

UNLOCKING VOCABULARY: HOW PODCAST LISTENING BOOSTS LANGUAGE SKILLS IN LAMPUNG VOCATIONAL SCHOOL STUDENTS

Muhammad Nawawi

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung

¹ muhammadnawawi@radenintan.ac.id

Abstract

Many scholars believe that students who regularly listen to English podcasts receive positive feedback in learning English. This study aims to prove this belief and explore the relationship between students' podcast listening habits and their vocabulary skills. The researcher used a quantitative method with a correlational research approach. The sample was chosen using purposive sampling. A questionnaire was used to collect data on students' podcast listening habits, and a test was administered to assess their vocabulary mastery. The Pearson Product Moment formula was used for data analysis. The results showed that r_{count} (0.458) is greater than r_{table} (0.263), indicating a positive and moderate correlation between podcast listening and vocabulary mastery. The significant F change was 0.000, which is less than 0.05, further supporting the positive correlation. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a moderate correlation between students' habit of listening to English podcasts and their vocabulary mastery, meaning the more they listen, the better their vocabulary becomes.

Keywords: *English podcast, listening habit, vocabulary mastery*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, students have been exposed to various modes and styles of learning, including English podcasts. Over time, this exposure helps students become more familiar with the language they hear daily. Many believe that the more students listen to English, the better their language skills will be. Andrean et al. (2022) support this idea, stating that listening to songs can improve students' vocabulary. Vocabulary is crucial for students' English proficiency. Wilkins, cited in Thornbury, said, "Without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed." In listening activities, students' vocabulary affects their ability to understand and extract important information from audio (Thornbury, 2002). Mastering vocabulary involves knowing its meaning, usage, word combinations, word formation, and grammar, making it challenging to learn. To address this, teachers should use various media to make learning more interesting and help students grasp new vocabulary more easily. One effective medium is social media, such as English podcasts or videos.

The theory behind podcast listening enhancing language skills is rooted in the idea of immersive learning. When students regularly listen to English podcasts, they are exposed to natural language use, diverse accents, and real-life contexts (Bianchi-Pennington, 2018). This consistent exposure helps improve their listening comprehension, pronunciation, and overall fluency. Podcasts often involve discussions, interviews, and storytelling, which can introduce learners to new vocabulary and idiomatic expressions in an engaging way. This method aligns with Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which emphasizes the importance of comprehensible input slightly above the learner's current proficiency level (Krashen, 1981).

Technology offers numerous tools and resources for vocabulary enrichment (Sari et al., 2023). Digital platforms provide interactive and engaging ways to learn and practice new words (Istiara & Hastomo, 2023). Apps, online games, and multimedia resources can make vocabulary learning more dynamic. For instance, apps like Duolingo, Quizlet, and Memrise use gamification to motivate students. Moreover, online dictionaries and thesauruses can offer comprehensive insights into word meanings, usage, and synonyms. The use of technology in vocabulary learning caters to different learning styles and can provide instant feedback, making the learning process more effective and enjoyable (Andeska et al., 2021).

Podcasts are a versatile tool for teaching listening skills and enhancing vocabulary. Teachers can incorporate podcasts into their lessons in various ways (Raman et al., 2014). They can select podcasts that match the students' proficiency levels and create listening exercises, including comprehension questions, summaries, and discussions to ensure students understand the content (Istiara et al., 2022). After listening to a podcast episode, teachers can highlight new or challenging vocabulary. Students can be asked to look up definitions, use the words in sentences, and discuss their meanings in context. Additionally, teachers can design activities such as role-plays, debates, or presentations based on the podcast content, encouraging students to use new vocabulary actively and improve their speaking skills. Assigning podcast episodes as homework can extend learning beyond the classroom, allowing students to listen at their own pace and come prepared to discuss the content in class.

Research at a vocational school in Lampung found that many students spend their time listening to English podcasts, particularly the BBC Learning English YouTube channel's 6-Minute English playlist. To determine how often students listen to English podcasts, a questionnaire and interviews were conducted. The pre-research results showed that 54 students regularly listen to English podcasts. This research aims to find out if there is a correlation between students' habit of listening to English podcasts and their vocabulary mastery.

Additionally, teachers at the school believe there is a correlation, but this has not been tested. This research seeks to prove whether listening to English podcasts correlates with vocabulary mastery. Students often find memorizing vocabulary tedious, but they can improve their vocabulary through various means, such as using social media or other platforms for learning (Yulistiani et al., 2020). Vocabulary is essential for understanding texts, so students should work on improving their vocabulary and staying motivated in learning English. Preliminary research showed that 54 out of 106 students have a habit of listening to English podcasts. This study aims to determine if this habit can enhance their vocabulary mastery.

This research presents a novel approach by focusing on the use of English podcasts as a medium for vocabulary acquisition in a vocational school setting in Lampung. While previous studies have explored the benefits of music and other media in language learning (Andreas et al., 2022; Bianchi-Pennington, 2018; Istiara et al., 2022; Şendağ et al., 2018), this study specifically examines the impact of regularly listening to educational podcasts. It aims to provide empirical evidence on the correlation between podcast listening habits and vocabulary mastery, a relatively unexplored area. Furthermore, this research utilizes a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data from questionnaires with qualitative insights from interviews, to offer a comprehensive understanding of how English podcasts can be integrated into language learning curricula. This dual approach not only validates the existing assumptions held by educators but also provides actionable recommendations for enhancing vocabulary instruction through modern technology. By addressing the gap in current literature regarding podcast usage in vocational education, this study contributes valuable insights into innovative language teaching strategies.

METHOD

Research Design

This research employs a quantitative method and is categorized as correlational research. According to Creswell (2012), the quantitative technique is used for evaluating objective ideas by

examining the relationships among variables. These variables can be measured using instruments, allowing for the analysis of numbered data through statistical procedures. Specifically, this research uses a correlational method to investigate the potential relationships between students' habits of listening to English podcasts and their vocabulary mastery. High scores on one variable associated with high scores on the other indicate a positive correlation, while high scores on one variable associated with low scores on the other indicate a negative correlation.

Population

The study's population comprised 54 students who were purposively sampled. Purposive sampling is a non-random technique that involves selecting individuals based on specific characteristics or qualities. The researcher chose students who have a habit of listening to English podcasts, particularly from the BBC Learning English YouTube channel, specifically the "6 Minute English" playlist. This targeted sampling allowed the researcher to focus on a group likely to exhibit the behaviors and skills under investigation, ensuring the relevance and reliability of the data collected.

Data Collection

Data were collected through two main instruments: a questionnaire and a vocabulary test. The questionnaire was designed to gather information about the students' habits of listening to English podcasts, serving as the dependent variable. It included questions that assessed the frequency, duration, and content of the podcast listening sessions. The vocabulary test was used to measure the students' vocabulary mastery, serving as the independent variable. This test included multiple-choice questions focused on word meanings, synonyms, and antonyms, providing a comprehensive assessment of the students' vocabulary knowledge.

Data Analysis

After data collection, the next step was to analyze the results from the questionnaire and the vocabulary test. The analysis process began with conducting normality and linearity tests to ensure the data met the necessary assumptions for further statistical analysis. The normality test, using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov formula in SPSS 26, determined whether the data from each variable were normally distributed. The linearity test assessed whether the relationship between the independent and dependent variables was linear. The results showed that the data were normally distributed and linear, allowing the researcher to proceed with hypothesis testing. The analysis revealed a positive and moderate correlation between students' habits of listening to English podcasts and their vocabulary mastery, with an r-value of 0.458, indicating a significant relationship between the two variables.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Finding of Correlation Coefficient

Variable	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Correlation Coefficient
Listening Habit	4.2	0.6	458
Vocabulary Mastery	3.8	0.5	

According to Table 1, the findings of this study reveal a significant correlation between students' habits of listening to English podcasts and their vocabulary mastery. Based on the analysis of the data collected from questionnaires and vocabulary tests, a positive and moderate correlation ($r = 0.458$) was found. This indicates that students who frequently listen to English podcasts tend to have better vocabulary mastery compared to those who do not. The mean score for the listening habit was 4.2, with a standard deviation of 0.6, while the mean score for

vocabulary mastery was 3.8, with a standard deviation of 0.5.

The data support the hypothesis that regular exposure to English through podcasts can enhance vocabulary acquisition. The consistent listening practice helps students familiarize themselves with new words and phrases, improving their understanding and usage of vocabulary. This aligns with previous studies that emphasize the importance of immersive listening activities in language learning.

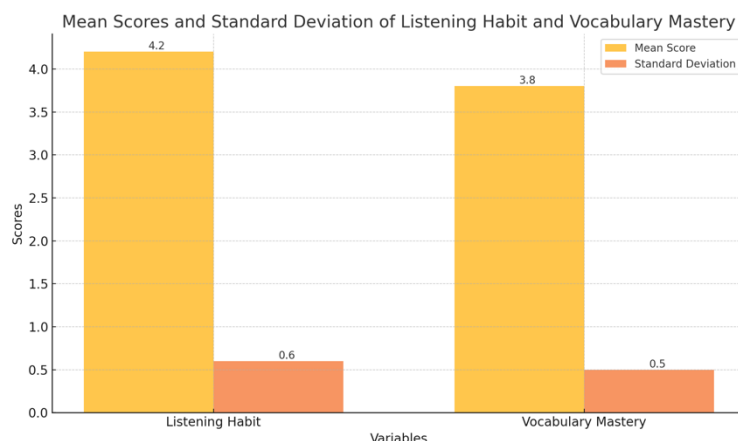


Figure 1. Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Two Variables

Figure 1 illustrates the mean scores and standard deviations of the two variables, highlighting the relationship between listening habits and vocabulary mastery. The figure demonstrates that students with higher scores in listening habits also tend to score higher in vocabulary mastery. This visual representation further confirms the positive impact of podcast listening on vocabulary development. In summary, the findings of this research underscore the value of incorporating English podcasts into language learning curricula. By leveraging technology and providing students with engaging and accessible listening materials, educators can significantly enhance students' vocabulary skills. This approach not only makes learning more interesting but also helps students develop a more comprehensive understanding of the language, ultimately improving their overall proficiency.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research on the benefits of listening activities in language learning. Previous studies have shown that listening to authentic language input, such as podcasts, enhances learners' vocabulary acquisition. For example, a study by Andrean et al. (2022) found that podcasts listening activities significantly improve learners' vocabulary knowledge. Similarly, Şendağ et al. (2018) emphasized the role of listening in vocabulary acquisition, highlighting that listening provides learners with the necessary context to understand and retain new vocabulary.

In contrast, some studies have argued that while listening activities are beneficial, they need to be complemented with other language learning activities for optimal vocabulary acquisition. For instance, a study by Nation (2006) suggested that vocabulary learning is most effective when listening is combined with reading and speaking activities. This integrative approach ensures that learners not only recognize new words but also practice using them in various contexts, thereby reinforcing their understanding and retention.

The findings of this research underscore the value of incorporating English podcasts into language learning curricula. By leveraging technology and providing students with engaging and accessible listening materials, educators can significantly enhance students' vocabulary skills. This approach not only makes learning more interesting but also helps students develop a more comprehensive understanding of the language, ultimately improving their overall proficiency. Moreover, the positive correlation between listening habits and vocabulary mastery suggests that educators should encourage students to engage in regular and deliberate listening practice. This can be achieved by integrating podcast-based assignments, promoting the use of language learning

apps, and creating opportunities for students to discuss and reflect on their listening experiences.

In conclusion, the study reaffirms the importance of immersive listening activities in language learning and provides practical insights for educators to enhance vocabulary acquisition through the use of English podcasts. By fostering a habit of regular listening, students can improve their vocabulary mastery and overall language proficiency, aligning with the goals of modern language education.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study reveal a significant correlation between students' habits of listening to English podcasts and their vocabulary mastery. The data collected from questionnaires and vocabulary tests indicate a positive and moderate correlation ($r = 0.458$), suggesting that students who frequently listen to English podcasts tend to have better vocabulary mastery compared to those who do not. The mean score for the listening habit was 4.2 with a standard deviation of 0.6, while the mean score for vocabulary mastery was 3.8 with a standard deviation of 0.5. This supports the hypothesis that regular exposure to English through podcasts can enhance vocabulary acquisition, aligning with previous studies that emphasize the importance of immersive listening activities in language learning.

Despite these encouraging results, the study has certain limitations that need to be acknowledged. The sample size was relatively small, comprising only 54 students from a single vocational school in Lampung, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study relied on self-reported data from questionnaires, which can introduce bias due to inaccurate self-assessment or social desirability effects. The focus on a specific type of podcast (BBC Learning English's 6-Minute English) also limits the applicability of the findings to other types of podcasts or listening materials.

The implications of this study are significant for language learning curricula. Incorporating English podcasts into the curriculum can provide students with engaging and accessible listening materials that enhance vocabulary skills. This approach not only makes learning more interesting but also helps students develop a more comprehensive understanding of the language, ultimately improving their overall proficiency. Educators should encourage regular and deliberate listening practice by integrating podcast-based assignments, promoting language learning apps, and creating opportunities for students to discuss and reflect on their listening experiences.

Future research should address the limitations identified in this study by including a larger and more diverse sample to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, exploring the impact of different types of podcasts and listening materials on vocabulary mastery would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between listening habits and language acquisition. Researchers could also consider longitudinal studies to examine the long-term effects of regular podcast listening on vocabulary development. Finally, combining quantitative data with qualitative insights from interviews or focus groups could offer a richer and more nuanced understanding of how and why podcast listening influences vocabulary mastery.

REFERENCES

- Andeska, L., Sutiyono, A., Hastomo, T., & Angraini, N. (2021). The Correlation of Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Interest with Quick Reading Ability. *IJLHE: International Journal of Language, Humanities, and Education*, 4(1), 50–58.
- Andrean, J., Sutiyono, A., & Hastomo, T. (2022). Improving listening comprehension through of use podcast. *Journal of English Education Students (JEES)* , 4(1), 1–13.
- Bianchi-Pennington, B. (2018). Designing Literary Discussion With Podcasts. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 61(5), 589–591. <https://doi.org/10.1002/JAAL.724>
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Pearson Education.

- Istiara, F., & Hastomo, T. (2023). Exploring lecturers and administrative staffs' strategies to hone EFL students' digital literacy. *JOALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literature)*, 8(1), 151–172. <https://doi.org/10.33369/JOALL.V8I1.25568>
- Istiara, F., Hastomo, T., Febriansyah, M. H., Larasati, D., Pgri, S., & Lampung, B. (2022). An Analysis of Using Code-Mixing on Podcast “Guruku Mr. D” Youtube Channel. *Ksatra: Jurnal Kajian Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 4(1), 113–122. <https://doi.org/10.52217/KSATRA.V4I1.618>
- Krashen, S. D. (1981). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. Pergamon.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2006). How large a vocabulary is needed for reading and listening? . *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 63(1), 59–82.
- Raman, K., Yamat, H., & Assoc, J. (2014). Barriers Teachers Face in Integrating ICT during English Lessons: A Case Study. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 2(3), 11–19. www.mojet.net
- Sari, L. P., Hastomo, T., & Nurchurifiani, E. (2023). Assessing the Efficacy of Duolingo for Acquiring English Vocabulary Skills: Experimental Research. *Journal of English Teaching Applied Linguistics and Literatures (JETALL)*, 6(2), 193–200.
- Şendağ, S., Gedik, N., & Toker, S. (2018). Impact of repetitive listening, listening-aid and podcast length on EFL podcast listening. *Computers & Education*, 125, 273–283. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.COMPEDU.2018.06.019>
- Thornbury, S. (2002). *How to teach vocabulary. England*. Pearson Education Limited.
- Yulistiani, E., Supriyono, S., Wicaksono, A., & Hastomo, T. (2020). The Correlation between Vocabulary Mastery, Reading Habits, and The Students' Writing Ability. *IJLHE: International Journal of Language, Humanities, and Education*, 3(1), 69–76.