# Podcasting and Speaking:
# A Perfect duo in English as A Second Language

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## Abstract

*In recent years, podcasting has emerged as a popular digital tool in language education, particularly for enhancing listening comprehension. However, its potential to support students in developing English conversational skills remains underexplored. While many studies have focused on receptive outcomes such as vocabulary acquisition and listening fluency, fewer have examined how podcasting can actively improve learners' speaking abilities and shape their attitudes toward English conversation. This study aims to investigate how podcasting contributes to the improvement of students' English conversation skills and to explore learners' perceptions of its use in speaking development. A mixed-methods approach was employed, involving secondary school EFL students with similar proficiency levels. Data were gathered through pre- and post-speaking tests and questionnaire over a week intervention period. During this time, students engaged with curated podcast episodes and participated in discussion-based speaking tasks linked to the podcast content. The findings revealed that podcasting significantly enhanced students' grammar, fluency, vocabulary use, and confidence in conversational English. Observation and documentation showed that learners spoke more spontaneously and used more natural expressions as the study progressed. Questionnaire responses indicated that students perceived podcasting as engaging, low-stress, and useful for improving pronunciation and real-time speaking. The study concludes that podcasting is not only an effective language input tool but also a catalyst for productive speaking development and learner motivation.*

## *Abstrak*

*Dalam beberapa tahun terakhir, podcasting telah muncul sebagai alat digital yang populer dalam pendidikan bahasa, khususnya untuk meningkatkan pemahaman mendengarkan. Namun, potensinya untuk mendukung siswa dalam mengembangkan keterampilan percakapan bahasa Inggris masih kurang dieksplorasi. Sementara banyak penelitian telah berfokus pada hasil reseptif seperti perolehan kosakata dan kelancaran mendengarkan, lebih sedikit yang meneliti bagaimana podcasting dapat secara aktif meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara pelajar dan membentuk sikap mereka terhadap percakapan bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki bagaimana podcasting berkontribusi pada peningkatan keterampilan percakapan bahasa Inggris siswa dan untuk mengeksplorasi persepsi pelajar tentang penggunaannya dalam pengembangan berbicara. Pendekatan metode campuran digunakan, yang melibatkan siswa EFL sekolah menengah dengan tingkat kemahiran*

*yang sama. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes berbicara sebelum dan sesudah dan kuesioner selama periode intervensi seminggu. Selama waktu ini, siswa terlibat dengan episode podcast yang dikurasi dan berpartisipasi dalam tugas berbicara berbasis diskusi yang terkait dengan konten podcast. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa podcasting secara signifikan meningkatkan tata bahasa, kelancaran, penggunaan kosakata, dan kepercayaan diri siswa dalam percakapan bahasa Inggris. Observasi dan dokumentasi menunjukkan bahwa peserta didik berbicara lebih spontan dan menggunakan lebih banyak ekspresi alami seiring berjalannya penelitian. Respons kuesioner menunjukkan bahwa siswa menganggap podcasting menarik, rendah stres, dan bermanfaat untuk meningkatkan pengucapan dan berbicara secara langsung (real-time). Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa podcasting bukan hanya alat input bahasa yang efektif, tetapi juga katalisator untuk pengembangan berbicara yang produktif dan motivasi peserta didik.*

**Kata Kunci***: Podcasting, Percakapan Bahasa Inggris, Pelajar EFL, Keterampilan Berbicara*

## A. Introduction

In today's globalized society, English serves as a crucial medium for international communication across various domains, including business, education, and technology. As a lingua franca, it connects people from diverse linguistic backgrounds and facilitates cross-cultural understanding (Zeng et al., 2022). With the increasing demand for English proficiency, educational institutions worldwide have placed strong emphasis on teaching English as a Foreign or Second Language (EFL/ESL). However, despite advancements in curriculum design and instructional materials, many learners still face challenges in achieving communicative competence. This issue is particularly noticeable in the realm of spoken English, especially when used in natural conversational settings (Rajendran et al., 2024).

Among the core language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing speaking is often considered the most difficult to develop (Normawati et al., 2023). This difficulty is amplified in conversation, where learners must respond in real-time, navigate unpredictable topics, and use language flexibly. Unlike writing or reading, which can be planned and revised, conversation requires immediacy and fluency. For EFL learners, this presents a significant hurdle, as classroom environments often emphasize accuracy over spontaneity (Sukma et al., 2025). Consequently, many students struggle to participate actively in spoken interactions, even when they possess adequate knowledge of grammar and vocabulary.

Traditional methods of language teaching often fall short in providing meaningful opportunities for authentic conversational practice. While dialogues, role-plays, and repetition drills have long been used in classrooms, they rarely

mirror the complexity or spontaneity of real-world interactions (Tsai & Piamsai, 2025). These activities are frequently constrained by scripted language, limited time, and teacher-centered dynamics (Rabani & Rad, 2024). Moreover, students may feel anxious or self-conscious when asked to speak in front of peers, which can further inhibit oral participation. To address these challenges, educators are increasingly seeking innovative strategies that promote natural use of language beyond the classroom.

In response to these limitations, technology-enhanced learning tools have gained prominence in supporting language development. The integration of digital media into language instruction has created new avenues for engagement, flexibility, and exposure to authentic materials (Zainuddin, 2023). Mobile applications, online videos, and interactive platforms allow learners to access rich linguistic input anytime and anywhere. These tools also support diverse learning styles and foster learner autonomy by enabling personalized practice. As a result, educators have started to explore how such tools can supplement traditional instruction and enrich the language learning experience.

Among the available digital tools, podcasting has emerged as a promising medium for enhancing English conversation skills (de la Peña & Cassany, 2024). Podcasts offer learners access to real-life speech, varied accents, and spontaneous dialogue that closely resemble natural conversation (Hamdayani & Sapitri, 2025). Unlike scripted audio materials, podcasts often feature genuine interactions, humour, and personal stories that make learning more relatable and enjoyable. They also provide a low-pressure environment in which learners can engage with spoken English without the fear of immediate performance (Khan & Madden, 2018). For these reasons, podcasting has attracted growing interest among language teachers and researchers aiming to improve students' speaking fluency and confidence.(Juniardi et al., 2020).

Although podcasting has gained popularity in language education, its direct influence on the development of students' English conversational abilities remains insufficiently examined. While many educators assume its benefits extend to speaking skills, the supporting evidence for its conversational impact is still scarce. Most studies tend to generalize podcasting as a passive input tool, overlooking its potential as a stimulus for interactive speaking activities. This leaves an open question about how podcasting can be used not only to receive language input but also to generate spoken output (Suvarnaphaet & Suvarnaphaet, 2023). Without deeper investigation, the conversational value of podcasting may continue to be underestimated in academic discourse.

A substantial portion of existing research emphasizes the improvement of receptive skills such as listening comprehension or the acquisition of vocabulary through podcast use. While these are essential components of language development, speaking—particularly in the form of natural conversation—receives comparatively little focus. This creates an imbalance in understanding how digital audio resources contribute to productive language use (Yeh et al., 2021). Learners may listen to podcasts regularly, yet it is unclear whether this habit translates into better real-time speaking performance. This lack of clarity hinders the full integration of podcasting into conversation-focused pedagogy.

Moreover, limited attention has been given to how podcasting might support learners in building speaking fluency, managing spontaneous speech, or applying conversational strategies (Farangi et al., 2015). Most studies overlook the active role learners could take by engaging with podcast content beyond passive listening. The absence of this perspective restricts the design of instructional models that fully utilize podcasting as an interactive language tool (Sulistianah Sulistianah et al., 2025). Without structured guidance on how to connect podcast input with speaking output, students may not benefit optimally from the resource. Therefore, more nuanced exploration is needed to bridge this disconnect between listening and speaking in podcast-based learning.

## B. Literature Review

### 1. Podcasts as Authentic Conversational Input

Podcasting offers learners exposure to authentic, unscripted spoken English, reflecting real conversational patterns, accents, and discourse structures (Ramli, 2018). Grounded in the Interaction Hypothesis, meaningful interaction even vicariously through podcast dialogue enables learners to notice linguistic forms and upgrade their spoken competence. Beyond comprehension, hearing varied speech styles encourages learners to adapt and approximate such language in their own speech, advancing fluency and pronunciation. In this way, podcasts simulate an interactive environment that supports both receptive input and the negotiation of meaning (Peng et al., 2025). Consequently, they form a bridge between passive listening and active conversational use.

### 2. Comprehensible Output & Learner Self-Regulation

Creating or responding to podcasts encourages learners to produce comprehensible output spoken language that they notice, test hypothesis, and refine through reflection. According to Swain's Comprehensible Output Hypothesis, this

act of generating language pushes learners to attend to form and restructure their inter-language (Benkaret, 2024). Moreover, podcast creation fosters self-regulated learning (SRL), as learners plan content, monitor their speaking performance, and reflect on their oral delivery enhancing autonomy and metacognitive awareness. With repeated practice and reflection, learners build strategic competence in conversation. Thus, podcasts serve not only as input media but also as catalysts for learner-generated spoken output.

### 3. *Social Accommodation & Motivational Engagement*

Engaging with podcasts encourages learners to adjust their spoken style, aiming for intelligibility, fluency, and social fitting—concepts rooted in Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) When learners emulate the pronunciation, tempo, or discourse features heard in podcasts, they practice accommodation, which enhances their communicative adaptability in real conversations. Simultaneously, this process boosts motivation and confidence, as students perceive themselves successfully adopting native-like conversational traits (Su & Zou, 2022). Higher motivation leads to greater engagement and sustained learning effort. Thus, podcasts function as both linguistic models and motivational motivators in the development of conversational skills (Yeh et al., 2021).

## C. Research Design

This study adopted a mixed-methods research design to examine the effects of podcast-based learning on students' English conversational skills (Yeh et al., 2021). By combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, the study aimed to capture not only measurable progress in speaking proficiency but also the learners' personal experiences and reflections (Chaves-Yuste & de-la Peña, 2023). This approach provided a comprehensive understanding of how podcasting influenced both performance and perception. The participants were fifteen EFL students from a tertiary level, purposefully selected to ensure they had relatively similar levels of English proficiency. This homogeneity allowed for a clearer observation of progress and reduced the impact of external proficiency differences. The total number of participants and their demographic details were recorded to support the reliability of the findings. To collect the data, the study employed a combination of instruments including pre- and post-speaking tests, and questionnaire. Over a week period, students were exposed to selected English-language podcasts and engaged in structured speaking activities designed to reinforce listening input. These tasks were aligned with the themes of the podcast episodes and provided opportunities for students to practice speaking in both guided and spontaneous ways.

## D. Results

The results of the pre- and post-speaking tests revealed a consistent improvement in students' conversational abilities. Most participants exhibited gains in grammar, pronunciation and fluency, especially in their ability to maintain longer stretches of dialogue without excessive pauses. Vocabulary use also expanded, with students incorporating more contextually appropriate words and phrases into their speech. In addition, their confidence appeared to grow, as observed in the increased volume, eye contact, and reduced hesitation during the post-test sessions. These changes suggest that the intervention using podcasts contributed to meaningful development in spoken English performance.

The interview findings supported the test results, as many students expressed that they felt more at ease when speaking English. Several participants mentioned that regularly listening to conversational podcasts helped them become familiar with common expressions and everyday speech patterns. As a result, they reported less fear of making mistakes and a greater willingness to speak spontaneously. One student noted that the casual tone of podcast conversations made English feel "less formal and more fun." This psychological shift played a significant role in lowering anxiety and encouraging active participation in oral tasks.

Interviews also revealed that students appreciated the accessibility and flexibility of podcast learning. They listened during breaks, commutes, or at home, which allowed them to engage with the material in low-pressure settings. This consistent exposure outside the classroom helped reinforce what they learned in class. Many students reported listening to certain podcast episodes more than once to improve understanding and mimic pronunciation. This repetition seemed to strengthen their grasp of both language form and conversational rhythm.

Observation during classroom sessions further confirmed the positive impact of podcast-based learning. In the early sessions, students were often reluctant to speak or responded with very short answers. However, as the weeks progressed, their interactions became more frequent and extended. Group discussions became livelier, and students began initiating dialogue rather than waiting for prompts. These behaviours suggest a shift toward more autonomous and confident speaking habits.

During podcast-based speaking tasks, students appeared more motivated and engaged compared to traditional speaking drills. The familiarity with podcast content seemed to give them a foundation from which to build their responses. For instance, when discussing a podcast episode about daily routines, students were able to relate their own experiences and use similar expressions. This transfer of input to output indicated that students were internalizing the language structures

heard in the podcasts. Consequently, their spoken English became more natural and connected to real-life communication.

Spontaneous speech was notably more present in the later weeks of the intervention. Observation notes described how students began using fillers, discourse markers, and small talk strategies that were previously absent. These elements contributed to a more fluent and conversational tone in their speech. Rather than producing isolated sentences, students began forming connected ideas with smoother transitions. This development marked a significant step in moving beyond textbook responses toward authentic interaction.

Reflective journal entries offered additional insight into students' learning experiences. Many students wrote that podcast listening helped them become more aware of intonation and pronunciation. They described trying to "copy how the speaker sounds" as a way to improve their own speech. Some even shared that they practiced out loud at home, using podcasts as models for self-rehearsal. These behaviours point to increased learner autonomy and active engagement in improving oral skills.

In several journal entries, students highlighted that they were able to understand "how people really speak" in casual conversations. This contrasted with what they perceived as rigid or overly formal classroom dialogues. Students noted that podcasts featured contractions, idioms, and relaxed phrasing that made English feel more alive and accessible. Exposure to these elements helped them feel better prepared for informal conversations. It also gave them confidence to use English outside of school settings.

Documentation from audio recordings of class presentations and role-plays captured the trajectory of students' speaking progress. At the beginning of the study, their speech was often fragmented and hesitant. By the end, most students delivered their ideas more smoothly and with fewer self-corrections. Their sentences were longer, more coherent, and demonstrated improved grammatical control. These audio artefacts provided concrete evidence of the shift toward greater fluency.

Transcripts of the recordings also revealed richer vocabulary and more consistent use of subject-verb agreement, articles, and tenses. While errors were still present, the overall grammatical accuracy had improved. Students appeared more comfortable experimenting with complex sentence structures, likely influenced by the models heard in podcast episodes. They also incorporated transition words such as "actually," "so," and "I think," which added clarity and

flow to their ideas. This suggests that students were not only imitating language but also beginning to use it creatively.

Another important finding was the change in classroom dynamics over time. In earlier sessions, the teacher had to call on specific students to speak. Toward the end of the study, more students volunteered to answer questions or initiate discussions. Peer interactions increased, and students began giving feedback to one another in group tasks. This collaborative energy reflected both growing confidence and a more supportive classroom atmosphere.

In summary, the integration of podcasting into speaking instruction yielded measurable and observable improvements in students' conversational English. The combination of listening, reflection, and speaking practice created a balanced learning cycle that supported both skill development and learner motivation. Students became more fluent, expressive, and willing to engage in spoken interaction. They also demonstrated increased autonomy, using podcasts as tools for independent practice. These results confirm the value of podcasting as an effective strategy for enhancing English conversation skills in EFL learners.

## E. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that students generally held positive perceptions of podcasting as a tool for enhancing their English conversation skills (Chaves-Yuste & de-la Peña, 2023). From both interview responses and reflective journals, students frequently expressed appreciation for the informal and engaging nature of podcast content (Yeh et al., 2021). Unlike rigid textbook dialogues, podcasts introduced them to language that felt more relatable and alive (Radianti et al., 2020). This exposure helped to reshape their expectations of what "good English" sounds like in everyday conversation.

Many students reported that listening to podcasts made them feel more confident in using English, especially when speaking in spontaneous situations. The authenticity of the audio content allowed them to hear how native or fluent speakers interact naturally, using contractions, fillers, and real conversational flow. This reduced the pressure of "sounding perfect" and encouraged them to take risks in speaking (Hamzaoğlu & Koçoğlu, 2016). As a result, learners began to view mistakes as part of the learning process rather than something to be feared.

A recurring theme in student interviews was the impact of podcasting on anxiety reduction (Korucu-Kis & Sanal, 2020). Several learners shared that speaking English in class used to make them nervous, but podcast activities helped normalize the experience of spoken interaction. Hearing casual conversations

between podcast hosts allowed students to internalize the idea that not all speech must be grammatically flawless to be effective (Chaves-Yuste & de-la Peña, 2023). This shift in mindset played a key role in building their self-assurance in speaking.

Students also found podcasts helpful in improving their understanding of how English is used in real-life situations. They noted that the podcast episodes introduced phrases, idiomatic expressions, and cultural references that were absent from traditional learning materials (Tabatabaee & Rezvani, 2019). This enriched their conversational repertoire and gave them the tools to express ideas more naturally. It also fostered a sense of linguistic and cultural immersion, which they found motivating.

The act of listening to and discussing podcast content seemed to strengthen students' speaking confidence over time. When students were asked to reflect or speak about the topics they had heard, they were more willing to contribute to class discussions. This is consistent with observation notes, which recorded increased classroom participation during podcast-integrated lessons (Nasution & Saragih, 2025). The familiarity with the material seemed to empower students to speak with greater ease and enthusiasm.

Some students even reported mimicking the pronunciation, tone, and sentence rhythm used by podcast hosts. They described podcasting as a form of "shadow practice," where they could repeat after speakers or rehearse speaking patterns silently or aloud (Sugiarto et al., 2020). This behaviour suggests that podcasting served not only as input but also as an informal pronunciation and fluency training tool. Students felt that this type of practice helped them speak more smoothly and confidently during speaking tasks.

The flexibility and accessibility of podcasting were also highlighted as advantages. Students enjoyed being able to listen to podcasts outside the classroom, on their phones or computers, at times that suited them best (Kay, 2012). This independent engagement fostered a sense of ownership over their learning. Several students mentioned that they chose to re-listen to episodes, not because it was required, but because they wanted to understand the content better or practice specific parts of the conversation.

Beyond linguistic benefits, students perceived podcasting as more enjoyable and less stressful than conventional speaking exercises. Many viewed the podcast-based tasks as more creative and interactive than grammar drills or memorized dialogues (Hasumi & Chiu, 2024). This sense of enjoyment likely contributed to higher levels of engagement and motivation, which are critical

factors in developing conversation skills. When students are interested in the content, they are more likely to pay attention, practice, and participate actively.

These perceptions were not only expressed but also observed in students' behaviour. The increased number of student-initiated speaking turns, spontaneous responses, and peer-to-peer interactions indicated a growing sense of confidence and conversational readiness (Berk & Aydın, 2023). Students who were previously quiet or hesitant began to take more visible roles in discussions (Barabas, 2023). This behavioural shift reinforced the idea that students' positive perceptions of podcasting were translating into meaningful language use.

In conclusion, the results demonstrate that students perceive podcasting as a valuable, motivating, and confidence-building tool for improving English conversation skills. Their feedback provides important insight into the affective dimension of language learning, showing that when learners feel comfortable and engaged, they are more likely to practice and improve. This study fills the research gap by highlighting not only the linguistic outcomes but also the learner-cantered perceptions that are often overlooked. The integration of podcasting in speaking instruction should therefore be considered both as a pedagogical strategy and a motivational support in EFL contexts.

## F. Conclusion

This study concludes that podcasting effectively enhances students' English conversational skills, particularly by improving their fluency, confidence, and ability to speak spontaneously. The use of authentic, engaging podcast content exposed learners to natural language use and conversational patterns, which in turn helped them speak more smoothly and with greater ease. Over the course of the intervention, students began to demonstrate more active involvement in classroom discussions and expressed themselves with more varied and expressive language. These observable changes indicate that podcast-based learning provides not only linguistic input but also serves as a practical platform for students to develop their speaking performance in real-world contexts.

Students' increased participation was also accompanied by clear shifts in attitude. Many learners reported a reduction in their fear of speaking English and an increase in their motivation to practice. They perceived podcasting as a relaxed, low-pressure medium that made them feel more comfortable exploring and using the language. The accessibility of podcast episodes allowed students to learn at their own pace, while the informal and relatable content helped them internalize spoken English more naturally. This positive emotional response likely played a central

role in encouraging students to take more risks in speaking and to engage more consistently with the learning material.

This research contributes meaningfully to the field of language education by addressing the relatively underexplored connection between podcasting and spoken language development from the learner's perspective. While existing studies have focused predominantly on listening comprehension or vocabulary acquisition, this study shifts the focus toward students' productive language use and their subjective experiences. By placing emphasis on student perceptions and their observed speaking behaviours, this research provides valuable pedagogical insight into how podcasting can be strategically used to support oral communication skills in EFL settings.

However, this study is not without limitations. The six-week duration of the intervention and the small, context-specific sample size may limit the extent to which these findings can be generalized to broader populations or long-term language development. Future research should consider extending the study over a longer period, involving more diverse learners, and exploring additional podcast-based activities, such as student-produced podcasts or peer interaction. Despite these constraints, the study lays a strong foundation for integrating podcasting into conversation-focused language instruction and encourages further exploration of its full potential in EFL classrooms.

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