

THE USE OF RADIO PODCAST IN TEACHING LISTENING COMPREHENSION AT STKIP PGRI TULUNGAGUNG

Willy Anugrah Gumilang

STKIP PGRI Tulungagung

osmondwilliam@gmail.com

Abstract: For EFL learners, listening comprehension is often considered as one of the most difficult skills. Consequently, it is really hard for the EFL students to achieve the good mark. There are many kinds of media that can be used to learn English: audio, visual, and audio visual media. Here, the discussion focuses on the audio media applied in teaching listening skill to the first semester students through the use of radio podcast at STKIP PGRI Tulungagung. The writer presents conceptual study by highlighting the use of radio podcast in teaching listening which is assumed to be more practical than other media. This includes all English lecturers who are concerned with the improvement of teaching skill. One of the innovative media used by lecturer is radio podcast. Radio podcasts are existing radio programs turned into podcasts, such as BBC News. The English lecturer uses radio podcasts which include audio materials, which are then given to the students. By giving up-to-date materials through an attractive media, the atmosphere of listening class has become an exciting activity.

Keywords: *radio podcast and listening comprehension*

INTRODUCTION

One of the keys to receiving messages effectively is listening skill. It reflects a combination of hearing what another person says and psychological involvement among the some or many people who are talking. Shofiyah (2015) states as one of skills of Language, listening requires a desire to understand another human being, an attitude of respect and acceptance, and a willingness to open one's mind to try and see things from another's point of view. Listening skill also requires a high level between concentration and energy. It demands that we set aside our own thoughts and agendas, put ourselves in another's shoes and try to see the world through that person's eyes. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, English becomes a foreign language. It is not the first or the second language. The teaching of English in Indonesia is intended to enable to use English for communication (Sukah, 2000). As an international language, English plays an important role in many aspects of life, such as education, business, science and technology. This statement is parallel with the objective of teaching English in Indonesia as stated in decree of the Minister of Education No. 22 2006 which stated that: 1) developing the students' oral and written communicative competence, 2) making the students have awareness toward the nature and importance of English to the nation competitive in the global society, 3) improving students' understanding about the relationship between language and culture. Based on the writer's observation, the first semester students at STKIP PGRI Tulungagung found a tough moment just for comprehending the listening materials, mainly those which contain natural conversations. For instance, the actors and actresses in a movie act and speak naturally without any purpose to teach foreign or second language to the viewers. However, nothing to worry about for the students since the lecturers has found the radio podcasts as the potential media to support their English learning.

The lecturers can provide some media, such as podcasts, songs and movies. Here the discussion focuses more on the use of radio podcasts which stands for playing on demand and broadcastings. It is more like a digital file which includes audio recording on YouTube, which can be downloaded from the internet and changed to the form of MP3. Ruhlemann (2008) states the

native speakers of English are not the only one starting place in listening since English is spoken internationally. In additional words, there is a need of understanding which has to be fulfilled by the lecturers to the learners of language, so they can be independent in gaining the valuable information. The technique of English learning using radio podcasts in the listening class is giving the students the materials or the websites to be listened to independently. Then they are supposed to submit their activities in the weekly report. The lecturers can ask the students to have at least one material in a week, but if it is possible, the lecturers can ask them more. Cahyono and Widiati (2009) state another thing that may be complicated comes from the variation of English accent in the materials given in the class. Some experts have different opinion about this issue. The function of English as a foreign language in Indonesia requires the English native speakers as the role model and standards resulting to the importance of language learning. They also argue that the use of English as a standard is really important in the teaching learning activity in listening comprehension. To answer those problems above, the independent listening through the use of radio podcasts media is expected to be able to motivate the language learners to learn the listening comprehension more joyfully.

METHOD

Through this paper, the writer presents a conceptual study by highlighting the use of radio podcast in teaching listening which is assumed to be more practical than other media such as VCDs or cassettes. As we know, the digital era has provided sophisticated media which can be applied in learning activity. This includes all English lecturers at STKIP PGRI Tulungagung who are concerned with the improvement of their teaching skill. Apparently, listening is a passive and receptive skill that is usually considered as a complicated skill to improve. In the teaching and learning of English, listening comprehension plays an important role in building the communication skills.

Listening skill is the first language skill learned, and it develops before a child speaks. Many children develop the ability to listen carefully to the speech of others during infancy and early childhood; others do not. Because language growth has been described as a receiving process followed by a sending process, a child's listening ability is important to gain future success in speaking, reading and writing (Machado, 2012). Further, he also explains that hearing and listening are quite different. Hearing is a process involving nerves and muscles that reach adult efficiency by age 4 to 5. Listening is learned behavior, a mental process that is concerned with hearing, attending, discriminating, understanding, and remembering. It can be improved with practice.

In the teaching learning activity of listening comprehension, one of the innovative media selected to be applied by the English lecturer is radio podcast. Baehaqi (2011) states that radio podcasts are existing radio programs turned into podcasts, such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) News. The English lecturer uses radio podcasts which include visual materials which are then given to the first semester students. By giving up-to-date listening materials through an attractive media, the atmosphere of listening class at STKIP PGRI Tulungagung has become more exciting.

According to Rost (2002), listening, in its broader sense, is a process of receiving what the speaker actually says (receptive orientation); constructing and representing meaning (constructive orientation); negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding (collaborative orientation); and, creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy

(transformative orientation). Listeners always correlate what they have known already and what they listen to, therefore, listening is an active process which is very complex.

For some students, the listening class is considered as a pleasure teaching learning process since they can do all the exercises fluently without studying hard beforehand, but, of course, some of them, or maybe most of them, do not have the same perception about it. Listening also supports the students' speaking comprehension since it is one of receptive skills which become one of the most important skills. Ruhlemann (2008, cited in Nashruddin, 2011:4), argued that the native speakers of English are not the only sources in listening, considering that English is spoken worldwide. While the listening process runs, the students can be independent in gaining any useful information since there is a need of knowledge which needs to be fulfilled by the teachers to the students.

According to Helgesen (2003), listening is an active purposeful process of making sense of what we hear. More often we hear, more often we understand something. As the students listen, they process not only what they hear but also connect it with other information they have got already. Listening can become very active although it is one of receptive skills since the students can actively think and try their best to catch the point at higher levels than what they have listened to.

There are various media which can be used by the lecturers in teaching listening such as podcasts, videos, movies, songs, radios or televisions. Using podcasts media, which is modified into the radio podcast, has become recommended since radio podcasts can give many benefits for a number of reasons. Fachrurrazy (2011) states that the strong motivation of English language learners can lead to the cooperative atmosphere in the learning process. In Indonesia, listening exercise is considered as a difficult activity. Since English is as a foreign language in Indonesia, it will not be the simple thing for the Indonesian language learners to listen and grab the information from the recorder. As a result, it is rather difficult for them to achieve the best mark in the listening course. Luckily, the development of technology provides us with the sophisticated media which are very helpful and potential for listening learning activities. One of the recommended media in the listening activity is called the radio podcast. The radio podcasts are more like the audio recordings to which users can subscribe and download. The language learners can also transfer the audio recordings to their computer or portable listening device such as an MP3 Player. And of course, the podcasts which are modified into the radio podcasts are believed very advantageous to develop the students' listening ability. Podcasts which are available on the web fall broadly into two types: radio podcasts and independent podcasts. The Radio podcasts existing radio programs turned into podcasts, such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) News. Meanwhile, the independent podcasts are more like web-based podcasts produced by the individuals and the organizations (Baehaqi, 2011). Many users of podcasts argue that this is a kind of tool which provides the huge variety of listening materials which are potentially useful and recommended to apply in the listening class. And it answers the questions why podcasts become comprehensible input appropriate to the various levels of proficiency.

In 2019, podcasting has grown to be accepted as an alternative way in providing radio-type content that can be listened to anytime, anywhere, and as many times as the language learner wants to. The design of listening material can be produced by a radio podcast by letting everyone connect to the internet, and this has raised a lot of interest in the education. In English Language Teaching, specifically listening comprehension, the application of radio podcasts is not only in providing further listening information for students, but also in involving the language learners

themselves in preparing, recording and producing the listening material through the use of the radio podcast.

There are many types of podcasts the lecturers can apply in the listening class with their language learners in the English language teaching, (on <http://mylcpodcasts.blogspot.com/>, accessed September 9, 2019).

- a. Authentic podcasts: Podcasts that are not aimed at ELT students can often be a rich source for listening. Most of these will only be suitable for use with higher level students, but others, such as *Sushi Radio* are made by non-native speakers of English and their length (5-10 minutes) make them ideal to use for classes.
- b. Teacher podcasts: Produced by teachers, often for their own classes, these podcasts are usually aimed at helping students learn by producing listening content that is not available elsewhere, or that gives a local flavor.
- c. Student podcasts: Produced by students, but often with teacher's help, the students can listen to these and experience the culture and hear about the lives and interests of other students from around the world. An interesting example is the podcast created by the Fudan university high school students in China.
- d. Educator podcasts: Ed Tech Talk is a more general show about educational technology, which is recorded live (this is called webcasting) using free Internet telephony and then provided as a podcast.

Rost (1991) states that ELT podcasts can be used for intensive and extensive listening activities. There is, however, a strong case for using ELT podcasts for extensive listening, for the purpose of motivating students' interest in listening to English, and providing them with exposure to native speakers' speech. On this research, the writer tried to use radio podcast as the audio media to improve the students' listening comprehension.

Through this paper, the writer presents conceptual study which aimed to review and analyze the use of radio podcast in teaching the first semester students' listening comprehension at STKIP PGRI Tulungagung in the academic year 2018/2019. The writer collaboratively tried to analyze and review the implementation of radio podcast in teaching listening, find the strength and weakness in teaching and learning process, and identify the impact to the progress of the first students' listening comprehension themselves. Then, the writer interviewed and also discussed with the collaborators related to the use of radio podcast in teaching listening comprehension which had been completed. The collaborator's name on the analysis and discussion is Piping Rahardiyanto. He taught listening subject to the first semester students at STKIP PGRI Tulungagung. In teaching his subject, he applied some principles of Brown (2004) in order to make the teaching and learning process successful: 1) In an interactive, four-skill curriculum, make sure that the teachers do not overlook the importance of techniques that specifically develop listening comprehension competence, 2) Use techniques that make the students intrinsically motivating, 3) Utilize authentic language and context, 4) Be careful to consider the form of listeners responses, 5) Encourage the development of listening strategies, 6) Use both bottoms-up and top-down listening techniques.

The setting of the analysis and discussion to design this conceptual study was at one class of the first semester students in English Department at STKIP PGRI Tulungagung. Jl. Major Sujadi No. 7, Manggis, Plosokandang, Kedungwaru, Kabupaten Tulungagung, Jawa Timur 66229. The number of the first semester students is 28. The listening class is given 100 minutes in each meeting once a week. The writer selected the first semester students as the subject of the study since he found a new innovation done by the other lecturer, and most students agree that

listening is the most difficult subject to learn. The observation and analysis were implemented in the first semester of the academic year 2019/2020. The observation and analysis were conducted from September 9 to October 9, 2019.

The writer took the data qualitatively by interviewing both the lecturer, Mr. Piping Rahardianto, and the first semester students, and then observing and analyzing the teaching learning process of listening class. Then, the data were in the form of field note and interview transcript. The writer collected the data quantitatively by checking listening assessment gained from the listening lecturer. Meanwhile, the lecturer implemented authentic assessments which encourage each student to submit one product in every meeting. It was done so that the students become more creative and they have a larger opportunity to improve their listening comprehension through the use of radio podcast.

After having interviewed the first semester students and the lecturer, the writer then also observed and analyzed the teaching learning activity in listening class. The writer recognized some conditions existing during the process. These are: (1) the students had limited vocabularies and radio podcast, (2) they had problem in detecting the spelling and pronunciation of the speaker, and (3) they had difficulty in getting information through the audio media and radio podcast, which are considered as the effective media to assist them. By paying attention to the situation and condition above, the writer and the lecturer could see that the use of radio podcast as the audio media was really needed as to assist the students in learning listening comprehension optimally.

The action was implemented in the class by paying attention to the lesson plan made by the lecturer. The writer used the form of field notes and observation sheets to observe and record the teaching learning process in the listening class. This conceptual study used qualitative and quantitative to analyze the data collected and found. The writer used qualitative methodology to describe the characteristics of data and he also used quantitative one to analyze the value of data collected. After that, all the data analyzed through a number of steps: first, the data gained from interview and observation are analyzed. Secondly, the writer analyzed the students' assignment and test result in learning listening using the radio podcast. Thirdly, the writer gained information about the students' level of listening ability. Lastly, the writer checked the average score given by the lecturer which informed the students' improvement level as long as being given the treatment of using radio podcast in learning listening.

The purpose of the study was to give information about the first students' listening comprehension after having given radio podcast as the audio media at STKIP PGRI Tulungagung. The observation result gave the information that the first semester students had difficulties in learning listening, especially in getting the information from speaker and making up their mind in selecting the best answer in the listening exercise or test. The writer believes that internet as the technological advancement can be used as the media of learning listening. He agrees that the use of radio podcast has many kinds of variation in the degree of complexities, modern, flexible and easy to be segmented. It is one of internet facilities of learning media which is very suitable to be used by the millennial generation.

The writer also agrees that in using radio podcast media, attention should be given to the students' need and the purposes of learning. The listening lecturer delivered some listening materials like list of words or phrases, answering 5 WH and 1 H questions, True and False, matching, completing map, and finding the main idea to find detailed information. The result shows that the first semester students' average of scores increased. The first semester students

also became more motivated and involved actively as long as the teaching learning activity uses radio podcast media in the listening class.

Field (1998) explains a typical lesson in current teaching materials involve a three-part sequence consisting of pre-listening, whilst-listening, and post listening and contains activities that link bottom-up and top-down listening. As the listening lecturer, Mr. Piping Rahardianto implemented the pre-listening phase prepares students for both top-down and bottom-up processing through activities involving prior knowledge, making predictions, and reviewing key vocabulary. In the while-listening phase, the students focus on comprehension through exercises that require selective listening, gist listening, rearranging, etc. For the post-listening phase, the lecturer asked the students to involve a response to comprehension and may require the students to give their opinion about the topics discussed. It also included a bottom-up focus when the lecturer and the listeners examine the parts of the text in detail and focused on some points that the students did not get properly.

The lecturer used some phases in a listening section which covers three steps of activity. As Goh and Yusnita (2006) states, "there are a cycle of activities and steps in guided metacognitive sequence".

a) Pre-listening activity

In pairs, the students predict the possible words and phrases that they might hear. They write down their predictions. They can write some words in their first language.

b) As the students are listening to the text, the students underlined or circled those words or phrases including the first language equivalents that they have predicted correctly. They also wrote down some new information they heard.

c) Pair process-based discussion

In pairs, the students compared what they had understood so far and explained how they arrived at the understanding. They identified the parts that caused confusion and disagreement and made a note of the parts of the text that would require special attention in the second section.

Having listening activity in pairs made the students discuss and share their each knowledge. Listening activity like this could assist the students whose listening score was under the average or low. They could discuss about the meaning of some unfamiliar words, talked about how to analyze the text, and support each other to be the good listeners. Through the listening activity in pairs in the class, the implementation would run under control. Through the use of radio podcast as the media in teaching listening, the students were fully motivated and their listening score average increased. In addition, the students felt free to gain their information and share their ideas without feeling afraid of making mistakes in re-telling what they have already listened.

CONCLUSIONS

The writer found that the first semester students' listening comprehension was unsatisfactory before having been given the treatment of radio podcast as the media. There were only 10 students (36.11%) out of 28 students, who reached the minimum passing score. The total of the highest score both the assignment and test was 75, total of the lowest score was 45, total of entire score was 2240, and total of average score was 62.22. It became the reason why the lecturer gave the treatment toward the first semester students' listening comprehension through the use of radio podcast as the audio media to assist the problems, minimize the students' difficulties in learning listening comprehension and implemented the authentic assessment.

In the first observation, unfortunately, not all of the first semester students were able to reach the good score although they had been given a treatment using radio podcast as the audio media, the average of students' listening score was 66.25. The students' achievement of listening had increased compared to the average score of the first test. However the condition itself had not met the criteria of success yet. There were 15 (52.78%) out of 28 students who reached the minimum passing mark. It had not met 80% from the number of students to get the minimum score 70.

Then, the writer kept doing the observation and analysis. The next activities were the pre-activity in listening section, making predictions, and reviewing key vocabulary. In the whilst-listening phase, the students focused on comprehension through exercises that require selective listening, gist listening, and rearranging. For the post-listening phase, the lecturer asked the students to involve a response to comprehension and may require the students to give their opinion about the topics discussed. While the implementation of the use of radio podcast as the audio media in the listening class is in progress, the students' attitude toward listening activity changed into positive motivation. It was also proven that after carrying out the activity routinely, the average of students' score increased. It was 73.89.

REFERENCES

- Baehaqi, L. (2011). Improving students' listening ability using podcast. In B. Y. Cahyono & N. Mukminatien (Eds.), *Techniques and Strategies to Enhance English Language Learning*, 19-34. Malang: State University of Malang Press.
- Brown, Douglas. (2001). *Teaching by Principle: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. (2nd Ed). London: Pearson Education Company.
- Celce-Murcia, Marianne. (2001). *Teaching English As a Second Foreign Language*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publisher.
- Deal, Ashely. (2007). Podcasting. *Teaching With Technology White Paper*, Jun 07. Retrieved from: https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/technology/whitepapers/Podcasting_Jun07.pdf
- Fachrurrazy. (2011). *Teaching English as a Foreign Language for Teachers in Indonesia*. Malang: State University of Malang Press.
- Field, John (1998). The changing perception: lexical segmentation in second language listening. *ELT Journal*, 57, 325-334
- Peterson, E. (2010). *Internet-Based Resources for Developing Listening*. Retrieved from <http://sisaljournal.org/archieves/sep10/peterson/>
- Prayoga, Moch. Ridwan. (2012). *Teaching Listening Skill Using Audio Lingual Method at First Grade Students of Asrama Bengkel Bahasa Course*. Bandung: STKIP Siliwangi