THE ROLE OF PODCASTS IN ENHANCING ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

In the era of globalization, English language proficiency has become increasingly essential, leading to the adoption of innovative learning methods such as podcasts. This study explores the role of podcasts in enhancing English proficiency through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of academic sources published within the last five years. Using the PRISMA framework, 36 studies from 2020 to 2025 were analyzed from ResearchGate and Google Scholar. Articles were selected based on their relevance, research methods, and key findings on the impact of podcasts in English language learning. The results indicate that podcasts significantly enhance listening, speaking, and writing skills, improve vocabulary acquisition, and deepen cultural understanding. Additionally, they positively impact student motivation, provide flexible and accessible learning opportunities, and encourage active engagement. Podcasts are particularly effective in self-directed learning, allowing students to access content at their convenience, making them a valuable tool in technology-driven education. Furthermore, integrating podcasts into English curricula and training educators to maximize their use can enhance learning experiences and outcomes. These findings suggest that podcasts serve as an engaging and effective medium for language acquisition, fostering independent learning and improving overall proficiency. Therefore, their incorporation into modern teaching strategies is crucial for optimizing English language education.

Keywords: podcast,englishlanguage learning,listening skills,vocabulary acquisition,speaking proficiency

INTRODUCTION

With the advancement of time, podcasts have become an alternative learning resource for developing English language skills (Ramli & Kurniawan, 2017). The availability of diverse topics and formats provides an authentic and dynamic learning experience through honest conversations with the speakers featured in a podcast.

Additionally, podcasts can be accessed without time or place restrictions, allowing students to enhance their English skills based on their interests and preferences.

Podcasts have become popular for disseminating information and knowledge to the general public (Ramirez, 2024). Amid the challenges of limited access to formal education, high language course costs, and time-consuming daily activities, podcasts offer a practical and affordable solution. Using podcasts as a learning medium provides students easy learning without being bound by specific time constraints (Suseno, 2023). Students can utilize their spare time to listen to a podcast episode while engaging in other activities, commuting to school, or during leisure time at home. Additionally, podcasts can reach a wide range of age groups and social backgrounds, making them an inclusive and accessible medium for anyone who wants to improve their English language skills (Gönülal, 2020). Moreover, many podcasts are free, making them an economical choice compared to other learning methods. Podcasts also offer students the opportunity to learn more flexibly.

The numerous studies discussing the role of podcasts in English language learning show that this medium has great potential as a learning aid. Some aspects require further exploration (Archana et al., n.d.). For instance, a study conducted by Romli in 2017 explored the potential achievements of using technology, affecting both students and teachers. This study focused on students' motivation to actively enhance their English language skills through listening and speaking experiences with technology.

Previous studies have examined various social media platforms, such as podcasts, in English language learning (Paulinsyah et al., 2024). Thus, this study explores the role of podcasts in enhancing English language skills. Although social media has proven to impact language learning positively, this systematic literature review aims to synthesize existing literature on the role of podcasts in improving English language skills across different countries and the underlying factors (Paulinsyah et al., 2024).

RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Technology in English Language Teaching

Technology has become an integral part of English language teaching in recent years. The use of technology in English language teaching is known as Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL). These technologies encompass various tools and platforms designed to support the language learning process (Chaikovska et al., 2019).

According to Butler-Pascoe and Wibrug, in their book "Technology and Teaching English Language Learners," technology can enhance student engagement and provide a more interactive learning experience (Book Citation 1). They explain that technology allows teachers to create dynamic and interactive lessons tailored to students' needs. For example, multimedia such as videos, audio recordings, and interactive exercises can improve students' listening and speaking skills.

Moreover, technology also facilitates communication and collaboration between students and teachers. Online platforms and tools such as discussion forums, video conferences, and collaborative writing tools allow students to interact with their classmates and teachers in real time, regardless of geographical location. Research by Alex in the journal "The Impact of Technology on English Language Education in Indonesia" also highlights the positive and negative impacts of technology use in English language education in Indonesia (Journal Reference 2) (Gönülal, 2020). This research shows that technology can increase student motivation and provide a more engaging learning experience. However, it also emphasizes the importance of teacher training in the use of technology and the need for equitable access to technological tools.

Therefore, technology plays a crucial role in English language teaching by providing tools and platforms that support a more interactive, collaborative, and engaging learning process. Although integrating technology can be challenging, the benefits gained from its use make it an indispensable component of modern English language teaching.

2.2. Podcast in English Language Teaching

Previous research has identified podcasts as a significant tool in enhancing English language teaching. The main findings indicate that podcasts provide an engaging auditory learning medium, allowing students to improve their listening and pronunciation skills (Mohzana, 2023). Podcasts offer a wide range of content that can be tailored to various proficiency levels and learning styles.

Various methodological issues have been discussed, including how podcasts can be integrated into the curriculum and the balance between passive listening and active engagement (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). This research emphasizes the importance of selecting podcasts that match the learning objectives (King, 2020) and ensuring that students are not only passively listening but also active in discussions and tasks related to the content of the Podcast (Rost, 2011). Some studies show that implementing structured activities, such as guided listening tasks, note-taking, and follow-up discussions, can improve students' understanding and recall (Field, 2008). In addition, effectively implemented podcasts have been shown to encourage independent learning and improve listening skills in language learning (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005).

3.1 Description of Sample

In this study, the sample used consists of written sources relevant to the research topic and following the inclusion criteria (Deda, 2023): 1) the articles must be original research that has been reviewed and cited by other researchers 2) the articles contain relevant keywords in both the title and abstract of the study 3) the articles are complete and accessible 4) the research methodology is mentioned. Based on these inclusion criteria, 20 pieces of literature related to the keywords. The

researchers then proceeded to screen the articles by selecting those from Scopus and Google Scholar and indexed by SINTA.

3.2. Procedure

This systematic literature review was conducted using a structure dapproach to ensure the results. The research procedure consists of three stages: a) Identifying relevant studies related to the role of podcasts in enhancing English languages kills. The search was conducted through various academic data bases such as Scopus, Google Scholar, and Research Gate. Keyword sused in the search included "podcasts in language learning," "podcasts for English learning," and "the impact of podcasts on English languages kills." The inclusion criteria encompassed studies published in peer-reviewed journals.b) After collecting relevant articles, the Mendeley reference managements of was used to organizeand storet he selected literature. The duplicate detection feature in Mendeley was utilized to identify and remove duplicate studies, ensuring that acharticle analyzed in this research was unique. c) Eac harticle was carefully read and thoroughly analyzed to extract key information regarding ther of podcasts in English language learning. The analysis high light edres search objectives, methodologies used, results obtained, and conclusions frome ach study.

3.3. Study Selection Criteria

In this study, the criteria include: 1) the articles must be original research that has been reviewed and cited by other researchers 2) the articles contain relevant keywords in both the title and abstract of the study 3) the articles are complete and accessible 4) the research methodology is mentioned

Research Questions

the research questions in this study are: 1) what is the role of podcasts in enhancing English language skills? 2) How effective are podcasts in enhancing English language skills?

METHODS/DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was used as the research method in this study, following the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework. The research synthesized findings from 36 studies published between 2020 and 2025, obtained from academic sources such as ResearchGate and Google Scholar. This approach aims to systematically examine the role of podcasts in improving English language skills based on the latest relevant research.

Research Design

The research design used in this study is a **Systematic Literature Review (SLR)**, following the **PRISMA framework** to ensure a structured and transparent review process. This approach is appropriate as it synthesizes findings from multiple academic sources, providing a comprehensive analysis of the role of podcasts in enhancing English language skills. By reviewing studies published within the last five years from

databases like Google Scholar and ResearchGate, the research identifies key trends, benefits, and challenges associated with using podcasts for language learning. The systematic nature of this design ensures that the findings are evidence-based, highlighting the impact of podcasts on listening, speaking, writing, vocabulary acquisition, and student motivation. Additionally, this method allows for identifying research gaps and future directions, making it a valuable approach for understanding the effectiveness of podcasts in English language education.

Techniques in Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection process began by systematically searching reputable academic databases such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and Scopus using predetermined keywords related to podcasts and language learning. Only studies meeting specific inclusion criteria—namely, original, peer-reviewed research published within the last five years—were selected. Duplicates and irrelevant articles were removed to ensure the final sample was both unique and pertinent to the topic. For data analysis, a thematic analysis was employed to identify, compare, and synthesize recurring themes and findings across the selected studies. This approach enabled the categorization of information into key areas such as listening comprehension, speaking proficiency, vocabulary acquisition, and learner motivation, as well as the identification of challenges like technical limitations and varying levels of student engagement. By combining rigorous document analysis with detailed thematic categorization, the study offers a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the role of podcasts in enhancing English language skills.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This study obtained findings from the synthesis results by following the PRISMA (Figure 1) illustrates thes ystematic screening process.

Figure 1. The PRISMA diagram visually summarizes the article selection stages

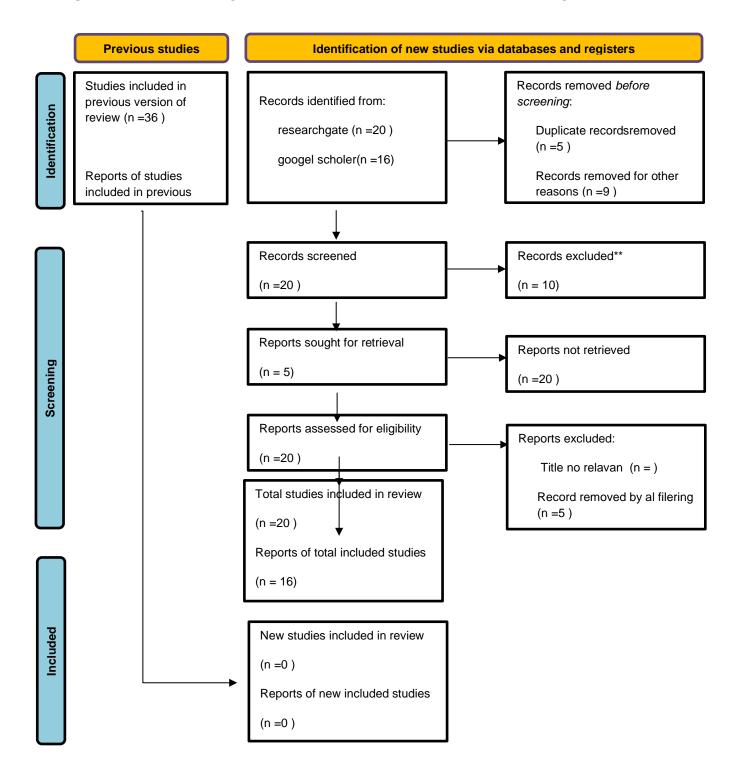


Table 1. Selection results with a total of 20 journals.

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No	Authors, year, and country	Mean Characteristic	Variable	Study Design	Measure	Findings
1.	(Ramirez, 2024, Philippines)	The study reviewed 18 papers published between 2013 and 2023, focusing on the effectiveness of podcasts in language learning.	Motivation, language proficiency, accessibility, linguistic reliability, and potential drawbacks (digital gap, internet connectivity issues, language progress)	A systematic review of the literature using the PRISMA 2020 framework	Thematic analysis of 18 eligible studies, categorized into benefits (motivation, authentic materials, linguistic reliability) and drawbacks (digital gap, internet issues, and uncertain language progress)	Challenges include instructors' lack of technical skills, internet dependency, and uncertain impact on language proficiency over time.
2.	(Dr. S. Archana&D r. P.V. (Vinitha, 2024, India)	The study focuses on non-native English speakers and examines the role of podcasts in improving their vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency.	It covers Vocabulary acquisition, listening skills, pronunciatio n, and fluency.	Qualitative research using a literature review and thematic analysis.	Analysis of existing studies on the role of podcasts in language learning.	Podcasts provide an engaging and flexible learning tool that enhances vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, and pronunciation. However, the study highlights challenges such as accessibility issues, the need for self-discipline in learning, and the effectiveness of podcasts varying based on learner engagement.
3.	(Deda, 2023, Croatia)	The study focuses on pre-service English teachers and their views on implementing Podcasts in English	Interested in Podcasts, self-reported language improvemen ts and the	Survey-based quantitative research.	Data was collected through an online questionnair e and	While participants know the benefits of podcasts, they also recognize the importance of careful selection,

4.	(ThisanaSat haratthana, 2024, Thailand)	as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching. The study focuses on first-year undergraduate students enrolled in the English for Life Skills course at Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna, Chiang Rai.	willingness to use podcasts in teaching. English reading achievement and student satisfaction	One-group pretest- posttest experimental design.	analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Lesson plans integrate podcasts, pretest and posttest, and a questionnair e assessing student satisfaction.	preparation, and supplementary material to ensure their effectiveness in EFL classrooms. Additionally, students reported high satisfaction with the podcast-based learning approach, with a mean satisfaction score of 3.60 out of 4, indicating that podcasts provide danengagingandeff ectivemethodforim proving their reading skills.
5.	(Erik Yuda Pratama& Winda Kurnia, 2022, Indonesia)	The study focuses on eight students from the English Education Department of a private university in Indonesia foreign language.	Extensive listening skills, pronunciatio n, vocabulary acquisition, and comprehensi on of spoken English.	A case study using the Case Study 2.0 framework.	Data collected through interviews, questionnair es, and guided reflective journals were analyzed using qualitative content and frequency analysis.	The study concluded that podcasts are an effective supplementary tool for improving listening proficiency and enriching vocabulary in language learning.
6.	(G.K.Belgib ayeva, at all., 2024, Kazakhstan)	The study explores how podcast-based learning enhances students' English language communicative competence and examines the role of podcasts in improving language	Communicati ve competence, language acquisition, comprehensi on, vocabulary development .	Mixed- method research combining qualitative and quantitative approaches.	Data was collected through statistical analysis of survey responses, podcast selection, observation, and synthesis of	. The study suggests that incorporating subject-specific podcasts into structured curricula can enhance communicative competence and revolutionize language education methodologies.

		acquicition and			collected	
		acquisition and			collected	
<u> </u>	(4)	comprehension.	1	The second treat	information.	Th
7.	(Alek, 2023,	The study provides	: language	Theoretical	Analysis of	The study
	Indonesia)	a theoretical	acquisition,	review	various	highlights the
		review of the	teaching		theoretical	importance of
		impact of	methodologi		perspectives 	integrating
		technology on	es,		, policy	technology
		English language	accessibility,		frameworks,	thoughtfully while
		education in	and digital		and previous	maintaining equity
		Indonesia,	literacy.		research	in access to digital
		analyzing its			studies on	resources.
		benefits and			technology	
		challenges			integration	
					in English	
					education.	
8.	(Paulinsyah	The study focuses	Listening	Pre-	Data was	The study found
	et al., 2024,	on students from	comprehensi	experimental	collected	that podcasts
	Indonesia)	SMK	on,	research with	using	significantly
	,	Muhammadiyah	vocabulary	a one-group	pretests,	improved students'
		Pagaralam	acquisition,	pretest-	posttests,	listening
			motivation,	posttest	and	comprehension, as
			engagement.	design.	statistical	indicated by an
			6.18086	0.03.8.11	analysis with	increase in posttest
					SPSS to	scores compared to
					compare	pretest scores. The
					student	mean gain score
					performance	was 12.24, and the t-
					before and	test results showed
					after the	a significant
					intervention.	improvement (t-
					intervention.	test value = 4.26,
						higher than the t-
						table value of 2.037
						at a 0.05
	(14.1	T	6 11 . 131	0 11 11	D .	significance level).
9.	(Mohzana,	The study focuses	Speaking skill	Quantitative	Data was	The study
	2024,	on Arabic and	development	research	collected	concludes that
	Indonesia)	English language	, confidence,	using a	through a	podcasts are a
		students and	vocabulary	survey	questionnair	valuable tool in
		examines the	acquisition,	method.	e distributed	language learning,
		effectiveness of	engagement.		via Google	offering
		podcasts in			Forms and	accessibility and
		developing			analyzed	exposure to real
		speaking skills.			using the	conversational
					Miles and	contexts while
					Huberman	highlighting the
					approach,	importance of
					' '	structured
						integration into the
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						curriculum for maximum effectiveness.
10.	(Yeh et al., 2021, Taiwan)	The study investigates the effects of podcast-making on the English-speaking skills of 77 first-year non-English major university students in Taiwan.	Speaking fluency, speaking accuracy, and students' perceptions.	This is a mixed-methods study.	Data was collected through TOEIC speaking pretests and posttests, podcast recordings, and reflective essays and analyzed using statistical tests and qualitative content analysis.	The study found that podcast-making significantly improved students' speaking fluency and accuracy, with increasing posttest TOEIC scores. Students exhibited fewer pauses and mispronunciations in their final podcast recordings.
11.	(Dr. S. Archana at all., 2024, India)	The study focuses on non-native English speakers and explores the influence of podcasts in improving their English vocabulary and overall language proficiency.	Vocabulary acquisition, pronunciatio n, listening skills, confidence in speaking.	Theoretical review with an analysis of various Englishlanguage podcasts.	Evaluation of different podcast platforms, analysis of their impact on vocabulary learning, and discussion of student engagement with podcasts.	The study highlights that students benefit from podcasts by increasing fluency and confidence in speaking English. However, challenges like the need for consistent listening habits and varying comprehension levels among learners are also noted. The research concludes that podcasts are valuable for language learners, particularly in developing contextual vocabulary and pronunciation.

12.	(Mohzana, 2024, Indonesia)	The study focuses on Arabic and English language students and examines the effectiveness of podcasts in developing speaking skills.	Speaking skill development, confidence, vocabulary acquisition, engagement.	Quantitative research using a survey method.	Data was collected through a questionnair e distributed via Google Forms and analyzed	The study concludes that podcasts are a valuable tool in language learning, offering accessibility and exposure to real conversational contexts while highlighting the importance of structured integration into the curriculum for maximum effectiveness.
13.	(Astuti et al., 2024, Indonesia)	The study investigates the impact of podcasts on improving the listening skills of eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Makassar.	Listening skill improvemen t.	Classroom Action Research (CAR) uses the Kemmis and McTaggart model with two intervention cycles.	Data was collected through diagnostic tests, listening tests in two cycles, and classroom observations and analyzed through percentage improvemen t in student scores.	The study concludes that podcasts are an effective medium for enhancing listening comprehension and should be integrated into listening instruction to make learning more interactive and engaging.
14.	(Mohanza, 2024, Indonesia)	The study explores the role of podcasts in developing speaking skills among 25 Arabic and English language students in higher education,	Speaking skill development, confidence, vocabulary acquisition, engagement.	Quantitative research using a survey method.	Data was collected through a questionnair e distributed via Google Forms and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman approach,	The study concludesthatpodc asts are a valuabletool in languagelearning, providingaccessibili tyandexposureto real conversationalcont extswhileemphasizi ngtheimportanceof structuredintegrati onintothecurriculu mformaximumeffe ctiveness.

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15.	(Yaacob et al., 2021, Malaysia)	The study involved 40 Primary Year 4 pupils (ages 10) from a cluster school of excellence in northern Malaysia. The participants were 21 male and 19 female students with mixed proficiency levels in English.	Use of YouTube and Video Podcasts in listening comprehensi on lessons.	Action research with a quasi-experimental approach.	Pretest and posttest to assess listening comprehensi on skills, observations to analyze participation and learning patterns, and thematic analysis of qualitative data.	The study showed that these digital tools helped reduce listening anxiety and improve students' ability to understand spoken English more effectively.
16.	(Ratnawati Mohd Asraf, 2021, Malaysia)	The participants were 40 Primary Year 4 students from a primary cluster school in Northern Malaysia. The group included 21 male and 19 female students aged 10 years with mixed abilities in English language proficiency.	The study investigated the impact of YouTube and Video Podcasts on listening comprehensi on among young learners.	Action research has three phases: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. It employed a mixed- methods approach combining quantitative (pretest and posttest) and qualitative (semi- structured interviews and observations) methods.	The pretest and posttest were adopted from the British Council English Learn Kids Channel on YouTube. The tests included 12 picture-word matching questions, story sequencing, True/False statements, and openended questions. Semistructured interviews were also conducted in Bahasa Malaysia (L1) and English, along with classroom	The study revealed a statistically significant improvement in students' listening comprehension performance. The pretest mean score was 46.03 (SD = 9.39), while the posttest mean score increased to 80.58 (SD = 8.86), with a significant p-value of 0.000. Qualitative data from classroom observations indicated that YouTube and video podcasts enhanced student participation, comprehension, teamwork, and motivation.

					observations	
47	(Lizatria Da	The study involved	Students'	Dro	The study	The finding
17.	(LizatriaPa ulinsyah, at all., 2024, Indonesia)	The study involved 25 students from SMK Muhammadiyah Pagaralam,	listening comprehensi on improvemen t (measured through pretest and posttest).	Pre- experimental research design with a one-group pretest and posttest method.	The study used pretest and posttest assessments , analyzed using SPSS software.	The findings indicate that podcasts positively impact students' listening comprehension by enhancing their engagement, motivation, and ability to understand spoken English.
18.	(LizatriaPa ulinsyah, at all., 2024, Indonesia)	The study involved 25 students from SMK Muhammadiyah Pagaralam, selected using a cluster random sampling technique.	Use of podcasts in learning English listening skills.	Pre- experimental research design with a one-group pretest and posttest method.	The study used pretest and posttest assessments , analyzed using SPSS software.	The findings indicate that podcasts positively impact students' listening comprehension by enhancing their engagement, motivation, and ability to understand spoken English.
19.	(Yunyao Li, at all., 2024, Malaysia)	This systematic literature review analyzed 31 selected articles on podcast usage motivations across various fields.	Different aspects of podcast usage, including education, entertainme nt, knowledge acquisition, convenience, and multitasking.	Systematic literature review using the PRISMA method, analyzing articles from 2004 to 2023 sourced from Scopus and Web of Science.	The study categorized 31 selected articles based on six content categories: education, various genres, health, crime, politics, and sports.	The study found that motivations for using podcasts vary across different fields. Educational podcasts were primarily used for ease of access and convenience. Entertainment, knowledge acquisition, and multitasking were the main motivations for various genres of podcasts.
20.	(Masitah et al., 2023, Indonesia)	The sample consisted of 999 students selected through purposive sampling.	Students' listening skills improvemen t (measured	Over four meetings, a pre-experimental research	The study used multiple-choice listening	The mean pretest score was 36.07, and the mean posttest score increased to 79.29.

	through	design with a	tests and fill-	The statistical
	pretest and	one-group	in-the-blank	analysis revealed a
	posttest).	pretest and	forms (20	significant value of
		posttest	items) to	o.ooo, which is
		treatment	assess	lower than the
		was	students'	alpha value of 0.05
		conducted.	listening	(0.000 < 0.05),
			skills. Data	leading to the
				acceptance of the
				research
				hypothesis and
				rejection of the null
				hypothesis. The
				study concluded
				that podcasts are
				effective in
				improving
				students' listening
				comprehension.

Discussion

Podcasts have become an effective tool for improving English language skills as they provide exposure to authentic and diverse language use. One of the main benefits of podcasts is their ability to enhance listening skills. By listening to various accents, intonations, and speaking styles of native speakers, learners can better understand English in real-world contexts. Additionally, using podcasts in learning strengthens pronunciation skills, as learners can imitate native speakers' speech patterns, improving their fluency and accuracy in communication.

Podcasts also play a significant role in vocabulary development and grammar comprehension. With a wide range of topics presented, listeners can learn new words and phrases in a more natural context(Nisa et al., 2022). Moreover, using complex sentence structures in podcasts helps learners understand how grammar is practically applied in everyday communication (Pratama & Kurnia, 2022). This aligns with language learning theories emphasizing the importance of repeated exposure to rich linguistic input to accelerate language acquisition.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this systematic review highlight the significant role of podcasts in enhancing English language skills, particularly in improving listening comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and speaking abilities. The integration of authentic conversations and diverse accents in podcasts provides learners with valuable exposure to real-life language use, fostering fluency and confidence. Furthermore, the accessibility and flexibility of podcasts promote autonomous learning, allowing

students to engage with English content at their own pace and develop self-directed learning habits.

Given these insights, this research underscores the growing relevance of digital resources in language education. The use of podcasts aligns with the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach and multimodal learning theories, reinforcing the effectiveness of auditory-based education in language acquisition. These findings emphasize the need for educators to harness the potential of podcasts to create engaging and immersive learning experiences.

Despite their advantages, podcasts present challenges such as passive engagement, lack of visual support, and difficulties in selecting appropriate content. To address these limitations, structured educational integration is essential. Educators should implement guided listening activities, curate content that aligns with curriculum goals, and encourage interactive exercises that promote active engagement. Additionally, developing pedagogical frameworks that incorporate podcasts within formal instruction can help mitigate these challenges and enhance their effectiveness in language learning.

The implications of this research extend to both educators and policymakers. For educators, the study provides valuable insights into how podcasts can be effectively utilized to support language instruction. For policymakers, the findings highlight the need for digital literacy initiatives that equip teachers and students with the skills to maximize the benefits of audio-based learning tools. Future research should explore the long-term impact of podcast integration in language curricula, examine the effectiveness of different podcast formats, and investigate learner engagement strategies that optimize learning outcomes.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the advancement of knowledge by demonstrating how podcasts can transform English language education into a more flexible, learner-centered, and immersive experience. While challenges exist, strategic implementation and further research can enhance their role in bridging the gap between formal instruction and independent learning, ultimately fostering linguistic competence and motivation among language learners

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