

# A Study on the Effectiveness of Using Digital Material of Podcast to Improve Students' Speaking Ability

Rahmi Aulia Amir<sup>1</sup>, Chairil Anwar Korompot<sup>2</sup>, Sultan Baa<sup>3\*</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>English Education Department, State University of Makassar, Indonesia

\*Corresponding E-mail: [sultan7304@unm.ac.id](mailto:sultan7304@unm.ac.id)

## **Abstract**

This study aimed to assess whether the use of podcasts to improve students' speaking ability is effective. The speaking ability measured consisted of five levels: pronunciation, intonation, fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. This study was designed as a pre-experiment one group pre-test and post-test which involved 30 students at the class XI MIPA 1, SMAN 9 Sinjai, Sinjai. Research data was collected using a speaking test. Data were analyzed with descriptive statistics and paired samples test using SPSS type 16.00. A significant level was determined at  $\alpha = 0.05$ . The result of the study indicated that the use of digital material of podcast is effective in improving students' speaking ability. The students achieved better speaking ability and reached higher post-test scores on average. It indicates that the implementation of the digital material podcast had a significant effect on students' speaking ability, which includes pronunciation, intonation, fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the use of digital material podcast was effective in improving the students' speaking ability. The findings suggest that the process of speaking after the podcast was implemented can develop students' speaking ability. Future research could discuss the results of a test conducted to investigate the effectiveness of the digital material of podcast approach based on the students' favorite types of podcasts.

Keywords: *Speaking, Podcast, Digital Material, Effectiveness.*

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## **1. Introduction**

The most significant language in the world now is English. Almost everyone uses it to communicate, and they do so from many different nations. English has always been a particular area of interest. This is due to how crucial English is in every aspect of our life. "An international language of communication used to achieve commercial, social, cultural, scientific, and technological objectives is English." (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2003). Furthermore, College students should understand and use English to boost their confidence to face international competition because English proficiency is also crucial for job growth.

The ability to talk is one of the essential English abilities that must be developed. According to Brown, valuable skill that can be tested directly and objectively, but observations are continually impacted by correctness and fluency. "Speaking is the verbal expression of thinking and emotion" (Djiwandono, as cite in Munir, 2005). In addition, Tarigan (1990) defined speaking as "the capacity to articulate sound or phrase in order to communicate or transmit thought, idea, sentiment, opinion, and want." Speaking may be defined as the ability to articulate sound in order to express or convey thinking, opinion, and desire to another individual. It may also be

claimed that speaking is the most crucial communication ability.

Fluency in speaking English is also very important nowadays, particularly Senior high school students who intend to continue their study abroad or simply need to go straight into the sector of work. Having a plan to continue study abroad, some universities require prospective students to take the TOEFL or IELTS test, where in these tests, speaking ability is also measured and becomes a consideration for acceptance. In addition, there are several jobs wherein the worker specs should grasp communication abilities, and the potential to speak English is a factor that is relatively emphasized.

Based on the explanation's considerations, in recent years, the emphasis of English language education has shifted from teaching about the English to teach the English language due to the aforementioned reasons. The focus should not always be put on the linguistic skill of language novices, but also on their communication potential. In order, Permadi (2002) stated that to increase the communicative skills of the students, the teacher must construct a situation in which the target language is taught in a lively, energetic, and engaging manner.

Getting students to talk with etiquette can sometimes be really simple. In an ideal classroom environment, students who get along with one another and whose English is at the optimal level would frequently participate freely and enthusiastically provided the teacher assigns them an appropriate topic and activity. At times, though, it is difficult to pique students' enthusiasm in speaking. Students frequently encounter a few obstacles when acquiring understanding of speaking abilities. Their native language makes it challenging for them to communicate in the foreign language. A further element is a lack of desire to use the second language in regular conversation.

On the other hand, Bradawi (1997), Florez (1998) and Miller (2001) as cite in Santoso

(2017) point out that teachers and students have a great deal of difficulty in relation to speaking abilities. Previous study has demonstrated that issues may occur as a result of the distinction between learnt systematic forms of speech and spontaneous speech. In addition to challenges of this sort, there are also psychological, social, and linguistic conflicts, such as a lack of fluency and precision, as well as an absence of pronunciation. It is crucial for teachers to be able to identify speaking-related issues in their classrooms in order to address them individually until oral communication develops.

The phenomena that have been stated above have similarities with the phenomena that occur in students at SMAN 9 Sinjai. When the learning process took place, especially in learning English, the learning process runs very monotonously, there is very little interaction between teachers and students. This happens because it is caused by several things such as students who lack motivation, students who lack confidence, students who are afraid of being wrong, students who have little vocabulary, and lack of pronunciation. The other cause is derived from the learning media. This is usually marked by educators who still present material manually in this digital era. In this all-digital era, there are not many educators, especially in learning English who present material digitally, so it was not uncommon for students to feel bored in learning.

Digital materials can enable students to comprehend concepts more quickly and thoroughly, to connect theory and application with greater skill, and to engage in learning more readily, while also enhancing instructional techniques, maximizing instructor time, and facilitating the widespread dissemination of knowledge. Digital Material or digital technologies will make this possible in new and improved ways and generate possibilities beyond our current imagining (MIT, 2016). In this case, the podcast becomes the choice as a tool to deliver a digital material.

According to Yoestara and Putri (2019) they discovered that podcasts made it easier for students to acquire speaking practice and assistance with oral presenting skills enhancement. In an alternate universe, podcasting is one of the inventive means of delivering content to students.

There are several researchers have conducted studies on podcasts, particularly in the education of speaking. One of them was published in 2017 by Dianithi. The title of the study was "The Use of Podcasts to Improve the Speaking Competency of Tenth-Grade Students" and it was conducted by SMAN 1 Amlapura in the 2016-2017 academic years. Classroom action research was used as the methodological strategy in this research. The study's findings suggest that the use of podcasts in the teaching and learning of English may improve students' proficiency in speaking the language. This study discusses podcasts as a medium for learning speaking among senior high school students, similarly to this study. Differentiating this research is its methodology. In this study, the researchers employed the CAR technique, whereas future research will employ the pre-experimental approach. All of the studies concur that the usage of podcasts as digital materials is useful for enhancing students' spoken communication abilities. The researchers desired to conduct a study at SMAN 9 Sinjai with the following title: "The Effectiveness of Using Digital Material of Podcast to Improve Students' Speaking Abilities".

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Speaking**

Speaking is the verbal use of words orally for interpersonal communication (Fulcher, 2013). Speaking is the spoken expression of ideas by two or more people speaking together (Adam, 2005, pp. 78). According to Richard and Hybel (2001), speaking is the process of sharing knowledge, thoughts, and emotions. In addition, Tarigan (1990) defined speaking as the ability to articulate sound or word to communicate thought, idea, sentiment, opinion,

and desire. Furthermore, speaking English can be seen as the ability to express ideas, concepts, thoughts, and emotions through oral communication by paying attention to the functions of English, such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and comprehension (Santoso, 2017).

From the definition above, Speaking is the act of expressing one's thoughts, delivering a speech, making social contact, and describing objects or people. Speaking is used for a variety of objectives, and each purpose requires a distinct ability, such as communicating our views, clarifying information, and persuading others. Additionally, speaking is an essential skill for conveying ideas, thoughts, and emotions to others. All acts involve communication, thus speaking also plays a crucial part in daily life. Through communication, individuals may develop relationships, inform others, share, and find knowledge. In other words, communication facilitates the accomplishment of objectives. In this situation, speaking is the needed ability for students to properly explain their ideas.

### **2.2. Digital Material**

A simple definition of digital material is materials delivered digitally. Digital materials are those that are accessible through computers. Some of them are "born-digital," or began in a digital format (such as photographs captured with a digital camera, web pages, and Twitter feeds), while others were transformed into digital files. This idea supported by the definition of digital media according to Digital material also known as digital content and digital technology. Mobile learning refers to the use of digital materials in language learning. Sharples, Milrad, Arnedillo-Sánchez, and Vavoula (2009, pp.225) describe "the processes (both personal and public) of acquiring knowledge through exploration and dialogue across numerous setting among individuals and interactive devices". It is essential to include technology into the learning process. During the learning process, technology can be utilizing aiding and

assisting in choosing internet-based learning resources; modeling, visualizing, and interacting with scientific structures, processes, and models; and arranging and supplying educational materials for students. This is proven by allowing pupils to do Internet searches for additional resources. The reader converts digital content into code so that it may be read, shown, or played by a digital machine or computer and communicated or shared with ease via digital media. Digital media also varies, ranging from e-mail, blogs, websites, podcasts, to social media such as YouTube, Facebook, Digital Contents, etc. These have all become a part of everyday modern human life. There are a lot of types of digital materials that can be applied in learning language, one of them is podcast.

### **2. 3. Podcast**

According to Rashtchi and Khosnevisan (2008), podcasts are new media that may suit the demands of students and the classroom. In addition, Edisitingha (2007), cited by Indahsari (2020), discovered that "by utilizing podcasts, students found it simpler to acquire speaking practice, and podcasts helped them enhance their oral presenting competence." According to Rosell-Aguilar and Fernando (2015), "a podcast is comparable to a public library in that it distributes any necessary materials or resources directly to consumers' devices." According to the above statement, a researcher can conclude that a podcast is a recorded audio/video file posted to a website that consumers can freely download and listen in another time.

Internet-accessible program installments are known as podcasts. Typically, Podcasts are original audio or video recordings, but they can also be recordings of radio or television broadcasts, lectures, concerts, or other events. Each episode of a podcast is often available in the same file format, such as audio or video, so that listeners may experience the program in the same manner. Learning with Podcasts is a fairly effective way to facilitate the learning process. Learning with podcasts is also

expected to strengthen STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education. In addition, podcasts are also a place where science can be included in daily.

Podcast may be one of the possibilities and innovative tools that help improve students' comprehension and communication skills. As a digital recording, podcasts may be utilized to supplement English language instruction, particularly the speaking ability. In contrast, Podcast media demonstrates positive benefits for students. It would bring students closer to the target language and affect their motivation and disposition. Using podcast media, a teacher may help students build self-confidence and cultivate an interesting learning environment. As a result of frequent hearing and oral performance, their comprehension of a particular issue's rhetoric may improve, so boosting their self-assurance (Bustari, Samad, Ahmad, 2016). This comprehension makes the learning process fun for them.

Learning English, especially speaking, an educator must be creative to increase student interest in learning. One of the efforts that educators can do is to deliver material creatively, both from teaching media that are different from the others or from other aspects. One of the lessons that can be used is media that involves hearing and sight or audio-visual media such as podcasts. Research on podcasts was previously conducted by Bustari in 2017 without including the location of the research. So that researchers consider that the information in the study was still lacking, there was no school-level information that is used as a subject in the study, so researchers did not know whether the use of this podcast was effectively applied to junior high school students or only to senior high school students or both. Besides that, another shortcoming that the researchers found was, in this study, among the five aspects of students' speaking, Ahmad Bustari did not reveal which aspects had a significant improvement after being given treatment. Therefore, the researchers thought that it was important to carry out this research

so that it could complete the information that was still lacking in previous studies, which then the results can be used as a reference for further research on the same topic.

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3. 1. Research Design

This study employed quantitative research methods. In this study, the researchers utilized one of three eligible experimental research designs, a pre-experimental design. The objective of this study was to examine whether the use of digital material is effective to improve students' speaking ability. Dependent variables of this study were the students' speaking ability. Speaking abilities divided into five categories: pronunciation, intonation, fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. Meanwhile, the independent variable of this study was digital material of podcast. The researchers collected data for this study using the pre-test and post-test.

#### 3. 2. Site and Subject Research

This research conducted at SMAN 9 Sinjai, Sinjai with the subject from students at second

grade of science. This study uses random sampling technique, cluster random sampling. The selection of sample individuals from the population was conducted at random, without reference to the stratification of the population (Sugiyono, 2017). In this case, the researchers took one class as a representative in second grade of Science (11 Science 1) in SMAN 9 Sinjai with the total number 30 students.

#### 3. 3. Research Instrument

This research use pretest and posttest as an instrument to collect the data, to provide the answers of the research question that listed in the problem statement. Pre-test is an experiment in which measurement are taken on individuals before the treatment was given. The purpose of the test is to determine the student's performance on students' speaking ability. Post-test is an experiment in which measurement are taken on individuals after the treatment is given. The goal of this test is to assess and acquire information on students' speaking ability performance after receiving treatment. The data collected from the students were analyzed by using the following procedures:

Table 1. Table speaking assessment

No.	Rated aspect	Criteria	Score 1-5	Score 1-4	
1	Pronunciation (pengucapan)	Almost perfect	5	4	
		There are some errors, but nointerfere with meaning	4	3	
		There are some errors and interfere with the meaning	3	2	
		Lots of errors andannoying meaning	Almost everything is wrong and interferes with meaning	2	1
		Too many mistakes andinterfere with meaning		1	
2	Intonation (intonasi)	There are some errors, but nointerfere with meaning	4	3	
		There are some errors, butinterfere with meaning	3	2	

		Lots of errors and annoying meaning	Almost everything is wrong and interferes with meaning	2	1
		Too many mistakes and interfere with meaning		1	
3	Fluency (kelancaran)	Very smooth		5	4
		Fluent		4	3
		Fluent enough		3	2
		Not that smooth	Very not fluent	2	1
		Not smooth		1	
4	Accuracy (ketepatan makna)	Very precise		5	4
		Appropriate		4	3
		Exactly enough		3	2
		Less precise	Very imprecise	2	1
		incorrect		1	
5	Comprehension (pemahaman)	Very precise		5	4
		Appropriate		4	3
		Exactly enough		3	2
		Less precise	Almost never	2	1
		incorrect		1	

### 3. 4. Procedure of Collecting Data

This is the process of data collection.

- The researchers gave the students pretest before the treatment applied.
- The researchers gave the students treatment.
- The researchers gave the students posttest after the treatment applied.

### 3. 5. Technique of Analysis

To analyze the data obtained from the research results used descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. Collected data in the form of pretest and posttest values and then compared. Compare the two values by asking the question whether there was a difference between the values obtained between the pretest scores and the Post test scores. Test the difference in value was only carried out on the average of the two values, and for this purpose,

a technique called the t-test (t-test) was used. With thus the steps for analyzing experimental data with the experimental model with One Group Pretest Posttest Design as follows:

- Descriptive statistical data analysis.
- Calculating the mean score and standard deviation.
- Calculating the t test value.
- Decisions.

### 4. Findings

The findings of this study were derived from test results to answer research questions. The research questions were whether the use of podcasts to improve students' speaking abilities is effective. The aim of this study was to assess if the use of podcasts to improve students' speaking skills is effective or not. Frequency and percentage of the data were calculated based on the accumulated overall score of 5 aspects as the table below:

Table 2. Frequency and percentage of pre-test

Category Score	Frequency	Percentage
Very low	15	50.0 %
Low	14	46.7 %
Modest	1	3.3 %
Moderate	0	0 %
High	0	0 %
<b>Total</b>	30	100%

According to Table 2, none of the thirty (3.3%) received a modest score, fourteen students who took the pre-test received a high (46.7%) received a low score, and fifteen (50%) score, none received a moderate score, one received a very low score.

Table 3. Frequency and percentage of post-test

Category Score	Frequency	Percentage
Very low	3	10.0 %
Low	13	43.3 %
Modest	10	33.3 %
Moderate	4	13.3 %
High	0	0 %
<b>Total</b>	30	100%

The students' score indicate that the usage of podcast digital content has an impact on students, as shown in Table 3. On the post-test, four (13.3%) out of 30 students received a moderate score, ten (33.3%) out of 30 students had a modest score, thirteen (43.3%) out of 30 students received a poor score, and only three (10%) out of 30 students received a very low score. The students' pre-test score and percentage were lower than their post-test score and percentage. Post-test performance is superior to pre-test performance. The researchers used paired sample tests to demonstrate the aforementioned assertions.

The researchers determined, based on the outcome of the paired samples test, that sig. (2-tailed) = 0.000 is less than = 0.05. On the other hand, the researchers might conclude that using podcast to improve students' speaking abilities is effective.

After carried out the pre-test and post-test, the mean and standard deviation are calculated. The following table displays the mean and standard deviation of the pre- and post-tests. The value of the mean must exceed the value of the standard deviation.

Table 4. Mean and Standard Deviation of Pretest and Posttest

Pre-test		Post-test	
Mean	SD	Mean	SD
36.00	8.469	50.00	12.551

According to the table 4, the mean score on the pre-test was 36.00, and the standard deviation was 8.469. In the meanwhile, the mean score on the post-test was 50.00, with a standard deviation of 12.551. It demonstrates that the use of podcast digital content to develop students' speaking abilities is effective.

## 5. Discussions

In this study, the researchers determined if the use of podcasts to improve students' speaking skills is effective or not. The results also revealed disparities in the speaking abilities of the students after receiving treatment.

The researchers used podcasts to provide a pre-test to the student. The title of the podcast was "My Ugly is My Global Brand" by Erica Freemantle. The pretest was done by face to face. The result of pretest were 0 student got high score, 0 student got moderate score, 1 student got modest score, 14 student got low score, and 15 students got very low score. Students found out it difficult to answer the question. There was a variety of reasons why students cannot answer the question that given by the researchers. According to Hetrakul (1995) he stated that the problem of students in speaking English are resulted from two causes they are environment and grammar. Hetrakul's statement was proven when the researchers took her research at school where the research took place. The researchers found some reasons why the students lack at speaking. First, the difficult to understand what the researchers said. Second, they lack of vocabulary. Third, they were afraid to being wrong in front of their friends. Because of that, in treatment the researchers try to deliver materiel that can increase students' interest in learning by using podcast. The researchers tried to build a good communication with student which is it can make student feel comfortable to deliver their idea without being afraid. In two meeting of treatment the researchers divided students into several groups, the researchers' purpose is to give a students' chance to discuss with their friends about the podcast and about the task that the researchers have given.

At the beginning of the meeting held in class, some students were unable to speak. After the treatment of podcast was implemented, the students have more interest to speak, they can deliver their idea with their friends or their group mate, they can answer the researchers' question even their vocabulary was lack but day by their vocabulary was increase. In the other hand, while the process of treatment day by day. The researchers can see students' improvement in speaking by using podcast. The research can conclude three reasons that prove that statement. Students are able to comprehend the meaning (comprehension) of sentences. Second, students are able to lower their self-confidence. Students are proficient in word production. This may be demonstrated by reviewing the post-test findings that the researchers has documented.

In conclusion, the three statements above which are also supported by detailed data analysis results prove that the use of digital material of podcasts is effective in improving students' speaking ability. the same as the results of previous study that have been attached by researchers in chapter 1 that research on the same topic, namely the use of podcasts conducted by Bustari, Samad and Ahmad in 2017 turned out to have the same results when research on podcasts was conducted at SMAN 9 Sinjai to improve students' speaking ability. But, in this research, the researchers found out that the significant increase of students' ability of speaking took place in aspect of comprehension and pronunciation. In addition, the same topic of the research that was podcast have done by Sari and Fitria in 2019 found out that podcast can increase students ability in speaking without mentioned what is the aspect of speaking that teachers' need to pay attention. But, in this research, the researchers found out that there was one aspect that needs more attention, it is accuracy. It is proven by students speaking score in pretest and posttest. There is just has a little bit of different. The researchers found out why the student lack in accuracy. It is because students' did not know what the speaker said and fear to ask. Regardless of that statement,

according to the result of data analysis, it is proven that podcast effective in improving students' speaking ability. Another reason based on the students' responses is because most students find that learning by using digital material of podcast is more interesting and enjoyable. This leads to increased focus during studying and encourages students to participate in speaking activities.

## 6. Conclusions

Based on the findings and discussion of the study, the researchers conclude:

- a. From the analysis of the researchers, it has been demonstrated that students' ability to speak improves when podcasts are used to teach them. This outcome provides an answer to the researcher's inquiry as to whether the use of podcasts to improve student speaking is successful. This was demonstrated by the fact that the mean pretest score was 36.00 with a standard deviation value of 8.469 and the mean posttest score was 50.00 with a standard deviation value of 12.551, indicating that the posttest score was higher than the pretest score. It indicates that the use of podcasts to increase students' speaking scores is successful.
- b. The use of digital material podcast makes the process of learning speaking activities more interesting and enjoyable for students. It is because the digital material of podcast helps the students to fix their point of view of speaking. Most of the students think that to have the ability to speak they have to master the entire category of speaking. They are afraid to be wrong, they have an insecure. But while the process of learning students felt enjoyable and braver to speak up. In addition, it is enjoyable, and the majority of students would agree that pleasure improves learning.
- c. The usage of digital media such as podcasts makes the classroom livelier and the students are willing to engage without the teacher's encouragement.

- d. The use of digital material podcast motivates students to study and makes it easier for them to comprehend the lesson.

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