



UTILIZING PODCASTS IN THE COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT) APPROACH TO IMPROVE ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS OF STUDENTS ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UIN ALAUDDIN MAKASSAR

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the utilizing of podcasts within the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach to improve the English-speaking skills of students in the English Education Department at UIN Alauddin Makassar. English, as a global language, plays a significant role in technology, science, and business, necessitating innovative teaching methods. Employing a descriptive quantitative approach, data were collected via questionnaires to examine how podcasts enhance students' communicative competence. Podcasts immerse learners in real-life communication, idiomatic expressions, and relevant topics, thereby developing their abilities in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The flexible nature of CLT allows integration with activities such as discussions, group sharing, problem-based learning, and role-playing, providing diverse opportunities for language practice. By listening to podcasts, students can emulate native speakers' pronunciation, intonation, and fluency, gaining confidence in their speaking skills. This research highlights the effectiveness of podcasts as a digital medium that not only supports listening practice but also bridges classroom learning with authentic communication, contributing to improved language acquisition outcomes.

Keywords: Communicative English teaching; podcast in learning speaking; speaking skills

1. INTRODUCTION

Language teaching and learning are two of the most important elements in contemporary school environments. Over the centuries, a large number of teaching and learning theories and strategies have been developed to meet the needs of students in learning the target language (Dos Santos, L. M., 2020). Meanwhile, when learners study a second language, such as English, the presence of a teacher in the classroom becomes even more important (Mustapha, S. M., &

Yahaya, R. A., 2013). Language teaching methods play a crucial role in the teaching and learning process for any language, especially English, given that English is one of the most widely used languages in the world. It plays an important role in various fields such as technology, science, and business. On the other hand, global demand has driven the need for high-quality language teaching and the provision of adequate learning materials and resources. Therefore, many methods in English language teaching, such as the Grammar Translation Method, the Structural Approach, and the Direct Method, have been tried (Sreehari, P., 2012). However, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach is one of the most frequently used and important teaching and learning theories, which can be applied in the contemporary language teaching profession (Savignon, 1987; Savignon, 2002).

According to Barnaby and Sun (1989) and Ellis (1996), CLT has been recognized as a strong theoretical model in English Language Teaching (ELT) by many linguists and language teachers, serving as a useful approach for language teaching. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been considered one of the ideal teaching approaches by many researchers and practitioners over the past three decades in the field of foreign and second language education (Memari, M., 2013). Communication plays a very important role in boosting self-confidence. Previous research has shown that students often have little or no training in spoken English, and many come from public schools where their exposure to English is very limited or even nonexistent. It is also difficult for lecturers to monitor their students' progress because of the large number of students in the class. According to Richards (2008), as cited in Yoestara (2018), students who can speak English well are those who can use English to communicate in everyday life.

In today's digital era, learners, especially English Education students at UIN Alauddin Makassar, have integrated technology as one of their learning resources and media. This is particularly important for mastering speaking skills, helping to create a communicative environment within the department, university, and even beyond campus. Speaking skills are considered one of the key aspects in learning English as a second language (Pabebang, E. K., 2021). The use of technology now plays a crucial role in motivating students, making them more interested and preventing boredom in learning to speak (Rahmasari, W., 2021). Many online and offline applications serve as learning resources or media to enhance students' speaking abilities. One popular tool among students is podcasts. According to Asmawati (2017), a podcast is an audio recording published on the internet. Podcasts are known as audio or video files available online and accessible through various applications (Silmawati et al., 2018).

Therefore, a podcast is an audio or video program featuring a host and guest speakers discussing specific topics, accessible via computer or smartphone applications. Podcasts can capture students' attention and are recognized as a modern technology due to their diverse content. They offer a wide range of materials from native speakers that can be selected and downloaded based on students' interests or teachers' instructions (Kamil, A. B., 2021). Clear pronunciation in a podcast ensures the speaker is understood, even if there are mistakes. Additionally, students have the opportunity to listen to or record the podcast themselves.

Therefore, the implementation of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach aims to develop students' communicative skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing,

focusing on the practical and functional use of the language. Teachers can incorporate various classroom activities and tools, such as discussions (Dos Santos, 2017b), group sharing (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015), problem-based learning (Da Silva Cintra & Bittencourt, 2015), and even role-playing (Tweedie & Johnson, 2018). The CLT approach offers flexibility and opportunities that teachers and students can use over time (Kennedy, 2002). Using podcasts as a flexible digital tool allows teachers and students to enhance speaking skills and exchange information with others at any time (Bahadorvar & Omidvar, 2014).

Thus, podcasts not only provide extra practice in listening skills but also help improve students' speaking abilities (Ahmad, Y. B., 2021). Before producing or speaking in a podcast, students can first listen to how native speakers speak English. By listening to podcasts, students can mimic pronunciation, understand intonation, and learn accuracy from native speakers. This helps them understand how to speak properly.

2. METHODS

The research in this study uses a descriptive quantitative approach, where data presentation involves comprehensive analysis, interpretation, and visual and narrative explanations to gain in-depth insights into a specific topic of interest (Gay et al., 2012). This approach is used by the researcher to understand the use of podcasts in English language learning, particularly in speaking skills within the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, among English Education students in the context of their studies.

This study uses a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms to 29 respondents. The questionnaire is designed to collect data on the use of podcasts in improving communicative language teaching skills. Data analysis is conducted using descriptive statistics to provide a clear and transparent overview of the research findings. Additionally, the researcher includes a literature review to ensure that the information obtained is relevant to previous research theories.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Podcasts have been recognized as modern technology in building students' listening and speaking skills (Sze, 2006). Podcasts offer a wide range of content or material from native speakers that students can choose and download based on their interests or teacher instructions (Kamil, A. B., 2021).

Several authors have shown that using podcasts for foreign language learning supports interaction and collaboration among students, as well as the development of intercultural and socioconstructivist competencies (Petersen & Divitini, 2005; Dervin, 2006; Ducate & Lomicka, 2006; Rosell-Aguilar, 2007; Sun, 2009; Fareed, 2010; Chan et al., 2011; Jain & Hashmi, 2013). This is evident from the various reasons why English Education students listen to podcasts as a source of entertainment, learning, and academic needs. In fact, 79.3% of students stated that using podcasts is effective.

Moreover, the effectiveness of podcasts in second language learning has been documented by previous research. For example, it was found that podcasts can improve vocabulary skills, language use, and learning practice (Chan et al., 2011). Other researchers, such as Fitria, Vianty, and Petrus (2015), discovered that podcasts support the development of students' speaking skills.

Podcasts can serve as an alternative tool for teachers to teach students outside the classroom (Bongey, Cizadlo, & Kalnbach, 2006). In this context, students can also engage in independent learning beyond the classroom (Elnagar, 2020). Speaking English as a foreign language involves the process of receiving input and then processing it for communication, resulting in output (Pabebang, E. K., 2021). In practice, using podcasts in speaking lessons serves as a learning support tool (Haberman et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, the modern world demands communication skills from learners, and English teachers need to teach English Language Learners (ELLs) the necessary skills so they can improve their speaking abilities and perform well in real-life situations (Rao, P. S., 2019). This is evidenced by the fact that 79.3% of students believe podcasts help them understand concepts taught in the CLT approach, and 65.5% feel that podcasts boost their confidence in speaking English.

A podcast is an audio or video program featuring a host and guest speakers who discuss a specific topic, accessible through applications on a computer or smartphone. Podcasts have been recognized as modern technology that helps build students' listening and speaking skills (Sze, 2006). This is because podcasts offer a wide range of content from native speakers that students can choose and download based on their interests or teacher instructions (Kamil, A. B., 2021).

Speaking English as a foreign language involves receiving input and processing it for communication, resulting in output (Pabebang, E. K., 2021). In practice, using podcasts in speaking lessons acts as a valuable learning support tool (Haberman et al., 2020). This is proven by the fact that 82.8% of students believe podcasts help them practice English pronunciation more effectively, and 75.9 % find listening to podcasts very beneficial before speaking in class.

Speaking a language cannot be separated from social interaction. Richards and Renandya (2002) state that speaking involves exchanging information, ideas, opinions, and emotions in communication. Therefore, it is clear that speaking is an essential activity conducted through verbal conversation. Furthermore, Nunan (2003) emphasizes that speaking is a crucial communication skill.

According to Ahmadi (2017), one important element in learning is the method used by teachers in the classroom to facilitate the language learning process. Bull and Ma (2001) mention that technology provides unlimited resources for language learners. Harmer (2007) and Genç İlter (2015) highlight that teachers should encourage students to find suitable activities using computer technology to succeed in language learning. Clements and Sarama (2003) point out that using appropriate technology can benefit learners. Harmer (2007) also suggests that computer-based language use can enhance cooperative learning among students.

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Podcasts have been recognized as modern technology that helps build students' listening and speaking skills (Sze, 2006). This is because podcasts offer a wide range of content from native speakers, which students can select and download based on their interests or teacher instructions (Kamil, A. B., 2021). This is supported by the fact that 72.4% of students reported improved speaking skills after regularly listening to podcasts and then discussing them.

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach is one of the most significant and applicable theories in contemporary language teaching and learning (Savignon, 1987; Savignon, 2002). Since the late 1970s and early 1980s, the CLT approach has been promoted as an effective teaching and learning strategy. Although many foreign language teachers strive to apply the CLT approach in their classrooms as much as possible, some still struggle to understand how to properly manage and implement it for their students (Dos Santos, 2016a, 2017b).

In fact, the CLT approach can be linked to various classroom activities and tools, such as discussions (Dos Santos, 2017b), group sharing (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015), problem-based learning (Da Silva Cintra & Bittencourt, 2015), and even role-playing (Tweedie & Johnson, 2018). However, some researchers (Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009) have questioned how teachers can develop and design curricula and syllabi that integrate the CLT approach effectively. For instance, while the CLT approach is suitable for activities like discussions and role-playing, can it stand alone as a teaching or learning method? This article provides a brief discussion of the CLT approach, its advantages, its limitations, and its application in today's language classroom settings.

The use of podcasts as a learning tool in the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach aims to improve speaking skills among students in the English Education Program at UIN Alauddin Makassar. The CLT approach is flexible and can be connected to various classroom activities and tools, such as discussions (Dos Santos, 2017b), group sharing (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015), problem-based learning (Da Silva Cintra & Bittencourt, 2015), and role-playing (Tweedie & Johnson, 2018). However, some researchers (Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009) have emphasized the importance of teachers designing curricula and syllabi that incorporate the CLT approach effectively. This approach offers flexibility and opportunities for both teachers and students over time (Prima et al., 2023).

4. CONCLUSION

Podcasts are seen as an innovative learning medium that supports understanding authentic language while enhancing listening and speaking skills. Their use exposes students to real-life communication situations, idiomatic expressions, and relevant topics, ultimately helping them develop their communicative abilities. Students highlight the importance of selecting relevant and authentic content. Podcast materials should be tailored to meet their needs, such as everyday communication scenarios, natural dialogues, and engaging topics. This ensures that students connect with the material contextually and functionally, leading to more effective language improvement.

Podcasts hold significant potential as a CLT-based learning tool for enhancing students' speaking skills. However, their effectiveness depends on selecting appropriate content, integrating them with interactive activities, and providing guidance from teachers. With these strategies, podcasts can go beyond being supplementary tools to becoming powerful resources for teaching language in a way that is relevant and focused on real-world communication.

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