Attitude toward Enhancing Extensive Listening through Podcasts Supplementary Pack

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Abstract

To promote independent extensive listening, the aim of this study is to investigate Saudi preparatory level students' and their teachers' perception about podcasts' criteria and contents to include in an extensive supplementary listening pack. An exploratory sequential design was adopted to collect data. The results of the focus group thematic analysis helped designing an online close-ended survey. The participants were 120 students and teachers sampled from the four proficiency levels of the English Language Institute (ELI) at King Abdulaziz University (KAU) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The findings of the study revealed that teachers were more familiar with the podcasts than students. Furthermore, all participants had a positive attitude toward using a listening instructional supplementary pack that can include few short authentic podcasts. They recommended using various challenging topics that are related to students' interests and proficiency levels. This study contributes to the literature of integrating podcasts to enhance extensive listening. It recommends designing an extensive listening supplementary pack based on Vandergrift and Goh's (2012) metacognitive approach and testing its suitability for application.

Keywords: extensive listening, perception, podcasts, supplementary pack

1. Introduction

1.1 The Listening Skill Problem

It has been argued that "the power of knowledge and the teacher is actively promulgated in Saudi culture" (Elyas & Picard, 2010, p. 139). The literature of teaching listening disclosed evidence that listening skill always causes problems for educators (Bozorgian, 2012). Although various listening activities are included in EFL classes, some learners still fail to comprehend and interpret received input when communicating in real life situations. Similarly, literature proved asking students in class to answer several multiple choice questions after listening to textbooks' limited audio tracks for few minutes did not provide them with enough comprehensible input. Since mastering a listening skill cannot be acquired by only listening to teachers' talk or class instructions, scholars called for a) integrating extensive listening and b) investigating the role of technology to improve it such as podcasts. It is a tool for sharing and playing media files available over the Internet to be played on portable media players (Lazzari, 2009).

1.2 Podcasts as a Listening Improvement Tool

It is worth mentioning that nowadays, the variety of information delivery has raised more interest. That is media has the ability to change the concept of teaching and that textbooks have been dictating specific teaching practices. Due to that, researchers call for varying teaching styles by integrating authentic materials from electronic resources such as podcasts to hold the interest of digital-age students. For example, Alm (2013), and Akbari and Razavi (2015) agree that accessing podcasts personally provides authenticity to learners. Also, podcasts could be used to provide an up to-date and extensive source of audio and video materials to improve learners language beyond the constraints of their classrooms (Cross, 2014).

Acknowledging the role of podcasts in fostering learning has motivated many researchers to examine it. Sutton-Brady, Scott, Taylor, Carabetta, and Clark (2009) and Lai, Shum, and Tian (2014) investigate its benefits for best teaching practices such as self-paced learning. Also, besides motivation and low anxiety, podcasts showed tendency to elevate students' individualized, informal language learning performance and increase their

mastery of challenging materials outside the classroom walls (Ashton-Hay & Brookes, 2011).

Likewise, some studies have highlighted the possibilities of enhancing listening skill through podcasts in higher education. For instance, studies in Iran at Imam Reza International University (Akbari & Razavi, 2015), at Qom University (Rahimirad & Moini, 2015) and three other studies at Islamic Azad University (Ashraf, Noroozi, & Salami, 2011; Habouti, Mahmoodi, & Ziaei, 2015; Mohammadi, Birjandi, & Maftoon, 2015) to name a few, have pointed that podcasts promote EFL listening as learners lack opportunities to communicate in English outside classrooms.

1.3 Podcasts Usages, Contents and Criteria

Coupled with the teaching-driven podcasts usage, McGarr (2009) reviewed the literature of higher education and outlined three significant usages which are: (1) substitutional to review lectures attended; (2) supplemental to deepen understanding with extra materials; and (3) creative to encourage students to record new podcasts as a course requirement. Among the three usages, supplemental was well received by both teachers and students because of its enrichment feature. Also, Al Qasim and Al Fadda (2013) pointed out that in language learning (LL), podcasts can either consist of materials designed by students to contextualize their LL or readily available authentic listening content such as news, audio events or speeches. Furthermore, Rosell-Aguilar (2007) enriched the podcasts literature with a broader perspective that guided future studies. He classified the online authentic podcasts materials into two groups; 1) podcasts provided and used by native speakers and 2) podcasts designed for language learning and course. He reviewed materials by relating them to the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories and suggested taxonomy for using podcasts in LL, presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Podcasts uses Taxonomy for language learning (adapted from Rosell-Aguilar, 2007, p. 476)

Although authentic listening audio tracks tempt educators to integrate them, they need to be extra cautious when selecting them. The reason is that a large body of literature reported difficulty finding appropriate modified authentic materials that match students' levels and interests (Li, 2013; Ting, 2014). Educators need to choose authentic materials that only fit the students' proficiency levels to avoid demotivating them. In the same vein, Rosell-Aguilar (2007), Ashraf, Noroozi, and Salami (2011), Cross (2013), and Yeh (2013) highlighted the podcasts' criteria and recommended using various authentic engaging short podcasts to avoid boredom. They also suggested varying the podcasts quality and difficulty level and including a transcript.

1.4 Importance of the Problem

Although some international studies have reported the significance of integrating podcasts in EFL classes specifically on listening performance, there is still a need for a local study that would explore more comprehensively Saudi students' and teachers' attitudes about podcasts' criteria and contents to include in an extensive supplementary listening pack. Since the effectiveness of integrating podcasts depends mostly on teachers' beliefs and learners' awareness of the new trends of LL, it is important to identify their preference in choosing podcasts materials that address their needs.

This study intends to add to the existing English as a foreign language (EFL) literature by promoting

independent extensive listening comprehension development. Also, the discussed perception of podcasts' contents and criteria to include in the listening supplementary pack will inform other studies to design one and test its suitability for the application.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Listening Skill and Podcasting

Using the rich content of radio in education has long been recommended. The only problem was that the transmission time of radio broadcast services made it difficult to use them in classes (Lee, Miller, & Newnham, 2009). As a solution, recorded audio tracks in cassette tapes were used in EFL classes to give the students the chance to listen to relevant materials. However, with the great exposure to media in the 21st century, the question remained, was that enough? Why students could not master the listening comprehension skills although they listen in class for various audio tracks for a few minutes then answer related questions. In an attempt to find an answer, a recent study by Al-Bargi (2013) reported why 333 beginner level students randomly selected from different ELI classes were not able to develop their listening ability. The reason is study revealed that the beginner curriculum did not explicitly teach any listening skills. Such key result indicates a need for teaching listening skills extensively. A listening skill oriented supplemental instructional materials can be suggested to assist improving listening through a much comprehensible input. This may confirm the call for using podcasts as a learning tool to enhance listening.

2.2 Rationale for Implementing Podcasts Supplementary Materials to Improve Extensive Listening Skill in KSA

2.2.1 English Language Program in KSA

English is the only foreign language taught in KSA since introduced in 1928 (Al-Seghayer, 2011). According to Rahman and Alhaisoni (2013), the Saudi educational field advances daily but not the students' EFL level and that is related to the traditional teaching methods, lack of chances to practice the language out of class, rote learning, and memorization that made student more exam-oriented (see also, Elyas, 2008; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014; Elyas & Picard, 2010, 2012, 2013; Elyas & Basalamah, 2012; Basalamah & Elyas, 2013a, 2014b). Similarly, in his attempt to bring harmony between Saudi school and university curricula, Ahmad (2015) investigated the Saudi traditional and socio-cultural barriers to EFL learning from Saudi male EFL / ESL, students, school teachers, university professor, parents, and Saudi journalists' point of view. The finding of his study revealed that the "lack of unification between school and college curricula" can cause a problem. He states that: "the… outcome of learning English in government schools are not so well defined...to produce Saudi graduates who are able to read, understand, speak and write English with ease while pursuing...their higher studies"(p. 201).

Likewise, in an attempt to identify the obstacles of teaching English in public schools in KSA, Elyas and Al Grigri (2014) investigated the teachers' and supervisors' perception. The data yielded some major barriers such as inadequacy of school supplies as well as in-service training programs, low students' motivation, and limitedness of using modern technology. The study would have been more interesting if the researchers used snowball sampling technique through social media, namely twitter or Facebook, to include more participants from different Saudi cities.

To improve the students' unsatisfactory proficiency level and facilitate academic progress, Saudi universities included English as a core introductory course in the preparatory year (PY) program (Al-Hazmi, 2007). Although that looked promising, the enthusiasm was short lived as more new challenges emerged such as the demands on instructors' time, the intensive nature of the English integrated skills courses used, and students' lack of interest (Alkaff, 2013). Henceforth, more studies called for revolutionizing teaching practices to involve 21st century students in their own learning specifically with the emergence of technology.

2.2.2 The Millennial Students' Active Role in Learning

In light of their great exposure to information through the World Wide Web, millennial students should be autonomous learners, information evaluators, observers, and critical thinkers. It is assumed that the new generations of learners are "digitally literate and can access courseware richer than the textbooks prescribed by their teachers" (Ezza & Bakry, 2014, p. 56). Therefore, teachers are expected to shift the responsibility of learning gradually to the learner (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Holding the interest of the internet generation is a predominant challenge current educators face. With the rapid and radical advancement of technology, the literature emphasizes that utilizing podcasts in handheld devices in EFL classrooms has become one of the critical tools that millennial educational systems strive to embrace. That compels instructors to be technologically literate to help orient students on navigating the web to foster their learning independently. The reason is that the brains of the "iGeneration" students' are digitally rewired and

cannot fit in a "traditional analogue classroom". Teachers should ensure that such students are controlling something actively "not sit in class passively" (Zimbardo & Boyd, 2008).Using a quasi-experimental design, Freihat (2014) randomly selected forty level-one, English major students form Al-Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University and Al Ghad International Colleges for Applied Medical Sciences in Riyadh, the capital city of KSA. The study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of (MOOC) on developing listening skills. The findings revealed were significant differences between the post-test mean scores in the intensive, selective, and extensive listening skills. This indicates integrating technology, specifically podcasts as an extensive learning tool, may have the potential to improve the students' listening skills more than the traditional listening cassettes or CD's.

2.2.3 Shift of Teaching Paradigm

To keep abreast of the latest trends in the educational system, align the Saudi teaching experience to the fast and growing global teaching methods, and to challenge the problem of adherence to traditional teacher-centered method, studies suggested using integrated skills courses to shift to student centered approach. To provide opportunities of global literacy, such coursebooks expose students to updated authentic topics about various cultures. Students can practice giving advice and making suggestions on everyday problems by using common real-life expressions. Likewise, provoking critical thinking skills through the reading texts requires students active involvement in accessing extracurricular materials available on the World Wide Web to support and simplify ideas discussed in class.

To encourage the demotivated students, teachers are hence suggested to implement Task Based Approach by selectively using diverse tasks. This strategy provides opportunities of communicating ideas purposefully, and using real-life language which some Saudi students might not be accustomed to (Ahmad, 2015).

Although the integrated skills textbooks approach seems to have many potentials, some studies provided confirmatory evidence to rethink the effectiveness of textbooks. For instance, Alkaff's (2013) 47 female ELI participants reported their willingness to improve their English but they lack the sufficient time, specifically with the intensive course pressure and its long hours as well as other subjects demands. Apart from shifting the teaching paradigm to student centered approach, some studies in the teaching methods literature argued that following a single teaching method has a negative impact because it "leaves little time for others to be considered" (Watkins, 2011, p. 3).

With that being said, the demand for revolutionizing teaching methods to involve students in the learning process cannot be ignored. It is one of the main reasons that informed the authors of this study to investigate students and teachers' perception about podcasts' criteria and contents to include in an extensive supplementary listening pack to improve listening skills outside the classroom boundaries.

2.3 The Conceptual Framework

The use of podcasts for extensive listening can be a specific practical application of the language acquisition theories.

2.3.1 The Affective filter Hypothesis

Krashen's (1982) premise of lowering the learner's "affective filter" informs integrating podcasts to enhance listening. It postulates helping acquiring a language through receiving and understanding messages. That is, when listening to podcasts outside the classroom, students expose themselves to a less stressful acquisition environment. Lowering the affective filter in this way assists learners to receive the maximum amount of comprehensible input, thus helping to develop the overall language competence of EFL learners (Al-Bargi, 2013).

2.3.2 Metacognitive Approach of Extensive Listening

Vandergrift and Goh's (2012) metacognitive approach of extensive listening informed this study as well. To answer the call of using process-based approach to encourage students to be active participants in improving their extensive listening, this approach postulates teaching students holistically and systematically how to listen and "engage with aural input" whether inside or outside classroom boundaries (pp. 11-12).

To cope with the massive authentic listening materials available online, structure and guidance can be means to help EFL learners navigate their way to practice regular listening (Alm, 2013). Alm (2013) and Rahimirad and Moini (2015) proved through their experimental studies the usefulness of the popular seminal Vandergrift and Goh's (2012) metacognitive approach to extensive listening. This metacognitive approach suggests solving the challenges of academic listening by guided structured regular listening practice to various authentic listening texts. By encouraging the participants to listen frequently and repeatedly to authentic materials for a defined time,

they reported positive impact. They even enjoyed selecting their own listening materials that align with their individual listening goals. Similarly, some scholarly papers on metacognitive approach to listening such as Bozorgian (2012), Cross (2014) and Rahimi and Katal (2012) have included sections related to its effectiveness in promoting listening comprehensibility. In brief, each of these theoretical positions contributes to understanding the use of podcasts' extensive listening supplementary pack.

2.4 Research Objectives and Questions

With the emergence of technological tools, such as handheld devices and earbuds, and their availability to students, this study aims to investigate Saudi tertiary level students' and their teachers' perception about including podcasts materials in an extensive supplementary listening pack.

The study attempted to answer the following main research question:

To increase listening comprehension, what are the podcasts' criteria and content topics suggested to be included in the EFL preparatory year supplementary pack?

3. Method

3.1 Participants and Context

The participants are sampled from different ELI's PY students and English teachers from Women's main Campus and the Women's colleges. They are both branches at KAU in Jeddah, KSA. The ELI follows an integrated skills program of four modules, two in each academic semester. The program consists of four levels correlated to the Common European Framework References for Languages (CEFR). It is an international standard that describes language ability. Different supplemental materials are incorporated in the ELI's curriculum to facilitate academic progress. All participants were sampled from the four proficiency levels. Data was collected from a total of (N=120) participants in both the qualitative and the quantitative phases of the study. Experienced Saudi and non-Saudi teachers were sampled (57=47.5%). As regards student participants (63=52.5%), all start in ELI's program after taking a placement test. In each module, they are instructed for seven weeks, 18 hours a week, using the coursebook series English Unlimited Special Edition (2014), as well as other supplementary materials. Student performance is assessed with speaking and writing tests and computer-based Mid-module and Final examinations before they proceed to the following level.

3.2 Study Design

An exploratory sequential design is used. It is a type of mixed method approach that builds on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2008). First, the researchers investigated the opinion of focus group participants then analyzed the results to form an online survey. To facilitate interpretation, the results were triangulated. The researchers believes collecting data from individual various perspectives first help designing a survey that relate specifically to the Saudi context. Adopting and adapting a readymade survey may not meet the participants' particular needs and circumstances.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

3.3.1 Focus Group

First, the ethical approval was obtained from the Women's main Campus. Then, the focus group was administered using a focus group guide with (N=12) participants divided in three groups; specifically, one group of teachers and two groups of students. Each group consisted of four participants. The ELI's coordination system helped arranging to meet with voluntary teachers via WhatsApp and email services. As regards the students, convenience or accidental sampling was used. The questions were discussed in Arabic with the students to avoid the language barrier when expressing views.

The three Preplanned semi structured questions used were informed by five studies (Abdous, Facer, & Yen, 2012; Al-Bargi, 2013; Chang, & Millett, 2013; Alkaff, 2013; Al-Thiyabi, 2014) and related to the themes emerged from the literature review. They were adopted and adapted to elicit 1) participants familiarity with the podcasts, 2) their awareness of the podcasts criteria, and 3) their suggested podcasts content to be included in an extensive listening supplementary pack. Also, the participants were kindly requested their contact details if they were willing to participate in the subsequent survey. Expert EFL instructors reviewed the questions to ensure validity then they were modified. Also, the questions are thought to be valid because the literature stated the importance of the aspects covered in the interview questions. As regards the questions reliability, it is believed that the investigator's face to face interaction with the participants supports collecting direct first-hand data.

3.3.2 Online Survey

The survey was developed by Google Forms service. Based on the major themes emerged from the literature review and the three focus groups thematic analysis to eliminate bias and elicit themes reflective of participant needs. The surveys of the previous studies were neither comprehensive nor compatible for some podcasts contents in the Saudi context. Previous studies and their findings helped developing the survey items (Sutton-Brady et al., 2009; Istanto, 2011; AlQasim & Al Fadda, 2013; Yeh, 2013; Alkaff, 2013; Ulum, 2015; Lai, 2015). Likewise, new items were added and the existing ones were modified based on the researchers' experience in teaching EFL students in the Saudi context.

The survey consisted of an introduction and two parts. The introduction had information about the study and its aim. The first part requested demographic information from participants, such as years of teaching experience, and the level number in students' case. It also included a short paragraph describing the podcasting nature and examples of websites to ensure respondents' familiarity with the concept. The second part included 12 closed ended questions using Likert scale model (strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, strongly disagree) with 5 indicating participants' strong agreement and 1 indicating strong level of disagreement. The survey items were grouped in three themes; a) the need of a listening supplementary pack (4 items), b) podcasts criteria (3 items), and c) podcasts suggested contents (5 items).

The survey link was sent via WhatsApp mobile application and e-mails using snowball sampling to avoid the estimate of bias. The ELI's coordination system of both Women's main Campus and the Women's Colleges helped distributing and collecting responses over a period of 3 weeks. It is anticipated that participants completed the online survey in less than 10 minutes.

The survey's English and the Arabic versions for both the teachers and the students were revised, edited and tested by experienced teachers. After rewording the unclear survey items, the researchers matched them against De Vaus's (2002) points to evaluate them such as the responses variety, clarity of survey items and the lack of redundancy. To be piloted, the survey links were then texted via WhatsApp application to 5 teachers and 5 students (N=10) that represent the same sample group. Internal consistency examined the reliability and consistency of the participants' survey responses. Using the SPSS package, the Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for the entire teachers' and the students' online survey items. The result of the instructors' responses showed adequate internal consistency (0.641) and the students' responses indicated (0.776). This reflects that the scale has an acceptable internal consistency.

4. Data Analysis and Results

Based on the nature of study design, the results are divided into parts 1) focus group questions; 2) the online survey; and 3) triangulated responses of both the instructors and the students.

4.1 Focus Group Questions

After collecting the participants' demographic information (see Table 1), the responses to the three focus group questions, were recorded, transcribed, and imported to the QSR International NVIVO software for a thematic analysis. Similar and different references were reviewed and labeled as nodes. According to Bryman and Bell (2007) nodes are "collection of references about a specific theme, place, person, or other area of interest" (p. 609). After grouping the final themes, they were compared to the ones emerged from the literature review and exported to an MS Microsoft word document to formulate the subsequent survey. The main themes are indicated in Table 2.

Table 1. Focus group participants' demographic information and their familiarity with the podcasts

Focus group No	Participant	First language	ELI level	Podcast Familiarity Response
Group 1			104	Yes
			102	Yes
			104	No
	Eight EFL Student (Woman's Campus)	Arabic	101	No
			102	Yes
Group 2			104	No
			104	No
			103	No
Group 3	Four EFL Instructors from (Woman's Campus)	English	103	Yes
		English	104	Yes
		English	103	Yes
		Arabic	102	No

As indicated in Table 1, the majority of the participants were teaching and studying level 104 (5 participants) and only one participant was from level 101. In addition, equal number of participants (3 instructors, 3 students) indicated their familiarity with the podcasts. One of the instructors defined podcasts as "recorded materials that you use for anything". Another one gave an example of the BBC podcasts "the news podcast From BBC for example, I know you can use them offline as well as online''. Similarly, one student stated that "you can download CNN app I think to listen".

Table 2. Themes emerged from the focus group thematic analysis and combined with the literature review themes

Main theme	References
1. A need of A Listening Supplementary Pack	1. Recommendation of guided extensive listening materials
	2. Intensive nature of the English language curriculum
	3. Classroom technological problems
2. Podcasts Criteria	4. Podcasts length
	5. Podcasts mobility features
3. Podcasts content	6. Examples of Websites and Applications
	7. Suggested podcasts Topics
	8. Provision of transcription with the podcasts

As indicated in Table 2, the three focus groups participants expressed various views about the need of a listening supplementary pack, podcasts criteria, and suggested contents.

A group of participants highlighted that beside the classroom technological problems, the English language curriculum is actually intensive and it would be boring to do more listening activities inside class. Pseudonyms have been used to maintain the participants' privacy.

"We usually don't have enough time. Even for the course curriculum and the tracks we have for the listening we hardly go for them! There are hinders…sometimes the PCs are not working and we have to bring our own stuff. Sometimes the sound system is not OK or the plug system'' (Instructor M.N.)

''It is good but not in a 2 hours class. It would be boring. We don't benefit a lot." (Student L.M.)

The following excerpts report the participants' positive attitude toward including a listening instructional

supplementary pack that can guide the students:

"I think this is a good idea. This will be kind of a new innovative idea to include extensive listening to the curriculum and it will be a good project." (Instructor M.N)

"I wish it can be improved so we can benefit" (Student A.M.)

"I think it's a good idea because it will help me." (Student L.M.)

''We should have a follow up.'' (Instructor F.M.)

''I think I can learn a lot if I do it by myself.'' (Student M.R.)

Likewise, participants supported the podcasts mobility feature and expressed their willingness to listen to them anywhere and anytime.

''I prefer for example listening while walking.'' (Student L.M.)

''Before I sleep.'' (Student B.A)

Participants also indicated their preference of short podcasts and challenging ones:

"They must not be very long that they lose interest.'' (Instructor M.N)

''Not long. I will get bored because I am trying to listen and understand.'' (Student S.B.)

''We can give them some challenging ones so they will be engaged in doing that.'' (Instructor F.M.)

As regards the content and topic to be included in the listening supplementary pack, the participants expressed:

''Going to restaurants or traveling. We need words for shopping.'' (Student S.B.)

''Accidents'', ''Journeys'', ''Experience'', and ''Transportation'' (Students Y.N., L.M, B.A, & S.E.)

''It is a good idea to give them short facts or to give them like real records from BBC or some other activities which they feel interesting.'' (Instructor F.M.)

5.2 The Online Survey

The responses of the closed-ended items were analyzed through IBM SPSS (Ver.19). Descriptive statistical analysis of frequencies, percentages and mode were used to describe the demographic information and the responses to the Likert scale items. They help in collecting information about the sample's present opinions.

Table 3. ELI instructors' teaching experience and English as a first language

No	Item	Responses		N	%
1	ELI teaching Experience	Less than three years		11	20.8
		More than three years		42	79.2
		Total		53	100.0
2	English as a 1st language	Yes	11		20.8
		No	42		79.2
		Total	53		100.0

Table 3 indicates that (79.2%) of the instructors participated in the survey have taught at the ELI for more than three years and their first language is English.

As regards the participants' levels taught and studied at the ELI, the pie chart in Figure 2 illustrates that over half of those surveyed were 104 students and teachers (64.8%).
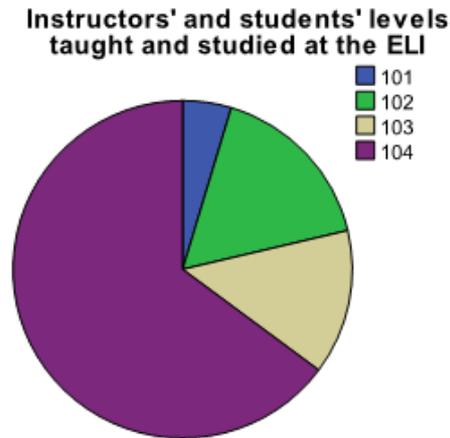
Figure 2. Instructors; and students' levels taught and studied at the ELI

Table 4. Participants' podcasts familiarity

Participants' Podcasts familiarity				
		Podcasts familiarity		Total
		Yes	No	
participants	Instructors	40 (75.5%)	13 (24.5%)	53 (100%)
	Students	14 (25.5%)	41 (74.5%)	55 (100.0%)

Respondents were asked to indicate their familiarity with the podcasts. From the data in Table 4, it is apparent that teachers (75.5%) were more familiar with the podcasts than students (25.5%).

Turning now to the main second section, its questions were grouped into three main themes. Each one shared related ideas as indicated in Table 5, Table 6 and Table 7.

Table 5 demonstrates participants' responses to the theme of a listening supplementary pack need. Teachers (47.2%) indicated that the curriculum audio tracks are insufficient to improve listening comprehension strategies while (30.9%) students were not sure (item1). Both teachers (45.3%) and students (36.4%) believed that the curriculum does not allow enough time to teach students all listening comprehension strategies needed (item 2). Also, (45.3%) teachers think that classroom technological problems prevent them from doing listening activities with their students while (36.4%) students reported their disagreement (item 3).They agreed to recommend adding four short authentic podcasts in a listening instructional supplementary pack (item 4, (54.7%) teachers and (49.1%) students respectively).

Table 5. Participants' responses to the first theme: a listening supplementary pack need

Item	Response	participants	
		Instructors	Students
		Frequency %	Frequency %
1. Sufficiency of curriculum audio tracks to improve listening comprehension strategies	Strongly Disagree	7 (13.2%)	5 (9.1%)
	Disagree	25 (47.2%)	13 (23.6%)
	Not Sure	8 (15.1%)	17 (30.9%)
	Agree	11 (20.8%)	13 (23.6%)
	Strongly Agree	2 (3.8%)	7 (12.7%)
	Total	53 (100.0%)	55 (100.0%)
2. Curriculum provision of enough time to teach all listening comprehension strategies needed	Strongly Disagree	15 (28.3%)	4 (7.3%)
	Disagree	24 (45.3%)	20 (36.4%)
	Not Sure	9 (17.0%)	13 (23.6%)
	Agree	4 (7.5%)	11 (20.0%)
	Strongly Agree	1 (1.9%)	7 (12.7%)
3. Classroom technological problems prevention from practicing listening activities	Strongly Disagree	2 (3.8%)	10(18.2%)
	Disagree	17 (32.1%)	20 (36.4%)
	Not Sure	2 (3.8%)	10 (18.2%)
	Agree	24 (45.3%)	12 (21.8%)
	Strongly Agree	8 (15.1%)	3 (5.5%)
4. Recommendation of adding four short authentic podcasts in a listening instructional supplementary pack	Strongly Disagree	1 (1.9%)	2 (3.6%)
	Disagree	4 (7.5%)	3 (5.5%)
	Not Sure	6 (11.3%)	11 (20.0%)
	Agree	29 (54.7%)	27 (49.1%)
	Strongly Agree	13 (24.5%)	12 (21.8%)

Table 6. Participants' responses to the second theme: podcasts criteria

Item	Response	participants	
		Instructors Frequency %	Students Frequency %
5. Students preference of short podcasts	Strongly Disagree	0 (.0%)	0 (.0%)
	Disagree	1 (1.9%)	0 (.0%)
	Not Sure	6 (11.3%)	1 (1.8%)
	Agree	27 (50.9%)	14 (25.5%)
	Strongly Agree	19 (35.8%)	40 (72.7%)
	Total	53 (100.0%)	55 (100.0%)
6. Podcasts mobility	Strongly Disagree	0 (.0%)	2 (3.6%)
	Disagree	0(.0%)	3 (5.5%)
	Not Sure	8 (15.1%)	15 (27.3%)
	Agree	31 (58.5%)	22 (40.0%)
	Strongly Agree	14 (26.4%)	13 (23.6%)
7. Flexibility of podcasts control functions	Strongly Disagree	0 (.0%)	0 (.0%)
	Disagree	1 (1.9%)	3 (5.5%)
	Not Sure	8(15.1%)	7(12.7%)
	Agree	24 (45.3%)	19(34.5%)
	Strongly Agree	20 (37.7%)	26 (47.3%)

Moving now to the second theme which is the participants' perception of podcasts criteria, table 6 shows similar perspectives were expressed by both groups of respondents. All participants preferred short podcasts (item 5, (50.9%) teachers and (72.7%) students respectively). Likewise, both groups of participants believe that podcasts' mobility features can help students listen to podcasts wherever and whenever they like (item 6, (58.5%) teachers and (40.0%) students respectively). In the same vein, out of 108 responses, (45.3%) teachers agreed and (47.3%) students strongly agreed that the podcasts' control functions such as rewind and pause encourage students to repeat and play them often.

Table 7. Participants' responses to the third theme: podcasts content

| Item | Response | participants | |
		Instructors Frequency %	Students Frequency %
8. Podcasts relation to students interest and proficiency level	Strongly Disagree	0 (.0%)	2 (3.6%)
	Disagree	0 (.0%)	3(5.5%)
	Not Sure	1 (1.9%)	4 (7.3%)
	Agree	29 (54.7%)	20 (36.4%)
	Strongly Agree	23 (43.4%)	26 (47.3%)
	Total	53 (100.0%)	55 (100.0%)
9. Podcasts relation to the curriculum units	Strongly Disagree	4 (7.5%)	4 (7.3%)
	Disagree	19 (35.8%)	11 (20.0%)
	Not Sure	6 (11.3%)	9 (16.4%)
	Agree	17 (32.1%)	16 (29.1%)
	Strongly Agree	7 (13.2%)	15 (27.3%)
10. Podcasts transcription potentiality of helping following native speakers' speed rate	Strongly Disagree	0 (.0%)	0 (.0%)
	Disagree	1 (1.9%)	0 (.0%)
	Not Sure	7 (13.2%)	6 (10.9%)
	Agree	32 (60.4%)	24 (43.6%)
	Strongly Agree	13 (24.5%)	25 (45.5%)
11. Variety of podcasts topics	Strongly Disagree	0 (.0%)	1 (1.8%)
	Disagree	0 (.0%)	1 (1.8%)
	Not Sure	2 (3.8%)	8 (14.5%)
	Agree	29 (54.7%)	23 (41.8%)
	Strongly Agree	22 (41.5%)	22 (40.0%)
12. Provision of various challenging podcasts	Strongly Disagree	0 (.0%)	0 (.0%)
	Disagree	2 (3.8%)	0 (.0%)
	Not Sure	8 (15.1%)	8 (14.5%)
	Agree	25 (47.2%)	25 (45.5%)
	Strongly Agree	18 (34.0%)	22 (40.0%)

Table 7 shows the 5 items of the last theme that tackled the podcasts' suggested content. Although they expressed different levels of agreement, Teachers (54.7%) agreed that podcasts should be related to students interest and proficiency level (item 8) and (47.3%) students strongly agreed. However, (35.8%) of the teachers disagreed to relate the podcasts content to the curriculum units while (29.1%) of the students agreed (item9). Furthermore, (N=32) teachers agreed and (N=25) students strongly agreed that listening to podcasts while reading the

transcription would help students follow the native speakers' speed rate (item 10). Responses to item 11 indicate both teachers (54.7%) and students agreed (41.8%) that various podcasts topics should be included such as short stories, talk shows or short facts from documentaries. Similarly, all participants agreed that students can improve their listening level when including various challenging podcasts that are above their current level (item12, (47.2%) teachers and (45.5%) students respectively).

3.5 Instructors' and the Students' Triangulated Responses

In Table 8, the mode was used to compare the instructors' and students' responses of the survey's three themes.

Table 8. The mode of instructors and students survey responses

Theme	Items	Mode
A need of A Listening Supplementary Pack	1. Sufficiency of curriculum audio tracks to improve listening comprehension strategies	2
	2.Curriculum provision of time to teach all listening comprehension strategies needed	2
	3.Classroom technological problems prevention from practicing listening activities	2
	4.Recommendation of adding four short authentic podcasts in a listening instructional supplementary pack	4
Podcasts Criteria	5.Students preference of short podcasts	5
	6.Podcasts mobility	4
	7.Flexibility of podcasts control functions	5
Podcasts Suggested Content	8.Podcasts relation to students interest and proficiency level	4a
	9.Podcasts relation to the curriculum units	4
	10.Podcasts transcription potentiality of helping following native speakers' speed rate	4
	11.Variety of podcasts topics	4
	12.Provision of various challenging podcasts	4

4a indicates multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown.

For the theme of a listening supplementary pack need, both parties expressed that 1) curriculum assigned audio tracks are not enough to improve students' listening comprehension strategies, 2) curriculum does not allow enough time to teach students all listening comprehension strategies they need, and 3) classroom technological problems prevent them from doing listening activities (items 1, 2, & 3). They also agreed that adding at least four short authentic podcasts in a listening instructional supplementary pack may encourage students to practice listening outside class and thus complement their learning (item 4).

For the podcasts criteria theme, teachers and students strongly agreed to prefer short podcasts and that the podcast' control functions encourage students to repeat and play them often (item 5 and 7). They also agreed on podcasts' mobility features. Surprisingly, all respondents agreed on all items of the podcasts suggested contents theme (items 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12).

5. Discussion

The aim of this study is investigating Saudi preparatory level students' and their teachers' perception about including podcasts materials in an extensive supplementary listening pack. The focus group and the triangulated online survey results are combined to answer the research main question which is:

To increase listening comprehension, what are the podcasts criteria and content topics suggested to be included in the EFL preparatory year supplementary pack?

Due to collecting data on the fourth Module of the academic year, most participants revealed teaching and studying level 104. As explained in the method section, after taking the placement test at the beginning of the academic year, student are instructed, tested then preceded to the next (CEFR) level.

As regards podcasts familiarity, teachers (75.5%), who most of them speak English as their first language, were more familiar with the podcasts than students (25.5%). Future studies can investigate particularly Saudi teachers' podcasts' familiarity. Despite the first language factor, this signifies ELI teachers' awareness of the newly emerged technological tools. This helps bridging the gap between them and their millennial students. It also reflects a change in the teachers' traditional image. They no longer grow gray standing in front of the class holding a textbook and chalks to explain their lessons. Instead they cope with the technological advancement of this digital age. Other studies on male participants may report different findings as this study was limited to female students. Accessing male participants is difficult in Saudi context due to social barriers.

Surprisingly, despite their experience, first language and level taught and studied at the ELI, instructors and students shared common beliefs. For example, they agreed that curriculum assigned audio tracks are insufficient to improve students' listening comprehension strategies. This concurs with Al.Bargi's (2013) findings that the ELI's beginner curriculum did not explicitly teach any listening skills or sub-skills. Similarly, participants reported that curriculum does not allow enough time to teach students all listening comprehension strategies they need. This echoes Alkaff's (2013) findings that assert the dissatisfaction of her study's participants with the long classes' hours and the intensive nature of the English course. Alkaff (2013) indicates that the KAU PY system demotivate students to practice the language as they are mainly concerned with ''passing exams and achieving high marks'' (p. 117).

Likewise, the result of classroom technological problems prevention from doing listening activities supports Elyas and Al Grigri (2014) findings that technology is an obstacle of teaching English in KSA. Furthermore, the enrichment and mobility features of the supplemental podcasts may justify the participants' positive attitude toward adding few short authentic podcasts in a listening instructional supplementary pack. Also, this pack can be designed as a practical application of Rosell-Aguilar (2007) podcasts taxonomy and Vandergrift and Goh's (2012) metacognitive approach of extensive listening.

In addition, the teachers' and students' preference of 1) using short podcasts with various difficulty levels, and 2) relating them to the students' interests, proficiency levels, and curriculum units echoes Ashraf, Noroozi, and Salami (2011), Cross (2013), and Yeh (2013) findings that the engaging various short podcasts prevent boredom. Also, this indicates that EFL podcasts listening materials should be connected to students' interest and lives otherwise learning loses its essence. Students' agreement to include challenging podcasts indicates their willingness to improve their English.

In brief, the results of this study revealed that teachers and students in the Saudi context have positive attitudes toward using podcasts listening supplementary pack. They recommend adding few short authentic podcasts in a listening instructional supplementary pack that include various challenging topics that are related to students' interest and levels.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

To conclude based on the premise that technological English learning tools can be used for learning, podcasts' literature reminds educators that such educational tools have a long way to rectify themselves. They are more like fashionable trends that by time, they rise and fall.

Since podcasts are among the powerful new tools that can enrich students' individualized learning experiences, it is hoped that this study will provide some valuable insights for the KAU (ELI's) students on how to equip themselves with technologically advanced channels to boost their ELL. Such insights will be beneficial once students actually decide to listen extensively to relevant materials that match their language learning needs. The researchers hope that the results of this study add to the growing literature of integrating podcasts to enhance extensive listening. Future studies may also design an extensive listening supplementary pack based on Vandergrift and Goh's (2012) metacognitive approach and test its suitability for application. Further local studies are required to investigate the perception of private and public schools populations.

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