

Saudi Female Students' and Teachers' Perception of Utilizing Podcasts to Improve Extensive Listening

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Abstract- Based on an exploratory sequential design, this study aimed at investigating the Saudi female students' and their teachers' perception of using podcasts to improve extensive listening skill. The study used Nvivo qualitative package and Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) Program to analyze data collected from 120 students and teachers. They were sampled from the four different proficiency levels of the English Language Institute (ELI) at King AbdulAziz University (KAU) in Saudi Arabia. First three focus group discussions are conducted using semi structured questions. Then, based on themes emerged from the literature review and the focus group discussions thematic analysis, an online close-ended survey was designed and piloted. The results are then triangulated to help understanding the research problem. The results revealed participants' positive perception about integrating podcasts to enhance extensive listening. The study also showed that teachers were more familiar with the podcasts than students. Such a study is important to raise undergraduate students' awareness of the necessity of increasing independent comprehensible authentic input outside classroom boundaries.

Keywords: comprehensible input, extensive listening, perception, podcast

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background into Listening

The history of language development has subscribed to the belief that a language cannot be spoken without improving the receptive skills specifically, the listening skill. Richards (2008) points out that its importance lies in the "input" which is perceived continuously. People listen daily to their family members, fellow workers, television shows or even radio broadcasts on the go. When communicating, people spend 50% of their time listening (Mendelsohn, 1994). The ability to receive and interpret spoken language may not only grant the success of effective communication but also broaden knowledge. Similarly, the classroom environment follows the same scenario as it is a microcosm of society. When inside the classroom, English Foreign Language (EFL) learners listen to their instructor to acquire knowledge and learn how to communicate.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Listening in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Context

The first channel of learning a foreign language is the ears (Scott & Yterberg, 1990) and beginner EFL learners receive massive new input that requires processing. Listening attentively, specifically in an EFL class, does not require just using the ears to comprehend the teacher's talk and teaching instructions. Instead, it necessitates mastering different systematic listening strategies to fully benefit from the received input and hence engage actively in the class. Like any other general learning strategies, listening comprehension strategies consist of techniques that learners need to utilize to assist them store and retrieve new information. Some of these strategies are listening for gist, activating schema to make predictions and taking notes to record information. Also, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and Vandergrift (1997) have categorized other varieties such as cognitive, metacognitive and social/affective strategies. Apart from classification, the involvement of all these active nonobservable comprehension processes makes listening skill complex and difficult to acquire (Rost, 2002), especially for lower level EFL learners.

Despite its importance, listening skill has gained momentum only after the emergence of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Morley, 2001). According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), questioning the theoretical assumption of both the Audiolingualism and the Situational Language Teaching methods in the United Kingdom and the United States in the mid 1960s led to their rejection. Eventually, CLT emerged to emphasize the importance of communicative proficiency; not only mastery of structures. Few years later, Krashen's (1982) ideas about the role of comprehensible input exposure in increasing language acquisition boosted the listening skill. Realizing the significant role of such an overlooked skill, literature started to grow rapidly to transfer listening skill theory into practice.

One major issue in the early listening skill research concerned the reasons behind the negligence of teaching listening. Echoing the Audiolingual method, Persulesy (1988), for instance, claims that language teachers tend to believe EFL learners acquire the listening skill naturally as they learn to speak. From teachers' perspective, this view is supported by Yildirim (2015) a recent empirical study in Turkey. It compared a group of pre-service and in-service teachers' perceptions of English learners' listening comprehension problems. The study's perception questionnaire revealed that the former group had more optimistic attitude as they thought learners experience problems less frequently. This lack of awareness of the existence of listening comprehension problems, unfortunately, leads some teachers to test students in listening instead of teaching them how to listen (Osada, 2004). That led Mendelsohn (2006) to propose changing the traditional name of "teaching listening" to "testing listening". In short, the listening skill has evolved overtime to be a core course in different language programs (Richards, 2005). However, the aforementioned reasons and many others still make listening comprehension problematic for both the EFL learners and instructors.

2.2. Listening Comprehension Problems in EFL Context

To solve EFL learners' barriers that hinder improving listening comprehension, a series of studies identified other potential problems. In listening for example, Underwood (1989), Bozorgian (2012), and Ulum (2015) found that the cultural differences, failure of recognizing repetition and example signals, speed of speech delivery, listeners' limited vocabulary, lack of note-taking skills, accents and content variety, and speech clarity cause serious problems for students. Similarly, students' lack of listening strategies knowledge, their insufficient exposure to the target language, and their low motivation are outlined to be main factors that determine listening comprehension problems (Field, 1998). Recently, these findings were complemented by Nowrouzi, Tam, Zareian, and Nimehchisalem's (2015) study that explored the listening comprehension problems among a number of Iranian tertiary level from four universities. The study draws attention to three often observed categories of listening problems which are perception, parsing, and utilization.

2.3. Extensive Listening in the EFL Context

Providing sufficient authentic input within the limited classroom time is one of the teachers' impossible missions (Yeh, 2013). This directed some scholars to call for students' active role in their own learning. That is, EFL students need "to evaluate their learning needs, to generate strategies to meet their needs and to implement those strategies" (Hacker, Dunlosky, & Graesser, 2009, p. 1).

To help students be more involved in enhancing their independent learning, recent studies have called for integrating extensive listening. It is defined as exposing students to massive amount of target language input through a personalized listening task that matches their interest and level (Yeh, 2013). Its main goal is improving automaticity in recognizing spoken text through enjoyment. Although this solution seems to be promising, some studies reported several challenges faced and suggested following a structured approach when implementing it. For example, Gamble et al. (2012) reported that 399 students in a Japanese university lack awareness of learning resources outside class and the self-confidence to use them autonomously and effectively to reflect their needs. They perceived that as the teacher's responsibility. To clearly interpret the quantitative data collected, interviewing students would have been more useful to clearly ascertain the students' reasons behind that belief.

In addition, as an answer to the call of using process-based approach to encourage students to have an active role in improving their listening skill outside class, 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 highlighting its effectiveness in promoting listening comprehensibility.

Notably, this indicates a need for applying a strategic approach to extensive listening tasks to help students infer information from whatever input received. Revolutionizing the traditional "product oriented" style of teaching listening and using a "process oriented" instruction may help the students overcome listening comprehension problems.

2.4. Introduction of Podcasts

Besides structured extensive listening, podcasts have also been overwhelmingly recommended as a means to provide several solutions that can surpass the traditional classroom instructions (Al Qasim & Al Fadda, 2013). This solution has been in the rise in many countries since its emergence the past twelve years.

According to Kavaliauskienė and Anusienė (2009) and Hasan and Hoon (2013), 'Podcasts' is a blend of the term 'pod' (i.e., from the Apple iPod) and 'broadcast' that became popular around 2004-2005. It became the "word of the year" in 2005, as decided by the editors of the Oxford American Dictionary (BBC News, 2005). Podcasts is defined as "an automatically-updated and -downloadable series of media files, such as short mp3 and video clips, through subscription to a Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feed" (O'Brien & Hegelheimer, 2007; Chan, Chi, Chin, & Lin, 2011; Al Qasim & Al Fadda, 2013).

The Edison research report (2015) indicates that podcasts now attract world-wide audiences because of the advances in automotive, bandwidth, and mobile technology across the globe. The report demonstrated that in 2015, awareness of podcasts among consumers has climbed steadily since its introduction and that affluent and well-educated males and females use podcasts equally. Consumers listen to audio podcasts in their cars even more than any other form of audio.

Going forward, this innovative learning tool has been popular in different fields. For instance, researchers have been interested in the educational potential of integrating podcasts with classroom instruction, as they are compatible with the movement of free, open-access, educational materials in Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and Open Educational Resources (OERs) (Rosell-Aguilar, 2015). Other scholars have highlighted the podcasts' features. Some of these features are: a) the portability feature as they can be listened to anywhere anytime (Evans, 2008; Lee, McLoughlin & Tynan, 2010; Lin, Zimmer, & Lee, 2013), b) automaticity of downloading contents to gadgets through a subscription feed (Min-Tun & Tzu-Ping, 2010; Cross, 2014), and, c) availability of rich extensive authentic sources of audio and video broadcasts to enhance learning beyond classroom restraints (Golonka, Bowles, Frank, Richardson & Freynik, 2014). Such features can only be convenient if people actually decided to make use of podcasts (Walls et al., 2010).

When it comes to teachers' and students' perceptions and attitudes toward integrating podcasts into instruction to improve students' listening skill, the EFL research literature has also abounded with evidence that document its effectiveness positive feedback. For instance, the studies of Kim, Rueckert, Kim, and Seo (2013), Li, Snow, Jiang and Edwards (2014) and

Akbari and Razavi (2015) reveal that students' and teachers' positive attitudes indicate podcasts' tendency to provide boundless opportunities, not only to acquire language skills but also to achieve a greater level of proficiency. Podcasts can facilitate language learning and challenge traditional teaching and learning methods if not revolutionize them.

2.5. Listening Problems in the Saudi Context

To shed light on the problem of extensive listening and limited chances to practice English in the EFL Saudi context, number of studies conducted revealed major findings. Such as, the various listening comprehension problems Saudi students encounter and the curriculums need to explicitly teach listening skills and sub-skills (Hamouda, 2013; Al-Bargi, 2013). Similarly, Al-Thiyabi's study (2014) identified ELI's preparatory year students' present needs and compared them with ELI's goals and objectives. The comparison revealed a gap that need to be bridged. Al-Thiyabi concluded that Saudi students do struggle badly with listening skills and their marks do not necessarily reflect high level of listening proficiency. Having also realized that, Al Fadda and Al Qasim (2013) attempted to investigate the influence of podcasting on the Saudi students' listening comprehension. In their study, the participants were 46 randomly selected female EFL students in King Saud University. The results indicated podcasts ability to enhance students' listening comprehension better than traditional classroom instruction. Furthermore, the attitudes of Foundation Year female students at the ELI in KAU towards learning English have been investigated. Alkaff's study (2013) indicates that students are willing to improve their English, despite demands on their time and limited opportunities to practice the language.

3. THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. The Input Hypothesis

The premise of extensive listening possible improvement through podcasts is framed within Krashen's hypotheses of monitor model (also known as the *comprehensible input* hypothesis). It proposes that in order to acquire a language, the input has to be beyond the acquirer's current competence level. That is "if the acquirer is at level i , then the input should contain $i+1$ " (Krashen, 1982, p. 32). Unlike the materials played to EFL learners in classroom, the online podcasts rich materials may moderately challenge the EFL students' current level and engage them critically with various topics. Mendelsohn (1995) explains that "teachers of listening [were] merely Krashen's (1985) providers of comprehensible input". They instruct students to listen to a curriculum assigned listening track and then answer related questions. Having realized this, large body of literature has been informed by aiding teaching with technology as the relation between the two is complex. Stockwell (2007) explains that "many pedagogies exist as a result of technology and many technologies exist as a result of pedagogies" (p. 118).

Besides the comprehensible input hypotheses, Krashen's 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 in spare time.

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

3.2 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 explore female students' and teachers' perceptions about utilizing podcasts to improve extensive listening comprehension skills outside classroom boundaries. The study attempted to answer the following main research question:

- 1- What beliefs do EFL students and teachers have about integrating podcasts into EFL curriculum, in order to improve extensive listening skill outside the class?

3.3. Rationale for the Study

In view of all that has been mentioned so far and to the authors' best knowledge, very few publications can be found in the literature that has investigated the association between extensive listening outside the classroom and the modified authentic podcasts in the Saudi context from the female students and teachers point of view. That is in spite of popularity of podcasts in Edison's report (2015) mentioned and the positive perception of integrating podcasts in EFL classes; there is still a need to develop it as a critical learning tool in the Saudi context. Therefore, the aim of this study is to add to the existing literature in the EFL field by investigating higher education students' perceptions of incorporating podcasts as an active learning tool to improve extensive listening. Since the effectiveness of integrating podcasts depends mostly on teachers' beliefs and learners' awareness of the new trends of ELL, the results of the study may inform other studies to investigate the effectiveness of podcasts as a learning tool on other EFL skills in public and private schools locally and globally. Likewise, this study can offer practical insights aiding in designing a much needed listening supplementary materials pack for EFL preparatory year students at (KAU).

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. The Study Design

To better investigate the Saudi female students' and teachers' perceptions of utilizing podcasts to improve extensive listening skill, an exploratory sequential design is used. According to Creswell (2008), it is a type of mixed method approach in which the qualitative interpretation of collected data builds to quantitative data collection and analysis mainly to build on the strengths of both data. In other words, the aim of the process is first exploring with a small sample then analyzing and ordering the results to form a quantitative data collection tool to

facilitate interpretation. The researchers triangulate by mixing both qualitative and quantitative data. This allows interacting and asking the participants about their opinions and thus identifying themes for the subsequent survey. This method was chosen because its nature has the ability to employ different theories for the sake of justification. It helps overcoming the limitations of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Also, it helps to understand first the participants' perceptions of podcasts listening and their particular descriptions of their views and experiences, then designing a survey based on that. The researchers believe 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.

4.2. Context and Participants

A total of (N=120) participants are sampled from different ELI's preparatory year students and English teachers from Women's main Campus and the Women's colleges. They are both branches at KAU in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. 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. Experienced Saudi and non Saudi teachers were sampled (N=57). As regards student participants (N=63), all start in ELI's program after taking a placement test. In each module, they are instructed for seven weeks, for 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.

4.3. Data Collection Tools and Procedures

4.3.1. Focus group

A focus group approach was chosen to obtain in-depth information on the participants' views and experience of podcasts and its potential use for extensive listening. For Mason (2002) focus group "interview methodology begins from the assumption that it is possible to investigate elements of the social by asking people to talk, and to gather or construct knowledge by listening to and interpreting what they say and to how they say it" (p. 225).

After obtaining the ethical approval, 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 researchers arranged with the ELI's coordination system to meet teachers willing to take part in the study. They contacted them via WhatsApp and email services. As regards the students, convenience or accidental sampling was used. According to Dawson, (2002) convenience sampling is more feasible when the aim is description rather than generalization. The

researchers discussed the questions with the students in Arabic to avoid the language barrier when expressing thoughts and views.

Preplanned semi structured questions were used. They were informed by five studies (Abdous, Facer, &Yen, 2012; Al-Bargi, 2013; Chang, & Millett, 2013; Alkaff, 2013; Al-Thiyabi, 2014). By relating to the themes emerged from the literature review, the researchers adopted and adapted various but related three main questions that were divided between the participants' groups accordingly. The questions helped exploring patterns in the participants' responses that thought to be shared by the population. Also, an optional contact details sheet was handed to participants willing to participate in the subsequent survey. Expert in the EFL field 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.

4.3.2. Web based survey

The surveys of the previous studies were neither compatible nor sufficiently comprehensive for some podcasts usage concerns in the Saudi context. Thus, an online survey was developed, based on the major themes emerged from the literature review and the thematic analysis of the three focus groups discussions. This can help eliminating researcher's bias and eliciting themes reflective of participant needs. The survey items were developed from previous studies and their findings (Sutton-Brady, et al., 2009; Istanto, 2011; Al Fadda, & Al Qasim, 2013; Yeh, 2013; Ulum, 2015; Lai, 2015) that tackled authentic podcasts perceptions and other various topics. Likewise, new items were added and the existing ones were modified based on the researchers' experience in teaching EFL students in the Saudi context.

Google Forms service was used to construct the survey. It consisted of an introduction and two parts addressing the research question. The header of the survey included an introduction and information about the study and its aim. The first part requested demographic information from participants, such as the academic ranking and years of teaching experience, and the level number in students' case. It also included a short paragraph describing the nature of podcasting and examples of websites to ensure respondents' familiarity with the concept. The second part included 8 close ended items on a five-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, strongly disagree) with 5 indicating participants' strong agreement and 1 indicating strong level of disagreement. For the theme of attitude toward extensive listening, 5 items were added and other 3 items were added for podcasts usefulness perception.

The survey was revised, edited and tested by experienced teachers. After rewording the unclear survey items, the researchers matched them against De Vaus's (2002) six points to evaluate them. They are 1) variation of responses, 2) clarity of survey items, 3) lack of redundancy, 4) scalability of questions design to form a scale, 5) reasons for participants' non response, and 6) acquiescent response set and the need to modify it. The survey links were

then texted via WhatsApp application to be piloted. The participants were 5 teachers and 5 students (N=10) that represent the same sample group. Most of the participants were the ones who shared their contacts in the focus group. Internal consistency was used to examine the reliability and consistency of the participants' survey responses Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for the entire teachers' and the students' online survey items using the SPSS package. The result of the instructors' responses showed adequate internal consistency (0.757) and the students' responses indicated (0.933). This reflects that the scale has an acceptable internal consistency.

The researchers then collected responses by using snowball sampling to avoid the estimate of bias. The links were sent to three instructors from different proficiency levels who provided their contact details during the focus group session. They were kindly requested to share the links and recommend them to other potential participants. As a precaution, the researchers also contacted the ELI's coordination management system from both Women's main Campus and the Women's Colleges through the Postgraduate Studies and Scholarships Unit. That helped collecting more survey responses by emailing and texting the survey links to participants respectively. Weekly reminders over a period of 3 weeks were sent. It is anticipated that participants completed the online survey in less than 10 minutes.

5. FINDINGS

The findings of the qualitative data and the quantitative data will be discussed as follows: 1) focus group questions; 2) the online survey; and 3) triangulated responses of the instructors and the students.

5.1. Focus Group Questions

After collecting the participants' demographic information, the participants were asked about; a) their beliefs of integrating podcast into an EFL curriculum to improve the students' listening skill outside the class b) how students improve their extensive listening skills, c) whether relevant listening materials that match the students' language learning needs were used. Table 1 illustrates the details of focus group participants. Recorded data collected from the three focused group discussions were transcribed and imported to the QSR International NVIVO software. Repeated, similar and different references were identified as nodes and reviewed. Nodes are "collection of references about a specific theme, place, person, or other area of interest" (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 609). The final themes were defined and named then compared to the ones emerged from the literature review. The final report was exported in an MS Microsoft word document to formulate the subsequent survey. The main themes are indicated in Table 2.

Table 1. Details of Focus group participants and their familiarity with the podcasts

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

As seen in table 1 most of the participants were teaching and studying Level 104 (5 participants) and only one participant was from Level 101. In addition, equal number of 3 instructors and 3 students indicated their familiarity with the podcasts. One of the instructors shared her knowledge of the BBC podcasts “the news podcast From BBC for example, I know you can use them offline as well as online”. Similarly, student (E.S.) from the students' first focus group stated that "you can download CNN app I think to listen".

Table 2. Themes emerged from the focus group thematic analysis

Main themes	Nodes	Sources	References
Attitude toward Extensive Listening	Saudi students lack of listening opportunities outside class	1	1
	Saudi students trials to improve listening outside class	2	3
	Students personalization of extensive listening through podcasts	3	8
	Students' Willingness to improve listening outside class	1	4
Perception of podcasts usefulness	Podcasts concerns	2	6
	Podcasts Usefulness Perception	3	31
	Listening comprehension problems	2	7
	Factors of positive perception	3	12
	Podcasts familiarity	2	12

As seen in the sources indicated in table 2, the three focus groups expressed various views toward extensive listening and podcasts perception. The following excerpts exemplify the common beliefs about students' personalization of extensive listening through podcast:

“They can listen to things they are interested in” (Instructors' focus group, Participant M.F.)

“I can listen before I sleep” (Students' focus group 1, Participant A.B.)

“I prefer for example listening while walking” (Students' focus group 2, Participant M.M.)

The participants also expressed their opinions on the usefulness of podcasts. Instructor M.F. explained "I think tuning your ears especially if you are listening to native speakers. What happens is that the classroom context is different. People usually deliberately speak very slowly, right? If you play some recorded materials. But if you talk about a particular podcast that is taken from a real life situation, it is usually how the language sounds. Especially from native speakers so I think this way they would understand better". Also, student M.A. from the students' first focus group highlighted the help of the rewind feature with the speed rate “It can help when someone talks to me in English I understand what they say. Some have fast accent so I can catch words”. Likewise, student B.S. from the students' second focus group added the possibility of learning new words “Yes, learning new words and I can hear someone pronounce it for me”.

5.2. The Online Survey

The researchers used Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS (Ver.19) to analyze the online survey responses of the closed-ended items. Descriptive statistical analysis of frequencies, percentages and mode were used to describe the demographic information such the students' ELI's proficiency level, the instructors' teaching experience at the ELI and the participants' familiarity with the term podcasts. Descriptive analysis helps in collecting information about the sample's present opinions about the Likert scale items.

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.

Table 4. Instructors' and students' level taught and studied at the ELI

			Proficiency level at the ELI				Total
			101	102	103	104	
Participants	Instructors	Frequency	0	8	11	34	53
		% of Total	.0%	7.4%	10.2%	31.5%	49.1%
	Students	Frequency	5	8	6	36	55
		% of Total	4.6%	7.4%	5.6%	33.3%	50.9%
Total	Frequency		5	16	17	70	108
	% of Total		4.6%	14.8%	15.7%	64.8%	100.0%

Over half of those surveyed were 104 students and teachers (64.8%) and only (4.6%) were 101 students as illustrated in table 4.

Table 5. 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 5, it is apparent that teachers (75.5%) were more familiar with the podcasts than students (25.5%).

Turning now to the second section which is the main one, its questions were grouped into two main themes. Each one shared related ideas. Item 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 were related to the participants' attitude toward extensive listening. Item 6, 7, and 8 tackled the participants' perception of podcasts usefulness. Similar perspectives were expressed in detail in table 6 by both groups of respondents.

Table 6. Participants' responses to the theme of attitude toward extensive listening

Item	Response	Participants			
		Instructors		Students	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1.Students practice of listening outside class	Strongly Disagree	4	7.5%	4	7.3%
	Disagree	10	18.9%	7	12.7%
	Not Sure	23	43.4%	7	12.7%
	Agree	5	9.4%	21	38.2%
	Strongly Agree	11	20.8%	16	29.1%
2.Teaching students the listening comprehension strategies	Strongly Disagree	0	0%	2	3.6%
	Disagree	2	3.8%	3	5.5%
	Not Sure	3	5.7%	7	12.7%
	Agree	29	54.7%	24	43.6%
	Strongly Agree	19	35.8%	19	34.5%
3.Students active role in improving listening sub skills	Disagree	1	1.9%	0	0%
	Not Sure	0	0%	9	16.4%
	Agree	17	32.1%	25	45.5%
	Strongly Agree	35	66.0%	21	38.2%
4. Students are assigned additional authentic listening activities	Strongly Disagree	3	5.7%	8	14.5%
	Disagree	17	32.1%	12	21.8%
	Not Sure	9	17.0%	10	18.2%
	Agree	18	34.0%	16	29.1%
	Strongly Agree	6	11.3%	9	16.4%
5.Students personalization of learning by podcasts listening outside class	Disagree	1	1.9%	3	5.5%
	Not Sure	1	1.9%	7	12.7%
	Agree	12	22.6%	20	36.4%
	Strongly Agree	39	73.6%	25	45.5%

Table 6 demonstrates participants' responses to the theme of attitude toward extensive listening. Different opinions were indicated when the participants were asked whether they think students practice listening outside class (item1), (38.2%) students agreed while (43.4%) teachers were not sure. Likewise, (45.5%) students agreed that students should have active role in improving listening sub skills (item 3) while (66%) teachers reported their strong agreement. Although they shared the same belief, their agreement level varied.

Surprisingly, despite their experience, first language and level taught and studies at the ELI, instructors and students agreed that; a) students are taught the listening comprehension strategies (item2, 54.7% and 43.6% respectively), and b) they should personalize their learning by podcasts listening outside class (Item 5, 73.6% and

45.5% respectively). Out of the 108 participants, only 18 teachers and 16 students reported that students at the ELI are assigned additional authentic listening activities (Item 4).

Table 7. Participants' responses to the theme of podcasts usefulness perception

Item	Response	Participants			
		Instructors		Students	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
6. Podcasts ability to provide a chance of listening to authentic materials provided by native speakers	Not Sure	4	7.5%	8	14.5%
	Agree	27	50.9%	30	54.5%
	Strongly Agree	22	41.5%	17	30.9%
7. Podcasts cultural appropriateness	Disagree	3	5.7%	2	3.6%
	Not Sure	14	26.4%	1	1.8%
	Agree	18	34.0%	28	50.9%
	Strongly Agree	18	34.0%	24	43.6%
8. Students willingness to download and listen to podcasts on mobiles in free time	Strongly Disagree	2	3.8%	3	5.5%
	Disagree	5	9.4%	4	7.3%
	Not Sure	26	49.1%	10	18.2%
	Agree	18	34.0%	15	27.3%
	Strongly Agree	2	3.8%	23	41.8%

Moving now to the second theme which is the participants' perception of podcasts usefulness, table 7 shows that out of 108 responses 27 instructors and 30 students believe that podcasts has the ability to provide a chance of listening to authentic materials provided by native speakers (item 6). Similarly, (34.0%) instructors and (50.9%) students agreed that podcasts are culturally appropriate (item7). Although both groups seemed to share common beliefs in most items, they reported different opinions in item 8. Teachers were not sure (49.1%) if students are willing to download and listen to podcasts on mobiles in free time. However, (41.8%) students expressed their willingness.

5.3. Triangulated Responses of the Instructors and the Students

Using the mode in table 8 to compare the instructors' and students' responses of the attitude toward extensive listening theme, both parties expressed their uncertainty about students practicing listening outside class (item1). Also, they both agreed that listening comprehension strategies are taught in EFL classes and that assigning students additional authentic listening activities may benefit the students (item 2, 4). They also confirmed that students should have

active role in improving listening sub skills as well as personalizing their learning by podcasts listening outside class (item 3, 5).

Table 8. The mode of instructors' and students' responses

Theme	Item No	Item	Mode
attitude toward Extensive Listening	1	Students practice of listening outside class	3
	2	Teaching students the listening comprehension strategies	4
	3	Students active role in improving listening sub skills	5
	4	Students are assigned additional authentic listening activities	4
	5	Students personalization of learning by podcasts listening outside class	5
podcasts usefulness perception	6	Podcasts ability to provide a chance of listening to authentic materials provided by native speakers	4
	7	Podcasts cultural appropriateness	4
	8	Students willingness to download and listen to podcasts on mobiles in free time	3
No of Participants			108

As regards the second theme, instructors and students strongly agreed that podcasts have the ability to provide a chance of listening to authentic materials provided by native speakers and that they are culturally appropriateness. Similarly, they doubted students' willingness to download and listen to podcasts on mobiles in free time. Overall, the results of the qualitative and quantitative data indicate that all participants welcome the idea of integrating podcasts to enhance extensive listening.

6. DISCUSSION

The aim of this study is investigating the students and the teachers' perception of utilizing podcasts to enhance extensive listening. The focused group and the triangulated online survey results are combined to answer the research main question which is:

1. What beliefs do EFL students and teachers have about integrating podcasts into EFL curriculum, in order to improve extensive listening skill outside the class?

Most of the participants were teaching and studying Level 104. This can be due to the time of data collection. As explained in the method section, after taking the placement test at the beginning of the academic year, students are instructed, tested and then proceed 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. 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.

In addition, the instructors and students reported their uncertainty about students practicing listening outside class. Although the level of uncertainty may vary since it is hard to measure a belief through a scale such as the one used in this study, this finding contradicts their agreement to assigning students additional authentic listening activities to complete outside class. The claim of assigned tasks can indicate their practice of extensive listening. One teacher in the focus group asserted that "listening is the most neglected skill. People don't spend that much time and energy to listening". This confirms Alkaff's (2013) findings that Saudi students have limited chances of practicing English outside the classroom boundaries. Her study revealed a need for an English speaking environment/community to help students listen and practice the language. Due to time constraints, the researchers were limited to focus group interviews and a survey. Future experimental studies may compare forced and voluntary students' results after listening extensively to podcasts in free time. This may indicate whether voluntary students' practice extensive listening.

By the same token, both group of respondents agreed that students are taught the listening comprehension strategies. This is sharp contrast to earlier findings by Al-Bargi (2013) in which the Regression Analysis revealed that beginner curriculum did not explicitly teach any listening skills or sub-skills as 122 students were not able to improve their listening ability. This may reflect the current survey respondents misunderstanding of the various listening strategies classified by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and Vandergrift (1997). To help the students participated in the study to fully comprehend the various active non observable comprehension processes, classification of cognitive, metacognitive and social/affective strategies can be included in a listening supplementary pack. They can be explained to be practiced outside class instead of the accustomed multiple choice questions (MCQs) or the linked categories in listening activities.

This study also revealed the participants' confirmation of students' active role in improving listening sub skills as well as personalizing their learning by podcasts listening outside class (item 3,5). This indicates practical application of Krashen's theory as well as the participants' awareness of the independent learning role. That is the comprehensible input can be received outside class from digital applications and tools instead of relying on teachers as the only knowledge providers or transmitters. Also, these findings confirm prior studies that have noted the usefulness of podcasts (Rahimi & Katal, 2012; Kim, Rueckert, Kim, & Seo, 2013; Li, Snow, Jiang & Edwards, 2014) such as podcasts tendency of providing students with a chance of listening to authentic materials recorded by native speakers. This is consistent with Akbari's and Razavi's (2015) study that confirmed the positive effects of authentic materials in improving students' listening skills.

In short, the results of this study revealed that teachers and students in the Saudi context have positive attitudes toward using podcasts to extensively listen to authentic materials. The researchers hope that the results of this study contribute to the growing body

of literature aimed at integrating podcasts to enhance extensive listening. Since KAU's ELI was accredited in 2013 for five years by the U.S.-based Commission for English-Language Program Accreditation (CEA), this study's results may provide practical insights to design a much needed listening supplementary materials pack to meet students' need to improve extensive listening metacognitive strategies. Such curriculum design could be justified as an enhancement to the EFL classes' quality. Future studies may also investigate integrating flipped learning to encourage L2 listeners to personalize their independent learning through podcasts. The Blackboard platform or the Edmodo learning management system can be the means of materials delivery.

7. CONCLUSION

The study investigated the perception of Saudi female students and their teachers regarding integrating podcasts to enhance extensive listening. The study was conducted at the ELI at KAU in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The results of the exploratory sequential design revealed that most participants had a positive perception toward using podcasts to improve extensive listening regardless of their first language, the ELI's levels studied or taught, and teaching experience. The findings also revealed that teachers were more familiar with the podcasts than students. These results are consistent with other studies that investigated the same perception.

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