

# The Student-Created Podcast to Facilitate EFL Speaking: A Case Study in Online Environment

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## ABSTRACT

Online learning is a growing movement of the twenty first century as well as the development of ICT (Information and Communication Technology). The online learning also has been used in second language learning, especially English. Several studies have been implemented concerning how the online learning is conducted. Podcast is part of ICT which can be used as a tool in teaching English. However, the studies investigating how the teachers use this technology in online environments are scarce. Therefore, this study is conducted to figure out the students' perception towards the student-created podcast as an active learning approach to promote extensive speaking practice in English online environment. This study involved one hundred twenty students in Politeknik Elektronika Negeri Surabaya as participants. The data collected from online course observation and questionnaire were analysed. The study showed that the student-created podcast is considered to be an innovative learning strategy in second language learning. The students had positive attitude towards podcast. The effectiveness of podcast can be established under the careful supervision in lesson sequence from teacher to deliver materials through podcast. The online interaction in podcast gives the students more exposure on extensive speaking practice. Further, it is also recommended to find out teachers' perception toward the use of podcast in language learning, so we can get clear picture on how podcast can enhance the learning activities particularly in online learning environment.

**Keywords:** *English teaching and learning, ICT, podcast, speaking*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is widely known that the students should have English language competencies to success in their discipline (Richards, 1980). Mastering speaking skill is important in language learning since it enables people to send and receive information or messages to others. The student is considered to be successful if he can deliver a conversation both inside and outside the classroom. (Widiastuti, Mukminatien, Prayogo & Irawati, 2020) stated that a good learning atmosphere should be promoted to arouse students' interest to participate in learning speaking. Appropriate actions should be taken by the teachers to assess the students' abilities properly.

The use of technology is considered to be one of the alternatives to facilitate new ways of teaching and learning process (Drent & Meelissen, 2008). Education

nowadays offers Information and communications technology (ICT)-based learning interactions by using various ICT learning resources and other media. Research shows that the use of technology in teaching has a positive effect on teacher creativity. To explore their creativity, teachers use various technological tools in their teaching practices including laptops, computers, LCD projectors, recorders, the Internet, power points, and videos. The use of the internet and audio-visual material is one of the most common communication media used in class. The learning process is seen to have innovative value because it brings new atmosphere in the teaching and learning process that is different from ordinary face-to-face learning. In addition, it turns out to lead the students to set independent learning.

In this case, teachers are expected to develop students' technological literacy. Particularly in ESP

(English for Specific Purposes), the need for incorporating ICT into classroom practices should be conducted by including written texts in print and electronically along with visuals, graphics audio materials. It can be seen how language pedagogy is possibly to be delivered in online platform by requiring the teachers to integrate ICT into ESP.

The use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach has been used to fulfil the target of communicative competence. In this case, students not merely master the language, but they have to be able to use the language itself in different situations. The students are supposed to have the ability to speak up clearly based on the topic and to respond well during the conversation. The use of podcast in online learning will surely need to be figured out in developing students' communicative skills.

Some research and studies have been conducted to find out how the podcast can be implemented to facilitate EFL (English Foreign Language) speaking in online environment for more impactful learning. There are several things to be pointed out, such as students' preferences and how they engage with material for learning. Darwis (2016) investigated how the students bring positive attitude towards the use of podcast in learning English. Most of the students consider that the use of podcast could give more exposure in practicing listening skill. Their listening skills can be upgraded by listening to the content of podcast and pronunciation. On the other hand, the availability of podcast gives an ease for students to get access from internet. However, some of students encountered some problems to choose the variety of podcast on their preferences. Li (2009) stated that most of the research conducted on podcast give some benefits into teaching and learning English. Although the use of podcast is considered to be effective in teaching and learning English, further study is needed to be examined. In this study, the writer examines the use of podcast to facilitate EFL (English Foreign Language) speaking in online environment. In this case, the students' attitude toward the use of podcast and the problems encountered by the students in using technology in learning process are further investigated.

The study is conducted at Surabaya State Electronics Polytechnic (PENS). In this polytechnic, ESP course-Bahasa Inggris is offered in 4 semesters with two credits for each. An interview with some students was also conducted to gain information about their opinions in using podcast to practice speaking skill in online learning. This will be a topic that will be examined to answer the title of this research. The contribution of the study is to provide better understanding of how ICT learning resources, like podcast can be implemented to facilitate speaking practice in online environment.

## **2. METHOD**

The study was conducted using a case study. It is intended to describe social phenomena as they occur naturally. The stages employed in this study were those of the case study research stages suggested by (Yin, 2009) that involved six stages of planning, designing, preparing, collecting, analysing, and reporting.

The topic of this study is the implementation of podcast to facilitate speaking in online environment. The subjects were the students of Politeknik Elektronika Negeri Surabaya on the third semester. 120 students were selected in this case study. Most of the students have digital literacy to use digital technologies like internet platforms, social media and mobile devices. Some of them have practical skills in using technology to create podcast media in online environment. However, some others are not familiar to create and use podcast before. The data collection and analysis were conducted from September to November 2020. To obtain a thorough description of the teacher' and students' experience in the implementation of online learning, the qualitative design approaches for triangulation was employed.

Questionnaires consisting of close-ended questions were distributed to the students to gain information about the students' opinion toward the use of podcast to facilitate their speaking practice in online learning. Further, the students' motivation and interests were also figured out. The questions in questionnaire vary from course design, teacher's roles and teacher-student and student-student interactions. The questionnaire consisting of open-ended questions was also distributed to the teacher. The triangulation for the data was collected from the questionnaire, observation of the online teaching and learning activities during online class and interview. The data were analysed using the content analysis technique. The result of questionnaires was classified and analysed so that conclusions can be drawn. Data from the online observation and document analysis were assembled, coded, compared, and interpreted. To strengthen the study, the data was collected from the interviews. Finally, conclusions were drawn based on the research questions.

## **3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***3.1. Data from Questionnaire***

English course in Politeknik Elektronika Negeri Surabaya consists of 15 online meetings and the time allotment is 100 minutes. The teacher and students usually use web address <https://ethol.pens.ac.id/> , google meet, zoom or other learning platform to conduct online meetings. The implementation of online learning in the teaching of English as a foreign language at

Politeknik Elektronika Negeri Surabaya is described and discussed as follows.

The data describing the students' perceptions toward the use of podcast in learning English were analysed from the questionnaire. The questionnaire for the students with 15 close-ended questions was analysed by using Likert Scale. The scale can be used as a tool to measure students' attitude or opinions about the use of podcast in speaking practice. The students as respondents will choose whether they agree or disagree regarding the statements in questionnaire. Findings for the Likert scale questionnaire finding out students' perception toward the use of the podcast implementation during online lesson were quite positive. In general, most of students showed a positive attitude toward the use of podcast for practicing speaking in online environment. It is due to the practical use of podcast which is relatively easy to be constructed and implemented in the classroom context. On the other hand, it is considered to be students' choice since it can provide the comfort and time convenience. Students' positive attitude have been influenced by several reasons, such as the variety of content in podcast, the creativity to create a podcast based on their preferences, the virtual interaction during online lesson, and practical use of podcast.

However, the problems encountered by the students in using podcast were also found in the questionnaire. Small number of students dealt with the lack of understanding in accessing and downloading the podcast information. Few of them did not have any experience before to use and create the podcast. They did not know that it is available and accessible on internet. Some others encountered internet connection problem that might disrupt the download process. It turns out that not every student has good internet capability in their places.

Meanwhile, the questionnaire with open-ended questions was also given to teacher prior to classroom observation. This questionnaire was distributed to figure out the teacher's insights about the strategies in teaching speaking particularly in online environment. The data from questionnaire was used to support the data found in classroom observation. The response from questionnaire is somewhat similar to the class observation which shows the series of teaching stages delivered by the teacher in virtual class. There are six activities to be carried out in teaching and learning process covering the pre, whilst and post activity, such as explain, explore, practice, presentation, feedback and reflection. It is in line with Black et al., 2008, where rules and procedures should be employed because classroom management in online education is the main point to determine the quality of online instruction.

Classroom management is a crucial aspect in language teaching and learning. Teacher should be

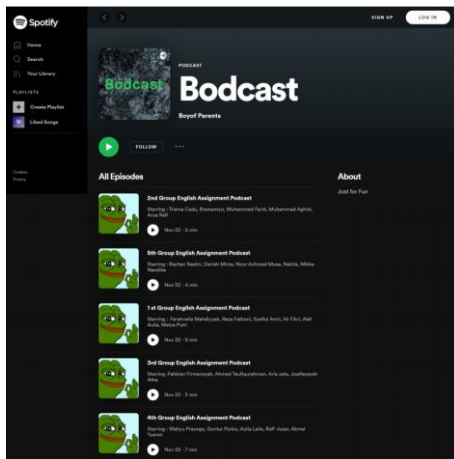
responsible to bring this matter whenever he conducts the teaching learning process. The learning process in online environment surely brings a challenge on how the classroom management is supposed to be delivered like it used to be in offline context. By doing so the teacher can make the best out of podcast media based on the careful planning before. For the students, classroom management brings a clear picture on the lesson structure and learning objectives. The students should know that their activities and actions should be in line with the established lesson structure. It surely assists the students to measure their ability to cope with the issue regarding the use of podcast in EFL Speaking in online environment.

### ***3.2. Data from Observation in online teaching and learning activities***

The observation during online teaching and learning activities showed the two-way communication not only teacher and student, but also student and student. The use of podcast in online learning can create an engaging learning environment which trigger the discussion among the students. In this case, teacher is not the only one who talks in class. The students can get involve by asking questions or giving responses about particular topic in their podcasts. They have chance to give their opinion over debatable issues with their friends in podcast group.

As stated by Widiastuti (2017), there are three points to promote meaningful learning, such as lesson plan, assessment, and teacher feedback. These characteristics were implemented by the teachers during the online learning process. In the beginning of the class, the teacher prepared lesson sequence emphasizing the language learning processes. The speaking lesson plan is intended to promote an interaction between teacher and student. There are six procedures to be carried out in teaching and learning activity, such as explain, explore, practice, presentation, feedback and reflection. It is also in line with the model of teaching implementation in speaking which focuses on series of learning activities. The role of teacher in each stage should be taken into account to facilitate practice and learning, to provide input and feedback (Goh and Burns, 2012). In this learning context, first of all, the teacher will show the power point slides and model target text from audio podcast in internet sources such as British Council. In this case, the teacher explored by highlighting typical text structure and language features from the text. After that, the teacher divided the class into groups and assigned the students to share and exchange ideas in English. The students then delivered their presentation or discussion and recorded in group. The recording was shared with the teacher and the rest of the class in the form of podcast lists in Spotify. The teacher gave some feedback regarding the video using

online learning platform. The compilation of students' audio podcast during online learning appears in figure 1.



**Figure 1** The Students' Online Podcast 4. findings and discussion

The scoring criteria by Heaton, 1990 was used by the teacher to assess students' speaking skill during online podcast. There are several aspects to be seen in their speaking, such as accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. It can be seen that assessment is planned well along with instruction. The teacher found out that the students were likely to have few numbers of errors to speak up in audio podcast. They can deliver ideas as naturally as possible since they had already prepared the script before recording the audio podcast. They had much exposure to practice with friends in group and to use communication strategies to make their English sound natural. Based on teacher's feedback, students reflected on their performance and made some improvement on the next podcast. From the daily observation, the teacher gave exposure for developing students' speaking skills. The students were asked to record themselves while having conversations with their friends in group. In this case, conversation is important since it provides opportunities for the students like they used to have to perform in real life. The data analysis results showed that, students' participation in the teaching and learning activities was quite high (90% from 120 students submitted the assignments). This is a good start since the students were quite motivated in holding conversation using foreign language in online learning mode.

### 3.3. Data from Interview

The findings from questionnaire and observation were also supported by the data from interview. The interviews were conducted with 12 students as sample. In this case, the questions in interview ranged from the students' perception toward the use of podcast in practicing speaking skill particularly the usability of podcast and how podcast could facilitate speaking practices during online learning.

The data from interview indicates that the students were quite satisfied with the use of podcast as one of the alternatives in practicing their speaking skills. It can be used to facilitate interaction with their classmates. Although some of the students were not familiar with how to create and operate podcast in learning process before, they could have some time to learn based on step-by-step guide from the teacher. Therefore, the use of podcast is relatively easy since at the beginning of class, the teachers introduce the learners with basic use of technology. The teacher also showed some resources about podcast information. On the other hand, they were quite highly motivated to hold the English conversation via podcast.

Podcast gives an alternative to accommodate the students to speak up and interact with others in online platform like they used to have in face-to-face learning mode. The use of podcast requires the students to be more active in participating in discussion forum. It is an evidence of how two-way communication can take a place among the students in online learning. However, some of the students have seen that they might need some time to learn how to familiarize themselves with podcast. Thus, the primary concern is how the teacher makes the best use of this podcast to facilitate speaking especially in online context and to encourage the students to get used to speak up in audio podcasts.

## 4. CONCLUSION

This literature review has shown that the implementation of podcast to facilitate the students in practicing their speaking skill is quite effective. Teacher can accommodate the students' needs to develop their speaking practices in online mode with the use of podcast. The use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) can assist the teacher to make speaking practices more meaningful especially in online mode. It can provide opportunities for the teacher to deliver two-way communication for teacher-student and student-student. The implementation of podcast can be used as one of methods in teaching speaking since it can encourage the students to engage with class discussion. However, in this case the effectiveness of podcast can be established under the careful supervision in lesson sequence from teacher to deliver materials through podcast. The teacher is somewhat the key indicator to integrate the technology in teaching and learning process. The teacher should set a careful plan on how to teach the students deliver their ideas in spoken language through podcast. The lesson plan should address the key language learning process, such as the input, interaction, accuracy and fluency development. Further studies are required to figure out what the learners and teachers need to do to get more exposures on speaking practices so they can make the best out of podcast. In addition, it is important to find

out the teachers' perception toward the use of podcast in language learning, so we can get clear picture on how podcast can enhance the learning activities particularly in online learning environment where the continuous interaction among the participants rarely happen.

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