

**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
EDUCATION, PSYCHOLOGY
AND COUNSELLING
(IJEPC)**www.ijepe.com**THE EFL JORDANIAN UNDERGRADUATES' ATTITUDE
TOWARDS THE USE OF PODCASTS IN TEACHING SPEAKING
SKILLS IN JORDAN**Abdel Fattah Kamel Alshawabkah^{1*}, Ahmad Taufik Hidayah Abdullah²¹ Faculty of Languages and Communication, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin
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Article Info:**Article history:**

Received date: 29.03.2023

Revised date: 15.04.2023

Accepted date: 17.05.2023

Published date: 12.06.2023

To cite this document:

Alshawabkah, A. F. K., & Abdullah, A. T. H. (2023). The EFL Jordanian Undergraduates' Attitude Towards The Use Of Podcasts In Teaching Speaking Skills In Jordan. *International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling*, 8 (50), 169-180.

DOI: 10.35631/IJEPC.850012

This work is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)**Abstract:**

Undoubtedly, English plays a vital role in ensuring flawless communication and interaction amongst people. Accordingly, this study aims at measuring the EFL Jordanian undergraduates' attitude towards the use of podcasts in teaching speaking skills in Jordan. It also aims to identify the role of demographic information (Gender and Academic Year) of EFL Jordanian undergraduate students. In order to achieve such aims, this study adopted a quantitative research design by distributing a questionnaire. Accordingly, 284 questionnaires were analyzed. The findings concluded that students have positive attitude to improve their speaking skill with the help of podcast use. In addition, it is highlighted that this kind of use for podcast can improve vocabulary, pronunciation difficulties, grammar differences, listening difficulties, and other skills. It also found that students are significantly affected by the gender and academic year as the P.value is below 0.05. This study recommends conducting further studies focusing on the causes of speaking difficulties.

Keywords:

EFL Jordanian Undergraduates' Attitude, the Use of Podcasts, Teaching Speaking Skills, Jordan

Introduction

English has grown to become the most spoken language on the planet (Kortmann, 2020; Naser, & Hamzah, 2018, 2022; Rao, 2019). As the world has grown more interconnected, new opportunities for information and knowledge-exchange have also emerged. Owing to the English language's prominence globally, it is seen as the primary means for undertaking long-distance collaboration (Krajka, & Gabryś-Sławińska, 2022; Kortmann, 2020; Rao, 2019). Thus, in today's competitive world, the success of individuals and countries is partially influenced by their capacity to communicate with others, which is often through English. Indeed, an individual can fit in more workplace contexts and dynamics when they are proficient in English (Aburous, & Kamla, 2022). That is to say, any subtle or complicated challenges that prevent learners' from undertaking effective English learning language can also impede the individual and national benefits associated with adopting a globalized language (Aburous, & Kamla, 2022; Kortmann, 2020; Rao, 2019).

Due to the linguistic differences between Arabic and English (Abdo & Breen, 2010) as well as the fact that English is taught as a school subject with an average of four 45-minute periods per week, Jordanian EFL undergraduates faced a variety of difficulties with spoken English, such as making syntactic mistakes in their speeches and some other difficulties (Huwari, 2019). (Bataineh, et al., 2020). Additionally, there appears to be a consensus among scholars in the Jordanian EFL environment that there is a relative lack of study on the challenges Jordanian learners have while speaking that these students experience substantial difficulties in oral communication (Bataineh, et al., 2017; Yaseen, 2018). It was argued that it is crucial to give students enough chances to improve their speaking abilities. Additionally, EFL speaking instruction in Jordan is conventional and more teacher-centered than learner-centered because students are rarely given the chance to speak in authentic communicative situations or for genuine purposes in a classroom setting (Bataineh, et al., 2020).

The use of technology to improve English speaking, which has little focus in Jordan, is another issue that the current study has to address. The use of technology in the classroom and outside of it has become essential to the learning process. Almost all language lessons incorporate technology in some capacity. The use of technology has enhanced language learning. Technology allows for the customization of classroom activities, which enhances language acquisition. Technology is playing a bigger role in helping teachers support their students' language learning (Al-qadi, & Naser, 2022; Alzobidy, & Naser, 2022; González-Lloret, Kim, 2020; 2020; Tondeur, et al., 2019).

Technology equipment tools are regarded as a key teaching tool in language classes provided teachers have easy access to them, are properly prepared, and have some degree of curriculum freedom, according to Becker (2000). Computer technology is viewed as a crucial component of providing a high-quality education by many teachers. Bull and Ma (2001) assert that a wealth of resources is available to language learners thanks to technology. Harmer (2007) and Genç lter (2015) stressed that in order for language learning to be successful, teachers must help students select appropriate computer-based activities. Learners can profit from the use of appropriate technology materials, claim Clements and Sarama (2003). Computer-based language exercises, according to Harmer (2007), enhance students' cooperative learning.

Technology is a helpful tool for pupils. For kids, technology must be a critical component of the educational process. So that students can use technology to improve their language skills, teachers should model how to integrate technology into the curriculum (Costley, 2014; Murphy, et al., 2003). Technology has the potential to improve student collaboration. Cooperation is one of the most important tools for learning. Students work together to design projects and read the work of their classmates to share knowledge (Keser, Huseyin, & Ozdamli, 2011). Accordingly, the objective of this study is to identify the role of demographic information (Gender and Academic Year) of EFL Jordanian undergraduate students. Additionally, to investigate EFL Jordanian undergraduates' attitude towards the use of podcasts in teaching speaking skills in Jordan.

Literature Review

Podcast as a Tool in Foreign Language Teaching

The term "podcast" is a mashup of the concepts "iPod" and "broadcast." A popular "brand name" for the "portable MP3 player from Apple" is "iPod" (Dudeney & Hockly, 2007). When downloaded, podcasts can also be listened to at any time and from anywhere. However, the term "podcast" is frequently used to describe any online media file that is distributed without regard to whether it is a part of a series or if it supports RSS subscriptions.

According to Dudeney and Hockly (2007), podcasts, including wikis and blogs, are thought of as examples of social apps. These three technologically based teaching aids have diverse qualities, but when it comes to using them in the classrooms, they have a few things in common:

1. These computer tools can be created and used by teachers and students.
- 2- These tools can let students connect with other learning communities, such as a class in another nation.
3. The students have the option to individually or collectively plan the subject and generate some suggestions.

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories have emphasized the value of accessing authentic resources while learning and teaching a language in a communicative setting. To create and use podcasts and include them into language teaching and learning, teachers and students need not require specialist technological expertise or computer operating abilities. Podcasts can only be made and listened to using a computer equipped with a microphone and an MP3 player.



Figure 1 Taxonomy Uses regarding Podcasting for Learning a Language (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).

Podcast as a Language Learning Material

Being able to connect with the global community needs the ability to speak English in this global age (Samad & Fitriani, 2016). A variety of tools have been created to help non-native speakers learn a language, including the podcast, which offers resources for language learning (Samad, et al., 2017). It is the process of posting an audio or video file on the internet for communication or educational purposes, as was previously indicated.

Users do not need to register or pay any fees to download it. They can select from a number of suggested discussion topics when they want to learn more. The podcast, according to Rosell-Aguilar and Fernando (2015, p. 32), "was a comfortable and easy to use format." As was already mentioned, the podcast is undoubtedly simple to access, appealing, and encourages students to learn. Teachers might therefore use the podcast to assist students in improving their communication abilities. The definition of using podcast media is based on the remarks made by a range of subject-matter specialists. Additionally, podcasts are thought to be a way to improve not just listening skills but also other language abilities like pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and learning experiences (Chan, Chi, & Lin, 2011). Podcasts, according to Fitria et al. (2015), can aid students in improving their speaking abilities. One of the unique and alternative resources that might aid students in improving their speaking and comprehension skills is the podcast.

Methodology

The research methodology design involves some types of inquiries in order to draw the directions of the processes and procedures of the study within quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method (Creswell, 2014). The current investigation's procedures and data will also be shown through the research design. This study uses a quantitative research approach, which entails gathering or analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data in one study (Creswell,

2012). The main justification for this strategy is that it combines the advantages of historically dichotomized quantitative and qualitative research procedures to produce an in-depth and systematic assessment of the challenges at hand that cannot be achieved by using just one of the two approaches (Creswell, & Clark, 2017). A questionnaire was used in this study to gather information from the participants. One of the many methods for gathering information from people (or responses to our study questions) is through questionnaires, which are often composed of direct or indirect questions (Gillham, 2000).

More specifically, this study adopted quantitative research design using a questionnaire among EFL Jordanian undergraduates identifying their attitude towards the use of podcasts in teaching speaking skills in Jordan. The target population is Jordanian undergraduates. The study sample size is 284. The five-stage Likert scale was adopted to correct the study measures, where each of its items is given one score out of its five degrees (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree), and it is represented numerically (5, 4, 3, 2, 1). The following scale (see Figure (2) was adopted (Naser, 2023) for the purposes of analyzing the results as shown by using the following equation:

$$\frac{\text{The upper limit of alternative} - \text{the limit minimum for alternatives}}{\text{The number of levels}} = \frac{5 - 1}{3}$$

Figure 2: Measurement Scale Of The Questionnaire

Analysis and Discussion

Demographic Information

Demographic Information of Respondents

This section consists of demographic information of respondents including gender and academic year. Table 1 illustrates the demographic information.

Table 1: Demographic Information Of Respondents (N=284)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent (100%)
Gender of Respondents	Male	156	54.9
	Female	128	45.1
Academic Year of Respondents	Third Academic Year	108	38.0
	Fourth Academic Year	176	62.0

As indicated in Table 1, the majority of the respondents were male comprising (54.9%), while the remaining are female (45.1%). Regarding academic years of the respondents, the majority of the respondents are within fourth academic year with the percentage of (62%), followed by the third academic year being (38%).

Table 2: The Attitudes Of EFF Undergraduates Regarding The Use Of Podcast For Speaking Skill Improvement

Questionnaire Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
I try to imitate English language speakers as much as possible being helped by Podcast	284	4.33	.684	High
I want to improve speaking skill when speaking English with using Podcast	284	4.27	.776	High
Podcast is much more important than learning speaking using traditional ways	284	4.25	.628	High
Learning speaking skill of English through Podcast is as same as learning vocabulary and grammar.	284	4.24	.645	High
Podcast helps in acquiring fluency speaking skill in English	284	4.20	.556	High
Podcast made me get more progress in the speaking of English.	284	4.17	.806	High
Podcast allows me to achieve one of my personal goals which is to acquire proper speaking skills and preferably be able to pass as a near-native speaker of English.	284	4.14	.881	High
I will be able to speak a foreign language with a good accent with Podcast	284	4.12	.612	High
I believe more emphasis should be given to proper spoken language in English class with the use of Podcast	284	4.06	.357	High
Podcast improves other language learners e.g., pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and such other language skills	284	4.02	.436	High
I believe I can improve my pronunciation skills when I speak English using Podcast	284	4.01	.782	High
Podcast allows me to speak as native as possible when speaking in English	284	3.93	.737	High
Valid N (listwise)	284			

This table presents the descriptive statistics of the entire questionnaire items arranged descendingly based on the mean. The following item “I try to imitate English language speakers as much as possible being helped by Podcast” has the highest mean being (4.33) and the standard deviation of (.684) ranked to be (high). It is followed by this item “I want to improve speaking skill when speaking English with using Podcast” with the mean of (4.27) and the

standard deviation of (.776) ranked to be (high). Such responses of the questionnaires' participants indicate that EFL Jordanian students believe that podcast is really important in improving speaking skills of EFL learners.

In addition, table 2 presents the lowest means based on the participants' point of view. It shows that this item "Podcast allows me to speak as native as possible when speaking in English" has the lowest mean being (3.93) with the standard deviation of (.737) ranked to be high. It is preceded by this item "I believe I can improve my pronunciation skills when I speak English using Podcast" with the mean of (4.01) and the standard deviation of (.782). Such responses indicate that even though podcast helps in improving EFL speaking skill, it does not always allow students to be as same as native speakers. In addition, it confirms that such podcast can improve speaking skills of English. However, pronunciation can be still a challenge for EFL Jordanian students. It is seen that attitudes of EFL Jordanian undergraduates are positive towards acquiring high speaking proficiency level they can be benefited by podcast. Indeed, this is agreed by previous studies (e.g., Chan et al., 2011; Denysenko, 2019; Edirisingha et al., 2007; Elekaei et al., 2020). Accordingly, it is important to enhance all of the following points based on their views: enhancing the possibility of speaking as native when they speak in English, improving speaking skill when speaking English, acquiring proper speaking skills and preferably be able to pass as a near-native speaker of English, improving their pronunciation skills when they speak English, enhancing the active English language use in Jordanian EFL classes.

Inferential Analysis

This section discusses the inferences that may be gleaned from the data. It identifies the role of demographic information on the EFL Jordanian undergraduates' attitudes of using podcast.

Table 3: Uses Regression Analysis To Discern The Relationship Between Demographic Information And Efl Jordanian Undergraduates' Attitude Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.058	.092		33.305	.000
	Academic Year	.321	.024	.629	13.658	.000
	Gender	-.052-	.023	-.105-	-2.280-	.023

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude

Table 3 displays the relationship's findings between demographic information (gender and academic year) and EFL Jordanian undergraduates' attitude. It is found that there are significant relationships between gender and academic year towards EFL Jordanian undergraduates' attitude as the P.Value is below 0.05. Table 3 shows that P.value of the academic years is 0.000 and for gender is 0.023.

Discussion

Students have a good attitude toward producing learner podcasts to advance their English-speaking abilities, according to data gathered about EFL undergraduates' perspectives on podcasting tasks. This result complements earlier research on learners' opinions of podcasts, which showed that learners have favorable attitudes toward the use of podcasting in language acquisition (Chan et. al., 2011; Lord, 2008). According to findings from a previous study on the use of podcasts to improve the listening and speaking abilities of EFL students, students have favorable opinions about using podcasts to do so (Fitria et al., 2015). The results of the questionnaire given to the participants indicate that the majority of the students believe that participating in podcasting activities helps them to develop not only their speaking but also other language skills. This is supported by earlier studies, which Hasan and Hoon (2013) reviewed and found to show that podcasts considerably help learning not just in speaking and listening but also in other language areas such as grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary.

Through podcasts, language learners can improve their speaking, listening, and grammar abilities as well as their vocabulary, pronunciation, and vocabulary (Chan et.al., 2011; Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005). The majority of students say that learner podcasts have especially helped them strengthen their pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and so on according to the questionnaires. The data acquired from the student show that the most important advantage of utilizing and producing learner podcasts in the development of speaking abilities. Students believe that projects with learner podcasts give them a fantastic chance to improve their speaking skills and other language skills. This shows that students had favorable opinions about using podcasts created by learners to improve their English skills. Due to the fact that their podcasts will be listened to by others, students attempt to speak the words correctly while they create and record their voice (their teacher, classmates and any people who subscribe to the podcast website). Students are motivated to work on their English speaking as a result of this. These results concur with those found in the literature. Studies on the use of learner podcasts to build speaking fluency have shown that learners of foreign languages have favorable attitudes toward utilizing podcasts to improve their speaking skills and that they believe that podcasts created by foreign language learners serve to improve such needed skills. The overall findings of the study on EFL learners' opinions of podcasts indicate that students can easily create learner podcasts and distribute them online because the process is straightforward technically. Additionally, prior studies have shown that language-learning podcasts provide useful resources and applications (Blaisdell, 2006, Clark & Walsh, 2004). Additionally, the results of the student survey show that students love listening to podcasts and that they all wish to employ learner podcasts in their English classes. Additionally, this study explores whether gender and academic year have a major impact on EFL learners' opinions of using podcasts. The findings show that gender plays a key role as a demographic characteristic in the learners' perceptions of using podcasting to develop their English-speaking skills. This pertains to students' perspectives on learner-produced podcast with respect to gender. Additionally, it demonstrates how much academic years influence the sentiments of postgraduate EFL Jordanians.

Conclusion

Findings showed that the majority of Jordanian EFL students prefer to practice speaking using podcasts. Podcasts can be included into foreign language instruction and used as a new technology-based instructional tool in cultivating students' speaking skills, especially in light of EFL learners' positive perceptions of using student-produced podcasts for their speaking

achievement. Since they don't get many chances to practice their English outside of class, EFL students typically struggle to improve their speaking abilities. As a result, individuals require more understandable information in addition to the speaking exercises they complete in English classes if they are to practice speaking English. In this way, podcasts help students hone their communication abilities outside of the classroom in a stress-free environment.

Regarding the use of technology in language acquisition, the researcher covered a number of important aspects. Technology resources cannot guarantee that teachers educate, and students learn without oversight, the literature study found. In order to improve student learning, technology must be valued and embraced by teachers. To incorporate technology into language instruction, instructors will need support and training in doing so. According to the study, instructors and students may gain greatly from technology when it is handled properly. It is a resource that students can use since it aids in the resolution of their learning challenges and the discovery of efficient and worthwhile applications for the knowledge they have acquired.

Additionally, this study showed that using technology encourages learners to acquire languages at their own pace, promotes self-awareness, doesn't preclude interaction with teachers, and fosters tremendous drive in them. This study also suggested that EFL learners should use technology to advance their language abilities because it helps to foster learners' creativity and gives them enjoyable, interesting, and stimulating ways to learn the language. Technology, such as podcasting, fosters interaction between teachers and students, offers comprehensible input and output, helps students develop their thinking skills, makes learning and teaching more student-centered, encourages students' autonomy and confidence, and heightens students' motivation to learn a foreign language successfully.

Acknowledgment

In the name of Almighty Allah, the most Merciful and the most Gracious. I thank Allah for His persistent help and guidance upon me. First and foremost, I wish to express my deepest appreciation to my supervisors, Dr. Ahmad Taufik Hidayah Bin Abdullah for his continuous inspiration, guidance, support, and generosity. He, indeed, inspired and motivated me greatly throughout my Ph. D journey until the completion of the study. This article has benefited greatly from the feedback and expertise of my supervisor, and without his advice and constructive criticisms this article would never have been written.

I am very greatly indebted to so many wonderful people for their contributions and spontaneous assistance in so many ways in completing this article. Finally, to my father and the souls of my mother as well as my brothers and sisters who always stood by me throughout my PhD journey. My wife and kids also deserve a special mention for their patience, support, prayers and endless love.

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