SAUDI EFL LEARNERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS INTEGRATION OF VIDEO-PODCASTS IN LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract:

The use of podcasts is growing in the instructions of listening comprehension. However, the success of computer technology generally depends on learners positive attitudes towards it. The present study explored attitudes of Saudi EFL undergraduates toward the use of video-podcasts integration in listening comprehension. Moreover, the study also examined students' attitude from the perspective of the number of video-podcasts they received in their instructions. Samples included 90 English major male undergraduates divided into three groups. The three groups received five (5), ten (10) and 15 video-podcasts in their listening classes before they answered an attitude questionnaire. ANOVA results revealed that the students had positive attitudes towards the use of video-podcasts in listening. However, no significant difference was found between the attitudes of the three experimental groups who received varied number of video-podcasts in their instructions.

Keywords: video-podcasts, listening comprehension, Saudi, EFL learners, multimedia

1. Introduction

The use of podcasts has been acknowledged as an effect channel to input knowledge. Its use in listening comprehension has effectively promoted listening skill which resulted in increased acquisition of a target language (McDermott, 2014; Meredith, 2013; Takeda, 2013; Viana, 2014). However, the effectiveness of computer technology is dependent on the positive attitude of the learners toward it; and the recognition of learners' attitude towards technology use is very important in creating effective learning environment

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(Kadwa, 2012). Hence, in view of the fact that the effectiveness of video-podcasts and the achievement of desired goals of technology integration rely greatly on learners' attitude, the present study investigates Saudi EFL learners' attitude towards video-podcasts in listening comprehension.

In recent years, research on the effectiveness of podcasts for the development of listening skill has been a popular research field which opened doors for researchers to study attitudes of learners toward podcasts. On the basis of evidence currently available, it seems fair to suggest that learners' positive attitude towards using online multimedia input in any part of the learning experience helps securing success in learning. It has been conclusively shown that carefully selected high-tech listening-input assists positively in target language learning, and hence the achievement of listening comprehension learning goals. As a new teaching approach, listening input through video-podcasts can motivate and generate positive attitudes and interests, thus helping learners pursue further language learning. On logical ground, there is no compelling reason to argue that if the learners are instructed using materials and methods related to their favourite areas, their positive attitude increases which enhances their performance significantly to achieve the learning goal. Thus, this vital element was taken into consideration in the present study.

2. Literature Review

The importance of listening in relation to learning a foreign language and the use of podcasts in that learning process has been addressed in many current researches in the field of foreign language learning and acquisition. The literature available in this regard shows variety of approaches and results. The following discussion includes a review of the studies devoted to learners' attitudes to podcast and other technology tools closely related to it. Examining learners' perception and attitude towards podcasting in listening comprehension is considered critical due to its increasing adaptation in the field. Hasan and Hoon (2012) assert that listening is the most frequently used language skill in communication but learning this skill is most often difficult for language learners and it causes frustration and anxiety among them. To this end, they conducted a study in Malaysia in which ESL students' perceptions and attitudes toward the use of podcast for developing listening comprehension was examined. The questionnaire results indicated that the vast majority of the respondents have positive attitude toward the use of podcast for improving listening comprehension.

Effectiveness and scope of podcasts has also been seen important for other than listening skill. Kalludi, Punja, Rao, and Dhar (2015) assessed the attitudes of first year

students toward video podcasts as supplementary material and examined the effectiveness of video podcasts as a teaching aid in comparison to text book reading. The students who watched video podcasts performed better than the ones who read the text book. Moreover, majority of the participants indicated a positive attitude toward using video podcasts as supplementary material. In another study, Kay and Edwards (2012) explored 11 to 13 years old students' attitude towards video podcasts use in mathematics. The results revealed a very positive attitude of the participants towards video podcasts. Furthermore, no gender or grade based difference was found in attitude toward video podcasts was found.

However, a majority of studies on podcasts examined participants' attitude towards podcasts for learning in general. In a recent research, McDermott (2014) found positive effects of supplemental podcasts on students' performance in language learning and they showed positive attitude toward it. Holbrook and Dupont (2011) explored students' opinions about podcasts use for a variety of course activities. Students perceived supplemental podcasts as helpful resource for a range of learning activities. Moore and Smith (2012) examined the effects of video podcasts and students' attitudes towards video-podcasts in learning. No difference was found between the performances of the experimental and control groups. However, students had positive attitude to video podcasts. Unavailability of the opportunity to ask questions in the video-podcasts group and lack of interaction with the instructor and the classmates considered the main causes for insignificant performance of the participants in the video-podcast group. All the above studies found positive results regarding students' attitudes to podcasts for learning in general. Yet, less interaction between the participants and their teacher is detected as one of the major obstacles in the way of successful integration of podcasts in the study by Moore and Smith (2012). This finding invites for further investigations into the matter and to find appropriate solutions to the matter. The present research considered this particular issue and attempted to find the best way of how the podcasts can be integrated into EFL.

To examine students' attitude towards podcasts use in learning, Tolulope, Adenubi, and Oluwole (2015) employed a total of 25 participants, 15 male and 10 female, from an intact class in University of Ilorin, Nigeria. Students' attitude towards the use of podcasts was measured on a 4 point Liker Scale 9-items questionnaire designed by the researcher himself. The findings revealed students' positive attitude towards podcasts for learning. Moreover, no significant difference was found between the attitudes of both the genders. Equally easy access of male and female to podcasts might have been the main factor for similar attitudes of both the genders in the study. Furthermore, the subjects revealed that there were 40% female and 60 % male

participants in the study. The equal participation of both the genders may have produced significant results between the two groups.

Rahimi and Asadollahi (2011) investigated Iranian undergraduates' readiness towards using podcasting technology. The readiness of 120 participants was measured on a three sub-scale survey: access, familiarity, and experience. The results revealed that most of the participants owned their own portable device and more than half of them could easily access to those devices. Majority of them had a high level of familiarity with podcasts except few who had never downloaded a podcast. However, the podcasts downloaded by most of them were irrelevant to their university courses. Despite this, they perceived that using podcasts would contribute well to their academic courses. Farshi and Mohammadi (2013) studied learners' attitude and motivation towards use of podcasts for vocabulary learning. Some video-podcasts were sent through email to a group of 30 intermediate level university students. Students' opinions about their experience with podcasts were taken on a questionnaire after the one week experimental period was over. Findings indicated learners' very positive attitude towards podcasts. They found them very motivating for learning English vocabulary. In the meanwhile, some limitations such as difficulty in access and filtering the most appropriate and relevant materials were also pointed out by the learners. Higher level of motivation is one of the influential factors for the positive impact of podcasts on students' performance. Lack of internet availability and technical issues in sending video-podcasts through email may effect learners' motivation negatively. However, the present study delivered video-podcasts in a way that there were no such internet and technical issues which could cause negative effects on learners' motivation.

Another interesting perspective of the research related to podcasts is the examination of both the audio and video forms of podcasts. In this regard, Lowman (2014) examined the impact of audio-podcasts and vodcasts on fourth and sixth grade students' vocabulary acquisition. Both the podcast and vodcasts groups completed three podcasts or vodcasts a day for three days. A total of nine words were taught to both of the groups. The results revealed that the vodcasts group performed significantly better than the podcast group. However, students' attitude was found positive towards both the podcasts and the vodcasts. In the like manner, Zelin II and Baird (2012) employed publically available podcasts and vodcasts to find students' perceptions about their use in learning. The vodcasts and podcasts were assigned as supplement class readings and lectures. Survey results indicated that students preferred podcasts and vodcasts over both traditional written and communication and live speeches. Students perceived podcasts as interesting and helpful in learning the topics. In another comparative study, Parson, Reddy, Wood, and Senior (2009) examined students'

opinions on audio and video podcasts and how well they met the requirements and aided learning processes. Two experiments at Aston University were conducted to explore students' opinions on the use of podcasts and vodcasts in their classes. Results revealed that students had very positive attitudes towards podcasts and vodcasts and considered them as a helpful resource added to their learning, particularly, when it is used in conjunctions with content of the lectures and as a revision tool.

Conversely, Walls et al. (2010) identified learners' negative attitude towards using podcasts in their learning. They studied students' readiness and attitudes towards repetitive and supplemental forms of podcasting. The findings revealed that students are less ready or eager to use podcasting for repetitive or supplemental educational purposes as expected; however, they could be persuaded.

In general, therefore, there is an ample support for the claim that attitude towards technology has both positive and negative significant effects on language learning. EFL instructors can improve the effectiveness of their curriculum by considering this factor in their planning. Eliciting attitude of learners towards the available technology for listening activities can further improve learning performance. One of the most prominent point of the findings from the study of Rahimi and Asadollahi (2011), Parson et al. (2009) and that of Farshi and Mohammadi (2013) is their emphasize on need of the role of teacher in providing the most relevant material after a careful evaluation and selection from the vision of a language teacher. This seems important in order to maintain a high level of motivation and learners' positive attitude towards podcasts which leads to a successful learning experience. Hence, the current study attempts to set an example for all the education stake holders by including the most appropriate podcasts as supplemental material which is carefully selected by the teacher in order to achieve the maximum output from the technology aided learning process.

2.1 Research Objectives

The main objectives of the present study are:

1. To investigate students' attitudes towards video-podcasts in listening comprehension.
2. To determine the relationship between the varied numbers of video-podcasts used as supplementary materials and Saudi EFL learners' attitudes toward using video-podcasts in listening.

2.2 Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

1. What is Saudi EFL learners' attitude toward using video-podcasts as supplementary material in listening?
2. Is there any significant difference between the mean scores of the participating groups on the attitude questionnaire when the varied numbers of Video-Podcasts were used in listening instructions?

2.3 Hypotheses

One alternative hypothesis was tested in the study:

$H_{a1.}$ Participants will show higher levels of positive attitudes toward the use of video-podcasts in listening as the number of video-podcasts used increases.

3. Methodology

The study is quantitative in nature. The aims of the study are first to explore Saudi EFL learners' attitudes toward the use of Video-Podcasts in listening comprehension, and then evaluate their attitudes based on the number of Video-Podcasts they received in their instructions. A questionnaire survey was used to collect quantitative data to answer the research questions. Questionnaires are considered effective instruments in quantitative studies. Xianghu (2013) believes that a questionnaire is the most effective and popular instrument for data collection in education research and it serves the basic purpose of gathering information from the research participants' responses which the researchers use to answer research questions. Similarly, Merriam and Simpson (1995) assert that questionnaire provides opportunity for careful construction and validation of questions prior to conducting the study. Moreover, they are easy to administer and do not require researchers' presence. The data obtained was analyzed through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0) software employing descriptive statistics, and one way ANNOVA techniques.

3.1 Sampling

The samples in the present study included 90 English major male undergraduates at Majmaah University. Their age is between 18-25 years. They are first year level one students in college of Education, Majmaah University where they study all four language skills including listening, reading, speaking and writing for three semesters in either a language laboratory or a smart classroom before embarking on their major language and literature courses. All the listening classes are taught in well-equipped high-tech language labs. Students from four classes studying at MU were involved in the research. Three of the classes were randomly assigned to three groups. In this

regard, section 1 was assigned to 5 video-podcasts, section 2 to 10 video-podcasts, and section 3 to 15 video-podcasts groups. All the groups received video-podcast aided instructions in the treatment period before they were given the attitude questionnaire.

3.2 Instrument

At the end of the treatment period, an attitude questionnaire (Scale of Attitude to Video-Podcasts in Listening - SAVPL) was given to the participants to explore their attitudes about the use of video-podcasts as supplementary material in listening. Surveys allow participants to voice their opinions and experiences (Seabolt, 2008) relating to a learning tool. Moreover, O'brien and Hegelheimer (2007) and (Copley, 2007) also employed questionnaire in order to collect students' feedback about the effectiveness of podcasts as learning aids. Students' feedback regarding the effectiveness of video-podcasts was analyzed employing descriptive statistics. The five-point Likert-scale questionnaire was divided into four subscales: listening comprehension; usability of the material; interest; and motivation to rate students' attitude towards integration of video-podcasts for the assistance in listening comprehension. Five-point Likert-scales are one of the most widely used techniques to measure attitudes (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 2006).

Furthermore, in order to seek deeper understanding of the effects of video-podcasts' integration, the participants of the experimental group were also required to answer two open-ended questions. In the first open-ended question, respondents were required to give their opinion about their preference for video-podcasts and how beneficial do they see them for enhancing listening comprehension. In the second question they were asked to give their opinion about the types of video-podcasts that are the most suitable to enhance listening comprehension. Fowler (2013) claims that respondents prefer to answer some questions in their own words. Moreover, the open ended questions allow researchers to obtain unanticipated answers from the participants and assist to describe participants' real views more specifically. Answering only by choosing a given response and having no opportunity to express what is one's mind can be a frustrating experience (Fowler, 2013). The researcher believes participants' feedback as an effective instrument to gauge effectiveness of any teaching system (Badyal, Bala, & Kathuria, 2010). Therefore, students' opinion on integration of video podcasts in the present study could be valuable data for references and future research developments. Thus, the qualitative data was obtained from the students' responses to the open ended questions which was analyzed and used to support the quantitative data of the questionnaire items.

The 18 items in the attitude questionnaire are adapted from the following three studies: a total of seven items are from Kuo (2009); four items from Al Qasim and Al Fadda (2013); and the rest of the nine items are from Shahid, Ali, and Mahmoud (2016).

3.3 Reliability and Validity of the Instrument

For consistency and reliability, research tools must be measured (Siddiqi, 2011). Since the questionnaire items are not scored simply correct or incorrect, Cronbach Alpha is employed to assess the validity of the questionnaire (Santos, 1999). Cronbach's Alpha is a statistical measurement of reliability (Kadwa, 2012). The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 20.0 was used to analyze the data for the attitude questionnaire (SAVPL). Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Index was used to evaluate the reliability of the attitude questionnaire items. Different recommendations have been given about the satisfactory reliability score such as Kadwa (2012) considered 0.77 as fairly strong reliability score in his study. And Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (1993) and Siddiqi (2011) believe 0.70 or greater as minimum acceptable reliability co-efficient for a research. Whereas, Rooney (2011) identifies 0.6 as a lenient acceptable cut-off score of reliability, and 0.7 or higher as adequate for research purposes. The researcher, however, obtained the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.92, which represents a high level of reliability.

Pertaining to the investigation of the validity of questionnaire items for the present study, the researcher consulted a panel of experts in the department of English, College of Education, MU. Necessary amendments were made to the questionnaire on the recommendations of the panel. In the end, the panel declared their full satisfaction regarding the validity of the instrument.

4. Results and Discussion

This section illustrates the analysis of the results and discussion on the findings of the study.

4.1 Analysis of the Attitude Questionnaire

At the end of the treatment period, students were given an attitude questionnaire (SAVPL). Descriptive statistics were applied to answer the third research question:

Research
Question 1
: What is Saudi EFL learners' attitude toward using video-podcasts as supplementary material in listening?

This question was formed to evaluate Saudi EFL students' attitudes toward video-podcasts in listening as indicated by the SAVPL. For this, the mean value and standard deviation were calculated, therefore, no hypotheses was set for the research question. Moreover, qualitative analysis of the two open-ended questions was also carried out to support the quantitative findings the question.

4.1.1 Analysis of the Likert-Scale Items

After the treatment period, the participants were given the attitude questionnaire, divided into four subscales: listening comprehension; usability of the material; interest; and motivation.

Descriptive statistics are presented prior to answer the research question in order to describe the summary measure of the data set for each item in the questionnaire (Lay & Khoo, 2009). The mean and standard deviation for students' attitudes toward video-podcasts in listening were measured based on the data obtained from the attitude questionnaire (SAVPL). In the survey, each participant gave their response to each of the questions on a 5-point Likert scale, 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Uncertain, 2 = Disagree, and 1 = Strongly Disagree. The higher the score, the more positive attitude the student had toward video-podcasts in listening.

Table II presents examination of students' attitudes to video-podcasts in listening. Item 14 obtained the highest mean (M = 4.28, SD = .848) related to the increase of listening comprehension through watching video-podcasts. This indicates that students favoured the use of video-podcasts for enhancing listening comprehension. While, item 17 pertaining to the General English Podcasts for improving listening comprehension received the lowest mean (M = 3.37. SD = 1.136). This entails that the abundance of information on several components of language in one single video-podcast is seen by the students as comparatively less helpful to enhance one specific skill. The mean, however, still indicates their positive inclination to this type of podcast for listening.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Students' Attitude to Video-Podcasts in Listening

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. I find video-podcasts watching is a useful learning material for me.	4.09	.944
2. I find the number of podcast episodes to be appropriate.	4.21	.989
3. I find the length of the podcast episodes to be appropriate.	4.00	1.081

4. I find the topics on the whole to be relevant to my learning.	3.99	.880
5. I think video-podcasts listening activities improve my learning interest.	3.91	1.056
6. I feel topics covered by the podcasts appeal to my interest.	3.64	1.009
7. I broadened my knowledge in listening comprehension through video-podcasts listening activities.	3.93	1.036
8. I like the use of videos as they make listening activities more interesting.	3.80	1.030
9. I feel video-podcasts listening activities enable me to maximize my involvement in the classroom.	3.90	.949
10. I would prefer to have video-podcasts in future English listening courses.	3.89	1.075
11. I find that using video-podcasts make me practice listening more frequently.	3.98	.912
12. I think that video-podcasts environment raises the level of my motivation for learning listening.	4.06	.940
13. I am motivated by the use of video-podcasts to utilize extra material related to listening comprehension.	3.98	1.049
14. I think video-podcasts watching helps me to increase my listening skills.	4.28	.848
15. I found video-podcasts watching helps me to understand the conversation.	4.19	.806
16. I found using video-podcasts had a positive impact on my listening comprehension.	3.71	1.063
17. I think using video-podcasts to learn English can enhance my listening comprehension proficiency.	3.37	1.136
18. I feel that video-podcasts make learning of listening comprehension much.	4.10	.949

Table 3 describes the overall analysis of students' attitude to video-podcasts in listening. The overall minimum and maximum value of Saudi EFL students' attitudes toward the use of video-podcasts in listening was 2.61 and 5.00 respectively. The overall mean was 3.94 and the standard deviation was 0.57. The mean value represents a positive attitude toward video-podcasts from the 90 participants surveyed in the study.

Table 3: Overall Means and Standard Deviation of Students' Attitude to
Video-Podcasts in Listening

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students' attitude to Video-podcasts in listening	90	2.61	5.00	3.94	.57
Valid N (listwise)	90				

4.1.1.1 Discussion on Students' Attitudes to Video-Podcasts in Listening

Research Question 1 in the present study concentrated on Saudi EFL undergraduates' attitudes toward using video-podcasts as supplementary materials in listening comprehension classes. The study found that students had positive attitudes towards the use of video-podcasts in listening. The results support those of the other studies

which showed that EFL learners have positive attitudes towards using podcasts in listening comprehension. Hasan and Hoon (2012) examined ESL students' perceptions and attitudes towards the use of podcasts for developing their listening competence. The participants were from an intact class from University Putra Malaysia (UPM). Students were given an introductory session before the distribution of the questionnaire. Sources and uses of podcasts in EFL were explained and several podcast websites were introduced. Findings from the survey indicated that the vast majority of the students enjoyed the use of podcasts in learning English. The students acknowledged that podcast had stimulated their interest in learning English. They also acknowledged that the use of podcasts could help improve their language skills particularly listening. The participants in the present study also expressed the same opinion that podcasts motivated them to participate more actively in the learning process and made them spend more time in learning the subject which aided to their performance.

In addition, the finding is in partial agreement with the studies by Kalludi et al. (2015). The study assessed the first year dental students' attitude to video-podcasts supplementation in reading comprehension. Video-podcasts of the main concepts of the lessons were shown prior to the main lessons. The participants in the experimental group outperformed the control group and indicated positive attitudes toward using video-podcasts for language learning. Similarly, the video-podcasts in the present study were also used as a part of lead-in activity which prepared learners to get into the topic with confidence. The relevance of the content in Video-Podcasts with the course objectives helped students develop understanding of the main concepts of the lessons beforehand. This might assist in understanding the audio text better and they formed positive perceptions about this tool for learning the receptive skill.

Moreover, the outcome also is in agreement with Farshi and Mohammadi (2013) in some measures. They investigated learners' attitude and motivation towards use of podcasts for vocabulary learning. Some video-podcasts were sent through email to a group of 30 intermediate level university students. Students' opinions about their experience with podcasts were taken on a questionnaire after the one-week experimental period was over. Findings indicated learners were very positive towards podcasts. They found them very motivating for learning English vocabulary. However, some limitations such as difficulty in access and filtering the most appropriate and relevant materials were also pointed out by the learners. The participants in the current study also perceived video-podcasts as a great supporting tool which helped them in learning vocabulary as well as assisted in long-term retention of the vocabulary and information. Furthermore, participants clearly acknowledged the role of video-podcasts

as a motivational tool on the subscale for motivation in the questionnaire. Additionally, their responses to the open ended questions further testified their acknowledgement in this regard.

However, the finding of the current study stood in contrast to that of Walls et al. (2010) who noted negative attitudes of learners towards podcasts in learning. They examined students' readiness and attitudes about the repetitive and supplemental use of podcasts for educational purposes. It was found that students were not as ready to accept the repetitive or supplemental use of podcasts in their learning as it was assumed. Students' use of mobile devices for non-educational material, and their unfamiliarity with the educational use of podcasts were determined to be associated to students' passive attitude to podcasts in the study. Thus, the results intensify the idea that podcasts are an important mode of learning for EFL students, and it is essential to train students about the utilization of this educational tool. Therefore, it seems possible that the utilization of video-podcasts instructions under teacher's supervision in the present study may have helped learners to stay on track and they could see its potential benefit more deeply which was revealed in their responses to the questionnaire and the open ended questions. The respondents indicated their positive attitude and they believed video-podcast aided instructions helped them enhance their learning. Majority of them wanted to watch video-podcasts in their future classes.

Overall, students showed positive attitudes to the use of podcasts as supplementary aid in learning. There is a strong indicator that students have welcomed the integration of video-podcasts in their listening classes; and want them to continue. These findings were further confirmed by the students' responses to the open ended questions in which they exhibited their desire to have video-podcast aided classes in future. The students perceived podcasts as helpful tool for their future learning.

4.1.2 Analysis of the Open-Ended Questions

This section describes the results from the second part of the attitude questionnaire. It presents the factors that determine students' preferences in using video-podcasts for improving their English. Secondly, it details the students' preferred types of video-podcasts in this regard. For this purpose, data collected from the two open ended items in the attitude questionnaire is compared and discussed (Fraenkel et al., 1993). Extracts derived from students' responses to the open-ended questions are used to justify the findings in chapter five.

The second part of the questionnaire is concerned with students' feedback related to students' preferences for watching video-podcasts as a language learning aid in future. The second open ended question inquired about students' preference for the

most effective types of video-podcasts for language learning. The analysis is divided into two parts: the first part discusses the main factors why students prefer video-podcasts as a helpful tool for language learning; the second part explains learners' preferred types of video-podcasts for enhancing their language.

4.1.2.1 Analysis of the First Open Ended Question

Five main themes emerged after reading through students' answers to the first open-ended question related to their preferences for video-podcasts in learning English. Table IV summarizes the obtained main themes of the qualitative part of the item 19 of the questionnaire in which they showed their preference for using video-podcasts in learning English. Students' responses indicated that listening along visuals in video-podcasts enhances listening and speaking. The facial expressions of the speakers and other pictorial contents in the videos increase learners' interest in the listening activities and they make them participate in the lessons with greater focus on the audio text. Moreover, the information presented through pictorial images in the video-podcasts also assists in the longer retention of the knowledge. Furthermore, the availability of the video-podcasts in different accents allows learners understand and learn several accents of English language. Video-Podcasts on vocabulary are also seen as beneficial for learning vocabulary by the learners. It is believed that such type of Video-Podcasts makes the difficult task of vocabulary building more interesting and easier.

Table 4: Themes for Students' preference in watching video-podcasts

No	Items	Frequency
1	Interesting for learning English	11
2	Help to improve listening in particular and speaking in general	27
3	Assist in mastering various accents and correct pronunciation	17
4	Easy to use and makes learning fast	24
5	Assist in longer retentions of knowledge, language and information	6

In response to students' preference for keep watching video-podcasts to strengthen their English competence in future, Table 4 indicates item 2 had the highest frequency with 27 students claiming that video-podcasts help them to improve their listening skill in particular and speaking in general. Video podcasts were mainly found to be helpful for improving listening comprehension as well as speaking. A huge proportion of participants believed that video-podcasts help in improving listening skill to a great extent that ultimately leads to enhanced speaking ability. Listening along with visuals assists in more focused listening and consequently in better understanding of the language presented. Thus, at the end of the day, learners become better users of the

target language. An interesting comment from a participant pertaining to using video-podcasts is worthy to be mentioned here:

"I don't want to but I need to watch video-podcasts to improve my listening. If I imagine the conversation I will be better. If I see a lot of videos my listening will be great. I learn new words and I improve my accent. For this, I prefer to watch real-life videos, documentaries, and videos on vocabulary and educational topics relevant to my course book."

On the other hand, item 5 was ranked the lowest. Only six (6) participants expressed that video-podcasts aid in longer retention of language knowledge and information through its latest technology enhanced videos. A respondent stated:

"When I watch a video-podcast, I don't forget the message or information in it. It helps to remember and I remember it for long time".

Item one (1) indicated that 11 participants preferred Video-podcasts because they are interesting and attract learners' attention. A number of students acknowledged that the content of the video podcasts used in the experiment was relevant to their interest and academic needs which tempted them to utilize their free time in learning English. Item two (2) obtained the third highest frequency of the five main themes of the first open-ended question. A total of 17 participants stated that Video-podcasts are helpful for improving listening comprehension as well as speaking. Majority emphasized that video-podcasts help to improve listening skill to a great extent and that ultimately leads to enhanced speaking ability. They believed that listening activities through visual-aids provide more focused listening practice which consequently results in better understanding of the language presented. Pertaining to this a student commented:

"English videos are the best source for learning English. I learnt all my English through English movies which are now easily available in the form of podcasts".

Relating to item three (3), seventeen students commented that the use of video-podcasts provide the opportunity of listening to various accents which allows them to understand and master different accents, and more accurate pronunciations of the target vocabulary. This may facilitate them to communicate with the native speakers all around the globe and hence accomplish the purpose of learning a foreign language. A student appreciated this element of podcasts:

"People from all parts of the world are making video-podcasts these days whether they are in Australia, UK, or USA. We can listen to so many accents and understand them easily".

Easy and fast use of podcast was also seen as an important element of this technology which can encourage learners for higher level of motivation and dedicating more time for learning a language. Item four (4) received the second highest frequency of all the themes. A total of 24 participants were of the view that easiness in the use of video-podcasts makes the learning process fast and smooth. They also mentioned that the clear presentation of the content helps in making the learning process fast. The new vocabulary items, particularly in vocabulary podcasts are presented in very clear voice and picture which makes vocabulary learning very interesting and easy. Moreover, unlike other online media, not much waiting time is required for downloading audio and video files. Some of the Participants' responses in reply to the first open-ended question are appended in Appendix-P.

4.1.2.2 Analysis of the Second Open-Ended Question

For the second open ended question of the questionnaire, students showed their preference for the types of video-podcasts which are the most attractive for their motivation to learn English. Table 5 illustrates that podcasts of movies that received the highest frequency with 39 students preferred watching podcasts of movies. They stated that the podcast technology has made the access to the popular and interesting movies easy and convenient. In addition, the imaginary world of animated videos such as cartoon Video-Podcasts is considered to be interesting and mind-opening. Relating to that, a participant stated: *"I watch video-podcasts of cartoons to open my imagination".* Video-Podcasts of documentaries are also seen as helpful by many participants. It was revealed that documentaries are useful for advance learners because they contain a lot of language in them. Particularly, they are a source to listen to natural language. When learners understand from the longer commentaries of documentaries, their confidence boosts, and it helps them become active learners. A student commented: *"… documentaries are good because they have a lot of words"* (Appendix-Q). Their availability in several small episodes as podcasts makes them 'student-friendly'. Their use is now more convenient and more effective for learning English.

Table 5: Students' preferences for types of English video-podcasts

No	Item	Frequency
1	Educational topics	10
2	Animated video-podcasts	19
3	Movies	39
4	Documentaries	12

On the contrary, item 1 had the lowest frequency in which only 10 students found themselves inclined towards video-podcasts on educational topics. Students preferred educational Video-Podcasts because they assist in accomplishing their academic needs. The low frequency indicates that a very few students are aware of the usefulness of the podcasts that are specifically prepared for educational purposes. This may be a reason why this type of video-podcast was considered the least preferred podcast for learning English.

4.1.3 Discussion on Students' Preferences for Using Video-Podcasts

This section discusses factors that derived students' preferences for opting video-podcasts to enhance listening comprehension in the future. The analysis for this discussion is taken from students' feedback in response to the open ended questions in the attitude questionnaire.

4.1.3.1 Reasons for students' opting video-podcasts

The results of the next discussion are derived from the first open ended question of the attitude questionnaire in the study.

4.1.3.1.1 Interesting for Learning English

Video-podcasts are interesting and they attract learners' attention. A number of students acknowledged that the content of the video podcasts used in the experiment was relevant to their interest and academic needs which tempted them to utilize their free time in learning English. They spent more time in learning language than before. Video-Podcasts were interesting to such an extent that they were motivated to discuss about the contents and language presented in the video-podcasts with their class mates after the class and in their break times. Thus, that additional rehearsal of the vocabulary and other ideas in the video-podcasts may have helped them to be improved and more focused listeners in the following sessions of their listening classes which contributed to their better performance and positive attitudes.

4.1.3.1.2 Helpful for Improving Listening and Speaking

Video-podcasts were mainly found to be helpful for improving listening comprehension as well as speaking. Majority stated that video-podcasts help improving listening skill to a great extent and that ultimately leads to enhanced speaking ability. Listening along with visuals aids in more focused listening and consequently better understanding of the language presented. Dual-coding theory suggests that using both visual and auditory sensory channels can aid learners comprehend and retain information better than using one channel (French, 2006). Thus, learners become better users of the target language at the end of the day. Learners' feedback infers that the students at present time are well aware of the place of video-podcasts in their education. They really need guidance on how to utilize them for their academic purposes without indulging in irrelevant stuff. The role of teacher seems obviously important in this context.

4.1.3.1.3 Assistance in Mastering Various Accents and Correct Pronunciation

The easiness and convenience in creating and publishing of podcasts have given the end users access to a vast variety of authentic content in several accents used across different parts of the world. This benefit has been seen as an important aid in learning a foreign language by the participants in the present study. Twenty students commented that the use of video-podcasts provide the opportunity of listening to various accents which allows them understand and master different accents and more accurate pronunciations of the target vocabulary. This may facilitate them to communicate with the native speakers all around the globe and hence accomplish the purpose of learning a foreign language. Moreover, in the present study, video-podcast users' enhanced ability to understand various accents helped them to comprehend various accents in the treatment and the performed better than the control group students who did not use.

4.1.3.1.4 Video-Podcasts in their instructions

In the same vein, another benefit of video-podcasts relating to its easy creation and publishing mentioned by students was that it provides them the opportunity to learn both standard and slang expressions in the target language. The standard language is usually available in the video-podcasts that are specifically prepared for educational purpose. Whereas, since, video-podcasts technique allows every common person to create and publish their own podcasts with great ease, such video-podcasts sometimes contain real life language which is sarcastically available in academic based multimedia material. Hence, the availability of real-life language in video-podcasts is considered one of the main advantages of podcasts by the participants in the study.

4.1.3.1.5 Easy to Use and Makes Learning Fast

Easy and fast use of podcast was also seen as an important element of this technology which can encourage learners for higher level of motivation and dedicating more time for learning language. A total of 24 participants were of the view that easiness in the use of video-podcasts makes the learning process fast and smooth. Unlike, other online media, not much waiting time is required for downloading audio and video files. The push system of podcast technology downloads the latest multimedia files automatically on subscribers' devices and they even do not have to go to any websites for it. This feature saves users' time and they can get into the learning process without any unwanted delays caused by other online multimedia in the process of accessing to the learning materials. The finding indicates that the easiness in using technology is very important for its maximum utilization. Ho, Chou, and Fang (2016) confirm that once people feel they can operate or learn new technology easily, their intention to use it will become stronger. Hence, in a video-podcast system, as compared to other videos available at other sources, if people realize that it is easier to use and they do not need to put too much effort into using it, they would be more willing to use it in EFL learning, and particularly in listening. This notation is testified in the present study by participants' responses to the open ended question when they preferred video-podcasts for their convenient access to them.

Another significant factor that attracted learners to video-podcasts was that they make the availability of vocabulary and information very clear. It was mentioned that the clear presentation of the content assists in making the learning process fast. The new vocabulary items, particularly in vocabulary podcasts are presented in very clear voice and picture. This makes vocabulary learning very interesting and easy. Use of clear visuals assist in illustrating important concepts (Clark & Mayer, 2008), and reduce cognitive load (Sweller, 1994). Learners collect 'the heaps of building blocks of language' in a quick time, acquisition of which is essential for listening skill. This finding agrees to the results by the study of Farshi and Mohammadi (2013) who identified that students had very positive attitudes to podcasts for learning vocabulary. Thirty intermediate level EFL students, in the study were sent video-podcasts for vocabulary learning via e-mail. The students found them very motivating for learning vocabulary. However, they also pointed out some limitations such as difficult access, low internet speed and filtering the appropriate content that matches their academic needs.

4.1.3.1.6 Assistance in Longer Retention

Video-podcasts are also seen as means to aid in long-term retention of language knowledge and information. Combination of fun, excitement, enthusiasm, and science in animated video-podcasts helps understand information easily and remember it longer time. Students claimed that the use of video-podcasts for listening comprehension help them to remember the information for a longer time because they participate in such learning environment with more focus and concentration. The finding can be attributed to dual-coding theory which suggests that using both visual and auditory sensory channels can aid learners comprehend and retain information better than using one channel only (French, 2006).

4.1.3.2 Types of Preferred Video-podcasts

This subsection illustrates students' preferred video-podcasts which they perceived as beneficial for EFL learning. The results discussed in this heading are derived from the second open ended question of the attitude questionnaire in the present study.

According to the participants, animated videos are interesting to watch because the quality of audios and videos is enhanced by adding sound and picture effects. The funny element of cartoons increases motivation level and enables learners learning language in an easy way without any stress or anxiety. Podcast technology has made access to popular cartoon series very easy, learners just need to subscribe to the specific podcast feeds and all the latest episodes come to them automatically. A participant considered cartoons as a stimulus for his imagination which wakes his brain up and keeps it active.

Several students' preferred watching podcasts of movies as well. Watching movies was a time-taking activity but the arrival of video-podcasts has made it easier to benefit from them. Now, interesting and popular movies are easily available divided into small chunks as video-podcasts and learners can watch them as per their convenient time. Two students mentioned that movies with English subtitles are very helpful as they allow learners listen and read at the same time. This helps in understanding the maximum language in the movie.

A large number of students expressed their interest toward documentaries. A student considered documentaries as useful because they have a lot of words. This may hint to the students' current level of language indicating that students are interested in a more advance level and comparatively longer segments of language as supplemental input. Simple and easy conversational content may negatively affect their interest in the learning process and can result in poorer outcome as was seen in the second hypothesis of the present study when students receiving five video-podcasts failed to perform

significantly better than the control group with no video-podcasts. The same is emphasized in Krahsen's (1985) input hypothesis that too easy input makes no progress in learning. This also signifies that students need more additional material other than their regular class instructions in their learning process.

Data from the open ended questions further revealed that video-podcasts motivated students towards learning. There is always attraction for adults in videos that makes learning a fun for them. The literature shows that if a learning activity is perceived as fun rather than as work, it becomes more engaging, and learning occurs very conveniently (Harris, 2011). Overall, students believed video-podcasts as a helpful educational tool that assists them to understand the material at hand as did in the study by Maag (2006); and May (2008) in which students preferred vodcasts in their instructions. Findings revealed students' perception about video-podcasts as a helpful learning material, and they had positive impact on their grades. It was concluded that video-podcasts motivated them in a non-traditional manner.

Altogether, this is evident from the participants' responses of the questionnaire and open-ended questions that podcasting technology has attracted EFL learners to it for its ability to make available diverse types of material in the most convenient way. The inexpensive and convenient accessibility of learners to that material has made them to see it as a new learning tool that allows them to access to their favourite and academic relevant material as easily as was never imagined before.

Students' responses to the open-ended questions and the questionnaire items revealed several factors that make students to consider video-podcasts as a helpful learning tool for listening comprehension. The questionnaire item about the effectiveness of video-podcast in listening yielded the highest mean score. A huge proportion of respondents in the study expressed that the video-podcasts enhance listening comprehension. Video-podcasts include not only audio but also video and text with enhanced affects added to them and thus cover both the audio and visual learners and help them better understand the topic and the material in the course. Since, learning is multi-sensorial; the combination of aural and visual stimuli provides more brain interaction. It leads to improved learning, and personal engagement through the emotions and the paid attention to the stimuli makes the effects even stronger (Kuo, 2009). The same was also echoed by Clark and Mayer (2016) as they recommended teachers to bring variety in their instructional methods and in presenting input in order to enhance learners' learning and help them to engage in cognitive learning.

4.2 Analysis of the Attitude Difference in Groups Using Varied Number of Video-Podcasts

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed to explore difference in students' attitudes based on their groups. A research question and an alternative hypothesis were formulated.

Research Question 2	:	Is there any significant difference between the mean scores on the attitude questionnaire of the participating groups when varied numbers of Video-Podcasts were used in listening instructions?
H$_{a1}$	:	Participants will show higher levels of positive attitudes toward the use of video-podcasts in listening as the number of video-podcasts used increases.

A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of using of varied number of video-podcasts as supplementary support in listening on students' attitudes toward the use of video-podcasts in listening. Data were collected based on the number of video-podcasts used in the three experimental groups: (1) five video-podcasts, (2) ten video-podcasts, (3) and fifteen video-podcasts. Table 6 presents the mean and standard deviation of all the three groups.

Table 6: Descriptives statistics of students' attitudes to video-podcasts in listening by various number of video-podcast groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
5 VP Group	30	3.76	.52	.096
10 VP Group	30	4.02	.60	.110
15 VP Group	30	4.04	.56	.103

ANOVA analysis in Table VII displays that there was no significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in their attitudes (F [2, 87] = 2.239, p = .113). The value of the observed significant level (.113) was greater than the .05 significance level. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was rejected.

Table VII: ANOVA of students' attitude to video-podcasts in listening by various number of podcast groups

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.449	2	.725	2.239	.113
Within Groups	28.162	87	.324		
Total	29.611	89			

4.2.1 Discussion on Students' Attitudes Using Varied Number of Video-Podcasts

In the third hypothesis, the researcher hypothesized that there will be a positive correlation between the varied numbers of video-podcasts used as supplementary materials and Saudi EFL learners' attitudes toward using video-podcasts in listening. However, the findings revealed no significant differences in the attitudes of the three groups towards video-podcasts instructions in listening. In other words, the increased number of video-podcasts as input material influenced students' attitude to a very little extent only.

The findings are partially consistent with previous research findings of Kuo (2009). The study investigated Taiwanese students' attitudes towards using YouTube video clips for enhancing listening comprehension and its relationship with the number of video clips used. Three different experimental groups were taught using two (2), four (4), and six (6) YouTube clips. The results showed that students had positive attitude to the supplementary use of YouTube clips in instructions. However, no significant different was revealed between the attitudes of the different groups who used different number of clips in their instructions. Learners' less proficiency in English language and their lack of experience in learning with computer technology were considered as the influential elements for the insignificant results of the study. Similarly, the present study also failed to find significant difference in the attitudes of the students who used different number of video-podcasts and thus confirms to the findings of the study by Kuo (2009). The demographic information in the present study is also quite identical to Kuo's study. Students' proficiency in English language and their experience with CALL integrated learning environment were also identified to be quiet similar.

Hence, the absence of significant relationship between the number of video-podcasts watched and attitude towards video-podcasts instructions can be referred to the inability of Saudi EFL learners in English language. Several factors such as insufficient vocabulary, fast speed of delivery by the native speakers, and deficiency in understanding the speech may have made the digestion of too much video-podcasts material difficult for the learners in one single session. This can be justified by the students' comments during the experimental period in which they complained several times for not understanding native speakers in the video-podcasts and the teacher had to explain important vocabulary and provide other assistance along with the video-podcast watching. Lack of students' academic and linguistic vocabulary may have caused anxiety or frustration in understanding too much video content. According to Lin (2002) too much burden in acquiring the target vocabulary causes frustration in learners, and hinders their advancement in learning. Thus, it seems that instructors must consider learners' current level and weaknesses, and implement the best suitable

amount of input material to avoid the hindrance elements in learning process such as anxiety or frustration.

Previous literature suggests that positive attitude builds up when several ways of stimulation input are employed with EFL learners (Salaberry, 1996; Strambi & Bouvet, 2003). However, students' lack of experience with this tool at the study location might have been a cause that hindered learners see its full potential in learning. Demographic data analysis revealed that about 50 % of students had never taken any podcast aided EFL course before; and about 40 % of total participants had received just one course so far. Merely 10 % students had taken two (2) or more podcasts aided courses. Strambi and Bouvet (2003) believe that less prior experience with the same type of teaching experience makes the success of any new instructional method difficult and it does not satisfy all learners' needs. Correspondingly, the new type of instructions using video-podcasts may not essentially have generated more positive attitudes in the present study.

In general, however, there is sufficient evidence for the claim that attitude towards podcasts has significant effects on language learning among students in higher learning. EFL instructors can improve the effectiveness of their curriculum by considering this aspect in their planning. Eliciting attitude of learners to the available tools for listening activities can further improve learning performance. A note of caution is due here since instructors in this regards are only facilitators. Instructors need to ensure that they do not spoon-feed their students as the latter are studying at tertiary level (Ali, Mukundan, Baki, & Ayub, 2012). For instructors, therefore, their roles are to deliver the most relevant material after a careful evaluation and selection from the perspective of a language teacher. This appears imperative in order to uphold a high level of motivation and learners' positive attitude towards podcasts which is very important for a successful learning experience (Rahimi and Asadollahi (2011); Parson et al. (2009) Farshi and Mohammadi (2013). Hence, the current study invites all the education stake holders to consider inclusion of the most appropriate number of podcasts as supplemental material in teaching listening skill. It can support to achieve the maximum output from the podcast aided learning process.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The students' attitude towards the use of video-podcasts in listening can be considered a vital factor for the successful integration of video-podcasts in the listening comprehension process. The quantitative and qualitative data analysis identified that the students had positive attitudes towards video-podcasts in listening. Nevertheless,

the alternative hypothesis was rejected as the findings indicated that adding more video-podcasts as supplemental input did not generate learners' more positive attitude toward this instructional mode. Developing students' listening comprehension skills may depend on developing their positive attitude towards video-podcasts in listening through providing them more interactions with video-podcast integrated listening courses. The more time they spend in the computer technology environment, the more positive attitude they may develop which ultimately leads them to the successful achievement of the learning goals.

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that video-podcasts should be integrated into listening comprehension courses. Furthermore, the EFL teachers development sessions providing training and information on the utilization of video-podcasts in teaching listening skill may also contribute in creating a high-tech listening comprehension environment. This is expected to generate more positive attitudes of the students towards it.

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