

## The Effects of Podcasts on Thai Undergraduates' English Listening Skills

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### Abstract

The purposes of this study were to investigate the effects of podcasts on students' English listening skills, students' perceptions towards using podcasts in English language classrooms, and the level of student satisfaction regarding the podcasts provided in this study. This study employed a survey and a one-group pre-test–post-test design involving 29 English major students enrolled during the second semester of the 2024 academic year at a university located in Songkhla province. An outlier detected in the pretest led to the exclusion of one participant's data, resulting in an analysis based on 28 students. The findings demonstrated that the students could understand and assimilate the main ideas of the content after listening to the podcasts, as the post-test scores were statistically significantly greater than the pre-test scores. The results indicated that students were able to enhance their understanding and grasp of the main concepts of the listening material through podcasts. Furthermore, the participants conveyed positive attitudes about using the podcast to enhance their listening skills. Many of them found listening to podcasts was difficult; they believed it helped them learn English. Participants also expressed great satisfaction with the podcasts used in this study. The findings of this study contribute to the understanding of how digital media influences language learning attitudes and support integrating podcasts into English as a foreign language curricula, offering a practical, engaging, and accessible method to enhance listening skills. Teachers and educators can use this research to develop lesson plans and instructional strategies.

**Keywords:** *podcast, English listening, Thai students*

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### 1. Introduction

In Thailand, being able to communicate in English is essential for social, professional, and academic success (Chuanpongpanich, 2021). However, the lack of exposure to real English content in their everyday lives and educational environments makes it difficult for many Thai students to improve their listening comprehension in English (Kirkpatrick, 2012; Jantasode & Ruangjaroon, 2025). Additionally, the dynamic and varied information required for students to acquire excellent listening skills in authentic situations is frequently absent from traditional classroom-based language training. Podcast presents an alternative, as they provide an informal, flexible, and engaging platform for learning (Meden et al., 2024). It can also expose students to a wide variety of accents,

speech patterns, and real-life conversations, thus helping them improve their comprehension abilities (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).

Since listening is the most common skill in daily conversation, mastering in listening comprehension is essential to successfully extracting important details from all kinds of information. Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) has found one of the effective techniques that could be utilized as a tool to help students improve their English listening since students could access the podcasts through their mobile devices anytime and anywhere (Chitprarop, 2024; Hilman et al., 2024; Ramirez, 2024; Saragih et al., 2022). Several scholars have examined the educational advantages of using podcasts in learning, especially improving listening skills, especially listening for gist and listening for details, but in Thailand it has been scarce (Luadthong, 2024; Suvarnaphaet & Suvarnaphaet, 2021). Podcasts have become known as a great way to help students learn a language since they could motivate and give them access to real resources, and searched for the topic that they are interested in (Laiya et al., 2022; Ramirez, 2024). The potential of podcasts for online lectures, comments, and other materials was emphasized by Ramirez (2024).

One common issue with using podcasts to improve the English listening skills of EFL learners is their limited language proficiency, particularly in grasping the main idea, listening for details, and interpreting spoken content (Sripuangmalai, 2018), which makes it difficult for these learners to understand different accents, continuous speech, and the rapid pace of communication typically used by foreign instructors (Furakul, 2022). However, using podcasts offers learners the opportunity to listen repeatedly to materials, enhancing their comprehension and retention. They also allow learners to control the pace and content, which is particularly beneficial for students who may struggle with the rapid speech often found in classroom materials (Kukulska-Hulme, 2020). This flexibility makes podcasts an excellent resource for Thai undergraduates who may face challenges in traditional language learning environments.

To acquire knowledge and enhance students' ability to develop their listening skills, using podcast could be one of effective tools to enhance students improve their language learning and increase their interest in the material. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate if using podcast could enhance students English listening skills, and to explore students' perceptions and their satisfaction towards using the podcasts. The findings of this research could contribute a valuable guideline for educators to integrate technology into language teaching.

## **2. Research Objectives**

This research aimed to examine the effects of podcasts on students' English listening skills, as well as students' perceptions towards using podcasts in English language classrooms and their level of satisfaction with the podcasts used in the study.

### **3. Research Questions**

The research questions are as follows.

RQ1: Is there a difference in students' English listening skills before and after listening to podcasts?

RQ2: What are the students' perceptions and attitudes towards listening to podcasts?

RQ3: What is the level of student satisfaction with the podcast used in this study?

### **4. Literature Review**

#### **4.1 Listening Skill and Thai Students**

As English listening is a fundamental skill in language learning. It is an active and cognitive process that demands concentration and mental engagement. Effective listening enables individuals to interpret and exchange messages accurately, making it a crucial element of successful communication.

Harahap (2020) emphasized the need to practice listening using podcasts, noting that most students agreed that podcasts could help them improve their listening skills, and they preferred using podcasts in the language classroom. Thongkliang (2019) explained that listening entails the purposeful perception of sounds and language, where understanding is shaped by previous experiences that help interpret meaning. Sripuangmalai (2018) classified listening into four categories: grasping the main idea, listening for areas of interest, listening for details, and listening for interpretation. Mastery of these categories is vital for effective listening and communication. Listening is an active and intentional process that requires interpreting and responding to auditory information, making it a crucial skill for effective communication and language learning.

Thangpradit (2020) highlighted strategies like top-down and bottom-up processing, which are crucial for enhancing listening skills. Top-down listening involves using prior knowledge and context, while bottom-up focuses on linguistic details such as pronunciation and vocabulary. Combining both approaches could strengthen comprehension. Sudsa-ard (2019) further outlined a five-stage listening process: hearing, understanding, remembering, evaluating, and responding. This process emphasizes the importance of active listening, where students must pay attention, process information, and assess its meaning. It was found that the students were aware of the strategies and realized the benefits of those strategies, but they rarely used them. Kisawadkorn et al. (2022) noted that Thai students often encounter significant obstacles in improving their English listening abilities, such as limited exposure to real-world English, fast speech rates, unfamiliar accents, and insufficient practice.

Thilaphan (2020) examined English listening challenges among undergraduates and reported that many of them struggled with listening comprehension, particularly with regional accents, such as Thai or American, and poor pronunciation. Their struggles caused nervousness and frustration, especially when they could not understand the speaker. Key issues included difficulty catching every word, understanding native speakers at a normal pace, and applying grammatical rules. Limited vocabulary also hindered comprehension, leading to a loss of focus. However, familiarity with accents and accent preferences could have a significant impact on students' motivation in English learning. Frank and Chayanuvat (2023) recommended that although students have a favorable attitude toward all accents and do not consider native English speakers to be better than other variations, English teachers are aware of the reasons why students like certain accents over others. Sangnok and Jaturapitakkul (2019) examined Thai undergraduates' perceptions toward three different accents in listening comprehension: Indian, Singaporean, and Filipino. It was found that students reported their more positive perception towards Indian accents in terms of clarity and comprehension rather than other two accents. However, the students performed better with more familiar accents like Filipino and Singaporean. This investigation highlighted the importance of exposing Thai students to various English accents to enhance their listening abilities and prepare them for effective communication in a globalized world. Yaemtui (2025) investigated students' English listening strategies utilized by Thai undergraduate students applying cognitive and metacognitive listening strategies to comprehend ASEAN Englishes-accented conversations. The findings showed that low ability listeners could not automatically process the listening input because they lacked the knowledge to choose the right listening methods. They therefore made an effort to pay close attention and rely largely on the word-for-word translation technique to understand talks with ASEAN English dialects. Maliwan (2019) explored English listening problems of Thai first year students majoring in Airline Business and found that the students have listening problems in finding specific details, the main idea, summarizing important details, inference or comment and predictions from the texts, respectively.

#### **4.2 Using Podcast in English Language Classrooms**

The use of podcasts as an educational tool has gained traction worldwide due to their accessibility, flexibility, and capacity to enhance language learning, particularly in improving listening skills. The term "podcast" is derived from "POD" (Personal on Demand), emphasizing user choice, and "Broadcasting", referring to the distribution of audio content. Essentially, podcasts are a form of media that allows listeners to access content at their convenience. Available in multiple formats, including audio and video, podcasts are stored as multimedia files using XML technology. According to Harahap (2020), podcasts first appeared in 2004 when a journalist from The Guardian started producing downloadable audio news files. Their popularity surged in 2005 when Apple introduced iTunes 4.9, featuring over 3,000 free podcasts, contributing to the rapid

expansion of the medium. Podcasts are generally classified into three main types based on content format: audio podcasts, enhanced podcasts, and video podcasts.

Podcasts in Thailand have evolved from a personal hobby to a more commercial platform, expanding their reach to a broader consumer audience (Suvarnaphaet & Suvarnaphaet, 2021). It is questionable in terms of language use in the podcasts such as impolite words or inappropriate expressions (Suvarnaphaet & Suvarnaphaet, 2021). To help improve Thai students' English listening skills, it is necessary for the podcasters to create the content that is appropriate for the students' proficiency, and it could be applied as learning tools. A study by Vandergrift and Goh (2012) highlighted that podcasts offer learners exposure to authentic language usage, revealing details about real-life speech, colloquialisms, and varying accents. This exposure is crucial for students in Thailand, where English instruction often relies on simplified, scripted materials that do not reflect natural speech patterns (Kirkpatrick, 2012). By listening to podcasts, students can familiarize themselves with diverse pronunciations and speech speeds, which can help improve their overall listening comprehension.

Research on the use of podcasts in the Thai context suggested that this method is particularly beneficial for Thai students due to the country's educational system's reliance on traditional, teacher-centered instruction (Montawat et al., 2023). Thai students, especially those in higher education, often face challenges when attempting to understand native speakers or casual conversations in English, as they are typically exposed only to formal, textbook English in the classroom. Podcasts provide an alternative that bridges this gap by offering informal, real-world content that is often more engaging and relatable. Jantee (2022) and Luadthong (2024) developed the packages of podcast program for tenth grade students in Thailand. Researchers found that students could effectively use the podcast to improve their English listening skills. Moreover, the students were satisfied with using the podcasts in the English language classrooms. In a study by Harahap (2020) and Montawat et al. (2023), Thai university students who incorporated podcasts into their language learning demonstrated significant improvements in their listening skills. The study found that students who listened to podcasts reported better comprehension of English audio materials and felt more confident in understanding spoken English in various contexts, from academic lectures to everyday conversations. The ability to replay podcast episodes also plays a crucial role in improving listening skills. Thai students often struggle to comprehend spoken English due to linguistic and cultural differences, but they can benefit from controlling the pace of their learning. The option to pause, rewind, and re-listen to podcast content allows learners to process complex or unfamiliar language at their pace (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). This flexibility has been found to foster greater learner autonomy and motivation, which are essential for effective language acquisition (Kukulaska-Hulme, 2020).

### **4.3 Improving Listening Skills through Podcast**

The diverse and dynamic nature of podcasts, which cover a wide range of topics from news and interviews to storytelling and discussions, appeals to students' varied interests and learning preferences (Kukulka-Hulme, 2020). This engagement is essential for maintaining motivation, which is often a challenge for Thai learners in language acquisition (Kirkpatrick, 2012). The use of podcasts aligns with the growing trend of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL). Students can access podcasts on their mobile devices anytime and anywhere. This convenience further enhances the appeal of podcasts as a learning tool. Research has shown that students who engaged with MALL—podcast—were more likely to develop their English listening and speaking skills (Chitprarop, 2024; Hilman et al., 2024; Ramirez, 2024; Saragih et al., 2022). As Hoan and Cuc (2021) stated, podcasts are effective in developing students' listening skills. Although there were issues with internet connectivity and listening to podcasts without transcripts, participants still maintained a positive attitude toward using podcasts to strengthen their listening skills. This aligns with Aunpikul and Kong-in (2023), which stated that the development of a podcast application combined with blended learning effectively enhances the English listening skills of grade 12 students and their ability to identify vocabulary, grasp main ideas, and understand reasoning from the content.

Despite the advantages of podcasts, several challenges must be addressed when implementing this tool with Thai students. While podcasts are generally beneficial for listening practice, students who are not yet proficient in English may experience it difficult to comprehend fast-paced, colloquial speech or content that uses specialized vocabulary. Ramirez (2024) and Saragih et al. (2022) noted that choosing podcasts that are appropriate for the students' proficiency level is important because it guarantees that the material does not become overwhelming or discouraging. Additionally, while podcasts are an excellent tool for independent learning, they should not replace traditional classroom instruction entirely. Teachers should guide students in selecting appropriate podcasts and integrating them into a well-rounded language learning curriculum that includes speaking, reading, and writing components (Luadthong, 2024). By exposing learners to authentic English language use, podcasts help bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world language application. Additionally, it is important for educators to consider students' proficiency levels and carefully curate podcast materials to ensure that they are both accessible and beneficial to learners.

## **5. Methodology**

This study used a survey and a one-group pre-test-post-test design, which is a form of pre-experimental design in quasi-experiments. This study included a pre-test followed by listening to podcasts, and a post-test for a single group. The participants were assigned to listen to the given podcasts for three weeks (one podcast a week), and then the students were asked to take the posttest. The purpose of using the one-group pre-test-post-

test design was to examine the effects of podcasts on students' English listening skills before and after listening to the podcasts provided by the researchers. Additionally, after the posttest, the participants were also asked to complete a questionnaire to investigate their perceptions towards using podcasts to enhance their English listening skills and their level of satisfaction with the podcasts used in this study. The integration of the research findings from the tests and the survey could benefit English instructors by tailoring English listening lessons to suit students' language proficiency and their perceptions.

### **5.1 Population and Participants**

The population of the study was 33 first-year students majoring in English who enrolled in the weekend program at a university in Songkhla, Thailand, and registered in the second semester of the academic year 2024. This group of students was equivalent to third-year students in the weekday program, who were required to complete the TOEIC test. Therefore, preparing them for this listening practice could be beneficial.

Purposive sampling technique was applied in this study, as the inclusion criteria were that all participants were required to pass at least two compulsory courses: English for Life courses and English Reading and Writing courses, and they were required to have a grade point average (GPA) higher than 2.00. According to the registration office of the university (data on 25th December 2024), thirty students passed the requirements, so they were initially selected to participate in the study. However, during the process of data collection, one student dropped out of the university. Therefore, the study included a total of 29 students.

### **5.2 Instruments**

The instruments used in this study were podcasts, a pre-test, a post-test, and a questionnaire.

#### **5.2.1 Podcast**

The podcasts used for the pretest, the posttest, and treatment were developed by students and their advisor<sup>1</sup> in the independent study course in the first semester of academic year 2024. The podcasts are audio files featuring three stories considered legends from Songkhla: Rat Island and Cat Island, Kao Seng Beach, and the Golden Mermaid. The researchers selected these stories to enhance students' understanding of cultural diversity and the cultural and historical heritage of Songkhla through the legends, which may also improve students' listening skills. The stories were sourced from the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre (2019), Songkhla City Hall (2016), and Songkhla Heritage Trust (2018). Each podcast is approximately three minutes

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long and recorded by a native English speaker. The podcasts were validated by three experienced researchers in English and tourism to ensure that the content, language use, and pacing were appropriate for undergraduates and aligned with the study's objectives.

### **5.2.2 A Pre-test and a Post-test**

A pretest and a posttest were developed, drawing on relevant studies, to ensure alignment with the objectives of listening for gist and listening for details. These assessments were administered using Google Forms. Each test consists of 30 multiple-choice questions, divided into three sections based on the podcast stories, with 10 questions in each section, totaling 30 marks. Three experienced researchers reviewed the tests to verify content accuracy and ensure they met the research objectives, employing the Item Objective Congruence (IOC) method. The average IOC score was found to be 0.97, indicating that both the pretest and posttest were suitable for data collection. This high IOC score confirms that the tests were valid for the study's purposes. Consequently, the researchers proceeded to administer the pretest and posttest to the participants, allowing for a thorough assessment of their knowledge and understanding of the podcast content.

### **5.2.3 A Questionnaire on Using Podcasts**

A questionnaire on the podcast was designed to inquire about students' perceptions towards using podcasts in English language classrooms and their satisfaction with the use of the podcasts provided in this study. The questionnaire was divided into three sections: general information about the respondents, a survey on using podcasts to enhance the English listening skills of Thai undergraduates, which includes close-ended questions and utilizes a Likert scale for respondents to express their perceptions of using podcasts in English language classrooms (20 items), and their satisfaction with the podcasts provided in this study (10 items). A five-point Likert scale is used in this section, including strongly agree (5), agree (4), undecided (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). Section 3 was designed as an open-ended question to determine if the participants have any suggestions regarding using podcasts to strengthen their listening skills. Three experienced researchers validated the questionnaire for content accuracy and conformity with research objectives using the IOC method. It was found that the questionnaire had a consistency index of 0.82, which means it can be used for data collection. We also calculated Cronbach's alpha to assess the questionnaire's reliability, resulting in a value of 0.914. This value indicates that the questionnaire demonstrates an acceptable level of reliability.

## **5.3 Data Collection**

The researchers informed the participants about their rights and the objectives of this study prior to data collection. Then the participants were invited to sign a form of



consent. Following the participants' signing of a consent form, a researcher administered a pre-test, activated the podcasts, which would be played only once, and instructed the students to finish the test. The participants needed to take the test and listen to the podcasts simultaneously. It took approximately 10 minutes to complete the test. Then the podcast URL was forwarded to the participants, and they were assigned to listen to the podcast, a story a week independently, for three weeks in total. We allowed the participants to repeatedly listen to the podcasts throughout the weeks. Subsequently, the students were asked to complete a posttest to determine if the podcasts had an impact on their scores. The posttest consisted of similar questions to the pretest, allowing us to measure any changes in their understanding and retention of the material. The results were analyzed to assess the effectiveness of the podcasts in enhancing the participants' learning outcomes. Then the QR code of the questionnaire would be distributed to the participants to investigate their perception towards using podcasts to strengthen their English listening skills and to determine the level of students' satisfaction with using the podcasts provided in the study. The participants took approximately 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Data from the pretests, the posttests, and the questionnaires were checked for any missing information. It was found that all data were completed, and it could be used for data analysis.

#### **5.4 Data Analysis**

Statistics used to compare the results of the pre-test and post-test of students from learning through podcasts were frequency, mean ( $\bar{X}$ ), standard deviation (S.D.), and Paired Samples T-test.

Statistics used to determine students' perceptions towards using podcasts in English language classroom and their satisfaction towards podcasts used in this study were mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), standard deviation (S.D.), and criteria for interpreting measured values of Likert Rating Scales with criteria for interpreting measured values as follows: An average score of 4.20 - 5.00 means the highest; 3.40 - 4.19 means high; 2.60 - 3.39 means moderate; 1.80 - 2.59 means low, and 1.00 - 1.79 means the lowest.

For an open-ended question in section 3 of the questionnaire, the data would be grouped in themes using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis process commenced with becoming familiar with the data, which involved transcribing all relevant details. The data written in Thai would be translated and transcribed into English, and the data written in English would be refined into an appropriate sentence for better understanding. Following this, the data were re-examined to generate initial codes. This step involved identifying keywords, phrases, and sentences that could offer a comprehensive understanding of the participants' perspectives on using podcasts to enhance their English listening skills. This process allowed for a thorough analysis of the insights gathered, leading to the development of themes that highlighted the benefits and challenges associated with podcast usage in language learning. Ultimately, these findings

aimed to inform educators and learners about effective strategies for utilizing podcasts to improve English listening proficiency. The themes were also cross-verified with co-researchers.

### 5.5 Ethical Considerations

The researcher stored all participant-related documents in a secure location and closely monitored every step taken when engaging with questionnaire respondents. Furthermore, before gathering data, the researcher applied for approval and permission to conduct the study from the Institutional Review Board for Human Subject Research at Sirindhorn College of Public Health, Yala. This study's Certificate of Approval, No. SCPHYLIRB-2567/464, was issued on January 3, 2025.

## 6. Results of the Study

The participants in this study consisted of 29 students (17 females, 58.62%; 11 males, 37.93%; 1 student prefers not to say, 3.45%). All participants were first-year students enrolled in weekend program, majoring in English, in the second semester of the 2024 academic year.

**Table 1:** Test of normality (n=28)

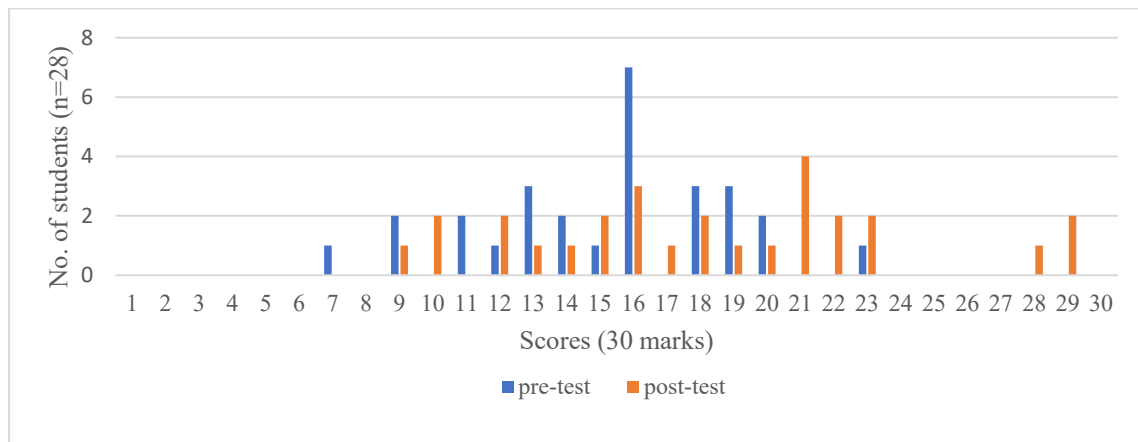
Pre-test	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
scores	.150	28	.107	.974	28	.701

p<0.05

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

For the tests, scores of 28 students were analyzed after an outlier had been excluded. The Shapiro-Wilk test was applied for the test of normality due to the small sample size (n<50) (Razali & Wah, 2011) to examine whether the students' performance was different. As shown in Table 1, the pre-test scores distributed normally, as there is no significant difference found in the Shapiro-Wilk test (p=0.701), meaning that the participants in this study shared the same experiences of English listening skills.

## 6.1 The Students' Pre-test and Post-test Scores



**Figure 1** The Students' Pre-test and Post-test Scores (n=28)

As shown in Figure 1, the results from the pre-test revealed that out of 30 scores, the highest score the participant attained was 23, which was achieved by one student, accounting for 3.57 percent, and the lowest score was 7, which was earned by one student, accounting for 3.57 percent. The post-test results showed that out of 30 scores, the maximum score gained by the participants was 29 attained by two students, accounting for 7.14 percent, with the minimum score of 9 achieved by one student, accounting for 3.57 percent.

**Table 2:** The Students' Pre-test and Post-test Scores (n=28)

Test	Score	n	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	t	df	Sig
Pre-test	30	28	15.25	3.777	-2.140	27	0.042*
Post-test	30	28	18.21	5.499			

\*p<0.05

As presented in Table 2, once the pre-test and the post-test scores of the sample group were compared, the mean of the posttest scores was significantly different from the pretest (p-value = 0.042). The mean of pretest was 15.25 with the standard deviation of 3.777, and the mean of the posttest was 18.21 with the standard deviation of 5.499.

## 6.2 The Student's Perceptions towards Using Podcasts in English Language Classrooms

To examine the students' perceptions towards the podcasts to improve their English listening skills and the students' satisfaction with the podcasts used in the study, twenty-nine voluntary students were included in data analysis.

**Table 3:** The Perception of Students towards Using Podcast in English Language Classrooms (n=29)

Content	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level of Perception
1. I like listening to podcasts in Thai.	4.00	.463	High
2. I like listening to podcasts in English.	3.93	.753	High
3. My English vocabulary will increase after listening to podcasts.	4.17	.602	High
4. Podcasts can be used to improve my English language skills.	4.31	.541	High
5. Podcast is easy to use and appropriate for me.	4.07	.704	High
6. Podcasts meet my need in improving my English listening skills.	4.21	.491	High
7. Listening to podcasts is fun and enjoyable.	4.07	.704	High
8. The length of podcasts is appropriate.	4.17	.468	High
9. The length of podcasts affects my motivation to listen to them.	4.28	.455	High
10. It is easy for me to find podcasts that match my interests.	4.14	.351	High
11. The topic of podcasts affects my motivation to listen.	4.10	.673	High
12. I will listen to podcasts outside the classroom to develop my English listening skills.	4.03	.626	High
13. Listening to podcasts in English is challenging for me.	4.24	.511	High
14. Listening to English podcasts without a transcript is quite challenging.	4.31	.604	High
15. I find the speech rate of native speakers hard to comprehend the content.	4.24	.435	High
16. Listening to podcasts helps me familiar with different accents.	4.17	.602	High
17. Listening to English podcasts helps improve my ability to grasp key points for better comprehension.	4.24	.511	High
18. I find podcasts helpful in listening to English.	4.31	.541	High
19. I want podcasts to be implemented in English listening courses.	4.28	.591	High
20. I want podcasts to be integrated in any English language courses.	4.10	.673	High
Total	4.17	.565	High

As shown in Table 3, the students perceived positive attitudes towards the use of podcasts to enhance their English listening skills at a high level ( $\bar{x}=4.17$ , S.D. 0.565), meaning that they realize the benefits of listening to podcasts. When considering each item, items 4, 14, and 18 got the highest mean scores ( $\bar{x} = 4.31$ , S.D. 0.541;  $\bar{x} = 4.31$ , S.D. 0.604;  $\bar{x} = 4.31$ , S.D. 0.541, respectively), emphasizing the challenges of listening to podcasts without the transcripts.

### 6.3 The Students' Level of Satisfaction with the Podcasts Used in This Study

To investigate if the students satisfied with the podcasts used in this study, those twenty-nine participants were also used in data analysis.

**Table 4:** The Satisfaction of the Content in the Podcasts (n=29)

Content	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level of Satisfaction
21. The content of each story is easy to follow.	4.07	.704	High
22. The content of each story is suitable for the student's English proficiency level.	4.17	.468	High
23. The length of each story is at an appropriate level.	4.28	.455	High
24. The content of each story is clear and corresponds to situation presented in each podcast.	4.21	.620	High
Total	4.18	.562	High

Regarding the content, Table 4 presented that the overall satisfaction of the students was at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 4.18$ , S.D. = 0.562) when ‘the length of each story is at an appropriate level’ got the highest mean score ( $\bar{x}=4.28$ , S.D. 0.455).

**Table 5:** The Satisfaction of the Use of Language (n=29)

The Use of Language	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level of Satisfaction
25. The pronunciation and the use of language are clear and easy to understand.	4.03	.566	High
26. The speed is at an appropriate level.	4.03	.823	High
27. There are varieties of vocabulary in the podcasts.	4.31	.541	High
Total	4.12	.643	High

Table 5 showed that the overall satisfaction with the use of language was at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 4.12$ , S.D. 0.643). When considering each item, it was found that ‘There are varieties of vocabulary in the podcasts.’ ( $\bar{x} = 4.31$ , S.D. 0.541) got the highest mean score.

**Table 6:** The Satisfaction of the Benefits of Podcasts (n=29)

The Benefits of Podcasts	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level of Satisfaction
28. These podcasts help me practice identifying details and answering questions.	4.24	.511	High
29. These podcasts influence my motivation to improve my English listening skills.	4.28	.528	High
30. I think students can use these podcasts to develop their English language learning skills.	4.17	.658	High
Total	4.23	.566	High

Table 6 showed that the overall satisfaction with the benefits of podcasts was at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 4.23$ , S.D. 0.566). It could be seen that the podcasts could motivate the

students to improve their English listening skills, help them practice identifying details and answering questions. The finding also reported that the podcasts used in this study could be used to develop students' English language learning skills.

**Table 7:** Overall of the Students' Satisfaction (n=29)

Overall	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level of Satisfaction
1. Content	4.18	0.562	High
2. The Use of Language	4.12	0.643	High
3. The Benefits of Podcasts	4.23	0.566	High
Total	4.18	0.590	High

Table 7 showed that the overall satisfaction for all three aspects of the satisfaction questionnaire combined was at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 4.18$ , S.D. = 0.590), confirming that the students find the usefulness of the podcasts.

#### **6.4 Suggestions on Using Podcasts to Improve Students' Listening Skills and Their English Language Proficiency**

Regarding students' suggestion in an open-ended question, twenty students (n=20) participated in the section. The suggestions could be grouped into four themes as follows: benefits of listening to podcasts for language learning, challenges with podcasts and listening speed, technology and modern relevance, and podcasts as a tool for overall skill development.

##### **6.4.1 Benefits of Listening to Podcasts for Language Learning**

Out of 20 students, fourteen of them (70%) stated that listening to podcasts could enhance their listening and vocabulary skills including listening for gist (S1, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S14, S15, S24, S26, S27, and S28), as shown in examples.

(It is) good. (S1, S24)

It can be applied in every English subject. At least students can use it (the podcast) to improve English listening skills. (S6)

I usually listen to (the podcast) in the topic I am interested in in English. It could help build up our vocabulary. (S8)

It is very good (to listen to the podcast) (because) it helps improve listening skills and our accents, and improve listening for gist. (S10)

The podcast could help us gain more knowledge. Those who are not good at English can listen to the podcast repeatedly. (S26)

#### **6.4.2 Challenges with Podcasts and Listening Speed**

Four of them (20%) suggested that listening to podcast is challenging, especially for those who are not proficient in English. Although listening to podcast is beneficial, the listening speed in the podcast should be slow, so the listeners could catch the words and comprehend the context in the podcast easier. (S13, S16, S17, and S18)

I think the speed of podcast should be slow. (S13)

The podcast for students should be slow and easy to listen. (S16)

I rarely listen to podcasts because I'm busy, but I believe that it can help us improve and develop our English skills. (S17)

I think listening to podcasts helps improve speaking skills, but (sometimes) it is too fast, so I couldn't catch the words. (S18)

#### **6.4.3 Technology and Modern Relevance**

One student (5%) mentioned that using podcasts in English language classroom to enhance students' English language proficiency is suitable in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

(It is) cool and suitable in this era, 2025. (S23)

#### **6.4.4 Podcasts as a Tool for Overall Skill Development**

One student (5%) suggested that using the podcast in English language classroom is beneficial, not only for listening skills development, but also their reading and writing skills.

The podcast could develop many skills in English language like reading or writing. (S29)

### **7. Discussion**

This study utilized podcasts as a tool to assist students in enhancing their English listening skills. The research aimed to investigate the effects of podcast usage on the listening comprehension of first-year students in a weekend program majoring in English, as well as to explore students' perceptions of using podcasts in English language classrooms and their satisfaction with the podcasts implemented in this study. The results of previous studies were discussed as follows.

### **7.1 The Impact of Podcast Utilization**

The study demonstrated a statistically significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores, with an improvement at the 0.042 level, indicating that post-test scores were higher than pre-test scores. This suggests that students developed the ability to comprehend and grasp the main points of the audio content, resulting in notably improved post-test scores. The results align with those of several researchers (Furakul, 2022; Maliwan, 2019; Thilaphan et al., 2020; Sangnok & Jaturapitakkul, 2019; Yaemtui, 2025), who found that many students struggled with English listening due to limited proficiency, including difficulties with speaker accents, pronunciation, and vocabulary. These challenges include finding specific details, summarizing important information, making inferences or comments, and predicting outcomes from the texts they listen to. After listening to podcasts, students reported improvements in their English listening and comprehension skills. Jantee (2022) and Luadthong (2024) noted significant enhancements in students' listening abilities following engagement with podcast audio, as evidenced by the pre-test and post-test results. This indicates that more proficient listeners benefit even more from this technique. Similarly, Ramirez (2024) highlighted that podcasts effectively enhanced students' English listening skills for comprehension, knowledge acquisition, communication, enjoyment, and emotional engagement. Therefore, podcasts could be valuable resources for students in their daily lives and further learning due to their engaging content, convenience, and accessibility. Additionally, the wide range of topics available in podcasts enables students to explore their interests while simultaneously improving their language proficiency. Incorporating podcasts into educational settings can create a more dynamic and interactive learning environment.

### **7.2 The Students' Perceptions towards Using Podcasts in English Language Classrooms**

The participants in the study expressed positive perceptions toward using podcasts to strengthen their listening skills. Although many of them found listening to podcasts challenging, they acknowledged its benefits for their English language development. Podcasts are user-friendly and can be accessed anytime, anywhere. This aligns with Harahap (2020) and Suvarnaphaet and Suvarnaphaet (2021), who noted that podcasts are accessible audio content on the internet, similar to broadcast radio, stimulating listeners' imagination. Listening to podcasts can effectively improve students' listening skills. These findings are further supported by Laiya et al. (2022) and Ramirez (2024), who highlighted the advantages of podcasts in teaching and learning due to their accessibility and ease of use. Montawat et al. (2023) also found that students reported positive perceptions of using podcasts, as they felt more confident in understanding spoken English in various contexts. Similarly, Hoan and Cuc (2021) discovered that students had positive attitudes toward using podcasts, although they sometimes encountered issues with internet connectivity. Saragih et al. (2022) and Vandergrift and



Goh (2012) supported the idea that students' positive perceptions of using podcasts in the English language classrooms stem from their ability to practice listening at their pace. Due to this flexibility, students can pause, rewind, and listen repeatedly, which can help motivate them to learn (Kukulska-Hulme, 2020). This adaptability enhances comprehension and allows learners to engage with the material in a manner that suits their individual learning styles. This personalized approach not only fosters a more profound understanding of the content but also encourages students to take ownership of their learning journey. As a result, podcasts can serve as a valuable supplementary resource in language education, fostering greater engagement and improving overall language proficiency.

### **7.3 The Students' Satisfaction through Podcasts Used in This Study**

Regarding the participants' satisfaction with the podcasts used in this study, the result showed high levels of satisfaction with the content, language use, and its benefits. The result is similar to those reported by Harahap (2020), Luadthong (2024), Montawat et al. (2023), Ramirez (2024), and Saragilh et al. (2022), that most students often encountered the challenges when attempting to understand native speakers or casual conversation in English, and they were not familiar with diverse accents, as they were exposed only to formal English textbooks in the classrooms. The podcasts, which are designed according to students' levels of English proficiency, could motivate them to better understand what they are listening to, and the students themselves could feel more engaged with the content, facilitating their language acquisition (Kirkpatrick, 2012; Kukulska-Hulme, 2020). The speed rate, content, and language used in the podcast could also encourage students to listen to it more frequently and become more familiar with the various accents (Thilaphan et al., 2020; Yaemtui, 2025). This repeated exposure could enhance their listening skills and improve their overall comprehension.

The study indicates that podcasts significantly improved students' listening abilities and promoted flexible English learning. Following the podcasts, participants exhibited enhanced academic achievement, as the content, which was customized based on students' language proficiency, strengthened their English listening abilities. The research found that podcasts served as an efficient medium for improving English listening skills and could be utilized in everyday life and for continuous education. With this adaptability, podcasts are a valuable resource for both educators and learners, as they facilitate a more personalized and engaging learning experience. Learners can explore themes of personal interest by utilizing the variety of topics and formats offered by podcasts, which makes language acquisition enjoyable and efficient. With the development of technology, language instruction will be further improved and expanded to meet the demands of a larger audience through the possibility of even more immersive and interactive podcast experiences.

## **8. Conclusion**

This study aimed to investigate the effects of podcasts on students' English listening skills, as well as their perceptions towards podcasts and their satisfaction with the podcasts used in the study. The research employed a one-group pre-test-post-test design and included a survey. The participants were 29 students majoring in English at a university in Songkhla, Thailand, during the second semester of the 2024 academic year. However, due to the identification of an outlier in the pretest results, data from 28 participants were analyzed to assess their listening performance in both the pretest and posttest. The findings indicated that students were able to comprehend and retain the key aspects of the material after listening to the podcasts. Posttest scores were higher than pretest scores, demonstrating a significant improvement compared to the pretest findings. Data suggested that repeated listening to the podcasts enabled students to enhance their comprehension and understanding of the material's key ideas. Additionally, participants expressed positive perceptions of using podcasts to strengthen their listening skills. Although many found listening to podcasts challenging, they acknowledged it as beneficial for their English language development. Participants noted that the engaging format of podcasts made the learning experience enjoyable and motivating. They suggested incorporating more varied topics in future episodes to further enhance their learning and keep their interest levels high. These ideas could involve exploring themes related to current events, cultural insights, or practical language usage in everyday situations. By diversifying the content, participants believed they could deepen their understanding and maintain a higher level of engagement throughout their learning journey. This approach would cater to different interests and encourage discussions among participants, which promotes a sense of community. Ultimately, by tailoring the podcast content to their preferences, listeners can feel more connected and invested in their learning experience. This connection can lead to increased motivation and a greater willingness to explore new topics. As listeners share their thoughts and experiences, they enrich their learning and contribute to a vibrant dialogue that enhances the overall educational atmosphere. Furthermore, regarding the participants' satisfaction with the podcasts used in this study, they reported high levels of satisfaction with the content, language use, and overall advantages of the podcasts. In summary, the findings of this study indicate that implementing podcasts in the language classroom could effectively enhance students' English listening skills.

## **9. Recommendations and Limitations of the Study**

To motivate students to practice their English listening, the findings can serve as a guideline to improve students' English listening proficiency and for those who want to strengthen their English listening skills. Based on the results, teachers, educators, and instructors should consider selecting suitable podcasts that match students' interests and integrating them in language classrooms, which could motivate students' English language learning more effectively. This study also adds to the growing body of work on technology-

enhanced language learning, particularly in non-native English-speaking contexts, although there are some limitations regarding the small number of subjects used in the study, so it could not be generalized. However, it provides a foundation for future impact studies on the long-term impact of podcasts on language proficiency.

Future research could explore the diverse ways in which podcasts can be tailored to specific learner needs and preferences, potentially enhancing engagement and retention. This effort could involve investigating different genres of podcasts, varying lengths, or even interactive elements that might cater to different learning styles. In doing so, researchers may uncover strategies that maximize the educational benefits of podcasts, making them a more valuable resource for language learners. Additionally, researchers could further illuminate the role of different types of podcast content, such as narrative versus informational, in language acquisition by examining their effectiveness. By examining their effectiveness, researchers can gain insights into how various formats influence learner motivation and comprehension. This understanding could lead to more targeted and effective podcast-based language learning resources that better meet the needs of diverse audiences.

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