

**Iranian EFL Learners' Attitudes toward Using British Council
Video Clips and Podcasts for
Listening Comprehension**

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Abstract

The current study intended to investigate the attitudes of Iranian intermediate EFL learners toward using British Council video clips and podcasts for listening comprehension. The participants were selected from among 132 intermediate learners based on their performance on an English proficiency test. 90 female EFL learners were selected and divided into three groups of 30 participants (i.e., one control group and two experimental groups). One of the experimental groups practiced British Council video clips while the other experimental group was instructed through British Council podcasts. The control group went through the same lesson plan without any video clips and podcasts. Once the treatment was over, the attitude questionnaire was administered to all groups. Based on the results of ANOVA and **Scheffe test**, it could be concluded that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the three groups on the attitude questionnaire. More specifically, the video clips had the most statistically significant effect on the positive attitude of intermediate learners in comparison with the other groups.

Keywords: British Council, video clips, podcasts, attitude, listening comprehension.

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1. Introduction

The use of technologies for learning has been highlighted over the last three decades. During this period, the use of computer-assisted language learning applications has created a revolution in language education (Warschauer & Kern, 2000). It has become the interest of many foreign language teachers and SLA researchers (Ellis, 2015; Fotos & Browne, 2013; Rahimpour, 2011). The development of CALL programs can be divided into three phases: behaviouristic CALL, communicative CALL, and integrative CALL (Kern & Warschauer, 2000; Warschauer & Healey, 1998). Additionally, three different categories of CALL have brought about significant changes in language teaching and learning since the early 1960s (Kern & Warschauer, 2000, Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The use of CALL application can increase learners' motivation to take more part in listening activities and improve their listening comprehension. Many researchers have already shown that CALL can encourage learners to bolster their listening comprehension abilities (Brett, 1996; Grgurovic & Hegelheimer, 2007; Liou, 2000).

Additionally, CALL application is integrated with multimedia and the internet resources for language learning. Multimedia and internet resources can influence second language learning. Many researchers have already shown that using multimedia in the area of education has a huge effect on language learning (Jones & Plass, 2005; Moren & Valdez, 2005; Nikolova, 2002; Tsou, Wang, & Tzeng, 2006).

Today, video clips are one of the most popular recourses for learning a language mainly listening learning. Lee, Liao, and Wang (2015) claimed that audio-visual tools facilitate listening comprehension and prompt learning process in the language classroom. Accordingly, video clips can influence learners' attitudes in language learning (Rosenbaum, 2013). The use of audio-visual aids (e.g., video clips) can prompt learners' attitudes to participate in listening comprehension practice.

Moreover, podcasts have a significant impact on language learning especially listening skills. They are different from audio files such as CDs, tape and radio broadcast; they can form part of a series. Many studies have been done to show the advantages of podcasts in language learning. The majority of outcomes have shown that podcasts have a positive impact on the language learning (McKinney, Dyck, & Luber, 2009). Also, podcasts can help to bolster *students' attitude towards learning a second language* (Bolliger, Supanakorn, & Boggs, 2010).

The aim of this study was to find the attitudes of EFL learners toward using British Council video clips, podcasts and the traditional listening

techniques for listening comprehension. To achieve the purpose of this study, the following research question was posed:

1. Are there any statistically significant differences between the attitudes of Iranian intermediate EFL learners toward using British Council video clips, podcasts and the traditional listening techniques for listening comprehension?

2. Literature Review

Since 1990, the use of computers has been booming in the language learning and teaching. Many scholars claimed that the use of CALL application can influence the learners' positive attitudes in the field of the language learning (Ayres, 2002; Klassen & Milton, 1999; Okan & Torun, 2007). Marzban (2011) claimed that the role of CALL has become so important in the teaching of modern languages, and it has provided many advantages for teachers, linguists, and computer researchers.

Today, multimedia technology can be regarded as computer-based materials to integrate a wide range of media (text, images, sound, animation, and full-motion video) and all skills learning (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) on a digital device (Beatty, 2010; Davies, 2011). According to Mayer (2005), multimedia can be defined as “the use of words and pictures to provide meaningful input, facilitate meaningful interaction with the target language, and elicit meaningful output” (p.468). Moreover, Davies (2011) stated that a multimedia computer has contained a variety of interactive exercises that can encourage learners to improve their second language. The aim of Multimedia computer is to trigger students' motivations with the use of computer and enhancing their ability in the language learning and teaching (Levy, 1997). The using multimedia can increase the learners' attention and ability in the language learning through the integration of images, sound, and video on a digital machine (Davies, 2011; Moreno & Valdez, 2005). Various studies have been highlighted that the use of the multimedia computer in education can increase learners' motivation to improve learning their second language (Jones & Plass, 2002; Moreno & Valdez, 2005).

In 2004s, the item podcast was first coined as a digital media file that distributed over the internet (Geoghegan, Cangialosi, Irelan, & Bourquin, 2012). Additionally, Holtz and Hobson (2007) stated that a podcast can be defined as a sound—or audio—file that has been stored on a digital media player or computer. These audio files are freely available to download and listen to anyone who has Internet access. A podcast can be considered as a teaching tool and can provide many advantages in the second language learning such as listening repeatedly, providing facility for distance learners and auditory learners (Heilesen, 2010), multitasking while moving about (Heilesen, 2010), and providing access to a multiple audio feeds for EFL

learners (Geoghegan, Cangialosi, Irelan, & Bourquin, 2012). Heilesen (2010) believed that the use of podcast can build positive attitudes for learners in general and also provide a genuine improvement in their study environment. Some researchers have reported that the use of podcasts in the academic environment can increase learners' motivation toward the language learning in general (Bolliger, Suanakorn, & Boggs, 2010; Fernandez, Simo, & Sallan, 2009). Also, Fernandez, Simo, and Sallan (2009) examined the feeling and reactions of learners toward the use of podcasts and found that podcasts as a powerful tool increased learners' motivation in learning.

Since 1980, the role of listening comprehension in the second language learning has been dramatically increased. Listening comprehension can be defined as an active and dynamic process including hearing the different sounds, understanding lexicons and grammatical constructions and having communication (Vandergrift, 2004). Listening acts as a processor of the meaning of words and sentences through the brain to facts and ideas can be understood. It can be important to note that listening is different than hearing. It happens when learners intend to gain further comprehension of meaning. According to Krashen and Terrell (1983), When EFL learners contribute to comprehensible input, language acquisition occurs and they learn a new language.

Today, Attitude as the popular topic has discussed in the learning process. Leong and Austin (2006) claimed that attitudes play a very crucial role in the human point of view, feelings, emotions, performance and success. Attitudes towards language learning can act either as the positive attitude or negative attitude. The positive attitude has the effect on students' success, and negative attitude has the effect of students' failure in their learning. According to Dörnyei and Csizé (2002), the positive attitude can play the role of bridge and negative attitude can play the role of barrier in learning a second language. Moreover, the positive attitude has the role facilitator in learning a new language (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002). Also, De Bot, Lowie, and Verspoor (2005) claimed that teachers, learners, and researchers believe that a high motivation and a positive language attitude will facilitate the learning of a second language.

Finally, attitude forms practice (DeLuca, Fox, Johnson, & Kogen, 2013). Therefore, If EFL learners show positive attitudes to apply British Council video clips and podcasts (as the online resource), they will be led to use the video clips or podcasts on this site and practice every day to improve their listening comprehension.

Newly, the use of British Council website has developed in educational field (Coleman, 2011). British Council can be considered as the world's largest English-language teaching organisation (Fisher, 2009). Today, British Council.org is one of the websites that can show prestigious culture

and international community of English speakers to increase the learners' motivation and improve their four language learning skills especially listening skills. Wallace and Dunn (2013) claimed that this website provides activities for people that can learn English in a more interesting way. Through British Council website, EFL learners can prompt their knowledge language with the best experts in the world (Coleman, 2011). Additionally, British Council website provides many unbelievable video clips and podcasts for EFL learners to increase their English language.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants in the present study were 90 Iranian intermediate EFL learners. All of the participants were female, native speakers of Persian and were aged between 11 and 15. Subsequently, the PET was administered to a target sample of 132 intermediate learners and as a result, 90 participants whose scores fell between one standard deviation below and above the mean were selected and randomly assigned to three groups of 30 learners (a control group and two experimental groups). Three classes were used; 60 learners were in experimental groups and 30 learners were in the control group.

3.2. Instruments and Materials

Adaptation of Li-Li Kuo (2009) attitude questionnaire was used in this study at the end of the treatment to check the participants' attitudes toward using British Council video clips, podcasts, and the traditional listening techniques. The researcher used an attitude questionnaire that was designed by Li-Li Kuo at La Sierra University. Li-Li Kuo created the students' attitudes toward YouTube use and its impact on listening performance. The researcher adapted the attitude questionnaire and used the items of British Council video clips, podcasts, and Tactics listening activities instead of the item of YouTube in this questionnaire. This adaptation consists of ten items which are in the form of a five-point likert scale to rate students' agreement or disagreement with statements relating to several perspectives—benefit in listening comprehension, the usability of the material, interest, motivation, and so on. The ten items of the attitude questionnaire were grouped into two subscales, one named attitude toward English in General and the other attitude toward English Listening, consisting of 5 different statement questions each. Besides, the questionnaire was given to three experts to judge it. Also, Kuo examined the reliability of the attitude questionnaire. A Cronbach's Alpha of .83 and .89 pointed to acceptable reliabilities of the two subscales (Appendix A).

Additionally, the textbook used at the intermediate level of language school was tactics for listening, by Jack C. Richards (2011). This textbook which was used by three groups in this study was same. The topics, contents, and levels of the textbook were chosen to develop learners' comprehension capability and listening skills acquisition.

3.3. Procedures

For the purpose of selecting a homogeneous group of participants regarding their language proficiency the Preliminary English Test (PET) was administered to a target sample of 132 intermediate learners and as a result 90 students whose scores fell between one standard deviation below and above the mean were selected.

Each class started with a warm-up phase. The teacher prepared the participants for the subject they were supposed to listen to by asking questions and engaging the learners in the discussions on the topic; this could be considered as a kind brainstorming. For the experimental groups, the researcher demonstrated to the participants how to find and use podcasts and video clips from British Council website in the first session. The researcher played the selected, downloaded British Council video clips episodes or podcasts episodes for three times and ran at the same speed for the participants. In this website, there are some activities such as listening for gist, multiple-choice questions, fill in the blanks and listening for details. The researcher selected and downloaded them for participants. After watching video clips or listening to an episode of podcasts, the participants were asked to work on the activities which were provided for those parts. Finally, their answers were checked by the teacher. The same lesson plans were used for the participants in the control group as for the two experimental groups with the exception that no British Council video clips and podcasts were included. The whole training lasted for nine sessions and each session lasted for one hour and a half. Once the treatment was over, on nine sessions of the class the attitude questionnaire was administered to all participant groups, including the control group.

4. Results and Discussion

To select the participants required for the study, PET was administered to 132 EFL learners. Then 90 students whose scores fell between one standard deviation below and above the mean were selected.

Table 1 displays the mean and standard deviation of the video clips group ($M=4.1300$, $SD=0.61876$), the mean and standard deviation of the podcast group ($M=3.5233$, $SD=0.60554$, and control group ($M= 2.8467$, $SD=0.40063$).

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of the Administration

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
control group	30	2.8467	.40063	.161
mean video clips group	30	4.1300	.61876	.383
mean podcast group	30	3.5233	.60554	.367
Valid N (listwise)	30			

In order to check the legitimacy of running an independent ANOVA, the data collected from the three groups needed to be checked for the normality of the distribution. Normality was examined through obtaining Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. Then, the one-way ANOVA was run. Table 2 illustrates an independent ANOVA of the score on the attitude questionnaire.

Table 2
Independent ANOVA of the Attitude Questionnaire

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	24.729	2	12.364	40.759	.000
Within Groups	26.391	87	.303		
Total	51.120	89			

The results of the ANOVA showed that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the three groups on the attitude questionnaire ($F(2, 87) = 40.759, p = .00 < .05$). Then, the Scheffe test was run to identify the absolute differences of the three groups' mean scores. The Scheffe test determines which means actually differ. Table 3 shows the result of the Scheffe test.

Table 3
Scheffe test

(I) groups	(J) g	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
video clips group	podcast group	.60667*	.14221	.000	.2525	.9608
	Control group	1.28333*	.14221	.000	.9292	1.6375
podcast group	Control group	.67667*	.14221	.000	.3225	1.0308

According to the result of the Scheffe test, it can be stated that there was a significant difference between the groups' mean scores. The video

clips group was different from the other groups. In the other words, the video clips group significantly had the highest difference from the other groups.

The results of data analysis indicated that learners who were in the video clips group were more willing to increase their listening skill through watching videos. They had the most positive attitude while utilising British Council video instructional materials. As video clips have image clues such as speaker's body language, gestures and other clues, so they can increase the learners' attitude to participate in listening comprehension practice. When language learners get the audio and visual simultaneously, they improve their listening comprehension. In the other words, language learners can dramatically increase their listening comprehension through listening to the sounds and watching the video image. Moreover, the outcomes of this study approve the previous research on the impact of the attitudes of learners toward using online videos for listening comprehension. According to the Wong (2005), the use of visual input along with the audio increases student's attention and encourage them to improve their second language. Many scholars claimed that the use of online multimedia input can influence the learners' positive attitudes in the field of language learning (Levine, Ferenz, & Reves, 2000; Rosenbaum, 2012). These findings demonstrated the role of attitudes as the facilitating factor in any learning process. In a research by Nouri and Shahid's (2005), indicated that positive attitudes have had the strong influence in the development of listening skills. As a result, when students are taught with their favourite materials, they can increase their positive inner attitude to improve language learning. Although a growing number of studies have highlighted the positive connection between the use of video in CALL and the improvement listening comprehension (Jones, 2003; Rosenbaum, 2012; Wong, 2005), most researchers have not determined the authority's online websites or media as an appropriate tool for developing listening skill. British Council website as an authoritative online resource offers many exciting videos and creates real-life situations for EFL learners to improve all four English language skills. Based on the findings, British Council listening/viewing activity can provide positive attitudes for students in general.

Additionally, based on the obtained results, podcasts group gained more scores than the control group. To compare podcast group with the control group, students who were in podcast group were more eager to improve their listening comprehension. Also, they showed a more positive attitude toward using podcasts as an instructional tool in language learning. Fernandez, Simo, and Sallan (2009) examined the feeling and reactions of learners toward the use of podcasts and found that podcasts as a powerful tool increased learners' motivation in learning. Moreover, Copley (2007) examined the effectiveness of podcast materials on learners. His findings

demonstrated that podcast materials provided learners with the sufficient training in strategies, and they were so engaging for learners. According to some studies, the application of podcasts as a new technology can help students to increase their language skills, especially listening skills (O'Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007; Pun, 2006). In contrast, some scholars claimed that the use of podcasts can provide disadvantages in teaching and learning process such as having technical limitations, focusing on a passive learning experience (audio or audio/video facility alone) instead of active learning experience, and providing negative effect learners' presentation in class (Jham, Durae Strassler, Sensi, 2008 ; Palmer, Devitt, Young, & Morris, 2005).

5. Conclusion and Implications

In the previous sections, the scores of the participants on attitude test showed that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of three groups. The video clips group did at a substantially higher level than the podcast group, which in turn did at a substantially higher level than the control group on the attitude questionnaire. Based on the previous researches and the present study, it may be concluded that the use of British council video clips can significantly increase learners' attitudes toward listening learning. In other words, the participants in video clips group enjoyed the highest motivation in performing British Council video watching activities during the class period. Therefore, it may be concluded that watching videos can still be introduced as one of the most popular recourses and a useful teaching tool in the foreign language learning.

Nonetheless, the findings show some implications for language learners and teachers. The results of the current study can help language learners. Based on the results, the authentic video clips can motivate EFL learners to increase desirable skills such as listening skill. Besides, the outcomes of the present study can be useful for teachers. Based on the results, the use of authentic and engaging video clips in teaching can provide more comprehension for learners. By using authentic visual materials, teachers can increase learners' motivation to improve their listening ability in class.

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Appendix A

(Attitude questionnaire for the video clips group)

Student Listening Comprehension Attitude Questionnaire For the Experimental Group (British Council video clips group)

Please read the following statements carefully and circle the number that matches your level of agreement on the scale provided.

SD - Strongly Disagree, D - Disagree, N - No Opinion, A - Agree, SA - Strongly Agree

Interest in English Listening

1-British Council video clips improve my learning interest.

SD D N A SA

2. British Council video clips make me more interested in my English subject.

SD D N A SA

3. British Council video clips motivate me to learn more.

SD D N A SA

4. British Council video clips enable me to maximize my involvement in the classroom.

SD D N A SA

5. I will encourage other EFL learners to employ British Council video clips as their learning instrument.

SD D N A SA

Attitude toward English Listening and Learning

6. Through British Council video clips, I broaden my knowledge in listening comprehension.

SD D N A SA

7. British Council video clips help me to increase my listening skills.

SD D N A SA

8. British Council video clips are a useful learning material for me.

SD D N A SA

9. British Council video clips help me to understand the conversation better.

SD D N A SA

10. British Council video clips help me to improve my listening comprehension.

SD D N A SA

Appendix B

Attitude questionnaire for the podcasts group

Student Listening Comprehension Attitude Questionnaire For the Experimental Group (British Council podcasts group)

Please read the following statements carefully and circle the number that matches your level of agreement on the scale provided.

SD - Strongly Disagree, D - Disagree, N - No Opinion, A - Agree, SA - Strongly Agree

Interest in English Listening

1-British Council listening podcasts improve my learning interest.

SD D N A SA

2. British Council listening podcasts make me more interested in my English subject.

SD D N A SA

3. British Council listening podcasts motivate me to learn more.

SD D N A SA

4. British Council listening podcasts enable me to maximize my involvement in the classroom.

SD D N A SA

5. I will encourage other EFL learners to employ British Council podcasts as their learning instrument.

SD D N A SA

Attitude toward English Listening and Learning

6. Through British Council podcasts, I broaden my knowledge in listening comprehension.

SD D N A SA

7. British Council podcasts help me to increase my listening skills.

SD D N A SA

8. British Council podcast is a useful learning material for me.

SD D N A SA

9. British Council podcast helps me to understand the conversation better.

SD D N A SA

10. British Council podcast helps me to improve my listening comprehension.

SD D N A SA

Appendix C

Attitude questionnaire for the control group

Student Listening Comprehension Attitude Questionnaire for the Control Group

Please read the following statements carefully and circle the number that matches your level of agreement on the scale provided.

SD - Strongly Disagree, D - Disagree, N - No Opinion, A - Agree, SA - Strongly Agree

Interest in English Listening

1- *Tactics* listening activities improves my learning interest.

SD D N A SA

2. *Tactics* listening activities makes me more interested in my English subject.

SD D N A SA

3. *Tactics* listening activities motivates me to learn more.

SD D N A SA

4. *Tactics* listening activities enables me to maximize my involvement in the classroom.

SD D N A SA

5. I will encourage other EFL learners to employ *Tactics* listening activities as their learning instrument.

SD D N A SA

Attitude toward English Listening and Learning

6. Through *Tactics* listening activities, I broaden my knowledge in listening comprehension.

SD D N A SA

7. *Tactics* listening activities helps me to increase my listening skills.

SD D N A SA

8. *Tactics* listening activities is a useful learning material for me.

SD D N A SA

9. *Tactics* listening activities helps me to understand the conversation better.

SD D N A SA

10. *Tactics* listening activities helps me to improve my listening comprehension.

SD D N A SA