

Incidental Academic Vocabulary Learning Through Listening to Expert Interviews: Form, Grammar, and Meaning

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Academic vocabulary, EFL learners, E-learning, Expert interviews, Incidental vocabulary learning

ABSTRACT

Incidental vocabulary acquisition in EFL contexts has garnered significant scholarly attention. Most existing research has concentrated on reading as the primary avenue for learning, while investigations into listening have been restricted to specific contexts. Thus, this study aimed to explore the effectiveness of expert interviews, as a dialogic academic discourse, delivered via podcasts for incidental academic vocabulary learning among EFL learners, with an emphasis on form, grammar, and meaning. The research, involving 38 intermediate learners, from Ilam University and Payame Noor University of Andimeshk, and adhering to a rigorous criterion-based procedure for podcast selection, was conducted in two phases. First, the participants took a pre-test, listened to the chosen podcasts containing the target academic words, and completed two post-tests. Second, a questionnaire was used to examine their attention and experiences. The results showed a significant increase in the learners' academic vocabulary knowledge after listening to the expert interviews. They also highlighted different levels of learning across the three dimensions of vocabulary knowledge. The participants found the interviews engaging, indicating their potential as a learning tool. The findings show that listening to expert interviews can improve academic vocabulary learning beyond meaning, improving learners' knowledge of form and grammar; this can promise implications for natural and instructed vocabulary learning.

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Introduction

Learning vocabulary is a key component of acquiring a second or foreign language (Cooper, 1999; Schmitt, 2010). The extent of someone's vocabulary has a significant impact on their ability to communicate in a foreign language (Alderson, 2005). In both vocabulary research and teaching, understanding the nature of vocabulary knowledge, different types of vocabulary, and approaches to word learning is necessary. Regarding vocabulary knowledge, knowing a word does not involve only its meaning. Ellis (1994a, p. 212) makes a distinction between the form aspects and the meaning aspects of vocabulary learning. Similarly, Nation (2001) defines vocabulary knowledge as a complex construct in terms of form, meaning as well as use, and Zimmerman (2009) talks about "layers of word knowledge" (p. 5). These dimensions are then described using both the mentioned categories and subcategories such as collocations, register, connotation, etc.

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Beside the components of word knowledge, it is necessary to differentiate different categories of vocabulary from each other. Words are classified into groups such as general, technical, and academic vocabulary as well as into frequency levels. Among these, academic words have found a significant place in some branches of English language teaching like English for Academic Purposes (EAP). They are words that are frequently used in academic disciplines and are rarely found in non-academic texts (Webb & Nation, 2017). According to Adger (2002), academic vocabulary is used by teachers and students to develop new competencies and knowledge, involving acquiring information, articulating abstract concepts, and enhancing learners' understanding of underlying principles. Academic vocabulary is critical to understanding the concepts of the content taught in schools (Zwiers, 2008).

Incidental Learning

Despite the effectiveness of explicit vocabulary instruction (Sonbul & Schmitt, 2010), classroom time is usually not sufficient for explicitly teaching and acquiring all essential words. Along with identifying the nature of word knowledge and types of vocabulary, approaches to vocabulary learning are key to vocabulary teaching and acquisition. The two major approaches are intentional and incidental learning. The latter is a result of language use rather than deliberate word learning (Webb & Nation, 2017) and it happens when learners do not concentrate on learning new words (Van Zeeland & Schmitt, 2013). Vocabulary learning may be often better in more actively targeted vocabulary learning circumstances (Hunt & Beglar, 2005; Laufer, 2009), but the majority of first language words are acquired incidentally (Ellis, 1994b; Webb & Nation, 2017). After evaluating 144 papers, Krashen (1989) asserted that incidental vocabulary learning can produce better results than purposeful vocabulary acquisition. Huckin and Coady (1999) similarly concluded that most vocabulary learning happens by accident when reading.

While the lion's share of studies on incidental learning have focused on reading as the mode of input, listening can be equally valid. Thus, there have been investigations on incidental learning of vocabulary through different types of listening like lectures (Vidal, 2003, 2011), songs (Pavia, Webb, & Faez, 2019), documentaries (Feng & Webb, 2020), and teacher talk (Jin & Webb, 2020). In many investigations, the focus has been mainly on the listening medium like podcasts (e.g., Saeedakhtar, Haqju, & Rouhi, 2021), rather than the genre and text type while a medium can be used to publish varying types of language input. Since, despite commonalities, various genres and text types have their unique characteristics and, in turn, potentials for and influences on language acquisition, they are worthy of separate and comparative research about incidental learning.

E-learning

There are different educational strategies to develop students' vocabulary, some of which are built on using the potential of E-learning. E-learning encompasses all instructional activities done individually or by organizations online or offline (Naidu, 2006). It can facilitate the learning process due to increased accessibility, up-to-datedness, personal instructions, cost-effectiveness, multimedia and interaction, and enhancement of learning outcomes by improving access to resources and services, alongside promoting remote interactions and collaborative efforts (Wong

& Huang, 2015). Rapid developments in information and communication technology have enabled teachers and language professionals to apply technology in their professions. (Mirzaeian, 2020). One of these tools is podcasts. Being around since 2004 (Hegelheimer & O'Bryan, 2008), podcasting is one of the technologies that has recently been considered in the field of education (Rahimi & Asadollahi, 2011). Podcasts are considered a web tool in e-learning because they can be used on portable devices and mobile devices (Safran, Heric, & Gutl, 2007). The rise of E-learning in the field of EFL has provoked many researchers to evaluate its effectiveness, advantages, and challenges.

Review of the Literature

Many studies have focused on incidental vocabulary learning through reading, but the number of studies dealing with listening for word acquisition is small. Van Zeeland and Schmitt (2013) investigated vocabulary acquisition through listening taking a dimensional perspective. The findings indicated that learners acquired knowledge of word form and grammatical recognition prior to meaning. The researchers highlight the importance of exposure frequency in the process. In another study, Farshi and Mohammadi (2013) examined whether podcasts help learners learn English words considering their attitudes and motivations. The findings revealed language learners' positive attitude towards podcasts and their high motivation to foster learning English words with the help of podcasts. Mashhadi, Hayati, and Jalilifar (2016) tried to see whether the combination of supplementary podcasts in the mixed module of teaching and learning L2 vocabulary leads to better learning outcomes compared to other common methods of teaching and learning. The results revealed that the podcast-mediated blended L2 learning situation was the most effective way of L2 vocabulary acquisition.

A study was also conducted by Tabatabaee and Rezvani (2019) to investigate the effects of using podcasts on idioms learning as well as learners' attitudes toward learning through podcasts. The findings were promising, indicating that the learners in the podcasts group gained better results than the control group in the post-test. In addition, the learners had a significant positive attitude towards learning through podcasts. Mirzaeian (2020) examined whether podcasts could be a valuable tool for improving the learning of English words compared to traditional vocabulary teaching methods. The students in the experimental group were involved in co-producing the podcasts. The study demonstrated that the experimental group achieved better results than the control group in terms of acquiring and retaining vocabulary knowledge.

Considering the importance of vocabulary knowledge from a dimensional perspective as well as the desire to take advantage of E-learning tools in language teaching and learning, this study was an attempt to investigate incidental academic vocabulary learning through listening to expert interviews via podcasts. Most of the research on incidental vocabulary learning has focused on reading and there have been calls for more attention to listening (e.g., Zeeland & Schmitt, 2013). Besides, unlike many studies on incidental vocabulary learning, following a dimensional perspective, this study examined three main components of word knowledge, namely form identification, grammar, and meaning recall (Zeeland & Schmitt, 2013), not just meaning. Thus, the study, in an under-researched context of Iran concerning incidental vocabulary learning through listening to dialogic discourse, explored the following research questions:

1. Does listening to expert interviews via podcasts significantly affect EFL learners' academic vocabulary learning?
 2. Is there a significant difference among the learners' acquisition of the three-word knowledge aspects of form, grammar, and meaning through incidental learning?
 3. For incidental vocabulary learning to happen, do the listeners concentrate their attention on the podcasts?
 4. What is the participants' experience with listening to podcasts for vocabulary learning?
- For the first and second research questions, these null hypotheses were formed:

H0: Listening to expert interviews via podcasts does not significantly affect EFL learners' academic vocabulary learning.

H0: There is no significant difference among the learners' acquisition of the three -word knowledge aspects of form, grammar, and meaning through incidental learning.

Method

Design

This quasi-experimental study had a one-group pretest-posttest design. The participants were volunteers who were homogenized based on their language proficiency level and field of study, thus non-probability sampling was a feature of the study. The treatment or intervention included listening to expert interviews.

Participants

The participants of this study were 38 EFL university students selected through purposeful sampling among 56 students at two universities in Iran, Ilam University and Payame Noor University of Andimeshk, who volunteered for the study. All 56 students were asked to take the Oxford Placement Test (2001). The participants whose scores were from 30 to 47, i.e., a total of 38 participants, were selected as the sample of the study at the intermediate level. All of them were familiar with the Internet and mobile phones. The participants' age range was between 20 to 40 years old. The demographics of the participants are reported in Table 1.

Table 1

The Profile of the Participants

Participants	Total number	Gender		University		Educational level	
		Male	Female	Ilam	PNU	BA	MA
	38	11	27	21	17	28	10

Materials

Podcasts can be divided into three main categories: substantial podcasts, which are predominantly utilized as alternatives to conventional teaching methods; supplementary podcasts, which aim to deliver summaries or extra materials for classroom use; and creative podcasts, which are crafted by the students (McGarr, 2009). Our approach in this study was using substantial podcasts. Since, in this study, academic words were the focus, after running an extensive search about different podcast platforms, two academic ones, namely *15 Minute History* and *Hidden Brain* were selected. In these platforms, both the host (interviewer) and the interviewee have academic backgrounds. Then, the criteria for sampling were established to choose certain podcast episodes from these two sources. The selection criteria were multifaceted because listeners' lexical knowledge examined in relation to texts' lexical coverage, speech rate, topic familiarity, and discourse structure are all variables that can impact listeners' comprehension (Giordano, 2021), and, in turn, their vocabulary learning through listening. These criteria were applied in two steps. First, 12 podcasts were selected from the two platforms based on the first two criteria: Topic and discourse structure.

Topic

Since the participants of the study were English majors, we chose academic topics in social sciences fields that were non-technical and the participants would be partly or generally familiar with them because of their educational background. Besides considering topic familiarity, we also tried to choose engaging and relevant topics to generate the participants' interest in the study (e.g., a podcast on pandemics was considered relevant and interesting as the study was done after the Coronavirus pandemic)

Discourse Structure

Since the majority of studies on incidental vocabulary learning through listening have focused on narrative monologues, and discourse structure has been regarded as a potentially influential factor in listening comprehension, this study chose expert interviews (expository dialogues) published through the medium of podcasts as the target oral discourse.

Second, to choose a smaller number of podcasts out of the initial pool, four other important criteria including lexical coverage, lexical density, speech rate, and word type /frequency level were considered. The results of this examination are reported in Table 2.

Lexical Coverage and Lexical Density

An examination of lexical coverage was conducted using a corpus-driven methodology, which involved analyzing the content of various texts and contrasting their lexical profiles with that of a representative corpus, such as the British National Corpus. This comparison aimed to determine the extent of lexical coverage necessary for a learner to effectively comprehend the target text. Recent reliable research indicates that achieving 90% lexical coverage is adequate for

ensuring sufficient listening comprehension of dialogic texts (Giordano, 2021). We analyzed the lexical coverage of the 12 podcast files using the Vocabulary Profile on the Compleat Lexical Tutor website, a platform for concordancing and word analysis (Cobb, 2019). As a result, the five podcasts meeting the criterion were chosen for the study. The results reported in Table 2 show that the target oral texts met the criterion as the lexical coverage ranged from 90.7 to 93.4. In addition to the lexical coverage, the academic word share of the texts was analyzed through the same tool to ensure they had an academic load. The texts' lexical density was examined, too. All five texts had the same appropriate level of lexical density.

Table 2

Profile of the Target Expert Interviews

Podcast	Length (min.s)	NO. of words	AWs	NO. of target AWs	Lexical coverage	Lexical density	Speech rate (WPM)
The history of the family	20.15	2478	4.34%	6	91.1	.51	122.97
Our better angels: what we lose when we assume people are bad	40.32	6436	3.98%	6	92.9	.46	159.62
The choices before us: can fewer options lead to better decisions?	50.16	7931	3.31%	4	93.4	.45	158.1
Albert Einstein-separating man from Myth	26.52	4394	2.86%	2	90.7	.46	165.68
The Spanish Influenza of 1918-1920	22.17	3645	3.94%	7	92.1	.46	164.41

Speech Rate

Besides lexical coverage, the speech rate was also checked. The average speech rate observed in the five expert interviews selected for the study was lower than the 190 words per minute (250 syllables per minute) benchmark established by Tauroza and Allison (1990) for native English dialogic interviews. This indicates that the speech rate of our target texts was likely easier for the learners.

Word Type and Frequency Level

To determine the target academic words of the study from the final five podcasts, the vocabulary content of the interviews was examined carefully with reference to the AWL (Coxhead, 2000) in terms of word frequency. 21 academic words were chosen as the target. They were either words of the third 1000 level or less frequent words that are not among the first 3000 words. Since the study design involved pre-testing and post-testing, we chose those words that are not transferred to and used in the learners’ first language, and their meanings are not guessable. For example, adverbs whose part of speech is easy to guess based on the suffix -ly were excluded. The target words are listed in Table 3.

Table 3

List of the Target Academic Words

Vocabulary	AWL	Frequency	Part of speech
Infrastructure	✓	Beyond 3000	Noun
Incidence	✓	S3	Noun
Detect	✓	W3	Verb
Core	✓	W3	Noun
Insight	✓	Beyond 3000	Noun
Implement	✓	W3	Verb
Policy	✓	S3	Noun
Pursue	✓	S3	Verb
Intrinsic	✓	Beyond 3000	Adjective
Distinctive	✓	Beyond 3000	Adjective
Contribute	✓	S3	Verb

Incorporate	✓	W3	Verb
Irrational	✓	Beyond 3000	Adjective
Constitute	✓	W3	Verb
Incentive	✓	Beyond 3000	Noun
Prioritize	✓	Beyond 3000	Verb
Infinite	✓	Beyond 3000	Adjective
Compatible	✓	Beyond 3000	Adjective
Legislator	✓	Beyond 3000	Noun
Trigger	✓	Beyond 3000	Verb
Sustain	✓	W3	Verb

Instruments

This study was conducted using three instruments in different steps. The first instrument that was utilized to homogenize the participants was the Oxford Placement Test (2001). The learners' scores on the test were ranked from high to low and homogenizing the sample was based on the test's categorizing chart. The selected participants were at the intermediate level.

The second tool used in this study was a researcher-made test. In the test, 21 academic words selected for this research were tested on three aspects of form, grammatical role, and meaning. This test was used as both the pre-test and the post-tests.

The last instrument of this research was a questionnaire that was sent to the participants after the post-tests. The questionnaire was an adapted form of Keller (2006)'s questionnaire on motivation in self-directed learning presented by Bolliger, Supanakorn, and Boggs (2010). Since one section of it examined learners' attention and since it was suitable for self-study learning situations, the adapted form was further modified slightly to be used in the study. So, the final questionnaire consisted of three parts. The first part included the demographics of the participants including age, sex, field of study, and level of education. The second part of the questionnaire was about the learners' attention and experience gained in the research process, while the final section probed into the participants' suggestions and opinions about the study.

Procedure

This study investigated EFL learners' incidental learning of three vocabulary knowledge dimensions through listening to podcasts: form, grammar, and meaning. First, the researchers used the Oxford Placement Test to assess the volunteered participants' proficiency level to ensure their homogeneity. The volunteers, who were EFL students, were informed about the purpose of the study and were interested to participate in it. Those whose scores were 30 to 47 on the placement test, i.e., intermediate students, were selected as the participants of the study. Then, a vocabulary test designed by the researchers on the three components of word knowledge was given to them to determine their vocabulary knowledge. In the pre-test, all the twenty-one target academic words were tested in short-answer questions. To perform the pre-test, the exact pronunciation of each of the words was checked using an English dictionary, and the audio forms were recorded as separate files. The researchers asked the participants to listen carefully to the files one by one and then answer the following questions using their own knowledge, avoiding guessing and with complete honesty.

1. Have you heard this word before?
2. Do you know the grammatical role of this word (noun-verb-adjective)?
3. Do you know the meaning of this word?

If their responses to the second and third questions were positive, the learners were asked to provide further answers (i.e., the part of speech and meaning). Following the pre-test, the researcher formed a WhatsApp group with the learners to share the podcasts. Two weeks after the pre-test, to prevent memory effects, the podcasts were sent to the group for five consecutive days, and participants were asked to listen to the podcasts with sufficient concentration at convenient times more than once. The latter request was made to enable the repetitions of the target words, i.e., exposure frequency. The participants were also informed that the passages had some unknown words, but they needed to avoid checking them in dictionaries and other resources and should try to comprehend them as much as they could. They were asked to declare their readiness for the post-test immediately after listening to each podcast. They were also tested for comprehension immediately after listening to the podcasts and before taking the posttest. Comprehension questions were two that were about the participants' focus and attention to the meaning of the texts, and their level of understanding. So, after listening to each podcast, the participants were asked two questions: a general question about the text content or topic, and a more specific question as follows:

1. Did you find out what the podcast is about?
2. What is the main idea of the podcast?

Accurate responses to these questions were interpreted as an indication that the learner had engaged with the provided material. To reduce the likelihood of random guessing, participants were instructed to respond with 'I don't know/remember' when they were uncertain of the answer. The questions and words used in the immediate post-test were the same as the pre-test. The learners were asked to answer the questions honestly and according to the knowledge gained by listening to the podcasts. The delayed post-test was taken with the same content and in the same way as the

immediate post-test two weeks after it to check the learners' retention. After the tests, the questionnaire was sent to the learners via WhatsApp at the end of the study. It should be acknowledged that several ideas regarding the procedure were inspired by Van Zeeland and Schmitt's (2013) study.

Results

This study sought to investigate the effects of listening to English academic podcasts on academic vocabulary learning of EFL learners as incidental vocabulary learning through listening in academic contexts has not received due attention. Data gathered from the pre-test and the post-tests were analyzed using the SPSS software.

Since the participants' experiences and familiarity with podcasts and also incidental learning could affect the procedure and, in turn, the results of the study, their background was examined through five questions in written form, whose results are as follows: 65.8% had listened to podcasts before participating in this study. (Out of them, 28% rarely, 56% sometimes, and 16% fairly often). 18.18% had listened to English podcasts, 39.38% Persian, and 42.43% both. The fourth question was ‘Have you ever listened to English podcasts with the purpose of learning English? If yes, please describe your previous experience?’. The participants' answers to this open-ended question are classified into four categories as follows: 28.9% of the participants had listened with the aim of learning English, 5.3% stated that they used podcasts only for university classes, 28.9% with the aim of gaining general knowledge, and 36.8% mentioned non-educational purposes. The fifth question was ‘How do you usually learn new English words (intentional or accidental)?’. The terms were described for them. 34.2% of the participants said that they use dictionaries to learn new words, 15.8% mentioned watching English films, 23.7% said they use words in texts, 15.8% mentioned memorizing and repeating words continuously, and 10.5% stated that they learn new words through a mixture of techniques (both intentionally and incidentally). According to the results, the participants mostly learned English words intentionally.

To answer the first research question, “Does listening to expert interviews via podcasts significantly affect EFL learners’ academic vocabulary learning?”, two paired T-tests were run to compare the results of the pre-test and the post-tests (Tables 4, 5, and 6).

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for the T-tests

Test	Mean	N	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Pretest	18.92	38	12.76	2.07
Immediate post-test	42.66	38	15.91	2.58
Delayed post-test	42.34	38	15.47	2.51

Table 5

Results of the Paired Samples T-test for the Pretest and Immediate Post-test

	Mean	SD.	Std. error mean	95% Confidence interval of the difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
Pretest-Immediate posttest	23.73	12.52	2.03	-27.85	19.62	11.68	37	.00

Table 6

Results of the Paired Samples T-test for the Post-tests

	Mean	SD.	Std. error mean	95% Confidence interval of the difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
Immediate post-test-Delayed post-test	.31	1.94	.31	-.324	.956	1.00	37	.32

As the results of the first T-test show, there was a significant difference between the scores of the participants on the pre-test and the immediate post-test (Sig.= 0 < 0.05). So, listening to podcasts had a positive significant effect on the participants' incidental academic vocabulary learning. The effect size for the difference calculated through Cohen' d is 1.89 which is large and indicates a substantial difference between the test performances. The second T-test indicates that there was not a significant difference between the learners' scores on the immediate and delayed post-tests (Sig. 0.32 > 0.05). Thus, we can conclude that the participants retained the word knowledge acquired through listening to the podcasts after two weeks.

To answer the second research question, to know if there is a significant difference among the learners' acquisition of the three vocabulary knowledge dimensions of form, grammar, and meaning through incidental learning, a repeated-measure ANOVA test was run. The null hypothesis was rejected as the results reported in Tables 7 and 8 reveal that the difference was significant (Sig. 0 < .05; F = 21.14). The effect size is large (0.54), and the observed power is 1

which shows detecting a true difference. Further analysis shows that the learners gained more knowledge of vocabulary forms than the meaning and parts of speech.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for the ANOVA Test

Dimension	Mean	Std. error	95% Confidence interval	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
Form	15.368	.934	13.476	17.261
Grammar	13.368	.814	11.720	15.017
Meaning	13.868	.869	12.107	15.630

Table 8

Results of the Repeated-Measure ANOVA

	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta squared	Observed power
Pillai's trace	.540	21.14	2	36	.000	.540	1
Wilks' lambda	.460	21.14	2	36	.000	.540	1
Hotelling's trace	1.175	21.14	2	36	.000	.540	1
Roy's largest root	1.175	21.14	2	36	.000	.540	1

Finally, to investigate the learners' attention and their experience with the podcasts and learning through them to answer the third and fourth questions of the study, the results of the questionnaire are reported in Table 9. The third research question was 'For incidental vocabulary learning to happen, do the listeners concentrate their attention on the podcasts?'

Table 9

Learners' Experience with Listening to the Podcasts

Item	Not true	Slightly true	Moderately true	Mostly true	Very True
1. There was something interesting at the beginning of the podcasts that got my attention.	2.6%	18.4%	39.5%	21.1%	18.4%
2. The podcasts were attention-grabbing.	5.3%	21.1%	34.2%	34.2%	5.3%
3. The quality of the podcasts helped to hold my attention.	0	28.9%	31.6%	18.4%	21.1%
4. The material in the podcasts was so abstract that it was hard to keep my attention on them.	47%	21.1%	23.7%	5.3%	2.6%
5. The podcasts were dry and unappealing.	63.2%	21.1%	10.5%	5.3%	0
6. The way the information was arranged in the podcasts helped keep my attention.	0	21.1%	31.6%	31.6%	15.8%
7. The podcasts included information that stimulated my curiosity.	0	31.6%	23.7%	34.2%	10.5%
8. The amount of repetition of the material in the podcasts caused me to get bored sometimes.	57.9%	23.7%	15.8%	2.6%	0
9. I learned some things from the podcasts that were surprising or unexpected.	10.5%	21.1%	21.1%	34.2%	13.2%
10. The variety of the podcasts helped keep my attention.	2.6%	21.1%	21.1%	39.5%	15.8%
11. The presentation style of the podcasts was boring.	55.3%	23.7%	7.9%	10.5%	2.6%
12. There was so much content in the podcasts that it was irritating.	47.4%	23.7%	18.4%	10.5%	0
13. The content and style of talking in the podcasts gave the feeling that their contents were worth knowing.	15.8%	13.2%	26.3%	18.4%	26.3%
14. It was a pleasure to listen to such well-designed podcasts.	0	21.1%	10.5%	31.6%	36.8%
15. I could relate the content of podcasts to things I have experienced, seen, done, or thought about in my own life.	2.6%	18.4%	28.9%	23.7%	26.3%
16. I really enjoyed listening to the podcasts.	2.6%	23.7%	15.8%	21.1%	36.8%

17. Podcast is a useful tool to learn the pronunciation of new (unknown) vocabulary.	0	7.9%	7.9%	34.2%	50%
18. Podcast is a useful tool to learn the part of speech (noun, verb, etc.) of new vocabulary.	0	10.5%	26.3%	26.3%	36.8%
19. Podcast is a useful tool for learning the meaning of new vocabulary.	0	15.8%	13.2%	31.6%	39.5%
20. I intend to use podcasts for English vocabulary learning in the future.	5.3%	13.2%	23.7%	18.4%	39.5%

According to the results reported in the table, the majority of learners believed that the podcasts had a good quality for attracting their attention, and in the beginning, there were interesting points that drew their focus. They also stated that issues such as newness and how the information is arranged in the podcast, variety, repetition of words in the podcasts, and unexpected content captured their attention and curiosity. The learners found the style of presenting the podcasts acceptable and listening to them valuable because they believed that they could relate the topics and content of the podcasts to their real lives. Thus, in answer to the fourth research question of the study, we can say that the majority of the learners focused their attention while listening to the podcasts.

Finally, to answer the last question of the study, that is, “what is the participants' experience with listening to podcasts for vocabulary learning?”, the opinions of the participants about their experience are summarized as follows:

1. The majority of them were pleased to participate in the study and listen to the podcasts.
2. The podcasts were considered a useful tool for learning the form, part of speech, and meaning of new academic words by the majority of the participants.
3. Most of the learners claimed to have decided to use podcasts for learning English vocabulary in the future.

Besides, the results of the open questions at the end of the questionnaire, which were answered by all the participants, are as follows:

The first question was ‘If you like podcasts for vocabulary learning, what do you like about them? You can mention more than one feature’. The participants' comments were categorized into four categories: About 60 percent of language learners said that listening to podcasts while studying has a significant impact on learning new vocabulary. Five percent said that using podcasts is affordable because they are accessible and free. About 21 percent stated that using podcasts is fun and exciting, and about 13 percent believed that it can help them improve their accent and pronunciation.

The second question was ‘Are there any other comments you'd like to make about your experience of listening to podcasts in this study?’. The participants' answers were categorized into three categories: About 89.4 percent of the learners said that listening to podcasts and participating

in this study was a good experience, and they will use podcasts again in the future, 5.3 percent maintained that the quality of podcasts was not very good, and about 5.3 percent reported that the podcasts did not have interesting topics.

Discussion

The current study aimed to investigate incidental learning of academic vocabulary through listening to expert interviews published through podcasts. Based on the findings, first, we can confirm Giordano's (2021) assertion that 90% lexical coverage is sufficient for adequate listening comprehension of dialogic texts. It should be pointed out that while the mentioned author reported this based on research on non-academic dialogues where the purpose was telling interesting emotional everyday life stories instead of informing and educating the audience, this study approved the criterion in a new discourse context. This can be significant because differences in various aspects of discourse can influence language users' processing and comprehension.

Second, it can be claimed that expert interviews, as an academic dialogue discourse, are useful for providing input for incidental vocabulary learning. Besides providing exposure, other reasons can be used to explain this. They relate to the features of dialogues involving repetition, redundancies, discourse markers which help with meaning construction (Rajaeifar, 2023), pauses, and multiplicity of perspectives, that enable listeners to examine the information flow and their own understanding (Shohamy & Inbar, 1991; Fox Tree, 1999). These characteristics, along with others, can make listenability and comprehension of dialogues easier than monologues.

Third, we can suggest that published podcasts are a useful tool for incidental academic vocabulary learning. The results of previous studies focusing on different categories of vocabulary like idioms are consistent with this study (e.g., Dale, 2007; Mashhadi, Hayati & Jalilifar, 2021; Mirzaeian, 2021; Tabatabaee & Rezvani, 2019). Furthermore, the findings regarding the potential of listening for vocabulary learning are in line with those of Vidal (2003) on lectures for vocabulary learning.

Fourth, the second question of this research was about the three aspects of word knowledge. The results showed that the participants learned more forms of the words, compared to meanings and parts of speech. This is in keeping with the results of a study by Van Zeeland and Schmitt (2013) which showed that incidental learning through listening led to the acquisition of words' forms more than meaning and grammar.

Fifth, the findings of the study also revealed information about the listeners' attention which is an important factor in incidental learning. Different features of the selected podcasts helped with capturing the attention of the learners. This is a crucial point to be considered in both research and instructional uses of podcasts.

Finally, the participants had a very positive view of participating in the study, which was seen as an incentive to use podcasts for future learning. Similarly, in a study by Farshi and Mohammadi (2013), it was found that students had a positive attitude towards using podcasts to learn English words, and because of the attractiveness and usefulness of podcasts, they had a high

motivation for using them in the future. The results are also consistent with those of a study by Baird and Fisher (2006) on podcasting that showed this tool has been effective in attracting participants' attention and interest in learning in the future.

While the findings can be valuable shedding light on incidental vocabulary learning in a new context, the limitations of the study should be acknowledged. For one thing, the participants of this study were volunteers, and this can affect its validity. For another thing, the number of participants was not large. Future research may employ bigger random samples. Besides, as the study focused on the dialogic nature of discourse, further studies may use comparative designs to compare monologic and dialogic discourses in academic contexts for incidental vocabulary learning.

Conclusion

The present study, illuminating the potential of dialogic academic discourse for incidental vocabulary learning, promises implications for academic vocabulary learning. As class time usually does not offer enough opportunities for thorough vocabulary learning, incidental learning can help as it compensates for time limits both in and outside the classroom. Besides, using E-learning tools for language learning can give learners autonomy which is key in language learning. Learners also differ regarding learning preferences and vocabulary learning techniques (Hosseini Dinani & Chalak, 2023). Since there are language learners who prefer to receive aural input rather than written input, incidental learning can be done through listening and not be confined to reading. Furthermore, E-learning has enormous potential for improving learning. In this case, its potential for incidental learning is revealed and should be considered in course design and materials development. The findings of this study point to the importance of future research on learning other dimensions and components of word knowledge through listening to different text types and genres.

Conflict of Interests

The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

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