The Use of Podcasts in Enhancing Discriminative Listening Skills of Turkish Learners Abroad: A1 Level

Görkem ARSLAN*, Selcen ÇİFCİ

Department of Turkish Teaching, Usak University, Türkiye
Corresponding Author: Görkem Arslan, E-mail: gorkemyasar8826@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

In order to demonstrate the effect of using podcasts on the development of A1 level students' oral reading, reading comprehension, pronunciation skills, and related discriminative listening skills of Turkish learners abroad, an 8-week podcast-supported listening practice was conducted with a group of 12 participants learning Turkish as an elective course at a university in Central Europe with the aim of improving discriminative listening skills. In this single-group quantitative design research, pretest and post-test were conducted, and the data sources were the Turkish Language Teaching as a Foreign Language A1 Level Discriminative Listening Skill Test and the discriminative listening worksheets were used in the skill development application process. As a result of the research, it was determined that the use of podcasts is effective in improving the discriminative listening skills of those learning Turkish as a foreign language at the A1 level abroad.

Key words: Turkish as a Foreign Language, Listening, Discriminative Listening, Literacy, Reading Aloud, Podcasts

INTRODUCTION

In simple terms, the listening skill begins in the womb with the perception of sounds through hearing (Sağlam, 2015, p. 29); it is the language skill to which the individual owes its first linguistic input. The individual transforms the linguistic inputs obtained during infancy and early childhood into production objects starting from the first year of life. The child ensures its intellectual development by strengthening day by day these first outputs of its brain, which nourishes by listening in the first years of his life (Arslan and Batur, 2023, p.1). These linguistic inputs and outputs, blended with the acquisition of literacy during school-age childhood, are supported by formal and informal education. The discriminative listening skill will strengthen as the individual progresses in literacy and will maintain a mutually determining relationship with other language skills in an interactive form.

Studies that emphasize the natural starting point for language acquisition as listening (Bohlken and Macias, 1992, p. 10), along with research asserting the existence of a taxonomy of listening consisting of five stages (Wolvin and Coakley, 1994), collectively reveal that discriminative listening serves the function of enabling individuals to comprehend what they hear, elevating the listener to a higher level of comprehension and recall while distinguishing auditory and/or visual stimuli. Discriminative listening, considered a skill that facilitates a child's recognition of both the language they are immersed in and the world they will experience by discriminating auditory and visual stimuli (Wolvin and Coakley, 2000), signifies the inception of learning the target language by attaining familiarity with the sound and speech structure, as well as the overall usage of the target language when acquiring a foreign language. The discrimination of sounds, words, sentences, emphasis, and intonation, and ultimately meanings, is indispensable in the process of language acquisition.

The ability of a person learning Turkish as a foreign language to parse the word "balkonaçık" into "balkona çık" or "balkon açık" depends, as mentioned above, on their skill to discern the general structure of Turkish, its sound-word-sentence sequence, stress, and intonation patterns. In discriminative listening, individuals exhibit initial sensitivities to both verbal and non-verbal cues, serving as a foundational structure, particularly for other listening types (Stewart and Arnold, 2018). Hence, it can be inferred that discriminative listening skills are mutually related to oral reading, comprehension, and pronunciation skills.

Numerous classifications of listening types exist in the literature. According to Brown and Yule (1983), listening

is divided into "transactional listening" and "interactional listening." Listening to a lesson, song, audio recording, etc., falls under transactional listening, while listening for the purpose of communication and conversation belongs to interactional listening. Kingen (2000) categorizes listening into five types: discriminative, aesthetic, effective, critical, and empathic listening, whereas Rost (2011) further breaks down listening into six headings: intensive listening, selective listening, interactive listening, extensive listening, sensitive listening, and autonomous listening. Özbay (2009) mentions discriminative listening, communicative listening, aesthetic listening, information-seeking listening, and critical listening types.

Deviating from the classification approaches found in the literature, Sampson et al. (2003) propose that listening can be divided into nine "levels" or "stages." This process comprises levels such as basic listening, discriminative listening, interpretative listening, listening for information, listening for organizing ideas, listening for the main idea, listening for different perspectives, critical listening, and creative listening (Sampson et al., 2003). This approach holds significance in expressing the progressive mental nature of the listening process.

According to some researchers, the key to learning a new language and speaking it lies in discriminative listening (Bohlken and Macias, 1992). Acquiring discriminative listening skills is also crucial for supporting individuals' oral reading and pronunciation skills. Discriminative listening sensitizes the listener to the language (Nagendra, 2014) and enables them to perceive and distinguish similarities and differences in sounds (Szabo et al. 2016, p. 26). Discriminative or discriminative listening serves as a foundation and overarching framework for other listening types and is fundamental for all listening categories (Welch and Mickelson, 2013, p. 86). It is widely accepted that discriminative listening marks the inception of second language acquisition since, during childhood and human evolution, individuals begin to distinguish human sounds, and subsequently, other features of human language, such as sounds, stresses, accents, pauses, etc. (Raju, 2018).

Melanlıoğlu (2012) has limited discriminative listening to the basis of phonological awareness, focusing on distinguishing sounds. However, the discriminative listening process extends to differentiate distinctive phonemes, suprasegmental units, morphemes, and syntax sequences (Bohlken and Macias, 1992, p. 1). Developing discriminative listening is not only necessary for sound awareness, pronunciation, and production but also, especially for oral reading and comprehension.

In the past century, the learning process expressed as "construction of meaning" is supportive in acknowledging that similar processes are followed when learning a foreign language. The use of podcasts, associated with the constructivist approach (Hoon and Hasan, 2013), supports the construction of meaning and new learning on mental schemas. It can be seen as an effective tool for self-directed language learning as well as formal and distance foreign language learning processes.

Açık and Berk (2021) share findings indicating that the use of podcasts in teaching Turkish as a foreign language reduces listening anxiety. In broader studies on the use of podcasts for language instruction, it has been noted that podcasts not only enhance listening but also lead to significant improvements in grammar, speaking, pronunciation, and vocabulary areas for students (Chan et al., 2011; Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005). Through language instruction podcasts specifically designed for students, they can acquire authentic information that enriches their speech patterns, broadens their cognitive horizons, and fosters positive cognitive interest in other cultures (Tsybaneva et al., 2018). Podcast creation performances that combine oral reading and listening can also serve as motivating and practical resources for students.

In addition to improving listening and oral reading skills, based on research demonstrating positive effects on speaking skills (Lord, 2008; Ducate and Lomicka, 2008; Hamzaoğlu and Koçoğlu, 2016; Phillips, 2017; Koçak and Sarıçoban, 2017; Bakla, 2018), as well as positive effects on reading (Azis and Puspitasari, 2019) and writing (Bamanger and Alhassan, 2015), it can be stated that podcasts will not only provide students with linguistic input but also create an environment where students can present their linguistic productions. In this regard, considering mobile learning tools such as smartphones, tablets, and computers that many

Table 1. Discriminative listening A1 level skill test item difficulty and discrimination values

Item	Difficulty value	Discrimination value
1	0.77	0.28
2	0.94	0.07
3	0.76	0.35
4	0.83	0.20
5	0.82	0.31
6	0.77	0.38
7	0.71	0.49
8	0.73	0.31
9	0.71	0.44
10	0.35	0.34

Average Difficulty of the Test: 0.595
Average Discrimination of the Test: 0.317

Table 2. Discriminative listening a1 level skill test internal consistency coefficients (KR-20)

Item	Cronbach's alpha
1	0.903
2	0.432
3	0.787
4	0.837
5-6	0.921
7	0.782
8	0.681
9-10	0.676

Cronbach's Alpha Value of the Test: 0.971

individuals now possess, podcasts can actively be used in educational settings as a tool not only to enhance listening skills for those learning Turkish outside of Türkiye but also to support oral reading, speaking, and pronunciation skills (Berk and Açık, 2021, p. 333).

Purpose of the Research

In the conducted literature review, initially, teacher training books written within the field of Turkish language instruction as a foreign language were examined. Subsequently, numerous studies related to listening and its sub-genres were reviewed. In order to access domestic research relevant to the problem of the study, 623 master's and doctoral theses accessible from the Türkiye Higher Education Council's thesis database and some articles available on Google Scholar were scrutinized. Foreign sources were accessed through portals such as Google Scholar, Taylor & Francis, and Tandofline. At the end of the literature review in the literature, it was observed that the discriminative listening skill did not come to the forefront in the instruction of Turkish as a foreign language. With this aim, it is intended to provide both a general overview of the discriminative listening skill and introduce an application that can be used for the development of discriminative listening skills to the literature.

The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of podcast usage on the development of discriminative listening skills of A1-level students learning Turkish abroad.

Problem Statement

What is the effect of podcast usage on the development of discriminative listening skills of individuals learning Turkish abroad?

Research questions

1. What is the impact of podcasts on the ability of foreign language learners of Turkish abroad to discrimnate sounds?
2. How does the usage of podcasts affect the ability of foreign language learners of Turkish abroad to discriminate Turkish words?
3. What is the effect of podcasts on the ability of foreign language learners of Turkish abroad to discriminate Turkish suffixes?

METHOD

Model of the Research

In this study, a quantitative research design known as the pre-test post-test single-group quasi-experimental design was employed to investigate the impact of podcast-supported education on the development of discriminative listening skills of A1-level students learning Turkish as a foreign language in non-Turkish contexts.

Quasi-experimental designs are frequently preferred in educational research due to the practical challenges of conducting full experimental studies in educational institutions,

Table 3. Targeted achievements of podcast-supported discriminative listening activities

Achievements	Activities							
	Introducing	**At the bank**	**Shopping**	**Expressing love**	**Alo 182**	**At the doctor's**	**Hockey**	**University dorm**
Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	+	+			+	+	+	
Be able to discriminate the appropriate suffixes for words heard.			+				+	
Be able to discriminate between the letters corresponding to sounds heard.				+			+	+
Be able to discriminate words that start with the same sound while listening.		+						
Be able to discriminate words that end with the same sound while listening.	+	+	+					
Be able to discriminate dotted sounds while listening.	+	+		+				
Be able to differantiate correctly and incorrectly pronounced sounds.					+			+
Be able to discriminate similar and different sounds from different sources.	+	+			+	+		

Table 4. Targeted acievements, question types and item analysis values of A1 level turkish as a foreign language discriminative listening skill test questions

Item	Targeted achievement	Question type	Score	Difficulty value	Discrimination value
1	Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	5 points	0.77	0.28
2	Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Fill in the Blank	20 points	0.94	0.07
3	Be able to discriminate suffixes that are appropriate for words heard while listening.	Fill in the Blank	10 points	0.76	0.35
4	Be able to discriminate dotted sounds. Be able to discriminate letters corresponding to sounds.	Fill in the Blank	10 points	0.83	0.20
5	Be able to discriminate letters corresponding to sounds.	Multiple Choice	5 points	0.82	0.31
6	Be able to discriminate words that start with the same sound while listening. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Matching	10 points	0.77	0.38
7	Be able to discriminate words that end with the same sound while listening. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	10 points	0.71	0.49
8	Be able to discriminate dotted sounds while listening. Be able to discriminate letters corresponding to sounds.	Multiple Marking	10 points	0.73	0.31
9	Be able to discriminate similar and different sounds from different sources. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	10 points	0.71	0.44
10	Be able to discriminate similar and different sounds from different sources. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	10 points	0.35	0.34

such as the difficulty of selecting students and dividing them into groups or classes for experimental purposes, as well as the responsibility of researchers to ensure minimal disruption to the activities of educational institutions (Büyüköztürk, 2002). In this research, the single-group pretest post-test quasi-experimental design was chosen. In this design, an independent variable is applied to one group, measurements are taken before and after the experiment (Yamak et al., 2014, p. 253). Subsequently, the effectiveness of the implemented intervention is assessed by comparing the pretest and post-test results. The use of a single-group pre-test post-test experimental design, although considered a weak experimental design, is deemed appropriate when examining the effectiveness of a newly developed educational intervention, according to Creswell (2012).

In this study, initially, the "Discriminative Listening Test - A1 Level" was administered as a pretest to the students. Following this, a podcast-supported education program was conducted, and after the implementation, the discriminative listening test was administered again as a post-test. The changes in scores between the pretest and post-test were analyzed to assess the effectiveness of the intervention.

Study Group

The study group of this research consisted of 12 voluntary participants who were enrolled in A1-level elective Turkish courses during the spring semester of the 2022-2023 academic year at Matej Bel University in Slovakia.

Development of Data Collection Tools and Data Collection

The quantitative data for this study were obtained by scoring the answers of the 12 participants to the questions in the "Discriminative Listening Skills Test" administered before and after the eight-week podcast intervention, as well as the student responses to the activity questions in the podcast activity sheets.

To obtain data through pretest and post-test applications for A1-level students learning Turkish as a foreign language, a valid and reliable discriminative listening exam was developed in alignment with the learning achievements. A pool of questions was initially prepared and presented to seven experts for their opinions. Following the feedback provided by the experts, necessary revisions and modifications were made. Subsequently, a candidate exam form consisting of 10 questions was created. The candidate exam form was pilot tested with 38 students, and item analyses were conducted to finalize the exam. Table 1 presents the item difficulty and discrimination values related to item analysis:

Hasançebi and colleagues (2020) have indicated that a test should have an average difficulty of around 0.50 by incorporating easy, moderate, and difficult questions, and the average discrimination of the test should be greater than

0.30. Accordingly, the difficulty and discrimination values of the test are considered ideal.

As seen in Table 2, the KR-20 (Alpha) value of the test is significantly high. Based on this, it has been determined that the prepared discriminative listening exam is a valid and reliable assessment for the application.

The discriminative listening skills test, whose validity and reliability analyses were described above and which was used for data collection in this study, was administered to students in a pretest and post-test format before the start of the 8-week podcast-supported listening education and after the completion of the implementation. Quantitative data were started to be tabulated for statistical purposes.

The discriminative listening activity program, developed by the researcher with the assistance of three experts and adjusted according to expert opinions and feedback from

Table 5. Comparison of students' pretest-post-test performance according to the achievements addressed by A1 level discriminative listening test questions

Item	Targeted achievement	Question type	Difficulty value	Discrimination value	Pretest scores (%)	Post-test scores (%)
1	Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	0.77	0.28	71.6%	88.2%
2	Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Fill in the Blank	0.94	0.07	91.65%	96.25%
3	Be able to discriminate suffixes that are appropriate for words heard while listening.	Fill in the Blank	0.76	0.35	55%	86.6%
4	Be able to discriminate dotted sounds. Be able to discriminate letters corresponding to sounds.	Fill in the Blank	0.83	0.20	93.3%	87.5%
5	Be able to discriminate letters corresponding to sounds.	Multiple Choice	0.82	0.31	83.2%	100%
6	Be able to discriminate words that start with the same sound while listening. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Matching	0.77	0.38	47.5%	85%
7	Be able to discriminate words that end with the same sound while listening. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	0.71	0.49	58.3%	80%
8	Be able to discriminate dotted sounds while listening. Be able to discriminate letters corresponding to sounds.	Multiple Marking	0.73	0.31	54.1%	78.3%
9	Be able to discriminate similar and different sounds from different sources. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	0.71	0.44	57.5%	73.3%
10	Be able to discriminate similar and different sounds from different sources. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	0.35	0.34	33.3%	57.5%
Total					66.16%	83.5%

pilot applications, is an eight-week podcast-supported listening education implemented in one-hour sessions once a week. The education preceding the development of listening skills is designed to target the achievements aimed at improving students' discriminative listening skills. Discriminative listening skills were evaluated within the framework of skills presented in interconnected patterns, and efforts were made to relate achievements in all activities and approach them with a spiral understanding. The lessons in the implementation lasted for 60-70 minutes. The first 5-10 minutes of each lesson were allocated for reviewing the previous lesson, followed by the weekly practice related to the respective achievement. Activity sheets involving pre-listening, during-listening, and post-listening activities were used in the implementation. It was ensured that each podcast was listened to no more than three times.

The quantitative data obtained from this study were analyzed by reporting individual student scores and comparing the group's overall average scores for the purpose of examination. To ensure reliability in the analyses, the consensus of two researchers was considered.

In order to seek answers to the research questions by examining participants' pretest and post-test performances, their achievement scores were initially presented in tabular form, both in terms of percentage and score values. Subsequently, for a more reliable interpretation of research findings, the pretest and post-test score values of participants were analyzed using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, a non-parametric test, through the SPSS 25 software, specifically focusing on the sub-dimensions of "word discrimination," "sound discrimination," and "affix discrimination." Given the low sample size, the use of non-parametric tests is recommended (Demir, 2017, p. 108), and in such a scenario,

the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test was chosen as a more suitable option for conducting the pretest and post-test comparisons in this research.

In the examinations to be conducted as a result of data analysis, students' responses in the pretest and post-test applications, as well as their responses in the activities, will be analyzed to address the research questions. For this purpose, Tables 3 and 4 were created to specify which achievements the activities and questions in the Discriminative Listening Test, used as the pretest and post-test, addressed:

As seen in Table 3, care has been taken to address the achievements covered at least twice during the activity process. In parallel with this, it has been ensured that the achievements addressed also appear in the questions at least twice; a spiral structure has been followed both in the activity process and in the discriminative listening exam.

When examining Table 4, it will be observed that out of the questions, four are of short answer type, three are fill in the blank type, one is multiple-choice, one is matching, and one is multiple-select type. The selection of these question types took into consideration the nature of the relevant competence and language proficiency level, and some of the question types most frequently used in A1 level Turkish teaching books in the field were taken as a guide (Arslan and Batur, 2022, p. 348).

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section, findings obtained from data analysis and the corresponding interpretations based on these findings are presented with the aim of examining whether the eight-week podcast application developed in the research enhances the discriminative listening skills of Turkish learners abroad.

Table 6. Comparison of students' scores in sound discrimination skills in the discriminative listening test

Item	Targeted achievement	Question type	Difficulty value	Discrimination value	Pretest scores (%)	Post-test scores (%)
4	Be able to discriminate dotted sounds. Be able to discriminate letters corresponding to sounds.	Fill in the Blank	0.83	0.20	93.3%	87.5%
5	Be able to discriminate letters corresponding to sounds.	Multiple Choice	0.82	0.31	83.2%	100%
6	Be able to discriminate words that start with the same sound while listening. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Matching	0.77	0.38	47.5%	85%
7	Be able to discriminate words that end with the same sound while listening. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	0.71	0.49	58.3%	80%
8	Be able to discriminate dotted sounds. Be able to discriminate letters corresponding to sounds.	Multiple Marking	0.73	0.31	54.1%	78.3%
Mean Score					67.28%	86.16%

Findings and Recommendations Related to the First Research Question

In this section, findings and interpretations based on the data obtained regarding the research question "What is the impact of podcasts on the ability of Turkish learners abroad to discriminate sounds?" will be discussed.

With the aim of addressing the relevant research question by scrutinizing participants' pretest and post-test performances, their achievement scores were initially presented in a tabular format, both in terms of percentage and score values. Subsequently, in order to obtain more reliable insights during the interpretation of research findings, the pretest and post-test score values of participants were examined through the Wilcoxon Test, a non-parametric test, utilizing the SPSS 25 software. This analysis specifically focused on the sub-dimensions of "word discrimination," "sound discrimination," and "suffix discrimination."

As observed in Table 5, the pretest results indicate that students encountered the most difficulty in discriminating sounds, discriminating dotted sounds, and differentiating the same sounds from different sources (e.g., female voice, male voice, child's voice; sounds coming from radio, television, or phone, etc.). The questions measuring the competency of discriminating sounds, which is a sub-dimension of discriminative listening, were related to achievements and were posed in the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th questions of the Discriminative Listening Test developed and used for the pretest-post-test application in this research. To facilitate a more detailed examination, Table 6 has been created:

Questions addressing the same achievements, a decrease in the 4th question and an increase in the 8th question are observed. This might be due to the difficulty level of the questions. Both in terms of difficulty and discriminative power, the 8th question outperforms the 4th question. While the 4th question is of the "fill in the blank" type, the 8th question is of the "multiple choice" type. Students, at the end of the eight-week application, had difficulty filling in the blanks with the correct sounds, but they provided correct answers when they saw the letter corresponding to the relevant sound. This pattern is also clearly visible in the answers students provided in the pretest.

Based on Tables 7 and 8, it can be inferred why Participants 10 and 11, who were unable to answer the 8th question correctly, may have encountered this issue in several examples:

In Table 7, the students' pretest performances are displayed. Due to their inability to answer question number 8 related to sound discrimination, the scores obtained by P10 and P11 for the respective question in the final test have been closely examined, considering that they are quantitative data.

As observed in Table 8, P10 and P11 have notably achieved a positive achievement regarding sound discrimination in question 8. This implies that these mentioned students, based on the quantitative data obtained, exhibited a positive change in sound discrimination at the end of the eight-week discriminative listening process.

The results obtained from the examination of participants' pretest and post-test scores on the Discriminative

Table 7. Pretest scores of students

	Q1 5 points	Q2 20 points	Q3 10 Points	Q4 10 Points	Q5 5 Points	Q6 10 Points	Q7 10 Points	Q8 10 Points	Q9 10 Points	Q10 10 Points	Total 100 points	Percentile %
P1	3	20	6	8	5	10	5	9	0	10	76	76%
P2	5	16	4	10	5	10	10	9	4	0	73	73%
P3	5	16	2	9	5	0	0	3	0	5	45	45%
P4	5	16	2	10	5	0	0	8	3	5	54	54%
P5	5	20	9	10	5	10	0	9	10	0	78	78%
P6	5	20	5	7	5	5	10	6	2	0	65	65%
P7	5	20	9	10	5	0	10	5	10	0	74	74%
P8	0	20	6	10	0	4	10	5	8	0	63	63%
P9	5	20	6	10	5	0	10	8	10	10	84	84%
P10	5	20	9	10	5	10	8	0	8	5	80	80%
P11	0	18	5	10	5	4	7	0	10	0	59	59%
P12	0	14	3	8	0	4	0	3	6	5	43	43%
Mean	3.58	18.33	5.5	9.33	4.16	4.75	5.83	5.41	5.75	3.33	66.16	66.16%
Average as Perc.	71.6%	91.65%	55%	93.3%	83.2%	47.5%	58.3%	54.1%	57.5%	33.3%	66.16%	

Table 8. Post-test scores of students

	Q1 5 points	Q2 20 points	Q3 10 Points	Q4 10 Points	Q5 5 Points	Q6 10 Points	Q7 10 Points	Q8 10 Points	Q9 10 Points	Q10 10 Points	Total 100 points	Percentile %
P1	5	20	8	10	5	10	10	8	10	10	96	96%
P2	5	20	7	6	5	10	10	4	10	0	82	82%
P3	3	16	6	6	5	10	6	10	4	5	71	71%
P4	5	20	10	10	5	10	10	8	10	5	93	93%
P5	5	20	9	10	5	10	10	9	8	10	96	96%
P6	5	20	10	10	5	2	0	5	0	5	62	62%
P7	5	20	9	7	5	10	10	9	10	4	79	79%
P8	4	20	9	10	5	0	0	10	0	5	67	67%
P9	5	15	9	7	5	10	10	10	10	5	87	87%
P10	5	20	7	9	5	10	10	9	10	10	95	95%
P11	5	20	10	10	5	10	10	7	10	5	92	92%
P12	1	20	10	10	5	10	10	5	6	5	82	82%
Mean	4.41	19.25	8.66	8.75	5	8.5	8	7.83	7.33	5.75	83.5	83.5%
Mean Perc.	88.2%	96.25%	86.6%	87.5%	100%	85%	80%	78.3%	73.3%	57.5%	83.5%	

Table 9. Examination of participants' pretest and post-test scores on the A1 level discriminative listening exam using the wilcoxon signed rank test

	N	M	Z	P
Pretest-Post-test				
Negative Ranks	11	6.95	-2.944	.003
Positive Ranks	1	1.50		
Ties	0			
Total	12			
WordPretest - Post-test				
Negative Ranks	9	6.61	-2.358	.018
Positive Ranks	2	3.25		
Ties	1			
Total	12			
SoundsPretest –Post-test				
Negative Ranks	9	7.78	-2.432	.015
Positive Ranks	3	2.67		
Ties	0			
Total	12			
SuffixPretest - Post-test				
Negative Ranks	9	5.94	-2.661[b]	.008
Positive Ranks	1	1.50		
Ties	2			
Total	12			

Listening Exam using the non-parametric Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test are presented in Table 9.

Upon examination of Table 9, it is observed that there is no statistically significant difference between the pretest and post-test scores in the sub-dimension of sound discrimination, identified as a component of discriminative listening in Turkish instruction as a foreign language at the A1 level. This suggests the need for an increase in sample size and a greater emphasis on practical applications.

Findings and Recommendations Related to the Second Research Question

In this section, findings and interpretations related to the research question of "How do podcasts affect the Turkish word discrimination skills of foreign learners of Turkish abroad?" are presented. Firstly, Table 10, which reflects the quantitative findings related to this issue and used for the pretest and post-test applications, is provided below.

When Table 10 is examined, it is revealed that students' overall performance in word discriminating in the "Discriminative Listening Test" is 59.97% in the pretest application. After the implementation of an eight-week podcast program designed to enhance students' discriminative listening skills, in the post-test application, students' overall performance in word discriminating has increased to 80.04%.

In the type of fill-in-the-blank questions, question number 2, which was found to be of lower difficulty and discriminative value, shows a lower difference in performance between the pretest and post-test applications. As mentioned in the findings related to the first research question, students have shown lower performance in fill-in-the-blank questions compared to multiple-choice questions in the first and second research questions. Based on these findings obtained for the first and second research questions, it can be stated that students struggled with fill-in-the-blank questions, but further data are needed to make a definitive statement about this.

When Table 11, which was created to examine individual student performance in the 1st, 2nd, 6th, 7th, 9th, and 10th questions targeting the relevant competence, is reviewed, the most prominent finding is the decrease between the pretest

Table 10. Pretest and post-test performances of students in word discrimination skills, question types of relevant items, and item analysis values

Item	Targeted achievement	Question type	Difficulty value	Discrimination value	Pretest scores (%)	Post-test scores (%)
1	Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	0.77	0.28	71.6%	88.2%
2	Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Fill in the Blank	0.94	0.07	91.65%	96.25%
6	Be able to discriminate words that start with the same sound while listening. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Matching	0.77	0.38	47.5%	85%
7	Be able to discriminate words that end with the same sound while listening. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	0.71	0.49	58.3%	80%
9	Be able to discriminate similar and different sounds from different sources. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	0.71	0.44	57.5%	73.3%
10	Be able to discriminate similar and different sounds from different sources. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	0.35	0.34	33.3%	57.5%
Mean Score					59.97%	80.04%

Table 11. Pretest performances of students in word discriminating questions

	Q1 5 points	Q2 20 points	Q6 10 Points	Q7 10 Points	Q9 10 Points	Q10 10 Points	Total 65 points	Percentile
P1	3	20	10	5	0	10	48	73.84%
P2	5	16	10	10	4	0	45	69.23%
P3	5	16	0	0	0	5	26	40%
P4	5	16	0	0	3	5	29	44.61%
P5	5	20	10	0	10	0	45	69.23%
P6	5	20	5	10	2	0	42	64.61%
P7	5	20	0	10	10	0	45	69.23%
P8	0	20	4	10	8	0	42	64.61%
P9	5	20	0	10	10	10	55	84.61%
P10	5	20	10	8	8	5	56	86.15%
P11	0	18	4	7	10	0	39	60%
P12	0	14	4	0	6	5	29	44.61%
Mean Score	3.58	18.33	4.75	5.83	5.75	3.33	41.75	64.23%
Average as Perc.	71.6%	91.65%	47.5%	58.3%	57.5%	33.3%		

and post-test scores of P6. Although the overall performance of students has increased from 64.23% to 83.20%, further data are needed to understand the reasons for the decrease in this student›s score.

As seen in Table 11, the pretest average score of P6 in word discriminating questions is 41.75.

As seen in Table 12 above, the pretest average score for P6 in word discriminating questions is 32. A detailed examination of P6's pretest and final test papers reveals that in the final test, P6 tended to avoid longer questions that required answers comprising more than two words, leaving those questions unanswered. It was also noted that the student had

Table 12. Students' performance in word discriminating questions on the final test

	Q1 5 points	Q2 20 points	Q6 10 Points	Q7 10 Points	Q9 10 Points	Q10 10 Points	Total 65 points	Percentile
P1	5	20	10	10	10	10	65	100%
P2	5	20	10	10	10	0	55	84.61%
P3	3	16	10	6	4	5	44	67.69%
P4	5	20	10	10	10	5	60	92.30%
P5	5	20	10	10	8	10	63	96.92%
P6	5	20	2	0	0	5	32	49.23%
P7	5	20	10	10	10	5	60	92.30%
P8	4	20	10	0	0	5	39	60%
P9	5	15	10	10	10	5	55	84.61%
P10	5	20	10	10	10	10	65	100%
P11	5	20	10	10	10	5	60	92.30%
P12	1	20	10	10	6	5	52	80%
Mean Score	4.41	19.25	8.5	8	7.33	5.75	54.08	83.20%
Average as Perc.	88.2%	96.25%	85%	80%	73.3%	57.5%		

Table 13. Percentage representation of students' performance in all activities

	Introducing 65 points	At the bank 50 points	Shopping 50 Points	Expressing love 80 points	Alo 182 20 points	At the doctor's 50 Points	Hockey 50 Points	University dorm 20 Points
P1	100%	68	42	72.5	80	66	86	100
P2	78.4%	44	42	82.5	90	96	90	90
P3	87.6	34	34	80	15	70	42	85
P4	98.4	54	50	75	95	86	94	100
P5	96.9	78	58	72.5	90	100	91	100
P6	92.3	52	42	52.5	40	90	62	95
P7	100	98	68	87.5	95	100	93	95
P8	98.4	40	36	85	95	100	96	85
P9	52.3	58	38	80	95	82	84	90
P10	66.15	54	54	100	95	84	100	85
P11	100	94	76	85	85	76	89	85
P12	73	60	56	82.5	90	46	82	85
Mean Perc.	77.09	61.15	49.64	79.15	80.35	83	84.08	92.05

low attendance in Turkish language classes, as evidenced by the attendance record.

As observed in Table 9, where students' pretest and post-test achievement scores were statistically examined through the Wilcoxon Test, a significant difference is evident between the pretest and post-test scores in the discriminative listening domain. However, no statistically significant difference is noted in the word discrimination sub-dimension between students' pretest and post-test scores. In light of this observation, the findings related to the performance exhibited by students in the word discrimination dimension of discriminative listening over the eight-week intervention period are further explored. This includes an examination of findings and comments concerning the pretest and post-test scores.

In Table 13, activities with given score values, titled "Introducing," "At the Bank," "Alo 182," "At the Doctor's," and "Hockey," are activities aimed at enhancing word discriminating skills concerning the targeted competence. To reveal what students did regarding word discriminating from the first activity to the last, activities that involve the word discriminating competence, including the initial worksheet titled "Introducing" and the final worksheet titled "Hockey," were examined.

Table 14 shows that the student performance in the "Introducing" the first activity in the Discriminational Listening - I worksheet, which is evaluated on a total of 65 points, was calculated as a percentage of 77.09%. All activities in the relevant study are designed to address the competency of "Discriminates words heard while listening."

To make interpretations based on quantitative data related to word discrimination, additional data can be accessed. For this purpose, you can refer to Table 15 which examines student performance in the first question addressing word discrimination in the pretest and post-test, and compares the scores in percentage representation.

When Table 15, created for the purpose of comparing students' pretest and post-test scores on word discriminating in percentage terms, is examined, it can be observed that student scores have increased in all word discriminating-related questions. This situation, parallel to the findings obtained based on the responses of P10, indicates that the discriminative listening practice conducted in the research has improved word discriminating skills.

Findings and Recommendations Related to the Third Research Question

In this section, findings and interpretations related to the research question "What is the impact of podcasts on the

Table 14. Relevance of achievements to "discriminative listening - I: tanışma" activity items and unit scores

Item	Targeted achievement	Question type	Score value of the question	The students' average scores in the relevant items	Percentil
1	Be able to discriminate similar and different sounds from different sources. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	5 points	4.66	93%
2	Be able to discriminate similar and different sounds from different sources. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening. Be able to discriminate dotted sounds.	Short Answer	33 points	28.46	86.6%
3	Be able to discriminate similar and different sounds from different sources. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening. Be able to discriminate dotted sounds.	Short Answer	6 points	4.38	73%
4	Be able to discriminate words heard while listening. Be able to discriminate dotted sounds. Be able to discriminate words that end with the same sound while listening.	Short Answer	10 points	6.16	61.6%
5	Be able to discriminate words heard while listening. Be able to discriminate dotted sounds.	Short Answer	11 points	7.72	70.18%
Total			65 points	50.11	77.09%

Table 15. Comparison of students' pretest and post-test scores related to word discrimination in percentage representation

Item	Targeted achievement	Question type	Score value of the question	Pretest	Post-test
1	Be able to discriminate similar and different sounds from different sources. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	5 points	71.6%	88.2%
2	Be able to discriminate similar and different sounds from different sources. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening. Be able to discriminate dotted sounds.	Fill in the Blank	20 points	91.65%	96.25%
6	Be able to discriminate words that start with the same sound while listening. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	10 points	47.5%	85%
7	Be able to discriminate words that end with the same sound while listening. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	10 points	58.3%	80%
9	Be able to discriminate similar and different sounds from different sources. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	10 points	57.5%	73.3%
10	Be able to discriminate similar and different sounds from different sources. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening. Short Answer	10 points	33.3%	57.5%

Table 16. Addressed achievements and score values of questions in discriminative listening-III: shopping activity

Item	Targeted Achievement	Question Type	Score Value of the Question	The Students' Average Scores in the Relevant Items	Percentile
1	Be able to discriminate suffixes that are appropriate for words heard while listening.	Fill in the Blank	10 points	5.91	59.1%
2	Be able to discriminate suffixes that are appropriate for words heard while listening.	Short Answer	10 points	5	50%
3	Be able to discriminate suffixes that are appropriate for words heard while listening.	Matching	24 points	8.08	33.66%
4	Be able to discriminate words that end with the same sound while listening.	Short Answer	6 points	5.83	97.16%
Mean Score				24.82	49.64%

Table 17. Score and average values of students' responses to questions related to suffix discrimination in the "shopping" titled discriminative listening activity

Item	Targeted achievement	Question type	Score value of the question	The students' average scores in the relevant items	Percentile
1	Be able to discriminate suffixes that are appropriate for words heard while listening.	Fill in the Blank	10 points	5.91	59.1%
2	Be able to discriminate suffixes that are appropriate for words heard while listening.	Short Answer	10 points	5	50%
3	Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Matching	24 points	8.08	33.66%
Mean Score			44	18.99	43.15%

ability of foreign learners of Turkish abroad to discriminate suffixes?" are presented. According to Table 5, created to examine students' pretest and post-test performance in accordance with the achievements addressed by A1 level discriminative listening test questions, the 3rd question in the A1 Level Discriminative Listening Skill Test is a fill-in-the-blank question specifically designed for suffix differentiation. When examining the item›s difficulty and discrimination values, it can be observed that the item has moderate difficulty and good discrimination.

In Table 5, which is used for the comparison of pretest and post-test scores based on achievements, a noticeable increase is observed in the pretest to post-test average scores for the item related to additional differentiation, which is the 3rd item addressing the achievement. While the group average of the pretest scores was 55%, this average reached 86.6% in the post-test. This situation suggests that the eight-week podcast application conducted in the research had a positive impact on students› ability for additional differentiation. As observed in Table 9, where students› pretest and post-test achievement scores were statistically examined through the

Wilcoxon Test, a significant difference is evident between the pretest and post-test scores in the discriminative listening domain. However, no statistically significant difference is noted in the affix discrimination sub-dimension between students› pretest and post-test scores. In light of this observation, the findings related to the performance exhibited by students in the affix discrimination dimension of discriminative listening over the eight-week intervention period are further explored. To enhance the robustness of data analysis, a more in-depth interpretation of students› performance in the activities employed over the eight weeks is required. This is essential because while there is a significant difference in the overall test scores, the absence of a corresponding difference in the sub-dimensions suggests a need for deeper exploration in the data. To strengthen this interpretation, a more in-depth analysis of students' performance in the activities used during the eight weeks is required. For this purpose, the activities of the third and seventh weeks, titled "Shopping" and "Hockey," addressing the achievement related to additional differentiation as expressed in Table 3 under the heading "Achievements Addressed by Podcast-Supported

Discriminative Listening Activities" have been examined to facilitate the analysis and provide in-depth insights.

When examining Table 13 mentioned above, it is noticeable that students' overall performance significantly decreased in the third-week "Shopping" activity (49.64%), and then their performance gradually increased afterward. In order to explain this situation, the performance in the relevant activity was examined, and the following Table 16 has been created:

As seen in Table 16, in the "Shopping" worksheet, three out of four questions are related to suffix discrimination. In this activity, which is diversified with fill-in-the-blank, short-answer, and matching type questions, among the first three questions related to suffix discrimination, the question in the matching type, which is the third question, is where students received the lowest scores, while the question in the fill-in-the-blank type, which is the first question, is where they received the highest scores. When Table 6, prepared to compare student performance in achievements related to discriminating sounds in the Discriminative Listening Exam, is examined, it can also be observed that students had the lowest performance in the fourth question, which is a fill-in-the-blank question related to sound discrimination.

When Table 17, which includes the scores and average values of students' responses to questions related to suffix discrimination in the discriminative listening activity titled "Shopping," is examined, it indicates that students were able to discriminate 43.15% of the suffixes covered in the activity, which is discussed at the A1 level.

In addition to the findings obtained from the listening podcast-supported activity titled "Shopping" conducted in the third week of the podcast-supported listening study process, the performance of students in the discriminative

listening podcast-supported activity titled "Hockey," which includes achievements related to suffix discrimination, was examined concerning the third research question. This examination is presented in Table 18, which includes the score values of students' performances.

Upon examining Table 18, it will become apparent that the first, second, and fifth questions in the discriminative listening exercise titled "Hockey" are related to suffix discrimination. Therefore, for a detailed analysis of students' performance, Table 19, created for this purpose, can be reviewed alongside Table 18.

Table 19 reveals that in the podcast-supported discriminative listening skill development program prepared and implemented in this study, during the third week in the activity titled "Shopping," the correct answer rate for questions related to suffix discrimination was 43.15%. In contrast, during the seventh week in the activity titled "Hockey," the correct answer rate for questions related to suffix discrimination reached 83.64%. These findings indicate that students improved their suffix discrimination skills as they approached the end of the eight-week podcast program. Students initially struggled with suffix discrimination activities, which is evident when analyzing the average scores in the "Shopping" and "Hockey" activities, as provided in the score tables (see Table 16 and Table 18).

Furthermore, another noteworthy aspect pertains to question types. Upon examining Table 18, which demonstrates the achievements covered in the activity titled "Hockey" during the seventh week, it is observed that the first question is matching, the second question is short answer, and the fifth question is multiple choice. The finding that students scored the highest on the multiple-choice question, combined with the knowledge that the fifth question, which is

Table 18. Score and average values of students' responses to questions related to suffix discrimination in the "hockey" titled discriminative listening activity

Item	Targeted achievement	Question type	Score value of the question	The students' average scores in the relevant items	Percentile
1	Be able to discriminate suffixes that are appropriate for words heard while listening.	Matching	16 points	14.33	89.56%
2	Be able to discriminate suffixes that are appropriate for words heard while listening. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	24 points	18.33	76.38%
3	Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	40 points	34.83	87.08%
4	Be able to discriminate letters corresponding to sounds while listening. Be able to discriminate dotted sounds while listening.	Short Answer	10 points	7.58	75.58%
5	Be able to discriminate suffixes that are appropriate for words heard while listening.	Multiple Choice	10 points	9.16	91.6%
Mean Score				84.08	84.08%

Table 19. Score and average values of students' responses to questions related to suffix discrimination in the "hockey" titled discriminative listening activity

Item	Targeted achievement	Question type	Score value of the question	The students' average scores in the relevant items	Percentile
1	Be able to discriminate suffixes that are appropriate for words heard while listening.	Matching	16 points	14.33	89.56%
2	Be able to discriminate suffixes that are appropriate for words heard while listening. Be able to discriminate words heard while listening.	Short Answer	24 points	18.33	76.38%
5	Be able to discriminate suffixes that are appropriate for words heard while listening.	Multiple Choise	10 points	9.16	91.6%
Mean Score				41.82	83.64%

both the easiest in terms of difficulty and has a "good" level of distinctiveness, is one of the questions where students scored the highest on both the pretest and post-test in the Discriminative Listening Skills Test, creates the impression that multiple-choice questions are answered more easily by students.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research suggests an eight-week podcast-supported listening program for learners studying Turkish as a foreign language at the A1 level abroad, with the aim of enhancing their discriminative listening skills. The findings indicate an improvement in students' discriminative listening skills. According to the results of the Wilcoxon non-parametric test conducted on the overall scores of the discriminative listening exam, a significant difference is observed between pretest and post-test scores, indicating that the proposed program is effective in enhancing discriminative listening skills. This result is consistent with the findings of Kavaliauskienė and Anusienė (2009), who demonstrated that podcast usage provides authentic listening opportunities and increases language awareness.

The significant difference in overall test scores, despite the absence of a corresponding difference in sub-dimensions, may suggest the integrated nature of the sub-dimensions of discriminative listening. It also implies that more efficient results could be obtained with a larger sample size in the implemented intervention.

The skill of sound discrimination, considered as a sub-dimension of discriminative listening, emerges as a crucial skill, particularly for learners at the beginner level of learning Turkish. Examining data related to the sound discrimination sub-dimension reveals that participants struggled the most with sound discrimination, distinguishing dotted sounds, and differentiating the same sounds from various sources (female voice, male voice, child voice; sounds from radio, television, or phone, etc.). The most common error in both pretest and post-test occurred with the sound "ğ." These findings are consistent with various studies indicating that learners

face challenges, especially with dotted sounds in the Turkish alphabet (Arslan and Batur, 2021; Okatan, 2012; Er, Biçer, and Bozkırlı, 2012; Şengül, 2014; Açık, 2008). Additionally, it should be emphasized that students may make errors not only with dotted sounds but also with other sounds, reflecting their language habits from their native language while learning the target language. Studies in the literature discussing the influence of the native language when learning a foreign language (Biçer, 2017; Çelebi, 2006; Moussu, 2006; Gabrielatos, 2001) support this observation.

In addition to the results concerning the sub-problems of the research, another significant finding is that participants faced the most difficulty with fill-in-the-blank type questions, while multiple-choice questions were the easiest to solve. These findings, which need to be supported with further research and additional data, are consistent with some studies in the literature (Tunçel, 2013).

Based on the findings and results mentioned above, this research recommends collaboration between instructors and academics working in the field to increase authentic materials for listening for those learning Turkish as a foreign language abroad at the A1 level. Moreover, it suggests developing specialized podcasts for learners of Turkish abroad, providing suitable environments and opportunities for podcast development, and incorporating mobile audio tools and materials, including podcasts, into both in-class and out-of-class activities. Research topics for future studies could include investigating discriminative listening with all its sub-dimensions on larger samples and examining it at levels beyond the A1 level to determine appropriate levels of question types for listening skills.

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