

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The research presents the information, which consists of background, research questions, research purposes, research significance, research hypothesis, and framework.

#### **A. Background of Study**

Listening comprehension is a critical component of English instruction in Indonesia. While hearing is frequently disregarded, speaking, reading, and writing are given much attention. Among the four language skills, Tompkins and Hoskisson (1995, p.81) claim that listening is the one that gets less attention. One must cultivate extraordinary listening abilities to understand English, particularly in professional and academic contexts. According to Ihsan (2011), the value of English comprises the capacity for written and oral communication. Consequently, Ihsan (2011) contends that "people need to master all English-language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing." As the most common form of receptive skill in daily life, listening is one of the English language's abilities.

Despite its importance, listening comprehension is not easy to acquire. Hassan (2000) and Graham (2003) have stated that listening is one of the most challenging learning skills. Likewise, Vandergrift (2007) asserts that one of the reasons is that learners do not know how to discover the way to learn effectively. They may face challenges in dealing with vocabulary, grammar, delivery speed, and so on, and their teacher must emphasize the importance of listening skills in the English learning process.

The researcher conducted a preliminary investigation to support the justification for this research. Based on the initial study from observations, it was found that students experienced a lack of vocabulary understanding. Often, they mix English with Indonesian. When the teacher speaks English, students often stay silent and ask about the words they do not know. The teacher will then tell or sometimes repeat what has been said so that students understand. Therefore, when the teacher speaks English, the teacher often repeats it in Indonesian. However, some students often

speak English; for example, when they ask permission to go to the toilet, they practice their vocabulary.

However, one solution to the problem is to use appropriate media, such as podcasts. Beheler (2007) asserted that teachers might use podcasts as a helpful teaching tool by posting podcast lessons on classroom websites and encouraging their pupils to visit the sites to increase their knowledge. To carry out such an activity, though, pupils must be encouraged. Teachers can provide podcast sources and negotiate for their students to select their preferred themes of interest.

Podcasts provide a large amount of authentic input and teaching materials with different approaches to language learning (depending on the content provider). Therefore, multimedia has been created to teach listening skills. It is essential to choose appropriate media to enhance students' listening skills. This research is concerned with improving listening skills and investigating the use of podcasts on students. A podcast is an audio file that is downloadable from the internet. The podcast was first known in 2004. It is defined as online audio blogging or internet audio publishing. The term "podcasting" is a blend of the words "iPod" and "broadcasting" (O'Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2008). Podcasts are automatically delivered online via a website, unlike other audio. Podcasts utilize voice, the most influential tool that quickly relates to the audience. It revolutionizes the English learning process, which provides students flexibility when and where to learn at their desired learning pace and path. Thus, the podcast is a series of sound files that contain comprehensive educational information to make the user an advanced learner.

According to Constantine (2007), a podcast is a digital recording of a radio show or similar program released as an MP3 file on the Internet. The emergence of podcasts on the Internet has provided language instructors with abundant resources to instruct students on listening comprehension. Podcasts range in length from thirty minutes to one hour. The study aimed to determine if podcasts considerably enhanced students' listening comprehension.

The goal of improving listening skills through podcasts is to enhance one's ability to understand and comprehend spoken language in various contexts since

people listen more often than they speak, read, or write and because listening plays a significant part in human life.

When teaching and learning English, the teacher seemed to overlook listening abilities. According to Gilakjani & Ahmadi (2011), the deliberate teaching and learning of listening skills has, for a very long time, been, for the most part, an insufficiently taught and, in most contexts, blatantly neglected portion of the Language curriculum. Additionally, they infer that listening has received important scholarly attention in several recent research studies on second language acquisition (SLA) and ESL curricula and classrooms.

It has been discovered that pupils struggle with listening skills. Several things, including a lack of understanding of vocabulary and grammar used in listening contexts, a lack of resources, and restricted exposure to the English language outside of the classroom, contribute to the students' poor listening skills. Melani (2020) argues that pupils cannot properly enhance their listening abilities in the classroom due to the short amount of time allotted to listening exercises. The situation needs to be addressed in some way. One approach to resolving the issue is through podcasting. The main distinction between podcasts and conventional audio/video is that downloading recently released episodes requires a subscription to some podcasting websites.

According to research by Kavaliauskienė (2008), podcasts can be used to enhance listening abilities. According to Puspitasari (2011), using STAD with podcast content can also improve students' listening comprehension. Furthermore, when employing podcast content delivered through STAD, students are engaged and passionate in the teaching and learning process, according to Puspitasari's (2011) research findings. Podcasts are also used in this study to help pupils with their listening comprehension.

Although many studies have examined podcasts to improve listening skills, research on different types of podcasts, such as pop culture news, music, and entertainment podcasts, is still rare. In contrast to previous studies, this study used the Zach Sang Show Podcast to improve listening skills in high school students. This research was chosen because previously, there was no research using this

podcast to improve students' listening skills. The podcast brings interesting topics and discussions, offering numerous language inputs to students (Yoestara & Putri, 2019).

## **B. Research Question**

This study examines the lack of understanding of vocabulary and grammar used in listening contexts and a lack of resources. Following some of the previously mentioned issues in the background, there is a question formulated for this study:

1. What are students' listening skills before using the Zach Sang Show podcast?
2. What are students' listening skills after using the Zach Sang Show podcast?
3. How significant is the improvement of students' listening skills before and after using the Zach Sang Show Podcast?

## **C. Research Purpose**

Following the research questions above, there are three research purposes:

1. To find out students' listening skills before using the Zach Sang Show podcast.
2. To find out students' listening skills after using the Zach Sang Show podcast.
3. To find out the improvement of students' listening skills before and after using the Zach Sang Show Podcast.

## **D. Research Significances**

This research will provide teachers and students with information about effective ways to teach English listening skills through podcasts.

### 1) Theoretical Significance

Teachers and students can benefit from this research's findings as assessment tools to help students' listening skills.

### 2) Practical Significances

a. Students

The study's findings are anticipated to facilitate students' acquisition of English, particularly when using podcasts for listening classes.

b. Teachers

This research is expected to help evaluate listening teaching strategies and improve teachers' understanding of how to teach listening through Podcasts. This allows students to access the material at home and on the go and continue developing their listening skills.

## **E. Research Scope**

This study focuses on the Zach Sang Show podcast, aiming to improve students' listening skills through podcast-based learning. The research was conducted with eighth-grade students at MTs Al-Jawami, using a pre-experimental design with pre-tests and post-tests to measure outcomes. The Zach Sang Show was chosen for its unique and engaging content. Zach Sang hosts the podcast and features interviews with celebrities, musicians, and other public figures, covering a wide range of topics such as pop culture, music, and entertainment news. The show appeals to young audiences, with guests including both international and Indonesian artists. Given the popularity of Korean and Western celebrities among students, this podcast serves as an ideal medium. It not only provides entertainment and information about their favorite idols but also offers an opportunity to improve their listening skills in English.

## **F. Conceptual Framework**

### **a. Listening**

As the foundation for all other talents, listening serves as the main method via which students learn to effectively connect with the language and culture of their target language. When both the speaker and the listener are aware of the subtleties of the discourse, effective engagement takes place. Students can find a variety of listening exercises every day, including debates, poems, videos, and directives. Students must be able to recognize accents, understand vocabulary meanings,

pronounce words correctly, and understand grammar rules to be able to understand them (Hardiah, 2019). Because listening activities necessitate concentration and effort from pupils, they involve mental entanglement.

In the oral style, listening is the receptive skill, and in the written method, reading is the receptive skill. Speaking and writing, however, are useful abilities. According to Hammer (2007), speaking entails production in the oral mode, whereas writing comprises production in the written method. Listening skills in language teaching have been neglected and shifted to a secondary position after speaking and writing. This is a surprising fact given that it is the skill most often used in communication. It is thought that about forty percent of our daily communication is spent on listening, thirty-five percent on speaking, sixteen percent on reading, and only nine percent on writing. However, despite its critical role in communication and language acquisition, listening comprehension remains one of the least understood processes in language learning. By now, language practitioners have accepted that listening skills have to be taught like any other language skills.

People view listening as an intricate, involved activity in which they actively create meaning. To interpret texts and gain meaning, learners of foreign languages need to become proficient in the language. According to Rost (2002), listening is a process that includes four different orientations: transformative (creating meaning via interaction, creativity, and empathy), collaborative (negotiating meaning and reacting), constructive (constructing and reflecting meaning), and receptive (hearing). A listener's tactics to improve task management and effective listening techniques are also linked to successful listening. These strategies can be taught. Active participation from the listener is necessary for these activities.

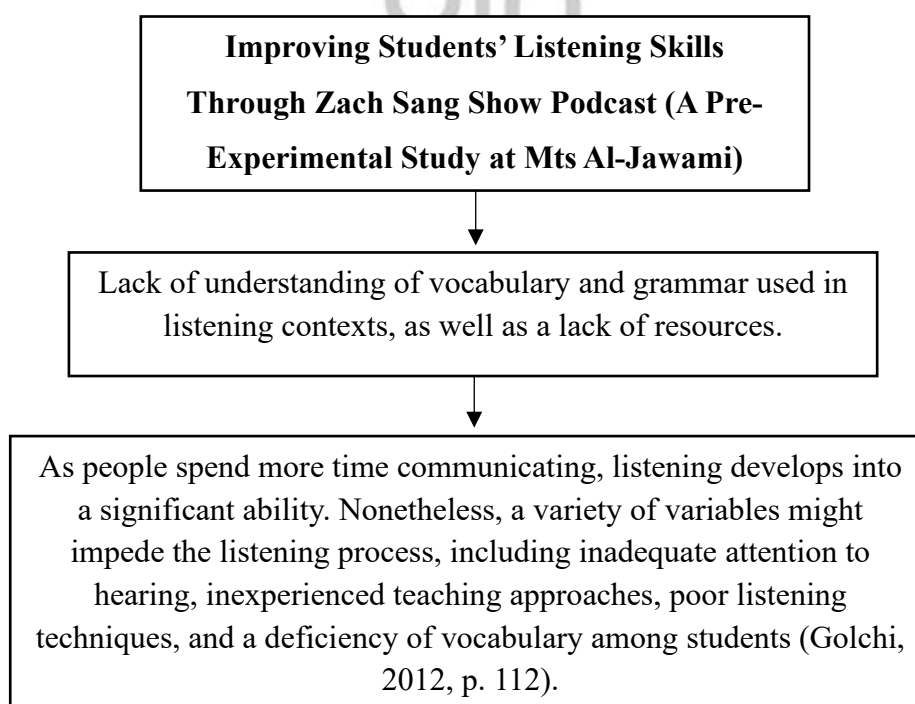
#### **b. Podcast**

A podcast is a digital recording of a radio broadcast or other such program, according to P. Constantine (2007). podcasts are available as MP3 files online. Interested listeners may download these MP3 files to any MP3 player or personal computer. The files are available for the listener to access whenever it is most convenient. Any content that piques the interest of learners can be listened to

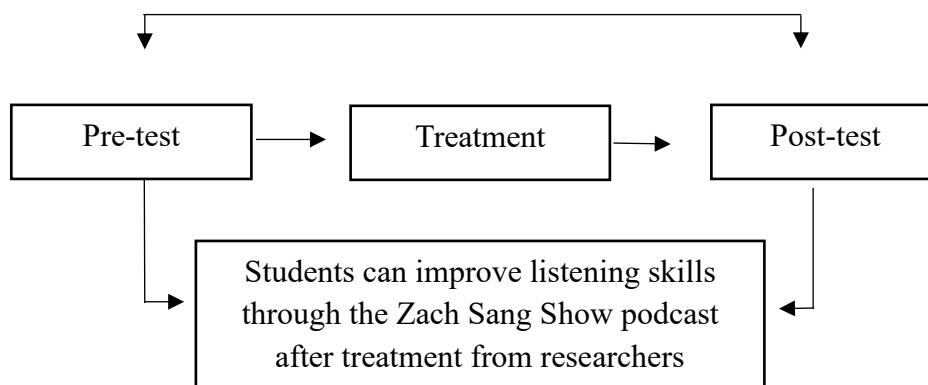
repeatedly. Podcasts range in length from thirty minutes to one hour. Students can follow a podcast with an RSS subscription (Really Simple Syndication).

Podcasts present engaging subjects and conversations that give students various linguistic inputs (Yoestara & Putri, 2019). A podcast presents a wealth of knowledge on a variety of subjects. Additionally, it informs pupils on current events and themes at specific periods. As they establish assumptions and opinions about the case, students' knowledge, comprehension, and critical thinking are partly shaped by the new material they are exposed to. It is probably simpler for kids to continue with the media and use it as a learning tool once they become interested in the subjects, particularly listening and the other three skills: reading, writing, and speaking.

The podcast has a ton of new vocabulary and grammar lessons that students may apply to their existing knowledge. Because of the subjects and abundant podcast information, vocabulary knowledge was developed (Rosyidah et al., 2021). The podcast's diverse vocabulary can be used for related topics because it is encapsulated in an audio exchange. Additionally, it allows students to apply grammar in real time to conversations, enabling them to match grammar usage to context.







*Figure 1.1 The Scheme to Improve Students' Listening Skills Through Zach Sang Show Podcast*

### **G. Hypothesis**

This research hypothesis mainly focuses on how podcast media can enhance students' listening skills.

1. Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) The null hypothesis states that podcast media does not enhance students' listening skills.
2. Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>a</sub>) The alternative states that podcast media enhanced students' listening skills.

### **H. Previous Studies**

This paper is related to several previous studies. First, the study conducted by Khairiah Syahabuddin, Mulia, and Khaira Rizqa (2021) on Improving Students' Listening Skills Using Podcasts. Finding out more about how using podcasts can help students improve their listening abilities was the goal of this study. Investigating how podcasts can help students become better listeners is the aim of this research. A quantitative approach was applied in this study. A pre-experimental technique was used to collect the data. The study included fifteen fourth-semester students from Universitas Islam Negeri ArRaniry Banda Aceh's Department of



English Language Education. The mean score of the students' pre- and post-tests improved from 36.3 to 63.3, demonstrating this. According to this study, podcasts may help improve listening comprehension in English.

Second, the study was conducted by Rizkina Damayanti and Muhamad Sofian Hadi (2022) on using podcasts as a strategy to improve EFL students' listening skills. This study aims to gather data regarding the usage of podcasts as a teaching tool to enhance listening comprehension in EFL students. The research technique employs a qualitative approach by performing classroom action research throughout two cycles. Planning, action, observation, and reflection are the four steps that make up each cycle. This study used tests, observations, and interviews as data sources. Studies have demonstrated the efficacy of employing podcasts as a teaching tool to enhance EFL students' listening comprehension.

Third, Siti Masitah, Lisa Rakhmanina, Melati, and, Marvin Doma Daveri (2023) on The Effectiveness of Listening to Podcasts To Improve Students' Listening Skills (An Experimental Study in the Second Grade of the SMAN 4 Bengkulu). The goal of the study is to ascertain whether or not podcasts can help SMAN 4 Bengkulu students become better listeners. The study used one group's pre- and post-test treatments while utilizing the pre-experimental approach. Second-grade pupils from SMAN 4 Bengkulu made up the study's population. A purposive sample was used in the study. In this study, 999 students make up the sample. Two methods of gathering data were completing a blank form with 20 numbers and taking a multiple-choice listening exam. It can be concluded that podcasts are useful for enhancing students' listening comprehension abilities since the result is accepted and the null hypothesis ( $t_0$ ) is rejected.

Fourth, Dhea Saragih, Anissa Marpaung, and Roselina Purnama Sari Saragih (2022) on The Use of Podcasts in Improving Students' Listening Skills in Senior High School. This study aimed to determine how podcasts, particularly those aimed at senior high school students, can enhance students' listening skills. In this study, students completed questionnaires and participated in brief interviews with researchers, which is a qualitative approach to data collection. Class XI Mia 1 students of SMA Swasta Assisi Siantar were the research subjects. According to

research that the researchers conducted, a podcast impacts students' learning processes, particularly when studying listening skills. The podcast is a learning tool that engages and motivates students to learn English listening.

Fifth, Luis Gabriel Parrales Picazo and Laura Mariscal Touzard (2023) discuss the uses of the podcast "Easy Stories in English" to improve the listening skills of students from "Centro Tecnológico Naval". This mixed-method design study aimed to ascertain how using the podcast platform "Easy Stories in English" would affect students' ability to listen in an Ecuadorian institute. It is concerning that students find it challenging to comprehend what they hear in this foreign language because military careers depend heavily on this ability. Listening to these stories on podcasts can make understanding pronunciation, accents, and colloquial language easier. In this study, fifty A2 students make up a convenient sample, with 25 students assigned to the experiment class and another 25 students to the control class. This study used a quasi-experimental approach with a pre-and post-test. Additionally, the experimental group was given a survey to complete and an interview to find out how they felt about using this podcast to get better at listening. The experimental group was found to be significantly different from the other group. Ninety percent of students, on average, have a good attitude toward using these podcasts for listening in terms of motivation for learning English. They view podcasts and tales as great resources for learning new information and reviewing material covered in class. To increase their motivation to study English, students thought podcasts offered realistic materials, engaging activities, and relevant tasks, such as listening exercises. Considering podcasts' efficacy as a technology-based teaching tool, this study suggested that educators use them to develop listening skills.

Sixth, Rumana Rafique (2019) on Using Podcasts to Improve Listening Skills of Tertiary Level Learners: Insights from Literature. In Bangladeshi tertiary-level EAP (English for Academic Purposes) schools, listening is an often-ignored receptive skill. While writing continues to be the primary focus, learning to listen is just as important for EAP students as speaking. Playing podcasts in the classroom is good for students to practice listening. According to numerous research findings,

podcasts offer young learners flexibility and a variety of content for listening in real life. This paper clarifies the value of using podcasts to improve listening skills in tertiary courses based on existing literature. In Bangladeshi tertiary-level classrooms, some of the problems associated with its implementation are also highlighted. According to the study, podcasts can be useful for honing in-depth listening skills. Nonetheless, educators must take special care when selecting the course material to ensure that students like learning in general.

Although many studies have examined podcasts as a way to improve listening skills, research on various types of podcasts, such as pop culture news, music, and entertainment podcasts, is still rare. Unlike previous studies that tend to use the same type of podcast, such as news or stories, this study used the **Zach Sang Show Podcast** as a means to improve listening skills in junior school students. This research was chosen because previously, there was no research using this podcast to improve students' listening skills.

