

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the research's background, questions, objectives, significance, theoretical framework, and preceding studies. It establishes a comprehensive theoretical framework for the research, emphasises the study's significance, and gives a conceptual framework. The chapter concludes with a recap of prior studies.

A. Background

Listening comprehension is challenging for many high school students in Indonesia, especially with authentic audio or native speakers. Factors like unfamiliar accents, colloquialisms, and fast speech make it harder than controlled classroom language. This leads to difficulty following conversations, missing key details, and disengagement, especially in EFL contexts with limited exposure.

Qizi, (2023 : 272) States that listening is an important skill for efficient communication. Listening carefully and attentively in personal or professional situations can improve relationships, foster trust, and add to overall comprehension. However, developing listening skills is sometimes disregarded or devalued.

Based on Fatika & Rahayu, (2021: 69) Students encounter numerous problems, particularly in Indonesia. In Indonesia, English is considered a foreign language, and Indonesian students do not use English as their first language, so they are inexperienced with it. Some of the challenges are cultural variations, accents, new language, and audio length and pace. Other issues contributed to the students' inability to deal with listening, particularly when studying English.

Based on the observations during the preliminary study, it was found that a significant number of students continued to encounter substantial difficulties in understanding spoken English. Several students reported feeling bored and unmotivated during listening activities, primarily because the materials lacked variation and authentic, real-life contexts. Furthermore, many students struggled with unfamiliar vocabulary, which further impeded their ability to comprehend

spoken texts effectively. The teaching methods observed were predominantly teacher-centered, offering minimal opportunities for student interaction and engagement. In several classes, listening activities still relied heavily on outdated materials and did not incorporate modern media such as podcasts or videos. Consequently, students became passive listeners and showed decreased enthusiasm for improving their listening skills. These findings underscore the necessity for more dynamic, engaging, and authentic listening materials that better support the development of students' listening comprehension.

Setiawan & Wahyuni, (2024:289) Explain media is provided to aid the teacher in meeting the learning objectives. When an application is used to integrate technology into the learning process, the students not only rely on learning in the classroom but also outside the classroom. Technology helps EFL students obtain and utilize foreign language materials easily and makes the learning process more purposeful through personal engagement. Media plays an essential role in teaching and learning English listening skills. By implementing appropriate media, such as podcasts, into the learning process, teachers can enhance students' performance and create a more productive learning environment.

According to Indahsari, (2020:105) podcasts help students become more invested in their language learning. Furthermore, podcasts not only allow students to explore a variety of language inputs, but they may also stimulate them into the target language by bringing actual English experiences into the classroom. Podcasts also enable students to focus on the subject at hand, recognise new vocabulary, memorise the sounds of spoken words, and improve their language competency to be more effective listeners. The study used LEP Podcast - Learn English Podcast features educational episodes that help you learn English through tips, tricks, motivation and real-life conversations. Content includes strategies to improve comprehension and speaking skills, a more relaxed way of learning, and overcoming communication fears.

Additionally, Ramli al., (2018:109) State that podcasts are revolutionizing the English learning process. They offer rich material sources to use in an EFL

context and to assist foreign language instruction in general. Podcasts enable Students can learn when and where they want, at their own pace and on their preferred learning route. Podcasts are also easy to download, distribute, and alter, giving learners more control and ownership over their learning.

Several studies have explored the use of podcasts in education Fadhilatun Nisa et al. (2022: 53) found that the use of podcasts in English language learning significantly improves students' listening comprehension skills. The data collected from pre-test and post-test scores show a noticeable improvement, suggesting that podcasts can serve as an effective supplementary tool for enhancing listening abilities. Additionally, students reported increased motivation and engagement in learning activities when podcasts were incorporated into their lessons. (Abdulrahman et al., 2018:29) conducted a quasi-experimental study with 60 high school students in Jakarta, concluding that podcasts improve listening skills and should be integrated into English language teaching. A'Yun, (2018:37) used an quasi experimental design with an independent samples t-test and found significant improvement in students' listening skills through podcasts. This research, however, focuses on integrating podcasts, aiming to enhance students' listening skills by leveraging the benefits of both podcasting and active learning strategies. This study aims to explore how integrating podcasts as a core component can facilitate active engagement and improve listening comprehension among students. Consequently, this research will use the Learning English Podcast (LEP) to enhance EFL students' listening comprehension (A pre-experimental research on senior high school EFL students in Sukabumi).

B. Research Questions

Based on the background of the study and the identified research gap, this research aims to investigate the role of podcasts in enhancing the listening comprehension of senior high school students. To achieve this objective, the following research questions have been formulated:

1. What are the EFL students' listening comprehension before using LEP podcasts?
2. What are the EFL students' listening comprehension after using LEP podcasts?

3. How significant are the differences before and after using the Learning English Podcast (LEP) in students' English listening comprehension?

C. Research Purpose

This study aims to investigate the impact of podcasts on the listening comprehension of senior high school EFL students. Specifically, it seeks to determine whether podcasts improve students' listening comprehension and engagement by providing authentic language exposure and fostering active learning. The research will assess students' listening comprehension before and after implementing this approach.

D. Research Significance

The significance of this research is multifaceted, addressing critical issues in the realm of English language education, particularly in enhancing listening comprehension among senior high school students.

- A. Theoretical: This study makes an important contribution to language learning theory, particularly in the context of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). By analyzing the effectiveness of Learn English Podcast (LEP) in improving students' listening comprehension.
- B. Practically:
 - a. For Students: This study provides a direct benefit for EFL students by helping them improve their listening comprehension through the use of *LEP – Learning English Podcast*. By engaging with authentic audio materials, students are exposed to different English accents, speech speeds, and real-life conversations. This not only strengthens their comprehension to understand spoken English but also builds their vocabulary, pronunciation, and overall confidence. Moreover, the podcast format supports self-paced and repeated listening, giving students the opportunity to take control of their learning and enhance their English proficiency effectively.
 - b. For Teachers: This research demonstrates the practical implementation of podcasts in educational settings. It offers

suggestions for choosing suitable podcast episodes and devising listening exercises that integrate with the curriculum while highlighting the necessity of utilizing diverse media to cater to the varied needs of students.

E. Research Scope

The research focuses on 11th-grade students at SMAN 01 Cicurug, Sukabumi, utilizing a pre-experimental design with a one-group pre-test and post-test approach to assess the effect of the LEP – Learn English Podcast to improve listening comprehension. The study will involve approximately 30–40 students over 3–6 meetings, during which they will listen to selected podcast episodes as homework and engage in related activities during class. The learning materials will center on analytical exposition texts, and the teaching will be conducted using the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model to foster critical thinking, collaborative problem-solving, and deeper comprehension. Listening comprehension will be evaluated using standardized comprehension tests administered before and after the intervention, alongside surveys to gauge students' engagement and feedback. The research will examine improvements in listening comprehension, as well as students' responses toward the integration of podcasts in PBL-based learning. However, the study will be limited to one school and one grade level, which may affect the generalizability of the findings, and external factors such as prior exposure to English listening activities may also influence the results.

F. Conceptual Framework

This section discusses the essentials of learning English, emphasizing the importance of listening as a language acquisition skill and investigating innovative ways that media and podcasts can enhance English language proficiency, particularly in EFL contexts. The study aims to demonstrate the connections between these elements and how they work together to enhance language learning.

A. Listening

Listening is one of the most crucial talents we begin to employ in the mother's womb, and it is essential for life. according to (Abali & Yazici, 2020:72) Furthermore, (Widiati & Cahyono, 2016:139) Listening is the most important of the four language skills: speaking, reading, and writing. A newborn will first listen to the voices and noises in their surroundings to internalise linguistic input before speaking and learning to read and write. In teaching English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL), determining which language skills should be given priority usually depends on the purpose of the ESL/EFL instruction.

B. Media

According to (Arif et al., 2019:224) technological advances have greatly impacted education, especially in learning English as a foreign language. (Puspitarini & Hanif, 2019:55) state that the Learning media can be defined as a type of hardware or software that teachers utilise to provide materials to students during the learning process. Media is expected to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of learning.. Anitah (2009) mentions Various sorts of media are utilised in education. These include: (a) non-projected visual media, such as caricatures, illustrations, charts, graphs, diagrams, maps, and so on; (b) projected visual media, such as slides (film frames), overhead projectors (OHP), opaque projectors, and film strips (composite films); (c) audio media, such as radios, optical media, tapes, telephones, and so on; (d) audio-visual media, such as television and voice slides; and (e) multimedia, which includes interactive media, hypermedia, virtual.

C. Podcast

According to (Tyas Sansinadi et al. 2020:13.) A podcast is an audio or video program that may be downloaded over the Internet to your phone or computer as audio or video material. Podcasts are a fascinating medium some people use to provide and share information. Furthermore, according to (Chaves-Yuste & de-la Peña, 2023:5), Podcasts are effective language learning aids within a constructivist pedagogical framework that emphasises the importance of social interaction in cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). These aids allow students to expand their knowledge through interactions with their teacher and peers.

This research focused on improving students' listening comprehension using podcasts. Constructivist learning theories were employed to support this study, and the conceptual framework is outlined as follows:

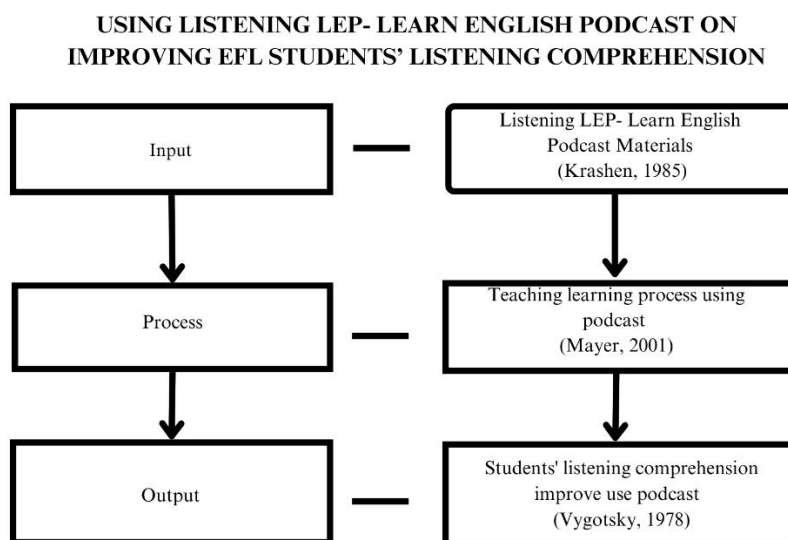


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

The diagram above illustrates the teaching-learning process, which consists of three key components: Input, Process, and Output. This study's conceptual framework, which focuses on using the Lep - Learn English Podcast to enhance EFL students' listening comprehension, breaks down the teaching-learning process into three parts: input, process, and output.

G. Previous Study

Several studies have explored the impact of various media on students' listening skills, especially in the context of learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Research on audiovisual media, podcasts and other digital tools have demonstrated their effectiveness in improving listening comprehension, engagement and motivation. This section reviews previous studies that provide insight into the role of media in improving students' listening skills.

Tryanti Abdulrahman, Nonny Basalamah, and Mohammad Rizky Widodo (2018), in their study titled "The Impact of Podcasts on EFL Students' Listening Comprehension," investigated the effectiveness of podcasts in enhancing students' listening comprehension skills in EFL settings. The research, conducted with 60

high school students in Jakarta using a quasi-experimental design, revealed that students in the experimental group who used podcasts scored significantly higher on posttests than the control group ($p = 0.010$). Surveys further indicated that students found podcasts engaging and motivating, appreciating their authenticity, portability, and relevance to real-life contexts. The authors concluded that podcasts effectively improve listening skills and recommended their integration into English language teaching. This study was published in the *International Journal of Language*. The previous study used a quasi-experimental design, while this study fills the gap by applying pre-experimental in examining the effectiveness of podcasts on EFL students' listening skills.

Q A'Yun (2018), in the study "The Effect Of Using Podcasts on Students Listening Skill", The research employed an a Quasi Experimental experimental design, specifically using an independent samples t-test to compare the means of two groups: an experimental class taught listening using podcasts and a controlled class not taught with podcasts. The researcher collected data through pre-tests and posttests to assess the students' listening skills. The research found that using podcasts in teaching listening significantly affected students' listening skills. The posttest mean score of the experimental class (80.88) was higher than that of the controlled class (77.04).

The research "The Effectiveness of Podcast to Improve Listening Skill in Narrative Text" by Henni Rosa Triwardani, Rinaepi, and Putri Septiana Mubarakah (2021), with a population of 18 tenth-grade students at SMK Darul Ulum Kuningan. The results showed a significant improvement in listening skills, with an average pre-test score of 58.75, a posttest of 84.00, and a T-test value of 0.000. The difference between the studies lies in the different focuses on using podcasts. This study generally uses podcasts for narrative texts, while the research focuses on 'The Lep - Learn English Podcast. In addition, the population studied is also different, with this study involving vocational high school students, while research involves high school students in Sukabumi. The methodology used is also different, where this study uses a quasi-experimental design, while the study uses pre-experimental research.

The research "The Effects of Audiovisual Media on Students' Listening Skills" by Thi & Dung (2021) Was conducted at Tra Vinh University, Vietnam. This study examines how audiovisual media help improve students' listening comprehension. The findings show that students experienced significant improvement after learning with videos, as multimedia elements such as text, images, and sound made learning more engaging. The difference between this study and our research lies in the focus of media usage. While the referenced study explores audiovisual media in general, our research specifically examines the use of "Learning English Podcast (LEP)" to enhance listening skills. Another distinction is the participant demographics; the previous study involved university students, whereas our study focuses on senior high school EFL students in Sukabumi.

