

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background

The purpose of this research is to examine the impact of podcasts on students' listening comprehension abilities. The findings of this study hold important implications, as the overarching goal is to leverage technological tools as effective learning mediums, particularly when teaching English as a foreign language. As Diem (2011) noted, acquiring language skills, especially proficiency in English, takes on heightened significance in today's interconnected world. In the current climate of globalization, English occupies a strategic position in satisfying needs that transcend geographical and cultural borders. Consequently, learners of English as a non-native language must devote adequate time and attention to cultivating their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills - the four primary facets of communicative competence. By evaluating how podcasts influence listening comprehension, this study seeks to provide meaningful insights into optimizing the use of technology to support language acquisition. With English serving as the dominant international language of business, travel, popular culture and academia, it is crucial to identify innovative and engaging methods for instructing English as a foreign tongue. This research has the potential to advance such pedagogical aims by determining whether podcasts present an effective medium for helping students strengthen their listening abilities, a foundational component of second language mastery. Overall, the significance of this work lies in guiding effective integration of technology into English language education, thereby better preparing global citizens to reap the opportunities of today's interconnected world.

Rost (1994, p. 07) distinguishes four fundamental language abilities: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Of these, listening is the essential skill in the early phases of language acquisition. Human beings evolved to communicate by listening before developing abilities in speaking, reading, or writing. Listening plays a critical role in communication, accounting for approximately 40-50 percent of the

total time spent engaging in communication according to research by Timothy and Hulme (2015). Regrettably, listening abilities are undervalued in Indonesia's pedagogical practices and learning processes. Many educators emphasize enhancing reading and writing skills while neglecting skills related to speaking and listening. Consequently, many students in Indonesia have deficient listening proficiencies. While reading and writing are undoubtedly important language skills, developing strong listening competencies should be a higher priority in language education, especially in early stages of acquisition. As the research of Timothy and Hulme indicates, listening accounts for nearly half of all time spent communicating. Without sufficient listening practice and development, students' ability to effectively engage in spoken communication will likely remain limited. Educators would be wise to integrate more listening focused exercises into their lesson plans and curricula. A balanced, well-rounded approach that cultivates all four core language abilities from the beginning would undoubtedly better serve students and help produce graduates with stronger language proficiency overall. Prioritizing listening early on could reap long-term benefits for students' language learning success and their future communication endeavors.

According to data published by Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture, the number of students failing the National Examination (UN) at senior high schools (SMA), vocational high schools (SMK), and Islamic high schools (MA) increased substantially in 2017. Failure rates rose from 7. % in 2016 to 52. 7% in 2017, representing a significant year-over-year increase. English was one of the subjects with the lowest passing rates on the UN, especially in regard to listening comprehension. Research has demonstrated that developing strong listening skills is vital for learning a foreign language. As education scholar Kenneth Chastain noted in 2008, listening comprehension is as fundamental as any other language ability. The phonological system is learned primarily through listening and oral communication, and listening development surpasses speaking development in importance. Michael Rost (2000) reinforced this perspective in his research, stating that listening skills are the most critical component of classroom activities because

they provide input for students. The learning process begins with input received through listening. Students comprehend the input and then produce output in spoken or written form. In other words, listening serves as the initial input driving comprehension, which then leads to output.

The data reported by Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture indicate that an alarmingly high percentage of students are failing to achieve proficiency in key subjects like English on the important National Examination. Research underscores the central role of listening comprehension within the foreign language acquisition process. Strengthening students' listening abilities may be key to improving overall English language learning outcomes and performance on high-stakes exams going forward.

Listening skills were rarely taught, according to limited observation and interviews in SMK Taruna Harapan 2. The limitations of the school facility and basic students ability in English make it difficult for teachers to teach listening. Furthermore, due to the Covid-19 condition, the school cut the time learning for each subject and limited the number of students in each class to avoid overcrowding. The limited facilitation and learning time impacted students' skills and knowledge, particularly their listening skills. In addition, the teacher is not willing to teach listening in the classroom by personal reasons. There are reasons for teacher was not teaching listening in classroom. As a result, students' ability in listening comprehension is not developed. Therefore, the researcher attempt to determine whether or not using podcasts as listening media affects students' listening comprehension.

The term podcast is derived from the words iPod and Broadcasting. According to Hasan and Hoon (2013), podcasts are audio and video files on the internet that are typically uploaded regularly. According to Constantine (2007), a podcast is a digital recording of a radio broadcast published on the internet as an mp3 file that can play on a media player, iPod, smartphone, or DVD player, among other devices.

The benefits of podcasts on the internet have provided language teachers and students with resources for language learning through listening.

A previous study discovered that the teaching-learning process using podcasts could improve students' ability to understand uncommon English words and allow them to practice their pronunciation skills (Mifta, Machdalena, & Hariswan, 2014). In addition, Li (2010) defines that podcast length will influence the outcome of a student's listening comprehension test. Using podcasts in the listening class has many benefits. There are stimulating students to become more imaginative, enriching students' vocabulary, assisting students to learn new things, assisting students to become better listeners and gain new interest, making students more creative, confident, and finally motivating them

Some previous research related podcasts' effect as a medium for listening comprehension with a suitable duration. First, Li (2010) conducted a study using all categories of podcast duration on students' listening comprehension. Second, research by Asmara (2017) and third by Widodo and Gunawan (2019) found that podcasts positively affect students' listening comprehension with students who are already familiar with listening learning activities. Therefore, while the previous research was conducted on students familiar with listening to learning activities and using all stages of duration, this study was conducted on students unfamiliar with listening to learning via podcast activities and chose a podcast with a time of no more than 10 minutes. For these reasons, the research focuses on the effect of using media podcasts on students' listening comprehension for students unfamiliar with listening learning activities.

## **B. Research Questions**

From the description above, this research intended to answer the following questions:

1. What is students' listening comprehension before using podcasts?
2. What is students' listening comprehension after using podcasts?

3. How is the effectiveness of podcasts media on students' listening comprehension?

### **C. Research Purposes**

From the research questions above, this study is aimed at obtaining the following purposes:

1. To find out students' listening comprehension before using podcasts on 11<sup>th</sup> grade?
2. To determine students' listening comprehension after using podcasts on 11<sup>th</sup> grade?
3. To find out the effectiveness of podcasts media on students' listening comprehension.

### **D. The Significances Research**

This research is expected to become a source of information about the use of Podcasts in learning listening comprehension.

Theoretically, this research can be beneficial for teachers and students to know whether this method is effective in learning listening comprehension. Practically, this research gives significance to:

1. Students

This result of the research is expected to help students know how effective or ineffective podcasts are as the media for listening comprehension.

2. Teachers

This result of the research is expected to help the teacher know how valuable podcasts are as the media for learning listening comprehension or improve this method for learning listening comprehension.

### **E. Rationale**

Effective communication is a key component of success in both professional and personal relationships. One of the most important aspects of communication is listening ability, which allows individuals to properly receive and understand messages from others. Listening involves not only hearing the literal words that are

spoken, but also engaging psychologically with the speaker or speakers to comprehend fully the intended meaning. As noted by Shofiyah (2015, as cited in Gumilang, 2019), listening is one of the core language skills that must be developed to interact effectively. True listening requires a sincere desire to understand another human being's perspective, as well as maintaining a respectful and open-minded attitude. It is not enough to simply hear the sounds coming from the speaker; one must be willing to focus attention, process information, and strive to see things from the other person's point of view. Different learning styles and techniques can be employed to enhance listening comprehension. Each individual may have a unique approach to improving this ability depending on their preferred methods and needs. Mastering listening skills in English provides numerous benefits. Those who have developed good listening proficiency in the language will find it easy to engage with English-language radio, complete academic assignments, enjoy films and television, and converse comfortably with international colleagues or clients. Considerable practice and regular exposure to English are necessary to strengthen this important communication competency over time. Regular opportunities to listen to and engage with native English speakers, through both academic coursework and independent study, can help learners at all levels refine their listening comprehension. With diligent effort, listening ability can become a powerful professional and social asset.

Podcast training has become an invaluable resource for educational institutions seeking to evolve beyond traditional models of instruction. As systems work to deliver dynamic, engaging learning experiences unconstrained by physical classroom walls, podcasts have emerged as a highly effective teaching tool. By leveraging the portability and on-demand access afforded by digital audio files, educators can now supplement or enhance curriculum with immersive lessons students can enjoy anywhere, anytime. A brief review of educational technology's progression underscores podcasting's utility. As the internet matured and new platforms broadened virtual learning potential, multimedia emerged with appealing formats that stimulated students in varied ways. Repeated studies have confirmed that judiciously incorporating such media yields positive pedagogical outcomes.

Podcasts, in particular, capitalize on the strengths of their predecessors. Learners benefit from podcasts' personable, conversational style and ability to transmit specialized knowledge in bite-sized portions optimized for mobile consumption. Today's students, having come of age digital natives, respond strongly to podcasts' multimedia interactivity and accommodation of mobile lifestyles. Forward-thinking institutions now deploy podcasts to enrich course materials, offer review supplements, feature guest lectures, and document fieldwork - all while respecting students' scheduling demands and study preferences. As educational philosophies progress to embrace flexibility and lifelong learning beyond academic walls, podcasts will remain invaluable tools for engaging and motivating the next generation.

Based on the above explanation about the Podcast as media, the researcher decided to employ this media on students' listening comprehension. Using students' comprehension skills, they are trained to understand the main issues from different podcast topics. This study employed two variables: the effect of podcast media as the independent variable (X) and the students' listening comprehension as the dependent variable (Y).

## **F. Hypothesis**

Creswell's (2010) hypothesis in quantitative research is a statement that the researcher makes a prediction or notion about the result of a relationship among attributes or characteristics. Statistically hypothesis for this research is:

### 1. Ho (Null Hypothesis)

This research shows the ineffectiveness of podcasts as media on students' listening comprehension.

### 2. Ha (Working Hypothesis)

This research shows the effectiveness of podcasts on students' listening comprehension.

## **G. Previous Studies**

Some previous researchers have studied podcasts as media in listening comprehension. They are (1) Li (2010), (2) Asmara (2017), (3) Widodo and Gunawan (2019).

Li (2010) conducted the first study. She investigated to find the best duration audio and video podcast to use in teaching-learning listening. The current study used a quantitative technique with a quasi-experimental pre-test post-test design to evaluate the effects of video podcasts as additional material on listening comprehension. The study's preliminary review revealed that the quantitative approach would be more suited than the qualitative one for studying the research topic and evaluating the research hypothesis. The study's target samples are male English major undergraduates aged 18 to 25 enrolled in the second semester of Academic Year 2015/ 2016 at Majmaah University. The result is that the optimal podcast duration in EFL learning is between 3-5 minutes and no more than 5-10 minutes. Although the Podcast's length of 3-5 minutes is inadequate, it can assist learners in grasping the main idea and subject, which they can discuss with their peers or ask the teacher before beginning the main lesson.

The second research was conducted by Asmara (2017). He aims to find interesting, fun, and accessible teaching materials for listening comprehension. The research used a quasi-experimental method with pre-test and post-test designs to evaluate the data. This study's population consisted of all eighth graders at SMPN 2 Teluk Gelam during the 2014/2015 academic year. Then, this study used purposive sampling and took two classes which consisted of 34 students who were already familiar with listening activities. The result of the study is that ELT podcasts were thought to be one alternative technique to urge students to engage in listening activities both within and outside the classroom. They might, after all, increase their listening comprehension skills. Therefore, ELT Podcasts are also regarded as the preferred type of media that can assist teachers in providing new and exciting authentic materials for teaching listening. Furthermore, ELT Podcast also treated



students' involvement in their listening activities to increase their level of listening comprehension development.

The third previous research was from Widodo and Gunawan (2019). They investigated the effect of the Podcast on students' listening comprehension. The research samples were collected using random cluster sampling with 60 participants. This study was conducted at SMA Angkasa 2 in Jakarta. The study approach used was a quasi-experimental method, using a post-test-only control group design. The participants were given a 30-item objective test to collect data. This study's result is that Podcast positively affects students' listening comprehension. There are many benefits of podcast media in students' listening comprehension. Podcasting as a medium assisted students in learning and engaged them in understanding hearing information in the English learning process. By using podcasts not just to get students to be more active but also to practice and review language classes, the objective is to boost students' listening comprehension.

