

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Many students say that listening is a difficult skill in language learning, especially English. Sari and Fithriyana (2019) argued that Listening is a challenging skill for many EFL learners. According to Rintaningrum (2018), the reason why people find it difficult to listen in English is because language-teaching energy is devoted to instruction in mastering English conversation while neglecting the importance of numerous other forms of spoken language into a language course, especially in teaching listening comprehension. Moreover, listening is an active process. Listeners have to focus on what they are hearing and understand the meaning at the same time. Listening is very important to which teachers and learners should pay enough attention to obtain communication aims (Ahmadi, 2016).

Technology and information continue to develop rapidly day by day, making our life easier to do activities, work and most importantly this contributes to the learning process. Technology can play an important role in enhancing language learning (Emhamed, 2011). Some people use the development of technology and the speed of the internet to improve their listening comprehension through various media, one of which is listening to Podcasts. Liton (2015) stated, the widespread growing ubiquity of media technology has heightened the remarkable changes in higher education over a period of time.

Podcasts are media files that can be distributed via the Internet and played on computers and handheld devices, including iPods or other digital audio players (Jham et al., 2008). A podcast usually focused on a particular topic or theme. Even though the term is derived from the iPod, now we can listen to podcasts via many different apps such as Spotify, Google Podcast, NOICE, even YouTube. Also, Podcasts can be accessed for free only requiring an internet connection. Quintana & Heaters (2020) claimed through podcast

directories (e.g., Apple podcasts, Google podcasts), they are available instantly, free, and in perpetuity on a variety of platforms, and are both downloadable and stream-able.

Recently, Podcasts have been known by many people, coupled with the many Podcast channels that can be accessed. Various kinds of channels or websites are available to access Podcasts, for example through Google Podcasts, Spotify, or the Podcast application. Harahap (2020) explained, many types of podcasts are found on the Internet such as television podcasts, radio podcasts, classroom podcasts, and individual or group podcasts. Television podcasts, radio podcasts and classroom podcasts are existing programs and lectures turned into podcasts such as those created by VOA (Voice of America). Further, Harahap (2020) stated that the ease of accessing Podcasts and several other advantages has made some people make this Podcast an alternative in learning foreign languages, especially English.

The researcher found a phenomenon in which the spread of Podcasts was used by some university students in Indonesia to improve their listening and English skills. These students have their own interests in the selection of topics to listen to, and different applications used, furthermore, they are not students majoring in English Education but they want to improve their English, especially listening skills through listening Podcast. Because they are students who are not from the English Department, these listening activities are carried out non-formally or outside the classroom teaching and learning process.

One female student likes to listen to podcasts that are made specifically for learning English like the British Council, Learn English with VOA, and so on. The other female student like various topics about tips and tricks, mostly for entertainment purposes. Meanwhile one male student chooses the theme of football. He said he liked listening to Podcasts from the Premier League, one of the Football Leagues in England. This Premier League presents Podcasts which are specifically for the global community who want to learn English but also like football.

The type of their listening activity is informative listening. The aim of this listening is to learn, understand, and grasp information. This type of listening is considered a passive form of listening (Derrington & Groom, 2004). In this case it is because the listener is not judging, critiquing, or evaluating the message. The listener just listens to understand it.

They considered Podcasts as a fun tool to use because there are a wide variety of topics available and we can choose what topics we want to listen to. Podcasts provide a variety of themes or topics that listeners can choose according to their preferred interests. Hasan & Hoon (2013) stated that research on podcasting pedagogy suggests that podcasting greatly helps learners develop various skills of the English language. Research studies on podcasting have already acknowledged its potentiality and have documented much evidence that podcasts can greatly help develop learners' language skills, especially in developing learners' speaking and listening skills (Ashton-Hay & Brookes, 2011; O'Bryan & Hegelheimer, 2007).

Based on the previous studies and the phenomenon experienced by them, this study explores their perception of using Podcast in listening activities. Many researches towards podcasts benefits in improving language learners skills have been conducted, but just a few researches about students' perception towards podcast itself (Kohar, Salam & Sumarni, 2014). This study uses thematic analysis by Braun & Clarke (2013) namely familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and the last is writing up. Besides showing empirical understanding on how university students' perception of using Podcasts in listening activities, this research also provide information for the readers about using Podcasts in listening activities. At the end, this study will contribute to help the readers, especially university students' in improving their listening comprehension using Podcasts. Moreover, Kohar et al., (2014) said that if students have positive perceptions towards podcasts, then they will engage in it over and over again and gradually it will affect students' language learning outcomes.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

This study focuses on answering the question: What are the perceptions of non-English department students while using Podcast in listening activities?

1.3 Operational Definitions

To avoid misinterpretation the researcher provide the operational definition of each keyword related to this study:

1.3.1 Listening : is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process.

1.3.2 Podcast : are media files that can be distributed via the internet and can be accessed through computers or mobile phones as well as other digital audio players. With a wide variety of topics that are available listeners are free to choose which theme they like to listen to.

1.3.3 University Students : students enrolled and studying in a university.

1.4 Aim of the Study

This present study aims to explore university students' non-English department perception of using Podcast in listening activities.

1.5 Significance of the Study

1.5.1 Theoretical Use : Theoretically, this research will help teachers' in improving students' listening comprehension through using Podcasts.

1.5.2 Practical Use

: This research will provide information for the readers about using Podcasts in English listening activities. Hence, the readers can use Podcasts in their teaching and learning practice.

1.5.3 Empirical Use

: This research will show empirical understanding on how university students' non-English department perception of using Podcast in English listening activities.