

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Listening comprehension is one of the most challenging aspects of foreign language learning, particularly in English. It requires not only the ability to recognize sounds and words but also the skill to interpret meaning within a broader context. According to a report by the British Council (2023), approximately 60% of English language learners struggle to understand spoken conversations in academic and social settings.

The difficulty in processing spoken language often results in reduced confidence and engagement in communication-based activities, highlighting the need for innovative instructional strategies to address these challenges effectively. Research by Raihana Askurny et al (2020) showed that motivated students tend to participate actively in class activities and achieve better learning outcomes.

As a crucial component of communication, listening comprehension plays a fundamental role in language acquisition. Research by Romauli et al (2025) suggests that well-developed listening skills contribute significantly to improvements in speaking, reading, and writing abilities. The interconnected nature of these skills underscores the importance of employing pedagogical

approaches that simultaneously enhance multiple language competencies. In second language acquisition, various interactive methods have been explored to overcome barriers to listening comprehension, emphasizing the necessity for engaging and contextually relevant instructional strategies.

In recent years, activity-based learning approaches such as Readers Theater or Reading Theater have been widely utilized to enhance students' language proficiency. This method integrates reading and theatrical elements, fostering a more immersive and engaging learning experience (Tresna et al., 2017). By incorporating performance-based activities, learners become active participants in their language learning process, which, in turn, facilitates deeper linguistic processing and comprehension. The use of such interactive strategies aligns with contemporary educational paradigms that prioritize student engagement and experiential learning.

Based on preliminary study, the researcher discovered that students in the eleventh grade, particularly in class XI-4 at SMA Negeri 5 Tanjungpinang, had serious problems with listening comprehension. This issue was noticed during the initial assessment of students' performance and discussions with the English teacher, which revealed that many students struggled to understand spoken texts, recognize important details, and interpret meaning from audio materials. Furthermore, preliminary findings indicated that the student's average listening scores were below the minimum mastery requirement (KKM). The student's average score was around 70, however the required KKM for listening is 80. This condition showed that they needed to improve their listening

comprehension skills through more engaging and effective teaching techniques. Therefore, the implementation of Reading Theatre was expected to be useful as an alternative technique to improve students' listening comprehension.

Reading Theater is an instructional technique wherein students read from a script and express characters through intonation and expression without the need to memorize dialogues (Susan K. Johnsen, 2025). Unlike traditional reading exercises, this approach encourages students to interpret and internalize spoken language in a dynamic and meaningful manner. By repeatedly engaging with authentic dialogues, learners enhance their ability to process auditory information, thereby improving their listening comprehension skills. Additionally, this method fosters greater emotional and contextual understanding, essential for real-world communication.

The application of drama-based instruction in language education has been widely recognized for its effectiveness. According to Edusci et al. (2024), incorporating theatrical elements into English language instruction significantly boosts students' confidence in comprehending spoken discourse. By participating in role-playing activities, students can better associate words and expressions with their contextual meanings, making language acquisition a more intuitive process. Furthermore, the integration of performance-based learning enhances pronunciation, fluency, and overall communicative competence, making it a valuable tool in second language instruction.

Empirical evidence supports the effectiveness of Readers Theater in enhancing listening comprehension. A study conducted by Posgrado (2024) revealed that the implementation of drama-based instruction in literature classes resulted in a 30% improvement in students' listening skills. Similarly, research within academic settings has demonstrated a notable increase in classroom participation and student engagement when interactive methodologies are employed. These findings suggest that Reading Theater offers a viable solution to addressing listening comprehension difficulties among language learners.

Despite its proven benefits, the implementation of Reading Theater is not without challenges. Some students encounter difficulties in following rapid dialogue exchanges or understanding different accents in English. Moreover, limited access to appropriate reading materials can hinder the widespread adoption of this method. Teachers must carefully curate content that aligns with students' proficiency levels and linguistic needs while incorporating diverse speaking styles to enhance exposure to varied accents and speech patterns. Addressing these challenges is essential to maximizing the pedagogical potential of this approach.

Previous studies have explored the role of drama in English language instruction, yet gaps remain in understanding its long-term effects on listening comprehension. Ivanivna & Mykolaivna (2024) emphasize the aesthetic and creative benefits of drama in education but provide limited insights into its direct impact on auditory processing skills.

The present study sought to address these research gaps by investigating the concrete effects of Reading Theater on students' listening comprehension. Employing a quantitative approach, this study measured changes in students' listening proficiency after participating in structured Reading Theater sessions. The findings contributed to the existing body of literature by providing empirical evidence on the efficacy of this instructional strategy. Additionally, insights gained from this research informed best practices for implementing performance-based methodologies in English language classrooms.

The primary objectives of this study were to analyze the impact of Reading Theater on students' listening comprehension, identify challenges encountered in its implementation, and propose pedagogical recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of drama-based instruction. By systematically examining these aspects, this research aims to provide actionable insights for educators seeking to integrate Reading Theater into their teaching practices. Considering the importance of English Listening skills and the potential of Reading Theatre as a learning technique, this research aimed to investigate whether using reading theatre on student's listening comprehension is effective to improve student's listening comprehension, particularly in narrative texts.

1.2 Limitation of the Problem

The aim of this research is to find out whether or not using reading theater has an improvement on eleventh grade students' listening comprehension at SMAN

5 Tanjungpinang, specifically in narrative texts, based on the background of the research previously mentioned.

1.3 Research Question

Given the previously mentioned background, the research question that guided this study was formulated as follows: "Did the use of reading theatre significantly improve the listening comprehension of eleventh-grade students at SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang, particularly in narrative texts?"

1.4 Objective of the study

Based on the research question, the objective of this study was to determine whether the use of reading theatre had a significant effect on the listening comprehension of eleventh-grade students at SMAN 5 Tanjungpinang, particularly in narrative texts.

1.5 Significances of the study

1. Theoretically

Theoretically, this research could give meaningful contribution for the ELT (English Language Teaching) by enriching the existing theory for teaching listening comprehension.

2. Practically

a Students

This research emphasizes that the application of reading theatre could help to enhance students' listening comprehension by involving them in expressive dialogue, effective auditory practice, and interactive performance activities.

b Teachers

This research could help teachers by presenting an excellent instructional technique, which is reading theater, that can enhance students' listening comprehension skills.

c Other Researcher

The researcher hoped that other researchers were encouraged to explore related topics, such the long-term impacts of theater in education or its influence on other language abilities, like speaking and writing.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1. Listening comprehension

Listening comprehension is the ability to understand the messages that we are received like recognizing sounds, understanding the meaning of words, and connecting context or meaning in conversation through the listening process

2. Reading theatre

Reading theatre is one of english learning strategies that involves students reading from a script or from a story with different parts rather than memorizing lines and using elaborate costumes and sets.

3. Narrative Text

Narrative text is a text that entertain or teach the readers about moral values by telling a story, whether it is real or fictional.

