

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Listening is one of the skills that students must develop when they learn English. It is the most often utilized language skill in everyday situations, especially at school. According to Kline (1996), students spend 10% of their time writing, 15% reading, 30% speaking, and 45% listening. Nunan (2002) claimed EFL students devote a significant amount of class time to listening, although it is the least recognized of the four skill sets in EFL situations. According to Jafari & Hashim (2015), students devote more than half of their time to learning a foreign language by listening. Furthermore, effective listening implies that the listener or students can understand what the speaker means in order to better understand the material in the learning process.

According to Harmer (2007), listening skill is the process of identifying and understanding spoken language, in which individuals grasp the meaning of what is said and may also repeat or reproduce the sounds they hear. This skill involves more than simply hearing words; it requires the ability to comprehend the speaker's intended meaning. In line with Underwood (1989), listening is seen as the process of trying to understand the meaning of what is heard within a particular context. Therefore, listening skills play a crucial role in enhancing students' comprehension. Without a clear understanding of what they hear, students may find it difficult to stay engaged in lessons and to develop their overall language proficiency.

However, many students still face challenges with their listening skills. A preliminary study conducted by the researcher at SMK Negeri 1 Bintan Timur through an interview with an English teacher revealed that only 9 out of 22 students in the Software Engineering 1 (RPL 1) class achieved the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM), representing 40.91% of the class. The students found it difficult to understand the speaker's message during listening activities, mainly due to their limited vocabulary. Furthermore, learning media such as podcasts had never been used before in listening lessons.

In fact, in today's era of rapidly advancing technology, learning media such as podcasts have become an effective tool to improve students' listening skills. Research by Wulandari et al., (2021) found that the average post-test score of the experimental group treated with podcasts (80.88) was higher than that of the control group without podcast treatment (77.04). Supporting this, research by Saragih et al., (2022) reported that 96.9% of students agreed that podcasts should be used in listening instruction, while only 3.1% believed that podcasts had no impact. These findings suggest that podcasts help create an innovative and enjoyable learning environment, thereby enhancing students' listening skills. Based on the questionnaire results, it is evident that most students perceive podcasts as having a positive influence on their listening ability. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of podcasts has a significant effect on improving students' listening skills.

Based on the research findings mentioned above, it can be concluded that podcasts can improve students' listening skills. Therefore, the researcher was

interested in implementing a podcast as a medium to enhance students' listening skills at SMK Negeri 1 Bintan Timur. In this study, the researcher focused on a specific podcast titled English Fairy Tales. This podcast presents fairy tale stories using different voice actors for each character, rather than a single narrator. The stories typically range from 7 to 20 minutes in length and are available on both Spotify and YouTube. Although transcripts are provided on the YouTube platform, this study focused only on listening skills. To help students concentrate on auditory input without relying on written texts, the researcher converted the videos into audio files extracted from YouTube. Therefore, this study was entitled "Improving Students' Listening Skills by Using English Fairy Tales Podcast at SMK Negeri 1 Bintan Timur."

1.2 Identification of the Research

1. Many students had difficulty understanding the speaker's message during listening activities.
2. The students' limited vocabulary hindered their ability to comprehend spoken English.
3. Podcasts had never been used as a medium in listening lessons.

1.3 Limitation of the Research

This study focused on improving students' listening skills through the use of the English Fairy Tales podcast as learning material for narrative texts at SMK Negeri 1 Bintan Timur.

1.4 Research Question

Based on the background of the problem presented above, the research question was formulated as follows: “How did the English Fairy Tales podcast improve students’ listening skills at SMK Negeri 1 Bintan Timur?”

1.5 Research Objective

This study was conducted to improve students’ listening skills through the use of the English Fairy Tales podcast at SMK Negeri 1 Bintan Timur.

1.6 Significances of the Research

1.6.1 Theoretically

This study aimed to support the advancement of language teaching strategies, particularly through the use of podcasts as innovative tools to enhance students’ listening skills. Furthermore, it sought to contribute to the expanding body of research on the integration of digital media in English language learning.

1.6.2 Practically

a. For teachers

The findings of this study provided valuable insights and practical recommendations for effectively utilizing the English Fairy Tales podcast as a medium for teaching listening skills in the classroom.

b. For students

The use of the English Fairy Tales podcast was found to be beneficial in enhancing students’ listening skill by providing engaging audio content that sustained their attention and encouraged active listening.

- c. For other researchers

This study may serve as a valuable reference for future scholars interested in exploring the use of podcasts as instructional tools in English language teaching and learning.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

1.7.1 Listening Skill

Listening skill can be interpreted as a process that not only listens to the words of the speaker but also understands the meaning of what the speaker is saying.

1.7.2 Podcast

A podcast is a type of digital media that shares audio or video episodes, usually hosted by one person or a group.

1.7.3 Fairy Tale

A fairy tale is a type of narrative text that tells a story, often with magical or fantastical elements, that is usually fictional and focuses on moral lessons or entertaining the audience.