

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research background, research question, objectives, research significance, limitations of the research and definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Research

Listening skills are a crucial part of learning a language. Rahman et al. (2018) state that listening accounts for about 40% of the time spent on language learning. According to Richards in Rahman et al. (2018), listening is fundamental to successful language acquisition. In learning English, especially to enhance listening abilities, various media can now be utilized thanks to technological advancements. Modern technology has had a remarkable impact on education. Among the many tools available, one effective resource for improving students' listening skills is the use of podcasts on the Spotify application.

In recent years, the popularity of podcasts has increased significantly, with Spotify being one of the main platforms that provide a variety of audio content. Spotify is an application that consists of several features such as digital music, podcasts, and video streaming (Chandra et al., 2019). According to a recent report, there are more than 400 million Spotify users worldwide, with over 3 million podcasts available (Kang et al., 2018). Data shows that more than 50% of the world's population has listened to podcasts, and this trend continues to increase, especially among the younger generation who are looking for new

ways to learn and interact with educational content (Ghoorchaei et al., 2021). This phenomenon suggests that podcasts can be a valuable learning resource for EFL learners, especially in improving their listening skills. In the context of language learning, podcasts offer authentic and diverse materials that can improve listening skills, which is one of the main challenges in foreign language learning (Harahap, 2023; Laiya, 2022).

Several previous studies have examined the effectiveness of podcasts in improving listening ability. Oktaviani and Thresia (2021) and Wahyuni et al. (2023) found that podcasts serve as an effective medium for enhancing listening skills and supporting blended learning. Similarly, Salsabila et al. (2021) demonstrated that the use of structured podcasts significantly improved students' listening ability and increased their engagement in learning activities. In line with these findings, Izzah (2023), Fatma (2024), and Iddiyaturrohman et al. (2024) also reported that Spotify podcasts contributed to significant improvements in students' listening performance and motivation. These studies confirm that podcasts are effective tools for improving listening ability.

However, while much research has focused on the effectiveness of podcasts, there is still limited understanding of how learners experience the process of learning through podcasts. Several studies have begun to explore learners' experiences in using podcast-based learning media. For example, Amanati (2024) found that students gained various learning experiences when using Spotify podcasts, including increased interest, improved vocabulary, and higher motivation to practice language skills, although they also faced challenges such as difficulty in understanding accents and pronunciation. Similarly, Wardiman

(2023) reported that students experienced both benefits and challenges when engaging with podcast content, particularly related to speech rate and accent variation. These findings indicate that learning through podcasts involves complex experiences that influence how learners engage with listening activities.

Listening in a foreign language is often challenging due to factors such as unfamiliar accents, fast speech, and limited vocabulary (Lo et al., 2021; Payaprom, 2022). In addition, learners often experience low confidence when engaging in listening activities, which can affect their motivation to continue learning (Nijakowska et al., 2018). In this context, podcasts provide flexible and authentic learning opportunities; however, it is important to explore how learners actually experience using podcasts in their learning process and how these experiences influence their engagement.

Learning experiences play an important role in shaping learners' perceptions, emotions, and engagement in learning activities. When learners interact with learning materials such as Spotify podcasts, they go through various experiences, including understanding content, facing difficulties, applying strategies, and reflecting on their progress. These experiences can be both positive and challenging, and they influence how learners respond to the learning process. Previous research has shown that learners' motivation is closely related to their learning experiences. For instance, Kim et al. (2025) found that learners' motivation is shaped by how they interpret and respond to their learning experiences, including learning environments, materials, and personal reflections. This suggests that motivation develops dynamically

through learners' engagement with learning experiences rather than emerging independently.

Motivation is another key factor that determines the success of language learning. According to Deci and Ryan (2000), motivation is the driving force that encourages learners to initiate, sustain, and engage in learning activities. Dörnyei (2009) further emphasizes that motivation in language learning is closely related to learners' learning experiences, particularly through the concept of L2 Learning Experience, which includes learners' interaction with learning environments, materials, and activities. In addition, Hariri et al. (2020) revealed that motivation is significantly correlated with learners' learning strategies, indicating that motivated learners tend to engage more actively in learning processes. These findings highlight that motivation is not static, but develops through learners' experiences and influences their learning behavior.

In the context of podcast-based learning, learners may develop motivation through their experiences when using Spotify podcasts. For example, learners may feel intrinsically motivated when they enjoy the content, feel interested in the topics, or experience improvement in their listening ability. At the same time, extrinsic motivation may arise when learners perceive that using podcasts helps them achieve academic goals or improve their communication skills. These motivations are shaped gradually through learners' continuous interaction with learning experiences (Kim et al., 2025; Dörnyei, 2009).

Despite the growing number of studies on podcast use in language learning, most research has focused on learning outcomes or general effectiveness, with limited attention to how learners' motivation is shaped through their learning

experiences. Some studies have explored learners' experiences (Amanati, 2024; Wardiman, 2023) or motivation (Hariri et al., 2020) separately, but few have examined the relationship between these two aspects in an integrated way, particularly in the context of listening ability. Therefore, there is a need to explore how learners' experiences in using Spotify podcasts contribute to the development of their motivation in learning listening ability.

To address this gap, the present study employs a qualitative approach to explore EFL learners' experiences in using Spotify podcasts and how these experiences shape their motivation in learning listening ability. This study aims to provide deeper insights into the relationship between learning experiences and motivation, as well as how learners engage with podcast-based learning in real-life contexts. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of more effective and meaningful listening learning strategies, particularly in the use of digital media such as Spotify podcasts.

B. Research Question

This research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are EFL learners' experiences in using Spotify podcasts for learning listening ability?
2. How is EFL learners' motivation shaped through their learning experiences when using Spotify podcasts for listening ability?

C. Research Objective

This study aims to provide actionable insights for educators to enhance classroom practices by:

1. To explore EFL learners' experiences in using Spotify podcasts for learning

listening ability.

2. To explore how EFL learners' motivation is shaped through their learning experiences when using Spotify podcasts for listening ability.

D. Significance of The Study

The study is expected useful for :

- A. For English Teachers, This study provides practical insight for English teachers, especially in EFL contexts, regarding the use of Spotify podcasts as a meaningful learning medium for listening ability. By understanding learners' experiences, emotional responses, listening difficulties, and learning strategies, teachers can create more flexible, engaging, and supportive listening activities that help learners feel more comfortable and motivated during listening practice.
- B. For EFL Learners, The findings of this study can help EFL learners understand that learning listening through Spotify podcasts is not only related to understanding spoken English, but also involves emotional experiences, strategy use, and gradual motivational development. Learners may become more aware that listening difficulties are part of the learning process and can be overcome through repeated practice, suitable listening strategies, and continuous exposure to authentic spoken English. In addition, learners can develop more independent learning habits and apply English more actively in daily life through podcast-assisted learning experiences.
- C. For Future Researchers, This study may serve as a reference for future researchers who are interested in exploring learning experiences,

motivation, emotional engagement, and self-directed learning in technology-assisted language learning contexts. Future researchers may also develop further studies related to podcast-assisted learning by involving different English skills, educational levels, or research designs to obtain broader understanding of learners' experiences in digital language learning environments.

- D. For the Researcher, This study helps the researcher develop a deeper understanding of how learning experiences influence EFL learners' motivation in listening ability learning through Spotify podcasts. Conducting this study also enhances the researcher's understanding of qualitative research processes, particularly in conducting semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis, and interpreting learners' experiences, emotional responses, and motivational development in language learning contexts.

E. Scope and Limitation

1) Scope of the Study:

This study focuses on exploring EFL learners' learning experiences in using Spotify podcasts for learning listening ability and examining how learners' motivation is shaped through those learning experiences. The study specifically investigates learners' experiences during podcast-assisted listening activities, including listening difficulties, emotional responses, adaptation processes, strategy development, and confidence growth while engaging with Spotify podcasts.

The scope of this study also includes learners' cognitive and affective experiences during listening activities. Cognitive aspects involve learners' experiences in understanding spoken English, such as recognizing pronunciation, unfamiliar vocabulary, different accents, and fast speaking pace. Meanwhile, affective aspects include learners' emotional responses during the learning process, such as confusion, frustration, nervousness, enjoyment, interest, confidence, and emotional engagement while listening to podcasts.

Furthermore, this study explores how learners' motivation is gradually shaped through their continuous learning experiences when using Spotify podcasts for listening ability. The study does not focus on measuring listening achievement or comparing learners' scores, but rather on understanding how learning experiences contribute to the development of learners' motivation in learning listening ability.

The participants of this study are EFL learners at the university level who have experience using Spotify podcasts as a medium for learning listening ability. Although participants may have different levels of English proficiency, all participants share similar experiences in using Spotify podcasts for listening practice.

2) Limitation of the Study:

This study has several limitations. First, this study employed a qualitative research design that focused on exploring learners' experiences and motivation in depth through narrative data. Therefore, the findings of

this study cannot be generalized to all EFL learners because the study involved a limited number of participants and focused on a specific learning context.

Second, this study focused only on the use of Spotify podcasts as a learning medium for listening ability. Other digital platforms or listening media, such as YouTube, Apple Podcasts, or other audio-learning applications, were not included in this study. Therefore, the findings are limited to learners' experiences in using Spotify podcasts.

Third, this study did not measure learners' listening achievement or listening performance through quantitative instruments such as tests or score comparisons. Instead, the study focused on learners' subjective experiences, emotional responses, learning strategies, and motivation during podcast-assisted listening activities.

Lastly, the findings of this study were based primarily on self-reported data obtained through semi-structured interviews. Therefore, the data depended on participants' personal perceptions, reflections, and experiences, which may involve subjectivity in describing their learning experiences and motivation. In addition, this study did not investigate the long-term development of learners' motivation over an extended period of time.

F. Definition of Key Terms

1. Spotify Podcasts

Spotify podcasts refer to digital audio programs available on the Spotify platform that provide various types of authentic spoken English content. In this study, Spotify podcasts are defined as a learning medium used by EFL learners to practice listening ability through exposure to authentic English conversations, pronunciation, vocabulary, accents, and speaking styles in flexible and self-directed learning situations.

2. Listening Ability

Listening ability refers to learners' overall ability to process and understand spoken English, including understanding meaning, recognizing vocabulary, pronunciation, accents, and spoken information from authentic audio input. In this study, listening ability refers to learners' ability to engage with and understand authentic spoken English through Spotify podcasts.

3. EFL Learners

EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners refer to individuals who learn English in a context where English is not used as the primary language of daily communication. In this study, EFL learners specifically refer to university students who actively used Spotify podcasts as part of their listening ability learning experiences.

3. Learning Experience

Learning experiences refer to learners' personal experiences during the process of using Spotify podcasts for listening ability learning. In this

study, learning experiences include listening difficulties, emotional responses, learning strategies, adaptation processes, confidence changes, self-directed learning behaviors, and the application of English in daily life that emerged throughout learners' engagement with Spotify podcasts.

4. Motivation

Motivation refers to learners' willingness, interest, confidence, persistence, and engagement in learning listening ability. In this study, motivation is viewed as a dynamic process that is gradually shaped through learners' learning experiences while using Spotify podcasts, including their listening challenges, emotional responses, successful listening experiences, and adaptation during the learning process.