

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this section, podcasts are an excellent innovative use in the listening class, appropriating new methods to improve listening skills for language learners. This literature review highlights recent studies that demonstrate how podcasts are increasingly used as effective, student-centered strategies to improve listening skills across various educational contexts, the definition of podcasts in listening skills, and the role of student-centered learning.

2.1 Listening Skills

Listening is one of the language skills that is often overlooked when learning a language, especially a foreign one. Many educators still consider listening to be a passive skill that can be learned naturally through exposure to language. As a result, its teaching tends to be less than that of productive skills such as writing and speaking. Nonetheless, some recent research suggests that listening is an important part of mastering other language skills. This is because through listening activities, students acquire linguistic inputs that are important for pronunciation, contextual understanding, and vocabulary (Ambubuyog et al., 2023; Yurko & Styfanyshyn, 2022).

Listening is regarded as a complex and active process where learners must receive, comprehend, and respond to spoken information. Afriyuninda & Oktaviani (2021) reference Brown (2006) as saying that listening is a way for people to comprehend the information they have been given. It suggests that

listening skills are important for students, especially throughout the teaching and learning process. Listening is essential to language learning since it improves linguistic skills and offers feedback, and listening is an active mental ability. It aids in our comprehension of the outside world and is essential to effective communication (Kurita, 2012; Pourhosein and Sabouri, 2016; and Rost, 2009, as cited in Nurjanah & Panjaitan, 2024).

Listening is an active and complex process of understanding spoken language by integrating linguistic elements (sounds, vocabulary, and structure) as well as cognitive knowledge and context through bottom-up and top-down mechanisms. In second language learning, listening serves as a fundamental receptive skill because it supports message comprehension, pronunciation development, vocabulary, and language structure, and is crucial to learning a language and communicative competence (Aryadoust & Luo, 2023; Lyubov, 2023).

Two main mechanisms are usually used to explain the learning process within the framework of language learning theory: bottom-up improvement and top-down improvement. Therefore, we must understand what we must do to become better people. Very helpful for subsequent linguistic progress, especially vocabulary acquisition and language recognition. On the other hand, the top-down process establishes the final objectives, the context of the situation, and the essential priorities to achieve the objectives internationally. Recent studies have shown that the integration of these two processes is more important than ignoring one of them (Binti Azhari et al., 2024; Latupono & Nikijuluw, 2022).

Here are some strategies aimed at improving listening skills, based on research Fayzullayeva (2023) highlights, emphasizing the importance of focus, engagement, and empathy in conversations. Key recommendations include removing distractions, such as phones or background noise, to create a conducive environment for active listening. Listeners are encouraged to practice patience, avoid interruptions, and show empathy by understanding the speaker's emotions. Techniques like reflective listening, paraphrasing to confirm understanding, and seeking clarification further ensure accurate communication. By enhancing concentration through mindfulness and maintaining respectful communication, these strategies foster deeper connections and more effective dialogue.

2.2 Media Podcast for Teaching Listening

The use of technology in listening learning improves students' listening skills through digital media such as music apps, YouTube, podcasts, and language learning websites. This media provided exposure to authentic and varied English, helping with training in sound recognition, vocabulary, and language structure. In addition, the accessibility of materials anytime and anywhere increases student learning motivation, making alternative technologies effective in learning English listening (Nur Fitria, 2021).

In keeping with the quick development of digital media, the scope of instructional tools has expanded beyond conventional audio resources to include artificial intelligence. According to research by Huda et al. (2025), the development of AI technology offers new opportunities in listening learning, helping students understand spoken language more effectively through features

such as automatic captioning, audio speed settings, segment repetition, and pronunciation feedback. Through interactive and customized learning experiences, this technology improves student motivation and engagement. However, the quality of the technology and the teacher's pedagogical support are still necessary for its efficacy.

Firmansyah et al., (2024) states that using technology for listening and learning such as Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) improves student comprehension and engagement. This technology allows access to authentic audio material, playback speed settings, and repetition of material, which increases the effectiveness of listening comprehension. In addition, technology favors personalized and collaborative learning, allowing students to adapt materials to their abilities and discuss through digital platforms, thus increasing students' motivation and liveliness.

Based on research by Yugsan Gomez et al (2019), Deda (2023), and Turner (2020) which highlights that the use of podcasts in Language Education offers flexibility and access to authentic cultural material, where their effectiveness is highly dependent on the ability of teachers in choosing relevant material as well as the active involvement of practitioners in utilizing this medium as a means of professional development and dynamic class discussions.

In the study of language learning, podcasts are categorized as authentic materials because their content is produced for the purpose of real communication and reflects the natural use of language in social and cultural contexts

(Kochkorova, 2025). In contrast to textbook recordings that tend to be artificial, podcasts present a more spontaneous and contextual language. In addition, Tran T. Dung et al., (2025) research shows that the use of podcasts provides realistic exposure to native speakers' speech speed, intonation, and accent variation, thus helping learners develop listening skills relevant to real-world communication.

Podcasts, as a medium, must be tailored to students' proficiency levels to align with language proficiency standards. According to research by Bielova et al., (2061), podcasts are effective for all levels (A1 through C1), but their impact varies depending on students' proficiency levels.

- a. Levels A1–A2 (Beginner): Focus on short podcasts with clear intonation and everyday topics to build confidence.
- b. Levels B1–B2 (Intermediate): Focus on podcasts that feature discussions and a variety of accents, which help students understand broader contexts.
- c. Level C1 (Advanced): Focus on content that requires critical analysis, subtext, and complex cultural references.

Podcasts have many great benefits for enhancing listening abilities, in addition to being an original source. One of the primary benefits of podcasts is ease of access, which favors mobile and independent learning. Podcasts help students learn to listen without being limited to time and place in the classroom (Hamdayani et al., 2025). Second, exposure to different speech styles and accents of native speakers helps students adapt to linguistic variations and prepares them for global Communication (Hoang Nghiem & Vu Diem Thuy, 2025). Third, podcasts have technical features that allow students to adapt the listening process

to their individual abilities. Features such as pause, repeat, and audio speed settings are all available. This has been shown to be beneficial for improving comprehension of oral input and reducing cognitive load, especially for foreign language learners (A. Y. Putri et al., 2025). As a result, podcasts are not only an alternative medium but also a tactical instrument that teaches listeners how to listen contextually and sustainably.

The researcher believes that podcasts play a multifaceted, undeniable role in English Language Teaching. Portability connects traditional and modern educational practices, investing heavily in enhancing learning. As this innovation progresses, teachers must adapt and become proactive about incorporating podcasts into their strategies. Podcasts' dynamic nature enriches learning, fosters a vibrant community of language and culture enthusiasts, and potentially transforms teaching and learning experiences. The researcher is eager to see how this medium will evolve and is convinced of its potential to revolutionize. However, additional discussion on implementation and the challenges involved would further enhance the argument for podcasting in language education.

2.3 Student-Centered Learning

Nowadays, the phrases “student-centered approach” or “student-centered teaching” are widely used in the education industry to indicate a significant change from teacher-centered education (Bara & Xhomara, 2020). Focused on students, the student-centered learning approach assigns teachers the roles of facilitators and problem solvers. It inspires students, encouraging innovation. Each sector has its unique courses; human resources is thus the most important

competition. Instead, stand-alone courses replace classroom methodologies that encourage the students to innovate (Pertiwi et al., 2022). In addition, Tang, (2023) findings show that student-centered teaching and problem-based learning significantly impact academic achievement in experimental groups, with a low positive relationship. However, experimental groups outperform control groups, indicating a strong effect. The student-centered approach to learning emphasizes actively engaging students in their education. Podcasts enable learners to choose topics of interest, listen at their own pace, and interact with content that resonates with their experiences.

The findings of previous studies suggests how learning will prioritize students, moving away from traditional, teacher-centered models that can hinder creativity. This shift empowers students to take charge of their learning, with teachers adopting a facilitative role to guide exploration and critical thinking. The use of tools like podcasts enhances student engagement, ownership, and motivation through familiarity, personalization, and choice. This approach is shaping the future of education, fostering passionate and capable learners prepared to face global challenges. Overall, the researcher believes this supports a student-centered approach and emphasizes the potential for transformative teaching practices, while also arguing for continued investment in innovative educational methods.

2.4 Previous Study

In this instance, the researcher discovers some earlier research that is pertinent to the research they have carried out. These papers demonstrate the application of this type of study.

The first related previous study was conducted by Harahap (2020), who examined the use of podcasts in English listening learning by focusing on student perceptions of the media. The purpose of the study was to investigate how podcasts affected college students' listening abilities. She did the research by using a case study design. This study involved 14 students in the second semester of Tadris Bahasa Inggris Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Mandailing Natal. The study's findings demonstrated that students are highly motivated and have a positive attitude in using podcasts as a medium of learning to listen. This is driven by students' interest in the variety of content, the clarity of native speaker pronunciation, and the ease of accessibility of the podcast platform. Overall, podcasts are considered to have great potential in optimizing the improvement of student listening competence.

The second related previous study was conducted by Yeganeh & Izadpanah, (2021), who emphasized the impact of podcasts and vodcasts on the development of listening skills among motivated EFL learners at all ability levels. The study was conducted at the Ayandegera Institute in Zanjan, Iran. This study aimed to elucidate how podcasts and vodcasts affect motivated learners' development of listening abilities. They did the research by using an experimental design. The study involved a sample of 196 motivated intermediate and advanced learners

who were divided into three groups: a podcast group (65 students), a vodcast group (65 students), and a control group (66 students). The results demonstrated that both podcasts and vodcasts significantly improved students' listening skills compared to the control group, even if the efficacy of podcasts and vodcasts did not differ statistically significantly.

The third related previous study was conducted by Chaves-Yuste & de-la Peña (2023), which highlighted the use of audio podcasts as an English learning medium to improve the linguistic competence of EFL students, particularly in listening and speaking skills. The research was carried out using secondary education students of a High School in Madrid. The purpose of this study is to investigate how social issue-themed audio podcasts affect secondary English language proficiency (EFL) pupils. They used a quasi-experimental design for their research, which yields quantifiable data. For one semester at a high school in Madrid, Spain, a sample of 78 students were split into two groups at random: the experimental group and the control group. The findings provided practical implications for teaching English in the classroom and confirmed the premise that the production and usage of podcasts are advantageous for enhancing EFL linguistic ability.

The fourth related previous study was conducted by Liu (2023), which focuses on the analysis of academic podcasts as a source of academic English learning, specifically in terms of academic vocabulary and disciplinary vocabulary. This study aims to determine the extent to which academic podcasts contain general vocabulary, academic vocabulary, and discipline-specific

vocabulary, and assess their suitability as learning materials for beginner to advanced EAP students. He did the research using a quantitative corpus analysis method. The study sample was a corpus of academic podcasts deliberately selected by the authors, namely 1,486 podcast episodes from 32 academic podcast series. The results showed that academic podcasts are easy to understand because they are not too difficult in terms of vocabulary. By mastering about 2,000-4,000 basic vocabulary words, learners can already understand the content. In addition, this podcast contains a lot of academic vocabulary and vocabulary specific to important fields of science, making it suitable for use as EAP learning materials, especially as an introduction before students face more complex academic lectures.

The fifth related previous study was conducted by Aybirdi et al. (2024), who highlighted the effect of podcast-based extensive listening on listening skills, listening anxiety, and student attitudes toward English language learning. The study was conducted at the Tenth Grade Students of a Senior High School in Turkey. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of prolonged podcast listening on the anxiety experienced by English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. They did the research by using a quasi-experimental design with mixed methods. The study involved 45 female tenth graders at a female Secondary School located in Ordu, Turkey. The findings demonstrated that the integration of podcasts significantly enhanced listening skills as well as effectively reduced students' anxiety in the process, although it did not have a major effect on changes in their attitude to English subjects.

The sixth related previous study was conducted by Datin Hulliyany et al. (2024), who highlighted an organized evaluation to evaluate the efficacy of using podcasts in English language instruction (ELT). The purpose of this study is to investigate the use of podcasts and how well they work for learning English. They did the research using a Systematic Review with PRISMA 2020 guidelines, so this study does not involve collecting field data directly. This study involved an analysis of 18 research articles published between 2018 and 2024. The results of this study prove that the integration of podcasts in English language learning (ELT) provides significant benefits to improving listening skills, vocabulary mastery, learning motivation, and overall language proficiency of students. The effectiveness of podcast use can be optimized through the selection of relevant content with a variety of accents, the design of interactive classroom activities, and the provision of ongoing structured guidance to form competent and confident communicators.

The seventh related previous study was conducted by Sengul, (2026), who highlighted how high school EFL students' attitudes about English and listening abilities were affected by podcast-based listening education. The study was carried out at two high schools in Hatay, Turkey. This study aimed to investigate how high school students' opinions toward English in general and listening in particular were affected by podcast-based listening teaching. They did the research by using a quasi-experimental mixed-methods design based on constructivist learning theory. The study involved 96 ninth-grade students who were equally divided into an experimental group and a control group over six

weeks. The findings showed that the experimental group's favorable attitudes regarding learning English had significantly improved. Additionally, the qualitative data revealed that students who were exposed to podcasts had greater learner autonomy, increased student engagement, and decreased listening anxiety.

Based on the previous seven studies, this research has gone well. Therefore, this study, titled "Podcasts in Listening Class: A Student-Centered Strategy for Improving Listening Skills," aims to address this issue by empirically investigating how podcast-based instruction can be used within a student-centered learning framework to improve students' listening skills at a university in an Indonesian EFL context. It is hoped that this research will provide a better understanding of how student-centered digital learning media, such as podcasts, can be applied most successfully to enhance students' English listening and critical comprehension abilities.

2.5 Concluding Remarks

In summary, this chapter has reviewed the relevant theories and previous studies concerning listening skills, podcasts as instructional media, and student-centered learning. The literature indicates that podcasts provide authentic language exposure, flexibility, and opportunities for autonomous learning, making them a promising instructional tool in English language teaching. Furthermore, previous studies generally report positive outcomes of podcast implementation, although limited research has examined its effectiveness among Indonesian university students using a quasi-experimental approach.