

**INVESTIGATING THE IMPACTS OF ENGLISH PODCASTS ON  
STUDENTS' LISTENING SKILLS**

**THESIS**

**Submitted by:**

**SHALLY ASHRIANI ZAHRA**  
**NIM. 200203009**

*Student of Faculty Education and Teaching*

Department of English Language Education



**FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN  
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**THESIS**

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By

**SHALLY ASHRIANI ZAHRA**

NIM. 200203009

Student of English Language Education Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training  
Ar-Raniry State Islamic University Banda Aceh

Approved by:

جامعة الرانيري

Supervisor **A R - R A N I R Y**

Head of Department

au -



**Syamsul Bahri, S.AG., M.A.TESOL**  
NIP.197711162003121002



**Syarifah Dahliana, M.Ag., M.Ed., Ph.D**  
NIP.197504162000032001

It has been defended in *Sidang Munaqasyah*  
in front of the board of the Examination for the working paper  
and has been accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the Bachelor Degree of Education in English Language Teaching

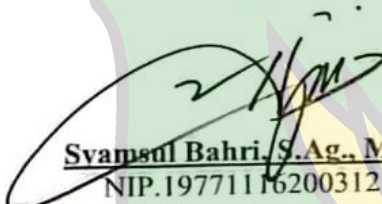
On:


Thursday, 29 January 2026  
10 Sya'ban, 1447 H

In Darussalam, Banda Aceh  
Board of Examiner,

Chairperson,


Secretary,

  
Svamsul Bahri, S.Ag., M.A.TESOL.  
NIP.197711162003121002

  
Nur Akmalivah, S.Pd.I., M.A.  
NIP.198207292025212019

Member,

Member,

  
Faishal, S.Pd.I., MA, Ph.D  
NIP.198010242011011002

  
Rahmi Fhonna, MA  
NIP.198211132015032004

Certified by,

  
The Dean of *Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan*  
*Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh*  
  
Prof. Saiful Mudrik, S.Ag., M.A., M.Ed., Ph.D.  
NIP.197301021997031003

## SURAT PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN

(Declaration of Originality)

Saya yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini:

Nama : Shally Ashriani Zahra

NIM : 200203009

Tempat/tanggal lahir : Jakarta 23 Oktober 2002

Alamat : Jl.Gunung Jaya Wijaya , Tanah Merah , Gg.Sabili Siregar ,  
Kec.Binjai Selatan , Kota Binjai

Menyatakan dengan sesungguhnya bahwa skripsi yang berjudul:


**Investigating the Impacts of English Podcasts on Students' Listening Skills**

adalah benar-benar karya saya, **kecuali semua kutipan dan referensi yang disebutkan sumbernya**. Apabila terdapat kesalahan dan kekeliruan di dalamnya, maka akan sepenuhnya menjadi tanggungjawab saya. Demikianlah surat pernyataan ini saya buat dengan sesungguhnya.

Banda Aceh, 11 januari 2025

Saya yang membuat surat pernyataan



  
Shally Ashriani Zahra

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The Writer,

Shally Ashriani Zahra

## ABSTRACT

Name : Shally Ashriani Zahra  
NIM : 200203009  
Faculty : Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan  
Major : Department of English Language Education  
Thesis working title : Investigating the Impacts of English Podcasts on Students' Listening Skills  
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English podcasts are digital audio media that provide authentic exposure to the English language and can be used to support the development of listening skills. This study aimed to explore students' perceptions of the use of English podcasts, the benefits they experienced, and their expectations regarding the use of podcasts in listening learning. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed to obtain an in-depth understanding of students' experiences. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews with ten students from the English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh who had experience using podcasts in listening activities. The findings indicate that students generally have positive perceptions of English podcasts. They view podcasts as interesting and enjoyable learning media that help them practice listening more effectively. Several benefits were identified, including improved understanding of English pronunciation, better listening comprehension, increased vocabulary knowledge, and higher motivation to learn English independently. In addition, podcasts help students become more familiar with various English accents commonly used in international communication. The students also expressed expectations that podcasts would be used more frequently in listening classes, with materials adjusted to their proficiency levels and learning needs. They suggested that lecturers provide clearer instructions and guidance on how to use podcasts effectively for learning purposes. Based on these findings, English podcasts can be considered a valuable learning tool with strong potential to enhance students' listening skills. Therefore, lecturers and educational institutions are encouraged to integrate podcasts more systematically into listening instruction as part of effective teaching strategies.

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of study

In today's era of globalization, English has become an international language widely used in education, communication, and international collaboration. In language learning, listening is one of the fundamental skills that plays a crucial role. Listening serves as the foundation for other language skills such as speaking, reading, and writing. Without good listening comprehension, learners may struggle to understand learning materials, follow conversations, or participate in real communication.

However, listening is considered one of the most challenging skills to master. Learners often find it difficult to comprehend spoken English naturally, especially due to differences in accents, fast speech, and unfamiliar vocabulary. Traditional listening materials, which are often scripted and lack real-life context, exacerbate this difficulty. As a result, students struggle to apply their listening skills in authentic communication settings.

According to Vandergrift (2002), listening is a complex and active interpretive process in which listeners relate what they hear to what they already know. Helgesen, in Nunan (2003), also states that listening is not only about hearing but also about connecting new information with existing knowledge. Therefore, varied and contextual listening practice is essential for learners to understand English in a meaningful and natural way.

In the context of learning English as a foreign language in Indonesia, listening is important to help students understand materials delivered by teachers and enables them to respond to input effectively. Limited classroom time, low motivation for independent learning, and the lack of exposure to authentic materials are major obstacles in developing listening skills (Renandya & Farrell, 2011).

With the advancement of digital technology, various innovative learning media have been utilized to support language acquisition, one of which is podcasts. Podcasts are digital audio recordings that can be accessed online anytime and anywhere using devices such as smartphones or computers. English-language podcasts offer authentic content featuring real conversations by native speakers, covering various topics and speaking styles. This provides learners with exposure to diverse accents, natural intonation, and real vocabulary in a flexible and continuous manner (Hasan & Hoon, 2013).

Several studies have shown that the use of podcasts in language learning can improve listening comprehension, enrich vocabulary, and enhance students' confidence in using English (Pourhosein Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). However, in Indonesia, the use of podcasts in listening instruction is still limited, especially in school settings.

The differences between the article the writer reviewed and the research I am conducting lie in several aspects. Their study focuses on listening comprehension in general, whereas the study not only measures comprehension but also examines various aspects of listening skills, such as the ability to identify main ideas, make inferences, and analyze students' responses to the use of podcasts over a specific period.

Moreover, the writer used different research subjects in terms of language proficiency level, educational background, and institutional context — namely, English Education students at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh. This provides a different context and generalization compared to the previous study.

I also use podcasts with specific criteria that may differ from those in the earlier researches. For instance, I employ narrative and conversational podcast formats (such as “*The English We Speak*” from BBC) that are specifically designed for English language learners; while the previous study does not explicitly describe the type of podcast used.

Based on the explanation above, this study aims to investigate the impact and experience of using English podcasts on students' listening skills. It is expected that the findings will contribute to the development of more effective, engaging, and relevant learning media for today's language learners.

## **B. Research Questions**

This research was conducted to find the answer to this question:” How do students English Education at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh perceive the use of English podcasts in improving their listening skills?”

## **C. Aim of the Study**

The aims of this study are as follows:

1. To identify students' perceptions of the impact of podcast use on their listening skills.

## **D. Significance of the Study**

This study highlights the impact of English podcasts on students' listening skills. It is expected to be beneficial for teachers, students, researchers, and others involved in the academic community. For teachers, the results of this research can provide insights into how podcasts may be integrated into English language teaching, particularly in improving students' listening abilities. Understanding how students perceive podcasts can help teachers make informed decisions about incorporating this engaging and useful tool into their teaching practices.

For students, the study presents podcasts as an enjoyable and alternative resource that can help improve their listening and pronunciation. Positive experiences shared by participants in this research may encourage other students to explore podcasts as a supportive learning tool outside of the traditional classroom environment. Podcasts offer a dynamic and interactive way for students

to engage with the English language.

For the other researchers, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on the use of podcasts in language learning. It can serve as a foundation for future research exploring the effectiveness of podcasts in various language skills and teaching contexts. Moreover, the study continues innovation and development in language education through the integration of digital media.

Overall, this research serves as a valuable resource for educators, students, and researchers by offering practical insights into enhancing listening instruction through podcasts and promoting further exploration in the field of English language education.

### **E. Terminology**

To ensure clarity and avoid misinterpretation, the key terms used in this study are defined as follows, in accordance with the study's title: *Investigating the Impact of English Podcasts on Students' Listening Skills*.

#### **1. English Podcasts**

The term *podcast* is a combination of “pod” (from Apple's iPod) and “broadcast.” A podcast is a collection of digital audio or video recordings that are distributed online, typically through RSS feeds (Hasan & Hoon, 2013). These recordings are available for streaming or download, allowing users to access them anytime on devices such as smartphones, computers, or portable media players. In this study, “English podcasts” refer to English-language

audio content used as listening materials to support students' listening comprehension.

## 2. Listening Skills

Listening skills refer to the ability to understand, interpret, and respond effectively to spoken information. In the context of this study, it refers to students' ability to comprehend spoken English delivered through podcast content.

## 3. Impact

Impact in this study refers to the changes experienced by students in terms of comprehension, comfort, and overall listening ability as a result of regular podcast use. Various studies have shown that podcasts have a positive impact on the development of students' listening skills. Previous research has indicated that podcasts can enhance listening comprehension, enrich vocabulary, and help students recognize authentic language more naturally (Pourhosein Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; Hasan & Hoon, 2013). Through exposure to authentic audio in the form of narratives or everyday conversations, students learn to identify intonation, pronunciation, and language structures in context. In addition, podcasts offer flexibility in terms of time and place, encouraging learners to become more independent and motivated in improving their listening abilities. Thus, podcasts function not only as a

medium for listening practice but also as a tool to build students' confidence and motivation in using English.

#### 4. Student Experience

This refers to students' personal responses, reflections, and perceptions regarding the use of podcasts as a tool in the process of developing their English listening skills. This experience includes how students feel the learning process through podcasts, the extent to which they feel their listening skills have improved, and the challenges and benefits they experience during the activity. According to Moon (2011), learning experiences include students' emotional and cognitive involvement in a learning activity. In line with that, Kolb (1984) in Experiential Learning Theory emphasized that learning experiences are formed through reflection on activities carried out directly. Therefore, in this study, understanding students' experiences is important to evaluate the effectiveness of using podcasts as a whole, both in terms of learning outcomes and student involvement in the learning process itself.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section explores in depth the theoretical framework surrounding the acquisition of listening skills and the use of podcasts, drawing on insights from a range of established literature sources.

#### **A. Listening Skills**

##### **1. Listening in Language Learning**

Listening is a receptive language skill that involves the ability to receive and comprehend messages spoken from others. According to Brown (2001), listening is an active process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken input. This suggests that listening is not a passive activity; it requires focused attention, information processing, and understanding of context.

Rost (2011) emphasizes that listening is a complex process that includes not only the perception of sounds but also linguistic and cognitive abilities, such as understanding sentence structures, identifying key words, and inferring meaning from context. In English language learning, listening serves as the foundation for developing other language skills, such as speaking and reading.

## 2. The Role of Listening in English Language Proficiency

Listening plays a crucial role in mastering English because it provides learners with the necessary language input for overall language development. Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis highlights the importance of comprehensible input spoken language that learners can understand as a key factor in second language acquisition. The more frequently learners are exposed to understandable spoken English, the greater their chances of developing strong language skills.

Field (2008) also states that listening is the first step in verbal interaction and is fundamental to communication, especially in foreign language learning. Without solid listening skills, learners may struggle to grasp messages and respond appropriately.

## 3. Listening Processes and Skills

### a. Micro Listening Skills

Micro listening skills refer to lower-level listening abilities that focus on understanding language in detail. According to Brown (2001), micro skills include recognizing sounds, word stress, intonation, vocabulary, and grammatical structures in spoken language. In this process, listeners use bottom-up processing, which means they understand messages by building meaning from small units such as sounds, words, and sentences.

These skills are very important because they form the foundation of listening comprehension. If learners cannot recognize words and sentence structures clearly, they will have difficulty understanding the overall meaning of spoken texts. Rost (2011) adds that micro skills also involve distinguishing similar sounds, identifying words in fast speech, and understanding how words are connected in sentences. Therefore, practice in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar is essential for developing micro listening skills.

In EFL learning, podcasts are useful for training micro skills because students are exposed to authentic pronunciation, intonation, and vocabulary used by native speakers.

#### b. Macro Listening Skills

Macro listening skills relate to understanding the overall meaning of spoken texts. Unlike micro skills that focus on language details, macro skills emphasize grasping the main ideas, the speaker's purpose, the relationship between ideas, and the context of the situation (Brown, 2001; Richards, 2008). In this case, listeners use top-down processing, which means they interpret messages based on background knowledge, experience, and context.

Rost (2011) explains that macro skills allow listeners to connect what they hear with what they already know. Understanding is not only word by word, but also about interpreting the message as a whole. In EFL classrooms, activities such as listening to podcasts or spoken stories help students develop macro skills because they learn to identify main ideas, make inferences, and understand messages in context.

### c. Noticing and Restructuring in Listening

Besides micro and macro skills, listening also involves awareness and processing of language input. Richards (2005; 2008) emphasizes the importance of noticing and restructuring in listening development. Noticing refers to learners' awareness of language forms and meanings in spoken input (Schmidt, 1990). Without attention and awareness, input will not become intake that can be learned.

Restructuring refers to the process of integrating new language information into the learner's existing language system (VanPatten, 1993). This process can be supported through structured listening materials, such as transcripts, vocabulary explanations, and repeated listening (Richards, 2005).

In the context of podcasts, features such as replaying audio, using transcripts, and selecting materials suitable for students' levels strongly

support noticing and restructuring. As a result, podcast-based listening activities can improve the effectiveness of listening learning.

### 3. Types of Listening

In linguistics, listening can be categorized based on its purpose and context. Vandergrift (2004) outlines several types of listening:

#### a. Intensive Listening

Focuses on detailed language features, such as pronunciation, grammar, or specific vocabulary. It is often used in formal learning environments.

#### b. Extensive Listening

Involves listening for longer periods to understand general meaning, such as when listening to podcasts or stories. The goal is overall comprehension, rather than attention to details.

#### c. Selective Listening

Targets specific information, such as dates, names, or instructions, are often used in tasks that require information extraction.

## 5. Common difficulties of listening

Despite its significance, many students face challenges in listening comprehension. Goh (2000) identifies several common difficulties encountered in listening. One such challenge is the fast speech rate, where native speakers often speak too quickly for learners to follow. Another difficulty is unfamiliar vocabulary, which can hinder overall comprehension. Additionally, the lack of visual context is a challenge, especially with pure audio materials like podcasts that do not provide visual aids, making it harder to interpret meaning. Lastly, exposure to varied accents and intonations from both native and non-native speakers can be confusing for learners, further complicating the understanding of spoken content

### **B. Podcast**

#### 1. Definition of Podcast

Podcast is defined as a digital audio medium that can be downloaded and replayed by learners according to their needs. According to Rosell-Aguilar (2007), podcasts are audio materials distributed through the internet that can be used as a source of authentic input in foreign language learning. He explains that podcasts provide natural exposure to the target language, including real accents, intonation patterns, and vocabulary used in real-life contexts.

Similarly, McGarr (2009) states that podcasts are a flexible learning medium because they allow students to access learning materials anytime and anywhere. This flexibility makes podcasts especially suitable for modern learners who prefer independent and self-paced learning.

In addition, Richards (2008) emphasizes that in listening instruction, learners need meaningful and contextual input. Podcasts meet this need because they present spoken language in real communicative situations, helping learners understand not only the words but also the purpose and function of the message.

According to Constantine (2007), analyzing podcast use involves evaluating aspects such as content quality, selection criteria, and strategies to maximize learning outcomes. Factors such as the relevance of the material, production quality, and alignment with educational goals are all important in determining podcast effectiveness in language learning.

An innovative way of using podcasts in education is by encouraging learners to listen while reading transcripts. This multimodal learning approach supports different learning styles, enhances listening comprehension, and reinforces language understanding. Learners can pause, replay, and review content, which supports deeper engagement and better retention. Moreover, as

Constantine (2007) suggests, students may also record their own interpretations or reflections and submit them to teachers for feedback, further promoting speaking, pronunciation, and vocabulary acquisition.

Podcasts are often distributed using Really Simple Syndication (RSS), allowing for automatic downloads to devices (Nisa, 2018). Their length may vary from a few minutes to over an hour, covering topics such as technology, culture, education, and more. As digital files, they are accessible anytime and anywhere, making podcasts a convenient tool for language learning.

## 2. Types of Podcasts

### a. Interview Podcasts

Interview podcasts feature one or two hosts who engage in conversations with guests who have particular expertise or experiences. These podcasts aim to extract insights, opinions, or personal stories through a question-and-answer format. McHugh (2016) explains that interview-based podcasts emphasize dialogue as a way of constructing meaning and knowledge through interaction between host and guest. The effectiveness of this type depends largely on the interviewer's questioning skills and the guest's ability to articulate ideas clearly. Therefore, interview podcasts are considered informative and valuable for educational and reflective listening.

#### b. Conversation Podcasts

Conversation podcasts resemble radio talk shows in which two or more hosts casually discuss various topics in a relaxed and spontaneous manner. According to Berry (2015), conversational podcasts create a sense of intimacy and authenticity because listeners feel as if they are part of an informal dialogue. The unscripted nature of this format allows natural language use, humor, and real-life expressions, which make it engaging and suitable for developing listening comprehension in authentic contexts.

#### c. Monologue Podcasts

Monologue podcasts are delivered by a single speaker who discusses a topic in depth without any co-host or guest. Llinares, Fox, and Berry (2018) state that this format allows for more structured and coherent discourse because the content is controlled entirely by the host. Such podcasts are often used by educators and professionals to present arguments, reflections, or explanations in a focused and organized way. This makes monologue podcasts suitable for learners who want clear and continuous input.

#### d. Storytelling / Investigative Podcasts

Storytelling or investigative podcasts focus on narrative-based content, often using real events, serial formats, and dramatic structures. McHugh (2016) notes that narrative podcasts rely heavily on scripting, sound

design, and suspense to immerse listeners in the story. This format enhances emotional engagement and encourages deep listening, making it effective for developing comprehension through context and inference.

#### e. Roundtable Podcasts

Roundtable podcasts involve several participants who discuss a topic from different viewpoints. Berry (2015) explains that this multi-voice format creates dynamic interaction and exposes listeners to diverse perspectives. The overlapping opinions and arguments encourage critical listening and interpretation, which are important skills in academic and EFL contexts.

#### f. Theatrical Podcasts

Theatrical podcasts, also known as audio dramas, use scripts, characters, and sound effects similar to radio theatre. According to Llinares et al. (2018), these podcasts focus on narrative performance and auditory imagination, making them effective for immersive listening experiences. They engage listeners emotionally and cognitively, which can support comprehension through story context and imagination.

#### g. Reused Podcasts

Reused podcasts consist of edited or compiled material from previous episodes, such as highlights or summaries. Markman and Sawyer (2014) state that repurposing content allows creators to maximize existing

material while making it more accessible to new audiences. This type is useful for listeners who prefer shorter, focused listening input.

#### h. Hybrid Podcasts

Hybrid podcasts combine two or more formats, such as monologue, interview, and discussion, within one program. Berry (2015) explains that this flexibility allows podcasters to adapt content to different audiences and purposes. Hybrid formats keep listeners engaged through variation and creativity, which can support sustained attention in listening activities.

### 3. The Role of Podcasts in Language Learning

#### a. Benefits of Podcasts

Podcasts play a significant role in promoting learner autonomy in second language acquisition. Yaman (2016) highlights that selecting appropriate podcasts is a crucial step for language learners, as it directly impacts the quality of their learning. Integrating podcasts into listening classes offers various benefits, as noted by Widodo and Gunawan (2019). These advantages include stimulating imagination and creativity, expanding vocabulary, supporting the acquisition of new knowledge, improving listening comprehension, and increasing student motivation and confidence. Constantine (2007) adds that even just a few minutes of daily podcast listening can provide learners with authentic language input, helping them become more familiar with

different accents, sentence structures, and vocabulary. Additionally, Ramadhan, Risnawati, and Efrizal (2021) emphasize the flexibility of podcasts, as they can be downloaded and listened to at any time and from anywhere. This adaptability allows content to be tailored to the learner's proficiency level, thus enhancing personalized learning experiences.

#### b. Weaknesses of Using Podcasts

Despite their numerous benefits, podcasts also come with certain challenges. According to Intan (2021), while podcasts can enhance interest and motivation, learners may encounter several obstacles. One of the challenges is the fast speech rate or unclear articulation, which can make it difficult for learners to follow the content. Another issue is the presence of unfamiliar accents and the lack of visual cues, which can further complicate comprehension. Additionally, the difficulty level of the content may not always align with learners' abilities, making it harder for them to engage effectively with the material.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methodology refers to a series of systematic steps used by the researcher to obtain valid and accountable data in order to answer the research questions. Methodology does not only deal with data collection techniques, but also with how the researcher understands and interprets the phenomenon being studied. According to Crotty (2015), methodology provides a theoretical foundation that guides the research process from planning to drawing conclusions. Therefore, this chapter presents a detailed explanation of the research design, research participants, data collection techniques, and data analysis procedures employed in this study.

#### **A. Research Design**

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to explore in depth students' perceptions and experiences in using English podcasts as a medium for improving listening skills. A qualitative approach is appropriate because this research focuses on understanding meanings, experiences, and perspectives of the participants toward a particular phenomenon. Creswell (2014) states that qualitative research aims to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. In line with this, Denzin and Lincoln (2018) explain that qualitative research emphasizes the study of phenomena in their natural settings and attempts to interpret them based on the meanings people bring to them.

The descriptive qualitative type was chosen because this study does not aim to test hypotheses or measure learning outcomes quantitatively, but rather to describe students' real-life experiences. Sandelowski (2000) argues that qualitative descriptive research is used when researchers want to present a comprehensive summary of events in everyday terms. Therefore, this research emphasizes students' voices, reflections, and evaluations regarding the use of podcasts in listening learning.

Through this approach, the researcher obtained rich and detailed data about students' learning processes, the challenges they face, their motivation, and the benefits they perceive. Podcast-based learning is flexible and personal, so a descriptive qualitative approach allows students to express their views openly. Thus, this study is expected to provide a clear picture of how podcasts contribute to the development of listening skills in higher education contexts.

### **B. Research Participants**

The participants of this study were 10 students of the English Education Study Program, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, from the 3rd to the 8th semester. The selection of participants was conducted using a purposive sampling technique. This technique is a non-probability sampling method carried out based on certain considerations in accordance with the research objectives. Palinkas et al. (2015) state that purposive sampling allows researchers to select informants who are considered the most

knowledgeable and experienced with the phenomenon under study. This is supported by Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016), who explain that purposive sampling is effective in obtaining in-depth data from relevant participants.

The participants were selected based on two main criteria: they were active students of the English Education Program at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh and they had experience using English podcasts as part of their listening practice. Based on these criteria, ten students were chosen because they were able to provide information that was relevant to the focus of the research.

Although this study does not aim for statistical generalization, the purposive selection of participants enabled the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of students' perceptions. Maxwell (2013) explains that the strength of qualitative research lies in understanding processes and meanings rather than in producing generalizable results.

### **C. Data Collection Technique**

This study aimed to reveal the meaning of students' experiences in using podcasts as a medium for learning listening skills. Therefore, the data were collected through semi structure interviews. Interviews were chosen because they allow the researcher to explore participants' experiences, views, and judgments in depth. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) define an interview as a conversation with a

purpose, where knowledge is produced through the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee.

Semi structure interviews are a type of interview that use guiding questions but still provide flexibility for the researcher to develop follow-up questions based on participants' responses. Creswell (2014) explains that semi structure interviews enable researchers to explore key topics systematically while remaining flexible in probing important answers. Thus, the researcher not only obtained short responses but also rich and detailed explanations.

The interviews in this study were conducted online through WhatsApp voice notes. Each participant was given ten main questions related to their experiences in using podcasts, the challenges they faced, and the impact of podcasts on their listening skills. Based on the interview results, students commonly listened to English podcasts with themes of language learning such as *BBC Learning English*, *The English We Speak*, and *ESLPod*, as well as podcasts on education, self-development, and light entertainment such as short stories and cultural discussions. These types of podcasts were considered helpful because the language is clear, the topics are interesting, and they are relevant to the learning context.

All responses were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and used as the main data of this study.

#### **D. Data Analysis Procedure**

After the data were collected, the next step was data analysis. Qualitative data analysis is the process of organizing, interpreting, and making meaning from textual data. Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) propose that qualitative data analysis consists of three main stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

Data condensation was conducted by selecting and focusing the interview data in accordance with the research objectives. The interview transcripts were read repeatedly to identify parts that were relevant to students' perceptions of using podcasts. Irrelevant data were eliminated, while important data were coded and grouped into themes. This process is in line with Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), who state that data condensation involves the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming raw data.

The next stage was data display, which involved organizing the condensed data into descriptive narratives. Data display helps the researcher to see patterns and relationships more clearly. In this study, the data were presented based on each interview question and the themes that emerged. According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), data display enables researchers to understand what is happening and to draw conclusions systematically.

The final stage was conclusion drawing and verification. At this stage, the researcher interpreted the meaning of the data and related it to the research

questions and theoretical framework. Creswell (2014) explains that conclusions in qualitative research are drawn gradually and continuously verified throughout the analysis process. Through thematic analysis, the researcher obtained a comprehensive understanding of how English Education students at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh perceive the use of podcasts as a medium for learning listening skills.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS AND DISSCUSSION**

#### **A. Findings**

This Research aims to find out the perceptions of English Education Students at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh toward the use of podcasts as a medium in learning Listening Skills. The data were collected through Semi-Structured interviews with 10 students from the 3rd to the 8th semester, using a Qualitative Approach and Purposive Sampling Technique.

The Interviews were conducted online using WhatsApp voice notes. The Researcher asked 10 main questions designed to explore in depth the students' Experiences, Challenges, and the impact of using Podcasts on their Listening skills. The results were categorized and analyzed based on each question as follows:

#### **1. Students' Initial Interest and Motivation**

The first interview explored students' perceptions of what initially made them interested in listening to English podcasts. Most participants said that they started listening because they wanted to practice their listening skills in a simple and flexible way. Many of them shared that podcasts felt more enjoyable than traditional methods, as they could listen anytime without feeling pressured.

### **Student 1**

AP said, “learning through podcasts is not boring like reading books. I can listen while lying down or before going to sleep.” She also explained that she prefers learning through audio because it helps her hear real pronunciation and intonation, which she cannot get from textbooks. AP added, “I like podcasts because the topics are random, so it’s easier for me to practice listening.”

### **Student 2**

Another student explained that her interest began after her lecturer recommended podcasts. SA said, “my lecturer suggested listening to podcasts to get used to English spoken naturally, and it really helped.” In the beginning, she felt awkward speaking English because she wasn’t familiar with how native speakers talked. Listening to podcasts helped her understand how words and phrases are naturally pronounced. SA added that she first listened to short podcasts on YouTube, around eight minutes long, but as she became more interested, she gradually moved to longer episodes.

### **Student 3**

PN became interested after seeing a friend listening to English podcasts while doing assignments. “I was curious, so I tried listening and realized it was fun because many topics were interesting.” After listening to several episodes, she felt it became easier to catch the main ideas, and she became more motivated to learn English through podcasts rather than movies. “PN added that podcasts suit her better because she does not enjoy reading books”. Her friend also encouraged her to improve her English by using movies, music, or podcasts.

Overall, students’ initial interest in podcasts is shaped by personal motivation, encouragement from their learning environment, and the enjoyable nature of podcasts as a learning tool.

### **2. Listening Habits and Frequency**

The frequency of podcast listening varied among students, generally ranging from two to five times a week. Each student chose times that fit their daily routines, showing that podcasts can be used as a learning aid without disrupting their schedules.

### **Student 1**

AP listens to podcasts three to four times a week. “I usually listen before sleeping. It feels calm and quiet, so I can focus better.” AP mentioned that night-time is the most effective time because there are no distractions from classes or assignments.

### **Student 10**

AR listen around three times a week while jogging in the morning. “every time I jog, I play a 30-minute podcast, so I can exercise while learning.” AR explained that combining podcasts with physical activity helps her understand better because she feels more relaxed. “AR also added that morning is the best time since her mind is still fresh, and heavy coursework during the day makes it hard to find time later”. Listening in the morning also saves time.

### **Student 6**

AD said the best time is when I walk from my boarding house to campus, about a ten-minute walk. Even though it’s short, it’s very effective because I can’t read a book or open my laptop while walking. Instead of wasting the time doing nothing, I listen to a podcast.” AD added that this routine makes her short trips feel more productive. “instead of walking while being lost in my thoughts, listening to podcasts makes the walk feel faster.” AD also said that

doing this daily helps her stay consistent. “even though the duration is short, listening every day makes a difference. I always learn at least one new word or expression. I don’t need a special study time just using small moments like this is enough.”

This flexibility shows that podcasts can easily fit into students’ daily activities, whether during relaxation, exercise, or commuting.

### **3. Types of Podcasts Chosen**

Students usually choose podcast topics that match their academic needs and personal interests. The most common themes include education, motivation, lifestyle, and light entertainment. These choices help them improve their English while staying motivated.

#### **Student 1**

AP often listens to educational and motivational podcasts. “I like podcasts about self-improvement and English learning tips. They give me two benefits at once.” She shared that these topics help her learn new vocabulary and improve her listening while keeping her motivated to study consistently.

### **Student 10**

AR enjoys light and funny podcasts. “I like relaxed content like funny stories or casual conversations, like talking about hobbies or future plans. It makes me think and answer in my head without feeling stressed.” Light topics are suitable for commuting or resting because they don’t require full concentration but still provide exposure to English.

### **Student 7**

AM prefers podcasts with native speakers. “I like interviews with native speakers because I can learn natural speaking styles and new vocabulary.” These types of podcasts help her become more familiar with different accents and natural intonation, which is useful for TOEFL preparation and understanding English movies.

Overall, students’ topic preferences reflect both their learning needs and personal interests. Some choose educational and motivational content to improve skills and discipline, while others prefer light topics for stress-free listening. Meanwhile, several students focus on podcasts with native speakers to gain exposure to natural language use. This shows that podcasts serve not only as entertainment but also as a flexible and motivating learning resource.

#### **4. Impact on Listening Skills**

Most students stated that podcasts had a significant impact on improving their listening skills. They felt more accustomed to different accents, speech speeds, and the natural speaking style of native speakers, which strengthened their ability to understand English in real contexts.

##### **Student 3**

PN explained that listening to podcasts regularly made her more sensitive to intonation and word stress. “PN said that in the past she often felt confused when native speakers talked too fast, and she frequently had to pause the audio to catch what was being said”. Over time, however, she became more capable of distinguishing key information from filler words. “PN added that this improvement came naturally as she continued to expose herself to authentic audio materials through podcasts”.

##### **Student 2**

SA acknowledged that her listening skills improved significantly after she developed the habit of listening to podcasts.” SA said that she could now identify the main ideas more quickly, even when she did not understand every single word”. She explained that understanding the overall context of the conversation became easier because she had become familiar with common expressions and natural sentence patterns frequently used by native speakers.

### **Student 1**

” AP added that podcasts helped her become more accustomed to different accents”. AP explained that some episodes featured speakers with British or American accents, requiring her to adjust her listening strategies accordingly. Over time, she became more comfortable and confident when dealing with accent variations.

Overall, podcasts are considered effective because they expose students to authentic language use in daily communication. Consistent listening allows students to develop better awareness of intonation and rhythm, understand main ideas more efficiently, and become more adaptable to different accents. This continuous exposure enhances their overall accuracy, sound recognition, and comprehension skills.

### **5. Difficulties in Listening to Podcasts**

Although podcasts are beneficial, students still encounter several challenges such as fast speech, unfamiliar accents, lack of visual cues, and the absence of transcripts.

### **Student 1**

“AP admitted that she often struggled with the speaker’s speed”. She explained that she sometimes needed to replay episodes several times because the speakers talked too quickly, especially when the topic was complex. “AP added that when a podcast did not provide a transcript, it became harder for her to check unfamiliar vocabulary”.

### **Student 6**

“AM mentioned that she had difficulty dealing with certain accents”. AM said that British or Australian accents often confused her because their pronunciation differed from what she was used to. She explained that she was more familiar with American English due to exposure from films and YouTube, so other accents reduced her comprehension.

### **Student 10**

“AR said that she sometimes lost focus when the podcast was too long”. AR explained that episodes longer than thirty minutes made it difficult for her to concentrate, causing her thoughts to wander. She recommended that beginners start with shorter episodes and light topics to avoid losing motivation.

These challenges indicate the importance of choosing materials that match the listener’s level and preferences. Factors such as fast speaking

speed, unfamiliar accents, and long duration can hinder comprehension. The findings also highlight the need for supportive features like transcripts and suitable playback speed to help students navigate these difficulties effectively.

## **6. Strategies to Overcome Difficulties**

Students used various strategies to manage the difficulties they encountered, such as adjusting playback speed, using transcripts, taking vocabulary notes, and choosing topics that match their level of interest and ability.

### **Student 7**

“AD said that she often reduced the playback speed when the audio felt too fast”. She explained that setting the speed to 0.8x or 0.75x made the content easier to follow. AD also mentioned that she usually wrote down unfamiliar vocabulary to review later, which helped her reinforce new words.

### **Student 2**

SA recommended listening twice. “SA said that she typically listened to the episode once without interruptions, then replayed it while reading the transcript if one was available”. She explained that this approach helped her understand sentence structures and vocabulary more clearly.

### **Student 3**

“PN said that selecting topics based on personal interest was her main strategy”. She explained that choosing podcasts she genuinely enjoyed made it easier to stay motivated even when the content was challenging. “PN added that personal interest played a key role in maintaining consistency”.

These strategies demonstrate students’ metacognitive awareness in managing their learning process. By adjusting speed, using transcripts, taking notes, and selecting appropriate content, students make podcasts an effective and adaptable tool for improving listening skills.

### **7. Strategies to Understand Podcast Content**

Students applied several strategies to improve their comprehension of podcast content. These strategies varied according to their learning preferences, including pausing the audio, taking notes, repeating episodes, and using transcripts.

### **Student 1**

AP explained that she relied on the pause-and-play method to understand difficult parts of the podcast. “AP said that whenever she encountered unfamiliar words, she paused the audio, wrote them down, and later looked up their meanings. AP added that she kept a personal

vocabulary notebook where she collected new expressions, which helped her review and reinforce what she had learned”.

### **Student 10**

“AR said that repeating the same episode several times was the strategy that worked best for her”. She explained that she usually listened to an episode two or three times on different days so her mind could gradually adjust to the vocabulary and sentence patterns. “AP added that this repetition made the content clearer each time and strengthened her overall comprehension”.

### **Student 3**

PN shared that she often listened to podcasts while reading the transcript. She explained that using the transcript helped her confirm words or phrases that sounded unclear when listening alone. “PN said that this method made it easier to understand the context and follow the flow of the conversation”.

These strategies show that students use metacognitive approaches to manage their learning. Understanding podcast content is not only influenced by how often they listen but also by the strategies they apply, such as pausing, repeating, taking notes, and using transcripts to support deeper comprehension.

## 8. Use of Podcasts Outside the Classroom

Most participants reported that they used podcasts as an independent learning tool outside the classroom. Podcasts supported their academic needs, exam preparation, and even their research.

### Student 6

“AL said that she often listened to podcasts before listening exams as a way to train her ears”. AL explained that this routine helped her become more familiar with different speaking speeds and improved her readiness for the test.

### Student 7

AD explained that she usually played podcasts while completing academic tasks. “AD said that when she was writing an essay or preparing an outline”, she chose podcast topics that were relevant to her assignment. AD added that this made the process more engaging and helped her gather ideas more effectively.

## **Student 2**

“SA said that podcasts supported her thesis writing”. Since her research focused on intercultural communication, she searched for podcasts discussing that topic. AD explained that these podcasts provided additional insights and examples that strengthened her understanding of the subject.

Overall, podcasts serve as a flexible learning medium that goes beyond classroom use. They support exam preparation, contribute to academic tasks, and even provide useful references for research.

## **9. Comparison with Listening Classes**

Students expressed different views, but many agreed that podcasts offer unique advantages as an authentic learning resource.

## **Student 1**

AP explained that podcasts could be more effective than traditional listening classes in some situations.” AP said that classroom listening activities sometimes felt monotonous because students simply followed the lecturer’s instructions without having much control over the learning process. She added that this often-made students passive”. In contrast, when listening to podcasts, she felt she had full control; she could choose topics she found interesting and replay challenging sections as many times as needed.

### **Student 10**

AR stated that both podcasts and traditional listening classes have their own benefits. She explained that classroom learning is important for building theoretical understanding, such as learning types of listening tasks, question formats, and receiving guidance from lecturers when difficulties arise. “AR added that traditional classes provide structure, which helps students know exactly what they need to focus on”.

### **Student 3**

“PN said that podcasts felt more challenging than classroom materials”. She explained that audio used in listening classes was often simplified, while podcast content sounded more natural and reflected real-life speech. This authenticity, “PN added, made podcasts a valuable tool for improving listening skills”.

Overall, podcasts offer flexible, independent, and authentic listening experiences, while traditional classes provide structure and theoretical grounding. Both complement each other in developing effective listening skills.

## 10. Students' Suggestions

Students shared practical suggestions based on their personal learning experiences.

### Student 7

AD suggested starting with simple and interesting podcast topics. 'AD said that students should avoid difficult content at the beginning so they do not feel overwhelmed. AD added that choosing enjoyable topics helps maintain motivation and prevents boredom'.

### Student 6

AM encouraged other students not to worry if they cannot understand everything at first. She explained that the most important step is to train the ears to become familiar with the sound of English. 'AM said that comprehension improves gradually with consistent exposure'.

### Student 2

SA recommended combining podcasts with other learning methods. "SA said that taking notes or discussing the content with friends could help reinforce understanding and deepen learning".

Overall, the suggestions emphasize a practical approach start with familiar topics, listen consistently, and combine podcasts with additional learning activities to enhance listening skills effectively.

To clarify the results of the data analysis, the researcher presents a summary of the findings in the form of a thematic table. This table contains the main themes derived from the semi-structured interviews with the participants, along with sub-themes, meaning categories, and supporting excerpts from the students' statements. The themes were developed through a process of coding and grouping the data based on similarities in meaning. Therefore, this table helps to systematically show the relationship between the raw data, categories, and the researcher's interpretation.

#### 4.1 Table of Thematic Analysis

Raw Data	Codes	Theme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "learning through podcasts is not boring like reading books... I can listen while lying down or before sleeping." (S1)</li> <li>- "My lecturer suggested listening to podcasts... it helped me</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flexible learning,</li> <li>- Enjoyable,</li> <li>- Relaxed learning</li> <li>- Authentic speech</li> </ul>	Students' Initial Interest & Motivation

<p>understand natural pronunciation.” (S2)</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “I was curious after seeing my friend listening to podcasts while doing assignments.” (S3)</li> <li>- “I usually listen 3–4 times a week before sleeping... it feels calm.” (S1)</li> <li>- “I listen while jogging... 30-minute podcast while exercising.” (S10)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Peer influence, Curiosity</li> <li>- Consistency, Quiet environment</li> <li>- Multitasking, Morning learning</li> </ul>	<p>Listening Habits &amp; Frequency</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “I listen when walking to campus—only 10 minutes but effective.” (S6)</li> <li>- “I like motivational and educational podcasts... two benefits at once.” (S1)</li> <li>- “I like funny stories... relaxed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Micro-learning moments</li> <li>- Self-improvement, Academic support</li> <li>- Light content, Low stress</li> </ul>	<p>Preferred Podcast Types</p>

conversations.” (S6)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “I prefer native speaker interviews.” (S7)</li> <li>- “I can now understand intonation and catch main ideas more easily.” (S3)</li> <li>- “I understand main ideas more quickly now.” (S2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Natural language, Pronunciation exposure</li> <li>- Improved comprehension, Intonation awareness</li> <li>- Increased processing speed</li> </ul>	Impact on Listening Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “The speaker talks too fast... I must replay several times.” (S1)</li> <li>- “British/Australian accents confuse me.” (S6)</li> <li>- “I lose focus when podcasts are too long.” (S10)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fast speech</li> <li>- Accent unfamiliarity</li> <li>- Limited attention span</li> </ul>	Difficulties in Listening
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “I reduce the speed to 0.8x... and take vocabulary notes.” (S7)</li> <li>- “I listen twice—first</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adjust speed, Vocabulary noting</li> <li>- Repetition, Transcript use</li> </ul>	Strategies to Overcome Difficulties

<p>without stopping, then with transcript.” (S2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “I choose topics I like so I stay motivated.” (S3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Intrinsic interest</li> <li>- Research support</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “I pause and write down unfamiliar words.” (S1)</li> <li>- “I repeat the same episode several times.” (S10)</li> <li>- “I listen while reading the transcript.” (S3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pause-note strategy</li> <li>- Repetition</li> <li>- Multi-modal listening</li> </ul>	<p>Strategies to Improve Understanding</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “I use podcasts before listening exams to train my ears.” (S6)</li> <li>- “I play podcasts while completing assignments.” (S7)</li> <li>- “Podcasts help with my thesis on intercultural</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exam preparation</li> <li>- Support academic tasks</li> <li>- Research support</li> </ul>	<p>Use of Podcasts Outside Classroom</p>

<p>communication.” (S2)</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “Podcasts are more effective because I can control the learning.” (S1)</li> <li>- “Traditional classes teach theory... podcasts give natural exposure.” (S10)</li> <li>- “Podcast language is more natural than classroom audio.” (S3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Autonomy, Independent learning</li> <li>- Structure vs. authenticity</li> <li>- Authentic speech</li> </ul>	<p>Comparison with Traditional Listening Classes</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “Start with simple topics first so you don’t feel overwhelmed.” (S7)</li> <li>- “Don’t worry if you don’t understand everything—just listen consistently.” (S6)</li> <li>- “Combine podcasts with note-taking or discussion.” (S2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Start easy</li> <li>- Consistency</li> <li>- Integrated learning</li> </ul>	<p>Students’ Suggestions</p>

Based on the thematic table above, it can be seen that students' perceptions of using podcasts in listening learning cover various aspects, ranging from interest and motivation, usage habits, types of podcasts chosen, and their impact on listening skills, to the strategies used to overcome difficulties. These themes indicate that podcasts function not only as a form of entertainment but also as a flexible and authentic learning medium that supports the independent development of listening skills.

## **B. Discussion**

This discussion aims to further elaborate on the findings from the semi-structured interviews conducted with ten English Education students PBI at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh. The main focus is to understand their perceptions of using podcasts in listening learning, based on the ten core interview questions. This section also connects the findings with relevant theories and previous studies to provide a more complete and in-depth understanding of the impact of podcasts on students' listening skills.

The findings reveal that students have a strong interest in using podcasts to improve their English listening skills. They feel that podcasts are enjoyable, flexible, and not as boring as traditional learning methods. This interest is largely influenced by intrinsic motivation, both from their personal desire to improve and from encouragement by lecturers, peers, and

their learning environment. This aligns with Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes that intrinsic motivation plays an important role in deeper learning engagement. However, despite their high motivation, not all students are able to use podcasts consistently, especially when facing a busy academic schedule or difficulties in understanding fast audio.

Students reported that they listen to podcasts regularly, about two to five times per week, at various times such as before class, during free time, or before sleeping. Many also listen while doing other activities, such as jogging or commuting to campus. This shows that podcasts support mobile learning, allowing students to learn anytime and anywhere, as described by Traxler (2007). On the other hand, this flexibility can also be a weakness because some students tend to listen while multitasking, which divides their attention. This may lead to passive listening rather than focused and purposeful listening.

Regarding content preferences, students tend to choose motivational, educational, lifestyle, casual conversation, and native-speaker podcasts. These choices reflect contextual learning, as explained by Johnson (2002), which suggests that when learning materials relate to personal interests, students become more engaged. In addition, podcasts featuring native speakers provide exposure to authentic language, including new vocabulary, natural pronunciation, and real-life speaking speed. However, this

authenticity also presents challenges. Some students struggle to understand certain accents, such as British or Australian accents, and find it difficult to follow fast conversations. This shows that although authentic exposure is important, the level of difficulty must still match students' abilities.

Students also reported significant improvement in understanding English conversations, especially in informal and everyday contexts. They become more familiar with sentence structures, idioms, and implicit meanings, supporting McBride's (2009) finding that podcasts provide valuable authentic language exposure. However, not all students experience the same level of improvement. Those with limited vocabulary or less experience listening to different accents still face difficulties, especially when the podcast contains technical or idiomatic expressions.

Several aspects of listening skills show improvement, such as the ability to identify main ideas, understand meaning from context, and maintain focus during longer conversations. This supports Vandergrift and Goh's (2012) argument that repeated listening can enhance inference skills and comprehension strategies. Students also become more accustomed to various accents, intonation patterns, and the speaking speed of native speakers. Repeated exposure to authentic language, as explained by Field (2008), helps them adapt to accent variations and natural speech rhythm. However, strong accents or very fast speech remain major challenges, especially when the podcast does not provide transcripts. Without textual support, some

students struggle to catch certain phrases or understand idiomatic expressions.

Students also face challenges such as fast speech rate, unfamiliar idioms or slang, strong accents, background noise, and difficult vocabulary related to specific topics. These difficulties align with the listening barriers identified by Rahimi and Abedini (2009). Nevertheless, these barriers can be overcome when students apply appropriate learning strategies. Reported strategies include slowing down the audio speed, replaying unclear sections, pausing to understand difficult words, taking vocabulary notes, and choosing topics that match their proficiency level.

To overcome these challenges, students use strategies such as replaying unclear parts, using transcripts or subtitles, slowing down the playback speed, checking new vocabulary, and selecting podcasts suitable for their level. These strategies reflect learner autonomy, as described by Little (2003). Students also take notes and make summaries after listening, which helps reinforce their understanding and memory. This supports Brown's (2007) claim that note-taking enhances information retention and deeper comprehension.

Overall, students perceive podcasts as an effective medium for learning listening skills. They value the flexibility, authentic language exposure, and engaging format. This is in line with Rots (2011), who emphasizes that audio materials such as podcasts can provide meaningful and varied input

that improves listening ability and learner confidence. Podcasts offer significant benefits, including authentic language exposure, high flexibility, increased motivation, and better listening skills development. However, podcasts also have limitations, especially for students with lower listening proficiency or those who lack self-discipline in independent learning. These findings indicate that podcasts are highly effective as a supplementary learning tool when combined with proper learning strategies, classroom support, and strong self-regulation.

Based on the review of previous studies, this research shows clear differences from earlier works that used podcasts as a medium for teaching listening. Previous studies generally focused on improving listening skills through the implementation of specific instructional actions, such as using podcasts in the form of structured audio programs integrated into classroom activities. These studies commonly employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design to measure changes in students' scores or improvements in learning outcomes after several cycles of intervention. Their primary focus was to determine how effectively podcasts could enhance listening scores, increase student participation, and improve the overall effectiveness of audio-based media at the secondary school level.

In contrast, the present study has a different scope and approach. This research focuses on exploring students' perceptions of using podcasts in listening learning. It examines in depth the students' experiences, their

motivation to use podcasts, the challenges they encounter, and the strategies they apply to understand audio content. The qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews allows for richer and more detailed data about how university students engage with podcasts as an independent learning tool in the digital era.

Furthermore, while previous studies were conducted in school settings with younger learners, this research takes place in a higher education context, where learners' characteristics, learning needs, and level of autonomy differ significantly. University students tend to use podcasts outside classroom hours, more flexibly, and based on personal interest, rather than through structured instructional designs. As a result, the findings of this study highlight how podcasts function as a supplementary learning resource for adult learners in developing their listening skills, rather than as a direct classroom intervention aimed at improving test scores.

Therefore, the main differences between this study and previous research lie in the research objectives, methodological approaches, learner contexts, and focus of the outcomes examined. This study provides a deeper understanding of students' perceptions and the dynamics of using podcasts as a self-directed learning resource, complementing previous studies that primarily emphasized improving listening performance through classroom interventions.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### A. Conclusion

Based on the data obtained from interviews with ten English Education students at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, it can be concluded that the use of English podcasts has a significant positive impact on the development of students' listening skills. In general, students demonstrated a high level of interest in listening to podcasts, with a frequency ranging from two to five times per week. They usually listen to podcasts during their free time, such as before going to bed, while doing household chores, or during travel, indicating that podcasts are a flexible and easily accessible learning medium in everyday life.

The types of podcasts most frequently listened to include educational content, motivational talks, casual conversations, and humorous stories. These preferences reflect both personal interests and learning goals, particularly in enriching vocabulary, understanding meaning within context, and increasing exposure to authentic English usage. Most students felt that podcasts helped them to comprehend daily conversations, recognize various accents, follow intonation, and adjust to the speed of native speakers. They also reported that podcasts enhanced their confidence and concentration while listening.

Nevertheless, there were also some challenges, such as difficulties in understanding unfamiliar accents, unknown vocabulary, idiomatic

expressions, and unclear audio quality. To overcome these issues, students applied several strategies such as repeating difficult sections, using transcripts, slowing down the audio, or selecting easier content. Some of them also took notes of key points or created summaries after listening, which helped them to better understand and retain the content of the podcasts.

Overall, students agreed that podcasts are an effective and enjoyable learning tool for improving listening skills. Podcasts are considered flexible, authentic, and engaging, making them a valuable medium not only for listening but also for overall English language development.

## **B. Recommendations**

Students are encouraged to make podcasts a regular part of their English learning routine. To get the best results, they should choose podcast topics that match their interests and proficiency levels, repeat difficult parts, and take notes or discuss the content after listening. These activities help improve listening comprehension, vocabulary, pronunciation, and speaking fluency. Lecturers are advised to integrate podcasts into classroom activities, individual assignments, and independent learning, and to guide students in selecting appropriate podcast materials.

Podcasts can function as supplementary materials that complement textbooks while providing authentic exposure to real English use in context. Lecturers may encourage reflection or discussion after listening to strengthen students' understanding. Future research is suggested to explore the use of podcasts in other areas of English learning, such as speaking skills, grammar mastery, and critical listening.

Future studies may also compare different podcast formats, such as scripted and unscripted or interview-based and storytelling podcasts. In addition, longitudinal studies with larger samples and mixed-method approaches are recommended to produce more generalizable findings.

Students should develop consistent listening habits by setting clear goals, such as improving vocabulary, understanding native accents, or enhancing note-taking skills. They are also encouraged to use platform features like adjustable playback speed and transcripts to support learning. Combining podcasts with other resources, such as dictionaries, language-learning apps, and peer discussions, can further strengthen understanding.

For lecturers, it is important to design meaningful podcast-based tasks, such as asking students to analyse episodes, identify language features, or present summaries. Collaborative activities like group discussions and reflective journals can also help students actively construct knowledge.

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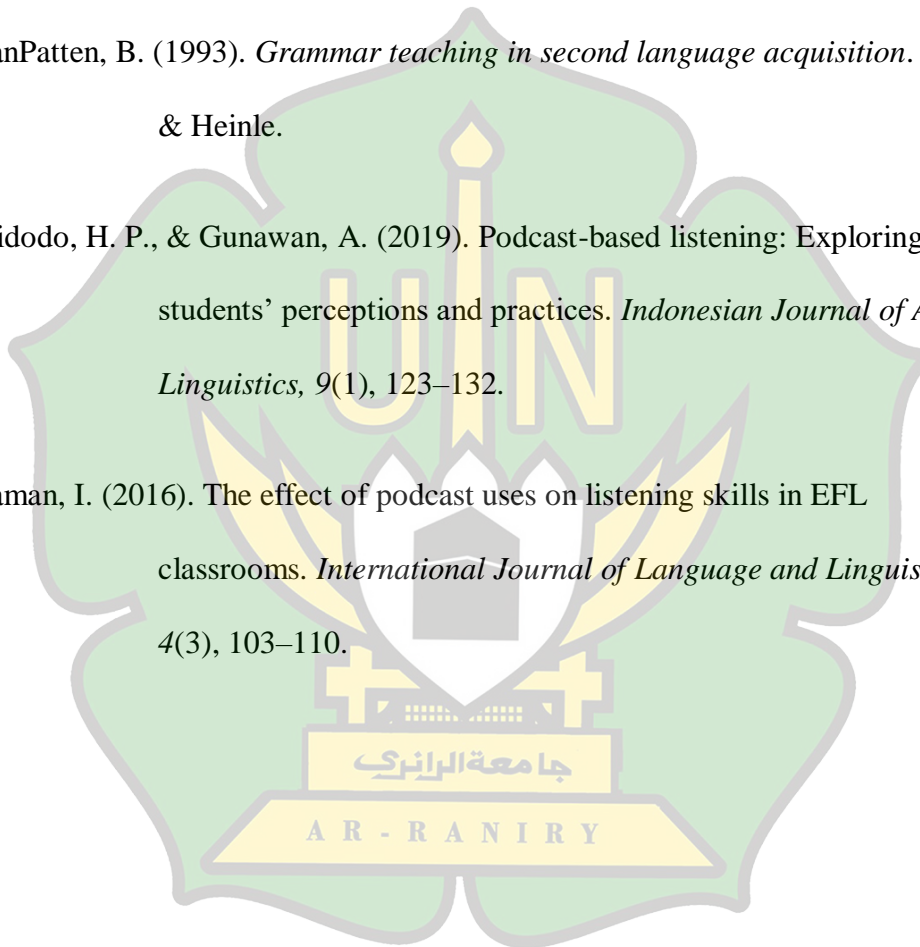
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## Appendix A

### The Concern Form

#### Research Title

“Investigating the Impacts of English podcasts on Student’s Listening Skills”

<b>Research Analyzer</b>	<b>Researcher’ Signature</b>
(Shally Ashriani Zahra)	
<b>Participant Name</b>	<b>Participant’ Signature</b>

First of all, thank you for your willingness to participate in this research interview. You have been invited to take part in a study entitled “Investigating the Impacts of English Podcasts on Student’s Listening Skills.” This research aims to explore students’ perceptions, experiences, challenges, and strategies in using English podcasts as a learning medium to improve listening skills.

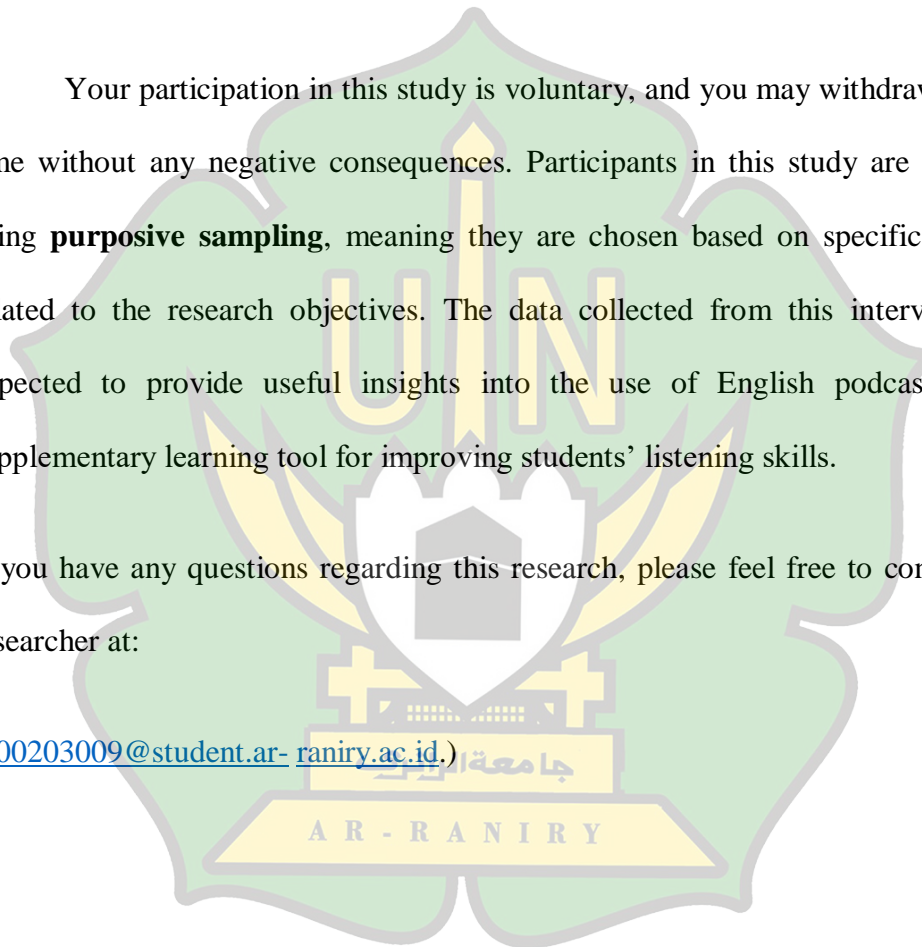
This interview will take approximately 20–35 minutes to complete. With your permission, the interview will be recorded for research purposes only. Please be informed that only the researcher and the research supervisor will have access to the recordings.

This interview is not a test, and there are no right or wrong answers. You are encouraged to share your opinions and experiences honestly and freely. All information provided will be kept confidential and will be used only for academic purposes. Your identity will remain anonymous, and pseudonyms will be used in the research report.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time without any negative consequences. Participants in this study are selected using **purposive sampling**, meaning they are chosen based on specific criteria related to the research objectives. The data collected from this interview are expected to provide useful insights into the use of English podcasts as a supplementary learning tool for improving students' listening skills.

If you have any questions regarding this research, please feel free to contact the researcher at:

([200203009@student.ar-raniry.ac.id](mailto:200203009@student.ar-raniry.ac.id).)



## Appendix B

Interview Protocol

### **Title:**

**Investigating the Impacts of English Podcasts on Student's Listening Skills**

### **Research Questions**

This research was conducted to find the answer to this question: "How do students at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh perceive the use of English podcasts in improving their listening skills?"

### **Background of Study**

1. What got you interested in listening to English podcasts?
2. How often do you listen to podcasts in a week, and when do you usually do it?
3. What types of podcasts or topics do you listen to most often? Why?

### **The Effects**

4. Do you feel that using podcasts has improved your listening skills? If yes, how?
5. Have you ever used podcasts as a learning tool outside the classroom? If yes, how?

6. Do you think listening to podcasts can be as effective as traditional listening classes? Why or why not?

### **The Challenges**

7. Can you mention any difficulties you face while listening to podcasts in English?
8. How do you overcome those difficulties while listening to English podcasts?
9. What strategies do you use to understand the podcast content better?

### **Closing**

10. What suggestions do you have for other students who want to improve their listening skills through podcasts?

Thank you very much for participating in this interview. Your experiences and opinions are very valuable for this research. The purpose of this study is to explore students' perceptions, challenges, and strategies in using English podcasts to improve listening skills.

If you are interested in knowing the results of this study, I will be happy to share them with you once the research is completed. Thank you again for your cooperation and contribution. I hope your learning journey continues to be successful.