CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the background of the study, research questions, purposes of the study, significances of the study, operational definitions, and organization of the paper. Each sub-chapter will be deliberately elaborated in detail.

1.1 Background of the study

Listening skill as one of the receptive skills is a pivotal skill in EFL learning. Listening comprehension is a core of second or foreign language learning (Vandergrift, 2007). Listening is a key in order to provide an effective and efficient communication between two parties, both speaker and listener. When the listener has no ability to listen effectively, the messages are misunderstood easily. In consequences, the process of communication between the speaker and listener breaks down and the messages are failed to be conveyed to the listener. Listening is about listening to someone or something and then imitating someone's talking as an effective way to be able to speak fluently. Moreover, listening is an ability to identify and comprehend what speakers are saying. This activity includes the comprehension of an accent or pronunciation of the speaker, grammar, vocabulary, and understand the meaning (Hasan, 2000).

However, some language learners still face difficulties with this type of skill. Language learners face difficulties when they listening to the target language (Goh, 2000). It is because of the complexity of listening process started from taking the incoming data, processing the signal, interpreting the data, and using various information to comprehend the purpose of communication (Buck, 2001). Furthermore, there are also a number of the problem that can be found in the listening activities. First, the learners have difficulties in understanding English accents, whether American English or British English. It is because learners used to listen to their English teacher's accent or to the standard variety of American English only. They find difficulties to understand speakers with other accents. Second, the learners lack exposure to listening. Especially in Curriculum 2013, the English teachers

discuss several of reading texts related to genre-based approach. It is also in line with the statement from Yagang (1993) that EFL learners tend to pay more attention to reading than to listening. The demand for Curriculum 2013 to integrate four skills (listening, writing, reading and speaking) still become a major problem that is not accomplished fully by the teachers. Third, during the listening process, the learners are difficult to keep up the listening process and inability to comprehend the speech. The learners' complaint what they heard is so much different to the written words, it is major problem because they lack vocabulary. Forth, listening takes a big portion in national final examination consisting of 15 listening questions among 50 questions in whole. This portion requires the learners to be more comprehensive in listening skill and needs more attention from the English teachers to find the best way to integrate and engage listening in teaching and learning process.

In order to overcome those problems caused by the complexity of the listening process, learners need significant practice to improve their listening skill. Many researchers in a library do agree to expose the learners to authentic listening materials in practicing their listening skill (Osada, 2004; Vandergrift, 2007, Zhao, 2003). The authentic listening materials support the learners to comprehend a target language in a real-life situation, expose them to natural native speech rate, and become motivated (Vandergrift, 2007). Hence, bring an authentic listening material to the language learners is one of the effective ways to listening class. In order to find and access an authentic listening material, especially in this 21st century, technology is the window to open enormous authentic listening sources.

Moreover, the vocational high school students are demanded in the 21st-century education to master 4Cs – critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity (National Education Association, 2012). It means that they have to be competent communicators, critical thinkers, excellent creators, and fit collaborators. Especially for Indonesia context, they need to compete globally and acquire 4Cs before they attend the workplace after they graduate. They are also demanded to master oral and written English competencies. Furthermore, in order to fulfill the demands of 21st-century education and to support low operational costs and to

provide new learning scenarios and the availability of sources, the use of technology is needed to create a new efficient method of learning (Targamadzė, Petrauskienė, & Rubliauskas, 2010). As a matter of fact, the generation today, called as digital natives or Net generation (An & Reigeluth, 2011) have mostly spent their time using their personal computers, notebooks, smartphones or another type of digital media that blends with technology. They really depend on technology, whether for communication, entertainment or even studying. Technology has become an integral part of their life (Oblinger, 2008: Prensky, 2007). Therefore, the use of podcasts in the EFL classroom in vocational high school is one of the alternatives to overcome problems in listening and answer the demands of 21st-century education.

The podcast is a combination of two words iPod and broadcasting (Newberry, 2006; Rosell-Aguilar, 2007). It is the latest technology which has started to be used for language education. The use of podcast in language learning is as a supplemental material besides the textbook (Bryans Bongey, Cizadlo, & Kalnbach, 2006). Podcast can be subscribed through the personal computer, notebook, mobile phone, and it also can be downloaded via RSS (Really Simple Syndication). Therefore, the teacher can choose the fit podcast with the syllabus, download and play offline in the classroom. There is a lot of programs that can be downloaded as podcast, radio, and television program can be transmitted as a podcast, it involves for any classes, lectures, programs, and performances. Podcast as the authentic resource can be created by the teacher and the students. Podcast as an educational tool is almost similar to another various computer-based technology.

The use of podcast for language learning is valuable because it provides an authentic materials for learners to develop their understanding. It is also supported by number of studies claiming the positive outcome of technology-based application applied in EFL literature (Chapelle, 2004; Meskill & Anthony, 2007). The technology podcast reveals many benefits for language learning. Podcast program can be downloaded and played in the classroom by an English teacher, or it can be played by the students in their own mobile device or personal computer. This study focuses on this item, the English teacher finds and download the relevant topic to the material

that referred to Curriculum 2013, provide and play an offline podcast in the classroom. Podcast serves the flexibility, mobility for both students and teachers (Al Fadda, & Al Qasim, 2013). The various contents of podcast such as design, entertainment, business, comedy, film, game, high technology and so on, those topics have a potential to increase students' motivation and reduce their nervousness (Hasan & Hoon, 2013). The enrichment of topic podcasts can increase learners' vocabulary related to their vocation. Hasan and Hoon (2013) argued that podcasting contains authentic materials are effective enough to improve students' listening skill. Podcasting program can be used in both inside and outside the classroom, it possible for the students to access listening material trough podcasting 24/7 (24 hours/ 7 days). Moreover, the use of podcasts for language learning motivate the students, appeals to digital native, enhances learners' autonomy, contributes to the development of listening and pronunciation skills, supports other language skills, limitless and authentic resources, can be used both online and offline, and involves both teacher and students.

Various studies considered that podcast is one of the supplements for language learning in various levels of education. The podcast is one of the latest technologies that can be accessed by students and teachers everywhere and every time as long as the network is available and supported. Therefore, this study focuses on the perception of vocational high school students in using podcasts for language learning. Additionally, there are a lot of sources claiming the benefits and barriers of using a podcast for language learning in various level of study and different major fields. Most of them believe that podcast is technology that has been used broadly because of many advantages promised. Meanwhile, each activity also comes up with the barrier in it. Hence, this study investigates the benefits and barriers that students' have when they use a podcast for language learning.

1.2   Research Questions

Based on the aforementioned rationales, this study mainly focuses on answering the following research questions:

1.   What are vocational high school students' perceptions on the use of educational podcasting directed to develop listening skills?

2.   How is the educational podcasting implemented in a vocational high school?

1.3   Purposes of the study

Related to the previous research questions, this study will be conducted:

1.   To elaborate the perceptions of vocational high school students' in using of podcasting in developing listening skill

2.   To elaborate the implementation of educational podcasting in a vocational high school especially in listening class

1.4   Significances of the study

1.   Theoretical

Theoretically, the result of this study is expected to provide theoretical information, empirical support, or references to existing theories to conduct a study related to the educational podcasting in developing listening skill in a vocational high school.

2.   Practical

Practically, it is expected that the result of the study can be used as a reflection for English teachers to keep using podcasting in a vocational high school. The result of the study also assists to define and clarify the benefits and challenges of the implementation of podcasting in the EFL classroom context. Additionally, the use of podcasts in the EFL classroom helps the students to enhance their awareness towards using technology to hone their English.

3.   Professional

Professionally, the result of the study can be used as the review for stakeholders for the betterment of the use of podcasts in learning English.

1.5   Operational Definitions

There are some key terms which are related to the study. In order to avoid misunderstanding and misconception of the terms used, the following are the key terms and their definitions:

1. Podcasting is blending the words iPod and broadcast (Kavaliauskienė & Anusienė, 2009) or it is defined as a series of media files which can be automatically downloaded through subscription to an RSS (Really Simple Syndication) in order to download the new episodes onto computers or portable devices to be played play offline.

2. English as a foreign language defined as a study of English by people living in a place or environment where English is not used as a means of their first language to communicate (Ghebard, 2006)

1.6   Organization of the study

Chapter 1: Introduction

This study begins with Chapter I comprises the background of the study, questions of the study, purposes of the study, and the significances of the study. This chapter also shows operational definitions and the organization of the whole thesis.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

This chapter consists of the theoretical of the framework. It involves the definition of podcasts, types of podcasts, the perception of language learners and English teachers related to the use of podcasts in listening class, and previous related studies.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter discusses the research methodology that the researcher uses in this study. It consists of several parts: research design, site, and participation of the study, research instrument, data collection, data analysis and pilot study.

Chapter 4: Finding and Discussion

This chapter deals with research findings and discussion which covers two main sections based on two research questions: the EFL learners' perceptions on using

educational podcasting directed at listening development and the implementation of podcasting in teaching and learning process.

Chapter V: Conclusions, Limitations, and Recommendation

This chapter covers the conclusions derived from findings and discussion of this study. The limitations as the weaknesses of this study were also floored in order to be used as the reflection to offer recommendations for the pedagogical practice and further study regarding the topic of this study.