

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Of the Study

Listening skill is one of the English skills that has always been used by the people to communicate, gain information, or to entertain themselves by listening to music. For learners, this skill is essential for them to gain information and knowledge related to the material they learned from the teacher. Bozorgian and Pilay (2013) as cited in Zuhairi (2016) state that listening skill for students is one of the English skills that students unconsciously in the context of a foreign language class because initially they have to listen to all teacher's instructions. According to Rost (2011), listening in a language classroom is vital because it provides input for the learners. Based on the statement above, it can be concluded that listening skill is essential for students in learning language.

Listening in English is our ability to understand what other people say very well. Not only that, but also the information we get through other media. Basically, hearing is not the same as when we are listening. However, hearing in English is hear. Meanwhile, listening in English is listen. When we hear, we have carried out activities in capturing sounds. Both sounds in language and non-language. Whether we do it intentionally or unintentionally. Listening is also like carrying out activities or activities of capturing sounds that we do carefully. Apart from that, we also do it on purpose. Meanwhile, listening is almost the same activity as when we hear. However, we do it seriously and there is a goal we want to obtain, for example important information. Whether it's what we hear directly from speech or what other people read and then we hear it.

In learning English, listening and paying attention is a very important understanding. We get it directly through media such as films or music. Listening and listening in English is very important material. Because, we must be able to know and understand what other people tell us. In order for us to have such capabilities, of course there are several efforts that must be made. One way is to understand the words we hear carefully. Basically learning to listen and listen in English is not a difficult thing. We can use various interesting methods as an effective way to learn it. We can learn to listen and pay attention in English using fun methods. So that our abilities can improve well and quickly.

One of Duolingo's strengths, compared to other language learning apps, is its gamification concept. Duolingo presents lessons in a way that makes it feel like you're playing a game. When you complete the lesson, you get experience points. If you make a mistake, one heart symbol will be lost. Duolingo designed it so that your learning process feels like a fun video game, and luckily, it pulls it off. Duolingo is an excellent tool for learning any language you are interested in, be it Spanish, French, Portuguese or any other. In addition, it has an attractive visual style and is completely free.

English is a specialization subject available at UPTD SPF SMP N 3 Simpang Kanan. The four language skills taught in English are reading skills, writing skills, listening skills and speaking skills. These four skills are taught in an integrated manner so that students can master English well. Based on researchers' observations during Field Experience Practice (PPL) activities carried out on 18 September – 23 December 2022 in Classes VIII and IX at UPTD SPF SMP N 3 Simpang Kanan, it was found that the majority of students had difficulty understanding the material presented, especially in listening skills.

Looking at the problems above, the learning models and media used during English learning for class 1X students must be appropriate to the current situation. Apart from having to use the right learning model, learning media must also support the learning process. For example, the Duolingo application is one of the foreign language learning media that can be used. Duolingo is included in the learning media in the Mobile Learning category because it uses smartphone devices. The Duolingo application was created in 2011 by Luis Von Ahn and Severin Hacker and contains questions on certain themes that users must complete. The advantages of the Duolingo application are that it is free, can be accessed easily, is fun because the learning methods used are like playing games, the material available is complete from basic to high level. The drawback of this application is that it requires an internet connection, so it cannot be used by some people who don't have an internet connection.

Learning using the Duolingo application can help make it easier for students to study independently, because it covers all the skills needed to learn a foreign language, from writing, sound, to speaking practice, which is also included in the application. The audio available on Duolingo is available for each question, so this application can help students with their listening skills, because as stated by the previous author, listening skills are one of the obstacles they experience. Listening skills are one of the language skills that are quite difficult, because they require full understanding to understand the content of the speaker's speech. In learning English, listening skills are an important skill, because English has differences in aspects of morphology, syntax, or phonological system, making it difficult for students to capture and understand the meaning expressed. To overcome these difficulties, the Duolingo application is suitable for listening skills.

Research related to the use of Duolingo as a learning medium has been conducted by (Ananda, Widodo, & Rosita, 2019). In this research, Duolingo was used to learn French writing skills. The results show that, by using the Duolingo application, the learning outcomes of class X SMA Negeri 9 Bandar Lampung students in French writing skills increased. What this research has in common is the use of the Duolingo application for foreign language learning. The difference is that this research uses the Duolingo application for the English listening skills of class IX students at UPTD SPF SMP N 3 Simpang Kanan. Based on the description above, the researcher conducted research with the title "The use of the duolingo application in improving students' listening skills at UPTD SPF SMP N 3 Simpang Kanan"

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on the description on the background of the problem above, it can be identified that the problem is as follows:

1. Students feel bored so they tend to chat with their friends.
2. Students lack concentration in English lessons.
3. Student learning outcomes are still low, indicated by the large number of students who have not completed the KKM at UPTD SPF SMP N 3 Simpang Kanan.

1.3 Problem Limitation

To avoid the possibility of expanding the problems to be studied, the researcher hereby limits the problem. This study is only limited to the use of the Duolingo application as a medium for learning English and student learning independence and its relationship to communication skills in English language students.

There are several limitations to this study. One limitation is that it focuses on Duolingo as the sole solution to the problem of improving students' listening performance. While Duolingo may be effective in increasing engagement and motivation, it may not be the only app or method that can be used to improve listening skills. Another limitation is that the study is based on a single app and it is unclear whether the results can be generalized to other mobile language learning apps or other forms of technology-assisted language learning. The study may not have fully considered the impact of Duolingo use on other aspects of language learning such as listening and reading skills. While the app focuses on speaking practice, it is also possible that it could impact other areas of language proficiency. Additionally, the study may be limited by the specific context in which it was conducted. The study may have had different results if it were conducted in a different country or with a different population.

1.4 Research Question

Based on the background of the problem above, the problem is formulated in this study

1. Can the use of the Duolingo application as a medium for learning English improve students' listening skills?

1.5 Research Objectives

Based on the background and research problems that have been described, the objectives of this study are:

1. To find out whether the use of the Duolingo application can improve students' learning abilities in listening skills

1.6 Significance Of Study

The results of this study are expected to provide benefits for:

a. For Students

1. This study can provide student learning outcomes and can increase student vocabulary in learning with use the duolingo application
2. can motivate students in listening comprehension

b. For Teachers

Can improve the learning they manage and encourage teachers to develop professionally.

c. For researchers, this research is expected to provide an overview and more in-depth knowledge about use of Duolingo learning media as a support learning process in schools and the importance of using media Duolingo learning for the learners themselves.

d. Schools, which can make useful contributions in efforts to improve the quality of the use of learning methods in the schools concerned.

1.7 Definition of key terms

1. Duolingo Application

The Duolingo application was created in 2011 by Luis Von Ahn and Severin Hacker and contains questions with certain themes that must be completed by its users. Learning using the Duolingo application can help make it easier for students to learn independently, because it includes all the skills needed to learn a foreign language, from writing skills, sounds, to speaking practice, which are also included in the application.

2. Listening

The process of listening requires intense concentration and attention to the message being conveyed, as it involves more than just receiving the message but also understanding its content. Therefore, listening is not as simple as it sounds.

According to Floyd (2012: 216), listening is the active process of assigning meaning to a message someone is communicating. Listening doesn't happen automatically; it's a process that involves attention and understanding.