

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents the background of the research, statement of the problem, objective of the research, significance of the research, scope of the research, and operational definition.

1.1 Background

Listening is one of the language skills taught at English Education Department Universitas Muria Kudus. Listening skills are a crucial aspect of communication, and are the foundation of second foreign language learning. The importance of listening skills is undeniable. People follow a conversation by receiving language inputs. As a result, listening to a foreign language is more difficult than we may believe, especially in English which has irregular pronunciation. As stated by (Buck, 2001) that “listening is a complex process in which the listener takes incoming data, an acoustic signal, and interprets it based on a wide variety of linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge”. Listening comprehension aims to understand the native conversation at the normal rate in a spontaneous condition (Pfister & Chastain, 1973). Without comprehending the listening skill, learners will never learn to communicate or speak effectively.

According to (Goh, 2000) “Listening difficulties are defined as the internal and external characteristic that might interrupt text understanding and real-life processing problems directly related to cognitive procedures that take place at various stages of listening comprehension.” According to (Hamouda, 2013) and Essays (2013), there are some obstacles in listening comprehension: (Boyle, 1984) classifies the factors influencing listening comprehension and directly related to EFL listening into four inter-relating categories: listener, speaker, medium and environment factors. Aside from these, (Saraswaty, 2018). discovered five major listening difficulties: speed, a cluster of sounds difficult for segmentation, obsession with the translation, an association of sounds with words and meanings, and idiomatic expressions. (Yagang, 2019) proposes that the sources of listening

difficulties came mainly from the four aspects: the message, the speaker, the listener, and the physical setting.

Furthermore, (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011) states that listening has an important role in communication in which listening takes up 40-50%; speaking, 25-30%; reading, 11-16%; and writing, about 9%. Thus, it is important to give more attention to listening skills. It is supported by (Day et al., 1998) that having knowledge of a foreign language means being able to speak and listen in that language.

Listening is not only difficult for the teachers in the way of teaching but also for students. Listening English is a difficult skill for English Foreign Language students because it is not their mother tongue. Listening needs a high concentration to comprehend the materials such as monologue and dialogue. Most of the students encountered some problems in listening comprehension. It was influenced by various factors. The difficulties based on the researcher's experience, we always find it difficult to interpret the meaning of the listening text, whether it is from the audio that is too fast, limited mastery of words, and also the difficulty of adjusting the focus between the questions and the ongoing listening speech. This situation comes like when in listening class, the TOEFL exam which includes a listening session in it, and also several situations.

Apart from those difficulties, there are some strategies proposed by some experts that can be applied to overcome the obstacles. According to (Graham & Oxford, 1993) listening strategies are one of the ways which makes successful in listening comprehension. Strategies will be thought of as the way in which a learner approached and manages a task, and listeners can be taught effective ways of approaching and managing their listening. There are six strategies that can help EFL learners effectively listening comprehensions, such as memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies.

In the case of the TOEFL, (Roberts, 2000) and (Vu & Vu, 2013) claim that this exam has been widely used to evaluate the English language proficiency of foreign students looking to enroll in programs in countries like Canada and the

United States that speak the language. When considering whether to accept a possible non-English speaker to those countries' institutions, TOEFL exam results are a major factor (Vu & Vu, 2013). This also applies in Indonesia, where many universities demand that students take the TOEFL exam to establish their English language competency and whether they will be admitted or graduate (Ermawan et al., 2014). For most students, however, getting the desired TOEFL score becomes an obstacle. However, there is a huge disconnect between expectations and reality.

Based on the explanation above, this study aims to achieve the following objectives; finding out what obstacles are faced by the students in listening comprehension and finding the students' strategies to overcome the obstacles faced in listening comprehension.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the research above, the researcher determines the statement of the problem:

1. What obstacles are faced by students in listening comprehension in English Education Department Universitas Muria Kudus?
2. What strategies are used to overcome the obstacles faced by the students in listening comprehension?

1.3 Objective of the Research

Based on the statement of the problem above, the objective of the research is: To find out what obstacles in listening comprehension are faced by students of English Education Department Universitas Muria Kudus and find the students' strategies to overcome the obstacles faced in listening comprehension.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The researcher hopes that the research, will be useful for many such as:

1. For the researcher

The finding of this research hopefully will be useful for the next researcher who wants to conduct similar research.

2. For the teacher

The finding of this research hopefully helps teachers to find an appropriate method that can solve the students' problems.

3. For the Lab UPT Bahasa

The finding of this research hopefully helps the Lab UPT Bahasa to find a solution for maintain the facilities of lab.

4. For the students

The finding of the research is expected to help students in solving their problem in listening comprehension.

1.5 Scope of the Research

From the statement above, the researcher needs to limit the research to make it more specific. In this research, the researcher focuses on analyzing the obstacles in listening comprehension of the students of English Education Department Universitas Muria Kudus academic year 2021/2022. The subject of this research were all of the students of English Education Department Universitas Muria Kudus in academic year 2021/2022. They were students who have been joining *Keterampilan Wajib (KW) Bahasa Inggris* and are prepared for the TOEFL Test at the end of the semester.

To prevent borders, the researcher intends to achieve these two following objectives; finding out the obstacles faced by students in listening comprehension and finding the students' strategies to overcome the obstacles faced in listening comprehension. The consideration why the researcher choose the students from EED is because the researcher wants to limits the subject based on the needs of the research.

1.6 Operational Definition

There are some definitions in this research, there are:

1. Students' obstacles

The conditions that affected students' achievement. It was something directly related to their cognitive that might interrupt the students to comprehend and answer the questions.

2. Listening comprehension

Listening comprehension is the ability to understand spoken languages, such as dialogue and monologue from a media which they will use to learn and analyze the question and the answer.

3. TOEFL

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is a standardized test to measure the English language ability of non-native speakers wishing to enroll in English-speaking universities.

4. English Education Department of Universitas Muria Kudus

English Education Department of Universitas Muria Kudus is a department that focuses to prepare the students to be an English teacher.

