

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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

1.1 Background of the Research

In some cases of the language classroom, listening was considered to be the most difficult language skill for students because it needs more attention and concentration to comprehend the material which included understanding dialogue and monologue text. It could be said that listening is a complex process in which many things happen simultaneously inside the mind. At that time, the researcher found difficulty in listening comprehension when attending an academic listening class in semester 4. The researcher and fellow researchers also found difficulties when attending class. This becomes a problem that researchers want to examine to make a thesis. Students often face difficulties in understanding the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary and the accent of the speaker. These difficulties may be caused by the quality of recorded material, students' physical condition, unfamiliar topics, unfamiliar words, and length and speed of the listening (Bingol and Celik, 2014). As investigated by Osada (2004: 8) in Vandergrift, "the unsuccessful in listening is caused by the speed of the speaker". Clustering; redundancy; reduced forms; performance variables; colloquial language; rate of delivery; stress, rhythm, and intonation; interaction are some aspects of listening that are difficult, or why listening is not simply a linear process of recording strings of language as they are transmitted into our brains (adapted from Richards, 1983; Ur, 1984; Dunkel, 1991)

The importance of knowing more about the difficulties in listening comprehension that students go through is so that educators can reduce or overcome these problems as listening skills are the main component in learning

English to produce a good communication in the use of language and also helped the students in the listening test as well as the TOEFL test.

The research conducted by Ani (2018) in an Indonesian university on which was fifty participants involved as a sample. Questionnaires and interviews were used to gain data. The results showed that unfamiliar words, speed of speech, and lack of equipment are still the most distinguished problems encountered by students. Those, two types of research explained above tend, that external factors dominated the causes. On the other hand, Sari & Fithriyana (2019) the observation, interview, and documentation employed to dig some data, and results merged, that the internal factors such as lack of confident in listening skill, and less of focusing in listening comprehension the most valuable problems that students faced.

This current study not only investigates the difficulties faced by EFL students but also the factors that cause students to have difficulties listening comprehension. It is very important to know the difficulties they face so that later it can be used as a new motivation that is useful for students in participating in learning. This study is about EFL students' difficulties in listening comprehension in an academic listening course at Muria Kudus University in the academic year 2022/2023.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Based on the background of the research above, the statements of the problem can be formulated as follow:

1. What are the EFL students' difficulties in listening comprehension in the academic listening course?
2. What factors cause the students' difficulties in listening comprehension?

1.3 Objectives of the Problem

Based on the statements of the problems written above, this research aims to:

1. Find out the difficulties faced by the EFL students' in listening comprehension in the academic listening course.
2. Find out what factors cause EFL students' difficulties in listening comprehension.

1.4 Significance of the Research

By conducting this research, the researcher hopes that this research will be beneficial theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, it is hoped that this research can be used as one of the references by future researchers who will conduct the same research related to students' difficulties in listening comprehension.

Practically, the researcher hopes that this research can inform lecturers about the problem of students' difficulties in their listening comprehension and the factors that cause students to feel difficulty in listening comprehension, and also lecturers can find and give solutions that must be done to help students overcome listening comprehension difficulties.

1.5 Scope of the research

The researcher focuses the research on the difficulties faced by students in listening comprehension. The participants of this research are the third-semester EFL students of the English Education Department of Muria Kudus University in the Academic Year 2022/2023 who got the academic listening course.

1.6 Operational Definition

Based on the title of the research, four terms can be defined in the operational definitions as follows:

1. EFL students are the students who are learning English as a foreign language in the English Education Department of Muria Kudus University.
2. Listening comprehension is the ability of a student in listening skills in a class.

3. Difficulties in listening comprehension is the inability of students to attend listening comprehension classes.
4. Academic listening is a course for third-semester EFL students in the English Education Department of Muria Kudus University.

