

Factors affecting the learning listening English

Dewi Kurniawati

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung

Email: dewikurniawati@radenintan.ac.id

***Abstract.** The main aim of this research is to examines where the difficulties are from internal factors and external factors. The methodological approach taken in this research is descriptive qualitative, in other words, in this study the collection of data contained in the form of reports and description. Of the study population, 40 students, 33 were female and 7 male returned the questionnaires.*

From the results of this research found that the factors causing difficulty in listening to students are; declining health condition or illness, the elusive material, a lack of support, lack of training to improve English listening whether with their classmates or with native speakers.

Key words: *Descriptive, Factor, Listening.*

A. INTRODUCTION

Background of The Problem

Language plays a big role in our daily lives, because language is a way to communicate our ideas to others. With language, everyone can express the feelings, desires, opinions and needs of each individual. Without language, it will be difficult for everyone to understand the purpose of the words of others.

English at this time is very important to learn, because English is an international language that is generally used to communicate with people who come from abroad. In addition, English in Indonesia has also developed into an intellectual and social medium, but in general the English language skills of students in Indonesia are inadequate.

Learning English is very complex because English has four basic abilities namely *Listening, Speaking, Reading* and *Writing*. And has three additional abilities, namely *Grammar, Vocabulary* and *Pronunciation*. All components are very important and must be studied if you want to master English well.

Basically humans cannot talk before listening; we can observe this in the development of children under five. They generally get a vocabulary from what they hear and what they see when interacting with the mother and the people around her. Wallace et al (2004: 13) write that listening skills are very important skills because these skills make humans gain insight, understanding, knowledge, and information, and achieve success in communicating with others. Therefore, listening skills are very important skills in language. However, listening is not a simple process. Someone who listens must distinguish between sounds, capture, and understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stresses and intentions, remember and interpret them all at the same time.

Here the writer tries to examine listening. The writer chooses this listening ability because the writer believes that before speaking, we must understand what is said by others who use English, because by being a good listener, we can become good language speakers too. So in this case the writer intends to examine the ability of listening. Pollard (2008: 39) states that:

"Listening is one of the receptive skills and as such it involves students in capturing and understanding the input of English. Reading, the other receptive skills, involves students in understanding and interpreting the written word. Listening is probably more difficult than reading because students often recognize the written word more easily than they recognize the spoken word."

Furthermore when reading, students can go back and recite a phrase whereas with listening they only get one chance. With reading, it's the reader who sets the pace whereas with listening it's the speaker or recording that sets the pace. "

Field (2008: 37) expresses his opinion about *listening*:

"In some respects, listening is a very individual activity. A speaker does not implant a message in the listener's mind. The listener has to remake the message: trying to gauge what the speaker's intentions are and extracting from the message whatever seems relevant to the listener's own goals".

From the explanation above we can conclude that listening and reading is both the ability to receive in language, but have different levels of difficulty. If in reading we still don't understand the essence, we can repeat to read it. This is very different from listening, because listening can only be done on one occasion without being able to repeat it. Based on the fact that there are so many people who cannot understand what other people are saying in English as a whole, they are a lot of confusion when the utterances spoken by the interlocutors use a speed of speech that is fast enough, so it is difficult to understand what is said by that person. This is where it is useful to learn listening skills so that we can understand the essence of what our interlocutors say more easily. Therefore listening is still far more difficult than reading.

Learning listening is not easy but in general most students are still many who ignore it. Difficulty in learning listening certainly influenced by many factors. Besides that student learning styles also determine the success of learning. Based on the phenomena that occur, the writer who is also lecturer feel responsible and challenged to find out what factors cause students to find difficulty in following listening courses so that writer seeks to be able to find steps to solve problems or

the right solution so that students' listening skills become better. Based on the problems above. The writer was interested in conducting the research about listening with the title Factors affecting the learning listening English.

B. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Listening

According to Tarigan (2015: 2) language skills have four components, namely listening skills, speaking skills, reading skills and writing skills. Each skill is closely related to the other three skills in a variety of ways. In acquiring language skills, we go through regular and related relationships between one skill and another. Listen and talk we learn before entering school. First in childhood we listen to the language used by those around us, then from the words we have gained from the listening process we learned to speak, then we learn to read and write afterwards. The four skills are basically a unity called chess.

Listening is a skill that plays an important role in our daily communication and in the educational process (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). Listening activities play an important role in developing one's language skills. Listening has an important role in communication because of the total time we spend communicating, listening requires 40-50%; speak, 25-30%; reading, 11-16%; and writing, about 9% (Mendelsohn, 1994 in Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011).

Some practitioners still argue that language learning is a linear process, which begins with mastering spoken language (listening and speaking) and then switches to written language (reading and writing). Ghazali (2010: 168) says that listening is a means to begin the production of spoken or spoken language, where what is meant by speaking here is to imitate texts taught orally.

In teaching English language skills in Indonesia, listening is one of the skills that are considered difficult but neglected when compared with other language skills such as speaking, reading and writing. This is because in teaching English in schools teachers tend to prioritize teaching speaking, reading, and writing skills. For listening skills, the teacher gives fewer portions than the other three skills. Generally the teaching of listening skills is taught by the teacher by reading a text and students are told to listen. The teacher repeats reading the text up to two or three times, after which students are asked to answer questions given by the teacher. If we look at this method it is very ineffective and insufficient to teach a language skill. Listening to English or a foreign language requires intensive practice as is the case with other language skills.

2. *Factors of Learning Difficulties in Listening English.*

According to Underwood (1990: 15) there are some difficulties inherent in this skill in listening experienced by English learners, namely (1) Listeners cannot control the speed of speech of the person delivering the message, and they feel the message conveyed is gone before they can understand the contents of the message. When they can understand one message, at that moment another message disappears. (2) The listener does not have the opportunity to ask the speaker to repeat or clarify the message delivered, for example when listening to the radio, watching TV, so the listener must be able to understand it as it is (3) The limited vocabulary owned by the listener, makes the listener unable to understand the contents of the text what they hear can even make them bored and frustrated (4) The failure of the listener to recognize and understand the 'signs' sent by the speaker which causes the listener to misunderstand the contents of the message received (5) Mistakes in interpreting the message received, so that the contents the message conveyed is received or interpreted differently by the

listener (6) Not able to concentrate because of various things, such as topics that are not interesting, physical fatigue, noisy environment and so on. (7) Concerns about the different ways and materials taught by the teacher and the material heard through audio devices or native speakers of English.

Hunt in Tarigan (2015: 104) says that there are five factors that influence listening, namely; Attitude, Motivation, Personal, life situation, and the role in the community. Webb in Tarigan (2015: 104) suggests that the factors that influence listening are; experience, Innate, Attitude or establishment, motivation, movement, and gender or sex difference. Meanwhile, according to Tarigan (2015: 105-115) there are eight factors affecting listening, namely;

1). Physical factors

The physical condition of a listener is an important factor that also determines the effectiveness and quality of its activity in listening. For example, fatigue, suffering from an illness, maybe he is under a normal nutritional size. In addition, the physical environment is also very likely to be responsible for the ineffectiveness of listening to someone. The room may be too hot, humid, sound or noise.

2). Psychological Factors

This factor involves the attitudes and personal qualities of the listener. These factors include the problem:

- a. Prejudice and lack of sympathetic
- b. Selfishness and preoccupation with personal interests and personal problems of
- c. Boredom that cause no attention at all to the subject.
- d. Sightedness and improper attitudes towards schools, teachers, or to speakers.

3). The experience factor

There is no doubt that our attitudes are the result of our own growth, development and experience. Lack or lack of interest is a result of lack of experience or no experience at all in the field to be listened to.

4). Attitude factor

Everyone will tend to listen carefully to topics or topics that he can agree with or that interest him. Basically, human life has two main attitudes about everything, namely the attitude of acceptance and attitude of rejection. People will be receptive to things that are interesting and beneficial to him, but to be resistant to things that are not interesting and not favorable to him.

5). Motivation Factor

Motivation is one of the determinants of one's success. If someone has a strong motivation to do something, that person is expected to succeed in achieving the goal. The same is true with listening.

6). Gender Factors

Silverman and Webb (in Tarigan, 2015: 112) raise the facts that the style of listening to men is generally objective, active, hard-hearted, analytic, rational, stubborn, or does not want to back down, neutral, instructive (disturbing), independent / independent, able to meet their own needs, can master / control emotions; whereas women's listening style tends to be more subjective, passive, friendly / sympathetic, diffusive, sensitive, easily influenced, easily succumbed, receptive, dependent, and emotional.

7). Environmental Factors

a. Physical environment.

In considering the physical environment, the classroom is an important factor in motivating listening activities.

b. Social environment.

A teaching and learning environment that allows children to utilize classroom situations to improve their communication skills is appropriate and in line with overall curriculum planning.

8). The role factor in society

The willingness to listen can also be influenced by our role in society. As an educated (student) is expected to listen more carefully and attentively about new things about the development of science and technology than daily employees at a local company. Similarly, specialists, and experts from various professions, must be thirsty to look at things that have to do with them, with their professions and expertise, which can broaden their horizons of knowledge so that they do not miss the rapid developments contained in their fields of expertise.

Meanwhile, according to Hermawan (2012: 49-54) that the influencing factors can be divided into two, namely internal factors and external factors:

a. Internal factors.

Internal factors that can influence the listening process are; hearing problems and physical conditions. When a person suffers from hearing problems or damage hearing devices that can inhibit the entry of waves in a certain volume, then the listening process will be disrupted. Likewise, if the physical condition is less healthy then he cannot concentrate on listening to other people's conversations properly. Another factor is the self limitation to listen simultaneously all that we hear. Many listeners can only listen to half of the verbal messages that other people make every day. Therefore the listener does not always listen well if his attention is distorted.

The next factor is thinking too fast, it's hard to do listening carefully. When there is free time to spare his thoughts while others talk, usually the listener instead thinks of things that are not related to the speaker's ideas, such as personal interests, daydreaming, planning a refutation and so on. The listening process is

also influenced by the motivation and feelings of the listener at that time (personal interest). Listeners will listen more effectively, and consciously select what is being heard, especially when they need or want that information.

b. External factors.

External factors include environmental factors, material factors, speakers, style and speaking techniques. The subject matter can influence the listening process. Listeners will be more interested in new material than material that has been known or experienced. The speaker factor can also disturb the listener's attention. For example, speakers who are experienced and appear calm will be more persuasive compared to speakers who are nervous. Besides that the style, appearance, and technique of presenting the material can also be one of the factors that influence the listening process such as visualization and technology used.

Research Method

This research uses descriptive research methods. In descriptive research in general, descriptive data collected more in the form of words and images than numbers. According to Best in Sukardi (2003: 157) descriptive research is a research method that seeks to describe and interpret objects as they are. This study is also often called non-experimental, because in this study researchers did not control and manipulate research variables.

According to Sugiyono (2003: 11) Descriptive research is research conducted to determine the value of an independent variable, either one variable or more (independent) without making comparisons, or connecting with other variables. Arikunto (2010: 269) says that analyzing data using qualitative descriptive techniques utilizing percentages is only the initial step of the entire analysis

process. Qualitative analysis certainly must be stated in a predicate that shows the state statement, a measure of quality.

Population and Sample

The population of this research was the students at the 3rd semester of English Study Program of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty of UIN Raden Intan Lampung in the academic year of 2018/2019. The samples of this research were 40 people consisting of 33 women and 7 men.

Data Collection Technique

In conducting this research, the writer did observation, interviewed the lecturers and gave questionnaire to the students. Questionnaire was used in order to collect data as to the factors which affect the listening skill, and the writer used Hermawan's theory in making the questionnaire.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following results from questionnaire, some factors that influence students in listening to English:

1. Internal Factors.
 - a. Physical condition of students

In the questionnaire statements no. 1 and 2, which stated that less than half (13 people or 32.5%) answered strongly agree, and most (25 people or 62.5%) answered agreed to the statement that they still follow the course *listening* even though they are sick. They continue to attend lectures even though they cannot concentrate when their physical condition is declining. Whereas those who answered could still concentrate only a small portion of the respondents (2 people or 5%). So it can be concluded that they have difficulty listening because of unhealthy physical conditions, so that what is listened to when attending a course cannot be absorbed properly.

b. From the answers in number 3, most of the respondents (29 people or 72.5%) stated that the third semester students were happy and interested in the listening course, less than half (11 people or 27.5%) answered that they were not interested. Although the high student interest is explained in the questionnaire statement No. 3, but if the student's physical condition is declining or unhealthy, students will find it difficult to concentrate when listening.

c. Students' perceptions of listening to English.

In questionnaire statement no 5, almost all (30 people or 75%) of students thought that listening subjects were difficult and less than half (10 people or 25%) of students who stated listening subjects were easy to understand. In the questionnaire statement no. 6 and 9 less than half (10 people or 25%) stated strongly agree and most (25 people or 62.5%) stated agreed with the statement that the lecturer teaching listening is a pleasant lecturer and can liven up the classroom atmosphere and deliver the course clearly. Only a small proportion (5 people or 12.5%) stated that teaching lecturers were not pleasant. This is inversely proportional to students' perceptions of listening subjects. The questionnaire statement No. 7 shows that almost all (30 people or 75%) of students think that listening is difficult. From the above statement it can be concluded that the students find listening courses is difficult, even though their instructors can make the teaching-learning process interesting.

d. Student motivation for listening to English.

In the questionnaire statement number 4 which states about the motivation of students in listening to English, the results obtained are less than half (17 people or 42.5%) strongly agree with the statement that they are always eager to follow the listening course, while half (20 people or 50%) answer agree and a small portion of respondents answered disagree (3 people or 7.5%). It can be concluded that students have the motivation to take listening classes.

e. Opportunities for students to listen to English

Rarely do students learn listening regularly every day as indicated by the majority of respondents answering disagreeing to question no 15 (27 people or 67.5%), while less than half (13 people or 32.5%) respondents stated that they had a regular schedule for learning to listen outside of the listening class. This can make students have difficulty in learning to listen because without practice outside of class hours the ability to listen to students does not increase. Their habits in utilizing free time by listening to music / songs and watching movies or videos in English can improve their listening skills. It turns out that the results of the research from the questionnaire statement No. 16 less than half (18 people or 45%) of respondents very often do this, and less than half (19 people or 47.5%) stated that they often listened to music or watched videos / films in English. And a small portion (3 people or 7.5%) of respondents said they rarely do it. Furthermore, the habits of students to communicate using English to improve their listening ability from the results of the questionnaire calculation at point no 17 only a small portion (2 people or 5%) stated that they did it very often, less than half (15 people or 37.5%) stated often, half (20 people or 50%) said they rarely communicate in English, even a small portion (3 people or 7.5%) said they never did. From these results it can be seen that students rarely practice communicating in English with classmates causing them to experience difficulty in listening to English. In addition to communicating with classmates, practicing the knowledge from *native speakers* gained can also improve their listening skills. However, from the data obtained that only a small proportion stated that they communicated with very often *native speakers* (1 person or 2.5%), and less than half (17 people or 42.5%) stated that they often communicated with native speakers. Half of the respondents (20 people or 50%) stated that rarely even a small portion (2 people or 5%) stated that they had never communicated with

native speakers. It can be concluded that students lack communication with native speakers to improve their English listening skills.

To overcome the difficulty of listening in listening course students should want to study with friends and attend English Club or other organizations so that they can improve their English skills. From the data obtained a small portion (8 people or 20%) stated that they had never participated in the club. 32.5%), and less than half of the respondents also stated often (13 people or 32.5%). Thus it can be concluded that students rarely discuss listening with friends and exchange ideas and share knowledge to develop listening skills.

2. External Factors Teaching

a. Material

Lack of understanding of the material taught due to difficulty listening to students can be seen in the questionnaire statement No. 5 shows that almost all (30 people or 75%) students view that listening courses are rarely easily understood. From the above statement it can be concluded that PBI semester 3 students feel that listening courses are difficult and cannot be understood easily.

b. Instructors and methods used.

From the questionnaire data in the questionnaire statement No. 10, it is obtained that less than half (10 people or 25%) strongly agree and most (25 people or 62.5%) agree with the statement that the listening lecturers have applied innovative learning methods and can liven up the classroom atmosphere and deliver courses clearly. Only a small proportion (5 people or 12.5%) stated that teaching lecturers did not use innovative methods. From the results of interviews with NI (a lecturer that teach listening classes) stated that: "When I teach listening, I usually use different techniques for each meeting such as intensive, responsive, selective teaching techniques and so on depending on the material, otherwise the results are not as we expect. " And according to AF who is also a lecturer teaching listening subject as

follows: "Usually in every teaching I use 3 stages, namely pre-listening, while listening and post listening and at each stage there are different activities for each meeting so as not to be monotonous and the results as we hoped ".

c. The place used in learning to listen.

The place of learning can also affect learning outcomes and this is one of the factors that cause students difficulty in listening. Because of the environment, the classroom atmosphere that is not conducive will affect student concentration. From the questionnaire statement No. 13, the data obtained shows that almost all respondents (31 people or 77.5%) stated that the place of study did not support. And only a small proportion (9 people or 22.5%) stated that the place of study was adequate. And according to the results of interviews with listening to lecturers and also based on my experience who also teaches listening courses that so far the classroom conditions are less conducive and quite an obstacle in the implementation of listening courses. Students often complain about the situation. Because the room is not soundproof, sometimes the sound from outside the class disturbs their concentration. Especially if in the field near the class is holding a performance or competition then their concentration is divided because they listen to the sound of the place.

d. Facilities and infrastructure

In the answer to questionnaire statement number 14, almost all (33 people or 82.5%) thought that learning facilities such as active speaker / sound system or LCD were available, and only a small portion (7 people or 17.5%) stated that there were rarely good tool for listening and learning. And from my observations that indeed for the implementation of listening learning courses the English department has provided a sound system or active speaker but for implementation in a fairly large classroom and open windows (not soundproof) and with the number of students up to 40 people are equipment / the media is becoming inadequate. From the results of interviews with lecturers and observations in the field also obtained

information that sometimes the condition of unfavorable equipment can affect the quality of students' understanding of listening material. Students complained that the sound from the sound system used sometimes had trouble so that the received voice access was less clear.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on data analysis and data interpretation, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Things that affect students in listening to English from internal factors are physical conditions that decline when attending listening classes and poor student perceptions of subjects listening as well as the attitudes / habits of students who lack practice in listening to English outside the listening course.
2. The things that influence student's listening English from external factors are the material that is difficult to understand, and the place or class that is less supportive for students' listening activities.

Suggestion

Based on the results of data analysis, suggestions that can be given by the writer are:

1. For students must be able to make the best use of listening to lectures to improve listening skills and practice more outside listening class. Students are also expected to practice communicating more with classmates using English and it would be better if they tried to communicate with native

speakers directly or indirectly by listening to songs / music and watching films / videos in English.

2. Teachers should use more varied teaching methods, for example by using whispering games, jigsaw methods or using You Tube video. This will make lectures more interesting and not boring.
3. Institutions should improve facilities for learning in the listening class.
4. For further researchers, especially in the field of English who also want to research about listening can use this research as reference material for conducting similar research. For example, research on methods that can be used to improve students' skills in listening to English. This is recommended because in this study, researchers found difficulties and things that affect students' difficulty in listening to English, so hopefully later there will be further research that can overcome the difficulties of listening to English and improve listening skills in English education students.

D. REFERENCES

Arikunto, Suharsimi. (2002). *Prosedur Penelitian: Suatu Pendekatan Praktek*, Jakarta: PT. Rineka Cipta

_____. (2010). *Manajemen Penelitian*. Jakarta: PT. Rineka Cipta.

Field, John. (2008). *Listening in the Language Classroom*. UK:Cambridge University Press

Ghazali, Syukur. (2010). *Pembelajaran Keterampilan Berbahasa dengan Pendekatan Komunikatif Interaktif*. Bandung: PT. Refika Aditama

Gilakjani, A. P., & Ahmadi, M. R. (2011). A Study of Factors Affecting EFL Learners' English Listening Comprehension and the Strategies for Improvement. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*.

<https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.2.5.977-988>

Hermawan, Herry. (2012). *Menyimak Keterampilan Berkomunikasi yang Terabaikan*. Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu.

Pollard, Lucy. (2008). *Teaching English*. UK: Longman

Sukardi, Ph.D. (2011). *Metodologi Penelitian Pendidikan*. Jakarta: PT. Bumi Aksara

Tarigan, Henry Guntur. (2015). *Menyimak Sebagai Suatu Keterampilan Berbahasa*. Bandung: Angkasa

Underwood, Mary. (1990). *Teaching Listening*. London: Longman

Wilson, JJ. (2008). *How to Teach Listening*. Edinburg: Pearson Longman