

An Analysis on Students' Listening Comprehension Problems at the Third Semester English Language Education of Universitas Islam Riau

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ABSTRACT

This study discussed about Difficulties Faced by Third Semester Students toward Listening Comprehension. The aim of the study were to find out the problems most encountered by students from three major problems, there are Quality of Listening material, Unfamiliar Vocabulary, Length and Speed of Listening. The research was conducted in State Islamic University of Riau. Descriptive method was used to analyze and to find the result about the problems. The population of this study was third semester students of English Language Education Department of teacher training and education faculty Academic year 2019/2020. The number of population was 98 students from two classes. Total sampling technique was used to select all students as the subject in this study. Data was gathered by questionnaire and interview was used to confirm students' answer. The data showed that the quality of recorded material was problem faced by most students. The conclusion is Quality of recorded material was the main problem that most frequently encountered by students, followed by unfamiliar vocabulary, length and speed of listening. Knowing about students' major problems can motivate and help the lecturers to develop effective learning strategies for the students to improve their listening abilities. It provided solutions also to overcome the problems were: the teacher should adapt and improve listening material, activate students' vocabulary, give some strategies in listening and always motivate students. The results of the study may also be useful for those who are interested in this study.

Keywords: Analysis, Listening Comprehension, Problem

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning English in this era is very important. This is because English is the language of the world. When learn a language, there are four skills that need for complete communication. When students learn their native language, they usually learn to listen first, then to speak, then to read, and finally to write. These were called the four "language skills". There are four skills need to be learned by the students in English. Listening skill, Speaking skill, Reading skill and Writing skill. Learning all the skills in English is

important including learning listening.

Listening skill is one of important skill that must be mastered by students if they want to be able to use English well. Whereas, Students need listening skills to obtain a variety of information from various sources. Learning listening will help them to improve speaking skill considerably. People need to hear various types of English repeatedly and continuously if they want to communicate properly, meaningful, and naturally. It means that without hearing people cannot acquire language because listening provides language input. As

Rost in Hien (2015) stated listening as foreign language learning is paramount important since it provides the language input. As an input skill, listening plays a crucial role in students' language development.

Accordingly, teaching listening needs more attention in order to develop students' language. 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 that 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.

When researcher interviewed several students in English program of Islamic University of Riau, the researcher found some facts that students had some difficulties learning the listening course such as difficult to listen to recorded conversation with low sound quality, learners mentioned a speaker's accent as one of the most significant factors that affect listener comprehension, unfamiliar vocabulary they hear, Length and Speed of Listening is one of their most frightening difficulties.

The objective of this research is to identify the major problems that dominate in the listening comprehension problems faced by students at the Third Semester English Study Program of Islamic University of Riau.

Listening is one of the topics studied in the field of language research and in the conversation analysis discipline. Practice can improve this skill and there are many benefits to develop your listening skills. It's the active method of obtaining and reacting to spoken (and sometimes unspoken)

messages.

Helgesen (2003:24) says listening is an active, purposeful method of making sense of what we hear. We hear more often than not, we can comprehend something more. With regard to that quotation, although listening is receptive, it is very active because listeners can believe and comprehend stuff at greater rates than they have heard. As they listen, they not only process what they hear, but also link it with other data they have already known. Since listeners combine what they have listened to their current understanding and experiences, they figure or create some kind of significance in their own minds in a very true sense.

Rost (2002:177) defines listening in its broadest sense as a method of obtaining what the speaker actually says (receptive orientation) ; building and representing significance (positive orientation) ; negotiating significance with the speaker and reacting (cooperative orientation) ; and generating significance through participation, imagination and compassion (transformative orientation). Listening, then, is a complicated, active process of interpretation in which listeners match what they hear with what they have already known.

Listening comprehension is basically a method of understanding what the speaker said. This means understanding pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and grasping the significance of the speaker's utterance.

Vandergrift (2002), states that "the interactional listening generally satisfies the social requirements of the respondents ; e.g., small talk and casual discussions. Therefore, interactional listening is extremely contextualized and two-way, involving communication with the speaker."

On the other side, the transactional language is mainly used to transmit data; e.g., news broadcasts and presentations. In comparison to interactional listening, transactional listening needs precise understanding of a message with no chance for clarification with a speaker;

1. One-way listening

One-way or non-reciprocal listening happens when we do not actively participate in the exchange of a message. One listens without speaking and without offering the speaker a nonverbal direction (Moore, 2005:363). The scenario in which we typically participate in one-way listening is as follows: Telephone customer service recordings, speeches and lectures, public address announcement, radio and television program.

2. Two-way listening

Dual or reciprocal listening actively includes the listener in the exchange of data. In practice, listeners provide the speaker with feedback by requesting for more data or by paraphrasing the speaker's message (Moore, 2005: 363). The circumstances in which we typically participate in one-way listening are as follows: face to face conversation and telephone interactions.

While-Listening activities are the core aspects for communication tasks. Learners listen to the feedback and make decisions on the approach to be used in accordance with the requirements of the project. Ultimately, in post-listening activities, listening to their address and analyze their policy options and their effectiveness. Feedback is given by self- assessment and also by group discussions. (The

Guan, 2015).

1. Pre-listening

Pre-listening activities help to hear and provide some information about the task goals, mostly by triggering schematographs. Imagine that you're a little late in the classroom, and you see that the teacher has already begun to lecture. Most probably, it will be difficult for you to grasp the subject and understand what's going on. Why do you think this is going to happen? Since you do not know the context and have no prior knowledge of the context, the context would initially be unavailable.

2. While-Listening

While-listening activity are directly related to listening text, students perform the activity either during the listening process or immediately after listening. As a result, the educator needs to match the exercises with the academic goal, the listening intent and the level of competence of the students.

3. Post-Listening

In the post-Listening process, students work throughout depth by applying both top-down and bottom-up strategies to connect classroom activities and their real lives (Wilson, 2008).

There are different definitions of "listening Comprehension". Listening comprehension is the different process of understanding spoken language, which includes recognizing speech sounds, understanding the meaning of individual words, and understanding the grammar of sentences (Nadig, 2013 as stated in Pourhosein Gilakiani & Sabouri, 2016). According to Hamouda (2013), listening comprehension refers

to the interpretation of what the listener has learned.

Listening difficulties is internal and external characteristic that interrupt text understanding directly related to cognitive. Hamouda (2013) stated that factors causing students listening comprehension problem were categorized into different sources including problems related to the listening text, listening problems related to task and activities, listeners problems related to the listeners and lecture's methodology.

The difficulties that faced by the student would interrupt during the process listening comprehension especially those who learn English as foreign language in non-native setting. According to Lindsay, a major problem students have, in contrast to students studying English is that they have little or no experience in 'real' listening to fall back on, no memory of past learning or social experiences. The facts that they lived in non- English speaking country were major factor to their listening problems.

According to Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yidliz, and Tugrul Mart (2014), there are a lot of difficulties that learners may encounter in the listening comprehension processes and the purpose is to be aware of these problems and try to solve them. Some of these problems are as follows:

a. *Quality of Recorded Materials*

In some classes, teachers use some recorded materials that do not have high quality. The quality of sound system can impact the comprehending of learners' listening (Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yidliz, & Tugrul Mart, 2014).

b. *Cultural Differences*

Learners should be familiar with the cultural knowledge of language that has a significant effect on the learners' understanding. If the listening task involves completely different cultural materials then the learners may have critical problems in their comprehension. It is the responsibility of teachers to give background knowledge about the listening activities in advance (Azmi, Celik, Yidliz, & Tugrul, 2014).

c. *Accent*

Munro and Derwing (1999) expressed that too many accented speech can lead to an important reduction in comprehension. According to Goh (1999), 66% of learners mentioned a speaker's accent as one of the most significant factors that affect listener comprehension.

d. *Unfamiliar Vocabulary*

According to Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yidliz, and Tugrul Mart (2014), when listening texts contain known words it would be very easy for students to them. If students know the meaning of words this can arouse their interest and motivation and can have a positive impact on the students' listening comprehension ability. A lot of words have more than one meaning and if they are not used appropriately in their appropriate contexts students will get confused.

e. *Length and Speed of Listening*

Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yidliz, and Tugrul Mart (2014) stated that the level of students can have a significant role when they listen to

long parts and keep all information in their mind. It is very difficult for lower level students to listen more than three minutes long and complete the listening tasks. Short listening passages make easy listening comprehension for learners and reduce their tiredness.

Some researchers have been doing the same research before, they were: Darti write a research about *"Analyzing Students' Difficulties Toward Listening Comprehension of English Education Department of Tarbiyah and Teaching Faculty at UIN Alauddin Makassar"* that tell us about understanding about students' difficulties can motivate and help the lecturers to develop effective learning strategies for the students to improve their listening abilities. and the research provided solutions also to overcome the problems were: the teacher should adapt and improve listening material, activate students' vocabulary, give the students variety of accent while practice listening in language laboratory, improve their pronunciation by training from native speakers, building students' knowledge about the topic, give some strategy in listening, always motivate students.

On the other research who did by Raihan Maulida about *"An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Learning Listening (A Study at SMAN 11 Banda Aceh)"* give us a result conclusion that Students sometimes encounter unfamiliar words which caused them to stop and think about the meaning of those words and they missed the next part of the speech. In the same way, paralinguistic features such as the accent, noise, rate of delivery,

pronunciation, and intonation caused students difficulties while doing listening exercises.

2. METHOD

Qualitative research was the design of this research. The aim of this research was to use these research designs in order to know students listening comprehension problems. It was only one variable, which was student listening comprehension problems in the Third Semester of the English Study Program of the Islamic University of Riau. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research focuses on data collection, analysis and writing, but organizes disciplines and flows throughout the research process. In other words, Seno (2014:32) indicates that the data analyzed was not used statistical calculations (statistical formula or numbers).

This research was carried out in the third semester of English study program of the Islamic University of Riau. In the selection of the sample based on the total sampling, the researcher decided to take all students on Class A and B B in the third semester of the English study program. As part of this research, there were 49 students in the class A and 49 students in the class B third semester of the English study program at the Islamic University of Riau.

Total sampling, according to Sugiyono, (2007), was a technique used when the number of subpopulations was small, generally not more than 100. If all members of the subpopulation were sampled, this sampling technique called total sampling. This research conducted by using two instruments to collect

the data. There were questionnaire and interview. The first, questionnaire adapted from Hamouda (2013) that consists of three sections. The second, interview adapted from Hamouda (2013) as supporting of questionnaire about students difficulties.

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This research utilized the qualitative data. As Miles and Huberman (1994:4) stated that the qualitative data consist of four concurrent flows of the activity: data collection, data reduction, data display, drawing and conclusions.

First phase was data collections, all data were submitted according to data collection procedure. It became basis to analyze in the next phase. Second phase, data reduction occurs continually throughout the analysis. It was not something separate from the analyses. The process of selecting were, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the 'raw' of data that appear in written-up field notes. Data reduction occur continuously throughout the life of any qualitatively oriented project.

Third phase data display, display was used at all of phase. Data was organized and summarized to help draw conclusions. Then show what stage the analysis has reached Data Display Drawing and Conclusions Data Reduction and Data Collection.

The last phase drawing and verifying conclusions, after reduction and display, the data was drawn from the beginning of data collection, the qualitative analyst was began to decide what things mean, was noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, and propositions. Final conclusions may not appear until data collection was over.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the research deal with result of data analysis about the major problems that dominate in the listening comprehension problems faced by students at the Third Semester English Study Program of Islamic University of Riau. The researcher limited it to three indicators, the first was Listening Problems related to the quality of recorded material, second was listening problems related to the unfamiliar vocabulary, third was listening problems related to the length and speed of listening. The discussion covered interpretation of the findings and further information was given.

Based on the results of the data description above, it can be stated that the opinion of Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yidliz, and Tugrul Mart (2014) -there are a lot of difficulties that learners may encounter in the listening comprehension process and the purpose is to be aware of these problems and try to solve them- can be proven. Based on data description of questionnaire above, the researcher considered to made the students' listening problems data to interpreted the whole problems frequency.

Table 1 Listening Problems Frequency Per Indicator

No	Question Indicators	10 Questions answered from each indicators		
		Yes	No	Answered Both
1	Listening Problems related to the quality of recorded material (consist of 10 questions)	710 (82%)	155 (17%)	5 (1%)
2	Listening problems related to the unfamiliar vocabulary (consist of 10 questions)	561 (64%)	299 (34%)	10 (2%)
3	Listening problems related to the length and speed of listening (consist of 10 questions)	605 (70%)	255 (28%)	10 (2%)

The researcher described, based on the data above, that the most listening difficulties encountered by students are listening problems related to the quality of recorded material. This could be seen in the data above where 10 questions related to the quality of recorded material get 710 "Yes" marks. This indicates that most students believed that the quality of recorded material was the issue that most affected their comprehension of listening. This correlated with the opinion of Hamouda (2013) stated that most students assume the difficulties they encountered in listening comprehension were due to the bad recording quality / poor-quality tapes or disks.

The second highest difficulties faced by students are listening problems related to the length and speed of listening. Based on data above, where 10 questions related to the length and speed of listening get 605 "Yes" mark. This indicated that students had low abilities when listening to high-speed and long-term spoken text. The lowest difficulties faced by students are listening problems related to unfamiliar vocabulary.

Based on table 1, 10 questions related to unfamiliar vocabulary only get 605 "Yes" mark. However, it cannot be said that students have no problem with unfamiliar vocabulary because the number of "Yes" marks is still more than the "No" mark. students still had to improve their knowledge of vocabulary to support their listening comprehension to be better. This correlated with opinion of Butt (2010) reported that the major problem hindering listening comprehension was that the students' vocabulary was too limited to understand the message.

In more detail, researchers displayed the information in the table below. The information on this table contains the questions contained in the questionnaire that was arranged by the researcher starting from the questions that were considered to be the biggest problems for students in their listening comprehension to the questions that are not the biggest problem for students in their listening comprehension.

Table 2 Listening Problems Frequency Per Question

No .	Related Indicators	Number of Questionnaire	Questions	Answer		
				Yes	No	Yes & No
1	Quality of Recorded Material	7	Do you feel worried if you hear material with low quality?	82 (94%)	5 (6%)	-
2	Quality of Recorded Material	9	Are you unable to understand when Unclear sounds is from noisy conditions of the classroom?	79 (91%)	8 (9%)	-
3	Quality of Recorded Material	5	Are you unable to understand When unclear sounds is from a poor quality CD player?	76 (87%)	10 (12%)	1 (1%)
4	Length and Speed	5	Are you unable to understand when the speaker speak too fast?	76 (87%)	11 (13%)	-
5	Quality of Recorded Material	3	Are you unable to concentration when recording material is unclear?	74 (85%)	13 (15%)	-
6	Quality of Recorded Material	8	Are you unable to understand when you do listening in noisy place?	73 (84%)	14 (16%)	-
7	Quality of Recorded Material	10	Are you unable to understand when recorded material can not be repeated?	73 (84%)	14 (16%)	-
8	Unfamiliar Vocabulary	10	Do you feel worried if you don't understand the spoken word?	72 (83%)	14 (16%)	1 (1%)
9	Length and Speed	6	Are you unable to understand when the speaker does not pause long enough?	72 (83%)	15 (17%)	-
10	Unfamiliar Vocabulary	9	Do you use your own personal experience and background knowledge of the topic to understand the unknown word?	71 (82%)	15 (17%)	1 (1%)
11	Length and Speed	9	I feel nervous and worried when the speaker speak too fast	71 (82%)	15 (17%)	1 (1%)
12	Quality of Recorded Material	6	Are you unable to understand when unclear sounds is from poor equipment?	70 (81%)	16 (18%)	1 (1%)
13	Quality of Recorded Material	2	Are you unable to focus when recorded material is unclear?	70 (81%)	17 (19%)	-

14	Unfamiliar Vocabulary	5	you stop listening and think about the meaning of the word, when you hear unknown word?	69 (80%)	17 (19%)	1 (1%)
15	Length and Speed	7	Are you unable to follow the spoken text when the sentences are too long and fast?	66 (76%)	20 (23%)	1 (1%)
16	Unfamiliar Vocabulary	5	Are you unable to understand listening text when the topic is unfamiliar?	64 (74%)	23 (27%)	-
17	Unfamiliar Vocabulary	4	Do you find the pronunciation familiar but you can not recognize the word?	64 (74%)	22 (25%)	1 (1%)
18	Unfamiliar Vocabulary	6	Are you unable to understand the meaning of unknown word while listening?	64 (74%)	23 (26%)	-
19	Quality of Recorded Material	1	Are you unable to understand the unclear recorded material?	63 (72%)	21 (24%)	3 (4%)
20	Length and Speed	10	I feel nervous and worried when the text spoken too long.	63 (72%)	23 (27%)	1 (1%)
21	Length and Speed	2	Are you unable to interpret the meaning of a long spoken text?	58 (67%)	27 (31%)	2 (2%)
22	Length and Speed	3	Do you feel tired and distracted when you listening a long spoken text?	56 (64%)	30 (35%)	1 (1%)
23	Length and Speed	1	Are you unable to understand When spoken text too long?	54 (62%)	31 (36%)	2 (2%)
24	Quality of Recorded Material	4	Are you unable to understand the spoken word when full of breakup and pauses?	50 (57%)	37 (43%)	-
25	Unfamiliar Vocabulary	7	Does listening comprehension have many unfamiliar words?	48 (55%)	38 (44%)	1 (1%)
26	Length and Speed	8	I lose my concentration when the text is too long	48 (55%)	39 (45%)	-
27	Unfamiliar Vocabulary	1	Do you understand listening text when there are too many unfamiliar vocabulary?	44 (51%)	42 (48%)	1 (1%)
28	Length and Speed	4	Are you unable to understand long conversation?	41 (47%)	44 (51%)	2 (2%)
29	Unfamiliar Vocabulary	8	Are you unable to understand active form?	36 (42%)	50 (57%)	1 (1%)

30	Unfamiliar Vocabulary	2	Are you unable to understand every single word of incoming speech?	29 (34%)	55 (63%)	3 (3%)
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Based on the data shown in table 6, could saw that the question which was the highest listening comprehension problem faced by students was in question number 7 with indicators related to the Quality of Recorded Material. Where there were 82 students out of 87 students or 94% of students assumed that they feel worried if they hear low-quality listening material. This means that their anxiety about the quality of recorded material they will face in listening activities was the problem that most affects the listening comprehension of students. Lecturers need to have high quality sources of listening materials. Of course, low quality of listening content would offer bad results.

The second highest was still from the same indicator, it related to the quality of recorded material. which in question number 9 contains 79 out of 87 students who think that they have difficulty doing listening activities if the situation in the room was noisy. This indicated that in a noisy situation, only 8 students thought they could participate in listening activities well. It was important for all of us, especially lecturers, to be able to provide a place for good listening activities and to be able to maintain a calm and conducive situation in the classroom during the listening activity so that it can run smoothly and can also provide good results.

The third highest problem was come from 2 different indicators, they were quality of recorded material and length and speed of listening. could see in question number 5 relating to the quality of recording material, where 76 students state that if the quality of the

recorded material was not good due to the poor quality of the CD player, it was difficult to understand the material. Therefore it was necessary to provide a good quality CD player to support the improvement of students' listening comprehension. The next discussion was on question number 5 relating to length and speed of listening where 76 students answered yes and 11 students answered no.

This concludes that the Speaker speak too fast was a factor that interfere with the students' comprehension in listening. Many students point out that when the speaker speak too fast, it was difficult for them to understand what was being said, even if the words were familiar for them. Native speaker speak too fast make the students sometimes hear all the words as a single unit. At this point, difficulty with speed delivery because unfamiliarity with listening to native speaker. The students need to practice their listening by listened native speaker. From the explanation, it can be concluded that the quality of recorded material was the problem most often faced by students. This was in accordance with the opinion of Hamouda (2013) stated that the majority of the students think the difficulties they encountered in listening comprehension were due to the bad recording quality/poor-quality tapes or disks.

Based on data description of interview, Problems with listening comprehension relating to the quality of recorded material always emerge from questions 1 to 4. The problem of listening comprehension related to unfamiliar vocabulary and listening length and speed does not even

appear in question number 4. it can be concluded that the quality of recorded material was the most common problem that could affect students' listening comprehension.

4. CONCLUSION

As stated in the previous chapter, the aim of this study is to identify the listening problems that most frequently occur from the three research-focused problems, including listening problems related to the quality of recorded material, listening problems related to unfamiliar vocabulary, and listening problems related to listening length and speed.

Based on the data analyzes in chapter IV, it can be concluded that: All of students was unable to comprehend listening. There was one problem most students face from the 3 main problems studied, that was Listening Problems Related to the Quality of Recorded Material. Followed by unfamiliar vocabulary and length and speed of listening were also problems faced by students. It was corrected based on Hamouda (2013) stated that the majority of the students think the difficulties they encountered in listening comprehension were due to the bad recording quality / poor-quality tapes or disks. Hence, the students have to study hard and have more practice to improve their listening comprehension.

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