

## **CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Listening needs a great deal of concentration and effort. Besides that, listening is occasionally seen as the most difficult language ability in the language classroom. In line with Hardiyanto et al., (2021), listening is a skill that has complexity because it requires students to be supported by several crucial abilities including the capacity to comprehend a wide variety of new English words as well as phrases, clauses and sentences either literally or in various contexts since it requires perception, cognition, attention, and memory (Hardiyanto et al., 2021). Listening skills seem challenging for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. A similar thing also happened at one of the universities I used as my research object. The researcher did the pre-interview with the participant; from the pre-interview, the researchers got information that students have difficulties when listening activities take place in listening class.

Listening is important as one of the fundamental abilities in language learning. Listening acts as a means to enable successful interaction, comprehension, and communication in a foreign language. However, EFL students faced several obstacles to become effective listeners. Majority of participants (87 Saudi female university students) felt that speaking and listening were the two most crucial abilities to master, while listening was also the most difficult (Alzamil, 2021). For example, listening can be uncomfortable and anxiety-inducing. Susilowati, (2019) argues “if students do not aware of some listening difficulties they face during listening, it is possible that it can diminish their interest to learn and increase their anxiety”. Because of that, it is very important to find out the students’ difficulties and the solutions to overcome them.

Researchers have conducted comparable investigations in relation to listening difficulties such as Hardiyanto et al., (2021) who investigate the difficulties faced by the students dealing with listening. The finding revealed that the listening difficulties encountered by the students at tertiary level are different depending on their proficiency in English. Another research conducted by Diora & Rosa, (2020)

revealed that students had several kinds of difficulties with the listening material. They included intricate grammatical structures, challenging word-by-word comprehension of incoming speech, challenging interpretation of lengthy spoken texts. In addition to the listening material, the students encountered listener-related challenges. It implies that they were the ones who had trouble understanding what they were hearing. They experienced anxiousness, difficulty understanding unfamiliar phrases, difficulty focusing, difficulty pronouncing words correctly, difficulty remembering, loss of attention, and drowsiness. The physical setting is the last factor that causes students problems with listening comprehension. The results showed that there were seven issues with the physical setting. Poor tape and disk quality, shoddy technology, a lack of breaks, the inability to repeat, sounds, a range of accents, and delivery speed were among them. The study conducted by Rini (2017) revealed that listening impairments are caused by both internal and external causes. The majority of the challenges stem from external factors including low vocabulary, rapid speaking rate, accents of native speakers, mispronounced words, and classroom conditions.

Based on the previous studies, those studies focused on listening problems only but have yet to offer solutions to overcome those difficulties. By investigating this case, it is expected that the result of this study will be helpful, where students can prepare and solve challenges or problems before or during listening class.

## **1.2 Formulation of the Problems**

The question of the research is:

- 1) What are the listening difficulties encountered by the students of the English education department in listening class?
- 2) What are solutions to overcome those difficulties?

### **1.3 Operational Definitions**

The researcher provides four definitions related to this study to avoid misunderstanding about the terms set out in this study as follows;

#### **1.3.1 Listening Skills**

The term listening in EFL refers to receptive skills and one of four English language skills that involve the ability to get and comprehend information from listening.

#### **1.3.2 Listening Difficulties**

The term difficulties in listening refer to any possible hindrance in English listening that involves precision and comprehension in learning.

### **1.4 Aims of the Study**

According to the research question, this research aims to find out the students listening difficulties and the solutions encountered by the students of English education study program in listening class.

### **1.5 Significances of the Study**

#### **1.5.1 Practical Significance**

The present study contributes to the English language teachers and the students' concerns with listening difficulties and solutions. Moreover, this study gives an overview of EFL students' possibilities of difficulty appearing in Listening Class and provides recommended solutions to solve the problems.

#### **1.5.2 Empirical Significance**

This study reviews and contributes to the previous studies in the listening field. This research will provide information on how students can prepare and solve challenges or problems that occur before or in conducting listening classes.