

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a brief explanation of some theories that support the study. The theories are related to listening skills, types of listening, listening strategy, listening challenges, intensive listening courses, and studies of relevant research.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1. Definition of Listening Skills

Listening can be defined as receiving sounds through the ear, and listening involves the process of identifying speech sounds and processing them into meaning. Listening is not merely a passive reception of sounds; it requires the allocation of cognitive resources to filter out distractions, comprehend the semantic content, and retain information (Plain et al., 2020). In addition, listening is not just listening to sound but going through a complex series of processes. As Nurkhamidah (2020) mentioned, listening is a complex process because the listener needs to hear the words and interpret the speaker's speech simultaneously.

The process of listening requires paying attention to spoken symbols, comprehending, valuing, and interpreting them to gather information, comprehend the content, and interpret the speaker's meaning (Pakpahan & Simbolon, 2019). Moreover, according to Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016), listening is a process of receiving what the speaker says, making and showing meaning, negotiating meaning with the speaker and answering, and creating meaning through participation, creativity, and empathy. From some of the above definitions, it is clear that listening is not just listening but must go through a complex process so as to get a complete understanding.

Listening skills in a learning context refer to the ability to accurately receive and interpret spoken language, which is crucial for language development and effective communication (Hinkel, 2022). These skills encompass both passive and active listening, where students engage with various forms of spoken discourse, such as lectures, discussions, and interactive dialogues. The development of

listening skills is essential for learners to engage meaningfully with spoken language, and instructional practices have evolved to prioritize listening as a skill that requires active engagement and strategic processing (Goh, 2008; Aryadoust & Luo, 2022). Therefore, students must be involved in every learning process in the classroom in order to get an accurate understanding.

2.1.2. Types of Listening

Different kinds of listening are necessary for various purposes. According to Raju (2018), “the process of listening can be divided into various types based on the purposes of listening.”. The type of listening depends on the purpose.

1) Discriminative Listening

The human auditory process commences at birth and is referred to as discriminative listening. During infancy, the infant begins to differentiate between sounds. The ability to distinguish between animal and human voices is acquired through the analysis of auditory stimuli. During this process, the infant is unable to accurately interpret the contents of the sounds. The infant can become aware of human emotions through the listening and exploration of sounds.

2) Comprehensive Listening

Once an individual has acquired the ability to comprehend the meanings of words and messages, they are able to engage in comprehensive listening, which builds on the skills of discriminative hearing. The manner in which spoken words or messages are delivered may vary from one individual to another. The comprehension of language and messages is significantly influenced by the use of postures and gestures. Consequently, humans have developed the capacity to derive meaning from nonverbal cues in addition to the meanings of words and linguistic skills. Other terms used to describe individuals capable of comprehending information include "content listeners," "informed listeners," and "total hearers."

3) Critical Listening

In the process of critical listening, the listener is engaged in the assessment, determination, and formation of views regarding the material being read. In order to accomplish this, the listener must be capable of evaluating, contrasting, and/or

communicating the message in light of seven current laws, customs, organizations, knowledge, and other significant factors as they approach a breaking point. The listener may comprehend the message's intrinsic meaning. In order to determine whether the speech is true, the listener must first analyze its advantages and disadvantages. This analysis allows the listener to decide whether the speech is of excellent quality or otherwise, whether it is deserving of praise or criticism, and so forth. This process is also referred to as interpretive, evaluative, or judgmental listening.

4) Informational Listening

The practice of informative listening is a relatively common one. Every individual engages in information-seeking behavior on a daily basis, whether in an academic setting, a professional environment, or within the context of a family unit. This type of listening is primarily oriented towards the acquisition of knowledge and the reception of instructions. One of the most crucial elements of professional communication is the act of informational listening.

5) Appreciative Listening

In order to gain insight and understanding from the information presented, the listener must engage in a process of active listening. The information may be conveyed in a variety of formats, including songs, spoken passages, poems, scenes from plays, radio programs, television shows, or episodes. In this process, the value of the communication is of lesser importance than the listener's response. The quality of appreciation is primarily determined by the listener's personal preferences, desires, and dislikes rather than by the intrinsic value of the message itself.

6) Biased Listening

In contrast to the act of listening passively, this style of listening involves a predetermined viewpoint and a selective process of hearing and comprehending based on that viewpoint. It is, therefore, somewhat ironic that the listener's understanding of the speaker's words is not an accurate reflection of the actual content of the message but rather a reflection of the listener's own expectations. The listener anticipates the speaker's intended message and is consequently unable

to discern the actual content of the speaker's words. This outcome can be attributed to the listener's preconceptions or the presence of competing cognitive processes.

2.1.3. Listening Strategy

Listening strategy is one of the essential aspects that influence listening comprehension (Bao, 2017). The results show that students use learning strategies to develop their understanding of listening. The application of such strategies is crucial for effective learning. Each student has their own listening strategies to overcome their difficulties. Listening strategies can be classified into four main types: cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies (Bao and Guan, 2019).

1. Metacognitive strategies enable students to consciously engage in activities while listening to spoken texts. According to Rubin (1988), as cited by Erinta and Listiyani (2023), these include planning, monitoring, and evaluating one's listening process, which has been shown to significantly improve listening skills and awareness. Students often plan their listening activities and monitor their understanding during the process (Erinta & Listyani, 2023).
2. Cognitive strategies can help students directly in using language material. A cognitive approach is related to understanding and acquiring input in short-term memory or long-term memory. These involve skills like note-taking, translating, summarising, evaluating and checking the notes or answers, and managing emotions while listening (Bao & Guan, 2019)
3. Socio-affective strategies involve students interacting with others and controlling their emotions (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990, as cited in Prayogi et al., 2018). An example of this strategy is students practicing or learning together while exploring listening and giving each other feedback related to their progress when learning and listening together. Based on Gou and Guan (2019), social-affective listening techniques are used to get interlocutors' support in order to improve understanding and help pupils get over uncomfortable emotions like anxiety.

Based on the theory of listening strategies above, EFL students learn to hone their listening skills based on their own strategies or ways, adjusting to their habits and preferences. Listening strategies refer to the ways or techniques that listeners use to manage problems while engaging in listening activities; these strategies are very crucial to be learned on the part of learners to make their learning more effective and meaningful (Jyoti, 2020). They practice according to their preferences; some want to take notes on every English-related activity, including watching films and listening to music. Every activity may be linked to not only enhanced listening ability but also the others.

Furthermore, if learning media are available, listening learning will be more interesting, as the usage of media may encourage students' active engagement and assist with their focus (Naibaho, 2019). The use of media such as news broadcasts, films, songs, and audiovisuals will greatly help students improve their listening skills (Hardiah, 2019). The audio-visual aids can be used to help students become better listeners, increase their comprehension of the target language, pronounce words correctly and politely, and comprehend the course material (Dheghu et al., 2021).

2.1.4. Common Listening Challenges

Learning is frequently undervalued and thought of as the simplest activity, but once learned, it is not as simple as one may believe. Alzamil (2021), in particular, believes that listening is the most challenging English skill in the language classroom. These challenges are experienced by all EFL students at any academic level. During listening lessons in the classroom, there may be various problems encountered. Samuel (1984), as cited in Rakhman et al., (2019), there are two factors of listening difficulties. They are external and internal factors. External factors are factors that come from outside the learners usually come from the learning environment. Internal factors come from the listeners themselves.

Furthermore, the problems of internal and external can be classified into several categories. Based on Yagang (1994), as cited in Ranukadevi (2014), the problems in listening were accompanied by the four following factors: the

message, the speaker, the listener, and the physical setting. Beside Adi et al. (2022), the result of the study found that the problems encountered by EFL are unfamiliar words, long spoken text affects students' memory, a different accent, and speech rate. Furthermore, the study also classifies the student challenges into several categories.

1. Problems with the related listening material. Related to the problems they face is an unfamiliar word, which means that the students have vocabulary limitation problems. The students' may struggle to understand spoken language if they lack enough range of vocabulary, especially when encountering technical terms (Bahri et al., 2022).
2. Problems related to psychological characteristics, such as anxiety disorders, affect the majority of students. When students are anxious and unable to grasp the spoken material, they may feel panicked and lose interest in critical thinking. The students may panic when they fail to understand the spoken text, and their critical thinking becomes dull when they are anxious (Adi et al., 2022). As stated by Windamayanti et al. (2022), students are anxious about the listening comprehension lessons that are required in English classrooms.
3. Problems related to the listener: The pupils believed that their poor pronunciation prevented them from recognizing it. Hidayati et al. (2022) found that students perceive themselves to be unable to comprehend the information presented in the listening section due to the inappropriate pronunciation and excessive speaking speed of the speakers. Students find oral speaking challenging because spoken language differs from written language in form. It's important to remember what they just heard when they were listening, particularly from long spoken text. After listening to a set of words or sentences, the students will immediately forget what they listened to before (Rakhman et al., 2019). They must wait for the repeat and pay too much attention to the text they forgot when they forget what they've been listening to.

4. The problem related to the speaker is the delivery rate issue. It might be challenging to grasp what they are saying, notably if the speaker is native. The accents can sometimes be confusing for the EFL learners who do not use the different accents used by native speakers of English (Yahmun et al., 2022).

In addition, the physical setting dimension also affects listening comprehension, including the noise and distortion produced. Ali (2020) argued that “both background noises on the recording and noise from surroundings may distract the listener’s attention off the content of the listening passage.” As mentioned, the background noise can interfere with students’ ability to concentrate while listening or learning.

Furthermore, the quality of the audio recording plays a big role in the listening activity. The audio system in the listening classroom includes the sound system, microphone, and others. If one of those parts of equipment did not function properly, the students will find it difficult to understand what the speaker said (Diora and Rosa, 2020). Such as the presence of noise or unclear pronunciation, which can make EFL students not understand at all what has been conveyed.

It can be concluded that the listening class must have good listening skills because listening is not as simple as imagined. It is certain that EFL students face various kinds of difficulties, especially those that come from themselves and from outside. These challenges can be mapped into various aspects, such as problems related to listening material, psychological characteristics, listeners, speakers, and physical settings.

2.1.5. Intensive Listening Course

2.1.5.1 Definition of Intensive Listening

According to Rost (2011), as cited in Prasongnern and Soontornwipast (2023), intensive listening can be defined as the act of listening to a text with the specific intention of decoding its meaning for analytical purposes. On the other hand, Cecilia (2016) stated, “Intensive listening is a type of listening practice that

directs the attention of language learners to their language knowledge and requires them to note contrasts of language form, sound, structure, and lexical choice in the process of comprehension and interpretation of the aural input.”. Intensive listening is designed to improve listening proficiency by engaging learners with authentic language input, such as podcasts and recordings (Sarbunan, 2024). An intensive listening program generally denotes a specialized training program that is intended to enhance listening proficiency in a given language. It refers to the process of listening for precise sounds in words, phrases, grammatical units, and pragmatic units (Syarieвна & Atxamovna, 2020). Intensive listening forms the foundation for acquiring listening skills. According to Arono (2014), intensive listening involves focused activities that prioritize language element acquisition, including vocabulary, grammar, and the recognition of different accents.

2.1.5.2 Learning Objectives of Intensive Listening

The intensive listening course is available in the first semester of the English Education Department Faculty of educational sciences and teachers’ training in one of the universities in Tasikmalaya. This course is designed to enhance the listening skills of non-native English speakers. The emphasis is on finding out specific and detailed information from recordings of native and non-native English voices. This course provides several listening activities with various topics through Youtube, VCD, and radio recording. The students develop their skills through instruction and intensive practice. The goals of this course consist of getting detailed understanding of segments of the text, transcribing certain segments in the text, and note-taking to recognize the meaning of word(s), looking at certain grammatical structures in the text to see how they can aid comprehension, feeling independent listening to English, and using polite manners in responding to the interlocutors.

2.2 Study of the Relevant Research

The first study was conducted by Izzah and Keeya (2019). Common listening challenges: Indonesian EFL learners’ perceptions. This study aimed to identify the common listening challenges experienced by Indonesian EFL learners. The

research was practical, using descriptive methods of quantitative research. Subjects of the study were subsequently randomly chosen, of which EFL learners at even semesters became the representatives. In collecting data, the researchers used a self-structured questionnaire that refers to three primary categories: the listener, the passage, and the physical setting. The findings showed that distortions, lexis recognition, phonological awareness, complexity of the passage, and speech rate highlighted a high degree of response to common listening challenges.

The second study from Alzamil (2021) was conducted to determine whether 87 female Saudi university students encounter difficulties when learning to listen to spoken English. It was acknowledged that listening constitutes an essential component of both the acquisition of a new language and of day-to-day communication. To this end, data were collected via an online questionnaire. The findings indicated that the majority of participants identified speaking and listening as the most crucial skills to be acquired, yet they also perceived listening as the most challenging. Reading was perceived as the most effortless skill to learn, as well as the most commonly used, indicating that the frequency of use contributes to students' perceptions of the ease of learning a skill. Participants' difficulties with learning to listen to English were associated with speech rate, pronunciation, nervousness, limited vocabulary, and lack of background information. However, students also expressed positive attitudes towards improving their listening skills.

The third study from Yahmun et al., (2020) in their research aimed at describing difficulties faced by students in learning listening skills. This study involved seventeen female students and eight male students taking a basic listening course in one of the private universities in Malang, East Java. To gain the data, the researcher interviewed the subjects one by one. The findings were classified into several classes by referring to previous studies discussing listening difficulties in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes. The findings showed that there were four difficulties faced by the students. They were the speed and length of the spoken text, vocabulary, pronunciation, and accents.

Previous studies have identified similar challenges that EFL learners face. The focus of this study is also to find out the challenges faced by EFL students when listening. The previous study was focused only on finding the challenges that students faced, and the participants were a random sample of students in the English department. Furthermore, the differences in this study consist of the participants and the data collection. In contrast, the participants of this study were students from an intensive listening course, and the data collection used semi-structured interviews. The researcher will focus on investigating deeper listening challenges and EFL students' efforts to overcome the problems.