

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The listening skill is very important when we are learning a language. Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011), argued that listening is the process of comprehending speech and that it emphasizes the function of linguistic units such phonemes, words, and grammatical structures as well as the function of listeners' expectations, the setting and context, prior knowledge, and the subject. Listening is the most important skill for four other skills in learning listening. That is why listening skill is very important in a language because listening plays an important role in people's daily communication. Guo and Wills (2006) state "People acquire a significant amount of their education, information, comprehension of the world and human affairs, ideals, and sense of values through this medium". According to Tyagi (2013), listening skill is a key to receiving messages effectively. It is a combination of hearing what another person says and psychological involvement with the person who is talking. Anderson and Lynch (2003) state that "We only become conscious of the extraordinary listening feats we accomplish when we are in a foreign listening environment, like listening to a language in which we are not very proficient." In conclusion, listening has an important role both in daily life and in academic context as it is crucial for people to sustain effective communication. Emphasizing the importance of listening, Anderson and Lynch (2003) state that listening skills are as important as speaking skills because people cannot communicate face-to-face unless both types of skills are developed together. In comparison to reading, writing, and speaking, listening is considered to be significantly more difficult for FL/L2 learners since it needs interpretation, comprehension, assessing, and memory. As one of the most difficult language skills to learn, effective listening comprehension is likely to present significant challenges for EFL students.

Hamouda (2013) in his observation found that some university departmental syllabi focus more on English grammar, reading, and vocabulary than on listening; moreover, FL/L2 teachers typically pay more attention to teaching reading, speaking, and writing. The first or the common challenge that EFL students frequently encounter is catching the essence of speakers' talks that are given quickly. Students get a limited opportunity to hear the spoken material again in the meanwhile. Speech speed has been shown to make listening more difficult (Renandya & Farrel, 2011) in (Milliner, 2017). According to Bano (2017) in Fauzi & Angkasawati (2019), listening in a second language is similar to listening in a first language, despite the learners' limited proficiency in the target language. In addition, some major problems the learners experience in listening comprehension are cultural differences, accent, vocabulary, length or the speed of the language input (Bingo, Celik, Yidliz, & Mart, 2014) in (Fauzi & Angkasawati, 2019). Second, the diversity of accents and speech patterns among native speakers. Third, a lack of vocabulary proficiency to support the listening process for students. The students' limited opportunity to go back and examine the spoken information they missed comes last. A group of students has a solid grasp of understanding and a significant amount of language, despite cultural variations that frequently make the listeners feel uncomfortable. However, they are unable to understand various expressions and sentences due to cultural differences (Abdullah, 2015).

One of the way to improve the listening skill is by using task based learning in an EFL classroom setting. Task-based learning will require a more comprehensive approach between teachers and students where this method designs the learning environment for students to investigate authentic problems including deepening material from a lesson's subject and carrying out additional worthwhile activities. According to Brown in Flowerdew & Miller (2005: 14), this method asks students to listen to what are called "authentic" scenarios and "do something" with the knowledge. The phenomenon or issue found by researcher in this study is that many EFL students at the junior high school level are indeed difficult to understand listening especially before, they fully learn

through online learning because of covid-19 where it is more difficult for them to understand any material provided.

This research refers to the research studies that have been done previously by several researchers in various countries which use the same method and also use a questionnaire test in concluding the results of the research which focus to the students or teachers. The first research from Mohammad Hamad Al-Khresheh (2020) Hamad study about The influence of cultural background on Saudi EFL students' listening comprehension skills. From the research Hamad found that Saudi EFL students struggle greatly with listening comprehension, the majority of the participants (64.5%) said they were fair at English, the ability that was deemed to be lacking (51.6%) was listening. Additionally, the study revealed that just under half of the participants (64.5%) failed the diagnostic exam, Where In the perception phase, problems with concentration were mentioned more frequently than other issues. Parsing issues include a range of challenges with processing a wealth of new information quickly, guessing the correct meaning of words and phrases, and following unfamiliar topics. Despite their ability to grasp the words spoken, it was discovered that the individuals had significant trouble understanding the speaker's intended meaning throughout the listening comprehension test use phase. The second research from Hamouda (2013), Hamouda has investigated his research about Listening comprehension problems, from the result of investigation conducted by Hamouda it can be concluded that most students have problems understanding foreign words, the length of the spoken text, the speed of pronunciation or speed level, the various kinds of accents that are spoken, and also the lack of concentration during listening. The two studies will be a reference for researchers because this theme is very important to be used as research material that researchers will conduct in different places because the problems that occur in learning listening are most often encountered, so all research results from previous research can be a reference for researchers to find the right solution to this problem.

The gap found from previous study with this research is the lack of research that focuses on listening skills issues applied at the junior high school level for Indonesian EFL students, such as research conducted by Hamouda (2013), where the target of his research only focuses on students at the university, namely at Qassim University. Likewise, the research conducted by Hamad (2020) involved EFL teachers and a group of EFL students, whereas in this study the focus was more on involving students and only focusing on listening problems by considering three aspects, namely the listener, the passage, and the physical setting.

1.2 Formulation of the problem

Based on the background above, the formulation of the problem is “what are the challenges faced by Junior High School EFL students in learning English Listening?”

1.3 Operational definitions

There are three definition terms in this research:

1.3.1 Challenge in listening

When practicing listening skills, students must try to understand every word that is spoken, but if only to capture a message or special information that is important, they do not need to understand each word one by one. Still, if students have a lot of vocabulary, it will make it easier for them to practice listening skills. Difficulty in understanding spoken text compared to written text because the process of receiving messages in spoken text is shorter and faster than written text so that the message is interpreted by the listener. The challenges faced in this study were obtained from the perceptions of students at the Junior high school level, considering that previously these students were still lacking in listening comprehension, and with this research it would later become a task for teachers and researcher to find solutions.

1.3.2 Learning Listening

Listening activity is an activity that is always carried out by everyone in everyday life but for EFL student the ability of listening in English must be mastered because it will make it easier for students to understand everything explained by the teacher in English. Theoretically, listening comprehension is viewed as an active process in which individuals focus on particular aural input, such as the meaning of passages, and relate what they hear to prior knowledge. So in the context of this study, where from the results of students' choices that they filled out through questionnaires, apart from being able to find out the difficulties they face, researchers can also find out the extent of their ability to master listening skills. If foreign students are able to master and understand all the aspects like recognizing intonation and stress, recognizing various accents, colloquial vocabulary and hand the sound, this will make it easier for students to master listening skills. The purposes of listening can be divided into five categories: enjoyment, information, perception, comprehension, and problem-solving.

1.4 Aim of study

The purpose of this research is to find out the challenges faced by Junior High School EFL student in learning listening.

1.5 Significance of study

This research has significant benefits for every student and every English teacher, especially in the junior high school environment. Following with what the researcher has explained in the point "research objectives/aim of the study", where studying or improving students' listening skills can help and facilitate students in understanding everything their teacher conveys, and then to know every difficulty and challenge faced by each student will be an evaluation material to find the best solution for each teacher, especially to pay more attention to them and provide special services for students who have difficulty learning by listening, and for schools in general, to further develop each learning

facility, such as a multimedia room, if indeed constraints are faced in this regard. In this study the researcher also divided it into three points, there are:

1.5.1 Empirical

Empirical evidence that has been carried out in this study, namely that it can be seen from previous researches that states that compared to mastering other English skills, it is concluded that the process of understanding listening is a bit difficult, which is caused by several factors that the researcher have described in the previous points, so that with this research, researcher and EFL teachers can to find out every challenge faced by students during the listening process and also helps the teacher to pay more attention to the needs of students and be able to invite students to do activities that can develop their skills.

1.5.2 Theoretical

Theoretically, listening is a process of receiving, responding, and building meaning from verbal and non-verbal messages. Therefore, this research helps student's motivation in learning the understanding of this listening skill not only when they are in the classroom, when capturing explanations from the teacher, but also when communicating in English in their daily lives.

1.5.3 Practical

In order to increase the understanding of listening skills for students, especially at the junior high school level, it is necessary to have tests and listening exercises that must be carried out by EFL teachers. With the listening process carried out and the evaluation, the teacher can find out the difficulties faced by students, and this is the focus of this research so that there will be a solution to this problem.