



## AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES IN LISTENING COMPREHENSION: A STUDY AT SECOND SEMESTER STUDENTS OF MATARAM UNIVERSITY IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2022-2023

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**Abstract:** Listening is one of the skills of English. The study aims to identify external and internal difficulties experienced of second semester students in English at Mataram University and how the students overcome their difficulties. To gather research data, they are given questionnaire and interviews, using qualitative methods. The subjects of this research are second semester students. In which the results are analyzed based on the research questions that have been determined. The finding and discussion results of this study that most of students have difficulty in listening, then from the outcome of questionnaire and interviews, acknowledging that listening is very difficult to learn, such as material that is too long, requires full concentration while listening and responding to material delivered, the atmosphere around the classroom and audio quality, also how they are overcome their difficulties in listening comprehension.

**Keywords:** *External and Internal, Difficulties, Listening Comprehension*

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### INTRODUCTION

Students who are learning English must become proficient in the four key abilities of speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Listening is one of the language skills that students studying English must develop. If people wish to communicate effectively, meaningfully, and organically, they need to hear multiple forms of English frequently and continually. It is crucial to our daily lives. Listening is the previous English ability. A person cannot speak, read, or write if they cannot successfully complete the listening component. In a person's native language, listening comes naturally before speaking, (Nation, 2009). Listening is essential for learning a foreign language input, claims Hien (2015). Listening is a critical input skill for student's learning.

The process of listening is not easy. A listener must be able to differentiate between sounds, comprehend vocabulary and grammatical structures, recall them, and simultaneously interpret them. Similarly, according to Harmer (2013), who emphasizes how, speaking fluently depends on both the ability to process language and information as well as knowledge of language elements.

A pupil will undoubtedly encounter a learning obstacle when studying English. The greatest absence of student learning results can be attributed to these obstacles.

According to Wallace (2004) in Dewi Kurniawati (2015), listening is crucial because it helps people understand, learn, and communicate effectively with others. However, listening is a difficult skill to master. A person who listens well can differentiate between sounds, take in and comprehend vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intent, and simultaneously remember and interpret everything. People often find it challenging to learn listening due to a variety of factors, such as the presence of numerous English dialects, a lack of vocabulary and poor pronunciation, distractions, and the employment of the incorrect learning techniques. There are some accents that are difficult for us to comprehend when we watch English movies or listen to tourists talk. Lack of lexical knowledge in English and ignorance of when attempting to understand what the speaker is saying, our lack of vocabulary knowledge and pronunciation skills will undoubtedly be a barrier.

The purpose of researchers conducting research on second semester English students is to find out what are the external and internal factors of students' difficulties in listening so that they feel difficult with listening comprehension in their lectures. As well as from the difficulties faced by students is there a way from them to overcome difficulties in listening. Students as subjects have a significant part in strengthening their listening skills, in addition to the lecturer being aware of their students' challenges. How well pupils can identify and address their problems will determine how successful they are at listening.

## **RESEARCH METHODE**

### **Research Design**

The framework of the research methods and procedures that researchers select to perform a study is known as the research design. The layout enables researchers to focus on developing research techniques appropriate for the topic and set up their investigations for success. Researchers employ qualitative research techniques in this regard. By focusing on a detailed and in-depth description of the conditions in a context that is experienced (natural setting), about what actually occurs according to what is in the field, qualitative research aims to understand the conditions of a context.

### **Population and Sample**

Population refers to any information that draws a researcher's focus throughout a set period of time and space. Population and data are related; if there are many persons providing the data, then there will be many populations (Margon 2017). Students at Mataram University in the second semester of the academic year 2022–2023 made up the population of this study.

The sample is one of the traits that the population used for the study possesses. Additionally, the sample is drawn from a population that is actually valid and representative, meaning it can measure what should be measured (Sujarweni 2015). All of the second semester students will participate in this study.

## **Data Collection Procedures**

In this study, questionnaires and interviews were employed as research methods. The purpose of the questionnaire employed in this study is to categorize different listening issues. To validate and further explain the responses that students had provided on the questionnaire, interviews were held.

### **Questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a tool for gathering information about the learners' personal and general characteristics. In this study, closed-ended questions were employed, allowing participants to respond in terms of the main issue encountered by all students. This instrument was used to identify the primary issue that could potentially affect learning to listen. The researcher used the Hamouda (2013) questionnaire.

Descriptive analysis will be used to examine the questionnaire results in order to support the conclusions drawn from data from other sources. The questionnaire's results will be used to determine which pupils have trouble learning to listen. For the students' convenience, the questionnaire was written in both Indonesian and English.

### **Interview**

A typical interview involves asking open-ended questions to respondents in order to engage them in conversation and obtain information about a topic. Most of the time, the interviewer is a subject-matter expert who seeks to understand the thoughts of the respondents through a carefully thought-out and executed series of questions and responses. The interview topic addressed and was centered on student listening challenges and solutions.

The information gathered from the test and questionnaire will be expanded upon using the interview findings. The use of interviews will reveal the causes of the students' listening learning challenges as well as solutions. The students will inquire as to whether they experienced any listening issues and what circumstances, in this case when they responded to the questions, contributed to those issues. The researcher also discussed the methods used by

the pupils to deal with similar challenges in the future. Because the students inquired as to why they encountered challenges in a number of areas, the questions posed during the interview will be more in-depth.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter consists of research findings and discussion. The data that were collected and analyzed based on the determined research questions. The whole data were taken from students' questionnaire and interview.

The first instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. This questionnaire is used to obtain information about external and internal difficulties encountered by students in listening. This questionnaire consists of 21 statements. The first part contains two statements related to listening material. The second part contains 6 statements related to linguistic features. The third part contains four statements related to the speaker. The fourth section contains two statements related to concentration. The fifth section contains four statements relating to psychological aspects. Finally, the sixth section contains 3 statements related to physical arrangements. The answer given in this questionnaire is 4 (never, sometimes, often, and always).

The second tool used in this study is interviews. The purpose of the interview is to triangulate the information obtained through the questionnaire, to obtain data on how the listening difficulties identified through the questionnaire affect the student's understanding of listening, to gain information about the reasons behind other difficulty listening that affect the students' listening understanding. In addition, by giving students the opportunity to report in their own words, we can gain some insight into their understanding and attitude toward some of these difficulties, as well as what students do to address those problems.

This section aims to outline the results of the analysis of research data carried out by researchers based on research questions. First, the questionnaire results are related to the external and internal difficulties of students in listening, and the results of the interviews of several students are associated with the difficulty and problems experienced by each subject in understanding listening. Second, how students overcome their difficulties in understanding listening to the results of interviews conducted by researchers.

## **External Factors**

The external factors that make it difficult for listener to listen or understand spoken language, which below is based on the results of research data from the findings and their relationship with the theory of the research study.

The results of the study in listening difficulties related to the speaker (*part D in finding results*), showed that students felt difficulty with speakers speaking too fast, which caused them to not be able to concentrate on the intentions of the material delivered. In addition, they find it difficult to think about the material or words they have just heard, with class conditions that are sometimes not conducive due to external disturbances such as the noise of another class that has finished learning, making them not concentrate.

Based on the data results in listening difficulties related to the linguistic features, (*part B in finding results*), most students felt difficulties with the languages used by speakers, such as colloquial language and slang. Especially in the slang language that they still do not understand by thinking about the meaning of those words so they stop when listening activity takes place.

The student problems with the quality of the audio or other listening support tools (*part G in listening difficulties related to the physical setting*), such as headphones that only sound like the side small volume of audio, material describe by the speaker that sometimes made them unable to concentrate because of thinking about the meaning.

## **Internal Factors**

The internal factors that make students difficult to understand for someone that arise from the listener himself. Such as the limited and the lack of grammar knowledge possessed by the listener, physical condition, unable to concentrate for a long time, and several factors caused of internal factors.

Based on the results obtained by the researchers, students often find it difficult to listening materials. The material was too long and the speaker did not control the speaking speed so it was difficult for students to capture what they heard.

As a result, they quickly get bored and sometimes stop for a moment because they are lazy to listen again. Listening to the material and answering questions at the same time makes them unable to concentrate. Disruption from outside the classroom or inside the class because of the noise that collides with the sounds they hear when hearing the material makes them confused. In addition, students have difficulty with the accents used by the speaker with different vocabulary but the same meaning, sometimes the same pronunciation but different meaning.

From the explanation of the discussion above, based on the students' external and internal difficulties in listening comprehension, the most factors experienced by them are from the speaker, listener himself, materials, and quality of media. Based on the results of these findings, 4 factors were found to be the most dominant among other factors where in

the theory of Lynch (2010) in Arifuddin (2020), which states that there are 4 main factors that affect the ESP listening process: Listener, speaker, the content of message, and visual support.

### **How the Students Overcome Their Difficulties**

From research results through questionnaires and interviews, many problems students face when learning listening. Most of the problems they face are the minimum vocabulary they learn, the various accents used by speakers so that they find it difficult to understand the matter, and they feel distracted by the noise outside and around them that causes loss of concentration when listening to the material, whether it is listening, asking questions, or answering questions at the same time. Results from interviews that researchers collecting, there are ways the students can overcome those difficulties and improve them for their listening abilities.

#### **1. Watching English Video**

Nowadays, technology is becoming more advanced. In the midst of the millennial today, many accesses that we can visit to search for learning videos, as there are social media, now there are also those displaying short or long videos according to the duration they display to share knowledge to all audiences. Students often watch videos on YouTube or other social media to improve their English language skills, especially in listening. Here they can also hear differences from speakers who use various accents, have listening exercises displayed so that you do not need to buy cassettes, and listen to English-language songs.

#### **2. Listen to English Songs**

Listening to English-speaking songs can also improve our English skills. In addition to being able to listen, we can also learn from the video that displays the lyrics of the song that makes it easier for us to understand each word of the lyric of the songs. Also, we can know words that we do not know before because of the limitations of the vocabulary we have, so that in this way we understand and multiply the words we learn.

#### **3. Talk to Tourists**

Moreover, Lombok is a tourist area with many tourists who visit for holidays or travel there, maybe occasionally for us to play to the beach or to the other tourist attractions to learn to chat in English with tourists. We can immediately know and listen to what accents they use so we can distinguish and understand what they say, from the way the speaker is delivered by the tourists to improve the smoothness, accuracy, and clarity of the pronunciation so that we can understand the good and correct spoken pronunciation.

#### **4. Play Games and Chat Online in The App**

The times are changing with increasingly advanced and affordable technologies. To talk to strangers, we do not have to go abroad. There are several apps that users can use to chat with strangers anywhere and anytime. There we can chat through text, messages, phone, and video calls. In addition to adding friendship, we can also sharpen our English skills with a variety of languages they use, such as their accents. In addition, there are also some online games where we can chat with text messages, or enable audio while

playing games together. In the games, usually in the setting with English, this is also so that we can learn some vocabulary in the games.

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