STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS IN LEARNING LISTENING

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Abstract.

One of the English skills that the students have to be comprehended is listening. Listening plays an important role in learning English. This article describes on the answers about investigating into the students' perceptions regarding listening comprehension in English at Senior High School in Muhammadiyah Luwuk. It used descriptive qualitative and interview in collecting the data. The major problems emphasized by the students were dealing with listening skill is more difficult than other skill the teacher gave them the monotonous activities and the material too long (conversation and monologue) in learning listening. It made them feel hard to comprehend the meaning of the material. In addition, most of the students thought that the difficult in learning listening related with their feeling anxiety, unable to focus when answer and listen at the same time, poor quality of tapes recording, and unfamiliar words. Furthermore, students thought that learning listening was very difficult because of their memory problem in remembering the listening material, noisy surrounding, high speed of delivery text, and unclear pronunciation from the native speakers and the obstacles that many encountered in learning listening were lack of vocabulary.

Keywords: Learning Listening, Listening Comprehension, Students' Perception

A. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English has been becoming an obligatory subject in junior high school and senior high school and it is tested to establish the students' graduation in national examination. Even English becomes a general subject in university level. In English there are several skills that must be considered and learned to be able to master English well. Listening skill, speaking skill, reading skill, and writing skill are the skills that must be comprehended by the students. English learning is said to be active if the learning can cover the four skills, because they are very important in English subject.

Listening is one of component of the skills of possessed by someone when they have good interpersonal effective skills. An communication can be done by someone if they have the ability for listening. It is main thing that students must have if they want to establish effective communication. In addition. Rost (2011) explained that listening skill is vigorous ability. It means that listening can help the students to recognize the word close to them and is one of the needed position in building effective in communicating. Good comprehension in listening intends covering the skill to understand knowledge through listening activities or conveys the information

in written or spoken communication. There are several elements that necessary to be considered in composing the listening skill, namely accent, intonation, phonology, speech rate, hesitation, prosodic feature, and discourse structure (Buck, 2001).

Listening comprehensions is needed in learning activity in the classroom because it is supported the students' successes in learning English. This is in line with Rivers' (2006) statement that listening is an imaginative skill. It means that the students have to know the sound fall down on their ears, and catch the material, arrangement of words, fill in the blanks and so on. In addition listening is the procedure of accepting what the speakers say, composing and displaying meaning, converting meaning, answering and generating meaning during the learning process. In other hand, (Harmer, 2001) confirmed that listening could be useful and beneficial for students to manage the successful in communicating. To obtain good listening comprehension in English requires the students to enhance themselves with fundamental language knowledge, for example vocabulary, structure, pronunciation, phonology, and other language element. In learning listening, the students not only need to know basic language knowledge and understanding the different topics, but also they have to formulate listening method and technique (Sah & Shah, 2020). It can help them in thinking out of some obstacles that they will face in the learning listening process.

In relation to the explanation above, it can be concluded that listening understand oral

language. Listening can also be interpreted as the activity of accepting and answering verbal and nonverbal communication. In this case, the students need to manage with the speaker's choice of words, grammar and frequency in delivery. Furthermore, in learning process the students have to hear oral sayings, share the sounds, categorize the sounds into linguistics and non-linguistics unit and understand the information. All of the comprehension that must be possessed by the students, it has been explained by Buck, (2001) emphasized the difficulty of listening practice, in which the students have to apply an extensive diversity of information sources, linguistic and nonlinguistic, to illuminate quickly receiving data. Moreover, the function of linguistic skill in understanding the sounds, vocabularies, phrases, clauses and sentences of passage are interpreted in an objectively direct manner to produce the information (Nemtchinova, 2013).

Many problems found in English subject especially in listening comprehension. The students' problem are limited of stock of vocabularies, students rarely hear the native speakers and others. This statement was emphasized by Arnold, (2000). He commented on how listening induce students' concern, because of the tension it place on the students process enter quickly. In other hand, Ngwoke et al., (2022) investigated weakness of reputation of linguistic acquiring in England obtained that for intermediate students, listening was the proficiency in which the students suffered the highest complexity. The researcher thinks that, it also happen in

Indonesian students especially in students in Senior high school in Muhammadiyah Luwuk. Some of the problems it will appear to a number of students' perception in learning English subject especially in listening comprehension. In various manners it is no stranger that the students presume listening as challenging. It affects their willingness to learn listening.

Inan-Karagul & Yuksel (2014)stated that perception is somebody supposed about they learn to assess how their view toward using something, whether they agree or not about they learn. In line with Hong's explanation, Kaur et al., (2004) also mentioned that students' perception are students' opinion of interpretation toward something that occurred in teaching and learning process during in class and formed it with submissions or argument for the classmate or teacher to expand the learning activity. It can be conclude that the students had their own belief toward something that they catch form teaching and learning process and how they extend toward it.

In other hand, many students assume that listening is difficult and do not want a lot of self- introspection if they know that more than 50% problems with listening fail because of lack focus (Inan-Karagul & Yuksel, 2014). The students also cannot distinguish the accent of British and American, because sometime the sound heard by the students was different, so they are confused with the sound. Another problem that may influence to the students' comprehension in listening relates to their

skill, for example lack of vocabulary, unclear pronunciation, unable to understand natural spoken, do not understanding grammar, and confidence/concentration, and bad recording (Darti & Asmawati, 2017). The causing students' face the difficult are classified into several sources including difficulties connected to the listening text or listening task although doing activities in learning listening, and students' problems related to the methodology and technique that the teacher used. Therefore, it is the way to investigate the students' perception from the problem mentioned.

In this article provided some research that related with this research. Some of them, Graham (2006), Hamounda (2013), Hadijah and Shalawati (2016) who conducted the related research, they confirmed that the students' perception about learning listening is very complex, it can be seen from the difficulties they faced in learning listening. Maresta (2018) conducted a research entitled an Investigation of Listening Comprehension Problems. This research reports on the problems dealing with the students have low ability in listening, difficult in listening text and task. Rara Saraswaty, (2018) employed the research about An Investigation of Listening Comprehension Problems Encountered by Saudi Students in the EL Listening Classroom. It found that the problem faced by students were accent of native speaker, lack of concentration, anxiety, rate of speech, lack of vocabulary, and bad quality of recording. Sitti Hadijah (2016) carried out the research entitled

A Study on Listening Skills and Perspective to First Year Students at English Department of Academic Year 2015/2016. The research discussed about the students cannot complete the basic listening skill, and accent, uninteresting learning materials and pronunciation become the problems encountered when the students learning listening skill. Form the previous research, this article will argue about the students' perception toward learning listening at SMA Muhammadiyah Luwuk.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This research was employed in order to get information about the students' perceptions encountered in learning English especially in listening skill. The researcher applied descriptive qualitative design because it is called an interpretation method in order the research result are more concerned with the interpretation of data found in the field. Creswell (2014)suggested qualitative strategies have faith in text and image knowledge, have distinctive steps knowledge analysis, and draw numerous styles. Furthermore, the researcher analyzed the data, which are appropriate with the goal of this research in order to acquire the report about the perception of students in learning listening.

The first grade of the students in SMA Muhammadiyah Luwuk was the participant of this research. The researcher chose them because they have listening section whey they learn English subject. In conducting the research, the researcher applied purposive sampling technique in selecting the participant. It is one of the techniques to choose a participant that refers to the researcher's purpose to be delegated of given population (Gay, Geoffrey E. Mills, 2012). The first grade consists of two classes, A and B but in this research, the researcher only took one class of them namely class B.

In getting the data, the researcher used interview to gather information from the students related their perception in learning listening. Interview is purposeful interaction in which one person is trying to obtain information. In addition, interview is the way someone tried to take out the ideas and feeling about specific content another one had in their mind.

The Procedure of Research

The interview conducted in group between the researcher and the students to be interviewed in order to get detail data. In this session, the researcher provided some questions related with the goal of this research. The researcher took time depended on the students taking time. The researcher attended the students' class to ask them about their perception in learning English. The researcher used mobile phone to record the conversation between the students.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data found from interview, the researcher used interactive model of data analysis that proposed by (Miles and Hubberman, 1994). The activities in

analyzing data consist of data reduction, presenting data/data display, and drawing conclusion or verification. The data form interview was transcribed into transcription and sorted them into particular information. After that, the classified data were displayed on descriptive text. The last activities was taking conclusion from the data displayed based on the research question.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After following some procedures of data collection in the interview, the transcripts were examined by coding data into the perception data. The interview result revealed that some of the students think listening skill is very hard because they got some difficulties when they learn listening course. The following are the description of students' perception in learning English especially listening skill.

a. Listening skill is more difficult than other skill

From the students' responses in interview, it can be indicated that most of the students said listening is more difficult and challenging skill than speaking, reading, and writing. It is because listening has many things that need to be done at once. For example: the students are asked to answer the questions while they are still listening the material, summarize the material they have heard, or retell the material that has been recorded. This condition makes the students think listening skill is very hard to be understood. The description of the problem is illustrated as follows:

R: menurut kalian skill apa yang paling sulit dalam bahasa inggris untuk dikuasai?

S₁: kalau saya yang paling susah itu speaking dengan listening. Kalau speaking saya susah mengucapkan kata yang jarang saya baca, dan kalau listening itu susah karena kita disuruh menceritakan kembali apa yang sudah kita dengar. Wahh itu yang paling susah.

S₂: menurut saya itu skill yang paling saya tidak bisa itu listening. Kenapa? karena biasanya kalau listening itu kita disuruh menjawab pertanyaan yang pertanyaannya didengarkan lewat radio yang diputar pada saat itu juga. Jadi saya susah konsentrasi pada saat belajar. Nah sedangkan saya punya vocab sedikit jadi susah sekali saya menjawab soal itu.

 S_3 : iyah, saya rasa juga begitu, listening yang paling susah. Apalagi kalau suaranya radio kurang jelas ditambah dengan kita tidak tau apa artinya yang dibicarakan itu.

R: in your opinion, what is the most difficult skill in English to be mastered?

 S_1 : for me, the most difficulty skill are speaking and listening. In speaking I faced difficult to say the words that I rarely read, and listening is difficult because we are asked to retell what we heard before. That is the most difficult for me.

 S_2 : I think the skill I do not know is listening. Why? Because usually when listening activities we are asked to answer the questions which are the questions are listened to via radio played at the same time. So, I am difficult to concentrate while studying. Meanwhile, I have a few vocabularies, it is very hard for me to answer that questions.

S₃: yah I think so. Listening is the most difficult. Especially, if the radio's voice is unclear, and we do not know what are materials to be discussed?

b. Monotonous activity

The students were also asked to give their perception about the activities during the learning listening. The data from interview prove that the teacher often provides the same activity in learning listening, namely listening to dialogue. In pieces of interview below, some of students claimed that their listening activities in teaching and learning process were

monotonous. This activity influenced the students' interest in learning English especially in listening skill. The description is illustrated in the following transcription below:

R : bagaimana pembelajaran listening di kelas kalian?

 S_1 : biasanya mendengar percakapan antara 2 orang.

S₂ : kalo belajar listening itu pasti mendengar percakapan

 S_3 : iya hampir semua percakapan, jadi kita agak bosan

R : what do you think about learning listening in your class?

 S_1 : usually listen the conversation between two people

 S_2 : in learning listening definitely we listened the conversation

 S_3 : Yes, almost all the conversation, it made us feel bored

c. Materials (long conversation and monologue)

As a result, it was found the students said that sometimes the teacher give them conversation and monologue but it is too long for them. The length of conversation or dialogue becomes one of the students' reasons in difficulties to learn listening skill. The conversation make the students feel difficult to understand what the speaker said. This obstacle clearly showed that the long conversation or monologue could be one major problem interfere the students' listening comprehension because it distracted their focus. The detail description can be seen as follows:

R : kalau mata pelajaran bahasa Inggris ketika belajar listening, biasanya guru memperdengarkan apa?

 S_1 : biasa guru memberi percakapan untuk didengar tapi itu percakapan panjang sekali

jadi saya sudah tidak tau apa yang pembicara bilang.

S₂: biasa juga guru ba kase dengar kayak cerita begitu setelah itu kita disuruh untuk menceritakan apa yang dibicarakan.

R: in English learning especially in listening, what does the teacher usually teach? S_1 : the teacher gives us conversation in listening but it is too long, so I do not know what the speaker said.

 S_2 : usually the teacher also asks to listen the story after that we are asked to retell the story.

d. Feeling anxiety

When the students asked about how they felt when learning listening skill some of them said felt nervous. They were worried about not being able to understand the information from the materials that played by the teacher. The result of the research was proven by interview below:

R : apa yang kamu rasakan ketika kamu masuk di kelas untuk belajar listening?

S : saya merasa gugup. Hehehe

R : kenapa gugup?

S : saya takut kalau ditanya guru maksud dari percakapan tersebut, dan saya tidak tahu mau jawab apa.

R : what did you feel when you entered the classroom to learn listening?

S : I feel nervous. (laughing)

R : why did you feel nervous?

S: I am afraid if the teacher asked me what the meaning of the conversation and I do not know the answer.

e. Unable to focus when answer and listen at the same time

Some of the students mentioned that they are unable to concentrate when listening activities. It is caused when they listen the audio, they also have to answer the questions that have been provided at the same time. They did not have much time to think the best

answer to the questions given by the teacher. The students' utterance can be seen in interview below:

S₂: menurut saya itu skill yang paling saya tidak bisa itu listening. Kenapa? karena biasanya kalau listening itu kita disuruh menjawab pertanyaan yang pertanyaannya didengarkan lewat radio yang diputar pada saat itu juga. Jadi saya susah konsentrasi pada saat belajar. Nah sedangkan saya punya vocab sedikit jadi susah sekali saya menjawab soal itu.

S₂: I think the skill I do not know is listening. Why? Because usually when listening activities we are asked to answer the questions which are the questions are listened to via radio played at the same time. So, I am difficult to concentrate while studying. Meanwhile, I have a few vocabularies, it is very hard for me to answer that questions.

f. Poor quality of tapes recording

The quality of recording is one of the determinants of students' success in understanding the information conveyed. The recorder should be clear so that students can catch the meaning of the materials. Based on the result of interview with the students, it showed that the recording played by the teacher is not clear, it makes them confused with the material conveyed by the speaker. The following are the description interview with the student:

- S: iyah, saya rasa juga begitu, listening yang paling susah. Apalagi kalau suaranya radio kurang jelas ditambah dengan kita tidak tau apa artinya yang dibicarakan itu.
- S: yah I think so. Listening is the most difficult. Especially, if the radio's voice is unclear, and we do not know what are materials to be discussed?

g. Unfamiliar words

Unfamiliar words used by native speakers in conversation, monologue or short story influence the students' comprehension in catching information, especially the students who have limited stocks of vocabulary. It became serious problem in understanding and transferring information from material that had been delivered. From the result of interview the students stated that unfamiliar words become an obstacle in understanding the meaning of native speaker' said. The following are description in interview.

R: menurut kamu bagaimana pembelajaran listening di kelasmu?

S : ketika guru memutar audio yang akan kita dengar, hampir semua kata yang dikatakan oleh pembicara tidak perna saya dengar sebelumnya.

R: in your opinion, how is learning listening in your class?

S : when the teacher teaches us, she plays the audio that we will hear, almost all the words said by the speaker, I never heard before.

h. Memory problem

Remembering what the speakers said is one of the keys for the students to know the information conveyed. When the students forget what they have heard, it makes difficult to know the meaning of materials and to answer the questions correctly. So, it will take a lot of time to think again about the material presented. From the result of interview, it can be indicated that some of students faced difficult in remembering the material that has been delivered. The interview with students is clearly shown below:

- R: selain itu ada lagi kesulitan yang kalian hadapi ketika belajar listening selain dari kata yang kurang familiar, pengucapannya yang terlalu cepat atau kira-kira apa lagi?
- S₁: oh iyah masih ada, saya sulit ba hapal kata-kata yang sudah didengar sebelumnya, jadi ketika selesai audio diputar dan guru meminta saya untuk menceritakan kembali, saya bingung kak karena saya sudah lupa apa yang saya sudah didengar tadi.
- S₂: mungkin karena bahasa inggris yang didengar, jadi saya susah sekali ba ingat katakatanya kak, mungkin kalo bahasa Indonesia saya masih bias paham. Hehehe
- R : Beside the problems that you mentioned before, is there any other difficulties you get when learning listening except from unfamiliar words, the pronunciation is very fast, or what else do you think?
- S_1 : yeah, it is still there, I have a hard time memorizing the words I heard before, so when the audio was finished and the teachers asked me to tell it again, I was confused because I had forgotten what I had heard earlier.
- S_2 : maybe it because of I had heard English, so I was hard to remember the words, may be if in Indonesian language I can still understand. Hehehe (laughing)

i. Noise around

Another obstacle connected with listening skill was noise around. When the condition classroom is noisy, the students will find difficult to concentrate on listening material. In this case, the teacher has to prepare the room well if the teacher wants to teach listening skill. Based on the students' interview, it can be concluded that they are very disturbed by the noisy situation around them, it makes them not focus on listening to the audio played and it was really disturb their concentration. The interview result can be seen as follows:

R: apa yang membuat kamu tidak fokus dalam latihan mendengar?

S₁ : ruangan yang ribut, karena kita latihan listening di kelas kita bukan kayak di

lab begitu, jadi teman-teman yang di luar kelas itu ribut, jadi suara di audio jadi tidak jelas.

S₂ : iyah betul itu, kadang kita sudah belajar listening dan itu rekaman sudah diputar, teman yang diluar sengaja berteriak. Jadi kita tidak konsen dengan ini pelajaran.

R : what make you not focus in listening practice?

S₁: the room is noisy, because we practice listening in our class not in lab. So, our friends in outside the class are noisy, so the sounds in audio are not clear.

 S_2 : yes, that is true. Sometimes we have learned listening while the recording has been played, our friend in outside deliberately screams. So, we are not concerned with the lesson.

j. High speed of delivery text

From the interview with the student, the researcher found that the rate speech refers to speed of native speaker said is very fast, so they cannot catch what words they produce. This result was proved in piece of interview below:

R: menurut kamu pelajaran listening itu sulit atau tidak?

 S_1 : sangat sulit

S₂ : sulit sekali

 S_3 : sulit

R : kenapa bisa sulit kalau belajar listening?

S₃ : yang berbicara itu cepat sekali, jadi saya tidak tau apa yang dia bilang.

S₁ : kalo saya itu susah listening karena saya punya kosa kata sedikit yang saya tahu.

S₂ : sulit karena apa yang pembicara katakana itu terlalu cepat, terus kata-kata yang dia bilang itu seperti saya belum perna dengar sebelumnya.

R : in your opinion, are listening difficult or not?

S₁: very difficultS₂: very difficult

S₃ : difficult

R: why is difficult to learn listening?

 $S_3\;$: the speaker is very fast, so I do know what she /he said

- S₁: for me it is difficult because I have few vocabularies that I know
- S₂: it is difficult because what the speaker said was too fast and the words the speaker said I never heard before.

k. Unclear pronunciation

The next perception related to learn listening was unclear pronunciation. The students' acknowledgement that sometimes some words had similarities pronunciation. It could be seen from how the words spoken, written and the meaning contained. It made the spoken words become obscure and difficult to be heard. The interview with the students is clearly shown in the following description below:

- R: selain hambatan tadi yang kalian katakana, kira-kira ada lagi yang kalian mau katakana terkait pembelajaran listening?
- S₁: pengucapan dari native speaker itu tidak jelas menurut saya. Ada kata yang artinga beda tapi pengucapannya itu hampir sama.
- R : besides the obstacle you said earlier, is there anything else you want to say related to learning listening?
- S_1 : in my opinion, the pronunciation of the native speaker is not clear. There are words had different meaning but it is pronounced almost same.

The transcription above proved that unclear pronunciation was the obstacle the student in understanding the meaning of what the native speaker said. Another perception of learning listening also found in relaxed interview below:

S₂: kata-kata yang mungkin agak sulit untuk didengar itu yang mengandung huruf R. contohnya kata here and heir, atau kata right and write. Itu kalau didengar akan sulit untuk membedakannya, jadi kita harus tahu konteksnya apa.

 S_2 : the words that might be bit difficult to hear are containing the letter R. for example the word *here* and *heir*, or the word *right* and *write*. If we hear it, it will be difficult to distinguish it, so we have to know the context before.

1. Lack of vocabulary

Lack vocabulary is the common problem in learning English especially listening skill. The students' skill in comprehending native speaker speaking and their teacher's speaking in the classroom are frequently caused by limited word mastery. From the interview some of students are not able to catch the words from the speaker said. The interview with the students was represented below:

- R: menurut kamu, dalam belajar listening hal apa yang paling penting siswa harus kuasai?
- S₁ : harus punya kosa kata yang banyak tapi kalau listening kosa kata yang saya kuasai hanya sedikit
- S₂ : yang pertama itu kosa kata, kalau kita punya kosa kata banyak pasti kita cepat mengerti apa yang dimaksud.
- S₃ : menurut saya, kosa kata juga yang penting kalo kita belajar bahasa Inggris. Tapi biasanya kalau sudah belajar listening, saya tidak tahu artinya kata yang diucapkan oleh si pembicara
- R: in your opinion, in learning listening what is the most important thing the students have to master?
- S_1 : we must have a lot of vocabulary but for listening I only master a few vocabularies
- S₂: the first is vocabulary, if we have a lot of vocabularies; we quickly understand what the speaker meant.
- S_3 : in my opinion, vocabulary is also important if we learn English. But usually when I learned listening, I do not understand the meaning of the sentences employed by the speakers.

In this research all the data about students' perception were obtained from the interview with students. From interview with several

students, it can be concluded that they view listening as an important aspect, because it can facilitate them to learn English. In other hand, the students stated that they found problems in learning listening. As result it makes the fail to understand the materials.

From the result of analysis data from interview, the researcher found several opinions of students about learning listening. They are listening skill is more difficult that other skill, monotonous activity and the long conversation and monologue. As they stated in the interview, some of students gave their perceptions about learning listening. They said that when the teacher taught them, the teacher gave the same activity in every meeting such as listening the conversation or monologue. In addition, the students feel the material that given by the teacher was too long conversation, so that they had difficulty in understanding the meaning conversation. In other hand, feeling anxiety, unable to concentrate when answers and listens at the same time, and poor quality of tapes recording were also becomes the students' opinion when they learn listening skill..

The data found from the students' interview related to the previous research that was conducted by (Darti & Asmawati, 2017). In addition, this research had additional findings about students' perception toward learning listening, namely unfamiliar words, memory problem, noise around, high speed of delivery text, unclear pronunciation and lack of vocabulary. All the problems made the

students difficult to catch and understanding the information from the material presented

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the result and discussion about students' perception toward in learning listening, some conclusion could be drawn. There are twelve students' perceptions about learning listening, namely, listening skill is more difficult than other skill, monotonous activity, the long material (conversation and monologue), feeling anxiety, unable to focus when answer and listen at the same time, poor quality of tape recording, unfamiliar words, noise around, high speed of delivery text, unclear pronunciation, and lack of vocabulary. From the findings in this research, listening is one of difficult skill for students to learn as foreign language. They need to study hard in learning listening because it is one an important skills because it provides the students in good communicating in their daily life.

Based on the result of the research, the researcher found several perceptions from the students about learning listening skill. This article suggested some things to consider both teacher and students. The following are the significances of this paper:

 This research is expected to provide useful information or reliable references for teacher and students in order to be used for enhancing information about students' perception in learning listening skill. In addition, these finding of this research were expected to give contribution to other researchers who wants to investigate the

- teacher, the result of this research can be used as a references or reflection about their performance in teaching listening.
- 2. This research is important for teacher and students as an input on for learning listening skill, so that it will be effective.
- further problem studied. and meaningful.
 For students, this research can enhance their listening outcomes, not only in listening but overall, in English lesson.

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