
Analyzing Students' Ability on Listening Comprehension

¹Maria Safriyanti, ²Atni Prawati

¹Universitas Riau, Jl. Bina Widya Panam, 28295, Pekanbaru Indonesia

²Universitas Riau, Jl. Bina Widya Panam, 28295, Pekanbaru Indonesia
maria.safriyanti@lecturer.unri.ac.id

Abstract. *Listening Comprehension* plays as one of the important skills in language learning for EFL students at Universitas Riau. This research aimed to describe how far the English Education Study Program students' ability on listening comprehension, especially their skill in writing summary based on the native speaker's oral speech. This study used the descriptive research with qualitative approach and focused on the content analysis. The researcher took the data based on the students' group activity in writing summary through listening comprehension. The data was analysed by measuring their ability on summary writing criteria; *main idea, details, order, paraphrase, and conventions*. The result showed that most of students were able to write their comprehension on main idea. However, they faced difficulties in writing the detail and the regular information they got through the listening audio. They were able to write by using their own words on the summary, and also, they used the good spelling, grammar, conventions on the sentences. The students' ability results on listening comprehension have indicated that they have to have the strong motivation, more practices, and deep knowledge to improve their listening comprehension.

Keywords: Students' Ability, Listening Comprehension

1. Introduction

Listening is one of the English skills that needs some considerations by the learners to comprehend the speech performance, especially while learning it. In learning a listening, the learners involve the process of internalizing meaning from the auditory signals being transmitted to the ear and brain and then producing their listening comprehension in the form of spoken or written response. According to Brown (2004) there are four basic types of learning listening. The learners have to considered about the ability of speech sounds recognition, the ability to determine simultaneously the type of speech event, the ability of using linguistic decoding skills and the ability to delete the exact linguistic form in which the message was originally received in favour of conceptually retaining important or relevant information in long-term memory. In addition, while learning listening, in term of final result on the comprehension level, the learners should focus on the speech's performance of surface structure elements, a pragmatic context understanding, determining meaning of auditory input, and a comprehensive understanding.

Therefore, in the University level, especially at Universitas Riau, listening comprehension has become the important subject at English Education study program. The students have to learn listening comprehension for three semesters. (listening I, II, III). In learning listening comprehension, the students are going to face the challenge and the obstacle to achieve the final goal of learning it. The students have to focus on speech sounds recognition, the identification of speech event type, the use of linguistic decoding skills, and the exact linguistic form deletion toward speech performance. However, the learners also face difficulties in listening comprehension. These have been caused by some factors in learning an English listening. Brown (2001) brought some sources from (Dunkel 1991; Richards 1983; Ur 1984) about eight characteristics that made listening difficult. They are clustering, redundancy, reduced forms, performance variables, colloquial language, rate of delivery, stress, rhythm, and intonation, and interaction. All characteristics have to be understood by the learners if they want to achieve their listening comprehensively. In other words, both challenge and obstacle

should be part of listening learning process but the learners require a systematic training in listening comprehension in order to be able to achieve the goal. Exploring Personal Reading Histories is useful for English Study Program (Delfi et al, 2017).

Furthermore, the writer tried to show some researches that related to how importance of learning listening comprehension and what difficulties faced by the learners in their listening. Afrianto (2019) In the context of English Language Teaching in Indonesia, speaking skill is often used as the main indicator of seeing the success of an English learner. People would tend to judge someone as a good English user if he or she can communicate orally. The same tendency also happens in many Indonesian based industries which would normally assess a candidate's English proficiency by conducting an English interview as one of the important stages in recruiting new employees. They focus more on speaking skill, not other skills. Nobuko Osada (2004) stated that the process of listening is highly complex so it requires the knowledge and skills simultaneously. It means that someone must comprehend the text performance while listening, keep the information in memory, interpret and integrate the meaning that listened, and decide his understanding continually in the light of prior knowledge and incoming information. Tiffany P. Hogan, Suzane M. A, and Crystle N. A (2014) found that listening comprehension became the dominating influence on reading comprehension starting even in the elementary grades. They said that listening comprehension became a complex skill. In the process of learning, the students had to involve the cognitive and linguistic processes. Language influences on listening comprehension included vocabulary, background knowledge, and inferencing, among others. Also, Hamed azinia, Hossein. S, and Vahed. M (2017) showed their research result that instruction in listening comprehension that received through process-oriented approach was more effective than instruction in the product-oriented approach. It indicated that the listeners were more active during the process the process of listening comprehension. It can be concluded based on the researches' result above that in learning of listening comprehension, we involve the knowledge and skills to understand the invisible and auditory text performance, and we have to follow the listening learning processes in order to get the effective comprehension among oral messages performances.

Based on the researches above, the researcher has done the research related to the students' ability of English education program at Universitas Riau on listening comprehension. The researcher aimed to describe about how far the students' ability in comprehending listening through their response on some ability aspects of stating the main idea, delivering all important details information, arranging and choosing their own words coherently and cohesively, using linguistic convention.

2. Method

This research used descriptive research with qualitative approach and focused on the content analysis. According to Gay (1992:217) descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. Referring to this research, the researcher used the students' documentation of listening exercises (group's summaries on talk) as the data to describe how far their ability in comprehending 'talk' they heard. There were 39 students and they were into 13 discussion groups at the 3rd semester of English Education Study Program, Universitas Riau. Each group consisted of three students. They were asked to listen 'talk' for three times. After listening it, each group was asked to write some important words inside the clustering form. Then Every student in each group had to write the important words he/she heard inside the clustering form. After that, each of them had to discussed about their comprehension towards 'talk' based on their clustering words they wrote. Then, they were instructed to decide the final comprehension by writing it through their group's summary task. The students' groups were coded based on the student's group number 1-13 and their score points.

The researcher analysed the data (13 groups' summary writing task) based on five criteria of main idea, details, order, paraphrase, and conventions. The students' group summary writing task through their listening comprehension results were analysed qualitatively based on their score point by using the scale of **4** for excellent, **3** for good, **2** for below average, **1** for ineffective.

3. Result and Discussion

In the process of doing the research, the researcher used her students who took the *listening comprehension III* subject. There were 39 students. They were divided into 13 groups and each group had to work together to overcome or to get detail summary writing of listening 'talk' on certain topic. Each group was guided to listen directly through the listening audio and at the end of the listening process, they had to write their summary task in order to know how far their ability in comprehending 'talk' They were guided to follow the instructions as follows:

1. You are working on 13 groups of three persons for each
2. You are going to listen the 'talk' about certain topic
3. You are going to listen for three times
4. Please listen once carefully!
5. After listening it, write the important words inside the clustering form you had personally!
6. Then, try to discuss about some important words you caught by conveying into sentences or statements!
7. Listen again about the 'talk' to get the information clearer!
8. Please discuss and decide about your group final comprehension by writing a summary based on a 'talk'!
9. Present the summary result in front of other groups!
10. The lecturer will direct the discussion to get the complete comprehension and conclude the result.
11. At the end, listen again to clarify the comprehension you wrote in each group!
12. Based on the questions above, the results of the students' opinions on literary response writing can be shown below:

Based on the instructions above, the results of the students' summary writing on listening comprehension can be shown below:

Table 1: Students' Group Summary Tasks on Listening Comprehension Results

| NO | GROUP NUMBER | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | TOTAL |
|----|--------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|
| 1 | I | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 12 |
| 2 | II | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 15 |
| 3 | III | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 13 |
| 4 | IV | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 17 |
| 5 | V | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 15 |
| 6 | VI | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 13 |
| 7 | VII | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 13 |
| 8 | VIII | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 15 |
| 9 | IX | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 13 |
| 10 | X | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 13 |
| 11 | XI | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 14 |
| 12 | XII | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 18 |
| 13 | XIII | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 13 |

Explanation:

1. Main Idea
2. Details
3. Order
4. Paraphrase
5. Conventions

Referring to the data results above, it showed that there were **2** groups got 4 (**excellent**) in writing *main idea*, and **11** groups had 3 (**good**). There were 8 groups got 2 (**below average**) and 5 groups got 3 (**good**) in writing *details*. 2 groups had 4 (**excellent**), 4 groups had 3 (**good**), 7 groups had 2 (**below average**) for *order*. For writing *paraphrase*, all groups got 3 (**good**). Only 1 group got 4 (**excellent**), 10 groups got 3 (**good**), and 2 groups got 2 (**below average**) in using English *conventions*. Based on the data description, it indicated that most of students in each group were be able to write their main ideas easily. Unfortunately, less students' group had the ability in writing detail proofs on their summary. However, the students' group had less skill of arranging the information coherently and cohesively. They wrote summary in limited information and some wrote the ideas in randomly order. Furthermore, all groups were able to write summary by using their own words. Lastly, only few groups had some errors in spelling, grammar, and other conventions.

Nevertheless, the researcher found some factors about the described data results. Based on the direct interviews done during the listening learning process toward five criteria in writing summary task, all students said that they were easy to write the main idea because they only focused on the first and the second sentences of delivered 'talk' and they were able to comprehend some important words because the words were familiar in use for the topic. So the familiar words could help them to decide the best main idea on their group summary. However, most of students' group found difficulties in writing detail information to support the main idea. this occurred because they faced difficulties in speed of speech, 'strange' words and expressions, unclear speaker's pronunciations, less concentration, and bad quality of the audio recording. These factors affected their ability in comprehending the next information they got. Fortunately, most of them had no significant difficulty in using their own words and had no troubles in using spelling and grammar.

Furthermore, there were some researches that showed us in learning listening comprehension. They found some problems during the listening activities. According to Arafat Hamouda (2013), he did the investigation on listening comprehension problems at Saudi Arabian's students in listening classroom. He found that the students faced some difficulties in listening comprehension on some factors; speaker's pronunciations, speed of speech, insufficient vocabulary, speaker's different accent, lack of concentration, anxiety, and bad quality of recording. These problems affected their comprehension. Again, Abbas. P. G and Narjes. B. S (2016) found that students, in English language learning in Iran, had critical difficulties in listening comprehension because universities and schools paid more attention to writing, reading, and vocabulary. Then, the research done by Darti and Andi (2017) showed that the difficulties faced by listening comprehension students occurred on some factors; listening material, listener factor, and physical setting. So, they said that the teacher should adapt and improve listening material, activate students' vocabulary, give the students' variety of accent, improve their pronunciation, building students' knowledge about the topic, give some strategies, and always motivate students. It can be concluded that while students learn to comprehend an English listening, they have to have the strong motivation, practice, and knowledge to achieve the target they expect

4. Conclusion

Based on the previous result and discussion, it can be concluded that most students have had the ability in writing their comprehension on main idea. They still have to focus on some problems they have faced while listening the oral speech, to improve their ability in comprehending among the accent, the pronunciation, the full concentration, and to use the effective strategies in term of listening comprehension achievement.

Thus, this research is limited on the students' ability descriptions on listening comprehension at English Education Study Program, Universitas Riau. So, it cannot be used as the generalisation for another listening comprehension learning condition. Therefore, the researcher should do the further research to find out the effective learning experience especially in listening comprehension.

References

- Azizinia, Hamed., Hossein. S., & Vahed. M. (2017). A Study on English Listening Comprehension Improvement via Product-Oriented vs. Proces-Oriented Tactics: The Case Study of Shiraz EFL Learners. *International Journal of Research in English Education*, 22-31.
- Afrianto D, Fakhri R, Novitri and Clara P A 2019 Factors Contributing to Speaking Anxiety: A Case Study of Pre-Service English Teachers. *Journal of Educational Sciences* Vol. 3 No. 3 (Sept, 2019) 412–422
- Brown, H. Douglas. (2004). *Language Assesment*. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- (2001). *Teaching by Principles*. New York: Pearson Education Inc.
- Darti & Andi Asmawati. (2017). Analyzing Students' Difficulties toward Listening Comprehension, 3 (02), 211-228. <http://journal.uin-alaudin.ac.id>.
- Delfi, S, Diah F.S, Safriyanti M (2019) Reading Experiences on Exploring Personal Reading Histories of English Study Program Learners of University of Riau. *Journal of Educational Sciences* Vol. 3 No. 3 (Sept, 2019) 303-317
- Gay, L.R & Peter Airasian. (1996). *Educational Research*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc
- Hamouda, Arafat. (2013). An Investigation of Listening Comprehension Problems Encountered by Saudi Students in the EL Listening Classroom. *International Journal of Academic research in Progressive Education and Development*, 2, 113-155.
- Osada, Nobuko. (2004). Listening Comprehension Research: A Brief Review of the Past Thirty Years. *Dialogue*, 3, 53-66.
- P. Gilakjani, Abbas & Narjes. B. S. (2016). Learners' Listening Comprehension Difficulties in English Language Learning: A Literature Review. *English Language Teaching*, 9 (6), 123-133.
- P. Hogan, Tiffany, Suzanne. M. A & Crystle. N. A. (2014). On the Importance of Listening Comprehension. *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 16 (3), 199-207.
- Rost, Michael. (1990). *Listening in Language Learning*. United Kingdom: Longman Group.
- Response Writing Rubric. <http://summary-writing-score-rubric.pub>. Retrieved on August 2019.