

## STUDENTS' LEARNING STRATEGIES IN LISTENING CLASS

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### ABSTRACT

Most of students think that listening comprehension is not an easy activity to do. The problems because of the students' levels in English proficiency. The level of students can have significant role when they listen to long parts and keep all information in their mind (Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yidliz, and Tugrul Mart, 2014). So many problems were found when they faced listening class; the study found that the students' problems were the quality of recorded material and the length and speed in listening. The students' strategies that the researcher found were storing and memory process and self-evaluating. There are only 4 students, out of 5, who used the listening learning strategies. The students have to interest listening comprehension. The researcher also found that students' learning strategies can help the students to solve their problems in listening class.

**Keywords:** *Learning strategies, listening problems, listening comprehension*

### INTRODUCTION

In our country, listening as a part of English subject has been taught in vocational high school. Although English teacher has taught listening many times, but there are many learners who have problems in improving their listening skill. Listening comprehension is regarded as a complex, interactive process in which listeners are involved in a dynamic construction of meaning (Hamouda, 2013 as cited in Rost, 2002). From the theory above, the students must hear and understand the meaning of spoken speaker.

Listening is considered to be neglected in language teaching. The students have problem in catching unfamiliar sounds, so they did not understand the meaning of the content in listening comprehension.

According to Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016) as cited in Brown & Yule (1983) the most problems that are also faced by the students are: quality of recorded material, unfamiliar vocabulary, background of students, length and speed in listening, and accent. Hamouda (2013) emphasized that comprehending speech is a very difficult activity for students. Learners face a lot of problems when they listen to a language. If teachers are expected to assist learners to improve their listening comprehension, they should comprehend their listening difficulties in understanding spoken passages. From the students' problems above the problem focused on vocabulary and understanding the meaning. The recent study would like to find out the students' problems in listening and the students learning strategies.

Goh (2000) said that "it is very important to teach listening strategies to students and before doing this, teachers should increase learners' knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and phonology". To help facing the problem of listening lesson the students must get appropriate language learning strategies that only focused on their knowledge of listening comprehension. The strategies can be thought of as the way in which a learner approaches and manages a task. There are 2 strategies in listening class; the first strategies stated by Kusumayanthi (2013) as cited in Serri and Boroujeni (2012) divided language learning strategies into three main categories, namely: metacognitive strategies,

cognitive strategies, and socio/affective strategies. The second strategies stated by Richard as cited in Buck (2001); He suggested two kinds of strategies in listening: cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies.

Those strategies will help to solve the listening problem in this research paper, the writer would like to find out the problems faced by students and to find out their strategies in listening class.

### **Learning Strategies**

According to Richard as cited in Buck (2001) there are two kinds of strategies in listening comprehension, there are cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies.

#### ***Cognitive strategies***

The comprehending and storing input in working memory or long-term memory related to mental activities for later retrieval. In the cognitive strategies there are comprehension processes, using and retrieval processes, and storing and memory processes.

- a. Comprehension processes: Associated with the processing of linguistic and nonlinguistic input.
- b. Using and retrieval processes: Associated with accessing memory, to be readied for output.
- c. Storing and memory processes: Associated with the storing of linguistic and nonlinguistic input in working memory or long-term memory.

#### ***Metacognitive strategies***

Those unconscious and conscious mental activities perform an executive function in the management of cognitive strategies. In the metacognitive strategies there are monitoring, self-evaluating, self-testing, and assessing and the situation.

- a. Monitoring: Determining the effectiveness of one's own or another's performance after engaging in the activity.
- b. Self-evaluating: Determining the effectiveness of one's own or another's performance after engaging in the activity.
- c. Self-Testing: Testing oneself to determine the effectiveness of one's language use.
- d. Assessing the situation: Taking stock of conditions surrounding a language task by assessing one's knowledge, one's available internal and external resources, and the constraints of the situation before engaging in the activity.

### **Listening Comprehension**

According to Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016) as acited in Brown & Yule (1983) listening comprehension means that a person understands what he/she has heard. If she/he learns the text through hearing it, she/he will understand it. The person who understands the meaning from what they hear and understand. The conclusion reached in a recent study (Nadig,2013) was that listening comprehension is the various processes of understanding and making sense of spoken language. That included knowing speech sounds, understanding the syntax of sentences, and comprehending the meaning of individual words. Listening not only focused on what they hear but they must understand and know the structure of spoken language.

### **Learning Problem in Listening**

According to Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yidliz, and Tugrul Mart (2014), there are five difficulties that learners may encounter in the listening comprehension. First, quality of the recorded material. This problem can give impact to the students' comprehension in

listening for example; the teacher uses some recorded materials that do not have high quality. Second, cultural differences. The students should be familiar about the cultural knowledge because that can give significant effect on the students understanding. Third, accent can give serious problems and effect for the students in listening comprehension for example; for the first time the students hear Indian English accent but in their listening class they only hear American English. Fourth, unfamiliar vocabulary; a lot of words have more than one meaning and if they are not used appropriately in their appropriate contexts, students will get confused for example if students know the meaning of words, this can arouse their interest and motivation and can have a positive impact on the students' listening comprehension ability. The fifth; length and speed of listening, it is very difficult for lower level students to listen more than three minutes long and complete the listening tasks, short listening passages is easier to comprehend for learners and reduce their tiredness, for example if the speakers speak too fast, students may have serious problems to understand the words.

## **METHOD**

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method in order to find out the students learning strategies especially the problem faced by students in listening test for vocational high school. The qualitative study was chosen in order to observe the process of verbal questioning in classroom (Meriam, 2009). Creswell (2009) also pointed out that qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning of individuals or group as social or human problem. (p.22)

Five students were participating in this current research (3 females and 2 males) second grade accounting students in vocational high school in Cimahi.

The instruments of the research were questionnaire, interview and classroom observation. They are taken into account to find out the problems that the students face in listening class and the strategies that the students use to solve the problems.

### **Instruments**

#### ***Questionnaire***

The researcher distributed the students' questionnaire of 5 students in XI AK, the questionnaire was given on October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018. The researcher gave the research questionnaire in a single meeting. The questionnaire is divided into 20 categories, namely students' problems and students' strategies.

#### ***Interview***

The interview is used to know the students' problems and strategies in listening class.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This part discusses findings of the research which are analyzed and discussed to interpret the data. It consists of findings and discussion.

### **Students' Problem in Listening Class**

The questionnaire consists of 10 subject questions which are included in students' problems in learning listening in the class. There were 10 questions in this questionnaire. The students who participated in this research were 5 students from class XI. The tables below divided every questionnaire one by one. The answers choices from the questionnaire below are 4 choices such as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The students' problems are presented in the following table:

Table 1. The students' problems in listening class

Number of Questions	Number of Answers				Number of Students
	SA	A	D	SD	
1		5			5
2		4	1		5
3	1	3	1		5
4		5			5
5		3	2		5
6		3	1	1	5
7	1		4		5
8			5		5
9		4		1	5
10		3	2		5

The analysis of this study, refers the frequency within each problem which was faced by the students in a listening class. It is calculated using the percentage formula:

$$\text{The score} = \frac{\text{The total of opinion of each type} \times 100\%}{\text{Total of Students}}$$

### Students' Strategies in Listening Class

The result of the questionnaire below is more into finding out students' strategies in listening class. The questionnaire has 10 questions about students' learning strategy. The questionnaire has 4 choices such as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). There are 5 participants in this research. The answer of students' questionnaire in listening strategy is presented in the following table:

Table 2. Students' strategies in listening class

Number of Questions	Number of Answers				Number of Students
	SA	A	D	SD	
1		2	3		5
2		3	1	1	5
3	2	2	1		5
4	1	3	1		5
5		5			5
6		3	2		5
7		3	1	1	5
8	1	3	1		5
9		2	3		5
10	1	3	1		5

The analysis of this study is the frequency of each strategy which is mostly used by the students in developing listening skill. It is calculated usage percentage formula:

$$\text{The score} = \frac{\text{The total of opinion of each type} \times 100\%}{\text{Total of students}}$$

### Students' Problem

After doing the interview, this research revealed many kinds of problem and students' strategies found in listening class at this Vocational High School.

The research gain answers from the students. Thus, a conclusion from the interview and the answer are presented as follows:

Table 3. Students' Problem

Students	Material Quality	Students' Background	Accent	Unfamiliar Vocabulary	Length and Speed in Listening
1	√	√	√		√
2	√		√	√	√
3	√		√		√
4	√			√	√
5	√	√		√	√

Based on the table, it is concluded that media, length and speed in listening are the most frequent problem found in listening class. The first problem was quality of listening material, in this school, they use tape recorder. Whereas the quality of sound system can impact the comprehension of learners' ability (Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yidliz, & Tugrul Mart, 2014). The impact of that problem could put the students in a confusing situation when understanding the meaning.

### Students' Strategies

Problems and solutions are very closely dependent. The participants tried to cope with their problems by accomplishing appropriate strategies. Table above illustrates the participants' strategies in Listening class problems.

Table 4. Students' strategies

Aspects		Students				
		1	2	3	4	5
Cognitive	Comprehension Process	√				√
	Using and retrieval			√	√	
	Storing and memory process	√		√	√	
Metacognitive	Monitoring	√		√		
	Self-evaluating	√		√		√
	Self-Testing					√
	Assessing the situation	√				

According to Richard as cited in Buck (2001), learning strategies in listening class are divided into 2 strategies: first cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies are related to understanding and gathering input in short term memory or long-term memory for later use (Gilakjani & Sabouri 2016). Cognitive strategies are divided into 3 strategies; comprehension process, using and retrieval process, and storing and memory process. Based on the interview result, the students mostly used storing and memory process.

The second one according to Salataci (2002), he stated that the use of metacognitive strategy in listening process increase self-confidence, ability to complete the activities, and motivation. Metacognitive strategies are divided into 4 strategies: monitoring, self-evaluating, self-testing, and assessing the situation. Mostly, the students choose self-evaluating to solve their listening problems.

### Classroom Observation

The classroom observation was completed in accounting class of 11<sup>th</sup> graders on October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2018, the teacher started the lesson in class by using tape. Before the listening test the teacher asked the students and informed them how to do the test. In part 1, it is a test about picture, part 2 is about short conversation, the question and answer of part 2 test

are separated. Part 3 is about long conversation where the students have to fill in the incomplete dialogue in the recording and there were 4 lines in 1 passage. The teacher explained the students and reviewed the students' comprehension from the materials. Because there are some words that the students did not know, the teacher decided to write the word and explained it to the students so that they became familiar with the unknown words.

To solve the problem student 5 used comprehension process, self-evaluating, and assessing the situations. Student 5 has interest in listening, so after the lesson student 5 is likely to learn through song or even bought the listening questions books. Student 5, is likely to learn from other sources than learning from school.

The teacher somehow explained, and motivated students to learn not only in school, but they also are able to learn from other sources such as song, audio recorder, movie, and many more, because listening is also important in communicating and making them pass the national exam. Or even pass the TOEIC or TOEFL.

Based on the finding description above, there are several things that can be noted down. It is concerned about the students' strategies in listening class in a vocational school and based on the objectives of this research: 1) To find out the problems faced in listening class, 2) To find out the strategies that the students use to solve the problems.

There are 2 classification of the problems. The first one is the quality of recorded material and the second one the length and speed in listening, because the media in their school does not support listening class. From the 5 students only 4 students find the strategies to solve the listening problems. The students' strategies according to Ricard as cited in Buck (2001), are associated with the storing of linguistic and nonlinguistic input in working memory or long-term memory.

## CONCLUSION

Most of students think that listening comprehension is not an easy activity to do. So many problems were found by them when they faced listening class. It is very difficult for lower level students to listen more than three minutes long and complete the listening tasks. Short listening passages is easier for lower level learners and reduce their tiredness. This problem occurs because students have different level English proficiency, even though the students have many vocabularies.

The students have interest in listening comprehension so they search another source. After the learning process at school, they search from another source such as videos, songs, or even books. They do the listening test carefully. Since the speed of spoken content is fast, it is hard for an EFL learners to analyze the word one by one in fast spoken English.

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