

ABSTRACT

Syifa, Bunaya (2025) Students' Difficulties in Understanding Native and Non-Native English Speakers Audio in EFL Listening Learning Material: A Case Study in One of Senior High School at South Tangerang City.

This study investigates how difficult it is for students to comprehend audio recordings of native and non-native English speakers, especially in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) course. Many students find it difficult to understand spoken English during listening exercises because of a variety of linguistic and environmental variables. Since it has a direct impact on students' listening comprehension, it is essential to comprehend the differences in speech delivery between native and non-native speakers. The purpose of this study is to pinpoint the particular issues that students face and investigate the ways in which these issues impact their general listening abilities in the classroom.

This study was carried out in a senior high school in South Tangerang City using a qualitative case study methodology. Students in the eleventh grade participated in semi-structured interviews and completed open-ended questionnaires to gather data. To learn more about the participants' experiences with listening tasks involving native and non-native speakers, they were purposefully chosen. To find reoccurring patterns and categories of the challenges that the students faced, the data were subjected to thematic analysis.

The results show that characteristics like quick speech rate, connected speech, shortened forms, and strange intonation patterns make it difficult for students to listen to native speakers. In contrast, non-native speaker audio was thought to be simpler to hear due to its clearer articulation and slower delivery. Unfamiliar language, intricate grammatical patterns, cultural allusions, and the propensity to mentally translate while listening are further challenges mentioned. These elements have a part in students' diminished listening confidence and comprehension.

In conclusion, students' difficulties in understanding audio materials are influenced by both linguistic and extra-linguistic factors, especially when dealing with native speaker input. To support students in overcoming these barriers, it is essential for teachers to incorporate diverse listening materials, teach explicit listening strategies, and gradually expose learners to authentic language use. The study emphasizes the need for pedagogical adjustments that accommodate the learners' proficiency level and prepare them for real-world communication.

Keywords: EFL listening, native speaker, non-native speaker, student difficulties, audio comprehension, pronunciation, cultural understanding