

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the introductory elements. It explores the listening anxiety experienced by students in an English education department in the post-pandemic context. This section explains the research background, research questions, research purposes, research significance, and previous study.

A. Background of the Study

Listening is one of the fundamental language skills in English, without good listening abilities, learners will experience difficulties in communication. Listening has numerous advantages for students. Listening skills can help students gain confidence by allowing them to understand the meaning and context of what is said and respond to it without making mistakes. This confidence can lead to effective listening, which allows students to communicate efficiently. Despite the fact that listening is the most overlooked element of language teaching and learning (Jaya, Petrus, and Kurniawan, 2021), the importance of listening is urged to be taught in EFL programmes, particularly for listening comprehension and skills (Mendelsohn, 1994).

Listening presents various challenges and has an impact on students' language skills. A lack of vocabulary, a difficulty grasping the speech, a loss of confidence and attention, inadequate listening intensity, and anxiety are the most typical listening issues. This study focuses on anxiety, which Golchi (2012) identified as the most important component in decreased listening skills. According to Adwas, Jbireal, and Azab (2019), anxiety is the pathological counterpart of normal fear and is defined by anomalies in mood, thinking, behaviour, and physiological activity. Anxiety can interfere with pupils' learning abilities and output while they are studying.

Anxiety is a concern in a listening environment because it prevents students from reaching the highest level of listening comprehension possible. Children who suffer from listening anxiety may have difficulty hearing. As a result, the pupils will struggle to digest information and respond correctly. Additionally, according to Adnan, Marlina, and Annisa (2020), the higher the students' anxiety, the worse their listening comprehension.

Listening anxiety is a common obstacle that can happen to EFL learners, despite the various age groups. Taysi (2019) discovered that listening anxiety and listening attitude had an effect on seventh-grade students' listening comprehension. According to Prastiyowati (2019), this could also happen to university students in the English Education Department. Listening is essential for language learners to be able to communicate in an academic setting, but anxiety is a sure barrier in the student's process of developing proficient listening abilities.

Learning conditions are also a determining factor, especially given the recent pandemic outbreak and the people who are now returning to a post-pandemic era where they can adjust and carry out their activities prior to the pandemic. Due to the rapid and widespread spread of COVID-19, students had limited access to practice listening during the pandemic, were separated from peers and teachers, and were unable to access many resources from the Internet and school libraries (Liu and Yuan, 2021). These factors may be the cause of the decline in listening learning, which may affect students' listening anxiety and their perceptions of it.

In this study, anxiety is restricted to post-pandemic situations. Anxiety after the pandemic has become widespread. Anxiety after the pandemic has become widespread. It causes more people to be easily depressed due to social and work factors, and students are no exception. Under normal circumstances, college is already stressful, but the pandemic continues to influence and stress students' lives. Rashid, Shaikh, Mardini, and Saad (2022) argue that a significant proportion of students experienced anxiety upon returning to campus in the post-pandemic era.

A previous study conducted by Agustiana (2019) investigated EFL students' experiences learning to listen to spoken English. The results suggested that students have a good attitude toward learning to listen to English, that their listening anxiety is significant, and that they put forth a lot of effort to improve their listening skills. Another study by Prastiyowati (2019) investigated the amount of anxiety and factors associated with listening anxiety in EFL students, and the results suggested that the students were typically moderately anxious. Pan (2016) conducted research on the elements that influence learners' listening anxiety in EFL classrooms. The findings revealed that teachers' and students' variables, instructional techniques, and learning practices can all generate listening anxiety.

Anxiety in class is a prevalent problem for students in the second semester of English education at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati. According to Effendi (2022), the major issue for students is motivation and concern. This is further supported by the researchers' prior experience in listening lessons throughout the first and second semesters. Researchers discovered that listening anxiety is still prevalent among EFL learners, owing to both internal reasons such as a lack of confidence and competence as well as external issues such as unclear audio, a lack of facilities, and so on.

This study is expected to fill a research gap on students' listening anxiety. Now, the pandemic has passed, allowing for direct teaching and learning between teachers and students to continue. This study aims to investigate English Education Department students' perceptions of listening anxiety and the impact of listening anxiety on listening comprehension. This study should be of interest to readers who want to learn more about the effects of post-pandemic listening anxiety on students' perspectives.

B. Research Questions

This research addresses the issue of listening anxiety in students in the post-pandemic era. As a result, two questions are posed in order to obtain answers about the listening anxiety of English education department students by observing their

perspectives in a narrative format. The two research questions are formulated as follows:

1. How do students perceive listening anxiety in the post-pandemic context?
2. How does anxiety affect students' listening comprehension in the post-pandemic context?

A qualitative method based on a narrative inquiry approach was used to answer the research questions. To answer the questions, selected participants are given an interview as well as a questionnaire. Both approaches are used to obtain strong and well-founded results. The collected data was then processed in the form of retelling the experiences of participants, who are English education department students who struggle from listening anxiety.

The pandemic has had an impact on many aspects of human life. Students have also been affected by the emergence of new anxiety-inducing factors, both inside and outside of the classroom. Adnan, Marlina, and Annisa (2020) investigated much higher anxiety interferes with the process of listening comprehension, which was studied prior to the pandemic's widespread. This study is expected to delve deeper into this topic.

C. Research Purposes

This study aims to investigate students' perspectives on their listening anxiety after returning to college in this post-pandemic era, with a focus on English education department students. The technique of gathering data from predetermined participants by giving them space to tell about their experiences is known as narrative research. The participants shared their experiences, so the researcher recorded and organized the information into a narrative that retold their perspectives on listening anxiety.

Furthermore, the purpose of this study is also to investigate the effects of students' anxiety on their listening comprehension in a post-pandemic context. A questionnaire based on the research of Chang (2008) is used to assess the effect of listening anxiety on participants' listening comprehension. The questionnaire contains questions adapted from previous studies on the topic of listening anxiety in order to determine whether there is a link between the two variables. The outcomes lead to conclusions about how it affects the students in post-pandemic time.

Lecturers and students are given information to help them understand listening anxiety better. This study aimed to fill a gap where there are still few studies on the topic of listening anxiety in the post-pandemic timeline, as well as to explore the students' experiences in the field using narrative inquiry. Students from an Islamic state university's English education department are the focus of the study.

D. Research Significances

Listening is an important language skill, especially for English majors who must rely on it to communicate in an academic setting. This study looks at how English education students perceive listening anxiety and how it affects their listening comprehension performance. The collected and processed data are expected to yield beneficial results.

This study contributes to both theoretical and practical perspectives. In theory, the findings of this study should be useful for enriching knowledge in English language teaching, particularly in the area of listening anxiety. In practice, this study provides researchers with research insights into listening anxiety, ideas for students, and a reference for lecturers or teachers.

E. Conceptual Framework

Listening involves numerous interwoven components of a language as it passes through processes such as sound discrimination, vocabulary and grammatical

structure comprehension, and stress and intonation interpretation. Tyagi (2013) provides various listening processes such as recognizing words and understanding their meaning, identifying grammatical groupings of words, identifying expressions and sets of utterances that act to create meaning, connecting linguistic cues to non-linguistic and paralinguistic cues, and recalling important ideas, as quoted in Ulum (2015). Listening is a challenging process, especially when used in a foreign language.

Listening anxiety is one of the challenges that students face when learning a language. This anxiety occurs as a result of the inability to interpret the messages (Dalman, 2012). According to Prastiyowati (2019), one of the reasons that learners' listening anxiety fluctuates according to their level of ability in foreign language hearing is because of this. The problematic issues also may involve speech rate, vocabulary, accent, focus, and poor audio quality. The following factors contribute to creating learners' anxiety: the instructor, students, listening materials, and methods. A lack of one of those factors might cause a decreased motivation, hostile attitudes, and, most unfortunate of all, difficulties in the students' English-language competence.

The post-pandemic environment in education has its own set of repercussions. Despite the modifications, students continue to have difficulties, particularly while studying. Several components of the pupils' new learning environment are involved. Additionally, students will require time to acclimate to classroom learning, interact with classmates, and receive direct guidance from teachers. It's all due to a shifting learning environment.

This study collects data using the narrative inquiry method and then narrates the results as a story from experience. According to James (2018), narrative inquiry is a style of study that emphasizes the entire and the specific rather than the fragmented and general, and this method emphasizes the telling of tales as a means of providing and exploring the meanings of an individual's experience.

F. Rationale

There are four basic skills that must be studied when learning the English language: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. These abilities are valued and interconnected (Supina, 2018). The goal of learning a language is to communicate effectively, and one of the most important aspects of doing so is listening. Listening not only improves a person's ability to understand others, but it also makes a person's speaking more enjoyable to others, making them a better communicator.

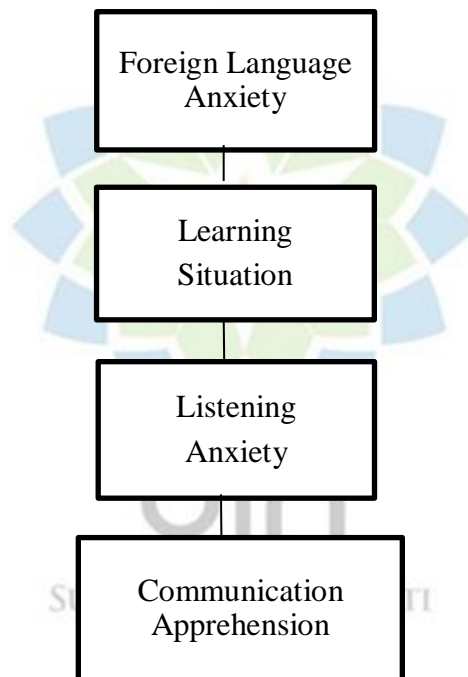


Figure 1.1 Listening anxiety in a foreign language context

The figure above shows that there are obstacles that can impede the process of learning a foreign language. One of them is anxiety. Foreign language anxiety, according to Oteir and Al-Otaibi (2019), is a difficult issue in foreign language learning and is known to have negative consequences for learners. Each of the four existing language skills has its own type of anxiety, with different causes and consequences.

Anxiety can be caused by a number of learning situations, such as classrooms, teaching materials, and facilities. This study focuses on situations in which students return to learning English in the classroom after the pandemic has passed and the post-pandemic era has taken its place. Post-pandemic is defined as a decrease in pandemic outbreaks. Post-pandemic can be determined by a variety of indicators; one of which is a society that has received numerous vaccines and a decrease in COVID cases. After about two years of attempting to deal with pandemic situations, people are now forced to re-enter society, interact with others, and fully return to their occupations.

As a result of this transition, there are changes, and one of the challenges left by the pandemic is anxiety. The post-pandemic situation has an impact on learning and can contribute to student anxiety (Anggraeni, Alpian, and Kodariah, 2021). During the pandemic, both teachers and students adapted to the teaching and learning environment, but readjustment is required due to the pandemic's gradual decline.

Listening anxiety can occur due to the setting and circumstances in which students learn. Anxiety also contributes to a person's failure to communicate since they are unable to capture information throughout a discussion (Razak, Yassin, and Maasum, 2017). Internal factors that cause students' listening anxiety, according to Nurkhamidah (2020), are rate of speech, vocabulary, accent, and concentration. Due to anxiety, someone's inability to focus on listening can impair their comprehension ability.

Listening comprehension is a step in the communication process. This receptive skill implies that it is only natural for people to understand the message conveyed through communication. Underwood (1989) contends that effective communication can be impaired by speech speed, a lack of vocabulary knowledge, a lack of contextual information, and a lack of concentration. He further adds that the

communication process fails when words that cannot be repeated cause difficulty for listeners (cited in Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016).

Anxiety that impairs listening comprehension can lead to communication anxiety. Hardiyanto, Retno, and Susanti (2022, p. 262) describe communication apprehension as a situation in which people have a negative feeling about speaking because of novelty, formality, subordinate status, unfamiliarity, dissimilarity, degree of attention, heredity, and environment. In short, "communication apprehension" is a term used to describe a person's fear or anxiety when communicating with other people. According to previous research in the Indonesian context, this problem is prevalent in countries where English serves as a foreign language.

G. Previous Studies

Previously, such studies on listening anxiety and its effects on EFL students were conducted. Agustiana (2019) investigated listening anxiety in EFL students in Indonesia. The study looked into three areas: students' attitudes, difficulties, and efforts to listen to spoken English texts. This study included 58 second-semester English Department students from an Indonesian private university. According to the findings of the study, the challenges that children face in listening comprehension are critical for developing their listening abilities.

Rakhman, Tarjana, and Marmanto (2019) discussed Indonesian EFL students' listening challenges and techniques. Six EFL students from an Indonesian university's English Department Program provided the data for this study. The findings revealed that EFL learners faced listening challenges such as a lack of opportunity, short-term memory, homophones, and speaking pace. The learners' ability to comprehend what they hear is influenced by English's status as a foreign language.

Another research by Chow, Chiu, and Wong (2018) looked into listening anxiety in Chinese EFL students. The data was collected from 306 Chinese

undergraduate students (116 males and 190 females). EFL learning motivation, EFL learning strategies (social and metacognitive strategies), and EFL performance all have varying effects on EFL reading and listening anxiety, according to the findings. Furthermore, increasing student motivation in foreign language learning can help reduce language anxiety in specific skills.

Furthermore, Otair and Aziz (2017) conducted research on the causes of listening comprehension anxiety in EFL Saudi learners. Based on availability, compatibility, and characteristics, the researcher recruited two participants, and data were gathered through semi-structured interviews. The researcher discovered that the participants struggled due to the difficulty of listening comprehension in English as a result of the strange accents and rapid speech. Two participants also discussed how the classroom environment (for example, classroom competition) can cause listening comprehension anxiety, as well as how their limited English vocabulary affects it.

The preceding studies discussed listening anxiety in EFL students. Those studies used a variety of methods to convey that anxiety in EFL learners, particularly in listening, can be caused by a number of factors, one of which is the classroom environment. The above studies were carried out in areas where the pandemic had not yet spread, and face-to-face lessons in class were carried out as usual. Meanwhile, this study looks at these issues in a post-pandemic context.

This study also includes more information about the effects of listening anxiety on listening comprehension among English Education Department students. This study attempts to fill a knowledge gap about students' perceptions of listening anxiety now that the pandemic has ended, allowing direct teaching and learning between teachers and students to continue in the post-pandemic era. The information gathered through narrative inquiry is used in this study.