

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Basically, English consists of four skills namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening plays an important role in communication; listening takes up 40-50%; speaking, 25-30%; reading, 11-16%; and writing, about 9% of the total time in communication (Abbas Pourhossein Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). Based on the statement, listening skill is the most important in communication. Therefore, English learners should know and learn the listening strategies as early as possible.

There are a lot of opinions or perceptions of the term "listening." Hamouda in Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016) say that listening skills are very important in acquiring comprehensible input. Furthermore, Al-Nafisah (2019) also states that listening, in particular, is the most demanding of all the language skills, as it is a vital discovery that enables students to unmask creative ways in which language is pronounced and comprehended. It is in line with Namaziandost, Ahmadi, & Keshmirshakan (2019) who found that listening skills are valuable in second language learning since they are central to getting a language. Language input is acquired through listening. In other words, listening is one of English skills that requires the students to understand, translate, and assess what they heard to have good communication with others.

However, listening is often considered the most challenging skill in second language learning. According to Namaziandost et al. (2019), in the process of learning English as a foreign language, the listening ability is viewed as one of the hardest language skills to be promoted because when learners have a listening exercise, they need to confront numerous challenges to comprehend the message.

Al-Nafisah (2019) also revealed that listening is commonly regarded as the hardest and most challenging of the four language learning skills. In that case, they may find it challenging to learn the language, which can have a very debilitating effect on their learning of other communicative skills, like speaking, reading, and writing.

In this study, the difficulty of comprehension in listening also happens in Soegijapranata Catholic University, Semarang, especially in one of the listening classes at the English Department, Faculty of Language and Arts. The students face a lot of listening difficulties. In general, there are five factors that influence students' problems in listening. Based on Bao (2017), these factors are categorized into different sources dealing with the listening text, the speaker, the teacher, the listener, and the physical environment. The factor related to the listening text includes the content of the message and the text feature. The factor related to the speaker consists of the speech rate of delivery, various accents, reduced form, redundancy, pronunciation, hesitation, pauses, and visual support.

Based on teaching, many factors influence listening strategies. Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016), said the factor related to a teacher is divided into primary teaching. The basic teaching includes asking, reinforcement, variation, explanation, opening-closing the lesson, organizing the class, and focusing on group attention or individuality. The factors related to the listener include lack of background knowledge, lack of topic familiarity, lack of grammar, lack of linguistic knowledge, lack of listening strategies, psychological states, physical problem, and task. The factors related to the physical environment include noise, low quality of equipment, and visual clues. Those factors impact students who have difficulties in listening, leading to students' poor results. According to Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016), when students listen to English, they have critical difficulties in listening comprehension because universities and schools pay more attention to writing, reading, and vocabulary. It is also supported by Indrianty & Kemala (2017) that having good

listening comprehension is very difficult for language learners because when they listen, they need to recognize what they hear and produce their language to respond to it. The speaker, listener, content, and support can cause difficulties in listening. However, apart from that, many factors cause listening difficulties, such as lack of interaction in English, many learners, and inappropriate strategy. Thus, a learning strategy is used to help the student relieve the difficulties in listening.

Listening strategy is determined as one of the solutions that can solve the listening problem among students. It is one of the most important factors that affect the process of listening comprehension (Bao, 2017). Listening is not an important part of many course books, and most teachers ignore this important skill in their classes (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). Chatom in (Bao, 2017) illustrated that learning strategies are techniques, approaches, or deliberate actions that students take to facilitate learning and recall linguistic and content area information. At the same time, Goh in Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016) said it is very important to teach students listening strategies. Before doing this, teachers should increase learners' knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and phonology.

Moreover, listening strategies are useful for expanding the listening appreciation skill; the students conquer every one of their troubles to comprehend. (Namaziandost et al., 2019),. It is known that some listening strategies can be used by students to comprehend listening skills. According to Indrianty & Kemala (2017), listening strategies are categorized as direct and indirect. Direct listening strategies are divided into cognitive, memory, and compensation strategies, while indirect listening strategies are divided into metacognitive, social, and effective strategies. Whereas, O'Malley & Chamot (1990) as cited in Zanjani & Izadpanah (2016), stated that listening strategies are classified into three types: psychological features (mental activities for manipulating the language to accomplish a task), meta-cognitive ones (metal activities for steering language learning), and socio-

affective ones (activities involving interaction or emotional management in an acquisition).

Thus, through the above definition of listening strategies, it can be seen that listening strategies are techniques or actions that are used by the students or listeners to comprehend and recall listening input. The listening strategy can be classified by how the students or listener processes the data the listener taps into the background of the topic, context or situation, type of text, and language background information that they heard to interpret and anticipate what will appear next.

Based on what has been explained above, the writer is interested in further conducting a study entitled **A Study of Students' Listening Strategies to Improve Listening Skills**. The results of this study are expected to provide valuable input for the improvement of listening teaching strategies.

1.2 FIELD OF THE STUDY

This study is in the field of applied linguistics, in particular learning strategy to improve students' ability in listening skills of English subjects.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on the students' listening strategies that are used to improve their listening skills. Listening strategies belong to linguistics in practice and knowledge. The scope of the study is limited to the language in use, the language in the context of teaching which is part of applied linguistics.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the explanation of the background above, the problem of research are formulated as below:

What do the students think of the listening strategies they can use to improve their listening skill in the Faculty of Language and Arts, Soegijapranata Catholic University, Semarang use to improve listening skills?

1.5 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Based on the problem of the study above, the objective of this study are as follows:

To know what the students think of the listening strategies they can use to improve their listening skill in the Faculty of Language and Arts, Soegijapranata Catholic University, Semarang use to improve listening skills.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this research is divided into two; they are theoretical and practical. Therefore, here are the explanations of each significance:

- Theoretical Significance

1. For English Department of the Faculty of Language and Arts of Soegijapranata Catholic University, it is expected that the research findings provide input to anyone concerned with the area of listening strategy studies as an effort to improve the listening skill of students.
2. For further researchers, the research findings can be used to conduct similar studies.

- Practical Significance

1. The study results can help the English teachers enrich the knowledge of how to improve the student's listening skills.
2. The research can improve the students' listening skills of 3 Inquest Listening classes in the Faculty of Language and Arts, Soegijapranata Catholic University.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

To prevent misunderstanding in this research, the researcher gives some definitions of key terms:

1. Listening skills

Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016) defined listening skill as the ability to receive any sounds, to select the specific sounds that will be listened to, and to assign the meaning of the specific sounds. This ability involves two main parts of the body: the ears and the brain. The ears are to receive and select the sounds and the brain is to assign the meaning of the sounds.

2. Listening strategy

According to Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016), listening strategies are thoughts and behaviors that are engaged by the listener during listening that are intended to influence the listening encoding process. In addition, Rubin in Huy (2015:24) indicates that listening strategies are activities or techniques that contribute directly to the comprehension and recall of the listening input.