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Listening Comprehension Challenges: Analyzing EFL Students in the English Teacher Education Program at Universitas Mulawarman

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Alya Saputri [1], Ichi Ahada [2], Iwan Setiawan[3], Didik Sucahyo[4]

Mulawarman University, Indonesia

alyaputrii1994@gmail.com[1], ichiahada@fkip.unmul.ac.id[2], iwansetiawan@fkip.unmul.ac.id[3], didiksucahyo@fkip.unmul.ac.id[4]

Correspondence author Email: ichiahada@fkip.unmul.ac.id

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Abstract
EFL students still struggle at several points in the listening process, despite the fact listening comprehension is an essential part of improving their listening abilities. The purpose of this study is to determine the listening comprehension challenges EFL students enrolled in Mulawarman University's English teacher education program face. Data were gathered using a descriptive study methodology also a listening comprehension-focused questionnaire. As per the results, pupils struggle greatly in all three stages of listening—perception, parsing, also utilization—with the perception phase exhibiting the most severe problems. These difficulties have a major effect on how well they listen overall. The study's findings are meant to give lecturers important information for creating engaging classes also training methods for listening skills.
Keywords: Listening Comprehension; Listening Difficulties; EFL Students

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1. Introduction

Particularly for students learning English as a foreign language (EFL), listening comprehension is a crucial language acquisition skill. Despite its significance, learning this ability is difficult for many college students (Nushi & Orouji, 2020; Petley et al., 2021; Yahmun et al., 2020). These topics will be covered in detail in this article. When English education is one of the study programs plays a significant role in the current globalization era in developing qualified candidates for English teaching positions, which will serve the nation in the future by producing a generation can connect the nation with other nations also advance the nation(Rakhman et al., 2020). One of the abilities students enrolled in English education

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programs must develop is listening. This skill is crucial since it is one of the fundamentals of good English communication (Perea Pérez et al., 2022).

In actuality, though, a large number of students in English-language programs still struggle with hearing English (Pascoinelli et al., 2021). Since students must be able to comprehend the information offered in audio format when listening, instructors must come up with efficient teaching techniques also ways to help their students who struggle with listening(Luwiti et al., 2023; Teo et al., 2022).

As per a prior pertinent study on the subject, Zur (2020) discovered EFL students in the English language education study program had trouble in every course. They encountered three stages of listening issues: perception, decomposition, also utilization. The study findings indicated perception was the most significant issue, having a significant impact on the caliber of their listening abilities.

Common listening comprehension problems include pronunciation also accents. One of the most difficult things for pupils to grasp is the many English dialects also pronunciations. Many students have trouble understanding speakers with diverse accents, which can lead to misunderstanding, also complicate understanding(Diora & Rosa, 2020; Lengkoan et al., 2022). The speed at which students speak is another barrier. Fast-paced interactions can be difficult for students to follow, which causes them to overlook crucial information. As per study, students who speak a lot may become anxious also find it difficult to follow the conversation's flow. Lack of vocabulary is another prevalent issue. Their comprehension of the information they hear is hampered by the frequent occurrence of unfamiliar words or phrases(Izzah & Keeya, 2019). This demonstrates increasing one's vocabulary is crucial to enhancing listening abilities. Maintaining concentration during listening sessions is a challenge for many pupils. Students may experience mental weariness due to factors including repetitive or lengthy audio content, which might hinder their ability to effectively assimilate information (Erkulova & Dedakhanova, 2019; Harianja et al., 2022). Anxiety tied to performance can also impact listening comprehension. Students frequently experience anxiety when taking hearing tests,

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which can impair their confidence, also make it more difficult for them to comprehend what they hear (Harianja et al., 2022; Teo et al., 2022). Additionally, the listening material's audio quality is crucial. It might be challenging for students to follow a conversation when there is unclear or poor sound quality interfering with what is being said. University students encounter a variety of difficulties with listening comprehension, ranging from anxiety also audio quality to accent also pronunciation, as indicated by all of the issues raised (Nguyen, 2020; Obuchi, 2023). Luwiti et al., (2023) said in order to overcome these issues, educators must offer engaging also diverse teaching resources also foster a positive learning atmosphere will boost students' confidence as they practice listening. Students can study English more successfully academically also develop their listening abilities using the correct method (Astika & Kurniawan, 2020).

2. Method

In this study "Listening Comprehension Challenges: Analyzing EFL Students in the English Teacher Education Program at Mulawarman University," investigated the difficulties students have when it comes to listening comprehension in English using quantitative methodologies. The purpose of this study is to determine the proportion of students who struggle with the three primary problem categories of perception, partial, also utilization issues.

2.1 Study Design

Thirty-three fifth semester students from Mulawarman University's English Language Education Study Program were given a questionnaire with twenty-three items in order to conduct this study. As in Kawase (2023) the purpose of the questionnaire was to gather information on students' listening comprehension experiences also to pinpoint the elements affect their capacity to comprehend English-language audio content. The questionnaire is broken up into multiple sections, each of which makes reference to the previously identified problem categories. There are multiple targeted questions in each category are meant to delve deeper into the difficulties students encounter. For instance, questions on perception problems center on how hard it is for students to understand the meaning of the words they hear, whereas

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partial problems deal with specific, hard-to-understand aspects of the subject matter (Vellanki et al., 2022). Applying listening comprehension in authentic communication situations is one of the utilization issues (Al-jarf, 2021)

Direct distribution of questionnaires to respondents was used to gather data. As per their individual experiences studying English, each participant was asked to give truthful responses. This enables studyers to calculate percentages represent the degree of difficulty participant's faced.

Following the completion of data collection, statistical software is used for analysis. Descriptive analysis of the data will determine the proportion of respondents who encounter issues in each category. To determine what percentage of students struggle with particular listening comprehension skills, studyers will compute the frequency also percentage for each question. For instance, if 70% of respondents say they have a perception problem—the inability to understand words—then studyers might say most students struggle with this issue. A comparison of the problem categories will also be part of the investigation to determine whether one predominates.It is anticipated this quantitative technique will give a good picture of the listening comprehension difficulties Mulawarman University EFL students confront. The findings of this study will not only shed light on particular issues students face, but they may also be used as foundations for creating instructional tactics are more successful. Understanding these difficulties enables teachers to create effective listening interventions will help students learn English also communicate more successfully (Subramaniam et al., 2020)

3. Findings

The purpose of this section is to present the data analyses also statistical results indicate the difficulties students encounter with listening comprehension. Perception, parsing, also usage are the three cognitive steps comprise the elements contribute to students' challenges in comprehending spoken language.

Table 1. Perception Problem

No.	Statement	Frequency	Percent
1.	I can hear the sound but not clear words	5	15.2
2.	I find it difficult to understand well when speakers speak too fast	17	51.5
3.	I find it difficult when missing the beginning of the text	8	24.2
4.	I know the meaning of the words when seeing it	23	69.7
5.	While listening, I get slow in recalling the meaning of familiar words	11	33.3
6.	I find it difficult to understand listening text in which there are too many unfamiliar words or expression	16	48.5
7.	While listening, I find it difficult to guess the meaning of unknown words by linking them to known words	8	24.2
8.	I find it difficult not recognize so many sound also words	10	30.3
9.	When thinking about meaning of unfamiliar words, I neglect the next part of the listening text	10	30.3
10.	I find it difficult to really concentrate on listening	4	12.1

The fact 23 students (69.7%) stated they "know the meaning of the words when seeing it" suggests they understand the phrases better when they are spoken out loud than when they are written down. The finding 17 students (51.5%) struggled to grasp "when speaker speaks too fast" suggests participants struggle to comprehend also recognize spoken words when information is presented quickly. It was difficult for 16 students (48.5%) to "understand listening texts in which there are too many unfamiliar words or expressions" they were unfamiliar with. Furthermore, 11 students (33.3%) stated they were "slow in recalling the meaning of familiar words" they already knew when listening, while 10 students (30.3%) stated they had difficulty "recognizing many sounds of words" also determining how to proceed to the next section of the text when they were considering the meaning of unfamiliar words.

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Additionally, eight students (24.2%) stated they had trouble "when missing the beginning of the text" since it affected their comprehension as a whole. Furthermore, four students (12.1%) who reported it was "difficult to really concentrate on listening" had the least amount of difficulty, while the same number of students (24.2%) said they had trouble "guessing the meaning of unknown words by linking them to known words" they were familiar with.

Table 2. Parsial Problem

No.	Statement	Frequency	Percent
1.	I find it difficult to quickly remember words or phrases I have just heard	4	12,1
2.	I find it difficult to understand the meaning of sentences	0	-
3.	I find it difficult to remember the meaning of a long listening text	6	18,2
4.	I find it difficult to guess the accurate meaning of words in sentences	7	21,2
5.	I find it difficult to follow unfamiliar topic	10	30,3
6.	I find it difficult to understand a lot of new information in a short time	6	18,2
7.	While listening, I miss the next part because of earlier problem	9	27,3

The challenges faced by students who have incomplete listening comprehension problems. Ten students (30.3%) indicated following a topic they are unfamiliar with is the most difficult assignment, according to the study. Here's an example of how "following unfamiliar topics" could make it hard for participants to understand the context also importance of what they're hearing. According to seven students (21.2%), they "find it difficult to guess the accurate meaning of words in a sentence," which explains why they have trouble deducing the meaning of the context they are studying. Furthermore, nine students (27.3%) stated they "miss

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the next part because of earlier problem," suggesting a bad first impression could influence how well they comprehend later content.

Furthermore, it can be difficult for them to absorb also retain a lot of information because six students (18.2%) reported they had problems "understanding a lot of new information in a short time" also "remembering the meaning of a long listening text." In addition to four students (12.1%) reporting difficulties "quickly remembering words or phrases," none of them had difficulties "understanding the meaning of sentences," indicating this may not be a significant problem for pupils. Students' initial assumptions about unfamiliar subjects also their ability to process also retain information both severely impair their listening comprehension, according to the data in the second table.

Table 3. Utilization Problem

No.	Statement	Frequency	Percent
1.	I understand the words but not the intended message	5	15,2
2.	I find difficulties to get the order of ideas in text	4	12,1
3.	When I listen to texts in English, I get confuse to understand the main idea of the text	6	18,2
4.	I find it difficult in getting the detail information	3	9,1
5.	While listening, I find it difficult to relate among ideas	4	12,1
6.	I find it difficulties to get the supporting ideas	5	15,2

When listening to English, six students (18.2%) said they "get confused to understand the main idea of the text." This suggests a lot of students still have trouble understanding the listening section's key theme. Table 3 shows the most significant student challenges are connected to utilization issues in reading comprehension. Along with looking for evidence to cover the phrases they don't know, five students (15.2%) said they "understand the words but not the intended message." with complete understanding. It appears four students (12.1%) had issues following a logical flow of information because they reported having trouble "relating

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among ideas" also "finding difficulties to get the order of ideas in text" when listening. According to three students (9.1%), they had difficulty "getting the detail information," which implies they struggled to pinpoint particular details in the listening material. These results emphasize the need to improve students' understanding of the logical structure, supporting details, also main idea of the hearing text in order to improve general comprehension.

Table 4. Summary of Listening Problem

Problem	Frequency	Percent%
Perception	11.2	33.94
Parsial	6	36.03
Utilization	4.5	34.09

The listening difficulty level result above makes it clear children still have a lot of trouble understanding what they are hearing. According to the study's findings, students perceive incomplete problems to be the most challenging, with an average frequency of 6 (36.03%). Perception issues rank lowest with an average frequency of 11.2 (33.94%), followed by utilization issues with an average frequency of 4.5 (34.09%). The results showed although the pupils struggled with all areas of listening comprehension, their issues with information processing also use were more noticeable.

The findings of this study are expected to significantly improve students' listening comprehension by emphasizing the value of taking a balanced approach to each identified issue. Both teachers also students need to become more cognizant of the challenges come with listening comprehension in this context as in (Obuchi, 2023; Zahran & Owusu, 2020). They must comprehend the importance of these issues in order to look for workable remedies for students' hearing difficulties.

In the selection of the subject sample this study involved 33 fifth-semester students from the English Language Education Study Program at Mulawarman University, this sample

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size is a limitation in this study which is based on considerations of accessibility, sample selection that focuses on population representation, and time constraints. Although the number is considered relatively small in the previous study showed that studies with a similar number of respondents still provide influential findings in the context of the analysis of listening comprehension challenges (Zur; Nguyen, 2022; Arroyyani, 2021). Study also states that difficulties in listening can be significantly identified even with smaller groups as long as the use of research instruments as well as their careful analysis is carried out. Similarly Nguyen (2020) emphasized that his challenges in listening comprehension have a uniform tendency in problem groups with similar levels of Education. As for the Arroyyani (2021) study that examines studets listening problems and strategies, it shows that despite having a relatively small sample of respondents, pattern in listening difficulties in the context of perfection, parsing and utilization can still be clearly identified, making it possible to draw valid conclusions and from data collected with this limited sample can still represent general trends in the wider population. Therefore, although this study has limitations in the number of samples the findings obtained can still make a meaningful contribution in understanding the challenges of listening in the context of EFL Education.

4. Conclusion

Perception, parsing, also usage are the three stages of difficulties EFL students encounter, according to this study. The most common problems during the perception phase comprehend the text's commencement, recognizing new words or sounds, also the speaker's voice rate. The degree to which students comprehend what they hear is significantly influenced by these three criteria. Additionally, students struggle to recall long sentences during the parsing process due to their short-term memory constraints. Additionally, they have trouble recognizing some phrases are essential to understanding sentence construction. This illustrates how effective information processing abilities are essential for understanding spoken language. The intended meaning of the text is not always clear throughout the use phase. Misunderstanding the speaker's true intentions might lead to more misunderstandings also

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communication breakdowns. Therefore, it is essential teachers design lesson plans not only prioritize the development of listening skills but also carefully take into account each stage of a student's difficulties. With this comprehensive approach, it is hoped students would improve their overall English language skills also be better prepared to manage listening comprehension challenges.

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