A STUDY ON THE ABILITY IN LISTENING COMPREHENSION ON DESCRIPTIVE TEXT BY THE 2nd SEMESTER STUDENTS OF ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM FKIP-UR

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Abstract: English is the most popular and most spoken language in the world which has been used effectively in many developing countries. One of the first skills that students should be learnt in English is listening. In learning language, students use listening to began the process of learning to comprehend and produce language. The problems that usually faced by students while listening are lack of control over the speed at which speakers speak, inability to concentrate (topic, effort, technical problems), and also established learning habit in listening perfectionism.This descriptive research was conducted in order to find out the students' ability in listening comprehension on descriptive text. The data were collected using test in the form of multiple choice. The test covered four components of listening comprehension question; finding main idea, finding detail, identifying inference, and identifying restatement.The sample of this research was the second semester students of English study program of FKIP-UR who had passed English Listening1 subject in first semester. They consisted of 3 classes: A, B, and C, and using cluster sampling technique, class B was chosen as the sample of this research. Before the data were collected, the try out was conducted in order to make sure that the test was good and valid. There were 7 rejected items and those items were revised before having been distributed to the sample. From the data analysis, it was found out that the students' ability in listening comprehension on descriptive text was in **poor** *level with the average score 48.33. The result of the students' ability on listening comprehension of descriptive text was in* **poor** *level for finding main idea (44.81),identifying restatement (40.37), while finding detail was in* **good** *level (60.37), and for identifying inference was in* **average** *level (50.00).Based on the finding, it was suggested that the students need to improve their listening ability by practicing more on listening exercise and should motivate themselves to listen more listening materials. Other researchers can also focus on how to overcome the high level of difficulty of listening comprehension materials, particularly in listening to descriptive text.*

Key words: Ability, Listening, Comprehension, Descriptive text

STUDI TENTANG KEMAMPUAN PEMAHAMAN LISTENING TEKS DECRIPTIVE MAHASISWA SEMESTER 2 PRODI B.INGGRIS FKIP- UR

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Abstrak: Bahasa Inggris merupakan bahasa popular yang sering digunakan secara efektif diberbagai negara. Salah satu kemampuan yang diharuskan dalam bahasa inggris adalah kemampuan listening. Dalam pembelajaran bahasa mahasiswa menggunakan listening untuk memulai proses pembelajaran untuk memahami dan menciptakan bahasa itu sendiri. Permasalahan yang biasanya dihadapi mahasiswa dalam listening proses seperti kurangnya kemampuan dalam mengontrol kecepatan speaker, kurangnya kemampuan dalam berkonsentrasi (topic, effort, technical problems, dan tidak adanya kebiasaan yang sempurna yang diterapkan ketika listening proses. Riset deskriptif ini dilaksanakan bertujuan untuk mencari tahu kemampuan pemahaman listening mahasiswa pada teks descriptive. Data diambil menggunakan tes dalam bentuk objektif. Tes mencakupi empat bagian pertanyaan tentang pemahaman kemampuan listening; main idea, detail, inference, dan restatement. Sampel riset ini adalah mahasiswa semester 2 prodi B.inggris FKIP UR yang telah lulus mata kuliah listening 1 di semester pertama. Mereka terdiri dari 3 kelas; A, B, dan C, dan dengan menggunakan cluster sampling technique, kelas B terpilih menjadi sampel. Sebelum mengambil data, try out dilaksanakan terlebih dahulu untuk mengetahui bahwa tes bagus dan valid. Ada 7 butir soal yang ditolak dan soal-soal tersebut diperbaiki sebelum didistribusikan kepada sampel. Dari hasil analisis data, ditemukan bahwa kemampuan pemahaman listening mahasiswa pada teks descriptive ada di level **rendah** (poor) dengan skor rata-rata 48.33.Hasil dari kemampuan mahasiswa berdasarkan pemahaman listening pada teks descriptive ada di level **rendah (**poor) untuk main idea (44.81), restatement (40.37), sementara detail berada di level **bagus (** good) (60.37), dan untuk inference berada di level **sedang** (average) (50.00).Berdasarkan data yang didapat, diharapkan mahasiswa dapat meningkatkan kemapuan listening mereka dengan banyak melakukan latihan lagi dan memotivasi diri mereka sendiri untuk lebih sering mendengarkan materi listening. Periset berikutnya dapat fokus pada bagaimana untuk mengatasi tingkat kesulitan dari materi, terutama listening pada teks descriptive..

Kata kunci: Kemampuan, Menyimak, Pemahaman, Teks Descriptive

INTRODUCTION

English is the most popular and most spoken language in the world which has been used effectively in many developing countries. Budiharsono (2004) states that English is the major language which is used by people in some sectors. As an International language, English nowadays becomes a study which is forced to be learnt. It divided in four language skills; speaking, listening, reading, and writing. All of the skills is highly required.

One of the first skills that students should be learnt is listening. Rost (1991) states that progress in listening provided a basis for development of other language skills. Listening is also one of the four language skills that students should process before students achieved proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing. Wolvin (2010) states that more than 40% of our daily communication time is spent on listening, 35% on speaking, 16% on reading, and only 9% on writing. It clearly showed us how important this listening skill was in overall language used.Listening is one way for the students to absorp the meanings of words and sentences by the brain. Listening means following and understanding the sound. Through listening the student can improved their ability in receiving and interpreting the message. This mean students should be able to produce sentence from what they have listened.

In this study, the writer focused on listening skill on descriptive text of the 2nd semester student English study program of FKIP-UR. Listening is important to support English especially in understanding text, understanding conversation and gaining a large portion of their education. The reason for choosing descriptive text because students of 2nd semester English study program of FKIP-UR have already learned and descriptive text is one of the syllabuses that should master by the students.

Helgesen and Brown (2007) say, "Listening is an active, purposeful processing of making sense of what he heard". It means listeners should actively pay attention and make an effort while listening and trying to interpreting the message from the sentence they have heard.

Listening is different from hearing. Hearing is a physical ability, while listening is a skill. We can hear the things all the time without listening, because listening is about learning and understanding meaning. In teaching listening we should be considered about the differences both. Listening is much complex more than hearing, because the listeners are actively paying attention and make effort in comprehending and interpreting what they heard. While in hearing listener just take in only information and held it in a sort of medium-term memory.

Machado (2012) explains further that hearing and listening are quite different. Hearing is a process involving nerves and muscles that reach adult efficiency by age 4 to 5. Listening is learned behaviour, a mental process that is concerned with hearing, attending, discriminating, understanding and remembering.It can be improve with practice. Listening is can be describe as passive and receptive, but it involves active thinking and interpreting.

In language teaching, listening and reading can be grouped into receptive skills, this is in contrast with speaking and writing can be included into productive skills. As states by Nunan (1999) "Listening is a receptive skill. The receptive skills used in language acquisition: listening and reading enable the productive skills: speaking and writing". It means listening precedes speaking and reading precedes writing.

Listening skill is very important skill. It is very important for every person as communicative competence and to understand what people say clearly especially from English user. By having good listening skill we could prevent misunderstanding problem, and also could accept what people say accurately, especially to understand a foreigner who speak English.

Machado (2012) states that listening skill is the first language art skill learned, and it develops before a child speaks. Many children develop the ability to listen carefully to the speech of others during infancy and early childhood, others do not. Because language growth has describe as a receiving process followed by a sending process, a child's listening ability is important to speaking and future reading and writing success. Vandergrift (1999) states " Listening comprehension is a complex, active process in which listener must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation, retain what was gathered in all of the above and interpret it within the immediate as well as the larger socio-cultural context of the utterance.

Listening comprehension is not only an activity to listen the speakers but also the process trying to get the message from what speakers said. In this listening comprehension, listeners are asked to understand and catch the ideas of what they listen. Listening will become easier when we have to practice. Frazier and Solorzano (2002) state that the best way to improve listening comprehension is to practice listening.

Helgesen and Brown (2007) state there are several ways to look how deeply the listener thinks about what he or she hears:Appreciation (highest level), evaluation, inference, reorganization, and literal (lowest level).

In listening comprehension there are two processes, bottom-up and top-down processing (Helgesen and Brown, 2007).Bottom-up comprehension is the process to find out the information only after the act of listening activities. It means that the listeners understanding of the text will depend on the knowledge of: vocabulary, grammar and sounds.Top-down comprehension is the process where the listeners can find out the information of the listening material (lecture) based on: general knowledge life experience (content schema), knowledge of situational routines (textual schema).

To improving listening comprehension the students also need to use good strategies (Gabler and Scholnick, 2003): using what you have already know, scanning for the main idea, scanning for the important points, inferencing (making intelligence guesses), scanning for specific pieces of information, using context clues, and using structure and intonation clues.

King and Stanley (1989) state there are listening comprehension questions that are asked to the listener in listening comprehension, they are: Topic/ main idea; topic is the gist of a passage, the central thought, the chief topic of a passage expressed or implied in a word or phrase, the topic sentence of a paragraph, a statement in sentence form which gives the stated or implied major topic of a passage and the specific way in which the passage is limited in content or reference. Detail; detail questions ask the listener about specific pieces of information that are stated in a passage. Inference; inference is called as some things are not stated but they can be understood through details which are stated or through general knowledge. Inference is an interpretation or a conclusion based on the information that we hear. Restatement/ conclusion; restatement is the way to say something in different way but still has the same meaning. Then, conclusion is the final result from one text or one sentence that describes the text.

In addition, Helgesen and Brown (2007) state there are five types of listening comprehension question, they are: listening for specific information/ literal comprehension, listening for gist/ reorganization, inference, listening and making evaluation, and appreciation.

Larson (1984), descriptive text is a text which lists the characteristics of something. A descriptive text has social functions to describe a particular person, place or thing. A descriptive text is a text which says what a person or a thing is like. Its purpose to describe and reveal a particular person, place, or thing. White (1986) also states that descriptive text is drawing in words. We use descriptive text to say what something or somebody is pictured with words. We can describe a person, animals, plants, places, process, thoughts, or feelings.

According to Zumakhsin (2005), "descriptive text is to describe the things that we see". Descriptive text also a text which describes something that appeal directly to the sense like Warriner (1982) says that "descriptive paragraph is giving a picture in words that appeal directly to the sense (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste)". He said a descriptive paragraph is normally full of vivid verbs and precise adjective. It depends on details, not action to hold the readers interest. Moreover, according to Gerrot and Wignel (1998), descriptive text is a text which describes what a person or thing is like. Seyler (2004) states that descriptive text has some characteristic as follow: generic structure consists of identification and description, focus a specific participant, use attributive and identifying processes, frequent use of epithets and classifiers in nominal groups, use of simple present tense.

Hammond (1992)"The Generic Structure of Descriptive Text consists of Identification and Description. Identification: Identifies phenomenon to be described. Description: Describes parts, qualities, characteristics, etc. Descriptive often uses 'be' and 'have'. Tense which is often used is Simple Present Tense. However, some times it uses Past tense if the thing to be described doesn't exist anymore.

There are the language features of descriptive text according Jenny Hammond (1992): focus on specific participants (My English teacher, Andini's cat, My favourite place), use of simple present tense, use of simple past tense if extinct, verbs of being and having 'Relational Processes' (My mum is really cool, She has long black hair), use of descriptive adjectives (strong legs, white fangs), use of detailed Noun Phrase to give information about the subject (a very beautiful scenery, a sweet young lady, very thick fur), use of action verbs 'Material Processes' (It eats grass, It runs fast) , use of adverbials to give additional information about behaviour (fast, at tree house), and the last use of Figurative language (John is as white as chalk).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive study which focuses on one variable. It describes about serves to describe, fond of describing (Hornby, 1974). This research aimed to find out the student's ability in listening comprehension on descriptive text. Gay (1990) says that descriptive research involves collecting data to test or answer question concerning the current statues of the subject study.

Gay (1990) states population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group which she or he would like the result of the study to generalize whereas sample is a number of individuals for a study in such way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they are selected.

The population of this research was the students' of 2nd semester English study program FKIP-UR. There were 3 classes with 30 students in each class. The total number is 90 students. The reason for choosing the 2nd semester students English study program FKIP-UR as the subject of this research is that they have already taken listening 1 class in the first semester.

The sample was selected by using cluster sampling technique. The population was class A, class B and class C of the second semester students. The writer randomly chose the class to be the sample by preparing three pieces of paper. The three pieces of paper were folded. In one paper, the writer wrote down the words "the sample". After that the writer asked the chairman to choose one piece of paper. The chairman who got the paper which was written the words "the sample" was the class to be the sample of this research. Finally, the writer got class B to be the sample and for trying out the instrument the writer got class A.

The instrument of the test that the writer constructs was multiple choices. It means the students have required choosing the best answer of the provided questions.Multiple choices were used because it was easy to score and it can avoid the ambiguous answer. According to Haladyna (1999) "Multiple choice testing is an efficient and effective way to assess a wide range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and abilities".In this research, the test was designed in the form of multiple choices that were adapted from **STeP** (Stands for **S**tandadized *Test Practice)* written by Michael Dupre (2013), http://www.elllo.org/english/STeP.htm. The test was designed for the intermediate level. The test consisted of 9 kinds topics of descriptive text. The reason for choosing the topic is based on the syllabus. In each topic student has been given by 4 questions. Thus, the number of all the questions is 36 items in the form multiple choice questions. The duration time for doing the test was 36 minutes.

Before administering the test, the writer conducted a try-out. The try-out was used to know the quality of the test items, particularly to determine the facility value (difficulty level) of the test items. The test items would be accepted if the difficulty level (FV) is between 0, 30-0, 70 and it would be rejected if the difficulty level (FV) is below 0,30 (difficult) and over 0,70 (easy) (Heaton, 1975:173).

The form to calculate the difficulty level is as follows:

$$FV = \frac{R}{N}$$

FV   = item difficulty   Heaton (1975:178)
R   = the number of correct answer
N   = the number of students taking test.

After collecting all the data, the writer analyzed the data. The students' individual scores from the test were computed by using the formula which was adapted from Harris (1974:79).

$$M = \frac{X}{N} \times 100$$

M= individual score
X= the number of correct answer
N = the number of item

The score of students' ability in the test were being classified to determine their level of the ability. Therefore, the classification was as follows:

The Level of Ability

NO.	Test Score	Level of Ability
1.	80-100	Excellent
2.	60-79	Good
3.	50-59	Average
4.	0-49	Poor

Adapted from Harris (1974)

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The result of this test was calculated by using formula from Heaton (1971). After analyzing the try out data and based on the scale difficulty level (0.30-0.70), the writer found that the 7 items were rejected and need to be revised. The items with difficulty level above 0, 70, they were items number 24, 31, and 35, while the items with difficulty level below 0, 30, they were items number 6, 8, 28, 36.

Before the writer continued her activity to administering a test to the students, the writer has revised the items on the instrument. The test was multiple choice type questions in order to know the students' ability in listening comprehension on descriptive text. Before the test was administered to the students, the writer found out the students' ability in listening comprehension on descriptive text by computing the data using formula from Harris. In short, the ability of students' in listening comprehension to descriptive text can be classified as presented in the following table:

Table 4.1
The Level of Students' Ability in Listening Comprehension on Descriptive Text

No	Test Score	Level of Ability	Frequency	Percentage
1.	80-100	Good to excellent	1	3,3 %
2.	60-79	Average to good	3	10%
3.	50-59	Poor to average	10	33,3%
4.	0-49	Poor	16	53,3%
	TOTAL		30	100%

The data on the table 4.1 can be presented in the following figure.
Figure 4.1The Level of Students' ability
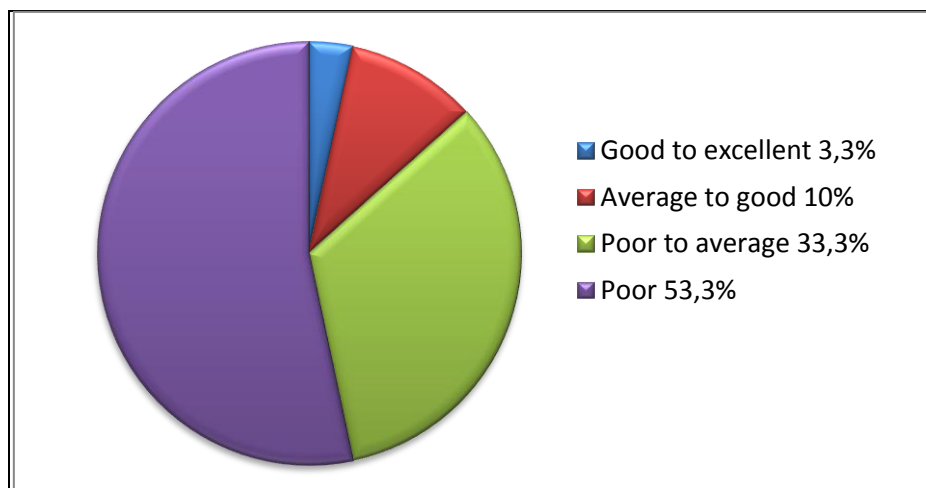
From the distribution of the data, it shows that more than half of the students (53, 3%) were at poor level, and one third of the students (33, 3%) were at poor to average level, 10% were at average to good level, and only 3, 3% was at excellent level. So, from the result of the calculation, the majority of student's ability in listening

comprehension on descriptive text was at *poor* level. The data also indicated that the highest score obtained by students was 91 while the lowest score was 25.

The writer also classified the questions based on four aspects in listening comprehension on descriptive text, there were: main idea, detail, inference, and restatement. After the data were calculated, it was found that the ability of second semester students of English Study Program FKIP-UR in listening comprehension on descriptive text based on the aspects of listening comprehension questions were follows.

Table 4.6

The Mean Score and Students' ability in Four Aspects of Listening Comprehension on Descriptive Text

Listening Aspect	Mean Score	Ability Level
Finding Main Idea	44, 81	Poor
Finding Detail	60, 37	Average to Good
Identifying Inference	50, 00	Poor to Average
Identifying Restatement	40, 37	Poor

From the distribution of the data on the table, it shows that identifying restatement was the students' lowest score and finding detail was the students' highest score. The mean score of identifying restatement falls to **poor** level ability (40, 37). It means identifying restatement was the most difficult in listening comprehension on descriptive text for the students. The mean score of finding detail falls to **Average to Good** level ability (60, 37). It means that more than half of students could find detail well in listening comprehension on descriptive text. Identifying inference and finding main idea were **poor to average** (50, 00) and **poor** (44, 81) level ability. It indicated that the majority of students' ability in listening comprehension on descriptive text was at **poor** level.

CONCLUSION

There were 30 students participated in this research. More than half of students (16) 53, 3% were in **poor** level of ability, 10 students (33, 3%) were in **poor to average** level ability, 3 students (10%) were in **average to good** level ability, and only 1 student (3, 3%) was in **good to excellent** level of ability. In addition the average score of the students was 48, 33. It means that the ability of the second semester students of English study program of FKIP-UR in listening comprehension on descriptive text was at **poor** level of ability. It leads to an interpretation that many of the students still have problems in listening comprehension particularly in listening to descriptive text.

For each classification of question, the mean score of the students' ability for finding main idea was 44, 81, finding detail was 60, 37, identifying inference was 50 and identifying restatement was 40, 37. It means that finding detail was the students'

highest score and identifying restatement was the students' lowest score of second semester students of English study program FKIP-UR in listening comprehension on descriptive text.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Concerning the result of study and conclusions, the writer would like to propose some recommendations related to the students' ability in listening comprehension on descriptive text. The recommendations are follows:

    i. The students need to improve their listening ability by practicing more listening exercise and listening to English talks as many as possible by enlarging an expanding on register in various field of study.

    ii. The students also should motivate themselves to listen to more listening materials, especially listening comprehension on descriptive text.

    iii. Besides, the students also should learn more about the strategies that can be useful in listening especially in answering comprehension question.

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