STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN LISTENING AND UNDERSTANDING SPEECH

Yunie Amalia Rakhmyta

STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon, Aceh Tengah, Aceh.
Amalia.nirfan@gmail.com

Abstract. Communication is the most important thing in human life. It was given to construct the best interaction between people. From the initial observation, most students have difficulties in understanding what they have listened to. The purpose of this research is to find out the most difficulties faced by students at second-semester unit B English department STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon academic year of 2017/2018. The methodology is descriptive method with qualitative approach. The techniques of collecting data are observation, test, interview, and documentation. Eventually, in finding describe some difficulties faced by the students in understanding the speech. The students do not gain satisfactory scores, low motivation in listening, lacked vocabularies and grammar obstacles. Most of all, the most difficulties is the speed. Students felt easier when listen to the slower speech rather than normal or faster speed. It is due to pronunciation style and intonation.

Key words: difficulties, listening, understanding, speech

Introduction

Communication is a means of exchanging information between two individuals.Language is one type of communication, but not the only one. For exampletraffic light function that communicates instructions from symbols that are notemphasize language. Language is essentially a means ofcommunication among the members of a society.In the expression of culture, language is afundamental aspect. English is currently one of the most widely spoken and written languages worldwide, with some 380 million native speakers. Through the global influence of native English speakers in cinema, music, broadcasting, science, and the Internet in recent decades, English is now the most widely learned second language in the world. Today, English is studied as a foreign language throughout the world and employed by a majority of Internet users. Because a working knowledge of English is required in many fields and occupations, education ministries around the world mandate the teaching of English to at least a basic level, Indonesia isnot an exception.

As Indonesian people who receive English as foreign language, English is studied at various levels of school, even in International school, English is used as intermediate language.In introducing English at first, the learners are usually presented with listening material. This view of listening is based on the assumption stated by Kriyantono (2008: 236), that the main function of listening in second language learning is to facilitate understanding of spoken. Different form of of syntactic, morphological, pronunciation, semantic, and pragmaticrequires qualified language skills. Indonesian people have amount reasons for facing difficulties in listening English. According to Nemser in Natalie Waterson (1975: 470), there is strong evidence to suggest that the second language learners does not simply transfer first language structures onto second language.

As Indonesian certainly often make mistakes in expressing English. An observation obtained toward the students of English department in second semester unit B STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon. Students stated that understanding meaning in listening subject was the most difficult things to do. Most of all is listening for a speech presentation.

One previous study, Saifulah (2013) give the discussion for students' difficulties in listening to the methodology of the way teachers' teach, it should also analyze the students' factors in listening. Because the problems does not only come from the teacher, but also from the students, such as lack of motivation in studying or so on. Meanwhile in this research, the writer fully analyse the problems faced by the students, it is based on writer asumpsition that the difficulties comes from students, considering the writer also as one of the lecturer at STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon. Thus the results of this reseach in the future will be used directly by the writer to improve learning methods and learning atmosphere, especially in listening speech.

Aim of speech is to convey useful and important statement to the listener. To become a listener should prepare thought to focus on what being presented. Moreover, for the foreign language learners, understanding a speech is more than just hearing. It such a complicated thing considering different background of the speaker. Judging from the facts of difficulties faced by the students in listening English speech, an analysis need to be done towardstudents in second semester of English department STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon especially in listening subject. Through this research, it is hoped to find the major problem faced by students in listening comprehension. This research will apply the title as below: "Students' Difficulties in Listening and Understanding Speech".

Based on above exposure, the purpose of this research is to find out the most difficulties faced by students at second-semester unit B English department STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon academic year of 2017/2018. Theoretically this research will give description about the main problem faced by students in second semester unit B of English department STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon in academic year 2017/2018 especially in listening speech ability. Practically this research will help and motivate students to learn English, and get important information from the contents of this reserach especially in the field of listening. For the Lecturer, this research will help other lecturers to be aware toward difficulties faced by students especially in listening subject so hopefully lecturer will resolves the problem earlier. For other learners the result of this research are not only to provide motivation to students in English Department who are analyzed but also to all students outside STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon for those who learn foreign language especially English. For other researchers, this research will give educative information especially in listening and can be a source or reference for further research.

Literature Review

1. Difficulties

Sabri (1995: 88) states that the difficulties in learning is a condition that causes students can not learn properly. According to Sabri difficulties in learning is the difficulty of students in receiving or absorbing lessons in school. Difficulties can be seen from students score either in one subject or more. Learning difficulties in the students can be detected by the mistakes of students in doing the tasks and test questions.

2. Difficulties in listening

Bloomfield A, et al (2010) state that the obvious obstacles are pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and speed.

1). Pronunciation   Pronunciation

of words may also differ greatly from the way they appear in print (Bloomfield:2010). There are students who simply can not grasp what the speaker said because of the difference pronunciation of the speaker, but some are able to catch. Usually the pronunciation difference is due to the accent of the speaker and intonation. So even though the speaker speaks in fluent english it would still carry the speaker respective accent.

2). Grammar and Vocabulary

Another point to be considered is vocabulary and grammar. In this case of grammar and vocabulary, some students who have not been able to master grammar such as in some tenses. Moreover, many students do not not mastered vocabulary, such as realted to the medic, technology, even for the daily vocabulary.

3). Speed

Another issue to take into account is that oral texts exist in real time and need to be processed quickly. In most cases, listeners must process the text at a speed determined by spakers, which is generally quite fast (Bloomfield). Meaning that the listeners can not normally control the speed at which listeners must process the delivered discourse. Many reasons of students are difficult to listen because the density of the speaker. When listening to a foreign language students prefer a slightly slower talk because what is heard is a foreign language.

3. Listening

Newton (2009:37) define Listening as a basic step in speaking and is an early stage in developing the first language. It is a natural way to get the language in use, so it all depends on listening. Speaker and listener are an active person, regard to the interaction between both provide an understanding of what has been heard. Listening is a basic skill for different learning processes. It is an active behaviour. Flohr and Paesler (2006:3) states there are three basic steps in listening involves hearing, understanding and judging. When a listener receiving some information through listen to something, it means that the listener have to give full concentration to it, because the listener prosecuted to hearing and understanding what the speaker said and the listener have to do some responses when listen to something. Listening to understand requires more than decoding what is heard. Do listening depends to the listener, when do listening the listener have to focus to the sentences of speaker and input data to the ear will in concept and comprehend in mind.

Students spend more time in listening and they know more things through listening. It is mean that speaker and listener have a role of each. Especially to a listener should be able to use the oracy part of the ear because from ear to ear will get something unknown to know and understanding. That ability has become a success in communication. and to make the listener understand the speaker should have good in speakers' pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and grasping his meaning. All is get as well speaking, reading and writing starts from listening, so listening is an initial skill set to get the others. Brown (2001: 119) states that "one of component of speaking that implied is listening. People could speak a language and also listening but perhaps a good

speaker that unwisely is often valued more highly than a good listener". Therefore need to pay close attention to listening as a performance for assessment in the classroom. Listening is always compared with speaking because the two are interconnected in one of the same moments. Being a good listener will leading to be a good speaker

4. Understanding

Wiggins and McTighe (1998) offer specific definition of understanding which is all about digging deeper, continually asking the essential questions, and rethinking. Understanding offer specific guidelines on how to frame desired and put much greater emphasis on the goal of transfer because an essential indicator of understanding is the ability to transfer learning to new setting and challenges, as opposed to mere recall. All people have to mastered understanding in all situation, would like to know anything and always asking for something. All understanding that has been obtained will be a responsibility for what is understood. As well challenge to transfer lessons back to others in their own way.

Khalifa (2017:51) state that understanding frequently involves impressive excersise of cognitive ability. Understanding surely requires this kind of ability. Cognitive is how a person carries out his ideas or thoughts. When understanding someone will filter what is obtained and rethinking what is understood.

5. Speech

English Oxford dictionary (2014:553) define speech as mind expression in the form of words addressed to the people, discourse in the ready to be spoken in front of audiences. The speaker must have prepared everything in the meaning of the contents of the speech that will be conveyed to the listener. The content of the speech is in the form of knowledge of something that will be informed to the listener so that the listener is able to understand what has been conveyed. Although a speech is not a so formal thing but the listeners generally filter the meaning of a speech.

In the world of communication, the person is called the orator and what is conveyed is called speech (oration). Iriantara and Surachman (2006:190) said speech is the art of persuasion, speech as an art to persuade, influence and convince audiences. In speech, art itself can be interpreted as a language of beauty that is justifying (corrective), commanding (instructive), encouraging (sugestive) and maintaining (defensive). A speaker should be able to attract the attention so that the listener focus on what the speaker means.

Research Method

1.Research Location

This research implemented at STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon Jl. Yos Sudarso Takengon toward second semester unit B of English Department students academic year of 2017/2018.

2. Research Specific Purpose

This research specifically will aims for the students students at second-semester unit B English department STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon academic year of 2017/2018. Based on problem of study, the purpose of this research is to find out the most difficulties faced by students at second-semester unit B English department STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon academic year of 2017/2018.

3. Research Approach

The research analyze students' difficulties toward listening a speech by using descriptive method with qualitative approach. Qualitative is a social phenomenon that occurs from the view of participants, the participants are the people who are giving information about the events either a debrief, or a participants' perception (Sugiyono:2014). Qualitative research tend to study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to the researcher. Based on the definition of descriptive method the researcher would like to describes what are students difficulties in listening a speech and get more data from the students about their major problem without forces by give some speeches, then the students have to listen it. Furthermore, the researcher will involve students in Question and Ask (Q&A) about their difficulties in understanding the speech.

In this research the qualitative used for getting the research purpose. The researcher only describes any information that found during the research. This research design will implemented to find out the most difficulties faced by students at second-semester unit B English department STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon academic year of 2017/2018

4. Source of Data

The population in this research is second semester unit B of English Department students academic year of 2017/2018. There are 19 students in a class. According to Sugiyono (2014:117) "The population is generalized region of an object that has certain qualities and characteristic set forth by researcher to study and then retract the conclusion". Based on the explanation, the researcher will involve the whole 19 students as data source.

5. Techniques of Data Collection

The techniques of collecting data will be done through observation, test, interview and documentation. The test will give the test includes several kind of speech to be listened. The speech already through a validity test. Researceher divides the speech into several testbased on Bloomfield theory includes pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and speed. This test is used to know the students understanding about speech. The test consists of 4 test belong to speed, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. All items have some points that to be the questions of test. The first audio speech provides the same speech but the researcher will give three times to play the speech with difference speed and consists of 10 questions, first at normal speed, then above normal or faster speed, at the last speech under normal or slower. Then for the grammar test, the researcher provides the same speech and consist of 10 questions. Third, to test vocabulary the researcher provides the same speech audio and consist 10 questions. The last audio speech is pronunciation, the researcher give two English speeches audio which is read by native (American pronunciation) and Indonesian pronunciation with same scripts consists of 10 questions.

Interview carried out to strengthen the conclusions after the test. The researcher will conduct interview to obtain more valid data to determine the most difficulties faced by students during the test. "Documentation is a form of writing, drawing or monumental works of person. Documents in the form of images, such as photos, live pictures, sketches, and others" Sugiyono (2014). In this research, the researcher used documentary

in the form of writing such as speech script, answer sheet, interview sheet, and photograph.

6. Instrument of Data Collection

1). Observation Sheet

Observation sheet used to gather preliminary information, the researcher observes the student's activity in the listening class related to the speech.

2). Test Sheet

Test sheet used by the researcher is to give some speeches to the students, then give written questions relate to the content of the speech that has been listened before.

3). Interview Sheet

Interview sheet consist of several questions to strenghten the test result before. The interview is conducted to confirm the researcher's assumptions so that.

7. Data Analysis

1). Miles and Huberman Theory

According to Bogdan and Biklen in Moleong (2012:246), data analysis is an effort carried out with data, organizing data, sorting it into manageable units, synthesizing, finding and finding patterns, discovering of what is important and what is not official. Eventually, this research will use interactive model by Miles and Huberman. According to Miles and Huberman there are 3 components in the data analysis process; data reduction, data display and data verification.

2). Coding

To support final conclusion, the students scores will be calculated. The researcher use coding to locate data needed from data sources. Saldana (2010) argues about "coding in qualitative research as the manual focuses exclusively on codes and coding and how they play a role in the qualitative data analytic process. Researcher using coding to obtain and count the data. The researcher used the coding to identify the number of errors in the test. The value will be such; the one who make a mistake given 1 code, the one who do not make mistake given 0 code, and the one who do not answer given 1 code. The coding results will be accumulated to strengthen the final conclusion about the diffculties faced by students in understanding speech throug listening subject..

Finding and Discussion

1. The Result of Observation

In this research, observation is emphasizing on finding the students' difficulties in understanding the speech. There are some factors catch in the class; less concentrated when do the listening, students look confuse in listening speech, students feel much easier to listen the music than listen to the speech, lack of vocabularies, and speaker speed. In addition, from the observation the researcher figure out that some students give much attention meanwhile some others are bored. According to the result of observation the students have not mastery and comprehend the the aim of speech yet.

2. The Result of Test

The test consists of 4 items includes speed, grammar, vocabulary and

pronunciation. In the speed test to speed listening, the researcher gave a test to students by giving the speech at normal, faster and slower through a player application that can be set of the speed. The second test is grammar, the researcher commands to students fill in sentence or phrases to be written in the blank part of the answer sheet and students also have to determine what tenses are in the sentence that they found. Further, the researcher in terms of testing the vocabulary adopted the opinion of Newmark (1988) which classifies several methods of translation, one of which is word for word translation, and from there researcher examines students' vocabulary skill. The last one is pronunciation test as the last test where the researcher give the commands to completing the sentence, Rahman (2014) suggests that the complete sentence learning model is a model that contains steps that support the achievement of increasing listening skills. The data of the test describe as follows:

a. Speed

From 19 students at second semester English department Unit B STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon, sum of error in listening of normal speech are 170 items, for faster speech are 174 items, and slower speech there 146 items.

b. Grammar

From 19 students at second semester English department unit B STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon, sum of error in comprehending speech in grammar are 156 items. From the result of the grammar function of speech, it is influences in students' ability to understanding the speech also.

c. Vocabulary

From 19 students second semester English department unit B STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon, sum of error in comprehending speech of vocabulary are 154 items. It shows that, the function of vocabulary in the speech is influences in students' ability to understanding the speech or the students still have lack of vocabularies.

d. Pronunciation

Based on 19 students at second semester English department unit B STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon, sum of error in comprehending speech are 162 items of American pronunciation and 136 items of Indonesian pronunciation. It means, the function of American pronunciation speech is influences in students' ability than Indonesian pronunciation to understand the speech.

It means that speed of speech contribute major influences in students' ability to understanding the speech. The faster of person who reads the speech becomes more difficult for students to understand the speech and otherwise the slower of person who reads the speech is easier for students to understand the speech. Followed by pronunciation in the second place.

It can be assumed from the first all part field test that the highest difficulty face by the students in understanding speech according to students' test items is speed and pronunciation. Researcher concludes that from four difficulties served, the most difficulties faced by students in understanding speech sequentially are speed, followed by pronunciation, then vocabulary, and the last is grammar. As can be seen in the diagram below:
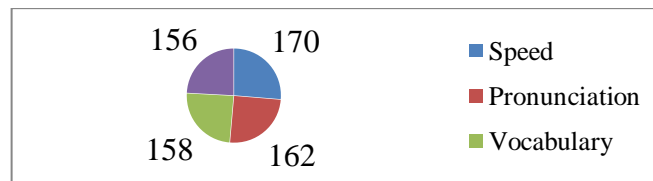
Figure 1. Most Dominant Error in Understanding Speech

From the figure above, it concluded that speed of a speech as the highest difficulty which consist 170 error items. The next difficulty is pronunciation, there are 162 error items. Furthermore, vocabulary is the third degree of difficulty in understanding the speech with 158 error items. The last one is grammar with 156 error items. It can be concluded from the first field test, the highest difficulty faced by students in comprehending speech are speed and pronunciation.

3. The Result of Interview

The researcher took the conclusion from the most answers from students. The interview questions is made based on the suspicions of the researcher from result of the answers test. The finding shows that the students find difficult to understand speech caused by the speech speed and some speech use native pronunciation. It means that the students still have not mastered the foreign language yet. Speech is the expression of mind in the form of words addressed to the people, discourse to be spoken in front of audiences. Llistening is an active process in kind of communication in order to get the goal of communication itself. People spend more time in listening than other because listening has important functions for each human. People get the information from the listening so that understanding the information that come is crucially needed. Listening is an early stage in order to people can get the other stage. Based on the explanation in the previous chapter, there are some results that the researcher make on this point. There are an observation result, test result and interview result. Focus of this research is to find out the most difficulties faced by students at second-semester unit B English department STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon academic year of 2017/2018. From this research find out that students' capability in understanding speech is not even in average rate.

The underlying conclusion taken from three main aspect: result of observation, test result and interview. The result of observation towards students in understanding speech are:

1) The students not interested of in listening subject.
2) Some of students can not understand about what they are listen.
3) The speed of speaker's tone is to be difficult for students in listening.
4) Students are less concentrated when do the listening.

Based on the interview as well, the researcher concludes that the students' difficulties in understanding speech are:

1) students can not understand what the speaker says when the speaker speaks faster.
2) Speed problem is most difficult to understanding the speech.
3) Students feel easier to understand the speech in slower rate.

4) Students feel easier to understand Indonesian pronunciation in speech presentation much better than American pronunciation.
5) Students do not get satisfactory score in listening subject.

The result of test shows most difficulties faced by the students in understanding speech are speed and pronunciation problem.

1) Students look bewildere during listening to a faster speech even in normal rate speed.
2) Some students do not fully understand the speech even in normal rate of speech.
3) Few students are able to answer the test, it means that need to increase learn and practice for students.

Conclusion and Suggestion

1. Conclusion
Based on the research finding in previous chapters the researcher makes the conclusion of this research. The general conclusion that can be taken is is in fact, there are some factual issues which is supported by Bloomfield theory that in most foreign language learner faced difficulties in understanding speech or speak especially in listening subject. SO do the students of second semester of English department at unit B STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon in academic year 2017/208. Researcher draw conclusion based on observation, test and interview. Speed problem is the main difficulty. Followed by pronunciation problem in the second place. Then, followed by vocabulary problem.The last, is grammar problem as students' difficulties in understanding speech presentation. Overall, from this research assumed that students listening skill below an adequate rate. More practice and learn definitely needed to eradicate all difficulties. In the future it is expected all efforts will be able to improve this situation.

2. Suggestion
There are some suggestions that for lecturer and students and who has correlated in educational world. The suggestions are:
1) The students have to learn and pratice more listening skill at a faster rate, as well as speech, sermons or others.Practice to listen something that using American pronunciation or Indonesian pronunciation, exercise for grammar and increase the vocabulary, because all of them need to understanding the speech.
2) The lecturer should have some methods and give motivation to the students for helping the them in handling the difficulties to understanding the speech.
3) For further research, it is recommended to examine the techniques/methods that can be applied in the listening class so that the students can be proficient at listening.

References

Bloomfield, A. et al. (2010). What Makes Listening Difficult? Factors Affecting Second Language Listening Comprehension. retrieved october 13, 2018. From http://www.google.es/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=3&ved=0CEgQFjAC&url=http://wwwdliflc.edu/file.ashx?path%3Darchive/documents/CASL_study_FINAL_Lit_Rev.pdf&ei=kFfMUu_vJ8PE0QXVm4HoDg&usg=AFQjCNGUJKlMDBEcB8vygOP4Hd2mh1uIQg.

Brown, H, D. 2004. Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices. Pearson Education. New York.

English Oxford Dictionary. 2010 (3rd ed). Oxford University Press. United Kingdom.

Flohr, S., & Paesler, P. 2006. Teaching Listening and Speaking. GRIN Verlag. Germany.

Iriantara, Y., & Surachman, Y. 2006. Public Relations Writing. Simbiosa Rekatama Media.Bandung.

Khalifa, K. 2017. Understanding, Explanation and Scientific Knowledge. Cambridge University Press. United Kingdom.

Miles, M, B., Huberman, A, M. 2014. Qualitative Data Analysis, A Methods Sourcebook, Edition 3. Sage Publications. USA.

Moleong, L.,J. 2013. Metode Penelitian Kualitatif (Ei Revisi). PT. Remaja Rosdakarya.Bandung .

Newmark, P. 1988. A textbook of Traanslation. Prentice Hall International Ltd. United Kingdom.

Newton, N., J. 2009. Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking. Routledge. NewYork.

Rahman.2014. Model mengajar & bahan pembelajaran. Alqa. Sumedang.

Rachmat Kriyantono, S.Sos., M.Si, Public Relations Writing dan Publisitas Korporat, Jakarta:2008, Prenada Media Group. P.236

Sabri, A. 1995. Psikologi Pendidikan. Pedoman Ilmu Jaya. Jakarta.

Saifulah, A. 2013. A Descriptive Study on the Problems of Teaching Listening on the Seventh Grade Students of SMP Negeri 4 Banjarmasin Barat Academic Year 2012/2013. A thesis.

Saldana, J. 2014. Qualitative Data Analysis, AMethods Sourcebook, Edition 3. Sage Publications. USA.

Sugiyono. 2014. Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Pendekatan Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan R&D, Alfabeta. Bandung.

Waterson, Natalie and Catherine Snow, 1975. The Development of Communication, London:, Great Britain

Wiggins, G.P., & McTighe, J. 1998. Understanding by Design. Prentice Hall. Upper Saddle River, NJ.