EXPLORING JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL EFL STUDENTS' STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME LISTENING ANXIETY

A THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of The Requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Pendidikan* in English Education

By:

ATIK SAADA
SN. 2520081

ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FACULTY EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI
K.H. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID PEKALONGAN

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2024

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Dengan ini mohon agar skripsi tersebut segera dimunaqosahkan.

Demikian nota pembimbing ini dibuat untuk digunakan sebagaimana mestinya. Atas perhatian Bapak, saya sampaikan terima kasih.

Wassalamu'alaikum Wr.Wb.

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MOTTO

“Man Jadda Wajadda”
Siapa yang bersungguh – sungguh maka akan berhasil
Whoever is serious will succeed
Listen with the will to learn
- Umarine ramaru –

ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the types of anxiety experienced by students while listening and strategies used to overcome listening anxiety. This research used a case study approach. One teacher and three students volunteered to participate in this study. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The findings of this study show the students experienced anxiety during listening classes based on its types, namely emotional listening anxiety indicates by physical reactions such as heart palpitations, sweaty hands, and trembling. Worry listening anxiety marked by tension and worry during listening classes, and anticipatory fear listening anxiety marked by students experience fear before attending listening classes due to a lack of understanding of the material and limited vocabulary. This research also found strategies to overcome listening anxiety, namely metacognitive strategies such as making plans, monitoring understanding, and evaluating understanding before attending listening classes, cognitive strategies through reviewing knowledge, making conclusions, and summarizing keywords, and socio-affective strategies through discussing and collaborating with peers to verifying understanding. This study concludes an empirical insight on how students raise awareness of listening anxiety with strategies to reduce their anxiety during listening.

Keywords: Listening Anxiety, Metacognitive Strategies, Cognitive Strategies, Socio-affective Strategies

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan jenis-jenis kecemasan yang dialami oleh siswa saat mendengarkan dan strategi-strategi yang digunakan siswa untuk mengatasi kecemasan mendengarkan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus. Seorang guru dan tiga siswa sukarela untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur. Temuan studi ini menunjukkan bahwa para siswa mengalami kecemasan selama kelas mendengarkan berdasarkan jenisnya, yaitu kecemasan mendengarkan emosional yang ditunjukkan dengan reaksi fisik seperti detak jantung yang cepat, tangan berkeringat, dan gemetar. Kecemasan mendengarkan ditandai dengan ketegangan dan kekhawatiran selama kelas mendengarkan, dan kecemasan mendengarkan yang ditandai dengan ketakutan anticipatory ditandai dengan pengalaman ketakutan siswa sebelum mengikuti kelas mendengarkan karena kurangnya pemahaman materi dan kosakata yang terbatas. Penelitian ini juga menemukan strategi untuk mengatasi kecemasan mendengarkan, yaitu strategi metakognitif seperti membuat rencana, memantau pemahaman, dan mengevaluasi pemahaman sebelum mengikuti kelas mendengarkan, kognitif strategi melalui meninjau pengetahuan, menarik kesimpulan, dan merangkum kata kunci, serta strategi sosio-afektif melalui berdiskusi dan berkolaborasi dengan teman sebaya untuk memverifikasi pemahaman. Studi ini menyimpulkan wawasan empiris tentang bagaimana siswa meningkatkan kesadaran akan kecemasan mendengarkan dengan strategi untuk mengurangi kecemasan mereka selama mendengarkan.

Kata kunci: kecemasan mendengarkan, metakognitif strategi, kognitif strategi, sosio-affektif strategi

PREFACE

Our prayers and thanks go out to Allah SWT, who has blessed us His presence and dignity and given me wisdom, health, and patience to write my thesis, "**EXPLORING JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL EFL STUDENTS' STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME LISTENING ANXIETY"** It is submitted to the English Education Department, UIN K.H Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, to fulfil one of the research thesis requirements. There is much support from many people, which enables this proposed study to be completed. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following people from the bottom of my heart:

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

One of the key components in language development is the acquisition of listening skills. Listening has an important place in learning as it is one of the four major skills in language acquisition (Renudekavi, 2014). This skill allows students to comprehend information and messages delivered in English. Listening is the ability to understand oral messages conveyed by others (Brown & Yule, 1983). Listening is a complex cognitive activity that involves the skills of receiving, decoding, interpreting, and understanding the language that is delivered. It is a fundamental aspect of language development and acts as a foundation for effective communication (Vandergrift, 2015). Thus, listening is an important skill in language development, allowing students to understand English messages. It involves receiving, decoding, interpreting, and comprehending language. It is a fundamental aspect of language development and the basis for effective communication. Moreover, a few students have issues related to listening, the most significant of which is listening anxiety.

Listening anxiety is the uncomfortable or fearful feeling experienced when listening to a foreign language. This discomfort or fear can be caused by internal factors, such as a lack of language proficiency, or external factors, such as an unsupportive environment. According to MacIntyre and Rudolph (2018), listening anxiety is a common phenomenon that occurs when learning a foreign language, and can be influenced by factors such as language proficiency level and learning environment. According to Adnan et al. (2020), anxiety related to listening is a state of tension, agitation, and concern that is associated with the human nervous system. It can happen when listeners are unable to understand what other people are saying. It can be brought on by internal issues like poor language skills or external issues like an unsupportive atmosphere. Huang

(2022) defines that listening anxiety as a student's foreign language feelings, such as tension, uneasiness, worries, and fears brought on by fear so that it is unable to comprehend throughout the listening process in class. Thus, listening anxiety is a typical sensation of unease or worry that can be brought on by either internal or external reasons. It may be brought on by inadequate language proficiency or an unwelcoming atmosphere. During class listening sessions, understanding may be hampered by this tense, agitated, and worried condition. It happens often when learning a language.

In the process of learning listening, understanding the types of listening is crucial to understanding the obstacles that students may encounter. According to Kim (2000), that emotion refers to the feelings or physiological reactions experienced by students during or after listening tasks. Meanwhile, anxiety concern refers to negative thoughts and self – doubt about a person's ability to understand listening input. Anxiety anticipator is associated with the fear or anxiety experienced by students before engaging in listening activities. Kim (2017) states there are two different kinds of anxiety related to listening: Self-Focused Apprehension, which is a worry about the threat of social evaluation, and Task-focused Apprehensions, which are worries about the efficient processing of auditory information. Thus, the types of listening anxiety are emotional, worry, anticipatory fear, self-focused apprehension, task focused apprehensions. In addition to the types of listening anxiety, there are factors that cause anxiety such as individual, input, and environmental.

In understanding the phenomenon of listening anxiety, it is important to identify various factors that can influence it. According to Serraj (2015), there are three components that affect listening anxiety: individual factors, input factors, and environmental factors. Individual factors include emotions and nerves, using the wrong strategy, and lack of practice. Input factors include lack of time to process, lack of visual support, speech, and difficulty levels. On the contrary, environmental factors consist of instructors, peers, and classroom environments. Vogely (1998) states that factors that cause

anxiety when listening to English are listening materials, listening processes, teaching methods. and listener personal factors. Prastiyowati (2019) states that factors causing anxiety are from teachers, students, materials and listening processes and the environment. As a result, listening anxiety is influenced by individual, input, and environmental factors. Individual factors include emotions, poor strategy, and lack of practice. Input factors include time, visual support, speech difficulty, and instructors. Environmental factors include materials, teaching methods, and listener personal factors.

In the face of listening anxiety, the use of the right strategies is important to helping students overcome. Sharif and Ferdouse (2012) states that strategies that can reduce listening anxiety are taking notes while listening, training listeners to use listening comprehension strategies, and trying to create a comfortable physical environment in the class. According to Oteir and Al – Otaibi (2020), there are four strategies to overcome listening anxiety: *First*, cognitive technique which includes taking notes, inferring to determine the meaning, and positive thinking. Second, an effective approach which included relaxation. Then, memory strategy which included teaching semantic mapping and keywords. Then, metacognitive strategy which included preparation, peer – seeking, and self- assessment. Tsai (2013) highlights that cognitive strategies and social affective strategies can reduce listening anxiety.

The ability of students to comprehend verbal information through listening, particularly in junior high school, is essential for academic achievement. However, not all students are comfortable or confident when listening to English. Student anxiety can hurt their ability to focus, comprehend, and interpret information students' focus and attention, hindering their ability to comprehend and accurately interpret auditory information. It is crucial for educators to create a supportive, low-anxiety environment to help students overcome these challenges (Goh, 2015). Anxiety caused by difficulty in quickly processing information can impair students'

audio comprehension (Benjamin & Lindsay, 2016). Anxiety can be caused by a variety of factors, such as a lack of confidence in language skills, fear of misunderstanding, or the inability to process information quickly. Anxiety can interfere with students' ability to focus and process information, and it can make it difficult for them to relax and enjoy the learning process (Brown, 2000). Agustiana (2019) states that in Indonesian junior high school students' experiences of listening anxiety, the student has a high effort to improve the listening skill. Based on initial interviews with students of junior high school, they showed signs of anxiety such as feeling nervous and panic. They also requested audio replays and had difficulty concentrating. Based on initial interviews with junior high school teachers, it can be reported that students' listening anxiety was caused by word comprehension, pronunciation, speed of speed, time constraint, comparison with peers, and lack of vocabulary. Students' listening skills, especially in junior high school, are crucial for academic success. However, some may experience anxiety or fear, hindering focus, comprehension, and interpretation due to language skills lack, fear of misunderstanding, or slow processing.

By looking at various factors, anxiety when students are in the listening classroom. Research investigating the causes of listening anxiety needed, thus further research is required. Therefore, the researcher conducted a deeper investigation on listening anxiety. This study aims to explore the causing factors and the strategies to overcome listening anxiety.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

Based on the background above, the researcher research questions as follows:

1. What are types of anxiety experienced by junior high school EFL students in practicing listening?
2. How do these students take initiative to reduce listening anxiety?

1.3 Aims of the Study

The aims of this study are as follows:

1. To describe the types of anxiety experienced by students while listening
2. To describe the student strategies used to overcome listening Anxiety

1.4 Operational definitions

To avoid misunderstanding about the terms in this study, the researcher provides some definitions related to the study as follows:

1. Listening anxiety can be described as the feeling of nervousness and fear of listening to a foreign language (Elkhafaifi, 2005)
2. Emotional Listening Anxiety can be defined as characterized by subjects feeling of discomfort, dislike, and physiological reaction such as pulse, sweating (Kimura, 2008)
3. Worry Listening Anxiety can be described as cognitive processes that occur before and during listening including self-doubt, fear of misunderstanding and concern about performance evaluation (Wang and Chen, 2021)
4. Anticipatory fear can be defined as a type of anxiety that arises before a listening task and is characterized by physiological arousal and cognitive worries about potential difficulties in comprehension (Hassan, 2019)
5. EFL students can be defined as someone who is learning English in a non – English speaking country (Brown, 2007)

1.5 Significance of the Study

The benefits of this study are can be theoretical, empirical, and practical:

1. Theoretical Use : This research will strengthen the theory from Kimura (2008) about anxiety during the listening process.
2. Empirical Use : This study will provide empirical insight into factors causing listening anxiety and strategies to overcome it.

3. Practical Use
   a For EFL students : This research provides benefits to students with insight into the types causes factors by listening anxiety and effective strategies to overcome it.
   b For teachers : This research hopes that EFL teachers will know and understand about the types of student anxiety during listening as well as its strategy in managing the anxiety during listening class.

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

This study conducted interviews with teachers and students to describe the types of anxiety experienced by students when attending listening classes. The findings of this research include emotional listening anxiety, this anxiety was marked by emotional and physical reactions such as sweaty hands and a racing heart. In addition, worrying listening anxiety marked Students experienced tension and anxiety during the listening class. Additionally, anticipatory fear through students experienced feelings of fear before attending listening classes because they were afraid, they would not keep up well. Understanding the components of listening anxiety, such as emotional, worry, and anticipatory fear, is essential for language learners. Addressing these elements can help learners manage their anxiety more effectively, leading to improved listening comprehension and overall language proficiency. By recognizing and controlling these responses, students can approach listening tasks with greater confidence, fostering a more positive and productive learning experience.

The students used three strategies to overcome listening anxiety. First, they use metacognitive strategies; planning beforehand by reading the provided materials and vocabulary; monitoring what they understand by focusing on keywords and being asked to repeat the material; evaluating understood by noting key points, and practicing listening exercises. Second, they use cognitive strategies such as the students reviewing the material, making conclusions from the listening class material, and summarizing the keywords obtained from the listening class before attending the listening class exercises. In addition, they use socio-affective strategies such as the students engaged in discussions to verify their understanding. The strategy was under the supervision of the teacher so that it could address students' anxiety during the listening class. Metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies have proven effective in overcoming listening anxiety, as

they help students develop self-awareness, regulate the learning process, and build social support, thereby enhancing their confidence and listening skills. Research shows that the use of these strategies not only reduces anxiety but also improves students' understanding and engagement in language learning.

5.2 Recommendation

Based on the result, this study appears to have several recommendations. Some recommendation related to this research are as follows:

From this research, the researcher recommends that EFL students identify anxiety factors based on their types and follow strategies to reduce anxiety during listening classes. This research can be used as a reference containing knowledge about types of listening anxiety, factors causing anxiety, and strategies useful for students in overcoming anxiety when dealing with listening anxiety. This study recommends that teachers pay attention to the factors causing listening anxiety. Teachers are advised to implement three strategies: metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies to address listening anxiety.

This research provides recommendations for future researchers who will study the same or similar research areas. Although this study only involved three participants, it would be better if future research involved more than three participants to strengthen the findings. Future researchers can also continue this study by conducting more in-depth investigations into other topics related to listening anxiety.

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