



**EXPLORING EFL STUDENTS' PERCEIVED
BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES TO COPE WITH
BACKGROUND NOISE INTERFERENCE IN
LISTENING COMPREHENSION**



VICKA AMELIA PUTRI

SN. 20522115

2026



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**ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING
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2026**

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Menyatakan bahwa yang tertulis dalam skripsi yang berjudul **“Project-Based Learning in Teaching Procedure Text to Junior High School: Practices and Challenges”** ini benar-benar karya saya sendiri, bukan jiplakan dari karya orang lain atau pengutipan yang melanggar etika keilmuan yang berlaku, baik sebagian atau seluruhnya. Pendapat atau temuan orang lain yang terdapat dalam skripsi ini dikutip berdasarkan kode etik ilmiah. Apabila skripsi ini terbukti ditemukan pelanggaran terhadap etika keilmuan, maka saya secara pribadi bersedia menerima sanksi hukum yang dijatuhkan.

Demikian pernyataan ini, saya buat dengan sebenar-benarnya.

Pekalongan, 11 Juni 2026
Yang membuat pernyataan,



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Yth. Dekan FTIK Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan

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Ketua Program Studi Tadris Bahasa Inggris

di Pekalongan

Assalamu 'alaikum Wr.Wb.

Setelah diadakan penelitian dan perbaikan, maka bersama ini saya kirimkan naskah Skripsi:

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Judul : *Project-Based Learning in Teaching Procedure Text to Junior High School: Practices and Challenges*

Dengan ini mohon agar skripsi tersebut segera dimunaqosahkan.

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

Wassalamu 'alaikum Wr.Wb.

Pekalongan, 11 Juni 2026

Pembimbing



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Has been established through an examination held on Friday, 3th July 2026 and accepted in partial fulfillments of requirments for the degree of Sarjana Pendidikan (S.Pd.)

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MOTTO

"It always seems impossible until it's done."

Nelson Mandela



PREFACE

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian-penelitian sebelumnya umumnya mengkaji dampak gangguan kebisingan latar belakang terhadap pemahaman menyimak mahasiswa EFL melalui pendekatan kuantitatif dan eksperimental, sehingga pemahaman mengenai pengalaman mahasiswa serta strategi yang mereka gunakan dalam konteks pembelajaran yang autentik masih terbatas. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi hambatan yang dialami mahasiswa EFL serta strategi yang mereka gunakan untuk mengatasi gangguan kebisingan latar belakang selama kegiatan pemahaman menyimak. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain studi kasus kualitatif yang melibatkan tiga mahasiswa semester pertama yang mengikuti mata kuliah Intensive Listening di sebuah universitas di Pekalongan. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi kelas dan wawancara semi-terstruktur, kemudian dianalisis secara tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa mengalami hambatan eksternal berupa kebisingan di dalam kelas dan kualitas audio yang kurang baik, serta hambatan internal seperti kecemasan, menurunnya rasa percaya diri, hilangnya konsentrasi, dan rendahnya keterlibatan dalam pembelajaran. Untuk mengatasi tantangan tersebut, mahasiswa menerapkan strategi kognitif, metakognitif, afektif, sosial, serta dukungan teknologi, seperti berfokus pada kata kunci, pemantauan diri, pengelolaan emosi, kolaborasi dengan teman sebaya, serta penggunaan fitur subtitle dan pemutaran ulang. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran menyimak yang efektif perlu didukung oleh lingkungan belajar yang kondusif serta penggunaan strategi menyimak dan dukungan teknologi untuk meningkatkan kemampuan pemahaman menyimak mahasiswa EFL.

Kata Kunci: *Gangguan Kebisingan Latar Belakang, Pemahaman Menyimak, Mahasiswa EFL, Hambatan Menyimak, Strategi Mengatasi.*

ABSTRACT

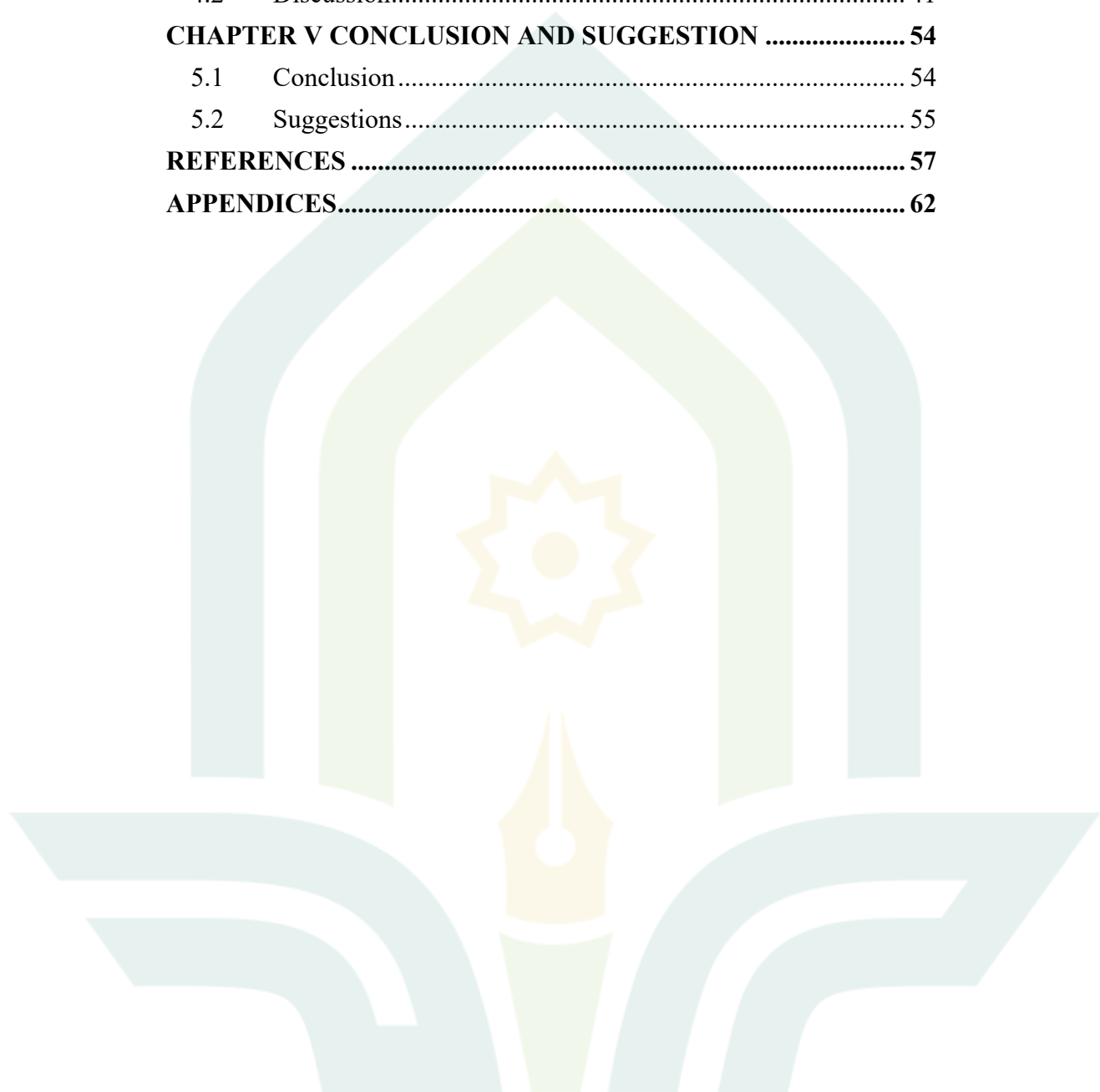
Previous studies have mainly examined the effects of background noise on EFL listening comprehension using quantitative and experimental approaches, leaving limited understanding of students' experiences and coping strategies in authentic classroom settings. Therefore, this study aimed to explore the barriers experienced by EFL students and the strategies they used to cope with background noise interference during listening comprehension activities. This study employed a qualitative case study involving fourth first-semester students enrolled in an Intensive Listening course at a university in Pekalongan. Data were collected through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews and analyzed thematically. The findings revealed that students experienced external barriers, including classroom noise and poor audio quality, as well as internal barriers such as anxiety, reduced self-confidence, loss of concentration, and low engagement. To cope with these challenges, students employed cognitive, metacognitive, affective, social, and technology-assisted strategies, including focusing on keywords, self-monitoring, emotional regulation, peer collaboration, and using subtitles and replay features. These findings suggest that effective listening instruction should promote supportive classroom environments and encourage the use of appropriate listening strategies and technological support to enhance EFL students' listening comprehension.

Keywords: Background Noise Interference, Listening Comprehension, EFL Students, Listening Barriers, Coping Strategies.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Listening comprehension was a fundamental skill in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), but many students experienced difficulty doing it due to various challenges (Goh, 2000). However, the presence of background noise presented a serious problem for listening comprehension as it made it more difficult. One important factor influenced listening comprehension was background noise, which could come from the surrounding environment and the listening content itself. This type of noise added difficulty for EFL learners, made it more difficult to focus and process spoken English effectively (Hamouda, 2013). The influence of noise interference and listening comprehension difficulties on EFL learners had been the subject of much research. Park and Lee (2023), for example, showed that prolonged sound interference could reduce hearing retention rates by as much as 40%. Similarly, Ahmed and Zhang (2021) emphasized how external distractions greatly impaired the accuracy and speed of second language processing. Thus, it could be concluded that background noise had a significant influence on students' difficulties in understanding listening materials, and therefore it needed to be considered an important concern in EFL learning.

Several previous studies explained that background noise during listening activities caused 70% of EFL students in Indonesia to experience difficulties in listening comprehension (Susanti & Harsono, 2021). This issue was exacerbated by classroom conditions in Indonesia, where limited infrastructure and high student-teacher ratios further worsened the problem (Aditya & Ratnasari, 2022). Additionally, rapid speech, varying accents, and a lack of clear pronunciation in authentic audio content made it increasingly difficult for students to extract meaning from spoken input (Hamouda, 2013). Based on the researcher's preliminary study, it was found that students often

experienced disturbances when participating in listening activities due to background noise, both from sounds outside the classroom and from equipment within the classroom. The results of observations and short interviews showed that the noise made it difficult for them to focus and often led to misunderstandings of information. These initial findings confirmed that noise interference was indeed a real problem that required further research.

Background noise interference was also caused by internal factors. One of the key internal factors was listening anxiety, which significantly affected students' comprehension abilities. The second internal factor was a lack of self-confidence. Some students admitted that they felt incapable and less confident in their ability to catch the message due to anxiety experienced during listening activities (Fanandi, 2022). Guswita and Sugirin (2021) reported that students often felt anxious when facing native-like pronunciation and fast-paced speech in English, which led to decreased confidence and poor comprehension. Moreover, cognitive functions such as working memory, attention control, and inhibition influenced how well listeners managed auditory input. Prodi, Visentin, and Borella (2023) found that children with better inhibitory control experienced less difficulty in understanding spoken language in noisy environments, highlighting how internal cognitive capacity modulated listening effort. Beebe, Beebe, and Redmond (2011) also classified internal noise as including thoughts, emotions, and physical conditions that distracted from effective listening, further supporting the idea that not all distractions were external. Similarly, Graham (2006) emphasized that low confidence and negative self-perceptions reduced learners' motivation to engage with listening tasks, resulting in mental blocks even in the absence of external interference.

To overcome background noise, EFL students used several strategies to improve their listening comprehension in noisy conditions. Cognitive strategies included predicting meaning

based on context, mentally filling in missing words, and focusing on keywords rather than every detail (Goh, 2000). Metacognitive strategies, such as adjusting listening techniques, practicing selective attention, and increasing exposure to a variety of listening conditions, also helped students manage background noise (Chen, 2005). Affective strategies referred to techniques that students used to manage their emotions, motivation, and attitudes during the learning process, such as reducing anxiety, increasing self-confidence, and maintaining a positive mindset, which were especially important in language learning contexts where challenges such as background noise had a negative impact on listening comprehension (Oxford, 1990). Social strategies referred to students' efforts to cope with background noise by asking for clarification or repetition from teachers or peers and discussing the listening content to confirm understanding when parts of the audio were unclear due to noise (Oxford, 1990). Additionally, some students used technological tools, such as subtitles, slowed audio, or noise-cancelling headphones, to enhance their listening experience (Izzah & Keeya, 2019).

Based on the aforementioned arguments, a closer investigation was required to understand how background noise interference affected EFL students. Therefore, this study aimed to explore the types of background noise interference in listening comprehension, how these diverse situations influenced students' perceptions of listening difficulties, and the strategies they used, which distinguished this study from previous research conducted in similar contexts. This research contributed to the field of EFL listening by providing a deeper understanding of how background noise affected students' listening comprehension and also extended existing theory by integrating both internal and external factors of noise interference into the listening process. Methodologically, this approach provided qualitative insights into students' perceived barriers and strategies, offering a more realistic view of the challenges of classroom listening. Pedagogically, these findings helped teachers design listening activities and learning

environments that reduced the effects of noise and improved comprehension.

1.2 Formulation of the problem

This research provides two research questions:

1. What barriers do EFL students' face when background noise interferes with their listening comprehension?
2. What strategies are used by the EFL students to cope with background noise interference during their listening comprehension activities?

1.3 Aim(s) of the Study

In line with the research questions, the aims of this study are:

1. To describe the barriers EFL students' face when background noise interferes with their listening comprehension.
2. To explore the coping strategies EFL students use to overcome background noise barriers during listening comprehension activities.

1.4 Operational Definition

To prevent any misunderstanding of the terms used in this study, the researcher offered the following definition:

1.4.1 Listening Comprehension

Listening comprehension is the process of understanding and making sense of spoken language (Nadig, 2013).

1.4.2 Background Noise Interference

Background noise interference was unwanted ambient sound that competed with the main signal, often reducing the listener's ability to understand or process auditory information accurately (Luther and Gentry, 2013).

1.4.3 Listening barriers

Listening barriers were defined as any internal or external factors that hindered students' ability to process, interpret, and understand spoken input during listening activities. These barriers included psychological factors such as anxiety or low concentration, linguistic challenges

such as limited vocabulary or difficulty recognizing speech sounds, and environmental disturbances such as background noise or poor audio quality. Listening barriers affected the listener's ability to focus, decode information, and construct meaning from the spoken text (Goh, 2000).

1.4.4 Listening strategies

Listening strategies were classified into four main types: cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. Cognitive listening strategies refer to all mental abilities and processes related to knowledge (Von Eckardt, 1995), such as applying linguistic and sociocultural knowledge to resolve problems. Some examples of cognitive performance included inferring, predicting, interpreting, storing, and recalling information, summarizing, translating, repeating, elaborating, resourcing, grouping, note-taking, substituting, and drawing images.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study aims to explore the barriers experienced by EFL students and the strategies they employ to cope with background noise interference during listening comprehension activities.

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

This research made a theoretical contribution to the field of second language acquisition, particularly in the area of listening skills. It deepened the understanding of how background noise influenced the cognitive and metacognitive processes involved in EFL students' listening abilities.

1.5.2 Empirical Significance

This study provided empirical insight into the specific difficulties EFL students faced due to background noise during listening comprehension. It also explored the various strategies students used to cope with these challenges, offering data-driven evidence on their effectiveness in real learning contexts.

1.5.3 Practical Significance

This study offered insight that helped students improve their listening skills despite background noise interference.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

This study explores the barriers experienced by EFL students and the strategies they employ to cope with background noise interference during listening comprehension activities. Based on the thematic analysis of classroom observations and semi-structured interviews, the findings reveal that background noise interference creates both external and internal barriers that affect students' listening performance. External barriers include classroom noise and poor audio quality, which disrupt students' ability to hear and process spoken information effectively. In addition, internal barriers such as anxiety, reduced self-confidence, loss of concentration, and low engagement emerge as significant factors that hinder listening comprehension. These barriers are closely interconnected, as external distractions often trigger negative emotional responses and reduce students' ability to maintain focus during listening activities.

Regarding the strategies used to cope with background noise interference, the findings show that students actively employ a range of cognitive, metacognitive, affective, social, and technological support strategies. Students focus on keywords, monitor their comprehension, regulate their emotions, seek clarification from peers, and utilize technological features such as subtitles and replay functions to compensate for missed information. These strategies help students minimize the negative impact of background noise and maintain their understanding of listening materials. Overall, the findings suggest that successful listening comprehension in noisy learning environments depends not only on the reduction of external noise but also on students' ability to apply appropriate coping strategies. Therefore, listening instruction should promote both effective classroom management and strategic listening practices to support EFL students in overcoming the challenges of background noise interference.

5.2 Suggestions

Based on the findings of this study, several suggestions are proposed for students, teachers, and future researchers.

5.2.1 For Students

Students are encouraged to develop effective listening strategies to overcome background noise interference during listening activities. They should practice maintaining concentration, using selective attention to focus on important information, and applying metacognitive strategies such as monitoring and evaluating their comprehension. Students are also encouraged to utilize technological tools such as subtitles and replay features to support their listening comprehension.

5.2.2 For Teachers

Teachers should create a more supportive listening environment by minimizing unnecessary classroom noise during listening activities. Teachers are also encouraged to ensure that audio equipment functions properly and that listening materials have clear audio quality. In addition, teachers should introduce and train students to use effective listening strategies that can help them cope with background noise interference.

5.2.3 For Future Researchers

This study has several limitations. The number of participants is limited and only involves one educational context. In addition, the study focuses on students' experiences and perceptions through interviews and observations, so the findings may be subjective. This research also does not measure the level of background noise during listening activities. Therefore, future researchers are encouraged to explore these aspects to obtain more comprehensive findings. Future researchers are suggested to conduct studies involving larger numbers of participants and different educational contexts to gain broader findings related to background noise interference in listening comprehension. Further research may also investigate the effectiveness of specific strategies or technological tools in reducing the negative

effects of background noise on EFL students' listening comprehension.

5.2.4 For Listening Material Developers

Listening material developers are suggested to provide materials with clear audio quality, understandable pronunciation, and balanced volume so that students can listen to the materials more effectively. In addition, listening materials should be equipped with technological support such as subtitles, transcripts, and replay features to help students understand important information, especially in noisy environments. Material developers are also encouraged to adjust the level of difficulty of the audio to students' abilities and use interesting topics in order to increase students' motivation and concentration during listening comprehension activities.



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