

CHAPTER K

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Listening is considered as a really important skill to be mastered by students. This idea is supported by the fact that students spend most of their time listening to what their teachers say in class, for example, presenting lectures, asking questions, and so on. Our speaking abilities will be substantially enhanced by learning to listen. People need to constantly and frequently hear many English dialects in order to speak accurately, meaningfully, and spontaneously. Thus, listening is crucial to learn a language since listening provides voice input and learning English as a foreign language requires a lot of listening.

Even though developing listening skills is crucial, many people find it difficult. Even in an educational environment, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners may experience listening issues. Nodira (2021) says that university students typically struggle with a limited vocabulary and paralinguistic issues. They occasionally come across unfamiliar words, which causes them to pause and consider their meanings, missing the rest of the speech. Paralinguistic features like accents, noise, rate of delivery, pronunciation, and intonation also make it challenging for students to perform listening exercises.

The difficulties of listening class may contribute to anxiety or anxiousness. Anxiety is a psychological condition that affects many people, including EFL students. Anxiety is characterized by a variety of symptoms, including concerning thoughts, psychological instability, shortness of breath, distress, anxiousness of committing mistakes, and even perceived threats (Arousal Anxiety); and difficulty focusing (Apprehension Anxiety) (Fajkowska et al., 2018) . Meanwhile Pan (2016) defines anxiety as a

subjective experience of tension, anxiety, discomfort, and concern caused by arousal of the autonomic nervous system and is a significant individual variation.

Other researchers have different perspectives. Anxiety is defined as a state of unease and restlessness carried due to stress (Susilowati and Kotabumi, 2020). Anxiety can cause mood swings. People who feel safe at first become uneasy as if something is bothering them, those who are cheerful at first become unhappy and those who feel calm and great at first immediately become worried and anxious. Listening anxiety can arise when a person feels anxious or worried in situations that require the use of a target language that they have not mastered well (Halat & Özbay, 2018). Anxiety can be experienced by all people including English foreign language students where it has an influence in various aspects of life. Anxiety, as a psychological effect that can be experienced in life and learning, can have a major influence on a person's psychology, cognition, and behavior (Kang, 2022).

Furthermore, if students are constantly anxious, it can become a significant problem, especially for Indonesian students who are required to be concerned about the quality of media, materials, the accent of the speaker, unfamiliar vocabulary, the length of audio, and speed in listening class (Saraswaty, 2018). Krashen (as cited in Gregersen & Horwitz, 2016) believes that anxiety in students could interfere with their capability to learn and cause them to not enjoy their studies. As a result, students' performance can decline when they experience anxiety. Anxiety is common among EFL students due to the difficulties of learning English (Namaziandost et al., 2019). Developing listening strategies may help learners overcome problems when learning a second language. Using listening strategies contributes to developing the necessary skills for retention and knowledge acquisition. According to Oxford (1990) there are two types of strategies: direct (memory, cognitive, compensation) and indirect (metacognitive, affective, social). To overcome learning difficulties and anxiety, it is important to employ several strategies,

particularly those for overcoming anxiety. Learning strategies are crucial for foreign language learners, particularly those who have difficulties with English listening. Employing the right strategies is crucial to overcoming learning anxiety.

There have been many studies that examine anxiety in the listening process. Although previous studies by Avci (2017) and Wang (2016) have explored listening anxiety in specific contexts, there are still some gaps that need further research. These studies focused on teacher interventions or the relationship of listening strategies with anxiety, without exploring in depth the factors that cause listening anxiety from the perspective of EFL students with high levels of anxiety. In addition, previous studies have mostly used quantitative approaches, while qualitative insights from students' personal experiences are limited. Meanwhile, the current study aims to fill this gap by exploring relevant factors and strategies in depth through qualitative methods and in-depth interviews. Related to the explanation above, researcher conducted research on anxiety factors and strategies in learning listening, where many EFL students experience difficulties in learning listening.

B. Research Question

The research questions of this research are as follows:

1. What are the factors influencing students' anxiety in listening classes?
2. What strategies are employed to minimize high level student's anxiety in listening class?

C. Aims of the Research

The aims of this research are to find out:

1. To find out the EFL students' anxiety factors in listening classes.
2. To find out the EFL student's strategies to overcome the anxiety factor in listening classes.

D. Contributions of the Research

This research hopefully gives some contribution for:

1. Teacher

The researcher hopes that this study can help and provide teachers with more insight into the specific factors that cause listening anxiety, as well as the coping mechanisms used by students. By understanding these aspects, teachers can easily identify difficulties, so that they can adjust their teaching approach to address these issues.

2. Students

The researcher hopes that this research could assist EFL students overcome the difficulty factor in the anxiety factor and develop the correct strategy for learning to listen, in order making listening easier and more enjoyable.

3. Institution

The researcher hopes that the results of this study can inspire curriculum development by emphasizing the importance of addressing listening anxiety, as well as provide direction for professional development programs for teachers. Additionally, institutions can develop policies that support students who experience high anxiety and allocate resources, such as language labs and audio-visual materials, to provide diverse and supportive listening experiences.