

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Anxiety

1. Definition

Anxiety is psychological conditions or an emotional state characterized by severe, persistent, and unmanageable anxiousness. According to the American Psychological Association (2017) anxiety is a type of "emotion" that emerges as "tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes". Anxiety is a state of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry brought on through the arousal of the autonomic nervous system. Additionally, anxiety is defined as a state of unease and restlessness carried due to stress (Susilowati & 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. According to Er et al. (2018), anxiety is characterized by thoughts that make someone worried and depressed. Anxiety can have an impact on an individual's behaviours. For example, it can make them less productive because of the pressure from undesirable situations that haunt them (Nurul et al., 2020). Additionally, anxiety can make a person feel helpless easily, depressed, and unable to focus, and might experience high levels of stress that they are unable to think clearly at times (Zhou, 2021).

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). In the context of foreign language learning, anxiety can appear in various forms, such as anxiety in speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Jiao, 2023). One type of anxiety that is often experienced by EFL students is listening anxiety. 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). This anxiety can have a negative impact on student learning performance, especially in listening skills. Therefore, it is important for teachers to understand the factors that cause listening anxiety and take steps to reduce it, such as providing appropriate materials, increasing student confidence, and creating a conducive classroom environment (Huang, 2022).

2. Listening Anxiety

Listening anxiety for second language learner is one of the important learner variables that affect success and failure in language learning. In spite of its importance, Gonen (2009) clearly emphasizes listening comprehension anxiety as one of the most ignored types of anxiety. Moreover, he claimed that although many researchers realize the importance about specific studies of learning anxiety, yet the study of listening anxiety is still limited. Listening anxiety is unique from other types of language anxiety, yet it is closely related to general language anxiety (Elkhafaifi, 2005, as cited in Avci, 2017). The impacts of listening anxiety occur in two ways. Those types can be recognized as debilitating or inhibiting and enhancing facilitating or enhancing (Alpert & Haber, 1960, as cited in Piniel & Csizér, 2013). Facilitating anxiety can act as a motivator that enhances students' performance. People who actually experience anxiety may not realize the presence of anxiety because this anxiety does not trigger tension. On the other hand, debilitating anxiety causes learners inhibit the language learning process. When students experience a debilitating anxiety, their performance is affected because it is destructive as well counterproductive to foreign language learning. The negative impact of debilitating anxiety relates to dropping motivation, negative attitudes and beliefs, that finally lead to language performance difficulties.

Listening anxiety has an impact on students' growth and accomplishment in the process of learning to listen, both theoretically and practically (Pan, 2016). If students' anxiety is reduced by positive thinking, they can better manage their anxiety by putting more effort into improving their skills and knowledge of foreign languages, which is aided by excellent teacher support and good facilities. As a result, listening anxiety will have a smaller impact on students. In this situation, anxiety will not have a significant influence because it may be handled using a variety of techniques. Based on the existing explanation, it can be synthesized that there is a close relationship between listening anxiety and the factors that influence it. Listening anxiety, as one of the affective factors that can inhibit a person's listening ability, is influenced by various factors (Guswita et al., 2021).

3. Listening anxiety factors

For some EFL learners, listening can be difficult because of many different kinds of factors. Vogely (1998, as cited in Nurkhamidah, 2020) identified various factors that contribute to listening anxiety in the context of English as a second language. These factors include the listening materials, the listening process, teaching procedures, and the personal factors of the listeners. The author attempts to analyse the factors influencing learners from the student's viewpoint, including the nature of the speech, the level of difficulty, lacking clarity, lacking visual support, lack of repetition, spontaneous speech, rapid speech, and unfamiliar accents or topics. Other factors that can cause listening anxiety are speaking speed, differences in spoken language, accent, complexity and difficulty of the material, number of unknown words in the content, difficulty of syntax and grammatical structure making individuals unfamiliar with it (Shawfani et al., 2020). On the other hand, other qualities such as the speed and length of listening to the text, the listener's familiarity with the subject of listening to the text, and others can also affect listening anxiety (Zhai, 2015).

Pan (2016) defined the factors influencing listening anxiety into four different categories. The first factor is teacher-related factors. A teacher is someone who is deeply connected to the process of learning. They must be aware of students' conditions in the classroom to provide suitable materials for learners. They must have the ability to instruct and motivate students in their learning activity. The second factor relates to the listening material and process. As the syntax becomes more complex, with faster speeds and shorter pauses, the chance of students experiencing anxiety will rise. The content, duration, pace, and vocabulary of listening material influence the effects of listening and anxiety. Additional factors influencing listening anxiety, as identified by Pan (2016), include the quality of the recording, classroom conditions such as intense heat or cold, loud noises, lack of oxygen, and cramped spaces, all of which can contribute to anxiety in the listening class.

Serraj (2015) classified the factors influencing listening anxiety into three groups: individual factors, input factors, and environmental factors. The individual factors consist of worry and emotional instability, the use of unsuitable strategies, and not enough practice. Input factors include lack of time for analysing, lacking visual support, nature of speech, and level of difficulty. The environmental factors consist of instructors, peers, and the classroom atmosphere. Kim (2020) analysed the characteristics of listening input that contribute to listening anxiety. The vocabulary, text length, speed, pronunciation, and intonation are the main causes of students' anxiety during listening activities. Prastiyowati (2019) concludes that students, teachers, input, and additional factors such as peers, classroom conditions, environment, and time limitations contribute to students' listening anxiety.

B. Learning Strategies

In the scope of teaching and learning, strategies referred to specific actions that students take to increase their success in learning. According to Oxford (1990) a learning strategy is "a set of specific actions taken by learners

to improve the ease, speed, enjoyment, effectiveness, self-direction, and transferability of learning to new situations." Based on this definition, we might conclude that a learning strategy is any specific learning action pupils used to achieve their learning objectives and make the process of learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, and more effective. They can also apply that specific learning action in various other situations. Students use a variety of learning strategies to achieve the goal of learning English, because everyone processes information differently and has different perspectives about what is enjoyable as well as effective.

Furthermore, Oxford (1990) classifies language learning strategies into two types, direct and indirect strategies, which are further divided into six groups. Students that employ direct strategies involve new languages in their learning process. Direct strategies refer to those that students use by directly involving new languages. Direct strategies are strategies used by students by involving new languages directly, for example: guessing the meaning of the target language, producing sentences using the target language, such as memory strategies, cognitive strategies and compensation strategies. Meanwhile, the indirect strategy is a strategy that supports and manages language learning without involving the target language directly, such as metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies.

a. Direct Strategies

- 1) Memory strategies are techniques for memorizing more effectively, storing and retrieving information, including transferring information required for future language use. Memory strategies involve students using their brains to remember important information or knowledge acquired during the learning process, as well as to help them retrieve the information or knowledge they have remembered when it is required for production and understanding. For example, a semantic map of a group of nouns or verbs that shows the relationship between words.

2) Cognitive strategies are methods or procedures employed in the learning process that allow pupils to manipulate language directly. Repetition, organizing new language, summarizing, predicting meaning from context, and remembering using imagery are all cognitive methods that help pupils learn and produce language more effectively. For example, students studying English may employ cognitive methods such as repeating new phrases multiple times to improve remember or summarizing the subject matter to better comprehend the essential concepts.

3) Compensation strategies are used by students to compensate for lost knowledge in the target language due to lack of vocabulary. These strategies enable pupils to speak and write in the target language despite their limited vocabulary. This is perhaps one of the most significant strategies for beginning as well as intermediate language learners, who do not recognize an expression under certain conditions, struggle to hear something clearly, or are confused by implicit or purposefully unclear meanings. For example, guessing the meaning of new words based on their context, or utilizing gestures to express meaning while unable to use the correct phrases.

b. Indirect Strategies

1) Metacognitive strategies are used to manage the overall learning process. Indirect strategies known as metacognitive strategies involve an individual's capacity to direct, observe, and assess their own cognitive processes. Metacognition serves multiple purposes, including developing critical thinking abilities for every difficulty, helping learners become more distinctive, and helping them think through problems in depth. Because they help students to take control and comprehend their own learning process, metacognitive strategies are crucial for enhancing language acquisition.

2) Affective strategies help students to overcome fear, increase motivation, and reduce stress associated with language learning.

Affective strategies are techniques to help students lowering anxiety (this strategy involves ways to reduce fear or apprehension associated with language learning), encouraging themselves (this strategy involves ways to increase one's own motivation and confidence), taking emotional temperature (this strategy involves ways to increase one's own motivation and confidence), and using positive statements (this strategy involves ways to use positive statements to increase motivation). For example, Students learning English may use affective strategies like making positive statements about language learning abilities, such as "I can do it!" or "I will study hard!" to increase their own motivation and confidence. These affective strategies help students to overcome fear and increase motivation in language learning, so they can learn more effective and enjoyable.

- 3) Social strategies involve interacting with others in order to get help with learning, such as asking for clarification on what is unclear, requesting assistance with language tasks, conversing with native-speaking peers, and working in groups to grasp language materials. For example, if they don't grasp anything, they seek friends or teachers for help, or they collaborate in groups to learn complicated topics. These social strategies assist pupils in overcoming their language barriers and improving their capacity to comprehend and produce language.

Language learning strategies (LLS), as defined by Oxford, are specific actions taken by learners to enhance their language acquisition process, making it more effective and enjoyable (Nhem, 2019). These strategies are particularly significant in reducing listening anxiety, a common challenge faced by language learners. Listening anxiety can stem from various factors, including fear of misunderstanding, pressure to comprehend quickly, and concerns about performance in front of peers (Zhou, 2021). To mitigate this anxiety, students can employ a range of strategies categorized by Oxford into direct and indirect

strategies, which can be tailored to individual learning preferences and contexts (Likitrattanaporn, 2018).

One effective approach is the use of metacognitive strategies, which involve planning, monitoring, and evaluating one's listening comprehension. For instance, students might set specific goals before listening tasks, such as identifying key points or summarizing the content afterward. A study by Zhou highlights that sharing feelings of anxiety within a group can foster a supportive environment, allowing students to collaboratively develop strategies to cope with their listening challenges (Zhou, 2021). Additionally, the use of cognitive strategies, such as note-taking or summarizing, has been shown to enhance comprehension and retention, thereby reducing anxiety by increasing students' confidence in their listening abilities (Karahan, 2022).

Case studies demonstrate the successful application of these strategies. For example, in a classroom setting, students who regularly practiced summarizing spoken content reported lower levels of anxiety during listening exercises. This aligns with findings from research indicating that learners who actively engage with listening materials through strategies like summarization and self-questioning tend to experience less anxiety and achieve better comprehension outcomes (Ji et al., 2021). Moreover, the incorporation of cooperative learning techniques, where students work together to discuss and analyse listening tasks, has proven effective in alleviating anxiety by promoting a sense of community and shared responsibility for learning (Likitrattanaporn, 2018).

C. Previous Studies

To support this research, the researcher has selected several previous studies related to this research such as:

Maulidiyah (2017) conducted a study about EFL students' listening anxiety levels. She involved 88 students in the third semester of English department at Tarbiyah and Teachers Training faculty of Antasari State Islamic University (UIN Antasari Banjarmasin). Descriptive quantitative method used

for data collection and analysis. She used questionnaire adopted from Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale for collecting the data. The result shows that the student experience high level of listening anxiety, and majority of students show high anxiety in listening text and strategies.

Shawfani et al. (2020) investigated students' listening anxiety in advanced English classes of the English department. They Identified factors causing high levels of listening anxiety in students and factors include lecturer's teaching style and students' listening concentration. This study used qualitative research and the sampling of this research was purposive sampling by using sample 50 students from 5 advance listening classes in Department of English in Universitas Negeri Padang. The data were collected through questionnaire and interview. The result implied that students have high listening anxiety due to various factors include fast speakers, teaching methods, student concentration, listening to material and lecturers' factor.

Nurkhamidah (2020) conducted study about the factors that causing listening anxiety on generation Z students. She involves 20 participants from Basic Listening class of the English Department of STKIP MNC. This study used qualitative study as a method and semi-structure interview as data collection technique. The finding shows that there are some factors causing students listening anxiety; students and technological factors. Students experience listening anxiety due to internal factors such as rate of speech, vocabulary, accent, and concentration.

Astrid et al. (2024) conducted study about Indonesian EFL students' listening anxiety factors and lecturer strategies to minimize it. This study involved 21 undergraduate students in listening class and 3 lecturers from 3 universities in Palembang. This study used qualitative methods for understanding listening anxiety and lecturers' strategies. They collected data from interview and observation. The result demonstrated that there are four factors contributing to listening anxiety: lack of skills, attention, mood, environment. Meanwhile, the lecturers are determined to implement strategies

that can reduce students' listening anxiety. These strategies included: prepare students, provide authentic resources, enhance learning environment.

While previous studies have explored listening anxiety among EFL students, significant gaps remain in understanding this phenomenon, particularly among students with high levels of anxiety. Maulidiyah (2017) quantitatively identified high levels of listening anxiety among EFL students but did not delve into the underlying personal experiences or coping strategies that students adopt. Shawfani et al. (2020) examined factors contributing to listening anxiety, emphasizing external influences such as lecturer teaching methods and students' concentration, yet their findings lack insights into the students' internal responses and adaptive strategies. Similarly, Nurkhamidah (2020) investigated listening anxiety factors among generation Z students but primarily focused on external and technological factors, leaving the internal psychological and strategic responses unexplored. Astrid et al. (2024) provided a broader perspective on listening anxiety factors and lecturer strategies to address them, but the study does not extensively discuss how students independently manage their anxiety, particularly in diverse academic and personal contexts.

To address this gap, this study attempts to provide a comprehensive exploration of the factors contributing to high listening anxiety among EFL students while uncovering the personal strategies they employ to manage and overcome this anxiety. By adopting a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews, this study will fill the gaps in understanding the experiences of students with high listening anxiety and their strategies. This contribution not only complements the existing literature, but also offers valuable practical implications for educators and students themselves, paving the way for more targeted and effective interventions to overcome listening anxiety.