THE ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN UNDERSTANDING ENGLISH NATIVE SPEAKERS

THESIS

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THE ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN UNDERSTANDING ENGLISH NATIVE SPEAKERS

Adalah benar-benar karya saya, **kecuali semua kutipan dan referensi yang disebutkan sumbernya**. Apabila terdapat kesalahan dan kekeliruan di dalamnya, maka akan sepenuhnya menjadi tanggungjawab saya. Demikianlah surat pernyataan ini saya buat dengan sesungguhnya.

Banda Aceh, 11 Maret 2025

Saya Yang Membuat Pernyataan,

Muhammad Iqbal Gogo

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juncture. They are exemplary individuals whose guidance, prayers, and steadfast support have been a constant source of inspiration. Additionally, I am thankful to my sibling, whose unwavering support and respect have consistently bolstered me throughout this journey.

I sincerely hope that this research will be useful for future researchers who want to explore similar topics and contribute to improving the quality of English Department students at UIN Ar-Raniry (PBI). Above all, I hope that this thesis can provide a little knowledge to its readers, enriching their understanding and perspective.

Banda Aceh, 11 Maret 2025

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ABSTRACT

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Thesis title	:	The Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Understanding English Native Speakers
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English is a second language in Indonesia, making it more difficult for Indonesian students to understand compared to native speakers. In listening comprehension, students are accustomed to hearing English spoken by teachers who adjust their speech to match students' abilities. However, listening to native speakers presents greater challenges, such as differences in accents, speech speed, and unfamiliar expressions. This study aims to analyze the specific difficulties students face in listening to English native speakers and identify the factors contributing to these challenges. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with six students (four females and two males) from the English Education Department at UIN Ar-Raniry, who had been studying for five semesters. The findings revealed that students struggled primarily with fast speech, unfamiliar vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and loss of focus, with speech speed being the most significant challenge. Both internal and external factors affected comprehension, including limited vocabulary, low concentration levels, lack of prior knowledge, background noise, and limited exposure to native speakers. Based on these findings, students need more structured and consistent listening practice. Teachers should integrate authentic listening materials into lessons, exposing students to different accents, speech speeds, and idiomatic expressions. Students are encouraged to use various listening resources, such as podcasts, movies, and online videos, while reducing reliance on subtitles. Additionally, schools and institutions should support listening comprehension development by providing facilities such as language labs with high-quality audio equipment.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background of the study, the research questions, the aims of the study, the significance of the study and it is followed by the terminology.

A. Background of the Study

English is an important language for communication in the modern era. English is not only a tool of international communication but also a language of instruction in various fields such as science, technology, business and diplomacy. Mastery of English has become an urgent need for most countries in the world, including Indonesia. The mastery of English opens the door for Indonesians to access the latest information and knowledge from all corners of the world.

Listening is one of the macro skills that students need to master in language learning. Listening skills can help students to understand information conveyed by English speakers, such as when learning in class, listening to English native speakers, podcasts, YouTube and many others. According to (Brown, 2006), listening is an activity to put the information they have heard. Listening is not just receiving information, but also understanding the context, tone, intonation and implied meaning in the conversation. In a global context, strong listening skills enable individuals to

interact effectively with native English speakers who may have different accents, dialects, and speaking styles.

In Indonesia, English is still considered as a foreign language, because English can be mostly obtained or learned through formal education, it cannot be obtained in daily life conversations, either from family or environment. Learning English as a foreign language is more challenging for students than learning English as a second language. Therefore, the way teachers use language in giving directions, explaining learning activities, and delivering lessons teachers often modify their speeches in order to make their listeners easy to understand and this term is commonly known as teacher talk. Teacher talk plays an important role for students. Teachers usually adjust the way they speak English depending on the ability of the students they interact to.

However, the teacher's talk used by teachers is sometimes too much, when the language input from the teacher is overly simplified or lacks challenge, students may not feel compelled to actively improve their comprehension abilities. This causes students to experience difficulties when listening to English native speakers. English native speakers are people who have English as their mother tongue or native language. They also have authentic accents and intonations when speaking English.

Several studies have shown some of the difficulties experienced by learners and the strategies used by students in listening skills, such as the results of research conducted by Rameshwar Jyoti (2020), which mentioned that unfamiliar words,

idioms, lack of concentration encountered with long listening texts, complex grammatical structures, pronunciation, speed of speech, and different accents are difficulties experienced by students.

Listening to native English speakers has its own complexities, due to the different intonation, structure, and speed of pronunciation. However, it seems that the 2022 PBI students do not realize this. They don't really understand that listening to native speakers is different from listening to English lessons in class. In other words, listening to academic English. Therefore, they will have difficulties in understanding English native speakers who speak with different speed, intonation, and structure.

Based on the research background above, the author is interested in conducting a research to analyze students' listening problem in understanding English native speakers. Therefore, the author chooses the following title, namely "The Analysis Students' Difficulties in Understanding English Native Speakers".

B. Research Questions

The researcher formulates the following two research questions based on the background above :

1. What are the students' difficulties in understanding English native speakers?
2. What are the factors of causing the students difficulties in understanding English native speakers?

C. The Aims of the Study

The aims of this research are as follows:

1. To analyze the difficulties of students in understanding English native speakers.
2. To analyze factors of causing students difficulties in understanding English native speakers

D. Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to be helpful:

1. For Students

Students are expected to have motivation in learning Listening and they will have a good quality in understanding English native speakers.

2. Researchers

This research is expected to contribute to the development of listening discourse and to be used as a source for further research and also can help readers to become translators or teachers in the future. In addition, it is hoped that this research can be a reference for the other researchers.

E. Terminologies

In order to clarify the key terms used in this study, the definitions of terminologies related to this study are provided below :

1. Analysis

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, analysis is defined as “a detailed examination of something in order to understand more about it”. In simpler terms, analysis is the process of breaking down a complex subject or problem into smaller parts to understand it better. The analysis in this study is the process of examining the specific difficulties that students experience when trying to understand native English speakers. This analysis will involve identifying the various factors that contribute to these difficulties, such as pronunciation, vocabulary, and cultural differences. By breaking these factors down into smaller components, this study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges that students face in understanding native English speakers.

2. Listening

Listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, “listening” is defined as “to give attention to someone or something in order to hear him, her, or it”. The Cambridge Dictionary explains that “listening” is not just hearing, but also involves understanding and interpreting what is heard. This involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, his grammar and his vocabulary, and grasping his meaning. This research is about listening and it is necessary to know the meaning of listening.

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According to (Brown, 2006), listening is an activity to put the information they have heard. It means that listening is an important skill for students especially in the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, listening is the activity of paying attention to the speaker and trying to find meaning from something that is heard (Underwood, 1989: 1).

3. Difficulties

Difficulties are situations or conditions that are difficult or complicated. In the context of listening, difficulties can refer to the difficulties experienced by students in understanding the information conveyed by native speakers. This difficulty can be caused by various factors, such as lack of experience, lack of motivation, or understanding of listening skills. The difficulties in this study are fast speaking speed, contractions and reduced pronunciations, omission of sounds, unfamiliar accents and dialects, and idiomatic expressions.

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