

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is intended to investigate the English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners' experiences of learning listening during COVID-19 at one of public universities in Kendari, SouthEast Sulawesi. This chapter depicts the background of the study, the scope of the study, the research questions, and the purpose of the study. Moreover, it includes the significance of the study and the definition of the key terms used in this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Over the past three decades, a growing body of research interested to discuss listening acquisition in the ESL/EFL classroom. Rost (2013) reviewed that in the early 1990s, with due to developments in recording technology and acoustic phonetics, listening was seen as a major breakthrough in communications area. Listening was defined in the terms of reliably recording acoustic signals in the brain for later use. With advancing research into the human psyche, in 1920s-1930s listening had been considered as a largely unconscious process controlled by mysterious cognitive mechanisms. Meanwhile, listening included the idea of storing lots of events and people in an accessibility network. It can be concluded that there can be changes in the expression of what is achieved through hearing. This topic began to explore with various cross-field in the 1970s (Osada, 2004).

In the international context, listening is considered as an important role in facilitating language learning which is most used in everyday life (Vu & Shah, 2016). Listening has been considered as a passive language skill that was not taught in class but rather developed naturally with speaking and reading (Chou, 2016). Listening consists of activities derived from verbal and non-verbal influence that control and influence cognitive processes. The listening view also addresses the behavioral aspect of intrapersonal communication (Welch & Mickelson, 2018). The importance of listening in learning English is to enrich vocabulary and train students' knowledge of pronunciation (Karimi, 2018).

In Indonesia context, Yusnida, Muslem and Manan (2017) stated that listening is one of the skills that need to be mastered by students. Susilowati (2020) shows that listening is considered a difficult skill in English and it is not easy to make online lessons. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, listening learning was very effective because it could use varied and fierce learning methods where teachers could evaluate students directly and face to face. Thus, the teacher can ensure progress of students regarding their difficulties and success in learning listening. However, today online learning during COVID-19 triggers a big challenge in learning listening. This is due to the selection of technology-based equipment, the material to be explained and the application of teaching methods and strategy that will be provided.

In general, there have been many studies discussing learning listening in ELT classroom context. Several previous researches have discussed in the terms of students' challenges in learning listening and benefits of learning listening.

However, there is still limited research dealing with EFL learners' experience of learning listening during this COVID-19 situation. The learning implementation absolutely has changed in alignment with the education system changes, so it is need to be conducted research to explore this topic (Schunk, 2012). Based on the situation, the research ertried to find the responses, views and experiences of EFL students while joining online listening learning during this COVID-19 pandemic. The result of the research is to give a representation of student experiences in learning listening during COVID-19 outbreak. This provided students, lecturer and universities additional information, so they can design appropriate online listening course in future implementation.

1.2 Scope of the Study

This research focused on EFL students' experiences of learning listening during COVID-19. This study conducted to explore the students' experiences and views in learning listening during their online learning due to COVID-19. About 28 EFL students are involved in this research to share their data.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study above, the research focused on the addressed question; "What are EFL learners' experiences of learning listening during COVID-19?"

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Based on the research background, this present research is aiming to analyze the experience of student learning listening during COVID-19.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is attempted to contribute to the existing knowledge in this field. This research is focused on contributing practically, especially to the growing body of theories in the listening field. For the teacher, this study can be teacher evaluation materials in carrying out learning during COVID-19. The finding of this study also contributes to helping the students design the appropriate lesson plan which is applied in the online EFL classroom. This research is also expected to provide information about student experience problems in leaning listening during COVID-19. Meanwhile, it can be self-feedback for students by learning through the result of this study. It means, the students can increase their ability in learning during critical situations as an effort to maintain their learning activity.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

For the purpose of this study, the terms to be defined are listed as the following:

EFL Learner: EFL (English as a Foreign Language) is learning in a non-English speaking country (Iwai, 2011).

Experiences of Learning Listening: in this study refers to how the students' experiences in listening learning in the time of COVID-19 outbreak, especially

they were in the fourth semester who majoring in English department at an Islamic university.

