

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction to the research. It includes the research background, the identification of the problem, the limitations of the study, the formulation of the research question, and the objectives of the research. Additionally, this chapter addresses the significance of the research along with definitions of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Research

The ability to listen is a fundamental skill that students must develop to effectively utilize the English language. Listening skills are essential for acquiring diverse information from multiple sources, and enhancing one's listening ability significantly contributes to improved speaking skills. To communicate in a proper, meaningful, and natural manner, individuals must engage with different forms of English through repeated and continuous exposure. This underscores the fact that language acquisition is impossible without listening, as it serves as the primary source of language input. According to Rost, as cited in Hien (2015), listening holds critical importance in foreign language education due to its role in providing necessary language input. As an input skill, listening is vital for the linguistic growth of students.

H.G.Tarigan and Djago Tarigan define listening skills (maharah as istima/listening skill) as the capacity to comprehend the words or sentences presented by an interlocutor or through various media.

Therefore, the instruction of listening skills warrants greater emphasis to promote the language development of students. In language courses, listening is

frequently considered one of the most difficult competencies for learners, as it requires considerable focus and concentration to understand a variety of content, including both dialogue and monologue texts. It is essential to acknowledge that listening is a multifaceted cognitive process during which several functions occur concurrently in the mind.

Interviews conducted with several students from Pasir Pengaraian University who took the TOEFL test unveiled a variety of challenges related to their listening skills. The participants highlighted that the accent of the speaker significantly impacted their listening comprehension, in addition to the presence of unfamiliar vocabulary and the duration and pace of the spoken content. As a result, listening comprehension was identified as one of the most significant challenges faced by these students.

The Language Center operates as an institution under the auspices of the University of Pasir Pengaraian. As a vital support unit within Pasir Pengaraian University, the Language Center is dedicated to enhancing the language proficiency of the academic community at the University. Furthermore, it aims to serve as a language education institution providing valuable services. Recognizing the significance of English language skills for students, the Language Center is particularly focused on this area of development. One of its key initiatives involves administering the TOEFL test annually for UPP students, allowing for the assessment of their English language abilities. This initiative not only serves as a monitoring tool but also aspires to enable students to succeed in subsequent TOEFL testing periods and to further develop their English language skills.

Pasir Pengaraian University (UPP) acknowledges the significance of language proficiency within the context of higher education. Accordingly, UPP has implemented a graduation requirement stipulating that students must attain a minimum TOEFL score of 400. The TOEFL, or Test of English as a Foreign Language, assesses an individual's command of the English language. This requirement is standard not only at UPP but also among numerous universities both nationally and internationally. Beyond being a prerequisite for graduation, the TOEFL is also employed as a criterion for admission into university programs.

In light of this, researchers are keen to examine the listening skills of students and to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges encountered by those undertaking the TOEFL test.

1.2 The Setting of the Research

This study was conducted at Pasir Pengaraian University with the aim of identifying the challenges encountered by students in their eighth semester. The research is planned to begin in August 2024.

1.3 Limitation of the Research

Based on the previous discussion, it is clear that students face a variety of difficulties while navigating the listening section of the TOEFL test. To clarify the issue and avoid misconceptions, it is important to focus on specific aspects of the problem. The researcher dedicated attention to analyzing the listening abilities of students during the TOEFL examination and identifying the key challenges they encountered.

1.4 Formulation of the Research

The formulates of the problem is:

1. What difficulties do eighth semester students experience when taking the TOEFL listening test?

1.5 Purpose of the Research

Every action is fundamentally connected to the goals one seeks to accomplish, which ensures that the actions taken are carried out with intent and clarity. Likewise, this research intends to examine the factors that contribute to the difficulties encountered by eighth-semester students in relation to their listening skills during the TOEFL examination at Pasir Pengaraian University.

1.6 Significance of the Research

The advantages of this research are categorized into two segments: theoretical and practical.

A. Theoretical Benefits

The outcomes of this study aim to enhance the understanding of how the listening skills of students at Pasir Pengaraian University influence their performance on the TOEFL test.

B. Practical Benefits

1. It is anticipated that the results of this research will offer valuable insights regarding the impact of British students' listening skills on their TOEFL Test performance at Pasir Pengaraian University.

2. This research aspires to serve as a resource for future researchers seeking to comprehend students' capabilities in taking the TOEFL Test.

1.7 Definition of the Key Term

1. The TOEFL test, which stands for Test of English as a Foreign Language, is widely regarded as a standardized assessment of English language proficiency and is often a prerequisite for pursuing higher education in nearly all colleges globally, including those in Indonesia. In Indonesia, the TOEFL serves as a measure of language proficiency; given the prevalence of English, it is instrumental in evaluating individuals' command of the language for essential purposes such as gaining admission to educational programs and applying for employment opportunities (Sukun, 2013). This research specifically pertains to students who have undertaken the TOEFL test.
2. Listening skills are an essential component of language acquisition that should not be underestimated, especially when the objective is to achieve comprehensive proficiency in language abilities. This skill allows individuals to comprehend spoken language effectively.
3. Hearing difficulties refer to a condition in which an individual experiences challenges with auditory clarity or may be unable to hear altogether. This disorder can manifest in one ear or both ears. It encompasses any form of impairment that diminishes a person's ability to hear distinctly or may lead to total hearing loss.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter encompasses a description of the theory, an examination of relevant findings, and a conceptual framework. It addresses listening and TOEFL theory as outlined by experts in the field. Furthermore, it provides an overview of five prior studies within the review of related findings. The chapter concludes with a conceptual framework that delineates the stages of this research.

2.1 Theory Description

A. Listening Skill

1. Definition of Listening.

Listening is one of the most important skills in language learning. According to Demouy and Kukulska-Hulme (pp. 217-232), it involves a mental process. Essentially, listening requires both effort and cognitive involvement. This skill is often a focal point in the study of linguistics. Dr. Henry and Asemota (pp. 22-33) also discuss listening in terms of conversation analysis, defining it as the ability to understand native speakers at their normal speaking rate. Moreover, Morley (2001, pp. 3-7) highlights that listening includes the ability to distinguish sounds, understand acoustic patterns, identify relevant information, remember that information, and connect sounds with their meanings.

Postovsky (2004: 13) argues that listening has a specific meaning that goes beyond simply recognizing sounds or understanding them. Goss (1982: 11-15) describes listening as the way individuals make sense of auditory information and organize it into meaningful linguistic units. Purdy (2001: 34) states that listening

involves receiving, interpreting, and reacting to both spoken and nonverbal cues. According to Rost (2002: 96), listening is a complex interpretive process where listeners assess what they hear based on their prior knowledge. Furthermore, Rost (2009: 34) emphasizes the importance of listening in deepening our comprehension of the world and highlights its vital role in effective communication.

According to McIntosh in Monica (2007: 11), the skill of listening plays a vital and essential role in students' comprehension of the English language. The information gained through listening greatly impacts how students achieve their goals. It is suggested that those who use effective strategies will be able to effectively tackle listening comprehension tasks and accurately understand the information presented to them. In short, utilizing appropriate learning strategies can improve the educational experience, especially regarding listening skills. Furthermore, Bowen, Madsen, and Hilferty (2000: 13) emphasize that listening is linked to verbal communication. Students interact with spoken language by recognizing and categorizing sounds into both lexical and syntactic groups while grasping the intended messages. The listening process consists of absorbing the speaker's words, interpreting and expressing their significance, and collaboratively constructing meaning through dialogue with the speaker. while also fostering participation, creativity, and empathy, as highlighted by Jafari and Hashim (2015:7).

In summary, it is clear that listening plays a vital role in language acquisition. It is crucial for students to cultivate effective listening strategies, as

these methods can greatly enhance their success in learning through auditory channels.

2. Types of Listening

Bacon (2000: 70) classifies listening into six types.

1) Discriminative Listening

Discriminative listening is the most basic type of listening, which involves the ability to tell different sounds apart. If someone cannot recognize the differences in speech, they will have a hard time understanding the meanings that those differences convey. While we generally learn to identify sounds in our own language from a young age, we might struggle to distinguish phonemes in unfamiliar languages. This difficulty plays a role in the challenges people face when trying to speak foreign languages fluently, as they cannot perceive the subtle sounds necessary for accurate pronunciation. Furthermore, even those who can notice slight changes in the emotional tone of others' voices may still have trouble identifying the emotions those individuals are feeling. Since a large part of communication happens via body language, listening involves both visual and auditory aspects. Therefore, it is important to recognize the differences among various muscular and skeletal movements, as they can express up to 4,444 unique meanings. Similarly, people who are adept at noticing subtle changes in emotional tone in others' voices frequently find it challenging to pinpoint the actual emotions those individuals are feeling. Body language serves as our main form of communication, which means that effective listening involves both visual and auditory components. Thus, understanding the distinctions between muscular and

skeletal movements is crucial, given their capacity to convey an impressive total of 4,444 distinct meanings.

2) Evaluative listening.

In evaluative or critical listening, we make judgments about what the other person is saying. We evaluate the truthfulness of their claims, considering our own values to decide if their statements are good or bad and if they have merit. This form of listening is especially important when the speaker is trying to convince us, possibly intending to change our behavior or beliefs.

Furthermore, we note the fine nuances in language and understand the underlying meanings of the messages conveyed. We often assess the pros and cons of an argument to determine its logical validity and its significance to us. This type of listening is commonly known as critical listening, interpretive listening, or evaluative listening.

3) Compassionate listening.

Compassionate listening involves genuinely caring for the person, actively paying attention to their feelings, and expressing empathy by acknowledging their pain and celebrating their happy moments.

3.Process of Listening.

Listening activities entail showcasing your understanding after a thorough listening session or participating in a task that requires retrieving information learned earlier. As noted by Brown (1995: 10), the steps involved in these activities are outlined as follows:

1. Listening processes raw audio and story images from it in short-term memory
This image includes phrases , characters sets.

2. The listener determines the type of each Talk event to be processed.

3. Listeners consider the form and nature, context, and content of the conversation to determine the speaker's intent and purpose.

4. Listener remember background information (through their own schemas) according to the context of the topic.

5. Listeners look for the literal meaning of the message they are hearing.

6. Determine the meaning intended by the listener.

7. Listeners consider whether to store or delay the information they receive.

4 . Kinds of the listeners Difficulties.

According to Bacon (2000: 13) notes that students face a variety of obstacles when it comes to developing listening skills. These challenges include issues related to audio quality, the pressure to understand every single word, difficulties in grasping their native language quickly and naturally, the need to hear information several times, problems following spoken conversations, and feelings of fatigue. Hale (2003: 13) also points out that listening difficulties can arise when students recognize the words but do not comprehend their meanings. Furthermore, phonetic changes like reduction, assimilation, elision, and others can create confusion for learners. Even though students may identify words in written form, they frequently struggle with their spoken counterparts.

Understanding words in continuous speech, such as in conversations, is particularly tough for them.

According to Rixon (2000: 37) points out further challenges that are directly related to the students. A major concern noted among students is their poor study habits, especially in regard to their capacity to retain information. They are able to understand the material when it is presented by the teacher in a slow and clear manner; however, if they encounter difficulties with certain words, they tend to lose interest in listening and subsequently fall behind on the subject matter. This pattern may be a factor in the anxiety and nervousness they frequently feel both before and during listening tasks.

Considering these factors, it is evident that student motivation plays a crucial role in developing listening skills. Vandergrift (2006: 6) points out that motivation is a key element in this process. Since listening comprehension can be particularly difficult, educators need to carefully assess the effectiveness of their activities and the attractiveness of the content. For example, teachers might create engaging tasks by using English songs to facilitate listening practice. Fostering a strong sense of motivation in students is expected to lessen the challenges they face in listening. Additionally, this strategy is likely to encourage students and alleviate feelings of anxiety or unease as they improve their listening skills.

As mentioned earlier, students at SMK Gelora encounter considerable difficulties in understanding English during listening exercises. Although they listen to the audio materials three times in class, they still find it hard to

comprehend the content. This challenge may contribute to a decrease in their self-confidence. They show reluctance about going to the lab to listen to English once more. When faced with listening tasks, they often underestimate their listening skills. As a result, they may struggle to understand spoken English because of a psychological barrier that undermines their confidence in their ability to comprehend it.

5. The importance of Teaching English Listening.

According to Graham (2006: 34) emphasizes that teaching encompasses helping individuals gain knowledge, providing guidance in their research activities, and sharing relevant information with them. It is essential to understand that teaching listening requires greater effort from the instructor than from the student. A key principle in teaching listening is that “language materials should not be introduced visually at first.” Listening is considered one of the most essential skills, as it involves the ability to understand spoken language. Additionally, listening skills are crucial for effective communication and are foundational for learning a second language.

Teaching listening involves various resources that can be effectively used in the listening aspect of education. According to Wilson (2008: 40), there are several sources for teaching listening skills, such as lectures from teachers and students, guest speaker presentations, and audio materials from textbooks. Furthermore, resources like audiobooks, tape recordings, TV shows, videos, DVDs, radio programs, and online content are also valuable. Porter and Roberts (1987: 179) point out that teaching a language that one has not encountered or

practiced can be difficult for an instructor. Therefore, in a classroom environment, it is crucial for teachers to provide students with the skills needed for genuine listening experiences. They emphasize that educators should concentrate on teaching only what is necessary.

According to Vandergrift (2002: 80), teaching listening skills is essential for improving other language abilities. However, it is crucial to ensure that any listening activities are well-structured and have clear objectives. In this regard, listening instruction should focus on the students and can be implemented in two main ways. The first approach involves classroom initiatives that assign tasks emphasizing student involvement rather than relying solely on the teacher's guidance. This method motivates students to engage actively in organizing and reinterpreting their understanding of the language while developing their language skills. The second approach allows educators to provide resources that center on students by encouraging them to identify relevant materials and take an active role in their learning process.

Many researchers have aimed to involve students in a more personal way by recreating real listening scenarios, like listening to conversations and giving written feedback. Although this method is not the same as directly taking part in conversation activities, researchers have observed that students stay actively engaged. This degree of engagement could provide a basis for introducing assignments that focus on improving their communication abilities.

The act of non-reciprocal listening enhances the listener's access to information. By engaging with diverse stories, individuals can reference a

variety of informational sources, including messages on answering machines, announcements in stores and public transit, short lectures, and personal narratives. A consistent focus in her recent writings on Language Teaching Methodology is the promotion of students' awareness of their own learning processes, which helps them take greater ownership of their education. In summary, essential techniques that can be taught in listening classes include selective listening, intentional listening, predicting, making inferences, and personalizing content.

Graham (2006: 15) notes that many practitioners recognize the difference between intensive and extensive listening. The same principles are relevant for both types of listening assessments; for example, in international tests, recordings are usually played twice. Some theories suggest that this practice is artificial, as people usually only hear sounds once in everyday environments. However, it's important to note that the listening environment in a language course is often artificial. Moreover, getting accustomed to foreign voices, especially those speaking in a non-native language, requires a period of adjustment to familiarize oneself with the rhythm, speed, and quality of the sounds. Thus, an initial phase of intensive listening is purposefully integrated into the process.

B. Toefl

A. Definition of Toefl

The Test of English as a Foreign Language, often called TOEFL, evaluates English language skills, especially in the American accent. This test is required for those looking to enroll in universities in the United States and several other nations. It is especially important for candidates whose native language is not English.

Cheng and Ma assert that in order to grasp the relationship between students' perceptions and the value of her TOEFL test preparation training, it is essential for students to adjust their value perceptions and enhance their language proficiency. They should cultivate an instrumental awareness that emphasizes general English and the achievement of lower scores during their study selections through the test preparation course. Regarding the test itself, many individuals regard her TOEFL as challenging. In reality, he seldom instructs on the TOEFL in certain universities and does not personally take the TOEFL. Furthermore, a majority of students have not experienced taking her TOEFL, leading to confusion among them and complications in understanding how to respond to TOEFL questions. The TOEFL exam is conducted by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in the United States for test takers globally.

The TOEFL English test is typically a requirement for admission into bachelor's (S-1) and master's (S-2 or S-3) degree programs at nearly all universities in the United States and Canada. Moreover, the results of the TOEFL test are used to assess the English language skills of prospective

students applying to universities in various other countries, including those in Europe and Australia. In general, the TOEFL focuses primarily on American English, setting it apart from the IELTS test, which is more aligned with British English. Unlike the IELTS, the TOEFL does not usually feature a separate interview section. Additionally, the TOEFL is gaining recognition in the professional sector as a valuable tool for recruitment and promotion evaluations.

According to Sugeng et al. (2012), implementing an English proficiency test for new students is an essential step for anyone looking to pursue higher education in Indonesia. The term "competence" refers to "a person's command of language" and indicates an individual's confidence in their language skills at a particular point in time.

A. The Types of TOEFL

1. TOEFL PBT

The TOEFL Type PBT is a commonly used version of the TOEFL test, available through various tutoring agencies and organizations. This version is the original format of the testing system created by ETS (Educational Testing Service), which is based in the United States and oversees the TOEFL examination. The test employs a paper answer sheet, and the testing environment is similar to that of conventional exams, where candidates sit and respond to printed questions. The questions are presented in a multiple-choice format. The duration of the PBT is roughly three hours, and scores range from 310 to 667. Therefore, if you intend to take this test, please remember to bring a writing instrument.

2. TOEFL CBT

The computer-based version of the TOEFL is an exam that employs computer technology for assessment. Scores for this test vary from 0 to 300, and it has been in use since 1998. The test measures listening, structure, reading, and writing skills, with an overall duration of about 2 to 2.5 hours. Nevertheless, the present situation regarding this exam is not entirely clear.

3. TOEFL IBT

The phrase "Internet-based test" refers to an assessment administered over the Internet. This type of test has brought about a notable transformation in cognitive behavioral therapy. The scoring system for this model spans from 0 to 120 and lasts a total of four hours. In Indonesia, the TOEFL iBT was introduced in 2006. The iBT assesses a TOEFL examinee's abilities in four language areas: listening, reading, speaking, and writing.

4. TOEFL ITP

The acronym stands for the Institutional Testing Program. The regulations linked to the TOEFL ITP are not applicable for university admissions or scholarship applications, as it is specifically crafted to satisfy the needs of educational institutions. Its primary purpose is for internal use within the institution. This TOEFL version is widely acknowledged and has a highest possible score of 677, which aligns with the scoring system of the official TOEFL conducted during the PBT era.

The TOEFL ITP is still considered a valid choice for applying to different scholarship providers, especially for third-party institutions. Scholarships such as the LPDP Scholarship, the AAS Scholarship (Australia), and the Fulbright Scholarship (USA) are a few examples of this. However, it's essential to understand that this option has its limitations. In order to gain complete admission, applicants must ultimately take either the TOEFL IBT or the IELTS for the AAS.

5. TOEFL Prediction

The TOEFL Prediction is a test intended to gauge a person's estimated proficiency in English language abilities. Often referred to as the TOEFL simulation, this assessment closely resembles the structure and difficulty level of the official TOEFL exam. Generally, the skills evaluated encompass Listening, Reading, and Structure.

Difficult listening refers to a situation where a person finds it hard to understand or follow what others are saying. This issue can arise from various elements, including characteristics of the speaker, the listener, or the context of the communication itself. Such listening difficulties can disrupt the communication process, which may result in misunderstandings or conflicts. The following section delves into the intricacies of difficult listening, examining the factors that contribute to it and offering approaches for overcoming it. This issue can impact anyone involved in communication. To address it effectively, both listeners and speakers should work together to create an environment that promotes successful communication. By improving listening abilities and being aware of how messages are delivered, individuals can reduce the challenges

associated with difficult listening, ultimately leading to clearer and more effective exchanges of information.

C. Difficult Listening

The phrase "difficult listening" refers to a situation where a person finds it hard to listen to or understand what others are saying. This difficulty can arise from several factors, including the speaker, the listener, or the communication context itself. Challenges in listening can hinder effective communication, resulting in misunderstandings or conflicts. This overview examines what difficult listening entails, its contributing factors, and approaches to address these challenges. Anyone can experience difficulty in the listening process. To tackle this problem, it is important for both listeners and speakers to work together to create an environment that promotes effective communication. By improving listening abilities and being aware of how messages are conveyed, challenges associated with difficult listening can be reduced, enabling better reception of messages.

2.2 Review of Related Findings

A study carried out by Parni Rina and Yulii Tiarina, titled "An Analysis of English Difficulties of Majoring Students in Answering the TOEFL Listening Ability Test," was published in 2021 in the Padang State University English Language Teaching Journal. The results reveal that students face difficulties when answering the TOEFL listening comprehension test. However, the researchers noted several factors that influence students' performance, such as limited vocabulary, lack of focus, extended test duration, fast-paced speech in listening

exercises, and differences in students' physical conditions as seen in their experiments.

Both recent and earlier research has focused on the difficulties students face when answering questions on the TOEFL Listening Test. However, previous studies mainly highlighted the challenges related to the TOEFL listening comprehension assessment. In contrast, this study explores not just the obstacles students encounter during the TOEFL test but also clarifies the strategies they use while participating in the TOEFL listening proficiency evaluation at Semarang State Islamic University.

According to Fitria's study conducted in 2021, two main factors contribute to the difficulties students face in mastering the TOEFL listening section: external and internal factors. The external factors include: 1) the influence of the speaker's accent on TOEFL listening skills; 2) the speed at which speakers deliver their responses; 3) the intonation and emphasis used by speakers; 4) the presence of pauses during sentence delivery; 5) the choice of words and the inclusion of foreign terms articulated by the speaker; 6) the complexity of the sentence structures presented; and 7) disruptions in audio quality, which can hinder clarity during the listening portion of the TOEFL. Regarding internal factors, these encompass: 1) insufficient prior experience with the TOEFL test; 2) a lack of practice in listening to the TOEFL format; and 3) inadequate time allotted for completing the listening assessment. The speaker's pauses while delivering a sentence can significantly impact your TOEFL listening skills. Additionally, the vocabulary choices and the use of foreign terminology by the speaker also influence your ability to comprehend the TOEFL listening section. 4) If the

speaker employs overly complex sentence structures, this too can detract from your listening proficiency on the TOEFL. 5) Furthermore, audio interruptions can render the audio less intelligible during TOEFL listening exercises. 6) Regarding internal factors, these include a lack of prior experience with the TOEFL exam, insufficient practice in listening to the TOEFL materials, and having limited time to complete the listening section. 7) The number of listening questions, which totals 50, can also pose a challenge. 8) Other internal factors may involve hearing impairments, memory limitations while processing auditory information, a lack of motivation and enthusiasm during the listening task, diminished concentration or focus, and a limited understanding of unfamiliar vocabulary encountered in the listening section. 9) Easily distracted by sounds or other things when listening to TOEFL. 10) Tend to translate any foreign vocabulary when listening to TOEFL. 11) Have trouble catching or finding keywords when listening to TOEFL.

A study by Hatice Nur Ozcelik, Kris Van den Branden, and Elke Van Steendam, titled "FL Learners' Listening Ability Problems in Interactive, Independent Peers Organized Listening Tasks," was published in the International Journal of Listening in 2019. This research aims to highlight the potential benefits of peer interaction by exploring how students experience and engage with the mental, emotional, and social factors involved in listening. The results reveal that many students faced challenges related to processing, listening, influence, and input, in addition to social and task-oriented issues. Among the most common problems were mental translation, the difficulty of interrupting the conversation flow, and issues with understanding the delivery. When it comes to managing

input independently, students mainly handle the audio to check their understanding and adapt to the speed of speech.

Both current and past studies have explored the challenges that students face in listening. Earlier investigations primarily focused on the level of hearing difficulties present in listening skills courses, incorporating peer interactions and self-regulation tasks. In contrast, this study seeks to examine the obstacles students encounter during the TOEFL listening test, as well as the strategies they use when answering the questions. Furthermore, the listening abilities of students in the English Language Education Department are also assessed during the TOEFL evaluation.

The research carried out by Ehsan Namaziandost, Leila Neisi, Fatemeh Mahdavi-rad, and Mehdi Nasiri, titled "The Relationship between Listening Comprehension Problems and Strategy Use among Advanced EFL Learners" and published in Cogent Psychology in 2019, clarifies the links between the listening difficulties experienced by participants and the strategies they adopt. The authors examined various listening needs and classified the challenges into six categories: input, context, audience, process, influence, and task-related issues. They suggest that the strategies employed to address these listening difficulties include cognitive, meta-cognitive, and socio-affective methods. The study's results reveal that learners face considerable challenges related to input and influence in listening tasks, with meta-cognitive strategies being particularly crucial in overcoming these issues. This research is a quantitative research using a purposive convenience sampling technique in the private sector language institute in Ahvaz, Iran.

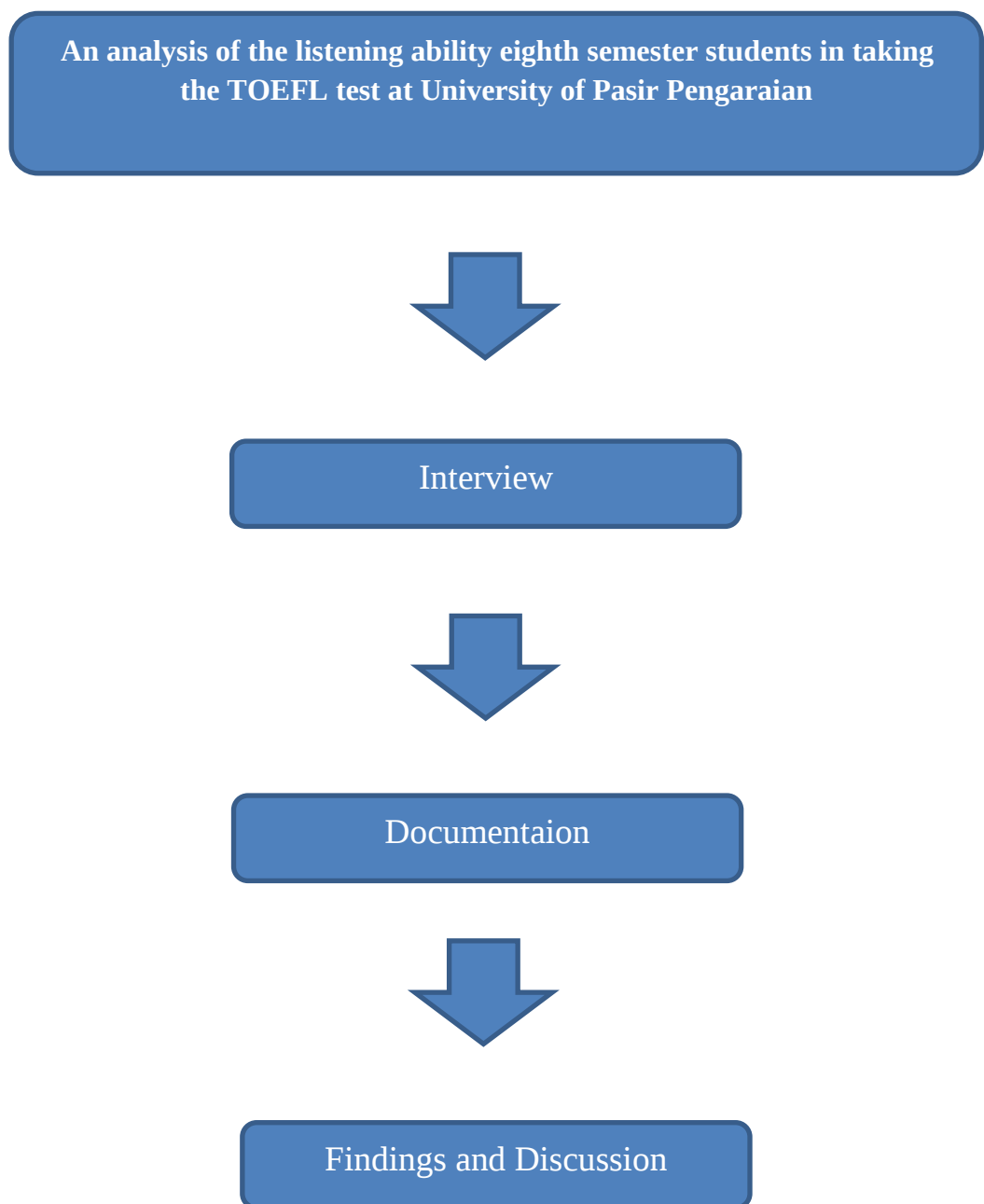
Recent and past research investigates the difficulties students face in listening, along with the techniques they use. Nevertheless, previous studies have mainly focused on the relationship between listening challenges and the methods applied in listening comprehension courses for advanced English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The objective of this study is to examine the particular challenges that students encounter during the TOEFL listening comprehension test and to clarify the strategies they employ in answering the TOEFL exam.

Based on the research I've compiled, it is clear that many students still encounter difficulties when taking the TOEFL test, especially in the listening section. Often, their responses to questions in this part do not accurately capture the intended meaning.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

This study includes a framework intended to enhance the reader's comprehension of the proposed research methodology. The following figure depicts the steps that will be followed in this research.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of The Research



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the research methodology employed by the researchers in this study. It is organized into several sections, including the research design, the research setting, the tools used for instrumentation, the research procedures, the data collection techniques, and the methods of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

This research was structured as qualitative inquiry, utilizing a qualitative methodology during its entire process. According to Creswell (2018, p. 35), "The qualitative method of gathering, analyzing, interpreting, and presenting data is different from traditional quantitative approaches."

According to Sugiyono (2018:213), qualitative research methods are based on philosophical foundations and are used to explore scientific contexts (experimentation) where the researcher is considered the main tool for gathering data. In qualitative analysis, the techniques for data collection emphasize understanding meanings. The goal of qualitative research methodology is to analyze and explain phenomena or subjects of study from the perspective of social behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions of individuals or groups. Researchers engaged in this type of study operate under specific assumptions about deductive theory testing, implementing measures to minimize bias, managing alternative explanations, and the capacity to generalize and replicate results.

The researcher uses a qualitative case study approach since the subjects explored in this study are described in qualitative terms rather than through numerical data. The analysis focuses on the obstacles and issues faced. This method seeks to offer a comprehensive explanation and discussion, effectively equipping students for the TOEFL exam.

3.2 Setting of the Research

This research was conducted at the University of Pasir Pengaraian in Rokan Hulu, Riau, with an emphasis on students in their eighth semester.

3.3 Population and Sample of the Research

According to Sugiyono (2012:73), a sample is a portion of the entire population that reflects the traits of the population from which it originates; it is crucial for the sample to accurately represent the population. The phrase "sample size" pertains to the number of samples that will be collected from the population.

According to Sugiyono (2021: 126), the term population denotes a broader area that includes subjects or objects with particular qualities and quantities identified for research, from which conclusions are drawn.

The population in this study were students enrolled in the social science education program. For the sample, purposive sampling was utilized. A total of 25 eighth-semester students from the Social Sciences Education Department will be interviewed.

3.4 Instrument of the Research

According to Sugiyono (2016:305), qualitative research fundamentally relies on the researchers as the primary tools for data collection. This means that the researcher plays a vital role in gathering information during the research process. They immerse themselves in the field to find and collect the data needed for their investigations. After establishing a clear focus for the research, there may be an opportunity to create a particular instrument to facilitate data collection, with the aim of improving its effectiveness.

This study employs two forms of instruments, specifically interviews and documentation.

1. Interview

Interviews are an effective approach for obtaining detailed information from individuals during the process of data collection. According to Mulyana (2001, p. 180), interviews involve a dialogue between two people, with one person asking questions designed to gather information for a particular purpose.

In this specific interview, the researchers conversed with students who took the TOEFL test. The aim of this discussion is to better understand the difficulties the students encounter.

2. Documentation

According to Sugiyono (2020:124), documentation involves the collection of records related to past events, which can be displayed in different formats, including written materials, images, or photographs.

3.5 Technique Collecting of the Data

The data collection method was specifically designed to fit the qualitative research framework. The researcher primarily used interviews to gather information, speaking with 25 students enrolled in the social education program. These interviews were held in person in their assigned study program room and occurred on three different occasions.

3.6 Technique Analysis of the Data

In their study cited by Sugiyono (2019:321), Miles and Huberman argue that data analysis in qualitative research takes place not only during the data collection process but also after it has been completed, all within a defined period. They describe qualitative data analysis as an interactive and continuous process that persists until saturation is achieved.

As for the steps that must be followed in data analysis are data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification.

1. Data Reduction (Data Reduction)

In their book cited by Sugiyono (2019:321), Miles and Huberman emphasize that in qualitative research, data analysis takes place both during the collection of data and after it has been gathered, spanning a defined period. The qualitative data analysis process involves ongoing and interactive tasks that continue until the analysis achieves a level of saturation.

The writer can conclude from the earlier observations that data reduction involves summarizing the information collected during fieldwork and then pinpointing the essential elements related to the research goals.

2. Data display

Miles and Huberman explain that data display, or data presentation, plays a crucial role in qualitative research by illustrating data with narrative text. This method of presenting data is key to understanding the events being studied and aids in conducting additional analysis derived from the insights provided by the displayed information.

3. Conclusion Drawing/Verification

Miles and Huberman state that the third step after analyzing qualitative data is inference and verification. The preliminary conclusions made at this point are tentative and can be adjusted if significant supporting evidence is not found in the next phase of data collection.