

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

There are a lot of sayings about language as a tool to communicate. It is a system of communicating with others to express ideas or thoughts (Daulay, 2019). One of the crucial components in language learning is to be able to speak up. In some cases, speaking (giving information) becomes the most important aspect while listening (receiving information) is regarded as the secondary. In order to communicate fluently, it is necessary to understand what the other speakers say. The most important as well as the basic skill in language learning is listening, moreover, it is the key to an effective communication. Listening is the most widely used skill, both in academic and non-academic context (Cole, 2018). It is also a difficult skill to acquire for several reasons including perception problems, memory and attention issues, and strategies.

We cannot pause a speech to separate it into distinct words; yet it flows as a stream of sound (Cole, 2018). Moreover, the words doesn't always sound they way they are written. This is the biggest obstacle that often encountered by English learners in listening process. They might be familiar with the printed form of words that they probably do not know how it is pronounced but when it comes to listening activity, they cannot even recognize what is being said because they never learn how to pronounce the new words.

Spoken language in communication also puts a burden on attention and memory, making it more difficult for students to hold everything in their memory (Cole 2018). Cole (2018) also says that the competing demands of unfamiliar vocabulary, pronunciation, grammatical structure, and the length of the text distract students' attention in most of the cases. Therefore, they end up spending several seconds trying to find out a word and miss what comes next.

Listening is one of four important basic English skills; speaking, reading, writing, and listening (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). Those four skills play essential roles in mastering English but we just tend to focus on speaking and reading as a productive skill and put aside listening and reading as the secondary skill. Listening is the most used

language skill in daily life besides speaking, thus it is the most important aspect in communication. In general, listening is the activity of receiving and responding to spoken messages. It is not only about hearing what the other participants in a conversation say but also contributing ideas as the feedback and showing interest (Nordquist, 2019). It is the key to effective as well as fluent communication.

Listening comprehension is an ability to comprehend a spoken language that entangles the process of absorbing and drawing up meaning (Kim & Pilcher, 2016). In short, listening is the ability to receive the message accurately and comprehend what is being told in the process of communication. Listening requires indirect explanations and cannot be observed directly (Rost, 2011). It will only lead the participants into misunderstanding if they cannot listen effectively.

Therefore, from the explanations above, listening is not only hearing what other people say but also paying attention to what is being told and understand the message. Listening comprehension aims to comprehend the spoken language that involves absorbing and drawing up the meaning contextually in a communication.

There are several strategies that can be applied in listening activity: extensive and intensive listening (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). Extensive listening allows the student to be more relaxed while doing listening task. Students can participate in their English language learning through extensive listening. Because students can choose listening materials based on their own interests, extensive listening might potentially lead them to engaging in intriguing activities in English language learning (Takaesu, 2014). Students can learn a variety of language expressions by watching videos on the internet. Simultaneously, they are exposed to a variety of spoken expressions embedded in internet-based videos, such as speech videos, song videos, and other audiovisual teaching tools, all of which contribute to the creation of engaging classroom conditions. As a result, they can choose from a wide range of extensive listening teaching materials to meet the students' English competencies.

In a good communication, we try to convey ideas, express the feelings, explain several things, share and receive information using language (Daulay et al., 2021). In order to comprehend the information in listening activity, a certain amount of vocabulary

is needed. Thus, it is one of the reasons behind the poor understanding in listening comprehension due the lack of vocabulary knowledge. It is absolutely impossible to engage in a conversation and understand a language without knowing the vocabulary. Someone cannot just guess what other people say and give a random feedback to the given information or statement. We do need a collection of words to understand what other parties say, make some phrases, arrange them into a sentence, and speak it up. In order to do that, we need knowledge of vocabulary.

Vocabulary is the main part of language proficiency to support the ability in speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Daulay et al., 2021). We cannot go far from vocabulary in learning language. Someone cannot just remain silent and expect that everyone around will definitely understand what is the meaning of her/his silence. Mastering a foreign language means mastering vocabulary. The learners are expected to know and recognize the words both in spoken or written text. It means, they not only able to spell or pronounce it but they also should be capable to differentiate the category and meaning when it comes to grammatically sentence (Sukmawati, 2006). When the students learn more vocabulary and be able to make some phrases with various words, it will help them make more improvement as we can say very little with grammar but we can almost communicate everything with words.

Students can improve their awareness and ability in recognizing varied English vocabulary by repeating the practice of listening spoken expressions in extensive listening activities (Saputra & Fatimah, 2018). Although students are not required to comprehend the meanings of each word in the audio texts, they are encouraged to make educated guesses based on the situations supplied. Students can use the audio to list unfamiliar terms, potentially boosting their vocabulary. As a result, their vocabulary will expand and their self-assurance will grow.

Thus it can be concluded that vocabulary is also the important thing in language learning. We cannot just rely on grammar to construct a sentence. We do need vocabulary to express the idea grammatically. By learning more vocabulary, students can arrange a lot of sentences, and by mastering vocabulary, the students can easily engage in a conversation.

Nowadays, as technology develops so fast, we can find a lot of things easily on the internet. Social media has been considered an effective tool to support teaching and learning process (Heriyanto, 2015). A number of sources and media-based technology can be accessed to help and ease us in an educational activity. Students prefer video-based training in language teaching over audio-only instruction because videos multiply input modalities, which can motivate students and draw their attention to spoken production (Robertson et al., 2016). Video is frequently used in EFL classes to improve students' listening comprehension as well as their vocabulary mastery because it is one of the technologies that provide educators with a wide selection of resource material.

One of the popular media is TED Talk. TED stands for Technology, Entertainment, Design that provides more than 2000 talks from various people all over the world with various topics (Gavenila et al., 2021). It provides EFL students with authentic materials as well as different types of language styles or accents that can improve and enrich their words bank as well as their quality of listening and speaking techniques (Rendaya & Farrell, cited in Gavenila et al., 2021). Moreover, each presentation is supplemented with the transcript that can be used as an equip while doing listening and also as reading material.

The combination of audio input and visual images can be adopted as teaching materials especially in the field of listening (Saputra & Fatimah, 2018). The students can simultaneously receive the utterance and visual which can enhance their language learning skills. Moreover, learning language using video to improve students' vocabulary knowledge and comprehension can expose the students to authentic context so they can improve their ability. Thus in some institutions, TED Talk becomes a source for academic listening courses.

In short, listening is an active process where the listener is not only demanded to hear what the speaker says but also understand the message. In order to grasp the information from the speaker, we need vocabulary knowledge. It is not enough to only have grammar skill but we do need vocabulary to arrange sentences in a meaningful way and understand the received information contextually. We need to combine this skill in classroom so that students get sufficient exposure of daily and contextually English

conversation. In order to achieve that effective English listening lesson, teachers should have adequate and suitable source and provide the students the authentic materials.

The researcher uses TED Talk as the media to do this research is due to its authenticity such as its material, the accent of the speakers, as well as their language style. Thus, using a contextual thing such as TED Talk in the class will be somewhat challenging so that the students can adapt themselves to the things they have never known before. Based on several researches that have been conducted previously, the researcher finds it interesting to figure out the relation between vocabulary mastery and listening skill using TED Talk as its material to examine how deep and far someone's ability in comprehending a speech with the collection of words they have.

1.2 Formulation of the Study

1. What is the correlation between the students' vocabulary mastery and their listening comprehension?
2. To what extent does vocabulary knowledge influence the comprehension in listening?

1.3 Objective of the Study

1. To find out the relationship between listening skill and the vocabulary knowledge the students have.
2. To figure out the influence of vocabulary knowledge to the students' listening comprehension.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

This study will be focusing on how listening comprehension has a correlation with the students' knowledge in vocabulary and the participants of this study will be the third grade of Mas Plus Al Ulum Medan. The researcher also would like to know if a student's comprehension in listening depends on how much vocabulary he/she has. In this case, the researcher would like to use one of video from TED Talk as the material for the study.

Moreover, this study wants to find out in what level can a student comprehend an English authentic speech.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Every research is conducted to obtain the result that can be useful for the wider community and the research itself as well. Therefore the significances of this research are:

1. Theoretical Significance

This research aims to know the relationship between listening comprehension and vocabulary mastery using TED Talk video as an authentic material.

2. Practical Significance

- a) For the teachers, this research will be the source of information to implement TED Talk videos as listening material in the classroom and to give several information about how vocabulary mastery can contribute to students' listening comprehension.
- b) This research will also be useful for English learners as the guide to a better listening activity using videos. Hopefully the students are encouraged to enrich their words collection that can be obtained from videos they watch or audio they listen to.
- c) The researcher hopes that this research can be used as a reference for the next or other research related to listening skills, vocabulary mastery, media usage for English authentic materials and other related topics.