

Chapter One

Introduction

In this chapter, there are several important points to discuss. It contains the background of the research, identification of the problem, delimitation of the problem, and the research question. The objectives of the research, and the significance of the research are mentioned in this chapter. In the background of the research, it explains about the reason why the researcher chooses the topic. Then, the researcher identifies the problem. After that, the researcher limits the problems to be discussed in this research. Next, the researcher lists some questions that will be researched and explains the aims of doing this research. Last, the researcher hopes that this research provides some advantages to teachers, students, and other researchers. The researcher mentions about the organization of the chapter at the end of this chapter.

Background of the Research

English Proficiency Test (EPT) is a test to measure someone's English competence. According to Sharpe (2013), EPT is a test that measures the English language ability of non-native speakers to obtain scholarship in Universities of America. He added that more than 8.500 colleagues and universities in the United States and 130 other countries request overseas registrants to give their English proficiency test score in order to fulfill the requirement.

When students learn a language, listening is one of the important skills that must be mastered. According to Hamouda (2013), the first skill that the learner has to master is listening skills. If it is not, the communication cannot run well. Besides, Rost (2002)

stated that listening comprehension is a process of getting what the speaker says, builds and represents the meaning. It is about understanding the grammar, accent, pronunciation, vocabulary, also the meaning of what the speaker says. For many English foreign language learners, listening is quite difficult, because they have to have an extra focus. Also, they cannot control the speaker's speed, and for some reasons, they have to learn a different accent from their mother tongue.

The problems that influence the difficulties of listening comprehension deal with the learners' motivation and concentration (Hamouda, 2013). Meanwhile, Bingol (2014) stated that unfamiliar vocabulary and the speakers' accent are also the problems that lead into difficulties of listening comprehension. Gilakjani (2016) added that the quality of the recorder and the length of the listening also affected difficulties.

Identification of the Problem

Students are required to take EPT as one of the requirements to graduate. In this case EPT refers to TOEFL like test. To prepare the students to achieve the standard result, the department offers a subject of International Language Testing. In this course, the students have opportunity to do the EPT. The purpose of doing this test is to measure their level of English proficiency. From the interview that has been conducted by the researcher before, it shows that the students found difficulties in listening, reading, and writing section of the test. However, most of them have difficulties in listening section of the EPT.

Listening is the most crucial stage in the learning process (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). Some problems that lead to the difficulties of doing listening test are the unfamiliar word, the accent, learners' focuses, and also the grammar. Besides, there are other

problems that lead to the difficulties, such as the speakers' speed, the bad audio, and unsupported materials for the listening in the EPT. To deal with those kinds of problems, learners need to have a strategy to overcome the problem. Watching Hollywood movies, listen to American songs, watching educational videos might be the way to improve their vocabulary and also their listening comprehension.

The reason why the researcher chose this topic is basically based on the researchers' informal interview and the discussion between the lecturer and the students in International Language Testing class. The result showed that the most challenging section in EPT is listening. It is quite complicated in comprehending the English proficiency test listening section test. There are some reasons that affected the difficulties in listening comprehension. In that class, students have to take the EPT test, which is TOEFL like test. They believe that the result of the test show that their listening scores are lower than the other sections, they are unable to complete the listening section, and they are unsatisfied with the test results. Therefore, the researcher found about the problems that leads to the difficulties that the learners faced in comprehending the English proficiency test listening section. In addition, the researcher found out that the students used strategies when taking the EPT. Based on these initial findings, the researcher was interested in exploring more on the students' problems in comprehending listening in EPT. Since the problems need certain strategies to overcome, the researcher was also interested in investigating the students' strategies to overcome the problems.

Delimitation of the Study

There are various kinds of English Proficiency Test to measure someone's English ability, such as TOEFL, TOEIC, IELTS. However, the researcher focused on the TOEFL like test. What is meant by EPT in this research refers to paper based TOEFL like test.

Although there are many problems in each section, namely listening, reading, and writing when doing EPT, in this research, the researcher only focused on the listening section of EPT. The researcher also limits the study on learners' problems and strategies to overcome the problem in comprehending listening section in English Proficiency Test. This research only focused on the learners' problems, and their strategies to overcome the problems during taking the English proficiency test especially in the section of listening comprehension faced by the English Education Department students at one of a private university in Yogyakarta. The research was limited as it only applied qualitative approach.

Research Question

The following are the questions that have been formulated by the researcher:

1. What are the students' problem in comprehending listening section in English Proficiency Test?
2. What are the students' strategies to overcome the problems in comprehending the listening section in English Proficiency Test?

Objectives of the Research

The objectives of this research are to find out:

1. The students' problems when comprehend the listening section in TOEFL like test.
2. The students' strategies to overcome the problems in comprehending the listening section in TOEFL like test.

Significances of the Research

The researcher expects that this research will give the benefits to teachers, students, also other researchers.

For lecturer. The research provides the information on the students' problems and strategies to overcome the problems in listening section in English Proficiency Test. Therefore, this research can be beneficial information for the lecturer when they find their students have the same problems as the findings to this research especially in comprehending the listening section in English proficiency test. Moreover, the lecturer can give some strategies to overcome students' problems.

For students. By reading this research, the researcher hopes if they have the same problem in English listening comprehension, they can adopt the same strategy to overcome their problems in comprehending the listening section in English proficiency test.

For other researchers. The researcher expects this study provides beneficial information about learners' problems and strategies to overcome the problem in comprehending the listening section in English proficiency test. It is expected that this research can be a reference to those who want to conduct research about the related topic and to develop the similar topic to be more depth.

Organization of the Chapters

The report of this research is presented in five chapters. The first chapter which is introduction, consists of background of the research, identification of the problem, delimitation of the problem, and the research questions which are, "What are the students' problem in comprehending listening section in English Proficiency Test?" and "What are

the students' strategies to overcome the problems in comprehending the listening section in English Proficiency Test?" The objectives of the research and significances of the research are also presented in this chapter. Chapter two discusses the literature review and the review of related study. In the literature review, it discusses the definition of listening skill, definition of listening comprehension, problems of listening comprehension which are quality of the recorded materials, cultural differences, accent, unfamiliar vocabulary, length and speed of the listening, environment conditions, and lack of concentration. Then, there are some strategies to overcome those kinds of problem, which are cognitive strategy, metacognitive strategy, and socio-affective strategy. In addition, there is a review of the related study. Chapter three relates to the methodology consisting of the research design, research setting, research participants, data collection method, instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis. Chapter four presents the findings and discussion. Chapter five draws the conclusion and provides suggestions.