



## INTRODUCTION

Listening comprehension is a language skill that plays a vital role in communication. According to Ramadhianti & Somba (2021) listening comprehension is the most important skill in learning a language, 45% of the time is spent just listening in the communication process. This is proof that a person receives more information through their listening skills. For example, in class, students are required to be quiet and listen to the teacher's explanation. Listening comprehension is defined as a student's ability to understand the meaning of orally message. Listening is not only the ability to hear sounds but also to understand vocabulary, pronunciation, and the content of the message heard (Muthmainnah & Nurbayan, 2024). According to Sastra et al (2023) listening is defined as an active process involving oral reception, information processing, and understanding of meaning. This process requires students' language skills and concentration. This means that listening is a crucial and active activity that encompasses receiving spoken messages, processing information, understanding word meaning, understanding pronunciation, and even concentration. Furthermore, listening also plays a crucial role in this lesson.

Listening has several important aspects, as stated by Nurgiyantoro (2016) listening has only two aspects: comprehension of the content and detailed comprehension of the text content. Comprehension of the content means measuring students' understanding to find the meaning of the main idea. This means that listeners must understand the context without understanding it completely. Meanwhile, comprehension of the text content refers to understanding the content of the spoken text in detail. This aspect clarifies the accuracy of capturing the content of spoken text. From all of these statements, it can be concluded that if someone experiences hearing loss, communication cannot take place effectively, and they will be unable to understand or convey information accurately. This is one of the challenges that learners will face.

Listening has many difficulties that learners usually face. According to Dong (2022) linguistic difficulties are the main difficulties faced by students in the listening activity. The difficulty such as lack of vocabulary, difficulty understanding sounds at high speed, and difficulty understanding the meaning of words with different pronunciations. Additionally, psychological factors also play a role, such as excessive anxiety experienced by students, a lack of self-confidence, and being easily distracted during listening exercises (Dong 2022). Furthermore, technical factors such as poor audio quality, a speaker's voice being soft or unclear, and noisy environments can make it difficult for them to listen.

In line with Ramadhianti & Somba (2021) the greatest difficulties students face in listening comprehension are when the audio is played too fast and when there are different accents. They face difficulty to understand when listening to something that is played too fast, making it difficult. Furthermore, unfamiliar accents can confuse them, making it difficult to understand what is being said. Furthermore, many ambiguous utterances confuse students and make listening especially challenging (Andika & Indah Sari, 2021). Furthermore, the main difficulty in listening here is caused by differences in accent and speech or audio speed, which make it difficult for someone to understand the meaning.

The ideal condition expected is that students can understand and provide responses directly or orally in English correctly, in accordance with the competency standards set in the national curriculum (Tesyfaye W & Banteyerga A, 2025). Based on the research by Dwi & Putera (2023) achieving good listening competency will support the mastery of other language skills and increase students' confidence in communicating. Tesyfaye W & Banteyerga A (2025) emphasized that the 2013 curriculum places listening as one of the core competencies that junior high school students must possess. However, based on the data that the researcher got, many students in class VII-E at SMP Negeri 4 Kediri experienced difficulties in

listening comprehension. Based on data from interviews conducted by the researcher on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, with one English teacher who teaches in class VII-E and five students from class VII-E.

**Table 1. Percentage of Students Scores**

| Skills    | Average | Failed | Passed |
|-----------|---------|--------|--------|
| Reading   | 71.37   | 16.7%  | 83.3%  |
| Writing   | 73.23   | 23%    | 77%    |
| Listening | 52.47   | 93%    | 7%     |
| Speaking  | 70.7    | 30%    | 70%    |

Based on the student score data provided by the school for the four skills taught, it can be seen that only 16.7% of students' reading scores did not reach the minimum competency criteria (KKM), then 23% of students' writing scores did not pass, then 30% of students did not reach the minimum competency criteria (KKM) in speaking lessons, and 93% of students had scores below the minimum competency criteria (KKM) in listening activities. Where the minimum competency requirement that must be achieved is 71. It means that, there is a problem that needs to be explore more deeply regarding the difficulties experienced by students, especially in listening activities. Furthermore, based on the interview with an English teacher at SMP Negeri 4 Kediri, the teacher revealed that students appeared to lack confidence during practice, possibly due to less of practice.

Based on the interview with students, they said that they experienced listening difficulties because the audio was too fast, it can make them difficult to understand the flow of the audio. Some students stated that they did not understand what the speaker was saying. Some students also said they felt nervous and afraid of making mistakes while listening activities, so they chose to be silent during the class. Furthermore, they also stated that the speaker quality was poor, resulting in unclear sound. The noisy classroom atmosphere also prevented students from concentrating on their studies due to the unsupportive atmosphere. Based on the interviews that have been conducted, it was indicated that listening difficulties were not solely a problem of language ability, but also involved many other factors, such as psychological factors and the learning environment.

Based on the research from Hadist et al. (2022) and Sastra et al. (2023), which states that the difficulties frequently encountered by students include difficulties with speaker quality, poor recording quality, material, attitudes, students' background knowledge, unfamiliar topics, unclear pronunciation, understanding the meaning, and also environmental. This research gap can be clearly explained because many studies discuss listening difficulties and the factors that influence them, but only a few examine the aspects of listening, listening comprehension difficulties, and the factors that influence them. This condition showed a gap between the expected listening competence and the actual listening ability of students, which needs to be explored through qualitative research. This study will find out which aspects of listening are difficult, the listening comprehension difficulties faced by junior high school students, and the factors that may influence them.

This study discusses listening difficulties among junior high school students, especially in class VII-E of SMP Negeri 4 Kediri. This study is important to gain a clearer understanding of the aspects of listening difficulties experienced by students, the difficulties in listening comprehension faced by students, and the factors that can influence their listening abilities, so that appropriate solutions can be found. The

results of this study can be used as a reference for creating appropriate listening learning strategies. Thus, the researcher hopes that the research at SMP Negeri 4 Kediri can contribute to efforts to improve the quality of education, especially in listening. This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing aspects of listening, the types of listening comprehension difficulties faced by students of SMP Negeri 4 Kediri and the factors that influence them.

Based on the problems above the research questions of this research were “What are the listening difficulties based on the listening aspects according to Brown (2007) theory experienced by class VII-E students at SMP Negeri 4 Kediri?” “What are the listening difficulties based on the concept of listening comprehension difficulties by Fadhly & Rahmatunisa (2021) experienced by students of SMP Negeri 4 Kediri?” “What factors can influence listening comprehension difficulties among grade VII-E students at SMP Negeri 4 Kediri?”

## METHODS OF RESEARCH

In this study, the researcher used a descriptive qualitative method type case study design because it focused on listening comprehension difficulties. The students were selected as research subjects because the researcher identified symptoms they faced in listening comprehension. The characteristics of the research subjects were that they were from class VII-E at SMP Negeri 4 Kediri, students who were taking English courses this semester, they had difficulty understanding the speaker's intentions because the audio was too fast, they were afraid of making mistakes and chose to remain silent, they felt disturbed because the class was noisy, and they said the audio quality was poor. This research was conducted at SMP Negeri 4 Kediri, located on Jl. Sentra, Kaba-Kaba, Kediri District, Tabanan Regency, Bali. The researcher conducted this study specifically with grade VII-E students who experienced difficulties in English listening comprehension during English lessons, with a total of 29 students. This research conducted in the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year.

Data were collected through listening tests, questionnaires (open and closed), and semi-structured interviews. The listening test consisted of 20 questions. This instrument used to answer research question number one. The questions were structured using Brown (2007) theory, which included listening for main ideas consist of 6 questions, listening for specific information consist of 8 questions (4 for implicit and 4 for explicit), and listening for inferences consist of 6 questions. This theory was chosen because it aligns with the purposed of this study, which is to determine the aspects of listening difficulties experienced by students. The audio transcript was adapted from the English for Nusantara textbook for 7th-grade students, which is appropriate for their level.

Then, a closed-ended questionnaire and an open-ended questionnaire were used. This instrument used to answer research questions number one, two, and three. The questions in the closed-ended questionnaire were designed using the concept of Fadhly & Rahmatunisa (2021) who stated that there are four listening comprehension difficulties: speaker difficulty, listener difficulty, stimulus difficulty, and contextual difficulty. The researchers created 39 questions, each indicator consisting of three questions. Respondents simply ticked "Yes" or "No." Meanwhile, the open-ended questions consisted of six questions. The researcher used this instrument to strengthen the data from the closed-ended questionnaire, which was administered via Google Forms. In this section, students were required to type their answers in short answer format.

Next, the semi-structured interview consisted of 7 main questions. This instrument used to answer research questions number one, two, and three. Interviews conducted after administered tests and questionnaires to students. The questions structured from Brown (2007) theory about listening difficulties aspects, which are divided into three, namely listening for main ideas, listening for specific information, and listening for inference. Then added with the concept of listening comprehension difficulties from Fadhy & Rahmatunisa (2021), namely speaker difficulties, listener difficulties, stimulus difficulties, and contextual difficulties. According to Fadilah et al. (2024) concept the factors that influence listening difficulties include internal factors and external factors. The researcher used six students which is two from higher score, two from middle score and two from lower score to get accurate data from each categories.

In addition, data from the listening test and closed-ended questionnaires were analyzed using a percentage formula. The data from open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were analyzed using the theory from Miles et al., (2014). There are four stages to analyze the data: data reduction, data presentation, conclusions, and verification.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Aspects of Listening Difficulties According to Brown theory

**Table 2. Analysis Students' Competences in Listening**

| No | Aspects of Listening                          | Total Correct Answer | Maximum Score | Percentage of Correct Answer | Percentage of Incorrect Answer |
|----|---|----------------------|---------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1  | Listening for Main Idea                       | 74                   | 29x6= 174     | 42.5%                        | 57.5%                          |
| 2  | Listening for Specific Information (Explicit) | 54                   | 29x4= 116     | 46.6%                        | 53.4%                          |
| 3  | Listening for Specific Information (Implicit) | 33                   | 29x4= 116     | 28.4%                        | 71.6%                          |
| 4  | Listening for Inferences                      | 89                   | 29x6= 174     | 51.1%                        | 48.9%                          |

#### Notes:

Maximum Score: Total Students x Total Questions

Percentage:  $\frac{\text{Total Correct Answer}}{\text{Maximum Score}} \times 100$

Total Students: 29

Based on the listening test, the results showed that most students had difficulty implicitly listening for specific information. This finding was supported by an open-ended questionnaire about students' difficulties in three aspects of listening. The results showed that most students reported several problem during the listening activity:

*"saya tidak bisa mendengarkan audio karena kata-katanya kurang jelas"* (I can't hear the audio clearly) (S6, S30).

*"kata-katanya tidak familiar"* (the words are unfamiliar) (S6).

“suasana kelas nya ribut” (the classroom is noisy) (S1, S3, S4 S5 S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S17, S18, S19, S20, S21, S22, S23, S24, S26, S27, S28, S29).

“tidak konsentrasi” (I can't concentrate) (S2).

“tidak memahami audio yang di dengar” (I don't understand the audio) (S25, S27).

It can be concluded that students faced several listening difficulties, including, a noisy classroom atmosphere, unclear audio, foreign words, and lack of concentration.

Furthermore, based on the result from semi-structured interview it was found that most students experienced difficulties in listening for specific information. They said that:

**Student 1:** “Lingkungan kelas ribut menyebabkan saya sulit fokus” (The noisy classroom environment makes it difficult for me to focus).

**Student 2:** “Audionya terdengar kurang jelas” (I feel that the audio is not clear).

**Student 3:** “Terganggu karena kelas yang ribut, dan vocabulary rendah” (I feel disturbed by the noisy class and low vocabulary).

**Student 4:** “Karena teman lain bercanda, dan ada kosakata yang tidak mengerti” (Because other friends joke around and there are words that I don't understand).

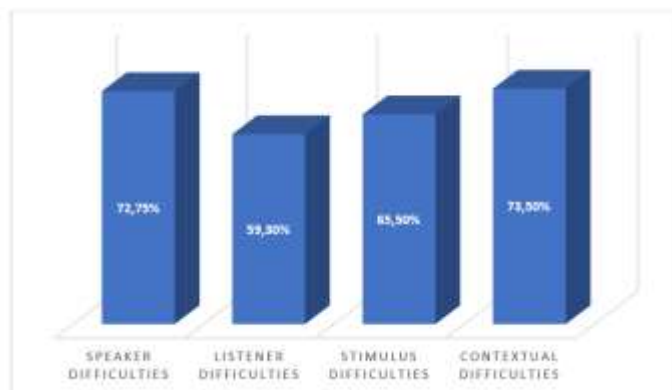
**Student 5:** “Karena, tidak mengerti apa yang dibilang oleh audionya dan kelasnya ribut” (Because I didn't understand what the audio was saying and the class was noisy).

**Student 6:** “Karena kosakata kurang dan teman ngajak bercanda” (Because I didn't have enough vocabulary and my friends were joking around).

It can be concluded that the most of students felt distracted by the noisy class, their friends joking around, and they had limited vocabulary mastery.

Based on the result of open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview it showed that most students experienced technical difficulties. Apart from technical difficulties the students also faced difficulties caused by limited vocabulary mastery. They said that “Terganggu karena kelas yang ribut, dan vocabulary rendah” (I feel disturbed by the noisy class and low vocabulary) (S1, S3, S4 S5 S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S17, S18, S19, S20, S21, S22, S23, S24, S26, S27, S28, S29). This finding suggests that environment factors influenced their listening activities. It supported by the result from open-ended questionnaire which was the student said that “kata-katanya tidak familiar” (the words are unfamiliar) (S6). This finding indicates that limited vocabulary became one of the major obstacles in listening. In contrast to the findings of Siregar & Hum (2021) which states that the difficulty experienced by students is listening for inference. This was because students felt that the audio was unclear because they have a lack of motivation, limited vocabulary and they are easily distracted by disturbances in the classroom.

## The Listening Comprehension Difficulties Based on the Concept of Fadhy & Rahmatunisa



**Figure 1. The Percentage of Listening Comprehension Difficulties**

Based on the close-ended questionnaire the results showed that the dominant difficulties faced by students in contextual difficulties, especially in noisy classroom and speaker difficulties, especially in speaking speed. Furthermore, students also experienced difficulties in stimulus especially in grammar and listener difficulties, especially in vocabulary. This finding was supported by the results of the open-ended questionnaire regarding contextual difficulties the student said that:

*“suasana di kelas terlalu ribut”* (the classroom atmosphere is too noisy) (S1, S6, S30). This indicates that environmental distraction affected students’ concentration during listening activities.

In speaker difficulties the student said that:

*“audionya terlalu cepat”* (the audio was too fast) (S4, S5, S8, S10, S19, S27, S29).

In stimulus difficulties the students' responses were:

*“tata bahasa nya terlalu sulit”* (the grammatical structures were too difficult) (S9, S11, S23, S24, S25, S26, S28).

In listener difficulties students said that:

*“kehilangan konsentrasi atau fokus”* (I lost my concentration or focus) (S18, S20).

Furthermore, the results of semi-structured interviews in contextual difficulties in response to the question “Based on your experience, how do classroom conditions, such as noise, affect your focus during listening activities? For example, if the class is noisy, you become unfocused”. The students’ responses were:

**Student 1:** *“Jika kelasnya ribut saya menjadi terganggu dan tidak fokus”* (If the class is noisy, I became distracted and lost my focus).

**Student 2:** *“Saya tetap bisa fokus meskipun kelas ribut”* (I could still focus even when the class was noisy).

**Student 3:** *“Kehilangan konsentrasi jika yang lain ribut”* (I lost concentration when others were noisy).

**Student 4:** *“Kehilangan konsentrasi karena teman lain bercanda”* (I lost my concentration because other friends were joking).

**Student 5:** *“Kondisi kelas ribut membuat tidak fokus sehingga menjawabnya”*

*ngasal*” (The noisy classroom made me lose focus, so I gave random answers). This response suggests that classroom distractions negatively affected students’ ability to answer accurately.

**Student 6:** “*Kehilangan konsentrasi karena kelasnya ribut*” (I lost concentration because the classroom was noisy).

Additionally, the result from semi-structured interview which is the question is “In your experience, does audio that's too fast sound unclear? For example, you can't understand what it means.” The student said that:

**Student 1:** “*Iya audio yang cepat terdengar sedikit kurang jelas*” (Yes, fast audio sounds a little unclear for me).

**Student 2:** “*Iya audio yang terlalu cepat bikin bingung*” (Yes, audio that was too fast confused me).

**Student 3:** “*Iya audio yang cepat suaranya menjadi kurang jelas* (Yes, fast audio made the sound less clear).

**Student 4:** “*Iya audio terlalu cepat membuat sulit menangkap informasi*” (Yes, audio that is too fast made me difficult to grasp information).

**Student 5:** “*Iya audio yang cepat membingungkan karena kosakata saya juga rendah*” (Yes, the fast audio is confusing for me because my vocabulary was limited).

**Student 6:** “*Iya karena audio cepat saya jadinya tidak tahu apa yang dibicarakan sama audionya*” (Yes, because the audio is fast, I don't know what the audio was being said).

The result from semi-structured interview which is the question is “Based on your experience, does audio that's too long affect your listening experience? For example, does it confuse you or make you feel bored? And why?” The student’ responses were:

**Student 1:** “*Iya karena sulit ingat informasi sebelumnya*” (Yes, because it was difficult for me to remember the previous information).

**Student 2:** “*Iya audio panjang membuat bingung karena tidak bisa menangkap informasi*” (Yes, long audio is confusing because I can't grasp the information).

**Student 3:** “*Iya berpengaruh karena kata-katanya sulit dipahami*” (Yes, it has an effect because the words are difficult for me to understand).

**Student 4:** “*Audio panjang biasa saja bagi saya*” (Too long audio was not a problem for me).

**Student 5:** “*Audio yang Panjang membingungkan karena kata-katanya sulit ditangkap*” (Too long audio is confusing because the words are difficult for me to understand).

**Student 6:** “*Iya audio panjang membuat saya tidak mengerti dengan apa yang disampaikan*” (Yes, too long audio made me difficult to understand what is being said by the speaker).

The result from semi-structured interview which is the question is “When practicing listening, what usually causes you to lose concentration? Is it because you don't understand the audio or something else?” The student’ responses were:

**Student 1:** “*Lingkungan kelasnya ribut sehingga saya tidak bisa fokus*” (The classroom environment is noisy so I could not focus).

**Student 2:** “*Di ganggu oleh teman*” (I was disturbed by my friend).

**Student 3:** “*Karena diajak ngobrol oleh teman*” (Because my friend invited me to talk during

the listening activity).

**Student 4:** “*Karena teman lain bercanda*” (Because another friend was joking).

**Student 5:** “*Kehilangan konsentrasi karena kelas ribut*” (I lost my concentration because the class was noisy).

**Student 6:** “*Kehilangan konsentrasi karena teman ngajak bercanda*” (I lost my concentration because my friends were joking around).

Based on the results of these findings, it can be concluded that students felt confused when the audio was too fast. According to the scaffolding concept proposed by Vygotsky (1978) students need assistance from more capable individuals to facilitate their learning. This is due to their limited vocabulary, which makes it difficult for them to understand the words spoken by the speaker. This aligns with Atmowardoyo (2022) listeners needed to have good vocabulary skills. Furthermore, regarding contextual difficulties, it can be concluded that students experienced difficulties when the classroom was noisy because it can cause confusion and cause them to lose focus or concentration. In line with Fadhly & Rahmatunisa (2021) which stated that lack of concentration affects students' listening skills. Students could not control the atmosphere, caused them to lose concentration. Additionally, the result from stimulus difficulties caused by complex grammatical structures made it difficult for students to understand information from the audio. According to research by Diora & Rosa (2020) students' listening difficulties were related to complex grammar, which made it difficult for them to understand each word and interpret its meaning. In addition to the results in the form of listener difficulties, it can be concluded that students were disturbed by noisy classroom, friends who joked around, and they lost concentration. This aligns with theory proposed by Vygotsky (1978) especially in the sociocultural theory which emphasizes the importance of utilizing the environment in learning. In this theory, the learning process cannot be separated from the social environment where they gained learning experiences. In the learning process, a conducive atmosphere was an important factor in helping students understand the information provided effectively.

### **The Factors Influencing Listening Comprehension Difficulties**

Based on the results of semi-structured interviews, it was found that students experienced difficulties caused by both internal and external factors. Internal factors refer to difficulties related to students' abilities, such as limited concentration and limited vocabulary. Meanwhile, external factors refer to difficulties influenced by condition outside the students' control, such as noisy classrooms, audio that was too fast and unclear, and unfamiliar accents. This finding was supported by the results of an open-ended questionnaire, the results showed that the difficulties experienced by students were caused by both internal and external factors. The students responded as follows: “*motivasi rendah*” (low motivation) (S4, S7, S12, S14, S17, S18, S20, S21, S22, S24, S25). This finding indicates that low motivation reduced students' interest and focus during listening activities. “*kosakata terbatas*” (lack of vocabulary) (S7, S9, S11, S12, S14, S15, S19, S23, S26, S28, S29). This suggests that limited vocabulary made it difficult for students to understand spoken information. “*kehilangan konsentrasi*” (loss of concentration) (S5). This finding indicates that students experienced difficulty maintaining focus during listening activities. “*ruang kelas yang ribut*” (noisy classroom) (S1, S2, S3, S5, S6, S8, S10, S13, S27, S30). This finding suggests that classroom noise distracted students and interfered with their listening comprehension.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that students experienced difficulties in both internal and external factors. This is in line with the research conducted by Atmowardoyo (2022) which stated that

listening comprehension difficulties are caused by two factors, namely internal factors and external factors. Internal factors refer to factors originating caused by students themselves, while external factors refer to factors caused by outside the students. Internal factors included vocabulary, motivation, and concentration. External factors included fast and unclear audio, noisy classroom, and unfamiliar accents.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the data analysis, the researcher concluded the following: Regarding the first research question is that of the three aspects of listening according to Brown, students experience the greatest difficulty in listening for specific information, especially in the implicit part. This is due to their feeling that the audio was unclear due to lack of motivation, limited vocabulary, and they were easily distracted by noisy classes. The second research question was listening comprehension difficulties. The biggest difficulty faced by students was contextual difficulties caused by the noisy classroom environment. In addition, they also experienced speaker difficulties especially in speaking speed, because they felt that the audio was too fast. That made them struggled to understand spoken information. Moreover, they also experienced difficulties caused by listener especially in vocabulary, because they had lack of vocabulary. Furthermore, the students also faced difficulties in stimulus especially in grammar. They felt that complex grammar makes them difficult to understand the audio. Then the last research question was the factors that influenced their listening comprehension were internal and external factors. Internal factors included student concentration, motivation, and vocabulary. Meanwhile, external factors included noisy classroom environments, speaker difficulties such as speaking speed, and complex text.

Furthermore, this study has several limitations that need to be addressed by future researchers. The limitations of this study lie in the small sample size, involving only one class in one school with a total of 29 students. The research period was also relatively short, only two months. Furthermore, this study focused solely on identifying students' listening difficulties and contributing factors, thus not providing solutions to address them.

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