

Problematic IELTS Listening for the English Department Students of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya

Chapter 1

Background of the Study

Listening is one of the English skills. It needs a serious focus from the students. Generally, listening lesson discusses conversation, dialogue, movie, etc. The students must concentrate when following a listening lesson. Based on the experience of the writer in recent years, many students could follow the listening lessons well. They could improve their skill with materials and exercises given. The Listening teacher-said that majority of the students passed this lesson. The students got good scores on this subject.

In the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University there are three levels of listening lesson, Listening A and Listening B, and Listening C. Listening A is given in the even semester while Listening B is given in the odd semester. One material is IELTS which is given in Listening C. IELTS material contains some parts and one of those parts is listening. The majority of the listening parts contain speeches of native speakers. Those native speakers talk about such subjects as art, biology, and economy.

TOEFL IBT program used in the LMM 2 in the writer's time was given in the first meeting and the last meeting as a post-test. In between, the lecturer gave exercises on TOEFL IBT as the regular listening materials. Although IELTS materials were not easy, yet the students enjoyed following the class. This makes the writer curious about what makes the students enjoy and pass the subject while TOEFL IBT materials are not easy.

Research Questions

- Which parts of the IELTS (Listening) are still problematic to the students?
- Why do the students still have problem with the IELTS (Listening)?

The Objectives of The Study

This study finds out the students' problem of IELTS program in their listening-C class; they are 'which parts of the IELTS (Listening) are still problematic to the students,' and 'why do the students still have problem with the IELTS (Listening).'

Theoretical Framework

Robinson, (2001) examined a number of factors that interact with each other so they are considered as key variables in the design of the listening tasks. These factors include the text itself, other components of the tasks and attributes of individual. Robinson (2001) identified two set of influential factors in complexity of tasks. These are —resource-directing factors (e.g., number of task elements, reasoning demands of the task, immediacy of information provided) and —resource-depleting factors (e.g., planning time, number of tasks, prior knowledge) (Robinson, 2001, p. 30). Robinson claims variations in the quality of language produced by the learners are due to the manipulation in the factors as this manipulation requires varying cognitive demands (e.g., amount of attention, memory, reasoning and other information processing).

Skehan and Foster (1999) have proposed that more complex tasks divert learners' attention from form to context. Simple tasks create more fluent and more accurate speech, whereas more complex tasks create more complex speech at the expense of accuracy and fluency. Brown (1986) reported other difficulty factors including inadequate response time, unfamiliar vocabulary, speed of voices on the tape, lack of clarity in instructions, unclear prompts, too much input material to process and lack of familiarity with the task type. Whereas tasks features that lead to more difficulty level can be revised, the control for the attributes of the candidate is difficult.

The Significance of the Study

Teachers who teach IELTS can identify which parts of IELTS Listening become the problem of the students. This will help teachers plan their materials carefully and may enrich the students with more exercises concerning the problematic material.

Assumption

It is assumed that students have already followed Listening A and Listening B. In this even semester 2018/2019 the students are taking Listening C which is a continuation from Listening A and B lessons. In Listening C, students will get many materials which are prepared by the lecturer. Before they follow regular meeting of listening lesson on second half of even semester, they will face pre-test on first meeting of second half of even semester. Pre-test is held to measure students' ability in doing variation of listening questions. Students also face post-test on last meeting of listening lesson. Materials of pre-test and post-test are taken from IELTS program.

Limitation and Scope

In Listening C, students will get some materials about IELTS. Students will listen dialogue from native speaker. Then, students will be given exercises by lecturer in end of session. Questions of exercises come from IELTS material. After students do exercises, they will check their answers with lecturer together. Then, they will give score for their job.

Definition of Key Terms

- Perception : Opinion of English Department students of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya (batch 2017) about IELTS (listening) as media to improve listening skill.

- English Department Students: Students who study at English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya.
- IELTS (Listening): kind of test which provides exercises of listening section.
- Listening Skill : are the ability to actively understand information provided by the speaker, and display interest in the topic discussed.

Organization of The Thesis

In chapter 1, the writer explains about background of the study, research questions, theoretical framework, assumption, limitation and scope of this research. In chapter 2, the writer explains about theory of difficulty of listening and using IELTS (listening). After that, the writer also explains about previous study. In chapter 3, the writer explains about methodology, instrument of research, steps to collect data, and data analysis. In chapter 4, the writer explains about result of post-test and problematic which was felt by the students. In chapter 5, the writer explains about conclusion of this research and suggestion for students and future researcher.