

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English is a global language that offers access to knowledge, communication, and opportunities. For hearing-impaired students, learning English can be especially empowering, helping them connect with the world beyond their immediate environment. This study explores the challenges and approaches used by teachers to support hearing-impaired students in learning English effectively. Not only for communication, English can also be used in educational terms. According to Law Number 20 of 2003 Concerning the National Education System, cited in (Takriyanti et al., 2022) "Every person has the equal right to get quality education." Citizens with physical, emotional, mental, intellectual, and social impairments have the right to special education. This study aims to focus on the essential need to investigate listening skills to students with special needs, learning listening skills is very important for hearing-impaired students because this ability is the main foundation for developing verbal communication and language comprehension. Without good listening skills, hearing-impaired students will experience difficulties in interacting with their environment, learning at school, and developing optimal language abilities. Furthermore, there is a difference in teaching methods between students who are completely deaf and those who still have some residual hearing. Students with partial hearing often require tailored approaches that combine auditory cues with visual supports, while those who are completely deaf rely more on visual communication methods such as sign language and lip reading.

A special school is a school made to help and support students with their learning needs. This school is designed to help students with special needs achieve their optimal potential. Learning English in special schools is crucial for hearing-impaired students, as it enables them to communicate more effectively, access a wider range of information, and have greater opportunities in the future. According to (Prasetya et al., 2023) English becomes one of the essential subjects to teach.

Teaching English as a foreign language has been a problem in Indonesia, particularly for students with special needs, especially hearing-impaired students. (Abata Checa & Proaño León, 2024) stated that learning a foreign language, such as English, is essential for the hearing-impaired as it impacts their professional and personal lives. According to (Berent, 2001), cited in (Abata Checa & Proaño León, 2024) English helps people with hearing impairments build cognitive skills by requiring them to think about words and then write them down to interact with others who can understand them.

Hearing-impaired students have unique needs in learning English, especially in developing listening skills, which often present significant challenges in the classroom. In line with (Aisyah et al., 2024) Hearing-impaired students can learn English. Although students may have difficulty hearing and pronouncing English words, unique learning technology and approaches can assist them in overcoming these obstacles. For example, children who have hearing impairment may use hearing aids or visual displays to learn and comprehend new words. Furthermore, hearing-impaired students can benefit from the use of body motions, sign language, and visualization when learning English. English lessons for hearing-impaired students can be adapted to their requirements and ability to ensure that they can follow the lesson and increase their English skills.

Teachers face challenges when teaching hearing-impaired students, such as difficulty in catching their attention in English. According to the results of the study from (Prasetya et al., 2023) The teacher faced several challenges in teaching English vocabulary to hearing-impaired students, including misinterpretation due to similar lip movements, difficulty gaining students' attention, and limited vocabulary comprehension. To overcome these, the teacher used strategies such as writing words on the board, using lip-reading, gestures, and sign language, as well as employing pictures, drilling, and repeated reviews. Despite limited experience with sign language and school restrictions on its use, the teacher showed patience and persistence, which were crucial in helping hearing-impaired students understand English vocabulary effectively.

Despite existing studies on teaching English to hearing-impaired students (Takriyanti et al., (2022), Susilo Adi et al., (2017), Mealings et al., (2025), and Mpofu & Chimhenga, (2013), there is limited research focusing specifically on the challenges teachers face in developing listening skills for these students. Therefore, this study focuses on Teachers' Challenges in teaching English Listening Skills to Special Education Needs, specifically in Listening Skills, because previous studies only examined challenges in Teaching English to Hearing Impairment Students in general or focused solely on the teaching strategies used for hearing impairment students.

1.2 Reasons for Choosing the Topic

The researcher chose this topic because the topic raised is unique and rarely discussed, and has curiosity about the challenges when teaching English to hearing impairment students.

1.3 Research Question

- 1 What are the challenges faced by teachers in teaching Listening Skills to Students with Special Education Needs?

1.4 Research Objective

This study aims to find out the challenges faced by teachers in teaching Listening Skills to Students with Special Education Needs.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

1. Theoretically

Theoretically, provides a contribution to the development of English language learning theory for hearing-impaired students, especially in listening skills.

2. Practically

Practically, provide information and recommendations for teachers, schools, and related parties in improving the quality of English listening learning for hearing-impaired students.

1.6 The Definition of Terminologies

1.6.1. Teachers' Challenges

As stated by (Hidayat et al., 2024) English teachers always face challenges during the learning process with students, for example, students' lack of ability in terms of vocabulary mastery, the class atmosphere is too busy, so the teacher is overwhelmed in handling the class

1.6.2. Hearing Impairment Students

According to (Prasetya et al., 2023) Hearing Impairment students have hearing issues that limit their ability to understand sounds and typically struggle with articulation.

1.6.3. Special Education Needs

Based on (Tohara et al., 2021) Special Education Needs (SEN) are students who have received certification from a doctor, optician, audiologist, or psychologist for visual, auditory, speech, physical, or learning disabilities. Special Education Schools provide services to students with special needs across all levels of education.

1.6.4. Listening Skills

According to (Weger et al. 2014) cited in (Tabieh et al., 2020) Listening skills involve an active and constructive process where the listener connects new information to their existing knowledge to better comprehend the spoken text.