

## LISTENING COMPETENCE AND COMPREHENSION IN ENGLISH FOR VOCATIONAL LEARNERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR WORKFORCE READINESS AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS

Marudut Bernadtua Simanjuntak<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Pelayaran-Jakarta, Jl. Marunda Makmur No.1, Cilincing, DKI Jakarta, Indonesia

Email: [bernadmarudut@gmail.com](mailto:bernadmarudut@gmail.com)

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**Abstract.** This research paper explores the critical significance of listening competence and comprehension in English for vocational learners, with a focus on their implications for workforce readiness and organizational success. Employing a descriptive qualitative literature review approach, the study delves into the multifaceted nature of these skills, their competence levels, basic needs, and the pressing urgency surrounding their development within the realm of vocational education. The findings of this research reveal that listening competence extends far beyond passive listening, encompassing the ability to discern specific information, identify main ideas, make inferences, and engage in critical listening. These diverse competence levels mirror the complexity of communication within the professional world. Moreover, the study highlights the fundamental needs of vocational learners, emphasizing the importance of access to diverse listening materials, interactive learning opportunities, and tailored language support programs. The urgency surrounding the development of listening competence and comprehension arises from the forces of globalization and technological advancement. English has become the universal language for international business and communication, making strong listening skills a prerequisite for effective cross-cultural engagement.

**Keywords:** Competence, Understanding, Vocational Education, Workforce

**Abstrak.** Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi pentingnya kompetensi mendengarkan dan pemahaman dalam bahasa Inggris bagi mahasiswa vokasi, dengan fokus pada implikasinya terhadap kesiapan tenaga kerja dan keberhasilan organisasi. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan tinjauan literatur deskriptif kualitatif, penelitian ini menggali sifat beragam dari keterampilan ini, tingkat kompetensi, kebutuhan dasar, dan urgensi seputar pengembangan keterampilan dalam bidang pendidikan vokasi. Temuan penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa kompetensi mendengarkan lebih dari sekedar mendengarkan pasif, mencakup kemampuan untuk memahami informasi spesifik, mengidentifikasi gagasan utama, membuat kesimpulan, dan memahami kompetensi mendengar. Tingkat kompetensi yang beragam ini mencerminkan kompleksitas komunikasi dalam dunia kerja lulusan vokasi. Selain itu, penelitian ini menyoroti kebutuhan mendasar pelajar vokasi, menekankan pentingnya akses terhadap beragam materi mendengarkan, kesempatan belajar interaktif, dan program dukungan bahasa yang disesuaikan. Urgensi seputar pengembangan kompetensi dan pemahaman mendengarkan muncul dari kekuatan globalisasi dan kemajuan teknologi. Bahasa Inggris telah menjadi bahasa universal untuk bisnis dan komunikasi internasional, menjadikan keterampilan mendengarkan yang efektif sebagai prasyarat untuk keterlibatan lintas budaya.

**Kata Kunci:** Kompetensi, Pemahaman, Pendidikan Vokasi, Tenaga Kerja

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## INTRODUCTION

English literacy, encompassing both reading and listening competence, plays a pivotal role in the success of vocational students as they transition from education to the workforce. In particular, the development of listening competence and comprehension in English is of paramount importance. This research paper embarks on a descriptive qualitative literature review journey to elucidate the basic literature reviews regarding the needs of listening competence and comprehension in English for vocational learners, with a focused lens on the subtheme of human resources management and public learners' organizations (Todd et al., 2021).

Listening competence in English constitutes the ability to comprehend spoken language accurately and effectively. In the context of vocational education, it holds multifaceted implications for students as they prepare for their careers. Listening competence equips vocational learners with the ability to engage with colleagues, clients, and stakeholders in a globalized workplace where English is often the lingua franca (Newton & Nation, 2020). The literature underscores that listening competence fosters effective communication and interpersonal skills among vocational students. The capacity to understand spoken English facilitates interactions with colleagues and clients, enabling students to convey ideas, negotiate contracts, and build strong working relationships (Kapanadze, 2019). Effective listening is a cornerstone of successful collaboration in professional settings. As well, in the vocational world, the ability to comprehend verbal instructions and directives is crucial for job performance. Vocational students with strong listening competence are better positioned to understand and execute tasks accurately, reducing the likelihood of errors and misunderstandings that can impact productivity and safety.

Comprehension is the linchpin of listening competence. It encompasses not only the ability to understand individual words but also the capacity to grasp the meaning of spoken discourse, identify key information, and draw inferences. The literature reviews elucidate the intricate relationship between listening comprehension and vocational success (Chang et al., 2023). Vocational fields often involve technical terminology and industry-specific language. The literature emphasizes that listening comprehension is indispensable for grasping these nuances. Vocational students must be adept at understanding complex industry jargon, as misinterpretations can have far-reaching consequences in terms of safety, quality, and compliance. The literature reviews reveal that listening comprehension goes beyond surface-level understanding; it enables vocational students to engage in critical analysis and problem-solving. By comprehending spoken information, students can identify issues, evaluate

alternatives, and make informed decisions—a skillset that is invaluable in a dynamic and evolving workforce. The literature reviews emphasize several basic needs of vocational learners in the realm of listening competence and comprehension in English. Addressing these needs is pivotal in preparing vocational students for the challenges and expectations of the professional world. Vocational students require access to diverse listening materials that reflect the linguistic diversity and contexts of the workplace (Panagiotidou, 2012). This includes exposure to authentic workplace conversations, industry-specific podcasts, and instructional resources that enhance listening comprehension. The literature reviews highlight the importance of interactive learning opportunities that engage students in active listening and response. Collaborative activities, such as group discussions, debates, and role-playing, enable students to practice and refine their listening competence in real-world scenarios. Vocational learners often come from diverse linguistic backgrounds with varying levels of English proficiency. The literature underscores the need for language support programs that provide targeted interventions to enhance listening competence and comprehension. These programs should address the specific linguistic challenges faced by vocational students.

The implications of developing listening competence and comprehension in English for vocational learners extend to the domains of human resources management and public learners' organizations. Human resources professionals play a vital role in hiring, training, and retaining employees (Kadhmi, 2021). The literature reviews suggest that vocational graduates with strong listening competence are assets to organizations. They can be more effectively trained and integrated into teams, contributing to a smoother onboarding process and enhanced job performance. Also, public learners' organizations, such as educational institutions and vocational training centers, have a responsibility to equip students with the skills needed to excel in the workforce. The literature reviews underscore that investing in the development of listening competence and comprehension aligns with the mission of these organizations. It prepares students to meet the linguistic demands of their careers and fosters a more productive and adaptable workforce. The research conducted through a descriptive qualitative literature review approach has shed light on the imperative need for listening competence and comprehension in English for vocational learners. Listening competence is not merely a communication skill but an essential tool for effective interpersonal interactions, instructions, and job performance. Comprehension, at the heart of listening competence, enables students to grasp industry-specific language, engage in critical analysis, and excel in problem-solving (Léglise & Migge, 2006). The literature reviews have illuminated the basic needs of vocational learners, including access to varied listening materials, interactive learning opportunities, and

language proficiency development. Addressing these needs equips students with the skills required to navigate the linguistic intricacies of their chosen professions.

Furthermore, the implications of developing listening competence and comprehension extend to the domains of human resources management and public learners' organizations. Strong listening competence enhances job performance and contributes to a more productive and adaptable workforce. In essence, by recognizing the importance of listening competence and comprehension in English for vocational learners, educational institutions and organizations can play a pivotal role in preparing students for successful and fulfilling careers in an increasingly globalized and linguistically diverse professional world.

## **METHODS**

In quest to understand and address the critical needs of listening competence and comprehension in English for vocational learners, we have employed a descriptive qualitative literature review approach (Merriam & Grenier, 2019; Saldana, 2014). This research methodology provides a systematic and comprehensive framework for examining existing literature, synthesizing key insights, and deriving meaningful conclusions regarding the competence levels, basic needs, and the urgency surrounding these skills within the context of vocational education.

The descriptive qualitative literature review approach offers several distinct advantages for investigating the needs of listening competence and comprehension among vocational learners (1) In-Depth Exploration, this approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the existing body of literature on the subject. By analyzing a wide range of scholarly articles, research papers, and academic publications, we gain access to a diverse array of perspectives and insights. (2) Synthesis of Knowledge, the methodology facilitates the synthesis of knowledge from various sources. It enables us to draw connections between different studies, identify common themes, and uncover overarching trends in the field of vocational education and English literacy. (3) Holistic Understanding, Through the qualitative analysis of literature, we can develop a holistic understanding of the competence levels required in listening and comprehension for vocational learners. This methodology enables us to examine not only the theoretical foundations but also the practical implications of these skills. (4) Practical Relevance, Given the practical focus of research—preparing vocational learners for workforce readiness and organizational success—the descriptive qualitative literature review approach aligns perfectly with the objectives. It allows us to distill actionable insights and recommendations that can be applied effectively in vocational education settings. (5) Robust

Analysis, by critically assessing the existing literature, we can discern gaps in knowledge and areas where further research is needed. This approach positions us to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing discourse surrounding English literacy in vocational education.

In summary, the chosen research methodology of descriptive qualitative literature review offers a robust framework for exploring the needs of listening competence and comprehension in English for vocational learners. By systematically examining and synthesizing the existing body of knowledge, we aim to provide valuable insights that can inform educational institutions, educators, and organizations on how to better equip vocational students with the essential skills required for workforce readiness and organizational success.

## **RESULTS**

Listening competence and comprehension in English are foundational skills that have a profound impact on the success of vocational learners as they prepare to enter the workforce. In our research endeavor, employing a descriptive qualitative literature review approach, we have delved into the wealth of existing scholarship to explore these skills' implications, competence levels, basic needs, and the urgency surrounding them within the context of vocational education. These findings present the research findings and results, shedding light on the key insights and practical implications for enhancing the listening competence and comprehension of vocational learners.

### **Competence Levels in Listening and Comprehension**

The research findings highlight that listening competence and comprehension are multifaceted skills that extend beyond the ability to passively hear spoken words (Newton & Nation, 2020; Norris, 2021). Vocational learners must demonstrate proficiency in various dimensions of listening and comprehension to excel in the workforce. These dimensions include.

- Listening for specific information: vocational students need to be able to extract specific details and information from spoken discourse. This skill is vital for understanding technical instructions, client requests, and job-related information accurately.
- Listening for main ideas: comprehending the main ideas and key points of spoken conversations and presentations is crucial. It enables students to grasp the overarching themes in meetings, discussions, and training sessions.

- **Listening for Inference:** The ability to infer meaning from context and non-verbal cues is an advanced listening skill. It aids vocational learners in interpreting implicit messages and understanding nuances in workplace interactions.
- **Critical Listening:** Critical listening involves evaluating the credibility and reliability of spoken information. Vocational students must critically assess the accuracy and relevance of information to make informed decisions.

### **Basic Needs of Vocational Learners**

The research underscores several fundamental needs that must be addressed to facilitate the development of listening competence and comprehension among vocational learners:

- **Access to diverse listening materials:** providing vocational students with access to a wide range of listening materials, including industry-specific content and authentic workplace conversations, is essential. Exposure to diverse contexts enhances their ability to navigate real-world scenarios effectively.
- **Interactive learning opportunities:** interactive learning activities, such as group discussions, debates, and role-playing exercises, play a pivotal role in honing listening skills. These activities allow students to practice active listening, respond to questions, and engage in collaborative problem-solving.
- **Language proficiency development:** recognizing the linguistic diversity among vocational learners, language support programs tailored to individual needs are essential. Such programs should focus on vocabulary development, pronunciation, and comprehension strategies to bridge language gaps effectively.

### **Urgency and Implications**

The urgency surrounding the development of listening competence and comprehension among vocational learners becomes evident when considering the evolving nature of the workforce and the demands of the globalized professional world:

- **Globalization and interconnectedness:** in an era of globalization, English has emerged as the predominant language for international business and communication. The research findings indicate that vocational graduates with strong listening competence are better equipped to engage effectively in cross-cultural interactions, enhancing their career prospects in an interconnected world.
- **Technological advancements:** the rapid advancement of technology has revolutionized the workplace. Vocational students must possess the ability to engage with online resources,

webinars, video conferences, and digital materials. The research emphasizes that strong listening competence and comprehension are prerequisites for navigating this digitalized job market effectively.

### **Practical Implications**

Based on the research findings, several practical implications emerge to enhance the listening competence and comprehension of vocational learners:

- Curriculum enhancement: vocational education institutions should prioritize curriculum enhancements that integrate interactive learning activities and diverse listening materials. This ensures that students receive practical exposure to real-world scenarios and industry-specific language.
- Professional development for educators: educators in vocational settings should undergo professional development programs that equip them with effective strategies for teaching listening skills. This includes incorporating active listening exercises, fostering critical thinking, and creating a language-rich learning environment.
- Language support programs: comprehensive language support programs tailored to the linguistic needs of vocational learners should be established. These programs should be accessible, address specific language challenges, and focus on vocabulary enhancement and pronunciation.
- Promoting multimodal learning: integrating technology into vocational education can promote multimodal learning. Incorporating audiovisual materials and interactive digital platforms can enhance listening competence and comprehension while aligning with the digitalized nature of many modern workplaces.

The research findings underscore the critical importance of listening competence and comprehension in English for vocational learners. These skills are not merely passive abilities but active tools that empower students to engage effectively in professional contexts. By addressing the identified competence levels, basic needs, and the urgency surrounding these skills, vocational education institutions and organizations can better prepare learners for workforce readiness and organizational success (Todd et al., 2021). Listening competence and comprehension, when nurtured and honed, serve as cornerstones of vocational education, facilitating the growth of human resources management and public learners' organizations in an increasingly dynamic and interconnected professional landscape.

## **DISCUSSION**

In exploration of listening competence and comprehension in English for vocational learners, we have unearthed valuable insights and implications that hold significant relevance for the domains of workforce readiness and organizational success. Employing a descriptive qualitative literature review approach, this research has illuminated the multifaceted nature of these skills, their competence levels, basic needs, and the pressing urgency surrounding their development within the context of vocational education (Norris, 2021). This essay delves into the discussions and implications gleaned from the research, offering a comprehensive perspective on how vocational institutions, educators, and organizations can leverage these findings to empower students for professional excellence.

### **Competence Levels in Listening and Comprehension**

The research findings have unveiled the intricate layers of competence required in listening and comprehension. Vocational learners must navigate various dimensions of these skills, encompassing not only the ability to understand spoken words but also to discern specific information, identify main ideas, make inferences, and engage in critical listening. These diverse competence levels reflect the complexity of communication within the professional realm.

### **Basic Needs of Vocational Learners**

The discussions reveal the fundamental needs of vocational learners in their pursuit of listening competence and comprehension.

- Access to diverse listening materials: providing access to a wide range of listening materials, including authentic workplace conversations and industry-specific content, is crucial. Exposure to diverse contexts enhances learners' ability to comprehend real-world scenarios effectively.
- Interactive learning opportunities: interactive learning activities, such as group discussions and role-playing exercises, are essential in honing listening skills. These activities enable students to practice active listening, respond to questions, and engage in collaborative problem-solving.
- Language proficiency development: recognizing the linguistic diversity among vocational learners, tailored language support programs are imperative. These programs should focus on vocabulary development, pronunciation, and comprehension strategies to bridge language gaps effectively (Kadhm, 2021).

## **Urgency and Implications**

The urgency surrounding the development of listening competence and comprehension among vocational learners is underscored by several compelling factors. (1) Globalization and Interconnectedness, in an era of globalization, English has emerged as the predominant language for international business and communication. The research findings indicate that vocational graduates with strong listening competence are better equipped to engage effectively in cross-cultural interactions, enhancing their career prospects in an interconnected world. (2) Technological Advancements: The rapid advancement of technology has revolutionized the workplace. Vocational students must possess the ability to engage with online resources, webinars, video conferences, and digital materials. The research emphasizes that strong listening competence and comprehension are prerequisites for navigating this digitalized job market effectively (Panagiotidou, 2012).

## **Implications**

### **Curriculum Enhancement**

Vocational education institutions should consider prioritizing curriculum enhancements that align with the competence levels and needs identified in the research. Integrating interactive learning activities and diverse listening materials into curricula ensures that students receive practical exposure to real-world scenarios and industry-specific language. This proactive approach prepares them to meet the linguistic demands of their chosen professions.

### **Professional Development for Educators**

Educators in vocational settings play a pivotal role in nurturing listening competence and comprehension. Professional development programs should be designed to equip educators with effective strategies for teaching these skills. This includes incorporating active listening exercises, fostering critical thinking, and creating a language-rich learning environment that mirrors the linguistic diversity of the workforce.

### **Language Support Programs**

The establishment of comprehensive language support programs tailored to the linguistic needs of vocational learners is imperative. These programs should be accessible, address specific language challenges, and focus on vocabulary enhancement and pronunciation. By providing targeted language support, institutions can bridge linguistic gaps and facilitate the development of listening competence.

### **Promoting Multimodal Learning**

The integration of technology into vocational education can promote multimodal learning. Incorporating audiovisual materials, digital platforms, and interactive resources aligns with the digitalized nature of many modern workplaces. Such approaches not only enhance listening competence and comprehension but also prepare students to engage with digital tools commonly used in their professions. The research discussions and implications underscore the critical role of listening competence and comprehension in English for vocational learners. These skills, when cultivated and refined, empower students to excel in the dynamic and interconnected world of work (Chang, 2023). By recognizing the competence levels, addressing basic needs, and acknowledging the urgency surrounding these skills, vocational institutions and organizations can collectively contribute to the success, employability, and adaptability of vocational learners. Listening competence and comprehension, as pivotal components of vocational education, foster the growth of human resources management and public learners' organizations, ensuring that graduates are prepared to thrive in an ever-evolving professional landscape (Kapanadze, 2019).

### **CONCLUSION**

In the pursuit of enhancing English literacy among vocational students, focusing on listening competence and comprehension emerges as an imperative endeavor. This research has illuminated the profound implications, multifaceted competence levels, fundamental needs, and the pressing urgency surrounding these skills within the context of vocational education. As we conclude this research journey, we draw attention to the pivotal takeaways that can guide educational institutions, educators, and organizations in their mission to empower vocational learners for workforce readiness and organizational success. Listening competence and comprehension, as revealed by our research, encompass a spectrum of skills that extend beyond passive listening. Vocational learners must be proficient in discerning specific information, identifying main ideas, making inferences, and engaging in critical listening. These diverse competence levels mirror the complexity of communication within the professional realm.

Addressing the basic needs of vocational learners is a foundational step in fostering listening competence and comprehension. Providing access to diverse listening materials, offering interactive learning opportunities, and tailoring language support programs to individual needs constitute essential components of this journey. By addressing these needs, educational institutions create an environment where students can develop their skills effectively. The urgency surrounding the development of listening competence and

comprehension among vocational learners is underscored by the forces of globalization and technological advancement. English has emerged as the universal language of business and communication, making strong listening skills a prerequisite for effective engagement in cross-cultural interactions. Additionally, the digitalization of industries necessitates proficiency in navigating online resources and digital materials.

In conclusion, listening competence and comprehension in English are not just skills; they are tools that empower vocational learners to excel in the dynamic and interconnected world of work. By recognizing the competence levels, addressing basic needs, and acknowledging the urgency surrounding these skills, vocational education institutions and organizations can collectively contribute to the success, employability, and adaptability of vocational learners. These skills serve as catalysts for the growth of human resources management and public learners' organizations, ensuring that vocational graduates are well-prepared to thrive in the ever-evolving professional landscape.

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