

THE USE OF AUDIO VISUAL TO IMPROVE LISTENING

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ABSTRACT

The increasing of globalization, pushes people to be fluent in some foreign language, one of which is English. This research is to: (a) describe a strategy of teaching English using an Audio Visual Method (AVM), and (b) to compare the results from an experimental group (EG) of students learning listening comprehension using the AVM and a control group (CG) using a standard method. This research, was done at SMP Negeri 15 Lamjame, Banda Aceh. The findings showed that the students in the EG got significantly higher average scores (69) for listening comprehension. than those from the CG (62). The t-test result showed that the listening ability of the students from the two groups was significantly different. Thus, it can be concluded that the students taught using the AVM got better results in listening comprehension than students who were taught using the standard listening comprehension technique.

Key Words: *Audio Visual Technique, Listening.*

INTRODUCTION

Language is considered a tool and a system used by people to communicate with others by using sounds, symbols, and words to express meanings, ideas, and thoughts. As an international language, English is spoken in many international events and it is used as a medium for information in education, science, technology, culture, etc. In Indonesia, English is one of the compulsory subjects taught in educational institutions from junior high school to university.

The teaching of English includes four skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. The four language skills must be studied

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in an integrated way as much as possible. The skill that some consider the most important is listening. It is a vital mental and physical activity by which those people who can hear understand and take part in the world around them. Listening is more than merely hearing words. Richards (2008:4-10) states that to deal with learning listening, listeners need to know the types of processes involved in understanding the incoming data of spoken text. These are often referred to as bottom-up and top-down processing. Bottom up processing is triggered by sounds, words and phrases which the listener hears as he/she attempts to decode speech and assign meanings, while top-down processing refers to the use of background knowledge in understanding the meaning of a message.

For junior high school students, listening to ESL is one of the integrated skills which the students should acquire. In the current curriculum, it is stated that the second grade (year VIII) students at junior high school are expected to be able to respond to the meaning of facts or ideas, react to the meaning of messages in a given passage, summarize and understand ESL language accurately, fluently and acceptably in daily life contexts (Depdiknas, 2006). To achieve this aim, the teacher needs to find creative ways to design activities in the classroom that can encourage and motivate her students to learn. Thus, the teacher has to plan and conduct learning activities that will help her students to listen to ESL as much as possible. In line with this case, Nunan (1989) states that the first task of the teacher is to create the best conditions for her students to study in.

There are some indicators that show that students lack comprehension of what they have listened to. These include: (1) they have difficulties answering questions based on what they have listened to, (2) they make mistakes in determining the general idea and also specific information from what they heard, (3) they are still confused about what the speaker(s) was/were mainly talking about, and (4) they cannot summarize what they have listened to. Other indicators showing that students are not interested in their listening class are (5) they grumble when they are asked to listen. They do that as a rejection of being asked to do listening, (6) they make noise or talk so they cannot listen to the lesson, i.e. they are not active during listening class, e.g. they seldom ask questions to their teacher and cannot answer questions that the teacher asks them, and (7) they cannot or will not tell their class what they have heard, i.e. they do not seem to want their work/ability to be known by their classmates.

It is very important to design listening activities that can make students feel confident, relaxed and unthreatened in understanding the content of spoken language. Teachers need to design listening activities such as reviewing of the whole lesson and discussing students' difficulties in listening. So, teachers may use media in order to facilitate their students to easily understand listening material.

Smaldino, et al. (2002) states the word media comes from "medium" from the Latin language that means carrier or escort, a thing bringing information from a source to a receiver. Media can be classified into three types – i.e. visual media, audio media, and audio visual media. In this research, I focus my study on video, a teaching medium that can be classified as audio visual media or AVM. There are many and various techniques that can be employed by a teacher to help students comprehend in listening lessons. The teaching-learning process can be facilitated by using some form of teaching media. Media help the teacher as a means of communication to convey messages more concretely and also to stimulate interest in learning English. One of the forms of media that can be used in teaching English is video. The use of AVM in the classroom can guide the study activities in an interesting way. AVM provide information to both eyes and ears, so students can see communication in action and it presents language in a lively way. Thus it can increase the interest and motivation of students.

Lever-Duffy and McDonald (2003:332), explain that AVM is a highly regarded instructional method with its roots in the constructivist learning style, and multiple intelligences theoretical camps. Using sight and sound, AVM is the perfect medium for students who are auditory, visual and kinesthetic-tactile learners. Besides, AVM as a listening tool can enhance the listening experiences of students. Visual information in the AVM is important in the teaching and learning process, especially in the teaching of second language listening.

Buck (2001:46-47) suggests that visual support can aid language learners, especially less proficient learners, and is particularly helpful with more difficult texts. The setting, action, emotion, gestures, etc. that the students can observe in a video clip provide important visual stimuli for language production and practice.

Mayer (2001) defines multimedia instructional messages as presentations involving both words and pictures that are intended for faster learning. Danan (1992) says that the use of different visual-verbal aids will hopefully help teachers to improve the motivation of students and their interaction in class as well as help the learning of particular

language skills and knowledge. Furthermore, Richards (2008) mentions that visual aids can provide practical solutions to the problems of a language teacher whose equipment, as a rule, consists of nothing more than a textbook.

Buck (2001:172) mentions that visual information is more important in interactional language use, where the emphasis is on the relationship between participants. He also mentions that with AVM it is easy to see who is speaking, the setting of places plus the situations and the gestures.

In this case, visual information such as the context of the situation where the speaking is taking place, the actions, emotions, and gestures of the speaker(s) can help the listener to catch the whole message of the story. In general, teaching listening by using AVM can help avoid the aforementioned problems in the classroom. These videos come with ready-made materials that can be used directly. Teachers can get AVM by downloading them directly from the Internet.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Listening

Listening is considered not only hearing but also including the added dimensions of understanding, paying overt attention, analyzing, and evaluating the spoken messages, and possibly acting on the basis of what has been heard. Rost (1991:3) says that listening is an active process. Celce-Murcia (2001:72) rejects a conceptualization of listening as a passive act, calling it a “listeners-as-tape-recorder” explanation. They argued that such a perspective fails to account for the interpretations listeners make as they hear the spoken text according to their own purpose for listening and their own store of background knowledge.

Nunan (2003) says that listening is seen as a major source of comprehensible input. Buck (2001) says that listening comprehension is a very complex process and if teachers want to measure it, they must first understand how that process works. If teachers consider how the language comprehension system works, it is obvious that a number of different types of knowledge are involved, both linguistic and non linguistic knowledge.

Listening plays an important role in language learning. According to Rost (1991:141), there are several reasons that make listening very important in language learning, they are set-out as follows:

1. Listening is vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learner. Without understandability at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin.
2. Spoken language provides a means of interaction for the learner. Since learners must interact to achieve understanding, access to spoken language is essential. Moreover, the inability of learners to understand what they hear needs to be an impetus, not an obstacle, to interaction and learning.
3. Authentic spoken language presents a challenge for the learner to attempt to understand language as it is actually used by native speakers.
4. Listening exercises provide teachers with a means for drawing the attention of learners to new vocabulary, collocations, grammar and patterns of interaction in the language.

Furthermore, listening is the language modality that is used most frequently. Ellis and Brewster (1992:56) mention that in early stages of learning English, the pupils may spend much of their time listening to the teacher while playing simple games, singing songs, saying rhymes, or listening to simple stories. Furthermore, Celce-Mulcia (2001:70) also mentions that on average we can expect to listen twice as much as we speak, four times more than we read, and five times more than we write. In fact, mastering spoken language is very important in communication. Without learning to listen, students might not be able to speak, to read and to write ESL.

Learning ESL listening, according to Rost (1994) creates four main problems. He says that it may not require more time to develop but second language learning is confounded by a number of difficulties. The four main problems are (Rost, 1994):

1. Motive, when students have learned the basic objects in the world and have associated them with words, we have lost one of the principal motives to learn language viz: self expression. These motives whether in children or adults are closely linked to cognitive and social motives to use the language.
2. Transfer, in listening, when some concept in the second language is fuzzy or unfamiliar, students tend to use transfer strategies such as translation to understand the new language. These strategies may help us to understand temporally. However they can weaken the acquisition of the concept in the second language.
3. Input, second language learners, particularly after early childhood, seldom experience the need to get a lot of understandable input.

4. Neurological Development, biologically, after the age of twelve or so, certain processes are completed in the development of the brain and this often prevents learners from processing new linguistic sounds easily and fully. Therefore, adults may have great grammatical and lexical knowledge that they are able to use in reading and writing but not in speech processing.

Audio Visual Media

The word media comes from ‘medium’ in Latin that means carrier or escort, a thing bringing information from the source to the receiver. Media can be classified into visual media, audio media, and audio visual media. Audio visual media (AVM) is the medium that can be seen and heard simultaneously. The use of AVM in teaching EFL has become a common practice for English teachers. Nowadays, the Internet and the availability of new technology have made the task of language teachers much easier. Teachers can download AVM for learners from the Internet. As there are thousands of ready-made AVM designed for language teaching, teachers can easily choose one based on their needs (Ozkan, 2002). AVM can facilitate language teaching in diverse ways. It makes classroom learning more interesting and can allay monotony amongst learners. Moreover, it helps learners to generate ideas for discussions. It makes the class more interactive and effective.

There are many definitions of AVM. Smaldino, et al. (2002:283) defines it as electronic storage of moving images. He adds that any electronic media format that employs ‘motion pictures’ to present a message can be referred to as video. Çakir (2006) reported that the use of videos in language teaching ensures authentic language input to learners. Moreover, using content related videos helps learners to conceptualize ideas and get in depth thought on the topic. Besides, learners can concentrate on the use of contextual language in the video with non verbal linguistic features that help them to have better understanding of the use of the target language.

Regarding the usefulness of video in language teaching, Cunnning (2001) states that video provides stimuli to learners, as it gives learners an opportunity to get a background schema of the subject. Also, the use of video helps learners to have an idea of the stress and rhythm patterns in the target language. Moreover, it allows learners to predict, infer and analyze information about the subject matter (Koksal, 2004). Moreover,

by watching a video, learners have opportunities for experiencing the dynamics of language communication.

As Secules, Herron and Tomasello (1992, as cited in Long and Doughty, 2009) state that video offers language learners opportunities to get the dynamics of communication and such materials are widely available, it may offer a better and feasible option for listening comprehension. Mayer (2001), as cited in Dolati (2011), claims that if the instructions are given in the class using both words and visuals, learning will become faster.

Buck (2001:172) mentions that visual information is more important in interactional language use, where the emphasis is on the relationship between participants. He also mentions that with AVM it is easy to see who is speaking, the setting of places or situations and in particular the gestures and the body language.

Procedures of Teaching with Audio Visual Media

Before teaching listening, the teachers need to have proper plans for the lesson they are going to deliver in class. First of all, the necessary materials and equipment need to be ready, the materials should also be chosen according to the proficiency level of the learners. If the teachers select some interesting materials, the learners will be interested in listening and learning actively.

The Benefits of Using Audio Visual in the Classroom

There are many benefits of using AVM in the classroom. Smaldino, et al. (2002:28) says that the advantages of using video in general include:

1. Motion: moving images have an obvious advantage over still visuals in portraying concepts in which motion is essential to mastery (such as psychomotor skills).
2. Processes: operations such as assembly line steps, science experiments or even cooking classes, in which sequential steps are critical, can be shown more effectively.
3. Dramatization: dramatic recreations can bring historical events and personalities to life. They allow students to observe and analyze human interactions.
4. Skills learning: research indicates that the mastery of physical skills requires repeated observations and repeated practice.
5. Affective learning: because of its great potential for emotional impact, video can be useful in shaping personal and social attitudes.

6. Cultural understanding: students can get a deep appreciation of other cultures by seeing depictions of everyday life in other societies.

Romana (2000) further mentions that there are many benefits of using AVM in the classroom. Some of the benefits of using AVM in the classroom for young learners are as follows:

1. Video communicates meaning better than other media.
2. It presents language in context in ways that a recording cannot. Learners can see who is speaking, where the speakers are, what they are doing, and most importantly can watch their body language. All these visual clues will help comprehension.
3. Video represents a positive explanation of technology.
4. Teenagers, in particular, have a positive attitude towards television and video; it is seen as being more 'modern' compared to books.

METHODOLOGY

This research used an experimental design with pre-tests and post-tests, an experimental group [EG] and a control group [CG]. It was intended to obtain information on the benefits of using AVM for teaching-learning listening comprehension at SMP 15 Banda Aceh. The experimental research design was as follows:

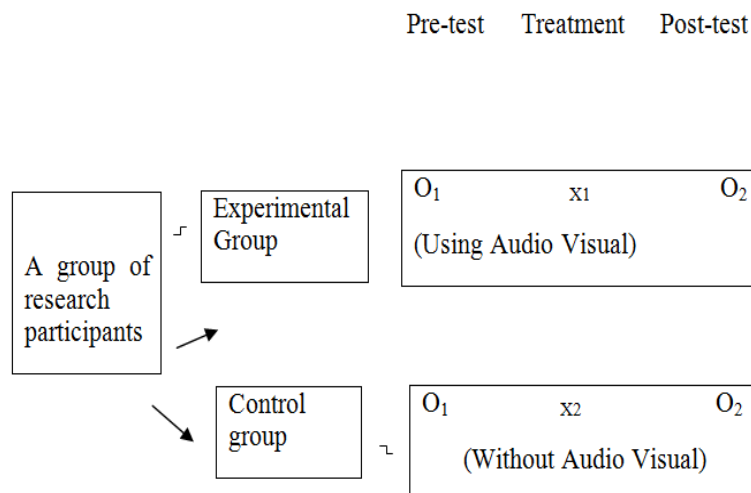


Figure 1. Experimental design with pre-test – post-test; EG and CG.

Figure 1 shows that X_1 and X_2 represent the independent variable. O_1 & O_2 represent the pre-test and post-test assessments of the dependent variable.

According to Gay (1996), experimental research is the only type of research that can test hypotheses to establish cause-effect relationships. It represents the strongest chain of reasoning about the links between variables. Furthermore, Wiersma (1991:99) explains that an experiment is a research situation in which at least the independent variable, called the experimental variable, is deliberately manipulated or varied by the researcher, while quantitative research is the collection and analyses of numerical data in order to explain, predict, and control phenomena of interest. According to Nazir (2009:65), an experiment is an observation under artificial conditions in which a treatment is made and arranged by the researcher. In other words, experimental research identifies the treatment variable which is manipulated with the object while there is a control that does not receive the special treatment but gets the standard treatment.

For this research, the writer took two classes of second grade, [year eight (VIII)], junior high school students as the sample. The first class was the experimental class [EC or EG] and the other one the control class [CC or CG]. The students of both classes were given the same pre-test and the same post-test. After giving the pre-test, the writer taught the EC using the AVM, while the CC was taught by using the traditional listening activity method. After the treatment was completed., the writer gave the post-test to both classes to compare the results

FINDINGS

Results

The purpose of this research was to find out if the use of AVM could improve the listening ability of Grade VIII ESL students more than the standard method of teaching listening. The research findings showed that aspects of listening skills were improved using AVM. In this section, those findings are discussed and compared with other theories, via: appropriate AVM are able to improve the listening comprehension of students. This improvement involves five aspects. Each of which is discussed in what follows.

AVM improved the ability of students to answer questions from their teacher based on what they listened to. The results showed that the

students were able to answer the questions correctly. Moreover, the ability of the students to answer questions correctly increased, and their mistakes decreased steadily after each treatment, by the end of the research most of the students could answer the questions correctly, as was proven by the increases in scores from the tests.

The AVM improved comprehension in determining the general idea of the text. The research findings showed that the students got more right answers in determining the general idea of the text. By watching AVM the students could understand what the speaker was talking about. The AVM helped the students concentrate because they could focus their attention on the visual presentations related to what they were listening to.

The AVM can also improve the comprehension of students by visually showing specific information related to the text. The research findings show that the students got more right answers in determining the specific information from the text. They were able to get specific information from the oral text by seeing the characters, situations, and settings whilst watching it on the AVM.

Furthermore, AVM improves listening comprehension of the whole story from the text. The research findings showed that the students were thus better able to make a summary of the text. By the end of the research, they were able to make a summary of the story in the AVM by themselves while before they could not do so well.

Next, AVM improved comprehension in determining the sequence of events of the material listened to. The results showed that the students were able to remember the sequence of events of the material watched. The visualization provided by AVM made it easier for students to understand the order of events that occurred in the text they listened to. While listening, the students could watch directly the sequence of events in the AVM shown.

Finally, AVM can improve the situation in the watching classroom. In the teaching-learning process, the students participated enthusiastically in watching the AVM. Improvements in the classroom included the following:

- AVM improved behavior. Students seldom grumbled when they were asked to watch AVM, the students complained less to the teacher.
- AVM improved attention to the lesson. Students paid more attention to the lesson, reduced their noise and listened more attentively to the lesson.

Discussion

For SMP Negeri 15 Lamjame Banda Aceh, it is necessary to provide proper facilities and media needed to support the teaching-learning process. Complete media facilities will help both students and teachers improve the language skills of the students especially for ESL listening.

This research was focused on the use of AVM for teaching listening. To find out the results from the study of AVM to develop listening ability, experimental processes were followed: First the pre-tests, then the teaching-learning treatment ending with the post-tests, and finally followed by analysis of the data.

At the first meeting, after getting all the students to do a listening task, listening to a narrative story entitled 'Pinocchio', came the pre-test. At the next meetings the writer taught listening to the EG using AVM, from narrative texts entitled 'Beauty and the Beast', 'Snow White' and 'Aladdin'.

The post-test was given to both groups at the end of the last meeting. The scores from the post-test were calculated and analyzed to find out the results from the treatment. After analysis, it was found that the post-test results from the EG were statistically significantly better than the results from the control group.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion

This experimental research was conducted at SMPN 15 Lamjame, Banda Aceh with second year (year VIII) students on the use of AVM to improve the ESL listening abilities of students in listening comprehension classes. From the results of this study, the researcher concluded that The results from the post-tests of the EG were statistically significantly higher than those from the CG.

Based on the homogeneity test and the normality test, it was found that the data were distributed normally. The results were evidence that the use of the AVM for teaching grade VIII students resulted in a positive improvement in their critical listening skills.

Suggestions

Based on these research findings, the researcher has some suggestions to try to improve the teaching of listening comprehension.

Listening appears to be a difficult skill for most students to learn. They often complain when they are asked to practice listening so the teacher has to use a suitable technique and method in the teaching-learning process for listening. By using AVM, students should enjoy their listening comprehension classes more and consequently the teaching-learning process can run better and the teaching objectives can be more easily achieved and possibly surpassed.

Both teachers and students greatly influence the teaching-learning process. Without student participation in class, there won't be any improvement in the skills of the students. Students should participate actively in the teaching-learning process for listening as well as be active to practice listening outside of the class.

SMP Negeri 15 Lamjame Banda Aceh needs to provide better facilities especially AVM needed to support the teaching-learning process. Good AVM facilities and media will help the students and teachers to improve the four language skills, especially listening.

Finally, this research aims to inspire other researchers, especially English teachers to improve their profession.

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