USING THE DICTOGLOSS TECHNIQUE TO ENHANCE LISTENING ABILITY

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ABSTRACT

This research was done to study the use of the Dictogloss technique for teaching-learning listening. The objective of this research was to see if this technique would be an efficient way to teach-learn English listening with 12th grade students from SMAN 5, Banda Aceh. The study used experimental research methods with $\alpha=0.05$. The sample for this study was 32 students from the 12th grade at SMAN 5 Banda Aceh. These students were grouped into an Experimental group and a Control group. Before the treatment, each group was given a pre-test; and after the treatment a post-test was again administered to both groups. The pre-test and the post-test each consisted of ten questions which the students had to answer after listening to a dialogue. The data was analyzed statistically. All the data was normal and homogenous. From the t-test, the critical area was -2.03 to +2.03. The t-test value from the post-test between the Experimental and the Control groups was 0.92 which was within the critical area. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted which meant that Dictogloss was found to be an effective technique to use for improving the listening ability of 12th grade students.

Keywords: *Offering Expressions, Dictogloss, Listening.*

INTRODUCTION

Developing listening is crucial for learning a language; this is why listening comprehension should be taught extensively to students at the

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early stages. A student with good listening skills will be able to engage effectively in the environment. Furthermore, successful ESL interaction either between school teachers or learners is primarily dependent on effective interactive listening skills. Interactive listening skills are also helpful to improve students' interpersonal skills from which students will be able to develop stable relationships with their conversation partners (Brown, 2001).

Listening can be categorized into reciprocal or interactive listening, where the listener is required to play a part, and non-reciprocal or non-interactive listening where the listener listens passively to a monologue or speech or to other people conversing. While listening, the listener may use top-down strategies or bottom-up processing or both. Top-down means using our prior knowledge and experiences; bottom-up processing means using the information we have about sounds, word meanings, and discourse markers to assemble our understanding of what is heard, one step at a time (Brown, ibid). Also, from a psychological point of view, the cognitive activity in language learning is differentiated and categorized into two main types: cognitive and metacognitive. The former manipulates the material to be learnt or applies a specific technique to the learning task while the latter involves planning, monitoring and evaluating (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

There are a lot of sources dealing with the importance of the other skills via: speaking, writing and reading, but not so many with listening (Abdalhamid, 2012). As a result, the skill of listening has been neglected in second language teaching. Other second language researchers consider listening skill as an ability that can be developed without assistance (Thanajaro, 2000).

Concisely stated, the purpose of listening for the 10th grade students in Indonesia, based on the 2013 Curriculum, is as follows:

> *"Menyusun teks lisan dan tulis untuk menyatakan dan merespons ungkapan menawarkan barang dan jasa, dengan memperhatikan fungsi sosial, struktur teks, dan unsur kebahasaan, yang benar dan sesuai konteks"*
> [To generate oral and written texts to state and respond to expressions offering goods and services, by noticing the social functions, the structure of the text and the elements of language, correctly and in context].

However, from the researcher's observations of the 12th grade students from SMAN 5 Banda Aceh in April 2014, she found that the real conditions of teaching-learning listening at that school did not correspond to the theory or the expectations from that curriculum. From interviews with the English teacher and some students she found that the students faced two problems. First, they could not catch the meaning of spontaneous quick speech. Second, the students still needed to take notes even when they were listening to a recording of speech at a moderate speed. The researcher presumed that these two problems may be caused by the teaching technique used by their teacher for teaching-learning listening which apparently does not suit the students. From the observations done by the researcher, teaching listening to the 10th grade at this school was done as follows. The teacher read a passage aloud from their textbook 2 or 3 times. Then the students only needed to listen and follow on the passage as it was read by the teacher. There was nothing they had to do that could be a tool for the listening assessment. There were no tasks. They only had to answer the questions following the passage which basically were reading comprehension questions. This technique seemed to be ineffective with these students.

In an attempt to solve the problems faced by the students and to provide an alternative way to teaching listening in the school, the writer suggested using a technique called *Dictogloss*. This is a dictation technique used to enhance listening skills since the learners need to build their own understandings through writing.

The "Dictogloss technique" (Wajnryb, 1990) has been proposed as a procedure that encourages students to reflect on their own output. Kowal and Swain (1997) and Swain (1998) have reported on the Dictogloss technique and studies that were done with 8th grade French immersion learners. There are several previous studies from other scholars using this technique and their results were as follows.

First, Iwanaka (2010) did research using Dictogloss with college students in Japan and after 5 weeks, the students showed improvement in their listening comprehension. Second, research by Vasiljevic (2010) using Dictogloss with a group of high school students in Japan found that the use of Dictogloss made the students better at comprehending English listening materials. Last, Indriyanti (2013) also did a study using Dictogloss with students at SMPN 1 Pangenan, Cirebon. She found that the students' ability in listening improved after 4 meetings and that this technique worked well with the students.

Problem of Study

Based on this background, the researcher formulated a research problem which was: Will there be any significant difference in listening ability between students taught listening using the Dictogloss technique and those who are taught listening by the normal teaching technique?

Significance of the Study

The results from this study should be beneficial to support better teaching of listening and for conducting further studies. In practice, the findings of this study should be useful information for English teachers, and other researchers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Listening

Listening skills are essential aspects of the development of motivation which empowers students to develop their communication and *critical thinking* skills necessary for functioning competently in the ESL classroom, the workplace, the home and other places where language learners engage with the public (Thanajaro, 2000).

There are 5 skills in listening as proposed by Omaggio (1986, pp. 316-321). The first one is *Listening for Specific Grammatical or Lexical Features*. In this type of listening, the students have to listen to passages from which, later, they will be asked some questions about specific lexical cues such as tenses, gender, or numbers. Next, is *Listening for Specific Semantic* in which students have to decode the specific details which are read out in the passage, for example the time, the location, the price, etc. Another type is the *Comprehension Question*. This is considered a pure listening test as the students have to answer questions based on what they understand from the passage. The last one is the *Writing Summary* question. This can be given either in EFL or in the native language (L1) asking for the gist of what the students have read or asking them to give a title to the passage just read.

The purpose of teaching listening is to provide students with the ability to respond to English conversations. These views should be revised because listening is an active process of which represents 40% of the total of all language skills including speaking, reading, and writing (Duqutte, 1995, p. 4). In the classroom, students always do more listening than speaking (Brown, 2001, p. 247). Those two ideas indicate how important listening is. In daily communications, listening is a very

significant process that helps the speakers and/or students understand communications in any field. Meanwhile students with better listening ability will have better understanding of what they are learning.

According to Aikenhead (1997, p. 75), there are several types of listening via: discriminative listening, comprehensive listening, therapeutic listening, and critical listening. Discriminative listening is where the objective of listening is to distinguish sound and visual stimuli (Aikenhead, ibid, p. 75). Comprehensive listening is a kind of listening where the focus is basically on the meaning or message of the speaker (Duqutte, 2005, p. 32). The next is therapeutic listening which is a kind of listening where the listener's role is to be a sympathetic listener without much verbal response (Rog, 2012). Finally, the last type of listening is critical listening where the listeners have to evaluate the message.

In the process of teaching, there are several techniques and strategies that can be applied when teaching listening as suggested by Omaggio (1986, p. 112). Initially, the suggestion of the use of the Talk Show is to generate listening activities in the class. Next, Tuan (2011) suggests the application of some fun ways of teaching listening skills for adult kinesthetic learners, or learners who learn better through physical movements. Then activities are set up in three phases: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) suggest the use of multimedia in enhancing the development of students' listening skills for the following reasons: First, they are able to catch the information faster because seen-things are processed a lot faster by the brain than heard-things. Second, they will feel more confident in dealing with the lesson as they not only depend on their listening comprehension but also their visual comprehension.

Moreover, a great number of students believe that listening is a most difficult skill and they start to panic when they hear the word *listening* or see a CD player. Duqutte (2005, p. 12) identifies some problems faced by students during listening. First of all is the problem caused by the lack of control of the speaker's speed of speech. Further, this problem is connected with listening repetition (Aikenhead, 1997, p. 66) as listeners cannot always make the speaker repeat what he has just said.

Next is the problems caused by the limited vocabulary of the listeners, Omaggio (1986, p. 109). Furthermore, there are problems caused by failure or difficulty to concentrate, Omaggio (ibid, p. 110). The last problem is the lack of visual support.

The Dictogloss Technique

For teaching listening, there are various techniques that can be used in the classroom. One such technique called Dictogloss is discussed here. Wajnryb (1990) defines Dictogloss as a dictation activity that requires students to reconstruct a short text by listening and noting down key words as they hear them. Later, these keywords are then used as the framework which the students use to recreate the text (Ash, 2013). According to Iwanaka (2010), Dictogloss is an integrated skills technique for L2 learning in which learners work together to reconstruct a text that they have listened to.

Dictogloss was introduced by Ruth Wajnryb in 1990 and was initially a technique just to study grammar. The concept of this technique was not too different from traditional dictation where students listen to a passage, and write down what they hear as they are listening. Then later they work together to reconstruct the text. In a Dictogloss task the learners listen and write and they rely on their knowledge of semantic, syntactic and discourse systems of the target language to complete the task with the focus on grammatical competence (Vasiljevic, 2010).

There are certain basic techniques in applying Dictogloss in a listening classroom. Wajnryb (1990, p. 7) details four key stages of the Dictogloss procedure:

Stage 1 - Preparation

The teacher introduces a topic and related vocabulary. This can be done using a variety of techniques in open class discussion, group brainstorming, question and answer session, predicting text content from pictures or vocabulary. The important thing is that the learners are engaged with the topic and hopefully become interested in it. Vasiljevic (2010, p. 9) notes that preparation stages are essential in listening tasks. Providing a context helps learners to prepare for the kind of information, lexis and ideas they are about to engage with. Once learners know the context for something, they will be able to predict possible content and are more likely to engage with the text.

Stage 2 - Dictation

When giving dictation using the Dictogloss technique, Wajnyrb (1990, p. 16) recommends that learners be allowed to listen to the dictation twice. The text is read at natural speed with short pauses between each sentence. Students are told not to write anything the first time, but to just listen. This is to allow students to get an overall feel for

the passage. On the second listening the students should take down notes. At this stage the teacher should suggest that learners focus on noticing and recording key content or information words. The Dictogloss technique makes dictation active and task based. It allows learners to engage with the language in a whole context rather than to try to record words verbatim. The emphasis is on text as a semantic unit of language which makes the procedure particularly relevant and useful for higher level learners (Sabet, 2012). Upper-intermediate and advanced students are usually able to construct grammatically accurate sentences in isolated or discrete item exercises but have difficulty when trying to piece these sentences together into coherent texts.

Stage 3 - Reconstruction

After the second reading learners reconstruct the text using the notes they have made in stage two of the dictation. Storch (1998) advises that groups of 3-4 students pool their notes and mental resources and work on reconstructing a combined version of the text. He also suggests that one student acts as the scribe and writes down the group version of the complete text. Jacobs (2003) suggests the benefits of reconstructing the text in this way lie in the experimenting and hypothesizing the learners engage in while doing the task. By producing the target language learners may consciously recognize some of their linguistic problems. It may bring to their attention something they need to discover about their L2. It also promotes communication, collaboration, interaction, and self-directedness on the part of the students. Learners are responsible for and can monitor their own learning in the reconstruction stage. This encourages learner autonomy, a tenet of the cognitive learning approach.

Stage 4 - Analysis and Error Correction

Learners analyze and correct their texts by writing their versions on the board and comparing these with the work from other groups. The student versions are then compared to the original text one sentence at a time. Feedback through peer correction and discussion is then encouraged. The learner errors are noticed, exposed and discussed. As Storch (1998) notes, feedback and error correction become part of the input-output cycle: first, the students listen to the text which is considered as the input for the process. Afterwards, they write a text based on their own understanding. This is the first output of the process. Finally, they compare the text they have written with that of their friends. This is the feedback in the process.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design
This research used the experimental research technique which was designed to prove the hypothesis. In this study, the researcher wanted to find out the effectiveness of Dictogloss technique in which texts were played or spoken to enhance students' listening skills.

The experimental method is a systematic scientific approach to do research in which the researcher manipulates one or more variables, and measures any change in other variables. In other words, this type of research uses a strategy to change a sample and measures the magnitude of the change.

Population and Sample
The population for this study was the entire tenth grade at SMAN 5 Banda Aceh. This school is located at Jl. Hamzah Fanshuri, No. 3, Darussalam, Banda Aceh.

Two classes were chosen at random as the sample for this research the experimental group (EG) was class IA and the control group (CG) was class IB. A controlled class was needed to verify the second hypothesis (Mitra, et al., 2003). Arikunto (2006) says that the sample for this size population should be a least 20%. The samples were drawn using a simple random sampling technique.

Research Instrument
In this research, the writer used tests as the instrument to collect the data. In the tests, the students were asked to listen to an audio recording and then they had to answer several questions about the text they had just heard. There was a pre-test and a post-test. The questions were the same for both tests.

Both the pre-test and the post-test tested the ability of the students to understand the dialogue in the recordings. In the tests, the students had to answer 10 multiple choice questions after they had heard the dialogue played twice. Each dialogue had 5 multiple choice questions.

Data Collection
Pre-Test
The pre-test was held on Friday, May 1st, 2015. The researcher played two audio recordings. Then, the students answered the questions

based on the recordings heard. There were 10 questions that had to be completed, five questions for each recording .

Post-Test

The post-test was held on Friday, June 4th, 2015. The purpose of the post-test was to see if the EG students listening skills had improved more after having the Dictogloss treatment in their listening class than those of the CG. The questions were the same as in the pre-test.

Technique of Data Analysis

The techniques of data analysis comprised the following steps:
Step 1. Determine data normality and homogeneity
Step 3. Determine the mean score
Step 4. Determine the standard deviation
Step 5. Determine the t-test

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

All the data from the tests of the EG and the CG were tested for Normality and Homogeneity and the results showed that all the data were normal and homogenous.

Going in line with the research question mentioned previously in Chapter 1, which is to figure out whether there was any significant difference in the achievement of the students between the EG students who were taught listening by using the *Dictogloss* technique and those who were taught listening by using the regular teaching approach.

However, the researcher had a problem when the study started, because the students were not co-operative. Most of them left the class early because they assumed it was not important to stay in the class since it was not their teacher who was teaching. Then the researcher asked the teacher to help to make sure that the students did not leave the class during the next meetings. So in the last two meetings, the students stayed and participated in the class.

Hypothesis testing proved that there was a significant improvement in the scores of the EG students taught listening by using the Dictogloss technique compared with those in the CG who were taught listening by using the conventional method.

Thus teaching listening using the Dictogloss technique was more effective than teaching listening using the regular technique used by their teacher at the school. There are some factors that are deliberated vital in

this process as once also found in the previous studies formerly cited in the prefacing chapter. Initially, Vasiljevic (2010) found that students had better comprehension in English listening materials. This is because Dictogloss is an activity that asks students to rebuild a text through listening and making notes. Later, these notes become words to use as a framework from which the students can write their own texts Wajnryb (1990). Next, Iwanaka (2010) further adds that Dictogloss is an integrated technique where the students can listen, inquire, reconstruct, and then write the text using their own words. From the finding of Iwanaka's study, the students improved their listening comprehension after using the Dictogloss technique for 5 weeks. This is also in line with Indriyanti (2013) who found her students' performance in English listening comprehension got better after 4 meetings using the Dictogloss technique.

In conclusion, the students' score increased after the treatment because of the following factors. First, Dictogloss is a way to combine activities between individuals and groups. This can lead to an active learning process. Second, Dictogloss can provide both communicative competence development and can promote learners' independence and positive behavior in the lessons. Lastly, in the reconstruction phase, the students can recheck the sentences that they have heard before, so that there is also an inquiry process with this technique.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

Conclusions that can be drawn are as follows: firstly, using the Dictogloss technique in teaching listening can increase the students' ability in comprehending the English listening materials. There was a significant improvement shown by the students who were taught using the Dictogloss technique compared to those who were not. Secondly, the implementation of Dictogloss technique was effective since the students learn how to do reconstruction and inquiry processes when they rebuild the texts based on their own knowledge and using their own words.

Suggestions

To follow up these findings, there are some suggestions for teachers, school principals, and other academicians in the field of teaching English. To teachers, considering that Dictogloss can effectively build students' ability in comprehending listening materials, English teachers

are recommended to use this model as an alternative means for teaching listening to students. To school principals, using Dictogloss technique requires some extra equipment, so the school principal should support any efforts being done by the teachers. To academicians, hopefully, there will be other studies following this research concerning the use of the Dictogloss technique for teaching listening. Indeed this technique can also be used in teaching writing and integrated listening-writing activities; this also needs further studies.

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