

The Use of VOA to Improve the Listening Skills of the First Semester Students of English Education Program of STKIP Kie Raha Ternate

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Abstract : This research aimed to investigate whether or not the students' listening skills can be developed through VOA. Based on the result of the teaching and learning process especially in the listening subject, The researcher found that many students still had difficulty recognizing the sound of words, the meaning, and the content in English when hearing the spoken version. These indicate that the student's ability in listening comprehension is still low. The population in this study was all students of the English Department Program. They are 53 students who registered for the 2022/2023 academic years. The sample was taken from first-semester students, they are 13 Students. To collect the data, the researcher used a test. Based on the findings and discussion, the researcher concludes that: The data show that the students' listening effectiveness before and after the treatments is a significant difference. It was found in the students' post-test was higher than the pre-test, which proved that the use of VOA in teaching listening skills contributed to the students' being more effective in listening to English. And using VOA can improve the students' listening ability even though the results of them are different. It can be seen through their increasing score from pre-test to post-test.

Keywords : *listening, Voice of America (VOA), listening skills*

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1. Introduction

There are two groups of skills in English language teaching (ELT) which are known as receptive and productive. Listening is called a receptive skill because we use our ears to receive a language. Besides, it is a receptive skill that inputs information and knowledge that people need to acquire linguistic acquisition (Wilson, 2009). Listening is also included as a receptive skill that refers to a person's ability in understanding a language.

Listening is an active process that can explain what the listeners hear with what they already know. In listening, listeners learn to distinguish between sounds, vocabulary with grammatical structures, stress, intonation, and many more about what the speaker actually says and how the listeners understand the content of the media. (Rost, 2011) Stated that acceptance of the language through the auditory system is called listening. It involves accepting the sound waves, identifying the language, processing them into the right comprehension of the speaker's goals, and defending the message for future use. Importance listening in academic contexts and daily life is crucial thing for students to get a good listening skills.

Listening is a familiar part of our everyday experience. Actually, most people spend a large part of their waking hours listening, with varying degrees of attention, to language and other stimuli. According to (Rivers, 1996) we have to spend much time through listening activities. He estimates that the time an adult spent in communication activities is 45% on listening, 30% on speaking, 16% on reading, and 9% on writing skills. We always want to know what we hear. Of course, it needs listening ability.

Listening is one of the four language skill is as oral and receptive skills. This is very essential in communication because we cannot catch someone's idea transmitted to us if we do not have the good listening ability. (Bowen, 1985) States that listening is attending to and interpreting oral language. It means that communication will not be running well without listening comprehension. Considering the importance of listening skills in daily communication, English learners should work hard to develop their listening ability.

Based on the result of the teaching and learning process especially in the listening subject, The researcher found that many students still had difficulty recognizing the sound of words, the meaning, and the content in English when hearing the spoken version. These indicate that the student's ability in listening comprehension is still low. So the researcher tries to analyze the students' problem in learning to listen and give the solution to solve their problems.

One of the approaches that can be used in learning English to improve students' listening skills is using media to aid the teaching and learning process. The researcher uses the media to make the students interested and they will automatically focus on learning English, especially listening skills. In this research, the researcher used the media, namely VOA (Voice of America) to improve students' listening skills. The researcher prefers choosing teaching listening because the audio-visual media can help the occurrence of communication and create an atmosphere that is not monotonous. Language learning is not only listening to the teacher's explanation, but it requires students' activeness in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, they are good ways to teach listening and improve students' listening skills (Arsyad, 2013). To gain more knowledge, the effectiveness of audiovisual news exposure and non-news materials for students' improve their intermediate language speaking skills as the focus. Furthermore, rather than listening to the audio, students can pay attention and be enthusiastic about learning

by watching news videos. The speakers of VOA are native English, Thus the researcher chooses the media in this research. This research aims to improve students' listening skills through VOA.

2. Literature Review

A. Listening

a. Definition of Listening

There are many opinions related to the definition of listening. According to some research agreement, the definition of listening is a skill that deserves equal treatment with others, both in the classroom and in the preparation of language teachers. All children are born with the ability to hear (Flowerdew, 2005). Hence, listening has an important role in language acquisition both in daily life and academic contexts. Every child gets their language from hearing something in the surrounding area first and then starts to speak. After they get the ability to speak, they can read and finally write word by word what they heard before. Therefore, listening is the first one to appear more than the other language skills.

Listening is one of the subjects studied in the field of language study and the discipline of conversation analysis. This skill can be improved by practice and there are many rewards to developing our listening skills. It is the active process of receiving and responding to spoken (and sometimes unspoken) messages. (Rost, 2011) Stated that listening is the process by which oral language is received, critically, and purposefully attended to, recognized, and interpreted in the terms of past experiences and future expectancies. It will happen in the classroom while students listen to the audio or video.

(Rivers, Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking, 2009) States that listening is a creative skill. It means we comprehend the sound falling on our ears, and take the raw material of words, arrangements of words, and the rise and fall of the voice, and from this material we create significance. So, we can say that listening is like a cooking process, there is the recipe, and then we gather the ingredients, start to process to cook and finally we eat that. The process will be successful if we prepare the right dose, as well as listen, we can get the right words if we listen well and know all of the sentences.

From the definition above, it can be concluded that listening is a complex, active process of interpretation in which listeners match what they have heard with what they have already known. It is a process to start in mind. We must pay attention first to listen, and then we can easily know the other skills.

b. The Teaching of Listening

The teaching of listening is the gateway to developing language skills both for native and foreign languages. Similar to (Linse, 2005) that the foundation of developing other language skills is the teaching of listening. We should, however, be aware that any kind of listening comprehension activity needs to be well-guided with clear aims.

The important thing about listening in language learning and teaching requires the teachers to help their students become good listeners. One example that can be done is to establish an English language program in the school every week so that the students will be more familiar with the listening situation.

We can conclude that teaching listening means delivering some material by giving an understanding of the language system. It also involves how we apply this knowledge of the language system to understand or convey meaning and how we apply particular skills to understand and convey meaning. It must be practiced continuously so that we will be more familiar with listening and finally can master it.

c. The Stages Of Listening

There are three stages of listening. They are pre-listening while listening and post-listening. According to (Underwood, 1989), each of the three stages has its specific purpose.

a) Pre-listening

Pre-listening activities help to hear and give some clues about the next activity through active schemata. The pre-listening activities activate the schemata and help the students to predict what they will hear. In real-life situations, people rarely listen to something without certain background information. Therefore, when asking students to do listening practice, teachers had better provide related information, which will facilitate students' listening comprehension. (Brown, 2004) Suggests that a pre-listening task should consist of two parts. Students should be provided with an opportunity to learn new vocabulary used in the listening material and a chance to activate their prior knowledge.

b) While listening

While-listening activities are directly related to the listening text and students perform the task either during the listening process or immediately after the listening. The activities are usually designed to help learners develop the skill of acquiring messages from spoken language. It is the most difficult stage for the teacher to control because this is where the students need to pay attention and process the information actively.

(Underwood, 1989) Explains the goal of while-listening tasks as being something that helps the learners understand the messages of the listening text. Examples of while-listening activities are multiple-choice completions, completing grids, or true/false practice.

c) Post-listening

Post-listening activities can be used to check comprehension. The comprehension check is either related to pre-listening activities, such as predicting, or extends the topic and helps students remember new vocabulary.

(Underwood, 1989) Stated that the post-listening task is an activity that is realized after listening, and merging all the work performed. It requires more time than the other tasks because students deal with thinking, discussing, reflecting, and writing processes

B. Learning Media

a. Definition of Learning Media

According to (Merriam Webster, 2021) media is the system and organization of communication through which information is spread to a large number of people. Learning media is a medium of technology in the form of printed material or other devices used for learning purposes.

b. *Roles of Media in Teaching and Learning Process*

According to Smaldino taken by (Riftiningsih, 2018), there are five roles of media in the teaching and learning process:

a) Thematic Instruction

It is known as the teachers' ways of organizing their instructions around topics.

b) Portfolios

A portfolio is a collection of students' work that illustrates growth over a period.

c) Distance Education

The distinguishing characteristic of distance education is the separation of the instructional team and students during learning.

d) Instructor-director Learning

A common use of media in an instructional situation is for supplementary "support of the live" instructor in the classroom.

e) Learner-director Learning

Media can be used effectively in formal education where a teacher is not available or is working with other students.

C. The Concept of VOA News

a. *History of VOA News*

The Voice of America (VOA) is a dynamic international multimedia broadcaster with services in more than 40 languages. Serving an estimated weekly global audience of 278 million. VOA provides news, information, and cultural programming through the Internet, mobile and social media, radio, and television.

VOA News is funded by the United State Government through the US Agency for Global Media. The VOA began broadcasting in 1942 to combat Nazi propaganda with accurate and unbiased news and information. Ever since then, VOA has served the word with a consistent message of truth, hope, and inspiration.

In November 2000, VOA launched the website VOANews.com. From the time of the Iraq War in 2003, the English language site attracted new readership during important news events or crises. During the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic in March and April 2020, traffic increased by 94%. In its 20th year, the VOANews.com site attracted an average of 2.6 million unique visitors per month.

Today, www.VOANews.com is VOA's English-language site from which users can navigate to any one of VOA's 47 language sites. It offers traditional text and photo content, as well as content on-demand and live-streamed, providing the user with a multi-media experience.

b. Definition of VOA News

Voice of America (VOA) is a United States government-funded multimedia news source and the official external broadcasting institution of the United States. VOA provides programming for broadcast on radio, television, and the Internet outside of the U.S. in English and some foreign languages.

On a weekly basis, more than 275 million people count on VOA for news and information about their world. VOA has affiliate and contract agreements with radio and television stations and cable networks worldwide. VOA News is one part of the VOA program. This program used many English words to deliver an article with audio and video with interesting news topics.

3. Methods

In this research, the researcher used the pre-experimental quantitative method. The Pre-Test and Post-Test were given to the pre-experimental group. Pre-experimental design is an experiment in which the results of the experiment are not fully influenced by the independent variables. After all, there are still external variables that influence it because there is no variable control (Sugiyono, 2011). The figure of the research design can be seen in the following figure 1:



Figure 1. Research Design

Where:

O1: The students' pre-test

O2: The students' post-test

X: Treatment

The population in this study was all students of the English Department Program. They are 53 students who registered for the 2022/2023 academic years. The sample was taken from first-semester students, they are 13 Students.

To collect the data, the researcher used a test. The students were given pre-test and post-test. The test that was given to the students was a writing test in multiple-choice forms. The test consists of 25 numbers. The purpose of the test was to know the result of teaching listening with VOA. The same test was used twice, as a pre-test and post-test.

The data collected through the listening test was analyzed by using the following formula:

$$\text{Score} = \frac{\text{Students' Correct Answer}}{\text{Total Number of Items}} \times 100$$

There were categories in scoring assessments of students' listening skills. They were excellent, very good, good, fair, and low. The score is excellent if the students get 90-100. For the students who get 80-89, the category is very good. The category is good if the students get 70-79. For the students who get 60-69, the category is fair. If the students get a score of 0-59, the category is low.

4. Results and Discussion

1) Result

a. Pre-Test

The purpose of the pre-test was to find out the students' listening skill scores before the treatment. This test was conducted on Tuesday, 8th November 2022. The researcher asked the students to listen carefully to the audio which played.

The researcher would like to show the complete students' scores of listening in the pre-test and the mean score. The researcher presented them in the tables. For more clarity, at first, the researcher would show the complete students' scores listening in the pre-test. It was tabulated by the following table:

Table 4.1 Students' Results in Pre-test

No	Samples	Students' Correct Answer	Score	Average
1	S1	10	40	19
2	S2	9	36	17.75
3	S3	11	44	20.25
4	S4	14	56	24
5	S5	14	56	24
6	S6	16	64	26.5
7	S7	17	68	27.75
8	S8	20	80	31.5
9	S9	13	52	22.75
10	S10	16	64	26.5
11	S11	13	52	22.75
12	S12	13	52	22.75
13	S13	15	60	25.25
Total			724	310.75

The table above shows that of 13 students, there were 8 students (72.7%) got low scores, they were S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S9, S11, and S12, 4 students (36.3%) got the fair score S6, S7, S10 and S13, no one student got a fairly good score, and just 1 student (9.09%) got very good, She/he was S8, no one student got an excellent score. After calculating the result of the test, the rate percentages of the students' scores were presented in the following table:

Table 4.2 Rate score of the students' pre-test

Classification	Score	Frequency
Excellent	90-100	0
Very Good	80-89	1
Good	70-79	0
Fair	60-69	4
Low	0-59	8
Total		13

b. Treatment

The treatment in the experimental group was done in one meeting. It was conducted on Tuesday, 15th November 2022. The activities during the treatment used VOA as the media to teach the listening skill. In the treatment, the researcher would like to conduct five VOA. They were three simple VOA in learning English and two VOA Video news.

c. Post-Test

The researcher gave the post-test to the students after giving the pre-test and treatments. The post-test aimed to find out the students' listening scores after the treatments. This test was conducted on Tuesday, 22nd November 2022. The question of the post-test was the same as the pre-test questions.

The researcher would like to show the complete students' scores of listening in the post-test and the mean score. The researcher presented them in the tables. For more clarity, at first, the researcher would show the complete students' scores listening in the post-test. It was tabulated by the following table:

Table 4.1 Students' Results in Post-test

No	Samples	Students' Correct Answer	Score	Average
1	S1	21	84	32.75
2	S2	18	72	29
3	S3	20	80	31.5
4	S4	22	88	34
5	S5	21	84	32.75
6	S6	22	88	34
7	S7	21	84	32.75
8	S8	24	96	36.5
9	S9	19	76	30.25
10	S10	21	84	32.75
11	S11	9	36	17.75
12	S12	20	80	31.5
13	S13	20	80	31.5
	Total		1032	407

The table above shows that of 13 students, there was one student who got an excellent score, she/he was S8, there were 10 students who got very good scores, there was one student who got a good score and also just one student got a low score. After calculating the result of the test, the rate percentages of the students' scores were presented in the following table:

Table 4.4 Rate score of the students' pre-test

Classification	Score	Frequency
Excellent	90-100	1
Very Good	80-89	10
Good	70-79	1
Fair	60-69	0
Low	0-59	1
Total		13

2) Discussion

Based on the data analysis from the students' pre-test and post-test, there was an improvement after treatment. The result of the students' pre-test showed that they were poor in listening skills. In the pre-test, from 13 students only one student (9.09%) got very good, 4 students (36.3%) got a fair score, and 8 students (72.7%) got a low score. In the post-test, the student's scores significantly increased. It was proved by the fact that there was one student who got an excellent score, there were 10 students who got very good scores, no one student got a good score and also just one student got a low score.

Based on the data above, we can see that the rate percentage of the post-test is higher than the pre-test. It means that the students' listening ability was significantly increased. Based on the students' mean scores in the pre-test and post-test, the researcher saw that they were significantly different. The average score of students' pre-test is 310 and the post-test is 407. It means that there was a significant difference before and after the treatment was given to the students. During the treatments, students were easy to learn using VOA News. The students are motivated to learn the listening test, which means that using VOA News is an effective technique for teaching listening.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

a. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion, the researcher concludes that: The data show that the students' listening effectiveness before and after the treatments is a significant difference. It was found in the students' post-test was higher than the pre-test, which proved that the use of VOA in teaching listening skills contributed to the students' being more effective in listening to English. And using VOA can improve the students' listening ability even though the results of them are different. It can be seen through their increasing score from pre-test to post-test.

b. Suggestion

After conducting this research, the researcher would like to offer some suggestions: first, English teachers should find a fun way to teach the students, especially in listening to avoid boredom in the learning process. Second, English teachers could utilize VOA News or video media in delivering listening material because it has a great effect on the students'

listening scores in learning English. The last, the other researcher would do better research in the future on teaching English.

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