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PROMOTING EFL LEARNERS' LISTENING COMPREHENSION THROUGH DIGITAL STORY-TELLING

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ABSTRACT

This research is aimed at finding out the effectiveness of digital story-telling in teaching listening at the second semester of Hamzanwadi University. This research is a quantitative research employing pre-exprimental design using one group pre-test and post-test. The sample of this study was 20 students of the second semester class 2d. The data were collected from students pre-test and post-test. The tests were multiple choice. The data were analyzed by using SPSS 22 for Windows. After submitting the data to a paired sample t-test, it was found that there was a significant difference in the mean score in the pre-test and the post-test which was $t(df=17)=-30.000$ at $p=0.000$. This means that the hypothesis proposed was proven to be accepted. Besides, the students could more easily grasp meaning especially when the story-telling was presented by video and some keywords related to the material. The activities were also more varied because the students worked more in groups. In short, digital story-telling was significantly effective in teaching listening at the second semester of the English Language Educatioan Study Program in Hamzanwadi University. Thus, it is recomended that English lecturers and teachers use this media in teaching listening.

Keywords: *listening comprehension, digital story-telling*

INTRODUCTION

In learning English as a foreign language, there are four main skills that learners should master. According to Aydoğan & Akbarov (2014), language educators have long used the concept of four basic language skills. Those

language skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Wati et.al., 2021). Listening and reading are passive or receptive skills, whereas speaking and writing are active or productive skills (Rao, 2019). These four skills support each other and are important to develop so that learners can communicate effectively in English.

To start with, listening is the very first skill acquired by language learners. Especially for foreign language learners, listening is the basic skill that should be learned and concerned on. Listening is significantly important because according to Tyagi (2013), listening is the key to receiving messages effectively. It takes the key role in daily and academic communication.

Listening skill is an important skill that allows someone to understand what is communicated by native speakers or speakers in English (Djabborova, 2020). Listening process involves recognizing and interpreting the sounds, intonation, accent, and vocabulary used in conversation, talks, and/or audio material. However, listening does not merely only deal with recognizing speech sounds but also with understanding the meaning of the words and grasping information presented on them.

Additionally, good listening involves the ability to focus, understand context, identify key information, and interpret the meaning of what is heard, and grasping any kind of information relies certainly on learners' ability of listening. In fact, what often happens is that EFL learners experience difficulties in listening. These difficulties do not only deal with limited access to listening material (Park, 2022) but also a lack of effective listening practice and feedback.

In most EFL instructions, listening seems to be pushed aside. Especially in junior and senior high schools, listening skill is hardly ever taught as single skill focused. The English teaching and learning is dominant to reading and vocabulary; Writing and speaking even take much fewer time than reading. Besides being difficult to find appropriate teaching materials, this may also happen because of the assumption that listening to native speaker is difficult. According to Bloomfield (2010) in (Walker, 2014), the pronunciation of words may differ greatly from the way they appear in print. Additionally, beside recognizing words in spite of their unfamiliar pronunciation, listener are also decipher which linguistic unit belongs to these words (Vandergrift, 2007 in Walker, 2014).

In universities, especially in the Study Program of English Language Education of Hamzanwadi University, listening is taught as a single subject to be fulfilled by the EFL students. Unfortunately, it is still not adequate enough to push learners to deep listening comprehension. This might be due to the believe that listening can be learnt alone or without being assisted as Osada said (in Walker, 2014) that listening was regarded as a passive skill that would develop without assistance.

Considering that listening is important, the instructional process should lead students to acquire listening skill. In fact, the listening class is often seem to be monotonous in practice and activities. The activities usually go more on listening to an audio then answering some items based on what is heard. Although sometimes students are led to repeat or find the meaning of some

words being heard, the listening instruction is somewhat not enough for a deep comprehension of the listening material. Additionally, even though the listening material is shared few days before the listening classroom meeting, it is no guarantee that the students learn the audio material before the class except only one or two of them.

Taking an essential part in communication, EFL learners need to be provided with effective listening practices and opportunity to practice intensively in an environment that supports the development of their listening skills. Thus, effective listening resources and activities should be offered. One of which to be used is digital story-telling.

Digital story-telling is a form of telling stories using digital media such as text, images, audio, video, animation, and other digital interactivity. Robin (2016), states that digital story telling is the practice of using computer-based tools to tell stories. It involves combining multimedia elements (Sarıca & Usluel, 2016) to create an engaging narrative experience for audiences.

Digital story-telling is advantageous. Choo et. al (2020) state that digital story-telling offers a series of advantages that makes it an attractive choice for telling stories. For instance, the interactivity allows audiences to actively engage in the story experience. Alismail (2015) also says that digital story-telling gives the students opportunity to participate and interact in the classroom. Besides, the excellent visual with the strong use of images, video, and animation helps to increase the visual appeal and effectiveness of the story messages.

Moreover, the use of variety of multimedia formats that can be combined creatively makes digital story-telling more flexible that allows for a better understanding of the impact of the story. Therefore, the immersive multimedia experiences can create deeper emotional engagement for viewers, making digital story-telling an effective tool in a variety of contexts, from education to marketing and entertainment.

In addition, the accessibility of digital stories through online platform allows them to be reached easily. Digital stories can reach a wider audience quickly due to easy sharing and potential virality.

Seeing the advantageous of digital story-telling, it is interesting to apply it in teaching listening. By the help of interactive supporting instructional activities, it is expected to be effective in the EFL learners' listening comprehension. Thus, to see the effectiveness of digital story-telling, this research is conducted. This is also to add research dealing with listening instruction since according to Vandergrift (in Walker, 2014), listening skills have been rendered the least researched of all four language skills. Therefore, it is expected that this research may explore the effectiveness of digital story-telling in teaching listening and add the list of research related to listening skill.

METHODS

This research was purposed to find out the effectiveness of digital story-telling in teaching listening. It was focused on the EFL learners' listening comprehension. In order to gain this purpose, a pre-experiment research was conducted. A pre-experimental design is a design that includes only one group or class that is given pre-test and post-test (Nappu et al., 2022). This research is

quantitative approach since numerical data were gathered and analyzed. According to Leppink (2017) and Apuke (2017), quantitative approach concerns typically on numerical data.

This study was conducted at Hamzanwadi University, and the second grade of Study Program of English Language Education participated. One class (2D)—consisted—of 20 students was taken as sample through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a data retrieval technique with specific consideration (Apostolopoulos & Liargovas, 2016). Since this study is purposed to test the effectiveness of digital story-telling, one class of the four classes in the second grade was taken as the investigated group.

The data in this study were collected through three main steps: pretest, treatments, and posttest. These tests were administered to measure the students' listening comprehension. Rezeki & Rahmani (2021) state that test is a method of measuring a person' level of development or progress that has been achieved after being given a treatment in learning process within a certain period of time. The pretest was administered before doing the treatment using digital story-telling, and the post-test was ordered after the treatment to determine the effectiveness of the digital story-telling in the students' listening comprehension. The test in this study dealt with comprehension test consisted of 20 items of completing information and multiple choice in the pre-test and the post-test.

The data collected then were analyzed using descriptive statistic, and paired sample t-test was used to test the hypothesis. The statistical analysis model was used to describe and examine the t-test. The alternative hypothesis in this research is that digital story-telling is effective in the EFL learners' listening comprehension of the second grade of English Language Education Study Program of Hamzanwadi University. A descriptive statistical analysis was to describe the calculation of mean score and standard deviation. Furthermore, the hypothesis testing was used to determine the effectiveness of digital story-telling.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data in this study were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The top and the lowest score gained by the students were determined to make it easier to see the difference in the pre-test and the post-test scores. The data are shown in Figure 1.
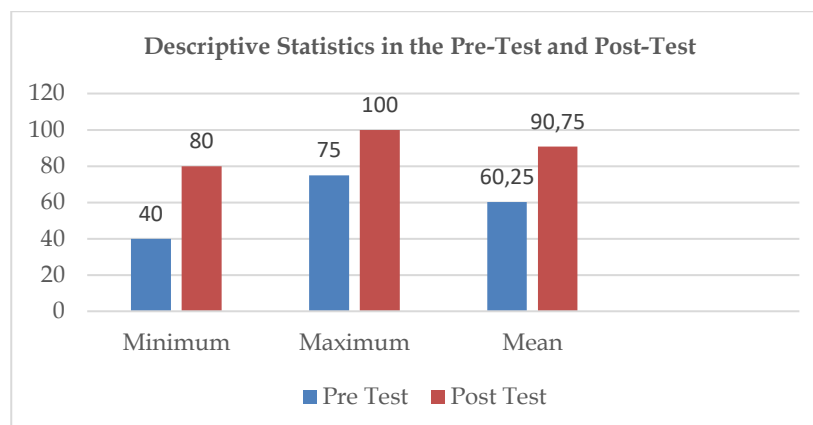

Figure 1 Descriptive Statistics in the Pre-Test and the Post-Test

Figure 1 shows that with a standard deviation of 9.662 in the pre-test, the highest score was 75, and the lowest was 40. In the post-test, with a standard deviation of 6.129, the lowest score was 80, and the highest score was 100. Additionally, the mean scores in the pre-test and post-test too were different. In the pre-test, the mean score was 60.29, and in the post was 90.75. The different scores from pre-test to post-test lead to a conclusion that there was a change in the students score after being taught using digital story-telling. This shows that digital story-telling is effective in facilitating students' listening comprehension.

Furthermore, the hypothesis testing was conducted to know whether the hypothesis provided was accepted or not through a paired sample t-test. After calculating paired sample t-test, it was found that **t(df=20) = - 35,296 at p= - 25,704**. This means the hypothesis was accepted, and it was discovered that digital story-telling was effective in the students' listening comprehension of the second grade of English Language Education Study Program of Hamzanwadi University.

Dealing with the listening instructional process through digital story-telling, the treatment was conducted in four meetings. The first meeting was through radio-style story-telling. The radio-style story-telling was entitled "The Comeback" by Chris Rose of British Council. In this first meeting, the students worked individually. They were led to note every word they heard from the story-teller. The story was played many times to let students gather more and more words from the story. After sometime, students were given some leading questions. These questions were purposed to help them comprehend better the content of the story. The students individually answered the questions based on the information gained previously from the radio story-telling.

In the second meeting, the students worked in groups. They were provided with the radio story-telling as in the first meeting. In their groups, they shared all the words and information they had gathered from the story in the previous meeting. They then discussed the answer to the questions provided previously. When the set-time ended, the students were led to discuss some unfamiliar words and the pronunciation. They were also led to discuss the answers to all the provided questions by providing feedback. Feedback was especially given related to the information missed by the students. This was done by replaying the radio story-telling and clarifying the information that the students did not surely hear or understand. Finally, as follow up for their comprehension, they retell the story on their own simplified words.

The treatment continued to the third meeting. This third meeting was through video animation story-telling. It was entitled "The Bear and the Bee" of The Fable Cottage. The activities in the first and second meeting were interesting to students, but as observed, this video animation story-telling was much more interesting to the students. The video animation story-telling was played on LCD projector to facilitate better view for students since they were group from the beginning of the instructional activities. In their groups, they put notes every word they get from the video as well as the audio. Some keywords were provided in the video animation, so the students could bring together more words and information as they followed the story. The students then shared and discussed

the words which were not written on the video and the information related to the story. They were provided with WH questions to lead them better grasp meaning and information related to how the story went on and ended.

After working in groups, in the fourth meeting, the students worked individually. This meeting was reinforcement and follow up for the third meeting. In this meeting, the video animation story-telling was played once to help the students recall the information they had shared and gathered previously in their groups. As the final activities, students were led to retell the story. They were not allowed to read or memorize the story; they were just to retell the story on their simplified English. In this stage, feedback was given. Additionally, it was observed that the students enjoyed the process. They told the story in turn, and they appreciated how their mates told the story.

Referring to the result of the study, digital story-telling was found to be effective in teaching listening. This finding is along with Tabieh et. al. (2021). Tabieh et. al. (2021) conducted a research in Arabic language class which was aimed at helping the students to acquire active listening skills and creative thinking skills including fluency, flexibility, and originality. The sample was 200 students in a mixed gender, and they were divided into two equal groups; one was the experimental group, and the other was the control one. Both groups were exposed to two post-tests. The first test was a post active listening test and the second was a creative thinking test. The validity and reliability of these tests had been assured. The results of this research showed significant differences in ($p \leq 0.05$) between means scores of the control and experimental groups. The students in the posttest of active listening skills were in favor of the students who studied through storytelling. The results also showed that the storytelling strategy affected the experimental group students' acquisition of one skill of the three creative thinking skills, which was fluency. This proves that digital story-telling is effective not only on students' listening comprehension but also on their active listening skill and their creative thinking skill.

Moreover, the result of this present study shows that digital story-telling accommodated the students' listening comprehension. This was proven by the improvement of their mean score in the pre-test and the post-test which was from 60.29 to 90.75. This was also proven in the instructional process in which that the students could retell the stories accurately. The result of this study is supported by Sari et.al. (2021). Based on the result of the qualitative research they conducted, 88.89% out of 45 students admitted that digital story-telling helped them understand narrative better. This result implies that digital storytelling is proven to be beneficial in teaching narrative.

In this present study, digital story-telling is good to be applied in teaching listening. It is proven in the instructional process. In the treatment process, the students involved actively especially when they worked in groups. Along with this finding, Smeda, Dakich, & Sharda (2014) said that digital story-telling is powerful to create more engaging and exciting learning environment.

In addition to being actively involved in the instructional process, the students seemed to be entertained especially when the digital story-telling was equipped with video animation. Their learning seemed to be joyful and fun.

There was sense of entertainment while they were focusing on grasping the information in the digital story-telling. This certainly shows that digital story-telling is beneficial for teacher. Supporting this finding, Choo, Abdullah, & Nawi (2020) argue that the use of digital storytelling is beneficial in developing the teachers' content, pedagogical and technological knowledge. In this study, obviously digital story-telling was helpful in facilitating us in the instructional process.

Furthermore, Choo, Abdullah, & Nawi (2020) and Sari, et. al. (2021), state that digital story-telling is beneficial in enhancing students' learning as it increases their understanding of content and caters for their multiple intelligence. In this present study, while working with digital story-telling, the students not only focused on hearing the sound from the audio, they also focused on the animated video in the digital story-telling presented. Besides, some key words were provided in the video of the digital story-telling, and this led the students not to rely only on what they listened to but also what they read and saw in the animated video. Thus, this proves that digital story-telling helps students develop their awareness and critical thinking toward the context presented in the digital story-telling.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result and finding of the study, digital story-telling facilitated the teacher and the students the content of the learning material, and it kept the students being actively involved in the instructional process from the beginning to the end when working individually and in groups. Thus, it is deduced that digital story-telling is effective not only on the students' listening comprehension but also helpful in keeping the class atmosphere good.

Referring to the result of this study, it is suggested that EFL teachers/lecturers to use digital story-telling to facilitate students to learn listening and to promote their listening comprehension because listening is indeed needed for an effective communication, and it supports the other language skills in many ways.

Since this research focused only on the students' listening comprehension and only administered listening comprehension test as the instrument to collect the data, it provides opportunities for further researchers to conduct deeper research using more instruments for more detail data and information. It is also suggested that further researcher conduct research dealing with digital story-telling which focus on the other language skills like speaking and writing and involve a larger number of sample.

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