

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a brief description of the whole content of the study, including the background, scope of the research, aim of the research, clarification of terms, and organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the Research

In modern language teaching and learning, listening has gained its active and communicative value while, as comes in the literature, it had been neglected for years or less emphasis was laid on this skill. Due to the technology development, these days the teachers and the researchers benefit from various listening tools to display tasks in the classroom to hone learners' listening comprehension ability. Yet students in each level may have problems listening to audio programs. In order to develop this skill, teachers have sought various strategies and techniques to teach and receive appealing result. A very demanding one would be audio story task, designed as supplementary material to language textbooks that can remove the students' listening problem, up to a point.

Nevertheless, listening has remained a difficult skill to teach students since setting listening task is considered time-consuming and boring if the strategy itself is problematic to enhance students' level of proficiency. Learning a language, students may encounter some affective factors such as motivation, anxiety, self-

esteem, inhibition and so forth that let them keep the pace forward or give up and quit the scene unsuccessfully. It seems the primary step overcoming the barriers would be to understand the language spoken in a context. If the recipient do not listen attentively, understanding may be undergone some difficulties interacting in sides.

Larsen-Freeman (2000) states that, "being able to figure out the speaker's or writer's intentions is part of being communicatively competent." According to Richards (2008) earlier views of listening saw it as the mastery of discrete skills or micro-skills such as recognizing reduced forms of words and so forth. Later views drew on the field of cognitive psychology, which introduced the notion of bottom-up and top-down processing and to the role of prior knowledge and schema theory in comprehension. Hence, the role of the listener as an active participant in listening is emphasized, employing strategies to facilitate, monitor, and evaluate his or her listening in spoken discourse. Listening stages (sensation, interpretation, evaluation, feedback), however, precede the speaking skill.

Listening, indeed, captures most of our communication time in comparison with other skills. A good listener says, can be a good communicator. Vandergrift (1999) defines listening comprehension as a complex, active process in which the listener needs to discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation, retain what was gathered in previous steps, and lastly interpret it within the immediate as well as the wider socio-cultural context. Therefore, the listener needs a great deal of mental activity involvement coordinating the steps mentioned. Listening comprehension is the

ability to understand the discourse around. Listening to and understanding the input involves a number of processes, depending upon linguistic competence, previous knowledge, and psychological variables as a link between.

Listening texts should ultimately be interesting like real-life situations and so should the technique. Isbell (2002) believes that listening to stories, indeed, draws attention to the sounds of language and helps children develop sensitivity to the way language works. Many stories that children practice with include repetitive phrases, unique words, and enticing description (p. 27). These characteristics encourage students and push them to join in actively in group work and class activities such as repeating, singing, or even retelling the story. Nation (2007) also states that "the meaning-focused input strand involves learning through listening and reading, using language receptively. Typical activities in this strand include extensive reading, shared reading, listening to stories, watching TV or films, and being a listener in a conversation." Moreover, Mesri (2012) in her study indicated that there is a statistically significant effect of video cues compared with picture and tape recorder. The real problem is that in different English classes students are mostly expected to listen to audio program to do their listening tasks. Therefore, the researcher intends to find a way to cover this area of difficulty.

The literature on the teaching and learning/acquisition of listening comprehension suggests different strategies and techniques to help learners develop this skill. With this respect, the purpose of this study is to investigate how audio story practice, as a new language or material to class activity enhance EFL

students' listening comprehension ability. Students are interested in listening to stories, because this follows sequential processing. There is logical and meaningful link in listening to stories. It makes students understand the learning process better and enhances students' interest to pursue the listening program. It needs a starting point and the students are willing to listening what is coming next.

Therefore, this can be an effective technique to enhance students' performance in current listening comprehension program and also by applying this task they can perform better in their future academic assessments accordingly. As most academic standard listening tests are designed and administered based on playing audio program on the day of exam, hence, this study among these techniques, investigates how to introduce audio story that can be enjoyable material for the learners, into EFL classroom practice design to maximize the students' exposure to suitable listening program. Ellis and Brewster (1991) indicates that "listening to stories develops the students' listening and concentrating skills" that leads to performing well in listening test.

The teaching of listening comprehension in EFL instruction has received more and more attention in the EFL circle in recent years. Many researchers and classroom teachers are doing research to find out what listening comprehension in the target language is, and to solve the learners' problems in English listening comprehension. Selecting the suitable listening materials is one important research branch. Because authentic materials –unsolicited, spontaneous, natural and covering a wide spectrum of styles from formal to very informal, can reflect the real life language, narrow the distance between the learners and the target

language used in reality, it becomes increasingly attractive to language experts, classroom practitioners and the learners.

Compared with foreign language teaching as a whole, listening teaching in the target language appeared much later. It first appeared in the Cambridge ESOL FCE exam in 1970, in the form of written texts read aloud. In the early days of English language teaching listening chiefly serves as a means of introducing grammar through model dialogues. It was not until the late 1970s and the advent of the communicative approaches that the skill was first taught in its own right. The researchers and teachers tended to do more research into reading, writing and speaking rather than listening. They often considered that listening was something which could be picked up easily and saw little need for developing a specific research agenda or approaches to teach listening. As a result, listening remains very under-researched.

Listening is drawing more and more of people's attention in recent years. People recognized its important role in the language learning and communication in the target language. In the 1980s, Krashen came up with his Input Hypothesis which emphasizes the importance of listening comprehension. And more and more books on listening, both practical and theoretical, especially dealing with listening skills, have been published. Listening has been given an unprecedented attention. Under this background, a considerable amount of research has been done into listening materials. The next biggest concern to teach listening is to discover an effective technique. Dickinson et al (2001) stated that storytelling could be one recommended way to develop students' listening comprehension

skill. Tales and story would be the effective listening materials for students to develop listening comprehension and literacy both in their first and foreign language. Stories can offer a valuable way of contextualizing and introducing new language, making it meaningful and memorable. They are associated with feelings and memories, as they are a distinctive manifestation of cultural values and perceptions. Generally stories are read loudly by teacher in front of students.

There are some findings on storytelling. One of those was being discussed in research journal by Cherry. The research conducted in 2001 at the Stamford Public School revealed that storytelling develops listening skill, enhances verbal expressions, increases comprehension, creates mental images, and highlights verbal reasoning. It is a natural used vehicle for making connections with people of all ages and also a flexible technique for developing skills in the language.

Furthermore, Rusdi (2006) also stated in his journal that storytelling gives students opportunities to listen to stories and at the same time they learn English and moral values. Storytelling creates a lively and enjoyable classrooms atmosphere. It arouses students' motivation and learning interest. It is therefore worthwhile for English teachers to incorporate storytelling when teaching English.

Other research regarding to the issue of using storytelling technique in teaching language had been conducted by Verdugo and Belmonte. The research focused on the effectiveness of using stories in developing students listening comprehension in Spanish. To accomplish this aim, a quasi-experimental research study was launched in six state schools in Madrid. Findings indicate that the experimental group outperformed the control group in the final test administered.

These results raise interesting issues related to the use of stories in the context of foreign language learning.

Referring to those explanations above, this research was aimed to seek the effectiveness of storytelling technique in developing students' listening comprehension in teaching-learning process at college. It is hoped by using audio storytelling will help students in learning English, especially to improve their listening skill.

1.2 The Scope of the Research

Since listening plays an essential role in the lives of people in general and of students in particular. It is important for educators to be more aware of the need for developing teaching listening technique. This research adapted the storytelling technique to be applied in teaching listening to the students in formal college

Therefore, the scope of the research will only focus on the implementation of storytelling technique in first grade of college classrooms.

Moreover, the technique of teaching called storytelling will be tested to prove its effectiveness in improving students' listening skill. In this case, this research will only emphasize on the ability to comprehend the explicit detail information from the text given.

1.3 Research Questions

This research is conducted to answer the following questions :

1. Is using audio storytelling effective for developing students' listening comprehension skill?
2. What is students' attitude toward the use of audio storytelling in teaching listening?

1.4 The Aim of the Research

Associated with the research questions above, this research is proposed to analyze the effectiveness of using audio storytelling technique in the improvement of listening comprehension of first grade of undergraduate students and to find out if the students like what they experience.

1.5 Clarification of Terms

1. Storytelling Technique

It can be defined as the conveying of events in words, images, and sounds in the shape of narrative genre. It should include plot, characters, and events. It is sometimes called narrative knowledge that attempts to recount events in the form of a story (Maynard, 2005). Moreover, it is the art of bringing a story to life through the inflection in one's voice rhythm.

2. Listening

According to Thompson & Rubin (1996) listening is process as an active process through which the listeners select and interpret information that comes from auditory and visual clues in order to define what is going on and what the speakers are trying to express. Listening comprehension is viewed to be an active process in which individuals focus on selected aspects of 'aural input', construct meaning from passages and relate what they hear to existing knowledge.

In this case, students' listening comprehension allows students to understand what is being heard. In this study, listening is focused on listening to the story, where the student should be able to capture and identify seven components of the story. The seven components of the story are theme, plot, setting, characters, dialogue, point of view and style (Mello, 2005).

3. Audio storytelling

According to Mc Adam (2009) audio storytelling is a technique that lets you focus on a person's voice. In many ways, it's a more intimate form of storytelling than using video

4. Attitude

An attitude is the psychological response to a person, an object, to a situation, to society and to life itself that generally influence our behaviors and actions.

Attitudes are either positive or negative (Van Den Berg et al., 2006; Eagly and Chaiken, 1998)

1.6 Organization of the paper

The paper will be presented into five chapters. The chapter will be subdivided into subtopics that will elaborate the issue given.

Chapter 1 (Introduction)

This chapter provides the background of the research, research questions, the scope of the research, the aims of the research, clarification of terms, and the organization of the paper.

Chapter 2 (Theoretical Foundation)

This chapter consists of related theories from the expert and some of researches and related literatures that used in this research.

Chapter 3 (Research Methodology)

This chapter will discuss the methodology in conducting the research. It includes research method, hypothesis, population and sample, the instruments, data collecting procedure, and data analysis.

Chapter 4 (Data Presentation)

This chapter will report the result of the research. The result will embrace the answer of the research questions and also researcher's interpretation about the result of the research.

Chapter 5 (Conclusion and Suggestions)

This chapter consists of the research conclusion and suggestions for the readers or other researchers who wish to continue the research.