

**TEACHING LISTENING COMPREHENSION THROUGH
VOICE OF AMERICA (VOA) SPECIAL ENGLISH
BROADCAST**

*(A Pre-Experimental study to Tenth Grade Students in Muhammadiyah Sekolah
Menengah Atas (SMA) of Ketapang in Academic Year 2011/2012)*

An Article

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Abstrak: Artikel ini berkaitan dengan pemahaman siswa terhadap listening comprehension. Voice of America (VOA) special English broadcast digunakan sebagai materi dalam pengajaran listening comprehension kepada siswa kelas X Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) Muhammadiyah Ketapang pada tahun Akademik 2011/2012. Tujuan melakukan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui seberapa efektif penggunaan VOA special English broadcast dalam pengajaran listening comprehension. Metode penelitian artikel ini adalah pra - eksperimental dengan siswa XC sebagai sampel. Sebagai hasilnya, ditemukan bahwa perhitungan dari effect size (ES) adalah 1.27, itu berarti bahwa pengajaran listening comprehension melalui VOA special English broadcast sangat efektif.

Kata Kunci : Voice of America, listening comprehension

Abstract: This article concerned with the students' listening comprehension. Voice of America (VOA) special English broadcast was used as material in teaching listening comprehension to the tenth grade students of sekolah menengah atas (SMA) Muhammadiyah Ketapang in Academic year 2011/2012. The purpose of conducting the research is to know how effective the use of VOA special English broadcast in teaching listening comprehension. The method of this article is a pre – experimental research with students of XC as the sample. As the result, it was found that the effect size (ES) calculation is 1.27; it means that teaching listening comprehension through VOA special English broadcast is highly effective.

Key words: Voice of America, listening comprehension

As an input skill, listening play a crucial role in students' language development. Students actively involve themselves in the interpretation of what they hear, bring their own background knowledge and linguistic knowledge to bear on the information contained in the oral text.

Listening is the basic language skill in language learning. It is the medium through which people gain a large portion of their information, their education, their understanding of the world appreciation. Therefore, it is vital importance that students are taught to listen effectively and critically in English language teaching.

There are varieties of materials that can be used in teaching listening. However, the English teachers often use materials in the textbook without for the listening materials. So, the students were not able to comprehend the information being listened well yet.

With the development of technology, the teachers have access many teaching resources. Teachers can take materials from various source to attract the students' attention and increase their motivation in listening comprehension. One of the resources is online broadcast (Voice of America (VOA) special English broadcast).

VOA special English broadcast is an authentic material that can help the students to hear natural language or real speech from native speaker in real life. For the English teacher can download it in internet and choose the form of VOA (audio, video, audiovisual or multimedia) in accordance with their material.

With regard to using broadcasting materials as authentic materials in teaching listening comprehension, Morrison (1989) used news broadcast for authentic materials. The result of his research was that the broadcasts expose students to 'real' spoken English, and in such a way they prepare students to be able to approach such materials without constant presence of teacher setting questions and such broadcasts contained elements that practice the listening skills both individually and integrally, and they integrate listening with other skills.

Inspired by that research finding, the purpose of this research is to find out whether VOA specific English broadcast as material is effective to teach listening comprehension.

DISCUSSION

A. Listening Comprehension

Listening is the crucial in teaching and learning process. It can help students to develop the other language skills in daily life. "listenings is the ability to identify and understand what other are saying." (Saricoban, 1999:1). Through listening, the students must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures. In short, the students understand the accent of speaker or pronunciations and grasp the meaning of the speaker.

In addition Nation and Newton (2009:38) states "Listening is the way of learning the language. It gives the learner information from which to build up the knowledge necessary for using the language". Therefore listening is the skill which required someone to listen well to somebody. When listening, a person has willingness and a competence to understand what is said. At this process, a person tends to pay conscious attention to what is being said in order to understand it.

In listening activity, the learners comprehend the messages being listened. They must understand the message as it is presented, effective listening requires the ability to organize and remember what is presented.

In listening comprehension process, listeners use knowledge to understand the meaning. The knowledge includes the knowledge of language about what is said, about the situation in which speech occurs and background knowledge of language. "Listening comprehension is an achieved process of constructing meaning, and that done by applying knowledge to incoming sound". In other words, listening is active process by which students fit with what they hear and what they already know.

Listening comprehension is divided into two processes that are involved in understanding spoken discourse. They are bottom – up and top – down processing. Brown (2006:2) explains "Bottom –up processing means using the information we have about sounds, word meanings, and discourse makers like first, then and after that assemble our understanding of what we read or hear one step at a time. Top – down processing means using our prior knowledge and experiences". Furthermore, Richards (2008:7) explains "listening comprehension involved two complementary processes: bottom – up and top – down process. The processes are identified as follow:

1. The bottom – up processing refers to using the incoming input as the basis for understanding the message.
2. The top – down refers to the use of background knowledge in understanding the meaning of message".

Thus, the teachers use bottom – up process when their students construct meaning by using the information they such as sounds, word meaning, and discourse makers and then gradually combining all the information increasingly from the phoneme level up to discourse level features. Meanwhile, teacher uses top – down process when their students' previous knowledge or information such as topic or other knowledge in long time memory to help them comprehend what they read or hear.

B. Teaching Listening Comprehension

Brown (2000:7) define "teaching as showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instructions, guiding in the study of something, providing with knowledge, causing to know or to understand". So, teaching is the process to carry out which experience has shown in getting students to learn.

In teaching listening, selecting or adopting materials should be relevant on the curriculum. The standard competence for second semester of senior high school, students should understand the meaning of short functional text and monologue in form of narrative, descriptive, and news item in daily life. Furthermore, students respond to the meaning of monologue using spoken language accurately fluently and comprehensibly in daily life in the form of narrative, descriptive, and news item texts on the basic competence. (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan : 2006).

As mentioned above, news item is one of the types of text taught in teaching listening. News item text is a text which informs readers about events of the day which are considered newsworthy or important. Some language features used in news item as follows: first, the use of action verbs, saying verbs, passive sentences, and simple past tense. Second, material process to retell the event. Third, projecting verbal processes in source stages. The fourth, information on the use of headlines. Its generic structure consist of three parts: main event (recount the events in summary form), background events (elaborate what happened, to whom, in what circumstances), and resource of information (comments by participants, witness to and authorities expert on the event).

In other word, technique is an instrument which is considered essential to transfer knowledge from teacher to students in teaching. Through the process of teaching, there is a process of internalization and possession of knowledge by the students, so that they can absorb what is conveyed by the teacher.

In order to know how well the students comprehend what they have listened to the materials being presented. Therefore, it requires the administration of a test to obtain data and feedback information about the achievements that have been held form learning. Test is one way of assessment which is designed in accordance with the basic competence or indicators that will be assed.

C. The importance of materials for developing listening comprehension

In teaching listening, a variety of materials can attract students' attention and increase their motivation in listening comprehension. Having appropriate English teaching materials of certain field of study is one of the requirements to make the teaching and learning process effective. Hutchinson and waters (1987:107) states "materials are as the means to provide a stimulus to learn". So, it is essential to develop the material to be attractive, creative, and innovative.

As the development of technology, it is also followed by the development of media (audio, video, multimedia, audiovisual, internet, etc). It can help teacher to get variety material in teaching learning. In developing material of teaching listening comprehension, authentic material can be used in teaching learning. According to Linzhu and Yuanyuang (2010), using authentic material can help the students to hear natural language or real speech from native speaker in real life. It can be from interviews, dialogues, lectures, discussions, conversation or broadcasts.

One of the materials that support in teaching listening is voice of America (VOA) special English broadcast program. According to Nan and Mingfang (2009:29) "VOA special English program uses a basic vocabulary of 1.500 English words to deliver interesting written and audion reports on news, music, language, culture, and other topics. Most of vocabulary consist of high frequency

words, although some words are more difficult when reports deal with topics like medicine and science”.

Besides, type of text of VOA special English broadcast is news item text of which it must be taught to the tenth grade students in second semesters. In VOA special English broadcast, some topic or theme is appropriate and familiar with the culture and society in the world where the students live.

D. Teaching listening comprehension through Voice of America (VOA) special English broadcast in senior high school

In teaching listening, it is presented in several sessions, they are pre-listening, whilst – listening and post listening (Richards, 2008). Thus, the process of teaching listening comprehension through VOA special English broadcast were as follows:

Pre-listening activities

- a. Guiding to link background information through showing the pictures and asks some questions to related with the topic
- b. Asking to make a group
- c. Asking to match the video of broadcast without sound and practice (task 1)

Whilst listening activities

- a. Asking to watch the video of broadcast with sound and practice (task II)
- b. Explaining the VOA special English broadcast about the possible participant’s situations, places and grammar structure of the broadcast.

Post-listening

- a. Summarizing the lesson

METHOD

Pre – experimental is a research that applies one group the pre-test and post-test and there is no control group (Cohen,et, al, 2000). So, to answer the research problem the writer used pre-experimental as the method.

The population of this research was the tenth grade students in Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) Muhammadiyah in academic year 2011/2012. The students consisted of 184 students from 5 classes, they were: XA which consisted of 36 students, XB which consisted of 34 students, XC which consisted of 36 students, XD which consisted of 39 students and XE which consisted of 39 students. As the sample, the writer used cluster sampling and took 36 students in class XC.

The writer applied measurement technique to collect the data. The measurements technique in this research was through written test. This test was administrated twice. First, pre-test was conducted to collect the data before the experiment. Second, post-test was conducted to collect the data after the treatment has been given.

Technique of data analysis was applied by calculation the means score of the students pre-test and post-test and then continued by calculating the t-test. Finally the formulation of effect size was practiced in order to find out the answer of the problem. It is as follow: $ES = t \sqrt{1/N}$. The criteria of the effect size can be classified as follow:

Table of Effect Size

$ES < 0.2$	Low
$0.2 < ES \leq 0.8$	Moderate
$ES > 0.8$	High

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Research Finding

The effectiveness of VOA special English broadcast in teaching listening comprehension to tenth grade students in second semester was determined by using Effect Size (ES) computation. The computation of the ES is 1.27. Based on the criteria of the effect size, $ES > 0.8$ is categorized high (effective). It means that the use of VOA special English broadcast in teaching listening comprehension is categorized highly effective.

Discussion

From the data analysis, the writer found that there is an increase of students' score after the treatment. The mean score of pre-test was 4.61 and categorized as poor to average. After giving the pre-test, then the treatment was administrated for three times. The next step of the research was conducted the post – test and the mean score of post-test was 6.52. It could be categorized as average to good. The score indicated that the students' performance in post-test was better than in the pre-test. It is in accordance with the explanation of Oguz and Bahar (2008) about some advantages of using authentic material in language teaching, such as students might have high interest value because of their relevance to the world, it can keep the students informed about what is happening in the world they live. Besides, when the authentic material is used in class, the students will get the chance to read, rehearse, listen to, practice, use and learn the language via the materials that can be seen, examined, touched and listened to.

Moreover, to determine the significance of the research, the whole data was put in t-test and the result of t-test was compared to the t-table. In this research the writer applied the significance of 5% with df (N-1) $36-1 = 35$ is 2.042. In this case the calculation showed that the t value was higher than t-table critical value ($9.09 > 2.042$). Based on calculating the significance's score of pre-test and post-test, the writer measured the effect size (ES) of the treatment. From the result of effect size calculation where the value of ES is 1.27 which was categorized as high indicated that the use of voice of America (VOA) s material to teach listening comprehension in second semesters is highly effective.

CONCLUSION

Referring to the research findings that teaching listening comprehension through Voice of America (VOA) special English broadcast can increase the student's achievement significantly. This research was found out that the use of VOA special English Broadcast is very effective to teach listening comprehension.

SUGGESTION

The writer provides some constructive suggestions as follow: (1) the teacher should provide variations of teaching techniques in order to avoid the students' boredom in learning. (2) VOA special English broadcast is advisable for the teacher to use in teaching listening in the aim of developing the students listening comprehension well. (3) In using VOA, the teacher should be creative in choosing the appropriate topic and examples. Those should be familiar and interesting for the students. (4) Using authentic materials can play multiple roles in language teaching; enable students to interact with real language and content rather than text book or teacher made especially the form (grammar and vocabulary).

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