



Analysis of English Teachers' Difficulties in Teaching Listening For Young Learners at Elementary School

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ABSTRAK

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan masalah yang dihadapi oleh guru bahasa Inggris dalam mengajar menyimak melalui lagu untuk pelajar muda. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kualitatif deskriptif sebagai desain penelitian. Sampel dari penelitian ini adalah dua orang guru bahasa Inggris di sekolah dasar. Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah melalui wawancara terstruktur. Adapun dari hasil pengumpulan data, peneliti menemukan beberapa masalah yang dihadapi oleh guru bahasa Inggris dalam mengajarkan listening melalui lagu untuk pelajar usia dini. Masalah-masalah tersebut berasal dari yang dihadapi oleh siswa, fasilitas di sekolah, dan guru itu sendiri. Masalah-masalah tersebut antara lain faktor psikologis siswa yaitu motivasi, latar belakang pengetahuan siswa, sikap siswa, kurangnya kosakata siswa, alat peraga atau media, dan metode pengajaran listening.

ABSTRACT

The goal of this study is to describe the problems faced by English teachers in teaching listening through songs for young learners. This study used descriptive qualitative design as the research design. The samples of this study were two English teachers in elementary schools. The data collection technique used in this research is through structured interviews. As for the results of data collection, researchers found several problems faced by English teachers in teaching listening through songs for young learners. These problems come from those faced by students, facilities at school, and the teachers themselves. These problems include students' psychological factors, namely motivation, students' background knowledge, students' attitudes, students' lack of vocabulary, teaching aids or media, and listening teaching methods.

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INTRODUCTION

As an international language, English remains a very important language to learn and master. Many parents send their children to schools, both international schools and English courses since they were children. This is because English proficiency is considered the key to success in Indonesia. English as a foreign language in Indonesia has a big role because English as an international language becomes a trigger for every country to learn the language (Dewi, 2019). Therefore, by providing an English-speaking environment, young learners will find it easier to master the language because they tend to use English every day when socializing or communicating with their friends and teachers.

Learning English should be done from an early age, because it will familiarize young learners to know the basics in English. Young learners are those who are between five to ten or under twelve years of age Jannah (2019) in Hapsari (2022). Young learners also defined as children who are in primary or elementary school.

In addition, according to Astutik (2021) young learners have the characteristics, which are:

- 1) They can differentiate objects based on their characteristics;
- 2) They can arrange logical combination where A is fewer than B and B is fewer than C, etc
- 3) They can develop a way to think which is reasonable and systematic, but they still think based on the physical.

Teaching is guiding and facilitating learning, enabling learners to learn, and organizing conditions for learning (Astutik, 2021). This suggests that teaching is the act of teachers imparting knowledge to students. In teaching English for young learner process, teacher is one of the factor that influence the success of teaching and learning process. The teacher plays the crucial role in teaching English process. They can lead significant mastery of English classroom activities if they are able to help students solve the problems faced by their students. In this process, there are four skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing that must be mastered by the English teachers.

Listening is the beginning part of teaching English to young learners. Listening is one of the language skills. It is an essential part of the telecommunication process that should be mastered by the students. By listening, the students can acquire information and develop what the speakers say (Afriyuninda & Oktaviani, 2021). For students, this is a basic part of achieving success in English communication. Listening plays a very important role in learning language. Through listening, students can acquire good pronunciation and acquire many useful words, phrases, and sentences (Listiyarningsih, 2017) in Pangestu and Astutik (2022). Listening skills should be taught effectively in the EFL classroom in order to produce better English speakers

(Lestari et al., 2021).

Furthermore, to make the teaching process run successfully especially in teaching listening for young learners, teachers should understand about the students' character. By understanding the characteristics of each student, they will know how to treat them appropriately. Every student has different character and learning style, and as professional teachers, they should aware. Teachers should try to understand what students want. In teaching listening, the teacher was expected to be creative. The teachers can create a condition in which the students relax and enjoy the learning activities.

According to Aryana & Apsari (2018) in Sah & Shah (2020), in making students becoming a good listener, the responsibility lies on the teachers' shoulders. So, in teaching listening for young learner, the teacher must know their difficulties in teaching listening so they achieve the goal of learning by repairing their difficulties. It is more entrancing than demonstrating adults, in light of fact that energetic learners tend to change their persepective each other minute and they find it to an extraordinary degree hard to sit still (Hapsari, 2022).

Listening is an invisible metal grip that is difficult to describe, so it is a challenge for the listener. Researchers have identified many factors that may make listening comprehension difficult for L2 learners and this section introduces some of those factors (Nushi & Orouji, 2020). In addition, listeners are also involved in many processes, such as distinguishing sounds, understanding vocabulary and language structure, interpreting images and accents, quickly remembering and translating them, as well as the background of larger social and cultural expressions. The problem can also be seen from several aspects such as : media aspect, students and teacher (Harpsari, 2022).

Richard (2008) sees listening in two different perspectives; listening as comprehension and listening as acquisition. Listening for comprehension is the traditional nature of listening. This views listening as the process of understanding the meaning in a spoken discourse, while listening for acquisition focus on listening as the process of deriving other skill such as speaking.

In teaching listening skill, there are certain principles which is needed by the teachers to help them creating their own techniques, activities, and philosophy towards teaching listening skills. According to Brown (2001) in Lestari et al. (2021), there are some principles of teaching listening skill that should be known by the teacher. Include a focus on listening in an integrated-skills course, Use techniques that are intrinsically motivating, Utilize authentic language and contexts, Carefully consider the form of listeners' responses, Encourage the development of listening strategies, include both bottom-up and top-down listening techniques.

Rost (2013) states about the four purposes of listening : orientation; receptive, constructive, collaborative, and transformative.

- 1) The first Orientation is receptive. It deals with receiving and catching what the speaker actually says. it focuses on getting idea, decoding the message, unpacking the content from the speaker. It involves the process of

attending to, hearing, understanding and remembering aural symbols. Listening is receiving the transfer of images, impressions, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and emotions from the speaker.

- 2) The second is listening for constructing and representing meaning. Listening means reframing the speaker's message in a way that's relevant to the hearer, understanding why the speaker is talking and noticing what is not said. Listening is the process by which oral language is received, critically and purposefully attended to, recognized and interpreted in terms of past experiences and future expectancies.
- 3) The third orientation is collaborative. Listening is negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding. It is the process of negotiating shared information or values with the speaker. Listening is signaling to the speaker which ideas are clear and acceptable. It involves having the emotional climate. In conclusion, Listening is the acquisition, processing, and retention of information in the interpersonal context.
- 4) The last listening orientation is transformative. Listening is creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy. It is creating a connection between the speaker and the listener. Listening is the process of creating meaning in the speaker. Listening is the process of altering the cognitive environment of both the speaker and the listener.

Furthermore, Kline (1996) in Lestari (2021) states that specified the process of listening through five steps which are divided into two groups:

- 1) The first three steps are the necessary steps which are receiving, attending, and understanding.
- 2) The secondary process consists of two steps which are responding and remembering.

According to Vandergrift & Goh (2012) in Lestari (2021) listening and thinking processes are not easily observed by others or even by learners themselves. This often makes the teaching of listening difficult. Listening, unlike writing, speaking, and even reading, is typically done in real time where the input is transient and there is little record of what happens during listening. Teachers therefore find it difficult to teach listening in the way they teach the other language skills.

Instead of doing listening activity in the classroom, the students should also practice their listening skill outside of the classroom. This kind of activity can be more challenging and fun. They can find any others materials everywhere, often on CDs, on MP3 players, videos or on the internet-should consist of text that they can enjoy listening too, because they more or less can be understood although without any intervention from their teacher for their do such kind of activity and practice their listening unconsciously. Probably the easiest way of practicing listening is by listening to songs. Many of the students enjoy sons very much, they will be curious on understanding the lyric as it may reflect his or her feeling. Another way is by watching English movie, as they see the set on the screen and listening to the dialogue. Although they may not understand the whole dialogue, at least they will know some parts and

they will absorb the language gradually.

METHODS

To conduct this research, the researcher used qualitative research approach. According to (Harefa, Lase, & Zega, 2023 ; Zebua, 2022) in Gea et al. (2023), qualitative research is describes events and our thoughts or reactions to them in terms of the interpretations that people make of them; this is how qualitative researchers observe things in their natural surroundings.

Instrument of the research that used by the researcher is an interview guideline. Then, to collecting the data the researcher have done conduct structured interview for the English teachers at elementary school. There are three techniques to analyze the data according to Mile et al. (2014) in Islamudin et al. (2023) : data condensation, data display, and drawing or verifying conclusion.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

Result

Based the results of the interview for the English teachers, the researcher found that there are several difficulties face by the English teachers in teaching listening through song for young learners including :

1) Teaching in large classes

Teaching a large number of young learners in one class will provide difficulties for English teachers in managing young learners. English teachers will find it difficult to deal with them who have different characteristics.

2) Students' ability to catch song lyrics

Young learners tend to get bored easily and get distracted easily. Therefore, in teaching listening that is monotonous and if it is not suitable for young learners, it will make them fail to focus and have difficulty in capturing the meaning of the song through listening.

3) Lack of interest in learning English

Student interest greatly affects their understanding of listening learning. Likewise, the impact on the teacher, if students are not interested in learning listening then of course it will make students tend to be unfocused and not serious so that it triggers the teacher to keep students focused and serious in learning listening.

4) Student's background knowledge

A student's background knowledge is knowledge that the students have, learned both formally in the classroom as well as informally through life experiences. Background knowledge is an essential component in learning because it helps us make sense of new ideas and experiences. A student's background knowledge on a subject affected their listening comprehension.

5) Students' attitude

Students have different attitudes in the classroom. The students' attitude could be a challenge for a teacher in teaching listening comprehension. The teacher denoted that the students have different attitudes in the classroom. According to the teacher,

there were two kinds of attitude; positive and negative attitude. Students with negative attitude absolutely became the difficulty for her in teaching listening.

6) Lack of students' vocabulary

Vocabulary is a set of familiar words within a student's language of English. The lack of the students' vocabulary of English was the reason why the students did not understand what a passage was. The English teacher stated that, "The lack of the students' vocabulary becomes the difficulty that I faced as an English teacher.

7) Lack of tools or media to support the audio in listening

The incompleteness of the media and tools used in listening learning is also one of the difficulties for teachers. Without supporting media, then of course it will greatly affect the success of teaching listening to young learners.

Discussion

Based the analysis of the data, the researcher conclude that there are two types of the factors of difficulties faced by the English teachers in teaching listening for young learners:

1) Internal

Based the explanation of the English teachers, I can conclude that some difficulties faced in teaching listening including Teaching a large number of young learners in one class will provide difficulties for English teachers in managing young learners. English teachers will find it difficult to deal with them who have different characteristics. In managing the class situation, teacher admits that they need more energy. Teachers need to adjust the voice to make the students listen to the teachers' voice clearly. In a large class, the situation can be very crowded and confusing. To be able to control the class, teachers should be able to turn up the volume of their voice without shouting or giving over threatening tone.

For the next is students' ability to catch song lyrics, young learners tend to get bored easily and get distracted easily. Therefore, in teaching listening that is monotonous and if it is not suitable for young learners, it will make them fail to focus and have difficulty in capturing the meaning of the song through listening.

Then is lack of interest in learning English, students' interest greatly affects their understanding of listening learning. Likewise, the impact on the teacher, if students are not interested in learning listening then of course it will make students tend to be unfocused and not serious so that it triggers the teacher to keep students focused and serious in learning listening, next is student's background knowledge is knowledge that the students have, learned both formally in the classroom as well as informally through life experiences. Background knowledge is an essential component in learning because it helps us make sense of new ideas and experiences. A student's background knowledge on a subject affected their listening comprehension. Furthermore, Students' attitude, it means that students have different attitudes in the classroom. The students' attitude could be a challenge for a teacher in teaching listening comprehension. The teacher denoted that the students have different attitudes in the classroom. According to the teacher, there were two kinds of attitude; positive and negative attitude. Students with negative attitude absolutely

became the difficulty for her in teaching listening.

Then is lack of students' vocabulary. Vocabulary is a set of familiar words within a student's language of English. The students limited vocabulary also becoming one of the problems in teaching English. To be able to understand the English students just listen, the students need to increase their vocabulary mastery. Vocabulary development plays an important role in improving the students' level of language proficiency, but many students appear to have reached limited vocabulary. This may be seen in the overuse of simple vocabulary and failure to acquire new complicated vocabulary. So, the lack of the students' vocabulary of English was the reason why the students did not understand what a passage was. The English teacher stated that, "The lack of the students' vocabulary becomes the difficulty that I faced as an English teacher.

2) External Factors

Furthermore, as the external factors English teachers states that in teaching listening through song for young learners there, still lack of tools or media to support the audio in listening class using English song or other media that should be used in teaching listening.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of data analysis, I found that there were some difficulties faced by English teacher in teaching listening at Elementary school. All the data was obtained from interviewing the participant involved. I found some difficulties that discussed in the previous chapter. Based on findings and discussion in the previous chapter, there were some difficulties faced by English teacher in teaching listening at Elementary school.

The difficulties are including teaching in large classes, students' ability to catch song lyrics because not all students want to listen with focus, students' lack of interest in learning English, students' background of knowledge, students' attitude, lack of students' vocabulary so students do not understand what native speakers or teachers are saying, that all of it as the internal factors. While the external factors is lack of tools or media to support the audio in listening class using English song or other media that should be used in teaching listening.

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