

## USING WEBSITE AS A TOOL FOR PRACTICING ENGLISH LISTENING SKILL

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### ABSTRACT

*Listening is a process included activity of listening sound of language and visual aspect, identify, interpret, value, and do reaction for the content of meaning. Technology is useful to teach listening because each type of technology provides opportunities for students to explore their ranges of listening strategies. Multimedia technology becomes more accessible to teachers and learners of other languages, its potential as a tool to enhance listening skills becomes a practical option. The technology mediates the process, getting language out there and giving feedback that shows whether someone has or hasn't understood what people have said. It makes that possible wherever people are in the world. Teachers and learners can go online to listen to material about different areas of interest, and can then speak about what they have discovered, telling others in the class or other classes elsewhere in the world. The Internet is suitable place to practice languages as it offers the possibility, with the right software, of using images and audio resources at the same time, combining sounds and images as in communicative situations in the real world. It also provides users with a highly appealing and innovative format. But only when the sources are properly selected can the internet be useful in learning environment. There is a plethora of educational material available online and accessible via Web search engines. In short, using websites for practicing listening can be a good assistance for students to practice their language learning ability.*

**Key words:** *Listening, English, Website*

### 1. Introduction

Listening is as important as the other three components of communication, namely speaking, reading and writing. According to Hamouda (2013), listening skill is very important in acquiring understandable input. Learning listening has been developed and advanced especially in media and in learning materials used in the cities. There are many choices of listening materials applied in the classroom. However, there are many evidences that listening is lack attention of teachers (Field, 2009, p.1). When they applied many learning competencies in the classroom, listening skill was always accelerated or reduced. Learning course methodology was discussed and analyzed slightly, and there was a tendency from the teachers that listening was ordinary activity in life. The other factor was a lack of teachers' commitment to apply an appropriate approach in listening like using integrative skill which affected listening as an indicator to teach it in haste.

Listening skill was as primary in learning language skill. The relevance of critical listening with learning listening is to prepare the students in order to be the best solver, make the better decision, and long life education. According to Richard and Lockhart (1994) said that listening did not only comprehend the utterances of speakers, but also understood visual aspect in activities of listening comprehension. Based on the explanation, listening is a process included activity of listening sound of language and visual aspect, identify, interpret, value,

and do reaction for the content of meaning. This term is used as the fundamental in developmet of active integrative listening learning model. In addition, Vandergrift (1999) explained that active integrative listening learning was focused on metacognitive knowledge started from planning, directed attention, selective interest, monitor, and evaluation. Active integrative listening learning which could be done into some steps like prepare for listening activity, apply listening model, value listening effectiveness, and implement new goal in listening activity. Listeners often must process messages as they come, even if they are still processing what they have just heard, without backtracking or looking ahead. In addition, listeners must cope with the sender's choice of vocabulary, structure, and rate of delivery. The complexity of the listening process is magnified in second language contexts, where the receiver also has incomplete control of the language. Given the importance of listening in language learning and teaching, it is essential for language teachers to help their students become effective listeners. In the communicative approach to language teaching, this means modeling listening strategies and providing listening practice in authentic situations: those that learners are likely to encounter when they use the language outside the classroom. Learners face a lot of problems when they listen to a language. If teachers are expected to assist learners to improve their listening comprehension, they should comprehend their listening difficulties in understanding spoken passages and teach

them effective listening comprehension strategies to be able to solve their listening comprehension problems.

The one of the best ways introduce students to listening strategies is to integrate listening activities into language lessons using multimedia technology. Multimedia technology becomes more accessible to teachers and learners of other languages, its potential as a tool to enhance listening skills becomes a practical option. Multimedia allows integration of text, graphics, audio, and motion video in a range of combinations. The result is that learners can now interact with textual, aural, and visual media in a wide range of formats. It is important for the students to be independent thinker since there are many jobs needed skillful workers which have critical listening ability. All this time, critical listening ability has not absorbed yet to the students' soul so it could not be function maximally in the society. Meanwhile, high level cognitive learning could help the students to be independent students which could develop reflective and logical thinking to decide some problems (Costa, 1985).

Today, many students are less to apply knowledge gotten from school to face their daily life problems since they cannot give some prove about some concepts and its connection to their problems. Listening skill is a process in language skill that needs practice by using technology such as a research done by Embi and Latiff (2004) in using E-learning as a tool for learning ESL. After practicing, the students agreed that comprehension of listening ability had been increased significantly. Moreover, in Hong Kong, Chapple and Curtis (2000), adopted strip film as teaching material for ESL which had 31 EFL students and got answer 67,8% students said that they had positive impact in listening skill within 13 weeks learning. Therefore, teaching of intensive multimedia could raise students' EFL listening skill comprehension. It could be seen that there were many less developed students in listening English skill applied internet, computer, or multimedia could help students EFL. Some listening activities have been applied in listening practice but most of them used listening material from cassette, television, and radio whereas using technology was seldom in learning listening. These were happened because using internet was still lack for listening media and there was not software for learning listening model. However, there was an internet that could be accessed by the students as a learning media. That utilization combination media could create the latest listening learning media product.

Learning media was said good if that media could convey the message and could be understood by the students. Before that media was used in the classroom, it was needed to do assessment. It could be done by paying attention to criteria of good media. To evaluate learning media referred to Ivers dan Baron's theories (2002) and Thompson (2010). Ivers and Baron suggested that good media was outline content, floccart view, storyboard, technique, design, and presentation. Then, according to Thompson (in Flowerdew & Miller) said that media criteria was as evaluation activities in documentation,

listening tool, and related to listening activities. Both theories in evaluating learning media completed each other, and Thompson's theory technically had been reported in Ivers and Barons theories.

Technology is useful to teach listening because each type of technology provides opportunities for students to explore their ranges of listening strategies. The technology mediates the process, getting language out there and giving feedback that shows whether someone has or hasn't understood what people have said. Teachers have always tried to encourage learners to learn about things through language. Technology makes this possible wherever people are in the world. Teachers and learners can go online to listen to material about different areas of interest, and can then write or speak about what they have discovered, telling others in the class or other classes elsewhere in the world. The Internet is suitable place to practice languages as it offers the possibility, with the right software, of using images and audio resources at the same time, combining sounds and images as in communicative situations in the real world. It also provides users with a highly appealing and innovative format. But only when the sources are properly selected can the internet be useful in learning environment. There is a plethora of educational video and audio material available online and accessible via Web search engines such as Google.com.

#### *A. Literature Review*

##### *1) Listening as one of Important Skills of being able to use English to communicate*

Listening is often used in together with the other skills of speaking, reading and writing. It is not only a skill area in language performance, but also a critical means of acquiring a second language. It helps students to acquire good speaking habits as a result of the spoken English they have absorbed, and helps them to improve their pronunciation. Listening texts often provide excellent examples of functions such as apologizing, inviting and refusing. The process of listening, especially the bottoms-up and top down model, the schema-building activities are also applicable to reading. According to Goss (1982), Listening comprehension is a rational phenomenon listeners try to establish a meaning when they obtain the information from the listening source. The aim of listening comprehension is understand the native conversation at normal rate in a spontaneous condition. Steinberg (2007) mentioned listening process as the ability of one individual perceiving another via sense, aural organs, assigning a meaning to the message and comprehending it. Nunan (1998) states that, listening is the basic skill in language learning. Without listening skill, learners never learn to communicate effectively.

According to Sharmaa (2011), Language learning depend on listening, listening provides the aural input that serves as the basis for language acquisition and enable the students to interact in spoken communication. Effective language instructors show students how they can adjust their listening behavior to deal with a variety

of situations, types of input, and listening purposes (p.13). Listening means people are demanded to pay attention what someone says, it involves the part of body such an ear. Because none of deaf can speak, so that is why listening is basic skill that should be acquire by everybody. According to Rost (2001), Listening task can be divided into pre – listening, while – listening, and post – listening phases:

- a. Pre – listening  
Effective listening task often involves an explicit pre – listening step, some activity that the learner does prior to listening to the main input in order to increase readiness.
- b. While - listening  
When the learner actually begins listening to the input, there need to be some expectation for concrete action. While – listening task can include guided note taking, completion of picture or schematic diagram or table, composing question any tangible activity that the learner does while listening to demonstrate ongoing monitoring of meaning. This stage of listening task is usually the most problematic for the teachers to prepare because it involves designing a task that involves only minimal reading or writing
- c. Post – listening  
This is probably the most important part of listening instruction because it allows the learner to build mental representations and develop short term memory, and increase motivation for listening a second time. Post listening tasks can involve additional reading, writing, speaking, and interaction, and may include comparing notes, negotiating a summary with partner, and formulating responses, or question about was what just heard (p. 20).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, applied linguistics recognized that listening was the primary channel by which the students gained access to the language, and that it therefore served as the trigger for acquisition (Rost, 2001). Listening as a process of understanding what is heard and organizing it into lexical elements to which meaning can be allocated (Goss, 1982). In addition, Morley (1972) said listening involves auditory discrimination, aural grammar, selecting necessary information, remembering it, and connecting it to the process between sound and form of meaning. According to Postovsky (1975), listening differs in meaning from sound discrimination to aural comprehension. Bowen, Madsen, and Hilferty (1985) demonstrated that listening understands the oral language. Students hear oral speech, divide sounds, classify them into lexical and syntactic units, and comprehend the message. Listening is a process of receiving what the speaker says, making and showing meaning, negotiating meaning with the speaker and answering, and creating meaning by participation, creativity, and empathy.

Listening comprehension is a complete activity which involves reading, speaking, and writing. Listening comprehension means that comprehend the text, by read the text or listen to the text and write down every words that they got. Listening was the primary channel by which the students gained access to the language, and that it therefore served as the trigger for acquisition. Listening comprehension is foundational in learning a foreign language. Listening comprehension levels do influence the capacity for improvement in other language skills such as reading, speaking, writing, and translating. According to Nadig (2013), listening comprehension is the various processes of understanding and making sense of spoken language. In addition, According to Vandergrift (1999), listening Comprehension is highly integrative skill. It plays an important role in the process on language learning or acquisition, facilitation the emergence of other language skill (p. 170). These involve knowing speech sounds, comprehending the meaning of individual words, and understanding the syntax of sentences.

#### B. Website in EFL Classroom

The use of website enhances English skills for students. Ru-Si and Chin-Chung (2007) investigated students' attitudes toward learning via the web of 1,866 Taiwanese university students by using an online survey. The results showed that the students had a positive attitude on the dimension of access to Internet technology for learning. Ahmed and Abdulaziz (2006) examined 47 University of Wisconsin-La Crosse students' performance on the Use of Internet in learning. The study reported that students had a positive attitude toward learning via Internet and the use of the web as a supplement to classroom learning and as a long distance instructional medium was an ideal way to improve learning and increase access to Education. Aytakin (2004) studied on classroom learning towards Internet. 73 graduate and postgraduate students in Eastern Mediterranean University were explored and the result showed that high percentages concentrated on positive and consciousness about internet. It showed that there was a consciousness about effects and importance of internet by having tendency to apply the consciousness or willingness of new technological style. Hong, Ridzuan, and Kuek (2003) studied the success of a technology and Internet enriched teaching and learning environment in molding positive attitudes among students toward using the Internet for learning at a university in Malaysia. The findings indicated that students had a positive attitude toward using the Internet as a learning tool and viewed the learning environment as supportive of using the Internet for learning. Moreover the students with better basic Internet skills and who viewed the learning environment as promoting the use of the Internet favored using the Internet for learning. Furthermore, Sanders and MorrisonShetlar (2001) explored the relationship between student attitudes toward web-enhanced instruction and variables such as sex, race, age, year in school, computer experience, and

learning styles. The study reported positive effect of the Web component on student learning. It, was also found that age, race, year in school, computer experience, and learning styles did not affect student use of the web.

Using websites for practicing listening can be a good assistance for students to improve their language learning ability. As Robin (2007) mentioned, effectively use of Internet website resources, such as easily repeatable video clips, captions, and even translated scripts will bring a wider variety of input at the proper level for a broader range of learning styles than could possibly be made available in any pre-packaged closed-track program. Practice shows that the best way to find good web sites is to listen to a colleague's suggestions who actually searched the site on his or her own or find a serious web site which may actually help. For example, Skype application is increasingly used as a part of listening development process throughout the world today. Skype is an internet-based application that enables Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) calls. It has a useful user-interface that enables the users easy and effective use. There are similar online applications such as MSN Messenger and GoogleTalk and the likes. MSN Messenger also has millions of users worldwide and is used to improve speaking and listening skills by L2 students. Skype and MSN Messenger increasingly create newer possibilities for the users. These softwares can also transmit video at the same time when the users speak to each other. So, this feature raises the level of interaction between practisers. Such level of interaction is also effective because of the highly useful features and user interfaces of the applications.

As an alternative, internet TVs and radios can be used to develop listening comprehension skills of a student in an entertaining atmosphere; however, there is a relatively new emerging phenomenon: YouTube.com. This is a video upload/watch-download site and is increasing its popularity day by day. According to statistics, the site has more than six million videos and the total time necessary to watch all these videos is 9.305 years. This huge video pool offers priceless opportunities to practice listening in an entertaining and convenient environment. Television or radio shows, news, documentaries, music videos and any videos beyond the imagination of people are just one click away. All people need is an internet connection. The rest is almost totally free; however, videos should be carefully selected and prepared by the instructor to maximize comprehension and minimize frustration of learners and they hope that improvement in search tools for videos will allow the teachers to find the right video clip for supporting language class. As BBC has always been seen as a genuine source of right form of English, it cannot be disregarded for English Language Teaching. Being aware of its educative role, BBC has been publishing books, audio or video materials and so on. With the rise of the internet, BBC has prepared an English Learning Page which is one of the best of its kind. The site gives ideas to the learner about material development and how to work efficiently with the aural input. BBC provides the

visitors with quizzes, videos, podcasts and games as well as radio archives and voice recordings. As regards listening activities, there are many activities based on listening comprehension.

In addition, according to Saitakham (2012), there are four major critical factors for the perceived usefulness of websites assisted language teaching and learning. The first of these is the course work interactivity. Course materials could be available electronically in different formats via the website and students can easily go and practice any of them. Those websites already include many other links to related materials and websites that widen students' exposure to current information on their topics. The Second usefulness factor is to enable students to accomplish their listening practicing quickly, because those websites can provide them with on-line components such as animations and multimedia materials. The third factor is to make study course material easier by having related study material available anytime anywhere, facilitating student student and student-teacher communications. The last factor is to increase the students' productivity and effectiveness. This factor is a result of enabling students to finish their practicing quickly and achieving their objectives efficiently using the tools available on the website.

## 2. Discussion

Technology offers teachers and learners vast amount of materials and communication possibilities to enhance their language teaching and learning. For successful integration of multimedia technology in language courses, both teachers and learners need to be prepared to adopt new roles and use the available technology in appropriate ways. Teachers should be prepared with professional skills which include pedagogical and technical skill because the more enthusiastic and more knowledgeable language teachers are, the more successfully they can implement internet in the language classroom. Learners can only benefit from technology which based activities provided that these activities are relevant to their needs and interest.

## 3. Conclusion

Listening comprehension is a complex process. Listening activities should be provided based on the students' needs and teachers should provide authentic listening materials for students that help them understand better the natural speech uttered by native speakers. Using websites for practicing English listening could be a good assistance to improve students' language learning ability. There are many listening comprehension activities on the websites. According to Robin (2007), effectively use of Internet website resources, such as easily repeatable video clips, captions, and even translated scripts will bring a wider variety of input at the proper level for a broader range of learning styles than could possibly be made available in any pre-packaged closed-track program. Teachers and higher education

institutions should focus on the websites usefulness and ease of use them for language learning and teaching.

New technologies have forced teachers to think about their roles in teaching with computers. Nowadays, websites through Internet grow rapidly, teachers began to see computers more as active partner than passive assistants (Debski and Gruba, 1999). However, Levy (1997) and Fernandez (2001) discussed that teacher is the important person who decide how the class should be conducted, not the computers, not the Internet. Therefore, teacher is not the only source of knowledge but also the person who enlighten students to succeed in their learning.

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