

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

When we think of learning a language, traditionally we think of learning four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Speaking and writing, which involve language production, are referred to as productive skills. Listening and reading, on the other hand, involve receiving messages and therefore, they are identified as receptive skills. However, this does not mean that one can or should threat any of these skills isolation. Listening skills, for example, can and must be integrated with the other skills areas, so that they are mutually supporting.

Listening is one of the most important skills. According to International Listening Association website, 85 percent of what we know, we learn from listening and 45 percent of our communication times is spent listening, 30 percent speaking, 15 percent reading, and 10 percent writing. Human communication is based on listening because it is the foundation for effectiveness of interaction. No communication process is complete without listening. Weak listening skills lead to misunderstanding.

But in reality, a few of us make any real effort to be better listener. Based on writer's interview and observation at SMP Husni Thamrin, most of the students got frustrated and lost their interests in listening section. They told that listening was very difficult for them to master. They faced many problems in listening section.

The main problem with listening seems to be the fact in real life situations the students have no control over the speed of what they are hearing and they cannot go back or 'rewind' to listen again, unlike reading. Although in class the listening materials are recorded and can be played again for student to listen again, it is usually under the control of the teacher who declares: '*Let's listen again*', (Underwood, 1989). Also, because of the speed at which native speakers usually speak, students feel that they cannot keep up with the speaker's speed and they are lost. They can not hear the pronunciation clearly. Hence, when they fail to understand every word while listening, they stop listening and lose the thread, which seems to be the reason for the state of panic and worrying they usually show before and during listening.

Another problem concerns the students' limited vocabulary in the new language; they can sometimes hear the words clearly, but the problem may occur in understanding the meaning of words that they do not know.

To sort out the problems, teachers should do something to help their students to improve their listening skill. The teachers should look for a technique and apply it in the classroom. The technique, which can be applied to improve students' listening skill, is storytelling.

Storytelling is the best vehicle for passing on factual information to students. Teachers through the ages have used stories as an educational tool. Why? Because stories are the way we store information in the brain. Miscellaneous facts and data are easily forgotten unless they are put into a narrative context.

When students listen to stories, they will listen effectively because students are more likely to listen in the context of storytelling. If students are listening to something entertaining like stories, then they are likely to attend and get full benefit from the listening experience. Storytelling is a relaxed and entertaining activity and so it becomes enjoyable for everyone that in turn creates a better attitude in the learner towards learning and using the language.

1.2 The Problem of the Study

In relation to the background of the study, the problem of the study is formulated in the following question, “Does storytelling technique significantly improve students’ listening skills?”

1.3 The Scope of the Study

The writer focuses the research of the study on the use of storytelling technique in teaching listening especially in the form of narrative text, in this case is fable to the second-year students of SMP Husni Thamrin Medan.

1.4 The Objective of Study

The objective of the study is to find out whether storytelling technique can improve students’ listening skill.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

1. This study will be useful for English teachers in giving a better solution in applying a better technique in teaching listening.
2. This study will help the students to improve their listening skill through the application of storytelling technique.

3. The findings will also provide information for those who are interested in this study



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