

Scrutinizing the strategies of EFL teachers in instructing listening skills in the classroom

Sakinah F. Hilly¹, Jhems Richard Hasan^{2*}

^{1,2}IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo

[✉ jrh@iaingorontalo.ac.id](mailto:jrh@iaingorontalo.ac.id)*

Abstract

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This study aims at scrutinizing the strategies of EFL teachers in instructing listening skill in the classroom. The research data was first described in a quantitative descriptive manner using the frequency format on the results of the questionnaire which was distributed to 46 students at SMP N 3 Limboto, Gorontalo. In addition, further research data is the result of interviews with two English teachers at the school regarding listening learning strategies so far. The findings of this study revealed that the EFL teachers in SMP 3 Limboto used a variety of listening learning strategies that are quite similar to one another. They have a solid understanding of the goals that should be accomplished by students at the junior high school level while using listening resources. They draw from a variety of sources, including books and the extensive online content available now, when putting together listening materials. The model for learning through hearing should be engaging and have a variety of components, and the utilisation of various learning media should be enabled by modern technology. The method of evaluation should incorporate activities at various points throughout the learning process and make use of a rubric as an assessment tool to determine the level of listening ability possessed by the students. The results of the student questionnaire regarding the teacher's strategy also confirmed the correctness of the strategy conveyed by the two teachers during the interview. These results certainly illustrate that the English teacher at SMP N 3 is quite good at teaching listening to students by paying attention to variations in strategies when learning takes place in the classroom.

Keywords: EFL Teachers, Instructional Strategies, Listening Skills

INTRODUCTION

The common consensus about listening ability is that it is a crucial component of effective communication. Listening is the process of receiving, comprehending, and

interpreting auditory inputs, and it is vital to interpersonal communication, language acquisition, and academic achievement (Kim, 2013). Excellent listening skills are essential not just for effectively comprehending spoken communications, but also for cultivating empathy, forming relationships, and avoiding misunderstandings (Brindley, 1998; Musa & Fojkar, 2019). Nonetheless, many individuals struggle with listening owing to variables such as distractions, inattention, and insufficient training. Thus, it is essential to build and enhance listening skills via practise, instruction, and criticism (Milliner & Dimoski, 2021).

Effective listening is a fundamental element of communication, and it is essential that students in junior high school be taught this skill. Training listening skills enables students to comprehend and respond effectively to spoken messages, which is crucial for effective communication. Moreover, listening is an essential component of language acquisition. Students in junior high school can increase their capacity to comprehend spoken language, which is necessary for language acquisition, by learning listening skills. Also, effective listening leads to personal development and evolution (Silviyanti, 2017). By enhancing their listening abilities, students may better comprehend others, cultivate empathy, and forge deeper connections (Muamaroh et al., 2020).

Listening in one's native language seems to grow naturally, but listening in a second or foreign language needs greater effort. As a result, children learning English as a second language may struggle with listening comprehension. According to Ur, pupils (1993) encounter several difficulties with listening comprehension. The students sometimes: (1) do not understand certain English sounds, (2) do not know how to deal with redundancy and "noise," (3) cannot predict the language meaning because they are unfamiliar with the patterns of words, (4) do not understand the colloquial vocabulary, (5) cannot set their own listening pace, (6) struggle to understand another accent, and (7) lack the ability to use environmental clues to determine the meaning. In addition, it was shown that the pupils are inadequately provided with strategies and exercises to increase their listening comprehension.

It is crucial to develop listening skills in junior high schools so that students can comprehend spoken words properly and respond appropriately. Yet, teaching listening in junior high schools presents a number of obstacles. The curriculum's lack of emphasis on listening skills is one of the primary obstacles. Many English teachers overlook listening skills in favour of teaching reading and writing. This might result in a lack of this key communication ability among kids. Another obstacle is the restricted time for instruction. Listening skills must be

learned and perfected over time, but occasionally junior high school learning time is insufficient. This may impact the quality of listening instruction. The absence of resources is an additional obstacle in teaching listening. Numerous schools lack the necessary listening instruction tools, such as high-quality audio and video materials and audio-visual assistance. This can complicate the teaching and learning of listening. In addition to motivation, teaching listening skills is also a task. Students may lack motivation to acquire listening skills since they are more interested in developing their speaking or writing abilities. This may impair their capacity to comprehend and respond to spoken communications. Last but not least, there is little evaluation of listening abilities in academic evaluations. This might deter pupils from acquiring listening abilities, resulting in inadequate training in this vital ability.

The above mentioned issues or challenges in teaching listening are often experienced by students and teachers at the junior high school level. Therefore, it is important to conduct research on English teachers' strategies in teaching listening skills to students at the junior high school level. This study is specifically conducted in SMP N 3 Limboto, Gorontalo. Connected with teaching learning, strategies can also be viewed as basic patterns of teaching and learning activities to meet the aims mentioned. In the area of strategy education is described as a plan that is intended for a certain educational aim. Hence, like in the previous paragraph, in the learning process, learning techniques are essential. Particularly for training on listening comprehension learning.

Several previous studies have examined the effectiveness of various teaching strategies in improving listening skills among students. One study found that task-based learning was more effective than traditional methods in enhancing motivation and improving listening skills (Ansarian & Teoh, 2018). Another study revealed that the use of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) was beneficial for improving listening comprehension and pronunciation (Habibie, 2021; Islam & Hasan, 2020). The flipped classroom approach was found to promote autonomous learning, engagement, and achievement (Basal, 2015). The use of authentic listening materials was effective in improving listening comprehension and motivation (Sabet & Mahsefat, 2012). Finally, metacognitive strategy instruction was effective in enhancing listening comprehension and strategy use (Milliner & Dimoski, 2021). These studies suggest that using a combination of teaching strategies can be effective in improving listening skills and motivation among students. From the narrative above, this study aims to explore English teacher strategies in teaching listening to students at SMP Negeri 3 Limboto.

METHODS

This study uses qualitative method. The type of research aims to understand the meaning, experience, and perception of a phenomenon being studied (Jesson et al., 2018). This method prioritizes the collection and analysis of data in the form of words, pictures, and sounds from participants or informants involved in the research. Qualitative research is usually carried out in natural or realistic contexts, so that researchers can understand more deeply how a phenomenon occurs (Sugiono, 2014). This research was conducted by observing, interviewing, and collecting in-depth and holistic data from participants or informants.

This research involved two English teachers at SMP Negeri 3 Limboto, Gorontalo and 47 students from two different classes that the two EFL teachers ever taught before. The two teachers are then symbolized by ET 1 and ET 2 to facilitate the coding of interview data.

The data for the study was gathered through the use of interview methods as well as the distribution of questionnaires to the students in the form of a Google form. The focus of the questions asked during the interviews was on the use of various instructional strategies by the teachers in the listening materials, and the questionnaires given to the students confirmed that English teachers do use various instructional strategies when teaching listening in the classroom. This bellow table describe the items and scales used in the questionnaire.

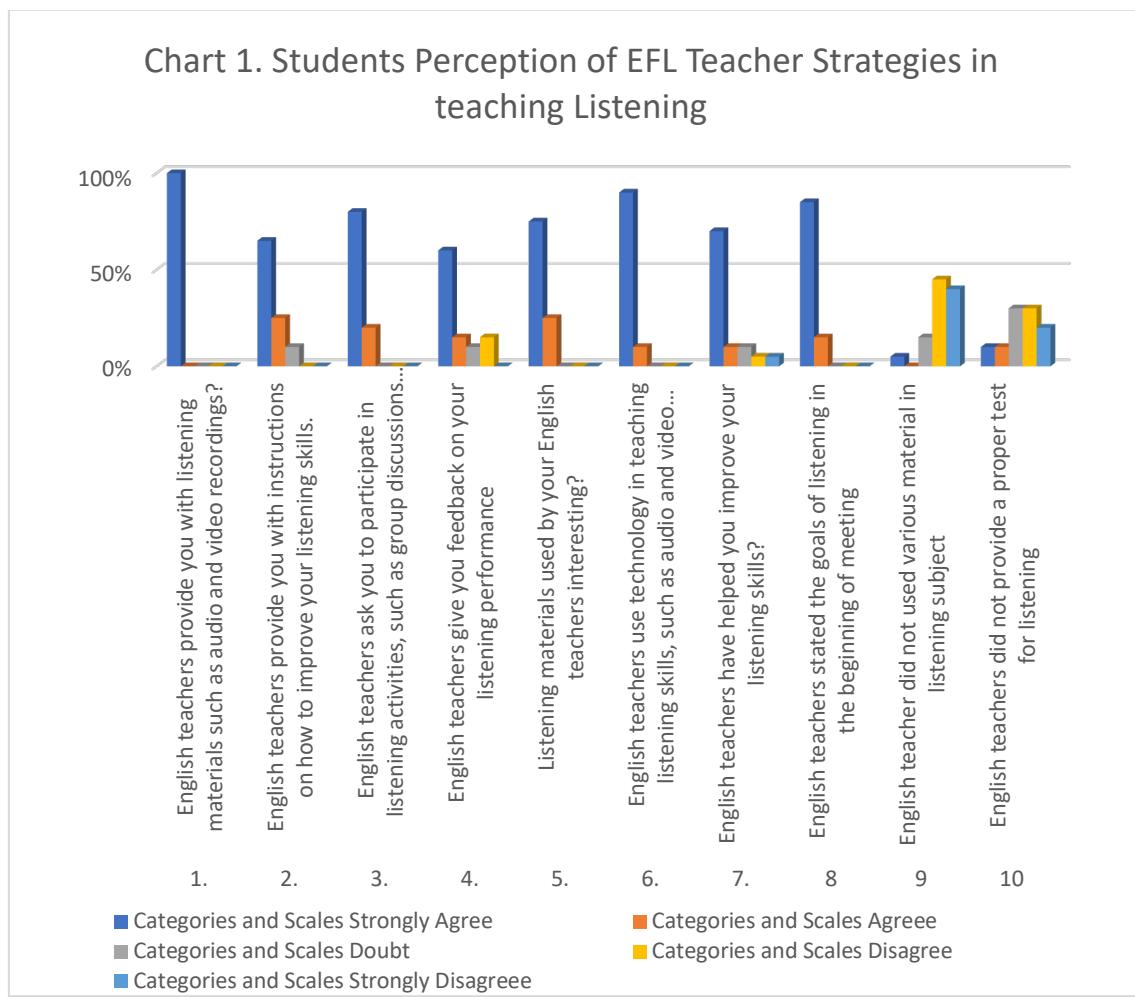
No.	Statements	Categories and Scales
1.	English teachers provide you with listening materials such as audio and video recordings?	5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Doubt, 2 Disagree, 1 Strongly Disagree
2.	English teachers provide you with instructions on how to improve your listening skills.	5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Doubt, 2 Disagree, 1 Strongly Disagree
3.	English teachers ask you to participate in listening activities, such as group discussions or debates?	5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Doubt, 2 Disagree, 1 Strongly Disagree
4.	English teachers give you feedback on your listening performance	5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Doubt, 2 Disagree, 1 Strongly Disagree
5.	Listening materials used by your English teachers interesting?	5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Doubt, 2 Disagree, 1 Strongly Disagree
6.	English teachers use technology in teaching listening skills, such as audio and video recordings on mobile devices?	5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Doubt, 2 Disagree, 1 Strongly Disagree
7.	English teachers have helped you improve your listening skills?	5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Doubt, 2 Disagree, 1 Strongly Disagree
8.	English teachers stated the goals of listening in the beginning of meeting	5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Doubt, 2 Disagree, 1 Strongly Disagree
9.	English teacher used various material in listening subject	5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Doubt, 2 Disagree, 1 Strongly Disagree
10.	English teachers provide a proper test for listening	5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Doubt, 2 Disagree, 1 Strongly Disagree

The data from this investigation were analysed using Phenomenological Analysis: In order to get an understanding of individual subjects' experiences in relation to the issues that were covered in interviews, phenomenological analysis was utilised. During a phenomenological analysis, the researcher attempts to get a comprehensive comprehension of the ways in which the participants experience, perceive, and comprehend a certain subject. The reduction, organisation, and description of the events that are recounted is the data analysis process.

While the data from questionnaire was analysed by descriptively statistic in form of frequency table. These results of these data then confirmed each other to get wide comprehensive about EFL teachers' strategies during the learning process of listening subject in the classroom.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of Questionnaire from 47 students described in the chart below.



This survey result shows that students' perceptions towards both English teachers who teach listening skills indicate quite positive results. From these results, students gave fairly good responses regarding the teaching strategies of the teachers during the learning process in class, ranging from opening learning activities, using various methods, media, and listening learning materials, to the evaluation process which according to most students has been running according to their goals and expectations in learning listening itself.

Results of interviews with two English teachers regarding teaching strategies in the listening class.

Q1. What are the main goals of your listening lessons?

According to ET1's response to the first question, the major objective of a listening course for junior high school pupils should enhance their capacity to comprehend spoken language. This involves recognising diverse dialects, intonation, and emotions, as well as varied media formats, such as news broadcasts, podcasts, and movies. ET2 mentioned that listening course for students are intended to build vocabularies. Listening course should help students acquire new words and phrases in context. Students must learn to recognise and comprehend new words from various sources.

Q2. How do you choose listening materials for your lessons?

According to ET 1, the listening material that is presented in class is derived from the textbook that is being utilised. While ET2 indicated that the listening material employed a combination of content found in books and material retrieved from Google, both of which were altered to meet the goals of learning listening for students in junior high schools, ET2 did not specify how the material was put together.

Q3. How do you prepare your students before listening to a new audio material?

According to ET 1, students were provided with a clear reason for listening to the audio material. This could be to answer specific questions, to identify key vocabulary or ideas, or to understand the main point of the material, while ET2 stated that preview the audio material by playing a short excerpt or by providing a brief summary of what the students will be listening to. This will help students to focus their attention and prepare them for what they will be hearing.

Q4. How do you model effective listening skills for your students?

According to ET1 that Demonstrate active listening by nodding, using appropriate facial expressions, and responding with verbal cues such as "yeah, wow" or "I see, While ET2 stated

that Provide constructive feedback on a student's communication skills, highlighting what they did well and offering suggestions for improvement.

Q5. How do you teach your students to take notes while listening?

According to ET1, during the learning process in class, students were provided with opportunities to practice note-taking skills in a variety of settings, such as during class lectures, while watching videos, or listening to podcasts, while, ET2 gave other opinion that Encourage students to use abbreviations and symbols to help them write notes more quickly and efficiently, such as using "w/" for "with" or "b/c" for "because.

Q6. How do you teach your students to use context clues to help them understand what they are listening to?

ET1 stated there were two strategies to use context clues to help students in understanding a listening, those are (1) explain what context clues are: Start by defining context clues and explaining how they can be used to help understand unfamiliar words or phrases, (2) identify different types of context clues: Introduce students to the different types of context clues, such as definitions, examples, comparisons, and contrasts. While ET2 stated that Provide examples of how context clues can be used to understand unfamiliar words or phrases in the audio material.

Q7. How do you differentiate listening tasks for students with different levels of proficiency?

ET1 stated that adjusting the difficulty level: Modify the difficulty level of the listening task based on the proficiency level of the students. For example, provide more challenging tasks for advanced students and simpler tasks for beginners. ET2 has a different practice when teaching listening with different levels, providing pre-listening activities that scaffold listening comprehension for students with lower proficiency levels. For example, provide vocabulary lists, graphic organizers, or prediction activities to help students prepare for the listening task.

Q8. How do you teach your students to recognize different accents and dialects in English?

ET1 answered this question with providing audio samples: Provide audio samples of speakers with different accents and dialects, and encourage students to listen carefully for differences in pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm. While ET2 stated that start with familiar accents: begin by introducing students to accents that they are likely to encounter in their daily lives, such as American and British.

Q9. How do you use technology to support listening instruction in your classroom?

According to ET1, during learning process, students were provided online resources for home use: Provide students with access to online resources that they can use at home to practice their listening skills, such as websites, podcasts, or mobile apps. While ET2 stated that use online resources: There are a variety of online resources available for listening practice, such as YouTube Chanel, podcasts, videos, TikTok, Instagram and interactive listening exercises. These resources can be used to supplement classroom instruction and provide additional practice opportunities for students.

Q10. How do you evaluate your students' listening comprehension, and what strategies do you use to help them improve their listening skills?

ET1 and ET2 agree to use same strategies to evaluate students listening ability, those are (1) use authentic materials: use authentic listening materials, such as news broadcasts, podcasts, or interviews, to evaluate students' listening comprehension. These materials provide a more realistic and challenging listening experience than manufactured listening exercises, (2) provide pre-listening tasks: Provide pre-listening tasks, such as predicting content or brainstorming related vocabulary, to help students prepare for the listening material and activate their prior knowledge and (3) Use rubrics: Use a rubric to evaluate students' listening skills. Rubrics can be based on accuracy of comprehension, ability to infer meaning, use of listening strategies, and pronunciation.

Discussion

Listening lessons are deemed indispensable for enhancing students' proficiency in understanding spoken language in diverse settings and cultivating listening techniques that facilitate their competence as effective communicators (Silviyanti, 2014). The said lessons proffer distinct advantages to students, such as augmenting communication skills, refining comprehension, honing critical thinking proficiencies, heightening cultural awareness, propelling language acquisition, and instilling a lifelong learning orientation (Blake, 2016).

Consequently, the listening lessons furnish students with the means to become better listeners, equipping them with the capacity to grasp and suitably respond to the intricacies of various social, academic, and professional milieus (Karkera & Chamundeshwari, 2018). Furthermore, students acquire the skills to identify and comprehend the fundamental ideas, nuances, and details of spoken language, thus elevating their comprehension skills. Additionally, these lessons stimulate the development of critical thinking abilities, engender cultural sensitivity, and support the acquisition of language proficiency (June et al., 2014).

Ultimately, listening lessons promote an enduring passion for learning and an inclination to refine listening aptitudes over time. By integrating a diverse array of listening materials and exercises into the curriculum, teachers can impart effective listening techniques to their students, which can positively impact every aspect of their lives.

In a listening class, teachers have a variety of strategies at their disposal to aid students in enhancing their listening skills. Pre-listening activities are one of the essential strategies, where teachers can present the topic and elicit prior knowledge from students, allowing them to understand the context and purpose of the listening task. Another significant strategy is listening for gist, where teachers motivate students to focus on the overall meaning or main idea of a listening passage, rather than every detail. Additionally, teachers can equip students with the skill to listen for specific information, such as names, dates, or numbers, helping them improve their accuracy and ability to extract precise information from spoken language.

Another effective strategy that teachers can teach their students is note-taking, which involves introducing techniques like abbreviations, symbols, or diagrams to help students keep track of essential information and improve their memory retention (Language Learning, 2004). After listening, teachers can also provide post-listening activities to students, such as summarizing or retelling the content in their own words, enabling them to consolidate their learning and enhance their ability to express themselves verbally. Finally, error correction is another critical strategy that helps students identify and rectify their mistakes, thus enhancing their overall listening proficiency and accuracy. By employing a range of these strategies, teachers can assist students in developing effective listening skills and become successful communicators.

Based on the results of interviews with two English teachers, it is evident that both teachers share similarities in several listening learning strategies. Furthermore, both teachers demonstrate a clear understanding of what they need to prepare and teach their students in the classroom. They have a strong grasp of the objectives of listening materials for students at the junior high school level. When asked about preparing listening materials, the teachers utilized sources such as books and abundant internet resources. A combination and variation of materials are essential in enriching the listening materials available from various sources.

Regarding the listening learning model, the two English teachers believe that it should be attractive and varied. This model can engage students and prevent them from feeling bored or confused while receiving listening materials. Additionally, both teachers agreed that the use

of learning media, especially in listening materials, needs to be supported by the current technology. Online and offline listening resources are the primary options for teaching listening to modern students.

Lastly, regarding the evaluation process of listening learning at the junior high school level, the two teachers believe that the use of materials must align with the evaluation model. The process should provide various exercises throughout the learning process and use a rubric assessment instrument to measure students' listening abilities.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and narrative discussion above, this research can then be concluded as follows. English teachers in SMP 3 Limboto share similarities in several listening learning strategies. They have a strong grasp of the objectives of listening materials for students at the junior high school level. When preparing listening materials, they use sources such as books and abundant internet resources. The listening learning model should be attractive and varied, and the use of learning media should be supported by current technology. The evaluation process should provide exercises throughout the learning process and use a rubric assessment instrument to measure students' listening abilities. Undoubtedly, there are limitations to this study, necessitating additional research to supplement the information, particularly on the implementation of strategies in the junior high school listening learning process. This study solely focused on one junior high school and involved only two English teachers and students as research subjects. Future researchers should broaden the scope by involving a larger number of English teachers to enhance the comprehensiveness of the study. Moreover, engaging students, school principals, or curriculum deputy heads as participants could help to validate and supplement the data or information provided by the informants.

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