

Using News Story as Alternative Activity for University Students in Listening Class

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Abstrak: Ada tiga alasan utama mengapa mendengar berita dapat menjadi kegiatan alternatif dalam belajar Listening. Pertama, disamping mendapatkan kemampuan menyimak, mahasiswa juga mendapatkan berita terbaru sesuai dengan topik yang mereka senang. Kedua, mahasiswa dapat menerapkan beberapa jenis keahlian mendengar melalui berita. Ketiga, makna yang terkandung dalam berita dapat dipahami dengan mudah melalui pertanyaan **5 Ws dan 1 H**. Berita dapat digunakan di kelas Listening melalui tiga tahap yaitu: persiapan, pelaksanaan dan penilaian.

Kata kunci: menyimak (*listening*), berita (*news story*)

INTRODUCTION

Listening is one of the four basic language skills. It plays an important role in human daily life as well as in campus. Some scholars have stated that listening is used far more than any other language skill in normal daily life. Listening is the language modality that is used most frequently. It has been estimated that adults spend almost half their communication time listening, and students may receive as much as 90% of their in-school information through listening to instructors and to one another. On average, people can expect to listen twice as they speak, four times more than they read, and five times more than they write (Kaurate, 2008).

The teaching of listening has attracted a greater level of interest in recent years than it did in the past. Now, university entrance exams, exit exams, and other examinations often include a listening component, acknowledging that listening skills are a core component of second-or foreign language proficiency.

At English Department of Padang State University, students get four levels of class listening. They are Independent **Listening**, **Listening 1**, **Listening 2** and **Advanced Listening**. The subject of independent listening is integrated with subject named Intensive Course. The main book for this subject is *Active Listening: Introducing*. Listening 1 is the basic class for

listening. The main book for Listening 1 is *Active Listening: Building*. The next level of listening class is Listening 2. The main book for this subject is *Active Listening: Advanced* and TOEIC books. The highest level of listening class is Advanced Listening. The main book for this subject is the continuation of *Active Listening Building: Advanced* and TOEFL book. Those Active Listening books are written by Marc Helgesen and Steven Brown.

Listening involves a sender (a person, radio, and television), a message, and a receiver (the listener). 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 or foreign 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.

In daily life, students are face to many kinds of genre. They have to be accustomed or to be familiar listening to the kinds of genre. So, the students need to study at the campus. According to Wilson (2008), there are at least nine genres which can be used in teaching listening. They are: (1) televisions or radio news and weather reports, (2) film clips, (3) film trailers, (4) television advertisements, (5) television documentaries, (6) episodes in a comedy series, (7) animation, (8) television or radio talk shows/ interviews and (9) television or radio game/ quiz/ shows.

Using text books and cassette only in the listening class is not enough to enhance students' skills, because the text books don't have enough kinds of genre which the students have to be familiar with. Besides the students need to study more authentic materials rather than text books only. To reach a good development in teaching listening at university, lecturer should create alternative teaching activities to increase the English ability of students. One of the activities is to teach listening skill by using News Story or News Item.

The purposes of this writing are as below:

1. To explain the reasons why using News Story can be as good alternative activity for university students in Listening class.
2. To describe the implementation of teaching listening using News Story.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Listening

Listening can be defined in different views and aspects. According to Yagang (1993) listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. However, listening is different from hearing in which hearing is the first step of listening process. To listen to a message, you must first hear it. Hearing is the psychological process of receiving sounds wave. Listening on the other hand, it is the cognitive process whereby people attach the meaning to aural signals. Listening is an activity of paying attention to and trying to get the meaning from something the listener heard.

Oliveros (2005) defines listening as the process of directing attention to what is heard, getting meaning, and deciding on action. It shows that listening is an active process in which the listeners play a very active part in constructing the

overall message that is eventually exchange between the listener and speaker. Furthermore, listening is an active process of perceiving and constructing messages from stream of sounds, not the passive process. It depends on what someone knows about the phonological, grammatical, lexical, and cultural system of language. The aims of teaching should be for the students to arrive successfully at a reasonable interpretation, and not to process every word, and not to try working out all that is involved in literal meaning of the utterances.

Rost (2002) states that definitions of listening typically draw upon one of four orientations or perspective: receptive, constructive, collaborative, or transformative.

First, in perspective of receptive, listening means receiving what the speaker actually says. In other words listening means: (1) catching what the speaker has said, (2) getting the speaker's idea, (3) receiving the transfer of images, impressions, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and emotions of speaker.

Second, in perspective of constructive, listening means constructing and representing meaning. In other words listening means: (1) figuring out what is in the speaker's mind, (2) noticing what is not said.

Third, in perspective of collaborative, listening means negotiating meaning with the speaker and respondent. In other words listening means: (1) responding to what the speaker has said, (2) signaling to the speaker which ideas are clear and acceptable to you.

Fourth, in perspective of transformative, listening means creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy. In other words, listening means: (1) imagining a possible world for the speaker's meaning, (2) the process of creating meaning in the speaker.

Harmer (2007) states listening principles as below:

1. Encourage the student to listen as often as possible. The more students listen, the better they get at listening and understand it.
2. Help students to prepare to listen. It could be through looking at the picture, reading a text, discussing the topic, etc.
3. Once may not enough. Students especially the low level proficiency one, need to listen at least twice to catch the ideas.

Another way to think about listening is the distinction between reciprocal listening and non-reciprocal listening. Reciprocal listening is between people - when we have conversation. We listen to other, add our ideas, and give feedback (like the back channel phrases *huh* and *really?*) Non-reciprocal listening is the kind of listening we are familiar with from language classes. The lecturer plays an audio recording and students do a task, or the lecturer dictates and students write. Listening to news is also reciprocal listening.

In conclusion, listening is an active skill. Listeners are actively paying attention and working understanding and interpreting what they hear. To improve students' listening skill at university, the lecture has to encourage the students to listen as often as possible.

News Story or News Item

News Story or News Item is a genre that functions to report a newsworthy event within the institutional setting of printed media. Furthermore, it can be from radio, television or internet. Gerot and Wignell (1994) say that news story as a kind of text which is used to inform readers, listeners, or viewers about events of the day which is considered newsworthy or important.

White (1998) states that news story is a text type is a kind of a vital mechanism for the dissemination of information. The notion of the news story should be neutral and factual. It is neutral because the news story should be written from a neutral point of view and in unbiased way. It is factual because the news story should ideally report the fact. Thus, the news story has an important function to spread the factual information happened that is commonly used by the media in neutral and factual them.

According to Wikipedia (2007), News Story is the particular prose style used for news reporting such as in newspaper as well as in news item that air on radio or television. It compasses not only vocabulary and sentence structure, but also the way in which stories present the information for intended reader. News Story attempts to answer all the basic questions about any particular event in the first two or three paragraphs that are 5Ws and 1H (who, what, where, when, why and occasionally how).

In conclusion, news story is a genre that functions to report a newsworthy event. As one of

authentic materials, it can be used for listening class. In other word, using News Story can be appropriate alternative activity in teaching and learning process of Listening.

DISCUSSION

Reasons Using News Item as Alternative Activity in Listening Class

There are some reasons why using News Story can be as good alternative activity for university students in listening.

First, the book sources in each listening class have various texts or genre, activities and tasks which enable the students in training their listening skill as well as improving their English. But the genre of news item is very limited even there is none found in the listening sources book. In fact, the students are always faced toward the news everyday in their life. The news is really needed to know the up date events or issues in the world, so they need to be familiar and understand about the news. By listening to the news, student is not only getting listening skill, but also get the up to date news which they are interested in. Besides, the students can study the news both inside and outside of class room.

Second, the news item or news story as authentic materials has been introduced and should have been taught at Junior High School and Senior High Schools. Even thought, it is almost studied for writing and reading class. In fact, news item is also more appropriate studied for listening skill. And the university is the right place to teach listening by using News Story.

At university, studying news item is appropriate in class of Listening 2. Because this class have been familiar with listening since they have studied Independent Listening and Listening 1. It is true that sometimes it is very hard and difficult to understand the English news, because of some factors such the issues being talked and the speed of broadcaster. However, this becomes challenges and good things to be learned in Listening 2 class.

Third, the general benefits of using News Story whether from radio, television or internet are that they are topical, interesting, sometimes stories run over a period of time and in different modes, evenly-paced delivery, clear cut-off points for pausing, headlines given first-good for prediction.

Meanwhile the linguistic features and the benefits of these are vocabulary-rich, lexical sets based on topic, formal discourse-good for high levels.

Fourth, students can engage some of listening types from the News Story. The types of listening we engage in on a day-to-day basis can be categorized as: listening for gist, listening for specific information, listening for detail and inferential listening. Students also can engage these types by listening News Story.

a. Listening for gist

This refers to occasions when we want to know the general idea of what is being said, as well as who is speaking to whom and why, and how successful they are in communication their point. Listening for gist can take many forms. Reorganizing information is simply one of them. A common reorganizing task is to have learners listen to a segment and number pictures or items, based on what they hear.

b. Listening for specific information

This refers to occasions when we don't need to understand everything, but only a very specific part. For example, while listening to of delayed trains, we are only interested in hearing news about one particular train-the one we want to catch- and so we listen selectively for this specific information. We ignore everything else. Listening for specific information is one of the most common tasks in the listening classroom. Listening for specific isn't limited to literal processing, but often they go together. While literal understanding is the lowest level of processing, it doesn't mean it is unimportant. Much of the information we get day-to-day we get through literal processing.

c. Listening in detail

This refers to the type of listening we do when, for example, we need to find errors or determine differences between one passage and another. We cannot afford to ignore anything because, unlike listening to a list of delayed trains, we don't know exactly what information will help us to achieve our task.

d. Inferential listening

This refers to the type of listening we do when we wish to know how the speaker feels. It is well known as inferencing. It is somewhat different than other types of listening, in that it often happens in the middle of listening tasks designed for some other purposes. A person

might be listening for specific or for a gist, but if the speaker says things indirectly or happens to use vocabulary the listener doesn't know that listener needs to infer the meaning.

Fifth, there is simple and smart way to understand the meaning of the news. That is by asking questions of 5 Ws and 1 H since these questions are essential element building news. According to Ewton (2007) 5 Ws and 1 H elements are the essential building of news. They are news requirements that will forge a news story becomes informative, well written and even potentially important. Questions of 5 Ws and 1 H have characteristic as below:

a. What

The question can open an interesting avenue of exploration. It is also a quite open-ended question. A whole text might explore what happened, some event or incident of the writer or speaker talk about. This element is the basic premise that supports why the story is news worthy.

b. Who

Several questions should be asked in order to highlight any people who may be involved in the news story. Find the major palyers, knowledgeable sources, stakeholders, etc. Secondary people would include those who support or oppose an issue or who may be indirectly affected by the problem or event.

c. When

It is important to include a timeline of events. At what point does the news begin and where does it end? The question of when locates even in time.

d. Where

It helps listener know not only where things are happening but what the place like and why it is important. By using where, it permits the listener to discover the sight, sound and the whole physical environment. His includes more than just the address or cross street.

e. Why

This element is not always the easy one to uncover depending on the circumstances. It is more than the other question, because it produces the greatest responses. Why ask for reason, conclusion, and thought and give listener analysis or explanation about the topic. Furthermore, this question helps listener in

getting more understanding of what being listened.

f. How

Once the initial news story has broken, listeners will want to gain insight into how the event happened, how the story was revealed and how the end has played out. Question of how shows the method, procedure and process. It depends on the listener's need and interest as well as the speaker's purpose in listening.

Using 5 Ws and 1 H in Teaching Listening by News Story has some advantages as below.

1. The students comprehend the text easily.
It helps the students to focus what they are listening to the recorded text. After that, lecturer gives some questions based on the concept above and asks the students to answer them. This makes the students more understand about what have been listened.
2. The students get detailed information in the text quickly.
3. It helps the lecturer and the students in producing answering the questions.
4. It save the student's time in doing the task because the concept of 5 Ws and 1 H helps the students in guessing what the text about.

The Implementation of Using News Story as Alternative Activity for University Students in Listening

The implementation of using News Story consists of three steps. They are preparation, implementation, assessment and evaluation.

Preparation

1) Listening and Recording the News

Each student has to find, listen and record different news every month. So, within a semester, they will record at least six different news. The sources of authentic recorded listening materials are the radio, the television, and the internet. From radio, the students can listen and record the BBC news, Kang Guru Radio. From television, it can be English Metro News. From internet, there are many choices such as BBC news, ABC news and Voice of America. It is strongly suggested to record news from internet rather than radio or television, because the internet has significant advantages over both the radio and television. One of these is that the content is achieved

rather than schedule-based. The biggest advantage of all, though, is the choice of material. The internet is very expanding

2) Listening and Writing the Transcript of the News.

Each student has to listen and write the transcript of the news they got at home. The students need to listen their own news for several times, so they can get the meaning and can write the transcript as long as they can. At the first time, the transcript doesn't have to be perfect because it will be corrected by some of their friend outside of classroom and by all classmates in the classroom.

3) Listening and Asking Friends Correction about the Transcript Out Side of Classroom.

Before each student brings the first assignment-news recording and its transcript to class, it has to be corrected by at least by two classmates out side of classroom. And the new version after the correction will be corrected together by lecturer and all students in the classroom. So, each student has to copy their transcript and distribute it to their classmates and submit the original one to the lecturer. Students should give number to each line of news transcript, so it will be easy to find and to discuss specific information later on.

Implementation

1) Listening the News and Doing Exercise in the Classroom:

- a) Each student listen to the news ones while correcting the transcript (takes time about five minutes).
- b) Answer questions 5 Ws and 1 H (takes times about 5 minutes) by using this special table called **Table of 5 Ws and 1 H Type A.**

TABLE OF 5 Ws & 1 (TYPE A) IN LISTENING NEWS STORY

Student's Name :
 Registration No. :
 Class :
 Day/ Date :

5 Ws & 1 H	News 1	News 2	News 3
	Recorded by:	Recorded by:	Recorded by:
What	.....	.....	.....

Who	.....	.....	.....
When	.....	.....	.....
Where	.....	.....	.....
Why	.....	.....	.....
How	.....	.....	.....

- c) All of students return the transcript to the owner (takes time two minutes).
- d) For one meeting, there is opportunity minimum for three students' news. The time is about a half our. If the class is large – consists of 42 students, the listening news activities will be ended at the fourteenth meeting. So, the students will study at least 42 different news every meeting in the classroom.

2) Listening the News and Doing Exercise Outside of Classroom

To really improve in a language, learners need to work on their own as **well as in class. They need to take charge of their own learning, to develop** autonomy. As lecturers, we need to support this outside work with structures that guide the students (Helgesen and Brwon, 2007)..

- a) Each student will invite at least four classmates to correct the other transcript by listening to the news once or more.
- b) The four classmate make correction
- c) The owner of the news and her classmate will Answer questions 5 Ws and 1 H (takes times about 5 minutes) by using **Table of 5 Ws and 1 H Type B.**

TABLE OF 5 Ws & 1 H (TYPE B) IN LISTENING NEWS STORY

Student's Name :

Registration No. :

Class :

5 Ws & 1 H	No. of News:		
	Title:	Recorded by:	Day/ Date
What	.....	.....	.....
Who	.....	.....	.....
When	.....	.....	.....
Where	.....	.....	.....
Why	.....	.....	.....
How	.....	.....	.....

- d) The students also will fill in the special table report as the result of their independent study outside of listening classroom.

STUDENT'S REPORT ON CORRECTION OF NEWS STORY

Student's Name :

Registration No. :

Class :

News	Title	Source	Day/ Date of Correction	Corrected by	
				Corrector's	Reg. No
1	1 .....	.....
				2 .....	.....
2	1 .....	.....
				2 .....	.....
				3 .....	.....
				4 .....	.....
.....until 6					

In implementation, lecturer has to pay attention to listening strategies. Listening strategies here means activities that contribute directly to the comprehension and recall of listening input. Listening strategies can be classified into two kinds which depend on by how the listener processes the input. They are bottom-up and top-down processing. Furthermore, both of the listening strategies can be combined in the listening activity.

Teaching Bottom-up Processing

Bottom-up strategies are text based; the listener relies on the language in the message, that is, the combination of sounds, words, and grammar that creates meaning. Bottom-up strategies include: listening for specific details, recognizing cognates, recognizing word-order patterns.

Learners need a large vocabulary and a good working knowledge of sentence structure to process texts bottom-up. In the classroom, examples of the kinds of tasks that develop bottom up listening skills require listeners to do the following kinds of things:

- a. Identify the referents of pronouns in an utterance
- b. Recognize the time reference of an utterance

- c. Distinguish between positive and negative statements
- d. Recognize the order in which words occurred in an utterance
- e. Identify sequence markers

Top-down Processing

Top-down processing, on the other hand, refers to the use of background knowledge in understanding the meaning of a message. Whereas bottom-up processing goes from language to meaning, top-down processing goes from meaning to language. Top-down strategies are listener based; the listener taps into background knowledge of the topic, the situation or context, the type of text, and the language. This background knowledge activates a set of expectations that help the listener to interpret what is heard and anticipate what will come next. Top-down strategies include: listening for the main idea, predicting, drawing inferences, and summarizing.

The following activities develop top-down listening skills:

- a. Students generate a set of questions they expect to hear about a topic, then listen to see if they are answered.
- b. Students generate a list of things they already know about a topic and things they would like to learn more about, then listen and compare.
- c. Students read a list of key points to be covered in a talk, then listen to see which ones are mentioned.
- d. Students listen to part of a story, complete the story ending, then listen and compare endings.
- e. Students read news headlines, guess what happened, then listen to the full news items and compare.

Combining bottom-up and top-down listening

In real-world listening, both bottom-up and top-down processing generally occur together. The extent to which one or the other dominates depends on the listener's familiarity with the topic and content of a text, the density of information in a text, the text type, and the listener's purpose in listening.

A typical lesson in current teaching materials involves a three-part sequence consisting of pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening and contains activities that link bottom-up and top-down listening. The pre-listening phase

prepares students for both top-down and bottom-up processing through activities involving activating prior knowledge, making predictions, and reviewing key vocabulary. The while-listening phase focuses on comprehension through exercises that require selective listening, gist listening, sequencing, etc. The post-listening phase typically involves a response to comprehension and may require students to give opinions about a topic.

Assessment

Lecturer can use post-listening activities to check comprehension, evaluate listening skills and use of listening strategies, and extend the knowledge gained to other contexts. A post-listening activity may relate to a pre-listening activity, such as predicting; may expand on the topic or the language of the listening text; or may transfer what has been learned to reading, speaking, or writing activities.

In order to provide authentic assessment of students' listening proficiency, a post-listening activity must reflect the real-life uses to which students might put information they have gained through listening.

Assessment is important part of teaching. it is needed as feedback to students on their progress and as administration record-keeping or to give grades. Assessment is quite complex and means many things to many people. There is no question that assessment needs to be done regularly, consistently and fairly in any language course, including any listening course, because feedback is such a vital part of learning. Most tests that lecturer herself produce and use are "achievement tests", designed to measure simply whether students have mastered what is taught to an acceptable degree.

The assessment for using News Story activity in Listening class can be classified into three kinds of assessment. They are teacher assessment, peer assessment and self assessment.

CONCLUSION

There are some reasons why using News Story can be as good alternative activity for university students in listening class. (1) By listening to the news, students get listening skill as well as get the up to date news which they are interested in. (2) News Story as authentic

materials is challenging to be learned in listening class at university. (3) News Story is topical, interesting, headlines given first-good for prediction, vocabulary-rich and lexical sets based on topic. (4) Students can engage some of listening types from the News Story: listening for gist, listening for specific information, listening for detail and inferential listening. (5) There is simple and smart way to understand the meaning of the news: by asking questions of 5 Ws and 1 H since these questions are essential elements building news.

The implementation of using News Story consists of three steps. They are Preparation, Implementation, and Assessment. First, Preparation consists of: (1) Listening and Recording the News, (2) Listening and Writing the Transcript of the News, (3) Listening and Asking Friends Correction about the Transcript Outside of Classroom. Second, Implementation consists of: (1) Listening the News and Doing Exercise in the Classroom, (2) Listening the News and Doing Exercise Outside of Classroom. In implementation process, both bottom-up and top-down processing can be done through listening activity. Third, Assessment is classified into teacher assessment, peer assessment and self assessment.

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