

IMPROVING STUDENTS LISTENING SKILL USING LISTENING PRACTICE: DIRECT LISTENING THINKING ACTIVITY (DLTA)

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Abstract : The purpose of this study is to analyze the effectiveness of using the Direct Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA) learning strategy in improving the listening skills of 8th Grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Eris. Direct Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA) is a learning strategy to improve students' understanding of the material being listened to. This study used quantitative research with a pre-experimental design. 22 8th Grade students were the subject of this study. The instruments employed to collect the data in this study are pre-test and post-test. The tests were only given to one group (class) since the pre-experimental design did not have a control class. The tests are in form of matching questions. The subject of this study had to answer the question according to the instructions given by the researcher. The result of this study shows that the mean score of the post-test (75) is higher than the pre-test (35). Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that the Direct Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA) learning strategy worked very well in improving students' listening skills, especially 8th Grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Eris.

Keywords : *Listening Skill, Verbs, Listening Strategy, Direct Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA).*

INTRODUCTION

Language is one of the most important communication tools used in daily life. Language skills are used to exchange information or interact with each other. Language sometimes addresses as a unifier tool. There are several international languages that have been determined by the United Nations including English, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, and Arabic. English is the most widely spoken language in the world, therefore English is used as the mother tongue in many developed countries in the world. This encourages people to learn English in order to enter the international world. For example, Liando (2009) compares the use of English and Indonesia, as developed

countries. Based on her research it is found that English as a foreign language in Thailand, English is not used as a medium of communication in society but is just seen as a subject to be taught in school. However, in business, certain sectors in university, or in tourism, English is used for communication.

In regard to national development and approaching a globalized world, Liando (2009) asserts that the need for English is increasing. In this case, Indonesia also does not want to be left behind. In Indonesia, English is set as a compulsory subject in schools as an effort to prepare students to be ready to face the international world. In learning English,

there are four language skills to be acquired: listening, speaking, writing, and reading. Each language skill has its own level of difficulty depending on the understanding of the person who uses it. One of the basic skills in language learning is listening. Listening is a process of capturing, understanding, and remembering as well as possible of what we heard. According to Worthington and Bodie (2017), "listening is the active process of receiving and responding to spoken (and sometimes unspoken) messages. It is one of the subjects studied in the field of language arts and in the discipline of conversation analysis." Listening is one of the most important skills in English. Listening skill is also one aspect that difficult to learn by students because it requires more attention and concentration to understand the material. The most common factors that make listening in English difficult to acquire are unclear pronunciation, boring topics and poor classroom conditions. These problems make students feel lazy and scared to study English.

Based on the initial observation done by the researcher during the teaching practice at SMP Negeri 1 Eris for 3 months, it was found that students are getting lazy to listen to the lessons delivered by the teacher in class, especially the English subject. Therefore, the researcher tried to conduct research based on this issue. The researcher had conversations with several 8th Grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Eris and found that there were several reasons why they tend to be lazy in learning English. The students thought that learning English is very complicated, foreign languages (English) is difficult for them (especially for the listening part), and students' lack

of listening skill makes learning English boring.

The problems mentioned above need to be overcome so the quality of learning English can be improved. It will also help the students to have a meaningful learning English experience. English teachers have to be more creative in teaching English so the students will learn better. In specific, for improving students' listening skill, English teacher need to select the proper techniques based on learning material. Therefore, the researcher tried to find a good method to be used for improving students' listening skill. The method selected by the researcher is the Direct Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA) with media audio to improve students' listening comprehension.

Direct Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA) is a strategy that can be used to teach by listening to English text. There are several media that can be used in this DLTA method such as audio media, reading English stories, and audiovisuals. For this research, the researcher chose to use media audio. By asking the students to listen to English materials and constructing a test from those materials, the researcher hopes to ignite students' interest in listening to English materials and reduce students' boredom during the teaching and learning process.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is quantitative research since the data are in form of numbers, graphs, charts, and statistics. Sugiyono (2009) explains the quantitative method as a research method based on the philosophy of positivism. It is used to examine a particular population or sample, which is generally taken at random. The data is collected using research instruments and then is analyzed

statistically with the aim of testing the established hypothesis.

This research uses a pre-experimental design. The model used by the researcher is a pre-test and post-test to determine students' understanding of the materials to be given. The pre-test is used to determine students' insight and understanding of the material before the treatment. Post-test is a test that is carried out after the material is given to determine the level of mastery of the students after receiving treatment. One group pre-test and post-test design are used by the researcher since the pre-experimental design does not require a control class. The process is described in the diagram below.

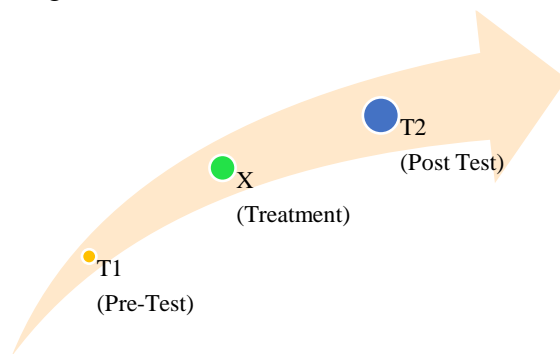


Figure 1. Steps of Pre-Experimental Design

According to Sugiyono (2016), a population is “a generalization area consisting of objects/subjects that have certain qualities and characteristics determined by researchers to be studied and then drawn conclusions.” In addition, Alma (2015) defines population as “the overall characteristic or unit of measurement that is the object of research.” It then can be concluded that a population is an object or subject that is in an area and fulfills the requirements of a particular research problem. For this study, the researcher took the students of SMP Negeri 1 Eris as the population. The sample was 8th Grade students at SMP

Negeri 1 Eris which consisted of 22 students.

Hadjar (1996) defines the research instrument as “a measuring tool used to obtain quantitative information that contains characteristic and objective variables.” Based on the purpose of this study, the research instruments used by the researcher are tests. The test is divided in a pre-test and a post-test. The test is used to be given to 22 8th Grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Eris to improve their listening comprehension. The researcher gave several Matching questions to determine students understanding of the material given.

The following steps are used by the researcher to collect the data:

1. Choosing the sample classroom from the population. The sample are 22 8th Grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Eris.
2. Preparing the listening materials that will be used by the researcher.
3. Giving the pre-test before using the presenting material.
4. Giving the treatment by using listening practice: Direct Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA).
5. Giving the post-test.
6. Organizing the data.
7. Analyzing the data.
8. Writing the final result.

This study uses descriptive quantitative data collection techniques. Antwi and Hamza (2015) defines the quantitative descriptive research method as “a method that aims to make a picture or descriptive about a situation objectively using numbers, starting from data collection, interpretation of the data as well as appearance and results.” The data collected by using the research instruments are then analyzed by using the mean score formula proposed by Arikunto

(2007). The formula is described as follows:

$$\bar{x} (\text{Mean}) = \frac{\sum x (\text{Total Score of the Students})}{n (\text{Number of Students})}$$

Researchers conduct the research and get complete data from the research instruments which consist of the pre-test and the post-test. To fulfill the purpose of the research, the researcher analyzed the data systematically by using quantitative research methods. The data are analyzed to draw conclusions about the objectives of the research. The sample is one class consisting of 22 students. The participants of this research were the 8th Grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Eris. The treatment was given to the students, as the experimental group, by applying Direct Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA) learning strategies to improve their listening skill. The pre-test and post-test are employed in order to see and compare the score between the T1 (the pre-test) and the T2 (the post-test). The T1 is given before applying the treatment and the T2 is given after the treatment.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

At the first meeting, the researcher gave a pre-test question sheet to the 8th Grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Eris to find out the students' insights about the material to be taught by the researcher, namely verbs. The pre-test worksheet given by the researcher was in the form of matching questions, which consisted of 10 questions. To do the pre-test, the researcher gave 20 minutes. After finishing the researcher collected the students' pre-test answers then the researcher checked the answers. After checking the students' pre-test answers, the researcher found that students' insight into the material about verbs was still very

low, there were even students who got a score of 20.

After the pre-test, the researcher began to explain the listening verbs material and the learning strategy that the researcher would use, namely Direct Listening Thinking Activity, the researcher also asked some questions about the obstacles that students face in listening to English words, especially listening to verbs. Researchers found several reasons including the lack of learning media that supports listening learning, students' unfamiliarity with listening to English words, and English words that are complicated and difficult to be understood. Therefore, the researcher used the Direct Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA) learning strategy to improve students' listening skills. The researcher used this treatment using audio media, namely by using loudspeakers to listen to students about material about verbs. This activity was repeated at every meeting while the researcher was conducting the research at SMP Negeri 1 Eris.

At the end of the meeting, the researcher gave a post-test sheet to see the development or progress of students' listening skills during the treatment. The post-test test used is also in the form of questions that are the same as the pre-test, namely the question of matching which consists of 10 questions. The aim is to compare students' listening skill after using the pre-test. After conducting the post-test, the researcher found a very drastic change in the scores, which means that this treatment worked very well in improving the listening skills of students. It is found that the development of the students who previously scored 20 had increased their score to 80 in the post-test. For more detailed data, the researcher made a table of the results of the pre-test

and post-test scores and their gained scores. The data collected through the pre-test (T1) and the post-test (T2) are presented below.

Table 1. Students' Pre-Test and Post-Test Score

Number of Students	T1	T2	GAIN
1	50	80	30
2	40	70	30
3	30	70	40
4	40	70	30
5	30	60	30
6	20	80	60
7	50	80	30
8	30	70	40
9	40	80	40
10	40	80	40
11	20	70	50
12	30	60	30
13	20	80	60
14	40	70	30
15	30	80	50
16	30	80	50
17	30	70	40
18	40	90	50
19	40	80	40
20	50	90	40
21	40	80	40
22	40	80	40
Sum	780	1670	
Mean	35	75	
Max Score	50	90	
Min Score	20	60	

Based on the data in Table 1, it can be seen that from a total of 22 8th Grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Eris, the average pre-test was 35 and the post-test average was 75. The average score does increase. The score obtained by the students corresponds to the average of the pre-test

and post-test results, which is 40 points. The maximum score on the pre-test was 50. There were 3 students who got the highest score on the pre-test, namely students numbered 1, 7, and 20. On the other hand, the highest score on the post-test was 90. There were 3 students who reached the highest score on the post-test, namely students numbered 18 and 20. It indicated the effectiveness of the DLTA in improving students' listening skill individually.

The effectiveness of DTLA in improving students' listening skill is not just individual level but also at the class level. It can be seen from the increase in the mean score from the pre-test to the post-test. The mean score indicates the level of students' listening skill as a group (class). The mean score of the pre-test and post-test were obtained by using the mean score formula proposed by Arikunto (2007). The mean score of the pre-test (T1) was obtained from the following formula:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x}{n}$$

$$\bar{x} = \frac{780}{22} = 35$$

$$\bar{x} = 35$$

The mean score of the post-test (T2) was obtained by using the same formula for the mean score of the pre-test. So, the mean score of the post-test was:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x}{n}$$

$$\bar{x} = \frac{1670}{22}$$

$$\bar{x} = 75$$

The mean score indicated an increase of 40 points from the pre-test (T1) to the post-test (T2). It means that the use of DLTA in the class can improve all the

students' listening skill. The increase of the mean score also indicates the improvement of the learning quality since the students understand the materials better after the treatment given. To make it easier to notice the improvement of students' listening skill, the mean score of the pre-test and the post-test can be described in the Chart 1, as follows:

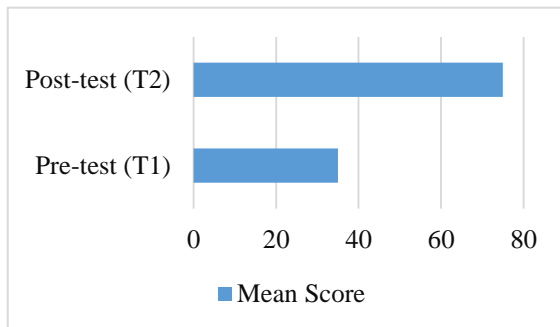


Chart 1. Comparison of the Mean Score between the Pre-test (T1) and Post-test (T2).

The analysis continues with the computation of both scores from the pre-test (T1) and post-test (T2). The frequency distribution matrix of T1 and T2 are presented below.

Table 2. Frequency distribution matrix of Pre-test (T1)

Pre-test Score	Tally	Freq	Freq%	Cumulative proportion	Cumulative presentation
50	///	3	13,63%	22	100%
40	### ////	9	40,90%	19	86,37%
30	### //	7	31,81%	10	45,47%
20	///	3	13,63%	3	13,66%

Table 2 shows that there are 3 students who get the lowest score 20 and there are 3 students who get the highest score 50. Table 2 also indicates the low learning quality since the score got by the students below the school standard. After determine

the frequency distribution of the pretest, then proceed with determine the frequency distribution of the post-test scores based on the results of the T2 acquisition in table 1. Table 4 shows the frequency distribution matrix of the post-test (T2).

Table 3. Frequency distribution matrix of Post-test (T2)

Pre-test Score	Tally	Freq	Freq%	Cumulative proportion	Cumulative presentation
90	//	2	9,09%	22	100%
80	### ### /	11	50%	20	90,91%
70	### //	7	31,81%	9	40,91%
60	///	2	9,09%	2	9,1%

Table 3 shows that the most common score is 80 with a frequency of 50%. The least common score is 60 with a 9.09% frequency in the distribution matrix. Table 3 also shows that there are 2 students who achieved the highest score (90) and there are 4 students get the lowest score (60)

The researcher discussed the research finding about improving students listening skill using listening practice: Direct Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA). From the results of data processing carried out by researchers in the findings, the researchers described the number of pre-test scores of 22 class VIII students of SMP Negeri 1 Eris reach 780 scores with an average value of 35, which after the researchers gave treatment by using strategy Direct Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA) obtained total score post-test increased dramatically to 1670 with an average of 75, which can be seen from the level of progress in students listening skill reaching 890 points with an average increase of up to 40.

Through the data presented by the researcher, it can be seen that before being given the DLTA treatment, students' listening skills were still very low. The various factors underlying this problem have been explained by the researcher in chapter I. The researcher had conversations with several class VIII students, the researcher found several reasons why they tend to be lazy to learn English including, learning English which is very complicated, foreign languages that make it difficult for them to listen, lack of students listening skill, and some students also stated that learning English is boring. Therefore, using the DLTA strategy is the right choice to improve students' listening skill. The Directed Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA) strategy is listening learning strategies that involve students in learning. Directed Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA) strategy is strategy that can be used to improve students' listening skill by using audio media. This strategy is also suitable for junior high school students because the strategy is interesting and not boring.

It can be seen the difference in the average scores of pre-test and post-test, which means that the use of the Direct Listening Thinking Activity listening strategy helps the 8th Grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Eris improve their listening skills. During the treatment of the Direct Listening Thinking Activity, the researcher focused on giving treatment about verbs in accordance with the problem limits that the researchers mentioned in chapter I. Thus, the researcher concludes that the DLTA strategy can work well in helping improve the listening skills of Grade VIII students of SMP Negeri 1 Eris.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions, it can be concluded that the Direct Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA) learning strategy worked very well in improving students' listening skills, especially for the 8th Grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Eris. It can be seen from the increase in the score of student competence after being given treatment using the Direct Listening Thinking Activity (DLTA). It is suggested that English teachers should apply the correct learning strategies and learning media to improve the quality of the learning process and students' listening skills. Teachers also should pay more attention to students' obstacles in listening to lessons in class and be more creative in providing material or lessons according to students' interests.

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