THE EFFECT OF THE USE OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS ON STUDENTS’ PERCEPTION AND ACHIEVEMENT IN TEACHING LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh materi otentik terhadap persepsi dan pencapaian siswa dalam pengajaran Mendengarkan. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian eksperimen yang melibatkan dua kelompok: kelompok eksperimen dan kontrol. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan di Universitas Cokroaminoto Palopo dengan jumlah responden sebanyak 40 orang. Data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan tes awal, perlakuan, dan tes akhir. Tes Mendengarkan diberikan kepada kedua kelompok. Data diuji dan diinterpretasikan dengan menggunakan program software SPSS 16.0. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa materi otentik mampu meningkatkan kemampuan mendengarkan siswa. Hasil peningkatan skor pemahaman mendengarkan siswa dari tes awal sampai tes akhir menunjukan perbedaan yang signifikan. Sig (2-tailed) yang ditemukan adalah 0.000 lebih kecil dari 0.05. Hal ini, menunjukkan bahwa kinerja pemahaman mendengarkan siswa meningkat secara signifikan. Selain itu hasil kuesioner dan wawancara menunjukkan bahwa siswa memiliki persepsi positif terhadap penggunaan materi ini.

Kata kunci: materi otentik, persepsi dan kemampuan mendengarkan siswa

ABSTRACT

This research aims to find out the effect of the use of authentic materials on students’ perception and achievement in teaching listening comprehension. This is an experimental research which involves two groups, experimental and control groups. This research was conducted at Cokroaminoto University of Palopo with 40 students as respondents. The instruments of data collection were pre-test, treatment, and post-test. The listening test was administered to the both of groups. The data were analyzed and interpreted by means of SPSS 16.0. The study reveals that authentic materials can improve students’ listening comprehension. The result of students’ listening score which is improved from pre-test to post-test demonstrates a significant difference. It is found that sig. (2-tailed) is 0.000 lower than 0.05. which shows that the improvement is significant. Besides, the result of questionnaire and interview shows that students have positive perception on the use of these materials

Keywords: authentic materials and students’ achievement and perception, listening comprehension
INTRODUCTION

Listening is one of the skills which frequently happens in our daily life. However, this skill receives late attention from linguists. Only in 1960s, listening is recognized as a fundamental skill in English. Its popularity can also be seen in Indonesia because the government has included listening skill in high school *Ujian Nasional* which is previously dominated by grammar.

Materials are important in teaching and learning process because they are the media for teacher to present what students need to know related to the lesson. Interesting materials can gain students’ attention and improve students’ motivation in learning process. One of the characteristics of interesting materials is authenticity (Peacock, 1997; Berardo, 2006; Ngai, 2003). Unfortunately, text books which are the main source of materials for teachers are believed to be lack of authenticity. The conversation provided by textbooks is purposively recorded in recording studio (Underwood, 1989: 99). As a result, the students are not used to listening to the ‘real’ language use of English. Unfortunately, many teachers still trust this kind of textbook because it has been packed completely – with materials, activities and answer keys.

Song, English movie, English radio program, and many other videos of native speakers speaking English are some sources of authenticity which can be found easily in students’ daily lives. They can be heard from radio, watched from TV, or downloaded from internet. However, they are not commonly used in classroom. The reason is that, perhaps, because of the extra preparation needed to present them in the class because the materials are not included in textbooks which have been teachers’ main source in teaching.

Cokroaminoto University is one of the popular private universities in Palopo. The English department receives fairly many students every year. And as English students, they are expected to have good English competence and performance. Consequently, they need to be introduced to the – what is called – real language. However, the authenticity in listening class is still rarely found. The students said that the lecturer does not use video or song in the listening class. What they did was doing the activities provided in their textbooks. Therefore, the researcher intends to conduct a study related to the implementation of authentic materials in listening comprehension class.
**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

*Location and Research Design*

The study was conducted at Cokroaminoto University of Palopo. It is one of private universities in Palopo which receives many students in each academic year. The study was conducted in two months started in April 2012 until June 2012. The participants were divided into two groups, control and experimental groups. The study was designed in two phases; pre and post test, which were given to the two groups. Pre-test was given at the beginning of the research, before the treatments were given while post-test was given at the end of the research, after the students were taught in several meetings.

*Sample and Population*

The target population was 280 students of the fourth semester students at English Education Department of Cokroaminoto University in Palopo, in academic year 2011/2012. The samples were 40 students and each group consists of 20 students as stated by Gay (1981: 102) that the number of sample in experimental research is 15 subjects in minimum. The samples were selected through cluster random sampling adopted from Gay (1981).

*Data Collection*

In collecting data, the instrument was the listening test. The test was taken from the listening section of TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). The researcher tested the students’ listening comprehension in the two groups before and after treatments. Then, the result was compared to see whether there was an improvement on students’ listening comprehension after treatments or not.

*Data Analysis*

The students’ proficiency in listening comprehension were analyzed and then categorized based on table written by DEPDIKNAS. To see whether there was a significant difference between the score of the two groups, the data were analyzed and then were interpreted by means of SPSS 16.0 in terms of the means score, standard deviation, and t-test value.

**RESEARCH RESULTS**

*The students’ perception on the use of authentic materials*

Students’ perception was resulted from questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire consists of two statements, positive and negative statements, and the number of statements is fifteen. The positive statements include statement number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 15 and the other four negative statements are on the number 8, 9, 12, and 14. The
positive statements received high score which were dominated by ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’ categorization; while the negative statements received various score. Statement number 8 got the highest score compared to the other negative statements. Statement 8 asked about the relationship between authentic materials and students’ condition during the learning process. The highest score means that the students do not feel the same as the statement stated.

The lowest score of negative statements was on the statement number 12 (50 score) and 9 (56 score). Statement number 12 asked about the vocabulary used by the speaker while statement number 9 asked about the speed of the speakers in uttering their sentences. The lowest score received by these two statements means that these two things (speed and vocabulary) are the main problems in using authentic materials.

The result of questionnaire was supported by students’ answers during interview. Their answers supported students’ responses in questionnaire that vocabulary, speakers’ speed and pronunciation in speaking were the main problems students found in using authentic materials. Nevertheless, the students agreed if the materials were used in their next-semester listening class. Besides, they stated that they received many advantages from the materials in spite of the problems they had.

**The achievement of students’ listening comprehension**

The data collected through pre-test and post-test shows that the students’ proficiency in listening comprehension of the two groups was improved significantly. The pre-test mean score of experimental group is lower than the control group (30.60 < 31.50). However, both were categorized as ‘fail’. It means that students in the two groups were in the same level.

After giving some treatments, the post-test was conducted and the result shows that the score of the two groups were improved. The mean score of students in control group was improved from 31.50 to 46.9 while the mean score of students in experimental group was improved from 30.60 to 58.80. It can be seen that the improvement of students in experimental group was better than students in control group. There is a significant improvement in experimental group students who were taught by authentic materials.

From independent t-test analysis, the researcher found that the t-test value is higher than t-table value, where t-test is 4.305 and t-table is 2.030 at 0.05 level of significant at 38 degrees of freedom (T-observed > T-table, α = 0.05). Sig. (2-tailed) is also lower than the level of significant (0.000 < 0.05). It means that the use of authentic materials can make significant difference on the students’ score of two groups in post-test.
DISCUSSION

The pre-test mean score shows students in the control and experimental groups were categorized as ‘fail’ where only two students of both groups were in ‘satisfactory’ classification and the other students were categorized ‘fail’. However, the mean score of control group students (31.5) is a little higher than of experimental group students (30.6). This was a good start because the data show that the students in the two groups were in the same level.

After some treatments, the score of the two groups are increased. The improvement is seen in mean score of the post-test result. The score of the control group was classified as ‘poor’ while the score of experimental group was classified as ‘satisfactory’ because the students of experimental group received higher mean score than of control group. The mean score of control group students was 46.90 while the mean score of experimental group students was 58.80. The better improvement of students of experimental group is also seen in the number of students who were categorized ‘fail’ after treatments. None of the students of experimental group was classified ‘fail’ while four students of control group were classified ‘fail’.

The data above show us that there is an improvement on students’ listening comprehension after they received several treatments; where students of control groups were taught by using materials on the text book while students of experimental groups were taught by using authentic materials. Students’ mean score of both groups was increased. However, if taking the described data and the figure into account, it is seen that the score gained by students of experimental group was better than of control group. It implies that using authentic materials can improve students’ listening comprehension more than using materials on text book.

Another statistical data can be seen on the result of inferential analysis – test of different for independent samples of students’ post-test score. The result of this test shows that there was a significant difference between the mean score of students in experimental and control group. The evidence was that the t-test value was greater than the t-table value (4.305 > 2.030). The same result also proved by comparing the probability value with the level of significance, where the value of probability (0.000) was smaller than the level of significance (0.05).

It can be concluded that the students’ listening comprehension achievement was significantly improved by the use of authentic materials in the classroom. This material was
able to give better contribution in teaching and learning listening comprehension, because it could cultivate the students’ listening comprehension better than using a conventional teaching.

The result of the study (the students’ listening comprehension was significantly improved after some treatments) is the same to some previous researchers such as Haidir (2006) and Jaenal (2011). The two researchers above found that authentic materials can give positive effect on students’ English proficiency in terms of their speaking and writing skill. However, the present study demonstrated a significant improvement in the quality of the students’ proficiency in listening comprehension. One reason for the improvement in the quality of the students’ listening comprehension could be explained in terms of the authentic activities during the treatments. Different from students in control group whose main activities in the while-listening stage is only answering questions, activities of students in experimental group are more various. The activities which are considered authentic are note taking, editing, retelling, and interpreting (Brown, 2004: 136). It is based on Widdowson’s statement (1994: 152) that the materials presented in the classroom should be ‘real’ in the context of students’ own world.

The positive result of the authentic materials used goes in line with what is recommended by experts that as the part of Communicative Language Teaching, authentic materials can improve students’ skill, in this research is their listening comprehension. It is because authentic materials give meaningful learning rather than focuses only on language lexical or grammatical (Richards, 2006: 12). By using authentic materials, students also have the opportunity interact and communicate directly to the real language and develop strategies for understanding language as it is actually used (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 130).

However, some factors like students’ level and the topic of the materials should be taken into consideration because as mentioned by Berardo (2006: 63), the inappropriate content and also the difficult materials can bring frustration to the students.

The improvement of experimental group students in listening comprehension has positive relation to students’ positive response on the use of the authentic materials. The result was indicated in the questionnaire result where most of the students’ answers on the positive statements are in ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’ category and none of them belongs to the ‘strongly disagree’ or ‘disagree’ category. Besides, the mean score was 54.2 which was in the ‘high’ category. It implies that the students’ of experimental group were interested in learning listening comprehension with this material.
This result is also supported by the students’ answer in the interview. The students admit that they have problems in listening to authentic materials. Speaker’s speed in speaking and also their vocabulary are the main problems which are found while using the materials. It is similar to what Underwood (1989: 16) stated that lack of control over speakers’ speed and students’ limited vocabulary are the first and the third potential problem in learning listening English. However, in spite of the problems they have, they agree that authentic materials are interesting. They also agree if the materials are used in their next-semester listening class.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

It is concluded that authentic materials has a significant effect on students’ listening comprehension because the materials can improve students’ score in experimental group better than students in control groups who were taught by using textbook. In this case, the researcher would like to suggest to the lecturers in English Education Department of Cokroaminoto University to think about authentic materials in teaching listening comprehension.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


