

**IMPROVING STUDENTS' LISTENING COMPREHENSION  
OF GRADE X IN SMA MUHAMMADIYAH 1 YOGYAKARTA  
USING ENGLISH STORY-TELLING TECHNIQUES  
IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2015/2016**

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**Abstract:** The objective of the research was to improve the students' listening comprehension of grade X in SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Yogyakarta using English story-telling techniques in the academic year 2015/2016. The research was carried out through action research that consisted of two cycles. The research steps are reconnaissance, planning, action and observation, and reflection. The researcher collaborated with the English teacher in implementing the actions. The members of the research were the researcher, the English teacher, and the students of Grade X. The data were qualitative and quantitative. The validity of the data was obtained by applying the democratic, dialogic, catalytic, process, and outcome validities. The qualitative data were obtained by observing the teaching and learning process during the implementation of the actions, interviewing the students, and holding discussions with the English teacher, while the quantitative data were obtained from pre-test and post-test. The data were in the form of field notes, interview transcripts, and documentation. The qualitative data were analyzed by assembling, coding, comparing, building interpretations, and reporting the outcome. Meanwhile, the quantitative data were analyzed by calculating the mean scores of the pre-test and the post-test. The mean score of both tests were compared. The findings of the study showed that the use of English story-telling techniques proved to be effective to improve the students' listening comprehension. The students made a good improvement in some aspects of listening comprehension skills. They became interested in the English listening class and they felt that the lesson did not make them bored. The findings were supported by the means of the students' listening scores which had improved from 8.2 in the pretest to 8.5 in the post-test.

**Keywords:** **listening comprehension, story-telling techniques**

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**Introduction**

As we all know, English has been considered as an International language. People all around the world are trying to learn English as it is the most frequently used language in the recent times. Crystal (in Lee Mckey 2000:7) says that English is rapidly assuming the role of a world language, and no other language has spread around the globe so extensively, making English a truly international language. Thus, English has become a compulsory subject in almost all schools, either junior high schools or senior high schools, in the world. As a result, the ideas of

teaching and learning English is being developed by many researchers and English teachers in order to design better and better ideas.

As English is being taught in schools, there are many problems emerged in the fields. Those problems are various as the scope of English language teaching is wide. The scope is related to the four skills of English, which are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In addition, vocabulary, pronunciation, and some other language features should also be taken into account in English language teaching. From those four skills, listening can be considered as the most important skill to be mastered by the students as people spend a lot of time listening. It is in line with Adler, R. et al. (2001) who state that adults spend an average of 70% of their time engaged in some sort of communication, of this an average of 45% is spent listening compared to 30% speaking, 16% reading and 9% writing.

However, in teaching listening skills to senior high schools students, there are some problems. The teaching and learning processes usually only focuses on the test or the final examination. The students are forced to study and memorize the utterances or expressions they hear. Still, in learning English, listening is not only the study of the utterances or expressions the students hear but the learners should also learn the utterances or expressions that are usually used in the real life. For that reason, the listening materials which are used in the teaching and learning processes should provide the real life texts. These findings are consistent with those of Morley (2001: 77) who discovered that best listening activities present in class activities that mirror real life.

Besides, some other problems are frequently found in the teaching listening processes for senior high school students. Firstly, the listening materials given are too difficult for the students. The materials may indeed be contextual texts as they are taken from English speaking countries, but the speakers usually speak very fast and use too many slangs. Secondly, the texts sometimes do not provide real English as they are made by non-English speaking countries people. Thirdly, the students are sometimes not given opportunities to respond the listening texts immediately. In fact, giving the students opportunities to respond the listening texts straight away is significant in teaching listening. The results of this study seemed to reaffirm the findings of a study conducted by Ur (1984, 4) who stated that a good listening task is one with “active responses occurring during, or between parts of, the listening passage, rather than at the end”.

According to the researcher's observation in SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Yogyakarta, the teaching and learning process of listening was still in a monotonous way. The students listened to the recordings, and then they answered some questions given by the teacher. They were not given sufficient opportunities to respond the listening texts during or between parts of the listening texts. In addition, their listening comprehension was also still low. They had some difficulties in understanding the spoken texts. It could be seen from their result of the listening test and from the information obtained from the English teacher.

For those reasons, the researcher was interested in improving the students' listening comprehension using story-telling techniques in teaching listening for the students of the Grade X of SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Yogyakarta in the academic year 2015/2016. Teaching listening using story-telling techniques can be very helpful for the effective and joyful learning. Moreover, story-telling techniques enable the teacher to give the students some opportunities to respond the listening texts immediately during or between parts of the listening texts. By doing so, the teacher can increase the students' participation and encourage active learning.

Storytelling has emerged as one such teaching technique that has proven to be an effective teaching pedagogy and learning process. Cirafesi (2004:3) claims that story-telling is a powerful teaching and learning technique that is nearly universal in its appeal. Haven (2000:75) identifies storytelling techniques to be powerful, motivating and effective. He states that, by using storytelling techniques, factual and conceptual information is learnt better and faster, and will be remembered longer, recalled more readily, applied more accurately when the information is delivered as a well-told story.

Storytelling can play an important role in language learning, particularly in learning listening comprehension. The researcher emphasizes that storytelling has great effect when it is visualized. Harmer (2004: 231) considered storytelling one form of the intensive listening or the live listening that can provide excellent listening material. The students can predict what is coming next, and they can be asked to describe people in the story or to comment on any part of the story.

## **Research Method**

This research was conducted at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Yogyakarta in the first semester of the academic year 2015/2016. The school was located in Jl. Gotong Royong II, Petinggen, Karangwaru, Tegalrejo, Yogyakarta, Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta 55241. The focus of this study was to improve listening comprehension of the grade X students using English story-telling techniques. The subject of this research was the students of Grade X IPA 3. This school implemented the curriculum of 2013. The study was conducted in this school because firstly, based on the observation, it was found that the students' listening comprehension was still low. The next reason was that the students were not motivated in the listening class. They tended to be passive in the listening activities. This study was an classroom action research following the cyclical AR model based on Kemmis and McTaggart in Burns (2010:8): planning, action, observation, and reflection. The researcher collected data through observation, interview, and test. The observation was done when teaching-learning process was running. The observation was conducted to gain information about the class situation, students, strategies used by the teacher and to know whether the objectives of the teaching-learning were achieved or not. The researcher also conducted interviews with the English teacher and the students. This was to dig

further information personally about the English teaching-learning process. The last data collection technique was testing. The preliminary activity conducted to know the students' listening comprehension was pre-test. It was conducted before the implementation of cycle 1. And the last was post-test which was aimed to find out whether the actions that the researcher proposed improved the students' listening comprehension or not. At the end, the results of both pre- and post-test would be compared to see the students' listening improvement.

### Research Findings

Based on the research that was conducted in grade X IPA 3 SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Yogyakarta, students' listening comprehension was improved. The efforts that were implemented in teaching and learning processes brought good improvement in students' listening comprehension.

The actions were implemented in two cycles. Based on the reflections of each cycle, there were some points which could be concluded as follows.

1. The implementation of story-telling techniques in Cycle I and Cycle II were successful to improve the students' listening comprehension.
2. Teaching the students by using story-telling techniques was effective to solve the problem that is the students were bored and sleepy during the teaching and learning process.
3. The listening activities solved the problem that was monotonous technique in teaching and learning of listening. The activities were interesting and enjoyable for the students.
4. The listening activities made the students more active in the listening class, especially when they are given some questions related to the stories being told.

The following is the description of students' improvement before and after the implementation of the actions.

**Table 1. The Description of Students' Improvement**

No	Before the actions were conducted	After the actions were conducted	
		Cycle I	Cycle II
1.	The students were bored and sleepy during the teaching and learning process.	Some students were enthusiastic in the lesson. However, some others were not.	Most of the students were enthusiastic and more active in joining the listening activities in the class.
2.	The teacher used a monotonous technique in teaching listening.	The teacher used new teaching technique in	The teacher used new teaching technique in

		teaching listening that is story-telling techniques.	teaching listening that is story-telling techniques and most students were high motivated in the teaching and learning processes.
3.	Students had low motivation in learning listening.	Some students had high motivation in learning listening.	Most of students had high motivation in learning and learned more actively.
4.	There are lacks of interesting materials.	The materials used were interesting. However, some students said that they found it hard to understand the materials.	The materials used were interesting. The students understood the materials after the teacher gave the vocabularies.
5.	Students are passive in listening class	Some students were active after the teacher gave some questions related to the story being told	Most of students were active after the teacher gave some questions related to the story being told

Besides, the researcher also got the data from evaluation in each cycle. It was supported by the result of pre-test and post-test of the students' listening skills. The researcher conducted the pre-test on September 2nd, 2015 and the post-test on October 28th, 2015. From the pre-test and post-test, it could be seen that the students' listening comprehension were improved. Below is the scores comparison of the pre-test and post-test.

**Table 2. The Scores Comparison (Mean Scores)**

Mean Scores	
Pre-Test	Post-Test
8.2	8.5

## **Conclusions**

All the actions brought good improvement to students' listening comprehension. It was shown when the actions were implemented. The scores also showed that students' listening comprehension improved as the scores of post-test were higher than those of pre-test. Classroom observation when the actions were implemented and interviews done with the students and the English teacher after the implementation of cycle I and cycle II proved that the actions were successful in improving students' listening comprehension as being expected.

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