

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background of the research, research problem, objectives of the research, research hypothesis, significant of the research, scope and limitation and also the definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Research

In language learning, comprehensive mastery of language skills is essential to achieve effective communication. Having good English language skills provides many advantages and opens up wider opportunities in various aspects of life. Brown states that reading, writing, speaking, and listening are the four main components of language instruction.¹ Then, Wall added two more supporting abilities: grammar and vocabulary.² Without these two skills in communicative production, the other four skills are illegible. It implies that by exposing themselves to their experiences with the language offered, pupils might improve their performance.

Listening skills is one of the essential component of language learning, especially when learning English as a foreign language. According to Smaldino, listening is a psychological process that starts with receiving sounds or speech patterns, then decoding them, and finally interpreting

¹ H. Douglas Brown, *Principles of Language Learning & Teaching Fourth Edition*, (New York: Longman, 2000), p. 219.

² Dianne Wall and Tania Horák, *The Impact of Changes in the TOEFL ® Exam on Teaching in a Sample of Countries in Europe: Phase 3 , The Role of the Coursebook Phase 4 , Describing Change*. (Lancaster: Lancaster University, 2011), p. 45

them.³ In the realm of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), enhancing listening skills is crucial, as listening serves as the foundation for effective communication and language acquisition. However, the lack of opportunities for students to interact with spoken English in natural settings may make it more difficult for them to understand different accents, speech speeds, and colloquial idioms. Therefore, innovative teaching strategies that can enhance students' listening skills in practical and meaningful ways, while also making listening practice more engaging, are becoming increasingly necessary to address these challenges.

One effective approach is to use short stories as learning medium, as they offer contextualized language input and can spark students' interest through narrative content. A story is a series of events arranged in narrative form to convey certain experiences, knowledge, values, or meaning. Stories appear in various forms such as movies, sitcoms, cartoons, commercials, poetry, newspaper articles, short stories, and novels. According to MacMillan, a short story is defined as a brief prose narrative.⁴ This suggests that a short story is a compact literary form that is generally straightforward and quick to read. In other words, readers can grasp the main idea of a short narrative in a relatively short amount of time.

Short stories provide not only linguistic input but also cultural insights that can help learners understand the context in which the language

³ Sharon E. Smaldino, *Instructional Technology and Media for Learning*, (New Jersey: Pearson Edu, 2008), p. 293.

⁴ MacMillan Literature Series, *Introducing Literature*, signature edition, (New York: Glencoe/McGrawHill, 1985), p. 53

is used. Through characters, settings, and plots, students are exposed to authentic expressions, sentence structures, and vocabulary within meaningful situations. This exposure supports their ability to interpret spoken English more effectively, especially when they encounter different tones, accents, or idiomatic expressions. Moreover, the familiar structure of short stories with a clear beginning, middle, and end helps students follow the flow of information more easily, making them a powerful tool for developing listening comprehension.

To further increase the impact of short stories in the EFL classroom, combining them with innovative learning models can maximize student engagement and retention. One such method is Problem Based Learning (PBL). Problem Based Learning (PBL) is an educational approach that focuses on student centered learning through the exploration and resolution of real world problems. When short stories are integrated with PBL, students are not only listening for understanding but also analyzing characters, identifying conflicts, and proposing solutions all of which foster deeper thinking and active listening.

The term "Problem Based Learning" (PBL), which was originally used solely in medical education, has expanded into other fields. According to Barrows and Tamblyn Problem Based Learning is the process of comprehending and solving an issue leads to learning. The difficulty appears

early in the learning process.⁵ However, it has since made its way into the literature and practice of engineering education, where it now refers to a problem based approach. In this method, students work collaboratively in small groups under the guidance of a tutor or facilitator. Instead of passively receiving information through traditional lectures, students are actively engaged in the learning process by identifying, investigating, and solving problems.

Incorporating Problem Based Learning (PBL) into short stories offers a dynamic and interactive teaching method, especially in the context of improving listening skills for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. By combining the imaginative and engaging nature of short stories with the critical thinking and problem solving focus of PBL, teachers can create a more effective and enjoyable learning environment. This approach makes listening practice more focused and improves students' comprehension skills, as they listen more intently to understand and solve the problems presented in the story.

Based on observation at MTsN 5 Tulungagung, researcher found that most students' listening skills were still considered low. In the independent curriculum, many of the student textbook assignments were listening assignments. However, they still struggled to understand the content of the audio or video they listened to. Most of them answered questions based on words they knew without understanding the content and were less accurate

⁵ Howard S. Barrows and Robin M. Tamblyn, *Problem-Based Learning: An Approach to Medical Education*, (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 1980) p. 1.

in their answers. Therefore, the researcher made this thesis entitled "The Effectiveness of Short Story Using Problem Based Learning in Teaching Listening Skill of the 8th Graders at MTsN 5 Tulungagung". By listening to stories and participating in problem solving tasks, it is expected that students will listen more carefully and critically, thereby improving their understanding and memory of spoken English.

B. Research Problem

According to the background of the research above, the research problem of this study is as follow; Is there a significant different on students' listening achievement when taught short story using Problem Based Learning and those taught via lecturing?

C. Objective of the Research

To investigate the effectiveness of short story using Problem Based Learning (PBL) technique in teaching listening skill of the 8th graders at MTsN 5 Tulungagung. Specifically, this study aims to determine whether there is a significant improvement in students' listening achievement when taught short story using Problem Based Learning method compared to students when taught via lecturing.

D. Research Hypothesis

In short, hypothesis is a prediction of a problem or an alleged relationship between two or more variables. There are two kinds of hypothesis, namely the null hypothesis (H_0) and the alternative hypothesis (H_a).

1. Null Hypothesis (H_0)

H_0 : There is no significant different on students' listening achievement between students who are taught short story using Problem Based Learning (PBL) method and those who are taught short story via lecturing.

2. Alternative Hypothesis (H_a)

H_a : There is a significant different on students' listening achievement between students who are taught short story using Problem Based Learning (PBL) method and those who are taught short story via lecturing.

E. Significance of the Research

The researcher expects that the result of this research will be significant to teachers, students and other researcher.

1. Teachers

This study is expected to help instructors develop professionally, particularly English teachers at MTsN 5 Tulungagung. It can expand instructors' instructional practices and provide a more

engaging, student centered approach to teaching listening in English classes by demonstrating the efficacy of short story using Problem Based Learning (PBL).

2. Students

This study aims to raise students' awareness of the importance of improving their listening skills through short story within Problem Based Learning. It is expected to provide students with a more interactive and meaningful learning experience, fostering better comprehension, retention, and engagement in English listening activities.

3. Other Researcher

This study is expected to provide a foundation for future studies in the field of English language teaching, particularly those focusing on the integration of innovative teaching methods like short story using Problem Based Learning (PBL).

F. Scope and Limitation of the Research

The researcher here writes about the scope and limitation of this study.

1. Scope of the Research

The scope of this research focuses on assessing the effectiveness of short story using Problem Based Learning (PBL) approach in teaching listening skill of the 8th graders at MTsN 5 Tulungagung. The study will involve the implementation of audio

playback sessions embedded in PBL activities and will measure students' listening proficiency, focusing on comprehension, accuracy, and retention of information.

2. Limitation of the Research

The research is limited to 8th graders at MTsN 5 Tulungagung during the academic year of 2024/2025. The samples are 8B and 8C class. It will not cover other grade levels or students from different schools. Additionally, external factors that may influence students' listening abilities, such as their home environment, personal motivation, prior exposure to English language media, or previous experience with PBL techniques, are beyond the control of the study and will not be accounted for in the analysis.

G. Definitions of the Key Terms

In order to clarify the key terms used in this study, some definitions are put forward:

1. Short Story

Short story is a concise piece of fictional writing that usually centers on one main event, character, or theme, and is shorter in length than a novel.

2. Problem Based Learning

Problem based learning (PBL) is a learning model that involves students' activeness in always thinking critically and always being

skilled in solving a problem.

3. Listening

Listening is an active process that entails receiving, interpreting, and reacting to both spoken and nonverbal messages. It goes beyond merely hearing the words; it also involves grasping the context, tone, and emotions that accompany them.