

IMPROVING LISTENING SKILL BY USING AUDIO-LINGUAL METHOD (ALM) FOR STUDENTS IN THE GRADE 7TH AT SMP DHARMA PATRA PANGKALAN SUSU

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Received: January, 10, 2024

Revised: January, 20, 2024

Accepted: April, 30, 2024

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the implementation of the Audio-lingual Method (ALM) to enhance listening skills among Junior High School students. The study used a classroom action research (CAR) approach, involving three cycles with observations, pre-tests, post-tests, and a questionnaire. The findings revealed that students initially struggle with listening in English due to limited vocabulary, grammatical difficulties, pronunciation issues, and a lack of confidence. The ALM significantly improved students' listening comprehension skills through audio recordings, dialogues, interactive activities, and authentic materials. Around 75% of students felt significantly assisted and found it easier to comprehend English vocabulary after the ALM implementation. However, 15% of students expressed disagreement, citing continued struggles with limited vocabulary. The ALM positively influences students' listening skills by combining listening practice with interactive activities and authentic materials. To further enhance students' listening abilities, teachers should address vocabulary limitations and pronunciation challenges, and employ additional strategies to foster a supportive and enjoyable learning environment. Future research should explore supplementary approaches and resources that complement the ALM to further enhance students' listening skills. Evaluating the long-term impact of the ALM on students' listening abilities would provide valuable insights into its effectiveness over an extended period. By implementing these findings, educators can effectively enhance students' listening skills and promote their overall English language proficiency.

Keywords: Audio-Lingual Method, Listening, Junior High School

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Introduction (Times New Roman 12, Bold)

Listening is one of the fundamental language skills along with speaking, reading, and writing, is taught to students from Elementary School. However, students often struggles to communicate effectively in English, requiring dedicated time and effort to enhance their listening abilities. One approach to improving listening comprehension is through the use of instructional materials and methods that align with the students' needs. The development of the Audio-lingual Method (ALM) was influenced by fresh perspectives on language acquisition from descriptive linguistics and behaviour psychology, as noted by Brown (1994:135).

Junior High School students, being beginners in language learning, must become competent listeners in English. This means they need to diligently study and master the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing in both passive and active ways. This aspect holds great importance for Junior High School students as they can be considered English beginners. In reality, Junior High School students often possess limited vocabulary and struggle to select appropriate verbs to convey their ideas. They also face difficulties in understanding certain grammatical structures and arranging words or sentences, resulting in incorrect sentences. Pronunciation problems further hinder effective communication, leading to misunderstandings. Additionally, many students feel hesitant and embarrassed to use English when communicating with their peers or teachers due to the fear of making mistakes or being perceived as boastful individuals.

Some teachers encounter challenges in teaching listening skills as students struggle to comprehend written texts and face difficulties with real-life language usage. The absence of authentic language experiences complicates their learning process. To address this, teachers can employ engaging teaching methods and utilize teaching materials that create enjoyable lessons. An alternative teaching method is the spoken language approach, where the teacher's role and the selected method significantly impact the success of improving students' speaking skills. Therefore, teachers should employ effective strategies to achieve the objectives of the class.

The purpose of this research was to assist students and teachers in the English teaching and learning process. Additionally, it aimed to expand readers understanding of the audio-lingual method in English instruction.

Literature Review

The Audiolingual Method has been a prominent approach in language teaching for decades, emphasizing the importance of oral interaction and pronunciation accuracy. Recent research has explored various aspects of language learning, including the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) technology in speaking practice. Zou et al. (2023) investigated the impact of social network-based interaction on students' English speaking practice with AI speaking apps in China. The study found that interactive activities can effectively improve learners' speaking skills in the AI context, highlighting the potential of incorporating social networking platforms into language learning.

Furthermore, Syarifuddin et al. (2022) examined the effectiveness of suggestopedia-based language learning in enhancing students' speaking skills at middle schools. The study revealed positive effects of SBL on speaking skills and highlighted the interaction between teachers' educational background and the use of SBL in improving students' speaking abilities. This suggests that the choice of teaching method and teacher qualifications play a crucial role in enhancing students' speaking proficiency. In the context of English education in China, Wang and Wen (2023) explored the historical development of pronunciation teaching principles in national syllabi and curriculum standards. The study emphasized the importance of balancing the nativeness principle and the intelligibility principle in pronunciation teaching, advocating

for more realistic and instrumental-pragmatic pronunciation goals. This research provides valuable insights for English teachers and students in setting achievable pronunciation targets aligned with varying learning purposes.

Moreover, Islam and Stapa (2021) investigated the challenges faced by students in private universities in Bangladesh in developing spoken English proficiency. The study identified various factors contributing to students' low proficiency, such as instructional methods, teachers' proficiency, and sociocultural factors. The proposed remedies, including task-based learning and cooperative learning, offer practical approaches to enhance students' spoken English skills in English-only environments. Valledor et al. (2023) proposed a study on the methodologies used to teach English as a second language through computer applications, highlighting the importance of blended learning and personalised learning environments. The review emphasized the limitations of current applications based on the Audiolingual method and called for further research on software applications integrating different teaching modalities and learning methods. Lastly, Lin et al. (2022) conducted a systematic review of robot-assisted language learning (RALL) and its impact on learner performance. The study identified the communicative and audiolingual methods as dominant approaches in RALL oral interactions, emphasizing the potential of educational robots in facilitating language learning tasks traditionally provided by human teachers. Future research directions include focusing on meaning-based communication and intelligibility in oral production among language learners in RALL.

Methods

This research is carried out using CAR (classroom action research). According to Harmer (2003: 414), classroom action research is the name given to a set of procedures teachers can use, perhaps to improve specific aspects of their instruction or alternatively to evaluate the effectiveness and/or suitability of specific assignments and methods. According to Lewis in McNiff (1998), there are four stages to action research: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. To match the overall needs of this research, a different form of design approach will be used in conducting this study. The design essentially consists of the same four elements that Lewin has.

The quantitative and qualitative data are the two types of data employed in this research. The quantitative data takes the form of student test scores. Students' test scores from the start of the study until its conclusion create the data. They come from the exam. The following methods are used to collect the qualitative data: Questionnaires, interviews, and observations.

The reason behind selecting the ALM lies in its alignment with the objective of language learning, which emphasizes effective communication (Freeman, 2000). Furthermore, this teaching method has been extensively utilized to train learners in target language communication. Place of this research is at SMP Dharma Patra Pangkalan Susu. This research was conducted from May to June 2023, in the last semester. The subjects of this study were students of Class VII-1 SMP Dharma Patra Pangkalan Susu the 2023/2024 academic year.

Result and Discussion

This research was conducted in three cycles, with each cycle taking place in three separate sessions. In the first session (Cycle I), the researcher conducted observations and interviews with the students regarding their listening abilities in English. A pre-test was then administered to assess any progress after implementing the Audio-lingual Method in the teaching and learning process. The researcher utilized speaker media (audio) to train the students' skills. After the pre-test, the researcher began teaching and implementing the Audio-lingual Method.

In the second session (Cycle II), the researcher conducted a post-test using the same media as in Cycle I to evaluate the students' progress. In this cycle, noticeable improvements in the students' performance were observed.

In the third meeting (Cycle III), the researcher administered a questionnaire to gather the opinions of the students regarding listening in English. The questionnaire aimed to assess their perceptions and experiences related to listening comprehension. Additionally, the researcher evaluated the outcomes of implementing the Audio-lingual Method (ALM) on the students' development in English listening skills.

Cycle I & Cycle II

Table.1

<i>Score</i>	<i>Cycle 1</i>	<i>Cycle 2</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
>60-68	4	2	Failing
69-74	7	2	
75-89	8	12	Passing
90-100	1	4	

Cycle I:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{The average of the students' result} &= \frac{\text{The number of students who passed}}{\text{The Number Of students}} \times 100 \\
 &= \frac{9}{20} \times 100\% \\
 &= 45\%
 \end{aligned}$$

Cycle II:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{The average of the students' result} &= \frac{\text{The number of students who passed}}{\text{The Number Of students}} \times 100 \\
 &= \frac{16}{20} \times 100\% \\
 &= 80\%
 \end{aligned}$$

Based on the analysis conducted, the average pre-test score of the students was 40%. The writer's conclusion is that the students face difficulties in listening to English effectively. In the first cycle of teaching and learning activities, the researchers implemented the Audio-lingual teaching method to enhance listening skills. The students were introduced to this method and given examples of English conversations through audio recordings. They were then instructed to listen and write down the dialogue in their notebooks. Afterwards, the researcher checked each student's work, and the results were consistent with those presented in the table.

During the second cycle, the researcher incorporated a combination of techniques within the Audio-lingual teaching method. Students engaged in practice sessions and performed

conversational dialogues based on what they heard from the research speakers. These dialogues were presented in front of the class, and the researcher evaluated the students' written outcomes.

The average score for students in cycles I and II accepting audio content is shown in the table below. Researchers use audio as a teaching tool to improve students' listening comprehension. The number of students who pass the test is seen in cycle I data, and it grows in cycle II. Calculating the score indicates an increase of up to 35% from cycle I to cycle II. It also shows that using audio in the classroom can enhance listening comprehension, especially in according to vocabulary memory.

Cycle 3

The questionnaire consisted of various items exploring the students' views on the difficulty of listening in English. Approximately 60% of the students agreed that listening in English is challenging, primarily due to their limited vocabulary and other factors. Around 30% of the students responded that listening in English can be both easy and difficult, depending on the pronunciation of the foreign language. Interestingly, 10% of the students disagreed that listening in English is difficult. After implementing the Audio-lingual Method in the learning process, approximately 75% of the students felt significantly assisted and found it easier to understand English vocabulary. However, 15% of the students responded with disagreement, stating that they did not find it effective. They still struggled to listen in English using audio media due to limited vocabulary. Additionally, 5% of the students disagreed with the effectiveness of the method.

The findings from the questionnaire provide valuable insights into the students' perception of listening in English. It highlights the common challenges faced by students, including vocabulary limitations and difficulties associated with foreign language pronunciation. These findings emphasize the importance of addressing these specific areas to enhance students' listening abilities. Moreover, the research analyzed the impact of implementing the ALM on the students' listening skills. The first two cycles of the study demonstrated a significant improvement in students' listening comprehension. The ALM, with its focus on audio recordings and interactive activities, effectively enhanced the students' listening abilities. The students were exposed to English conversations, practiced listening, and transcribed dialogues. They also engaged in conversational dialogues based on the audio materials.

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the ALM approach positively influenced the students' listening skills. The combination of listening practice and interactive activities facilitated their progress in comprehending spoken English. The utilization of authentic materials and engaging teaching methods contributed to a more enjoyable and effective learning experience.

In conclusion, the questionnaire results highlighted the difficulties faced by students in listening to English, while the implementation of the ALM proved to be beneficial in enhancing their listening skills. These findings emphasize the significance of addressing vocabulary limitations, pronunciation challenges, and creating an engaging learning environment. Teachers can utilize the ALM approach and incorporate interactive activities to foster students' listening comprehension effectively. Future research can explore additional strategies and resources to further enhance students' listening abilities and evaluate the long-term impact of the ALM in English language instruction.

Conclusion

The research conducted three cycles of implementing the Audio-lingual Method (ALM) to enhance listening skills among Junior High School students. The findings revealed that students initially faced difficulties in listening to English effectively, particularly due to limited vocabulary and pronunciation challenges. However, the application of the ALM resulted in noticeable improvements in students' listening comprehension. The use of audio recordings, interactive activities, and authentic materials facilitated their progress in understanding spoken English. The students' perception of the ALM was generally positive, with around 75% of students feeling significantly assisted and finding it easier to understand English vocabulary.

Based on the research findings, the following suggestions can be made:

1. **Address Vocabulary Limitations:** Since limited vocabulary was identified as a major challenge, teachers should focus on vocabulary development through various activities, such as word games, context-based exercises, and exposure to authentic language resources.
2. **Provide Pronunciation Practice:** Pronunciation plays a crucial role in effective listening comprehension. Teachers should incorporate regular pronunciation exercises, drills, and provide opportunities for students to practice speaking and listening in a controlled environment.
3. **Create Engaging Learning Environment:** To enhance students' listening skills, it is essential to create an engaging and supportive learning environment. Teachers can use interactive teaching methods, multimedia resources, and real-life language experiences to make the learning process enjoyable and relevant.
4. **Continued Use of Authentic Materials:** Authentic materials, such as audio recordings, videos, and dialogues, should be integrated into the curriculum to expose students to real-life language usage and improve their listening comprehension in different contexts.
5. **Evaluate and Adapt Teaching Strategies:** Teachers should regularly evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching strategies and adapt them based on students' needs and feedback. This can be done through classroom observations, student assessments, and soliciting input from students regarding their learning experience.
6. **Further Research:** Future research can explore additional strategies and resources that can complement the ALM and enhance students' listening abilities. Additionally, the long-term impact of the ALM on students' listening skills can be evaluated to assess its effectiveness over an extended period.

By implementing these suggestions, educators can better support students in developing their listening skills and improve overall English language proficiency.

Acknowledgments

The author stated thank you to headmaster and teachers at SMP Dharma Patra Pangkalan Susu

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