

**THE EFFECT OF USING MEMORY ACTIVITIES TOWARDS
STUDENTS' LISTENING PROFICIENCY AT SMAN 7 PADANG**

THESIS

Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements to

Obtain the Strata One (S1) Degree



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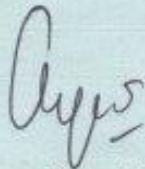
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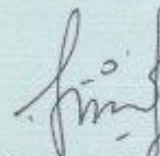
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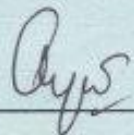
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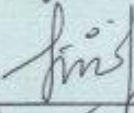
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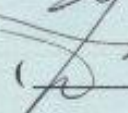
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ABSTRAK

D Gumanti, Febrian. 2015. "The Effect of Using Memory Activities Towards Students' Listening Proficiency at SMAN 7 Padang." *Skripsi*. Padang: Jurusan Bahasa Inggris. Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni. Universitas Negeri Padang.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melihat apakah penggunaan Aktivitas Memori memberikan dampak yang lebih baik terhadap pencapaian menyimak siswa. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian eksperimen dengan desain *posttest-only*. Populasi penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas X SMAN 7 Padang tahun ajaran 2014/2015. Dua kelas yang diasumsikan memiliki kemampuan sama pada kemudian dijadikan sampel penelitian, yaitu kelas XMIA 5 sebagai kelas eksperimen dan kelas XMIA 6 sebagai kelas kontrol. Pada kelas eksperimental siswa diberikan satu Aktivitas Memori setiap pertemuan pada tahap *observing* lalu menanyakan pertanyaan yang berkaitan dengan apa yang akan dipelajari berdasarkan *Aktivitas Memori* yang dilaksanakan. Sedangkan di kelas control siswa tidak diberikan *Aktivitas Memori* dan langsung menanyakan pertanyaan-pertanyaan yang berkaitan dengan materi pelajaran yang akan dipelajari. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai rata-rata siswa kelas eksperimen lebih tinggi dari pada kelas kontrol. Berdasarkan analisis statistik dengan menggunakan rumus *t-test*, ditemukan bahwa nilai *t*-hitung adalah 3,09 yang mana lebih besar dari *t*-tabel yaitu 1,67 dengan tingkat signifikansi 0,05. Dengan demikian, dapat disimpulkan bahwa hipotesis yang menyatakan "penggunaan *Aktivitas Memori* memberikan dampak yang lebih baik terhadap pencapaian menyimak siswa" dapat diterima.

Kata Kunci: Aktivitas Memori, Pencapaian Menyimak, Penelitian Eksperimental,

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Padang, January 22th

The Writer

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Listening holds an important role in language learning. Vandergrift and Gog (2012:4) say that listening helps language learners to receive and interact with language input and assist them to deal with other language skills, especially for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners. Mastering listening skill will benefit students in learning other language skills. For example, as it is emphasized by Nation and Newton (2009:37) that listening is the forerunner of speaking skill. It means that mastering listening skill would also help learners to improve speaking skill. Furthermore, listening is a crucial aspect in interpreting oral information or message since they need to understand and decipher the spoken input from the speaker. Besides, Nunan in Nation and Newton (2009:37) claims that most EFL students assign almost 50 percent of their time in listening activity. Altogether, listening skill is a crucial aspect in language learning especially for EFL learners.

However, there are some evidences that teaching listening for EFL learners is still undervalued. For instance, Wei (2012:1), a senior high school's English teacher from Taiwan, states that teaching listening is put aside from her classroom, while listening test is required as a requirement to go to college. Moreover, she adds that the students should forcefully practice to listen right before the examination is held. Another proof is presented by Field (2008:1), he

states that generally teaching listening in EFL classroom will be diminished when there is a time pressure. Additionally, he also notices that listening skill is rarely evaluated by English teachers and problems in listening that happen to students are often left unrecognized. In addition, Vandergrift and Gog (2012:4) allege that EFL learners are barely taught how to be good listeners or the way to deal with auditory information or messages. All in all, teaching listening is still not becoming a concern in most EFL classroom.

In Indonesia, listening skill is obligatorily included in English subject. However, in latest curriculum in Indonesia, well known as curriculum 2013, teaching listening is almost diminished in classroom activities. In previous curriculum, the School Based Curriculum, teaching listening along with three other skills, were taught in integrated way and the time allocation was equally same for each skill. Based on the researcher's experience during his student-teacher period, School Based Curriculum was the applied curriculum back then. There were always allocated meeting for each skill, including listening skill. Otherwise, in curriculum 2013 teaching listening is not as important as other skills since the focus of curriculum 2013 is reading, writing and grammar. Furthermore, Field (2008:1) states that integrated teaching could downgrade teaching listening since writing and reading are more reasonable to learn.

As the fact that teaching listening is slowly put aside and the allocated time is shrunk, an alternative strategy is needed to help students develop their listening ability. Listening is a skill that requires attention and a good memory ability in order to hold information. By far, the emphasis in activating background

knowledge has been and still applied in many schools to help students in listening skill. Activating background knowledge helps students to improve their Long Term Memory (LTM). However, efforts to enhance students Short Term Memory (STM) are often forgotten. STM is important in listening process, because before the received information is passed to the LTM, the information will be first processed in STM. STM helps learners to hold more amount of information and last longer. Therefore, teachers need to bring strategy that could help students to train their memory, especially for the STM.

Listening requires a good STM ability to store new information. However, in many schools especially in Indonesia, amount of meaningful activities that could engage students' STM is still limited. The focus of listening activity in many classrooms tends to give exercise as many as possible to students. Most teachers might assume that the more test would give more comprehension. As the result, listening does not show a significant improvement. This similar problem was also found by the researcher during his student-teacher activities at a public senior high school in SMA N 7 Padang. In other words, engaging students' STM is sometimes underrated from learning activity.

Therefore, several problems might rise when teachers teach listening to the students. Firstly, students face a difficulty to remember information they hear from the speaker. Listening is delivered through auditory information. The purpose of the delivery is to have students remember and hold as many as possible information from the recording before they are able to interpret the message and they can understand the information. This case happened in SMA N 7 Padang. In

2014 the researcher conducted interview to some students related to the difficulty of holding new information in their mind. Most students admitted that they could not clearly remember information they just heard from an auditory text. In brief, students were still not able to hold more information in their mind and kept it lasting.

Secondly, the teachers sometimes did not care about conducting activities that can engage students' STM. For years, this aspect is often forgotten by the teachers when they teach listening to their students, whereas STM is utterly an important aspect towards a successful listening activity. As Bilbrough (2011:1) emphasizes that STM holds an important aspect of successful learning that human rely so much on STM to interpret new oral and written information, and to speak and write effectively. It is clear that STM must not be put aside. Therefore, the teachers need to provide more activities that can engage the ability of STM to hold more information in mind. These activities will be useful for students later to master listening, reading, speaking, and writing skill.

Thirdly, in latest implemented curriculum in Indonesia, listening is taught implicitly since the focus of the curriculum is reading, speaking, writing and grammar. Unlike the previous curriculum that teaching listening was explicitly taught alongside three other skills. However, listening test is required for students in national examination and most importantly for preparation of college study. As the result, many learners failed in listening test due to the limited time allocation for listening skill.

Among many teaching strategies that can be taught at senior high school, the researcher would like to conduct a research about memory-based strategy to help students in listening skill. This strategy is called “**Memory Activities**”. This strategy assists students in improving their STM ability. Through these activities, students are expected to hold more information and keep it lasting, and then the stored information could be associated with their background knowledge. This strategy was chosen because the lack of activity that could enable students to improve their STM, since STM is an important aspect in listening. These activities could help students to improve their STM and later it can help students not only during listening class, but also in speaking class.

Memory activities do not only use one activity, but there are various activities in this strategy that can be conducted in classroom activity. The activities of this strategy will be adapted from “**Memory Activities for Language Learning**” by Nick Bilbrough. For example, working memory challenge activity, pictorial links activity, holiday snap activity and repeated role plays. Thus, by using these activities, it is expected able to improve students’ interests. It is really important to make a classroom less stressful, playful and the most importantly enjoyable. Moreover, by using various activities in classroom activity, the teachers could manage to find the best activities to use later in other classrooms.

There are some findings related to the training of STM. A research was conducted by Alloway and Gathercole (2007:19), University of Durham psychologists’ with over 20 years of experience in research on memory during childhood, resulted improvements in the whole class as a result of the treatment,

such as improved concentration and focus, as well as increased ability to follow instructions. In addition Bilbrough (2011:17) mentions that a well-trained memory could assist learners to improve their fluency in listening, reading, speaking and writing. Morrison and Chein in Lervag and Hulme (2013:273) claim that, the result from STM training on individual stimulated the cognitive achievement. Moreover, Klingberg (2010:332) also emphasized that STM training could improve learners' academic performance and daily life.

From the explanations above, the researcher conducted the **“Memory Activities”** into classroom activity in order to see the effect of this strategy. This strategy was chosen because it helps students to make their STM works even more. Furthermore, this strategy was promoted since the limited activities that could improve students' STM.

This research was carried out to see if Memory Activities significantly affect students' listening proficiency since there is a strong relationship between listening and STM. It was surprising that the use of STM of students is still put aside and sometimes it is totally forgotten. Moreover, by applying this strategy, the researcher was able to identify the improvement students' STM to see how the students perceive new information and use their prior knowledge to interpret the information they heard. This strategy is useful to learn other skills for the students, because having a good memory means having a good comprehension.

B. Identification of the Problem

From the background above, it could be identified that students have difficulty in learning listening. Therefore, there were some problems that could be identified through Memory Activities. The first one was whether there is a correlation between STM training and cognitive improvement. The second one was how to help students improve their STM. The third one was to what extent improving students' STM affects their listening skill. The last one was to what extent or how significant the effect of applying a particular strategy, in this case Memory Activities, on students' listening proficiency.

C. Limitation of the Problem

This research was focused on how significance Memory Activities affect students' listening proficiency is. Thus, this research was limited to the effect of applying "Memory Activities" on X grade students' listening proficiency at SMA N 7 Padang. There are two listening activities taught at school: listening to conversation and listening to monologue text. These activities were taught to X grade students at the first semester at SMA N 7 Padang where the researcher carried out this research. This research involved students who registered in 2014/2015 academic year of SMA N 7 Padang.

D. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the identification and the limitation of the problem above, the problem of this research is formulated in the following question: "Does Memory Activities strategy affect grade X students' listening proficiency?"

E. The Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research was to find out whether Memory Activity strategy affects students' listening proficiency at senior high school.

F. The Significance of the Research

This research was expected to give both theoretical and practical contribution for teaching and learning process of listening. Theoretically, it was expected well that the research could produce useful data for the upcoming researchers who are willing to carry out further research about memory activity strategy based on the available theories. Practically, from this research, teachers could find a better strategy that they can use for students to deal with problem they face in learning listening skill.

G. Definition of Key Terms

1. Memory Activities = activities to enhance memory capability in holding several new information (short-term) that is useful to help students in learning activity (Nick Bilbrough, 2011)
2. Listening proficiency = students' overall ability in listening that were obtained and calculated from a specific or certain standardized test, for example TOEIC test.
3. Effect = results that are produced from a certain strategy applied into a classroom.
4. Curriculum 2013 = A scientific approach based curriculum that is applied in most school in Indonesia.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions

Based on the research findings that have been discussed in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that it can be said that the use of Memory Activities affected students' listening proficiency. The mean of listening score of the students who were given Memory activity in every meeting was higher than those who were asked some questions towards what they are going to learn by the teacher. By using statistical analysis, it was found that there was a significant difference in listening proficiency between those two groups.

Despite of the success of the research, there are also some important factors that affect the result of the research. The intervening variables benefit the experimental groups which affected the post-test score. Furthermore, training memory, especially STM, requires times. There should be more meeting in order to see the effect of Memory Activities.

B. Suggestions

Based on the results of the research, the researcher would like to give suggestions as consideration for some problems existing in teaching listening for senior high school students. Teachers can use Memory Activities to help students with the listening proficiency. It is recommended for English teachers to use Memory Activities before build the students' background knowledge. Moreover, by conducting Memory Activities in every meeting, it would balance

the use of short term memory and long term memory. As a recommendation for the next research, the researcher proposes to see the correlation between students' short term memory and the students' listening skill. Moreover, this research was merely a beginning of upcoming researchers that intent to explore more the possibilities of cognitive functions by using Memory Activities.

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