

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of The Study

In today's increasingly interconnected world, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners need to develop effective listening skills to navigate a wide range of real-life situations. Traditional listening instruction has predominantly focused on auditory input, often overlooking the multimodal nature of communication. This background of study explores the rationale for implementing multimodal learning techniques in teaching listening skills to EFL learners. Drawing from current research, this discussion highlights the benefits of a multimodal approach in enhancing EFL listening proficiency.

Engagement is a critical factor in effective learning. Multimodal learning materials have been shown to captivate the attention of learners more effectively than traditional auditory-only materials. An experimental study by Mehravaran and Ahmadi (2016) revealed that EFL students exposed to multimodal learning materials demonstrated significantly higher levels of attention and participation compared to those exposed solely to audio. Incorporating visuals, gestures, and text alongside audio recordings provides students with additional cues for understanding and maintaining their interest throughout the listening activity.

Comprehension and retention are at the core of successful listening skills development. Research by Mayer and Moreno (2003) has established the concept of the multimedia principle, which suggests that presenting information in multiple formats enhances learning outcomes. When applied to the EFL classroom, this principle implies that incorporating visual and textual support in listening activities can improve students' comprehension and retention of the content. Multimodal materials enable learners to decode complex auditory input by cross-referencing with other sensory input, leading to more robust understanding and memory consolidation.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education has witnessed a significant transformation in recent years, particularly in the realm of language skills development. Listening, as a fundamental language skill, plays a crucial role in EFL classrooms. The integration of multimodal learning, which involves the use of various sensory modalities such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements, has gained attention as a

promising approach to enhance EFL listening skills. This background study explores the rationale and theoretical underpinnings of implementing multimodal learning in EFL listening classrooms. Listening skills hold paramount importance in language acquisition and communication. Competence in listening comprehension is not only vital for effective communication but also forms the basis for developing other language skills, including speaking, reading, and writing (Vandergrift, 2007). In the context of EFL, where learners may not have constant exposure to the target language, effective listening skills become a key determinant of their language proficiency.

Teaching EFL listening can be a challenging task. Learners often face difficulties in understanding rapid speech, unfamiliar accents, and complex vocabulary and syntax (Field, 2008). Furthermore, traditional listening instruction primarily relies on auditory input, neglecting the potential benefits of incorporating visual and kinesthetic elements. This one-dimensional approach may not cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of EFL students.

Multimodal learning draws on the principles of cognitive science and educational psychology to provide a holistic learning experience that engages multiple sensory modalities (Plass et al., 2013). It is rooted in the belief that integrating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements can enhance comprehension and retention. The use of visual aids, gestures, multimedia, and interactive activities can provide a comprehensive understanding of the listening content, making it more accessible to EFL learners.

Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 1988) posits that learners have a limited cognitive capacity for processing information. Traditional listening instruction that relies solely on auditory input may overwhelm learners with high cognitive load. By incorporating visual aids and kinesthetic elements, multimodal learning can reduce cognitive load, enabling students to focus on comprehension rather than struggling to process auditory information. Advancements in technology have further facilitated the integration of multimodal learning in EFL classrooms. Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) tools, such as interactive multimedia software, provide opportunities to create engaging and effective multimodal listening materials. These digital resources can cater to various learning styles and preferences, making listening activities more dynamic and interactive (Chapelle, 2001).

Cultural factors can significantly impact EFL listening comprehension. Multimodal learning allows for the inclusion of culturally relevant visual and contextual cues in listening materials, making the content more relatable and meaningful for learners from diverse backgrounds (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003). This approach acknowledges the importance of cultural sensitivity in EFL instruction. Motivation is a crucial factor in language learning. Multimodal learning, with its dynamic and interactive nature, has the potential to enhance learner motivation in the EFL classroom. Engaging and stimulating materials can create a positive learning environment, promoting a desire to improve listening skills (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Inclusive education is a growing priority in EFL classrooms. Multimodal learning can benefit learners with diverse needs, including those with learning disabilities or different learning styles (Bashash, 2016). By offering multiple pathways to understanding, multimodal learning supports the inclusion of all students, irrespective of their abilities. Research in the field of EFL pedagogy has provided evidence of the benefits of multimodal learning in enhancing listening skills. Studies have demonstrated that the integration of visual and kinesthetic elements in listening instruction leads to improved comprehension, retention, and overall language proficiency (Hampel & Stickler, 2005). These findings underline the potential of multimodal learning as a viable approach to address the challenges in teaching EFL listening.

B. Problem Statement

1. How is the implementation of multimodal learning strategies in teaching listening in SMA N 1 Gemolong?
2. What are the challenges of the implementation of multimodal learning strategies in teaching listening in SMA N 1 Gemolong?
3. How do teachers overcome the challenges of the implementation of multimodal learning strategies in teaching listening in SMA N 1 Gemolong?

C. Objective of The Study

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of the teacher implementing multimodal learning strategies in the teaching of English listening in the classroom. The study aims to:

1. To investigate the implementation of multimodal learning strategies in teaching listening in SMA N 1 Gemolong.
2. To investigate the challenges of implementation of multimodal learning strategies teaching listening in SMA N 1 Gemolong.
3. To investigate how to overcome the challenges of implementation of multimodal learning strategies teaching listening in SMA N 1 Gemolong.

D. Benefits of The Study

1. Theoretical Benefits

- a) The study's findings should assist the following researcher in their investigation of English teaching and learning, particularly when teaching listening.
- b) The study's findings should help address the issue with teaching listening in EFL classes.

2. Practical Benefits

- a) The research's findings should ideally extend the reader's understanding of listening instruction methods in the EFL classroom.
- b) The study's findings can assist English teachers in determining how to best enhance or devise the most effective methods for teaching listening in EFL classes.