



THE USE OF STORYLINE ONLINE WEBSITE BY EFL LEARNERS AS THE INDEPENDENT LEARNING MEDIA TO LEARN LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract: This study aims to explore the use of the Storyline online website for learning listening comprehension and also find out the benefits and challenges EFL learners perceive when using the Storyline Online website as a self-learning tool to learn listening comprehension skills. The methodology for this study is qualitative, using a descriptive research design. The participants of this study were 3 students from class XI RPL 2 who were selected by criterion-based sampling. For this study, the researcher employed interviews, focus group discussions and documentation methods to gather the necessary information. The researcher used Miles and Huberman's method to analyze the data. The results of this study show that the online storyline website is used to learn to listen for gist, listen for specific information, listen for details and inferential listening. Storyline online has several benefits and challenges. The benefits of storyline include practicing listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, inspiring stories and easy to use. While the challenges in learning to use storyline include unfamiliar vocabulary, fast pronunciation and accents.

Keywords: Listening skill, independent learning, storyline online website.

INTRODUCTION

Listening is an essential ability that enables individuals to utilize their auditory senses to perceive and comprehend the intended message of the communicator. According to Cj et al (2018), the act of attentively perceiving and comprehending the information communicated by the speaker, along with the cognitive process of analyzing and assimilating the received information, is referred to as listening comprehension. Listening plays a crucial role in language acquisition as it offers valuable input to learners and contributes significantly to the development of their linguistic knowledge. According to Ahmadi (2023), in the absence of attentive listening, communication suffers, leading to difficulties in receiving information.

Learning listening skills can present both advantages and challenges. Effective listening can lead to improved communication, conflict resolution, and collaboration, as it promotes open dialogue and the exchange of ideas. However, acquiring the ability to listen effectively can also present certain obstacles. According to Bingol et al (2014), there are many difficulties that learners may face that may be encountered in the listening comprehension process. Some of them are as follows: Quality of recorded materials, cultural differences, accent, unfamiliar vocabulary and length and speed of Listening.

Gaining an understanding of listening for students can be obtained through learning English at school. Therefore, teachers have the responsibility to teach with various techniques so that learning can take place in a fun way and the material can be conveyed appropriately. Based on Poedjiatustie (2018), students should improve their listening skills not only in class. Students can acquire listening skills from anywhere and from anyone. According to Wilson (2008), there are four skills in listening, namely listening to get the gist, listening to get specific information, listening in detail, and inferential listening. Technological advances make it easy for anyone to obtain information from various sources on the internet. This can be utilized by students for language learning through computers, laptops, smartphones or other media. According to Egbert in Sen's paper (2021), Mobile Assisted Learning Language (MALL) is an emerging field with a new way of learning and expanding educational boundaries through mobility.

Digital storytelling media is utilized to facilitate the learning of listening comprehension in the target language. It involves combining the art of storytelling with various digital multimedia elements like images, audio, and video. According to Arroba (2021), implementing digital storytelling can significantly enhance the appeal of the learning environment. Digital storytelling

is an application of technology that is incorporated to help make learning fun. One of the digital storytelling websites is the Storyline online website.

Storyline Online is an interactive website that promotes literacy and the love of reading. It offers a collection of popular children's books narrated by famous actors and actresses. The platform allows users to listen and follow along with the narration, accompanied by colourful illustrations and animations. This platform can be a valuable educational tool for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, as it offers many benefits for improving English language skills, especially in listening comprehension. The students are expected to use the Storyline online website best by regularly practising listening in English. Based on the explanation above, the researcher believes that the storyline online website can be a medium for independent learning for EFL Learners to learn listening comprehension skills.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this study is qualitative, using a descriptive research design to investigate the use of a Storyline online website as an independent learning media and to know what the benefits and challenges EFL learners perceive when using the Storyline online website as an independent learning media to learn listening comprehension. According to Litchman (2022), qualitative research aims to depict and comprehend human phenomena, human interaction, or human discourse. The participants of this study were 3 students from XI RPL 2 class who were selected by criterion-based sampling. The researcher selected students for the study based on their scores in the odd semester final examination, including those with high, average, and low scores. The researcher employed interviews, focus group discussions and documentation methods to gather the necessary information. After the data was collected, the researcher used the Miles and Huberman method to analyze the data. According to Miles & Huberman (2014), there are three sets of activities carried out in data analysis, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study provide an overall picture of the use of storyline online websites as the independent medium for EFL learners to learn listening comprehension based on insights

gained from semi-structured interviews. Furthermore, this section will discuss the findings in detail.

The Use of Storyline Online Websites by EFL Learners as The Independent Learning Media to Learn Listening Comprehension

This research mainly centers on semi-structured interviews that explore the use of storyline online websites as the independent learning media for EFL Learners to learn listening comprehension. According to Wilson (2008), the four skills in listening are listening to get the gist, listening to get specific information, listening in detail, and inferential listening. The data obtained is based on the needs of participants after doing self-regulated learning in listening comprehension skills. The data obtained from the interview results can be seen in the following diagram.

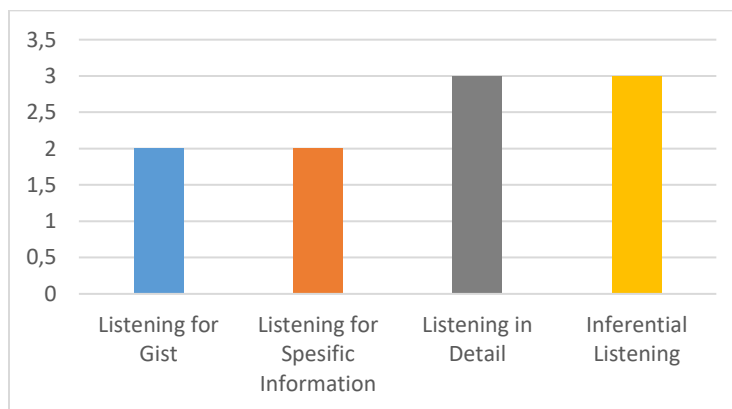


Figure 1. The use of Storyline Online Website

Based on the diagram above, the storyline online website is used for participants to learn four skills in listening comprehension, namely listening for gist, listening for specific information, listening in detail and inferential listening.

1. Listening for gist

The researcher found that two participants utilized the storyline online website as an independent learning media to improve listening skills, especially in listening for gist skills. Listen for gist is a listening activity that aims to get an overview or main topic of what is being discussed. The following is one of the interview excerpts from the participant.

“...With the visualization of the story on the Storyline online website, it helps me understand the essence of the story, although there are some unfamiliar words, I can still understand the story through the visualization...”

This finding is in line with the result of research by Hardiah (2019), which shows that students can identify the main idea through the use of audio-visuals.

2. Listening for specific information

Specific information listening skills are listening activities that do not need to understand all the information available, but only focus on very specific parts. Two participants utilized the storyline online website as an independent learning media to improve listening skills, especially in listening skills for specific information. The following is one of the interview excerpts from the participant.

“...The questions in the teacher guide helped me to focus on the specific information I wanted to get while listening to the stories on the storyline online website...”

This finding is in line with the result of research by Namaziandost et al (2019), which shows that listening to specific information is a sub-skill that improved the most after the application of authentic videos as audio-visual aids.

3. Listening in detail

The researcher found that all participants utilized the storyline online website as a self-directed learning medium to improve their listening skills, especially in detailed listening skills. The researcher found that all participants utilized storyline online by listening to the audio, reading the transcript, and completing comprehension exercises. The following is one of the interview excerpts from the participant.

“...Storyline online website helps me hone my detailed listening skills. Because the reader is a native, I know in detail what the correct pronunciation is. If I encounter unfamiliar vocabularies, I will repeat the pronunciation while turning on the subtitles...”

This finding is in line with the result of research by Namaziandost et al (2019) , which shows that other listening sub-skills, listening to main ideas, listening to core, and listening to detailed information also improved due to the help of audio-video.

4. Inferential Listening

The researcher found that all individuals who participated in this study subsequently used the storyline online website as a self-learning tool that was beneficial to the participants' goal of improving their auditory comprehension skills. Specifically, all participants used the storyline online website to help improve their ability to infer hidden meanings in spoken discourse, which is information that is conveyed implicitly. The following is one of the interview excerpts from the participant.

“...I consider that while using the storyline online I can infer the story, whether it is implied or not. I can summarize what the story is like or the moral message of the story...”

This finding is in line with the result of research by Kirana (2016), which shows that students were able to summarize the story through Audio-visual which previously students could not do the summary.

The benefits perceived by EFL learners when using the Storyline online website as the Independent Learning Media to Learn Listening Comprehension

All participants found the storyline online website useful and flexible to use. Storyline online websites allow users to practice listening at their own pace, making storyline online websites a valuable tool for self-study outside of class. The following is a diagram of the storyline benefits of an online website.

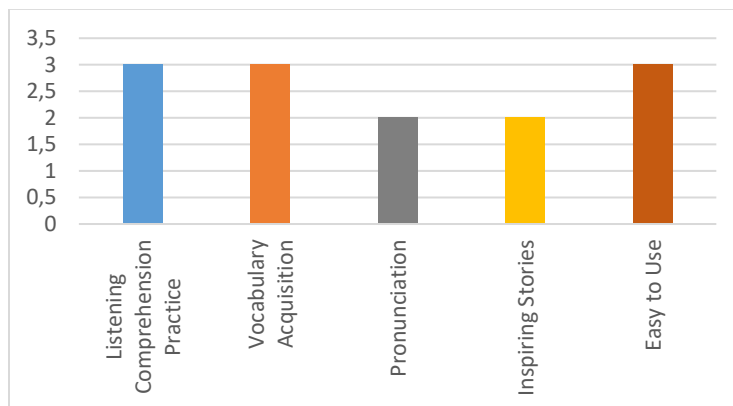


Figure 2. Benefits of Storyline Online Website

Some of the benefits perceived by EFL Learners when using the storyline online website as the Independent Learning Media to Learn Listening Comprehension are as a medium for listening comprehension practice, increasing vocabulary, knowing the pronunciation of a word, the story is inspiring and easy to use.

1. Listening comprehension practice

Three participants agreed that the storyline online website is an interesting medium as a listening exercise because of the visualization and audio assistance. The following is one of the interview excerpts from the participant. The following is one of the interview excerpts from the participant.

“...There is. With the support of interesting illustrations, I can understand the meaning of the story...”

This finding is in line with the results of research by Khasanah et al (2023), It is explained that Digital Storytelling makes the learning experience more fun and interesting for both students and teachers.

2. Vocabulary acquisition

Three participants agreed that the storyline was useful for vocabulary acquisition. Storyline online is a website that contains a collection of storybooks whose stories are read by famous actors, which can provide a new vocabulary for listeners. The following is one of the interview excerpts from the participant.

“...The benefits are getting to know the native pronunciation directly increasing vocabulary...”

This finding is in line with the result of research by Leong et al (2019), which shows that digital storytelling has a positive impact on vocabulary learning.

3. Pronunciation

Two out of three participants agreed that storylines are useful for knowing the pronunciation of a word. The story reader is a native speaker, allowing EFL learners to listen to stories from a variety of accents. The loud and expressive reading of the story can help EFL learners imitate and pronounce the vocabulary correctly. The following is one of the interview excerpts from the participant.

“...The benefit is that I get to know new vocabulary, and I also get to know how to pronounce the word through a native person...”

This finding is in line with the result of research by Tatli et al (2022), which shows that using digital storytelling can improve English language skills in terms of oral grammar, vocabulary use, fluency and coherence, and pronunciation after using Digital storytelling repeatedly in three stories.

4. Inspiring stories

Two out of three participants agreed that storyline is useful because of their inspiring stories. Storyline Online is a website that offers a large collection of inspiring stories read by famous actors and actresses. There are various themes in the storyline such as stories of life, friendship and love. The following is one of the interview excerpts from the participant.

“...The story is good and very inspiring, because every story contains moral values...”

This finding is in line with the result of research by Cj et al (2018), which shows that the story being watched has meaning and moral values in stories.

5. Easy to use

Two out of three participants agreed that storylines are easy to use. With a simple interface and useful features such as a search bar and filters to help users find specific stories or authors. Storyline Online's user-friendly design makes it a convenient and enjoyable platform for children and adults to access and enjoy a wide variety of interesting stories read by talented actors. The following is one of the interview excerpts from the participant.

“...Very simple design and not too many features so easy to use...”

This finding is in line with the result of research by Robin in Surayatika (2017), which shows that the website is an effective medium because of the easily repeatable video clips and even translatable script.

The Challenges Encountered by EFL Learners when Using the Storyline Online Website as the Independent Learning Media to Learn Listening Comprehension

The participants used and created learning experiences in the storyline. While learning on the storyline online website, not only benefits are obtained but also challenges in learning. The following is a diagram of the challenges of learning in storyline online website.

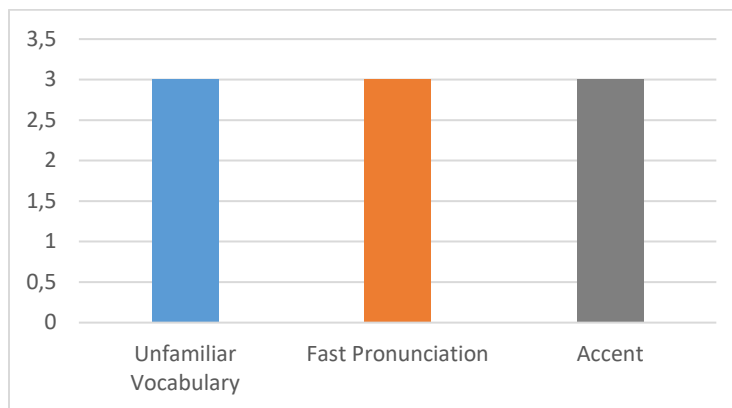


Figure 3. Challenges Faced by EFL Learners when Using Storyline Online Website

Some of the challenges perceived by EFL Learners when using the storyline online website as the Independent Learning Media to Learn Listening Comprehension are unfamiliar vocabulary, fast pronunciation and accent.

1. Unfamiliar vocabulary

Various stories in online storyline websites may contain words or phrases that are unfamiliar to EFL learners. As felt by the participants, there were many unfamiliar vocabularies that participants encountered while learning on the online storyline website. The following is one of the interview excerpts from the participant.

“...Yes, I found a lot of new vocabulary. However, when I find new vocabulary, I write it down first, and then after I finish watching, I look up the meaning...”

This finding is in line with the result of research by Aulia et al (2023), which shows that students face difficulties with unfamiliar words, phrases and topics in English when learning to listen.

2. Fast Pronunciation

The pace of storyline online narratives, while professional and appropriate for native speakers, can be a significant hurdle for EFL learners, especially beginners. In addition, some students may have difficulty following the intonation and rhythm of the narrator, hindering their comprehension. The following is one of the interview excerpts from the participant.

“...The native speaker is sometimes too fast in delivering the story.but I overcame this by repeating the video and turning on the subtitles...”

This finding is in line with the result of research by Purwanto et al (2021), which shows that speed can make the listening part difficult.

3. Accent

Different accents can make it difficult for EFL learners to understand the stories on storyline online websites. The participants felt that different accents were a challenge when learning to use the online storyline website. To overcome this challenge, participants needed to listen to the same story several times and use subtitles to help understand the story. The following is one of the interview excerpts from the participant.

“...I came across both British and American accents. But the most challenging was the British accent. Because I rarely hear British accents. The way to solve it is to turn on the subtitles...”

This finding is in line with the result of research by Ilahiy & Kirana (2023), which shows accents have a big impact on listening comprehension.

CONCLUSION

The online Storyline website can be used as an independent learning medium by EFL learners to learn listening comprehension. In this case, participants used the Storyline online website as a medium to improve listening comprehension skills. By using the online storyline website, the students saw an improvement in four skills in listening comprehension namely listening skills to get the gist, listening skills to get specific information, detailed listening skills and inferential listening skills. This research also provides findings related to the benefits of online storyline websites through interviews with participants. The perceived benefits of the online storyline website include being a fun medium for practicing listening comprehension, increasing vocabulary because there are various kinds of stories on the storyline website, and the pronunciation of a word

spoken by native speakers. In addition to the perceived benefits, participants also faced challenges when learning on the Storyline website such as unfamiliar vocabulary, pronunciation and fast accents.

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