

## **RIDER STRATEGY: ITS EFFECTIVENESS IN DEVELOPING LISTENING SKILLS**

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**Abstract.** This study was conducted to determine the effectiveness of RIDER Strategy to improve students' listening comprehension in one high school in Ambon-Indonesia. The research design is quasi experimental with pre-post test non-equivalent control group design. This research involved two groups of samples; experimental group and control group. The result shows that there is significance improvement on students' listening comprehension after implementing RIDER Strategy. The students' mean score increases to 66.05 from 44.82. RIDER Strategy has been succeeding to improve students' listening comprehension and motivate students to develop their listening skills.

**Keywords:** *RIDER Strategy, Listening Skills, Effectiveness*

### **Introduction**

Helping teachers to promote teaching listening strategies for EFL (English as A Foreign Language) learners should be taken into consideration. This contention is reasonable due to the fact that people spent most of their time to listen in order to either gain information or listen for pleasure. Without listening, students could not interact well with each other. They may misunderstand the information and cannot respond to the information that they receive.

In addition, listening is a substantial thing not only in communication but also in language acquisition. Teachers mostly spend their time in class by speaking. This indicates that learners would have some input through listening. Hamouda (2012) states that as an input listening holds an important role in improving students' language acquisition. In spite of its importance, listening becomes a neglected skill in teaching English as foreign language. The reason which makes listening tends to be neglected is based on language teachers' perceptions that listening skill would be automatically acquired by language learners.

However, there still exists problem in learning to listen in foreign language. Underwood (1989) cited in Chen (2005) emphasizes that some problems have been identified which prevent students' listening skill development such as lack of control over the speed which make students hardly to get the information from the speaker, lack of vocabulary, unable to concentrate, and less of listening practice.

A preliminary study had been conducted in senior high schools in Ambon and the result revealed that most of English classroom activities focused on speaking and reading which causes students to become less aware about listening skill development. Moreover, listening learning process is also considered as passive activity which mainly focuses on literal comprehension. It is also figured out from the questionnaire given to the students that many students were hard to

catch information and missed points during listening process. Some students lost their focus when they listened. It was even harder for some students to catch the points of information which was repeated over times.

Regarding this finding, it is suggested that teacher should apply and modify interesting teaching strategy to help students gain better comprehension in listening. Marks (2014) and Vega (2012) believe that teacher should raise the students' awareness of listening by giving them the purpose to listen. Furthermore, setting a purpose before listening could help students to focus, for instance, by asking them to listen to find main ideas of a text. Marks (2014) adds that teacher can use authentic materials, set interesting listening tasks in order to motivate and direct students to be more detailed to understand spoken messages.

According to Cusker and Oliver (2006), Read or Listen, Image, Describe, Evaluate, and Repeat or in short RIDER strategy can strengthen students' ability to monitor their comprehension and recall the information. By applying this strategy, students are guided to listen step by step. First, students listen to the information, imagine it on their mind, describe in a simple picture or in form of note, evaluate it in pairs, and in the last step, repeat, students listen to the whole text again in order to check whether the information well accepted or must redo the step. Students can improve their comprehension to understand the materials since in each step in this strategy students are required to focus on the idea mentioned in the listening materials. This strategy also activates students to relax and enjoy the listening process because students have enough time to listen effectively.

Therefore, this investigation is an experimental study to answer this question: *Do the students who are taught by using RIDER strategy have significant improvement in listening comprehension than those who are taught by using Sketch to Stretch strategy?* A tentative hypothesis is *"The students who are taught using RIDER strategy will have significant improvement in their listening comprehension than those who are taught by Sketch to Stretch Strategy."*

### **The Concept of Listening Comprehension**

Listening is the ability to identify and to understand the meaning of spoken language. While listening to something, people use their critical thinking to assign the meaning in order to give a response regarding the information. In teaching language, there are two major skills (receptive and productive) which concluded four basic skills (speaking, reading, writing, and listening). While speaking and writing skill are categorized as productive skills that produce something, listening and reading are the receptive that receive and understand the information (input). People can understand information even in the higher level in receptive skill rather than produce something in productive skill. Due to that reason, some people might understand listening as a passive skill in language learning. Nunan (2003) argues this reason by says that listening is an active skill since it is not only receiving the information but also analyzing it by using other prior information.

The process of combining the received input and personal prior knowledge to produce new meaning is called listening comprehension (Brown, 2006). He continues that personal prior knowledge can be in a form of personal experience,

grammatical acquisition and vocabulary mastery. Additionally, Vandergift in Wei (2009) states that listening comprehension is a process of distinguish sounds, understanding vocabulary and grammar, interpret intonation and stress and use all abilities to communicate in real life context. Listening comprehension is the ability to not only hearing something but being able to give the meaning on it in order to be able to interpret it in real life.

### **Visualization and Listening for Comprehension**

Visualizing is the process of making images in mind while listening. Donohue (2007) states that when teacher talks about visualization to their students, they often tell them to create images in their mind or imagine the story just like a movie. Visualization is important to develop skills of listening for comprehension. Mahoney (2010) says that when readers or listeners lose their mental image, they will lose their comprehension ability. This contention is based on the fact that when listening, students create mental pictures of what is emerging in the story, based on their knowledge and understanding regarding the background knowledge.

Bell in Namara (2012) states creating mental images can improve comprehension in three ways. First, it raises students' working memories capacity by absorbing information from what they listen and focus on creating mental images in their mind. Second, in the process of making mental pictures about what they listen; students are involved in creating comparison and logical thinking. Third, imagery is a strategy which is acted as an arrangement tool for keeping the information stayed in memory. Therefore, as long as the students are able to cope with all these three ways, they will also able to keep the consistency in creating mental images and put them into papers.

Visualization is a crucial part before students start to implement it. This means that after students create their mental pictures; they are required to put it into their textbook. In applying RIDER strategy, visualization indeed, holds an important and interesting part for the students because it directly linked to language comprehension and critical thinking of the students.

### **Teaching Listening in EFL Class: The Underpinning Theories**

Teaching listening is a challenging activity for teacher and this requires a lot of practices in order to help students to achieve much progress especially for EFL students. Nunan (2003) said that there are five important principles in teaching listening as it is explained as follows;

1. *Expose students to different ways of processing information: bottom-up versus top- down.*

There are various types of listening materials and those are helpful for students if the materials are used effectively to negotiate meaning in communication process. According to Richard (2008), bottom-up process refers to using the incoming input as the basis for understanding the message. The input can be familiar words and grammatical knowledge if those are used to analyze elements of sentence. For example, teacher provides key words in pre-listening activity which can help students in listening process later. Meanwhile, top-down

processing is the opposite. Top Down process refers to the use of background knowledge in understanding the meaning of message. Background knowledge is previous knowledge about a topic, a listening context, a type or other information that extracted in pre-listening process.

2. *Expose students to different types of listening*

To achieve much progress, students need to consider their purpose in listening. Teacher should inform students that a good listener do not pay attention to everything but should listen selectively based on the purpose of the task. Brown (2006) said that there are three types of listening; (1) listening for main ideas; (2) listening for details; and (3) listening and making inferences. Brown, further, suggests that it is useful to help students develop their sense of why they listen and which skill to use to gain information better. In short, listening by purpose helps students to listen more effectively.

3. *Teach a variety of task*

If students need experience with the different type of listening, they also need to deal with a variety of tasks. Students do the task as they listen and it is important to teachers to not too overwhelm the students with difficult tasks; in this case, teachers have to consider the difficulties of the task with the level/grade of their students. This means that teachers need to introduce their students to a wide range of tasks in order to deal with different types of texts.

4. *Consider text difficulty and authenticity*

It is true that students have difficulty to identify the different voices and cope with the issue of speed when it comes to natural speech and the difficulty of the listening text, especially for EFL students. In order to improve students' listening comprehension, they should be given enough opportunity to experience real life communication or in this case we called it authentic material. Mamo (2013) explains that authentic material is a material which contains real life communication of native English speaker, either orally or in written form, but not specifically simplified for teaching and learning purposes. Authentic material, like newspaper articles, advertisements, Hollywood movies, recording of the foreign news channel and etc, can be easily found. The purpose of using authentic material is to make students more familiar with the natural speech and speeds of native speakers.

5. *Teach listening strategies.*

Successful listening can also be looked at and in term of the strategy that a listener uses when listening. Rost (2002) contends that it is useful to consider item identifies as strategy that are used by successful listener; (a). Predicting, listener predict what is going to be heard using their background knowledge, (b) Inferring, listeners use inferring to find meaning between the lines, (c) Monitoring, means to monitor listener's comprehension, (d) Clarifying, ask a question and give feedback about what is being heard, (e) Responding, listeners react to what they hear, (f) Evaluating, listeners check on how well they have understood the information they have heard.

### **RIDER Strategy versus Sketch to Stretch Strategy.**

It has been shown that visualization has power to improve students' comprehension. RIDER strategy is a strategy that required students to make image or creating picture to assist comprehension. According to Marcer in Falen (2013), RIDER is a visual imagery strategy for reading comprehension. She explains that RIDER strategy can make the students comprehend the text by showing information through create a mental picture. Although, RIDER strategy is commonly used in teach reading comprehension, it has also been known as a strategy in teaching listening comprehension. Cusker and Oliver (2006) support this notion by saying that RIDER strategy strengthens the students' ability to monitor their comprehension and to recall information. They reveal that indicator of successes of this strategy are students understand the material and could recall the ideas mentioned in material. By applying RIDER strategy, students also can be motivated to listen since they have been guided in listening step by step through the implementation of RIDER strategy.

RIDER stands for Read or Listen, Image, Describe, Evaluate, and Repeat and it is clearly that the acronyms of RIDER strategy are shown its own steps in the implementation in the reading. Besides, RIDER strategy also can be applied in listening and following are steps of RIDER strategy that can be implemented in listening classroom, especially in whilst activity;

1. **Listen:** Teacher plays a recording and students listen to the recording.
2. **Image:** Students make picture in their mind and visualize about what they already listened.
3. **Describe:** Students describe in simple picture based on what they have visualized.
4. **Evaluate:** Teacher asks students to discuss in pairs. Recheck what they have missed and understood during listening.
5. **Repeat:** Teacher repeats the steps from the beginning. Students focus to listen to the recording again.

Brunner in Sunanda (2013) defines Sketch to Stretch strategy as a strategy that supports visual imaging of a text. It is a strategy which teaches students to visualize the text by making a quick drawing picture which is related to a text. This strategy helps students to easily comprehend a text. Ningsih (2014) describes the steps of applying Sketch to Stretch strategy as follows:

1. Teacher activates students' background knowledge.
2. Ask students to listen carefully and to visualize what they hear by drawing a quick picture
3. Teacher and students discuss students' works in class discussion.

Sketch to Stretch strategy is a strategy that requires students to visualize while listening. It is similar to RIDER strategy. On the contrary, these two strategies are different since RIDER strategy has unique procedure that provides opportunity and time to focus while listening.

## Research Design

In order to find out the effectiveness of RIDER strategy to improve students' listening comprehension, Quasi-Experimental Design was used as the type of research, particularly non-equivalent control group design, which involved two classes, i.e. experimental class and control class. Tuckman (1999) explains quasi experimental research which can be described as follows:

E = Experimental Class  
 C = Control Class  
 X = Treatment  
 01 = Pre- test for experimental class  
 02 = Post-test for experimental class  
 03 = Pre-test for control class  
 04 = Post-test for control class

E	O1	x	02
C	03		04

The experimental class was treated by using RIDER strategy while control class was treated by applying Sketch to Stretch strategy. At the end, the result of pre and post-test from both classes were compared in order to find out the differences after applying the strategies.

## Findings and Discussions

### *The Result of Data Homogeneities*

In experimental research, the data homogeneities are important steps to be done before the testing of hypothesis in processed. Testing the homogeneities of data in this study was used to calculate the *Ftest*, the researcher divided the highest degree if the two values of standard deviation and the low value degree of the two of standard deviation. In this step, the researcher calculated the *Ftest* which is 1.95. After that, the researcher compared *Ftest* with *Ftable* with the large variants degree of freedom numerator n-1 and small variant degree of freedom numerator n-1. If  $Ftest < Ftable$  the data is homogeny, but if  $Ftest > Ftable$  is not homogeny.

The following table refers to the result of normality and homogeneity test of variants.

Source of Variants	Df of numerator n-1	Df of numerator n-1	<i>Ftest</i>	<i>Ftable</i>
Listening Comprehension	21	21	1.95	2.11

The table shows freedom's numerator of experimental class is  $22-1 = 21$ , and second, freedom's numerator of control class is  $22-1 = 21$  with *F-test* is 1.95 < *F-table* is 2.11. This reveals that the variance data between Experiment and Control class is not different (Homogeny). In other words, the data is assumed as the equal variance.

### *The Result of Hypothesis Testing*

In analyzing the hypothesis, the result of f-test is compared to calculate the value of t-table with significant level of 0.05 (5%). Furthermore, it is also compared with the mean score of both experimental and control class on their post-test result. The result is presented as follows:

Source of variation	Result of T-test	Significance (p-level)	Result of T-test	Mean Score	
				Experiment	Control
Listening Comprehension	26.60	0.05	Significance	66.05	54.41

As it is shown in the table, the mean score of the experimental class is higher than the mean score of the control class and the t-test value (26.60) > the value of t-table (2.02). Therefore, this concludes that the null hypothesis is rejected and this study's hypothesis is accepted.

## **Discussion**

### ***The Effectiveness of RIDER Strategy to Improve Students' Listening Comprehension***

The result of post-test had been proven that RIDER strategy was effective to improve students' listening comprehension. In application of RIDER strategy, students found that Image and describing steps were helpful to get them more focused while listened. Image step was visualizing process which encouraged students to make an image while listening to a text. As said by Mahoney (2010) visualizing refers to the process of making picture or image of a text, to assist understanding or comprehension. Hence, with visualizing the image as they listened, students got more concentrate with the information they have received and it help them to memorize it. This step was effective to make students fully concentrate since they have to remember all the information so they can keep up with the next step. The next step is describe, this step require students to explain what they have imagined before in words and in picture (draw) in their textbook. The drawing doesn't have to be a complex one but it just a simple image and a keyword. As the result, students found that this step was interesting and really useful to gain their comprehension because they got to put their imagination into a real work and all of the students were succeeded to process their mind and draw the image (with the keyword) into their textbook.

### ***The Use of RIDER Strategy and Students' Learning Motivation***

Students were motivated during listening since they have guide while listening. RIDER strategy train students to listen in sequences. Students know what they should do at the very first place. Arisnata (2014) affirm that RIDER strategy help the students to listen through steps. This means RIDER strategy guide the students to listen chronologically according to the steps. So, the atmosphere in the class room was very silent. There is no such noisy class during listening process, asking to repeat the conversation since the student focuses to keep follow the steps. Thus,

the students are fully concentrating their mind to gain information without any distraction.

Moreover, not only students' listening comprehension that can be improved but this strategy also can turn the classroom become more active. RIDER strategy encouraged students to be responsible about their task since in Evaluate phase, students are supposed to discuss with their partner. RIDER strategy also gave opportunity to students to interact with each other since this strategy train students work in group and they also recheck their task with their partner. Students found this step is really helpful since they can share what they did understand instead of worrying about what they missed.

### Conclusion

RIDER strategy is an interesting strategy that was found effectively in improving the students listening comprehension. The major reasons were RIDER strategy help students to concentrate and more focus to their listening class. Besides, the use of RIDER strategy motivates students to listen.

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