

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter contains detailed information about the theories related to the research. There are several points in the theoretical framework, such as audiobooks, the history of audiobooks, using audiobooks as a teaching medium, the listening process, listening skills, and teaching listening skills. Furthermore, the relevant studies are attached to give broader data and information regarding this research.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

##### **2.1.1 Audiobook**

Over the years, several people have tried to define the term audiobook. Have and Pedersen (2016) called it the recorded version of a preexisting written and released book. Rubery (2011) defined it as “any spoken word recording of books, periodicals, or other printed materials” (p. 1). However, as mentioned before, audio-exclusive audiobooks have been produced; they are original book titles created solely for the audio version.

There is an assortment of audiobook titles and genres for listeners. These include fiction, nonfiction, poetry, folklore, children’s books, drama, and many more, including the sub-genres. They also come with various durations, from short minutes to extended hours. For instance, *Horton Hears a Who* by Dr. Seuss, a children’s book, lasts 16 minutes, while more extended literature, such as *1984* by George Orwell, a dystopian fiction book, lasts over 10 hours.

In general, there are two versions of audiobooks available on the market: *Abridged* and *Unabridged*. An abridged audiobook means the work is shortened; the unnecessary parts will be cut after the author’s permission is granted, whereas an unabridged audiobook is identical to the printed version.

Listeners need to consider several factors when choosing the appropriate audiobook. Beginner listeners and young children are typically advised to choose the unabridged version since they can listen to the audio while simultaneously reading the text, enriching the listening experience further.

### 2.1.2 History of Audiobook

Audiobooks had a lengthy background; Thomas A. Edison first foretold the importance of recorded spoken books in his essay. He is credited as the father of the phonograph, a machine that makes it possible to record, reproduce and replay human voices. Without his revolutionary invention, audiobooks may not be able to exist today. Edison (1878) envisioned a recorded spoken book in his essay titled *The Phonograph and Its Future*; he explained:

Books may be read by charitable-inclined professional readers or by such readers mainly employed for that purpose, and the record of such book used in the asylums of the blind, hospitals, the sick chamber, or even with great profit and amusement by the lady or gentlemen whose eyes and hands may be otherwise employed; or, again, because of the greater enjoyment to be had from a book when read by an elocutionist than when read by the average reader. (para.8)

True to the statement above, audiobooks have always been associated with books for visually impaired people. According to Rubery (2011), it started becoming popular in the 1920s-1930s as a necessity for visually wounded soldiers after World War 1 in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Later, in 1952, a collection of poems and a story titled “A Child’s Christmas in Wales” by Dylan Thomas was recorded in spoken word format by Caedmon Records, with the author himself as the narrator. It was loved by the public and consequently made Caedmon Records one of the first companies to advertise audiobooks commercially successfully (Burkey, 2013; Rubery, 2011). From then on, the audiobook industry flourished; it is no longer exclusive to the blind community but has also reached the mass media.

Over a century later, after Edison initially proposed the significance of the recorded book in 1878, it could not be more relevant to the modern lifestyle. People are busy, engulfed with work, and have little time for hobbies like reading books. That is the reason why audiobooks became so popular since they allow listeners to enjoy literary works everywhere and every time, even while doing their mundane activities, such as commuting, cooking, exercising or listening to them before bed (Have & Pedersen, 2021). Another

factor for its popularity is the narrator. Publishers often hire famous actors, professional voice actors or the authors themselves to narrate the story. Burkey (2013) mentioned that these famous narrators will attract their fanbase to listen to the books. She further describes how a good narrator plays a pivotal role in enjoying an audiobook and how it separates an audiobook from a mere read-aloud E-book read by AI (Artificial intelligence), which sounds robotic. A good narrator can immerse their listeners in the story through the emotion, setting and tone the author had intended.

### **2.1.3 Using Audiobook as a Teaching Medium**

As technology keeps advancing, the need to adapt to the digital world keeps growing, and it also applies to educational contexts. ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in education has progressed, and growth has shown positive traits like dynamic, interactive, and accessible education. In ELT (English et al.), the role of ICT can be felt by the vast media used in the classroom, such as educational websites, software, language learning applications, educational games, e-books, audiobooks, Webinars, audio-visual aids, etc. Integrating technology into teaching practice will motivate students since it is more engaging than traditional textbooks (Sekścińska & Olszańska, 2018).

Audiobooks have gained popularity in recent years as a language teaching medium, whether for in-classroom activity or outside-classroom activity for students' enrichment. Audiobooks are suitable for classrooms because they are easy to access, low cost, effective and entertaining. Furthermore, Sekścińska & Olszańska (2018) noted several qualities that make it excellent for students: it serves as authentic material, allowing students to experience the language first-hand from the native speaker narrators and eventually improve their pronunciation skills, it works as an exposure to new terms, accent and introduce them to more literary texts which will further develop students' knowledge and creativity.

However, there are several things a teacher needs to consider before integrating audiobooks to teach listening skills. Al-Jarf (2021) mentioned that teachers should help provide students with instruction beforehand on how and where to access audiobooks; then, while selecting them, the teacher should consider students' listening proficiency level. Aspects like accents, vocabulary, length, and the content's difficulty will affect the effectiveness of audiobooks as a teaching tool. If all considerations are achieved, it can become a powerful tool to help EFL teachers to teach listening skills.

Al-Jarf (2021) further disclosed teaching strategies for teaching listening skills using audiobooks that teachers can implement in the classroom. There are three phases in the teaching process along with its evaluation, namely:

1. In the pre-listening phase, the teacher can introduce the audiobook to students and explain how to access it while asking triggering questions to evoke students' learning motivation. The teacher can ask students about the audiobook's identity, theme, characters, setting, plot, point of view, style of spoken language, and any figurative language the author might have used in the book.
2. During the listening phase, the students can be asked to take notes, summarise, or predict the events of the book.
3. After the listening phase, the teacher can ask students what part of the book they might struggle to understand, answer students' questions, and encourage them through feedback.
4. In addition, the teacher can conduct a listening comprehension test using parts of the audiobook that students have not yet listened to and ask them questions as part of the evaluation.

#### **2.1.4 Listening Process**

Listening can be defined as the action of decoding meaning from sounds. It is different from hearing; one may think the two terms are similar; however, they cannot be used equivalently as they mean two separate activities. Tyagi (2013) explained that hearing is a passive operation while listening is an active

one. Hearing occurs subconsciously when the auditory organ, the ears, perceive audio stimuli and send them to the brain, which then will be processed, whereas listening is a complex skill that happens through stages and needs conscious effort to activate both the auditory body part and the psychological aspects. A person can hear, but it does not mean she is listening. To sum it up, ideally, “hearing is a sense; listening is a skill” (Beck & Flexer, 2011, abstract para. 1).

Moreover, according to Tyagi (2013), there are five phases of effective listening.

1. *Hearing*: The ears pick up the sound waves first, and then the brain processes the stimuli.
2. *Understanding*: The meaning of the sound is analysed along with its context, including other stimuli like sights or smells, to understand what the speaker is talking about.
3. *Remember that after interpretation, it is crucial to be attentive to the conversational details and store them in the mind.*
4. *Evaluating*: During this stage, the listener will form a judgment or opinion regarding the speaker’s message.
5. *Responding*: The listener will give feedback, either verbally or not. At this stage, it can be assumed that the listener has comprehended the message.

Furthermore, there are two processing types to understand spoken speech: bottom-up and top-down. Bottom-up processing is when the message is understood by starting with the received input. Beginning with the information gathered and examined as it is organised into sounds or phonemic units, words, phrases, sentences, and texts until the meaning is understood. On the other hand, top-down processing is decoding the message by using the listener’s prior knowledge of the topic. This process requires the listener to use their familiarity with the discourse context and interpret or predict its meaning.

### **2.1.5 Listening Skill**

Listening is one of the four vital skills of language learning: speaking, reading and writing. Listening and reading are receptive skills since the learner only receives information, unlike speaking and writing; they are called productive skills because the learner produces language. Because of that, listening is also dubbed as a passive skill. However, there has been a shift regarding listening as a passive skill. As previously mentioned, listening is an active process of comprehending a language through sound. There is a production of meaning-making during the listening process. It is unwise to call listening a passive skill anymore.

Nevertheless, people tend to assume listening skills will develop naturally without the need to practise the skills. Listening is often undervalued in language learning despite its importance. In the language learning and communication process, listening plays a pivotal role. About 40% of communication is done through listening, while speaking only contributes to 35%, 16% is spent on reading and only 9% on writing (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). Albeit it is the most applied skill in daily interaction and the language learning process, it is still overlooked, especially in teaching practice. The school curriculum tends to focus more on teaching writing, reading, and vocabulary building, giving listening to fewer practice hours.

### **2.1.6 Teaching Listening Skill**

Students often express their difficulty in acquiring listening skills. Several factors could lead to students' struggle, but they generally fall into four groups: the message, the listener, the speaker, and the environment (Yagang, 1994). Similarly, a study by Nadhira and Warni (2021) revealed that students find listening challenging because of foreign terms, rapid speech rate, unaccustomed accents, indistinct pronunciation, inaudible audio quality, and poor school accommodation.

In the effort to teach listening skills, there are various things to note when designing a listening lesson. For instance, the listening itself. According to

Nunan (2002), listening can be classified into multiple types based on the circumstances; these types can be explained as follows:

1. *Intention*: During listening practice, the teacher needs to specify whether students will listen for the gist idea of the discourse or to generate precise knowledge about the given topic.
2. *Listener's role*: During the listening session, the listener may participate in the dialogue; this practice is called reciprocal listening. On the other hand, if the listener does not need to respond to the material, it is called nonreciprocal listening.
3. *Material style*: In listening practice, a teacher may use various listening materials. Different skills are utilised depending on the type of text. Listening to a news broadcast will not be the same as listening to recorded dialogue, the same way it is also different when listening to spoken poetry.

The next thing to consider is the exact skill the teacher wants to teach. There are sub-skills of listening, such as micro and macro skills. When designing a listening task, it is essential to specify which element of those skills will be taught to help students become competent listeners. Richards (1983) proposed 33 micro-skills of conversational listening and 18 micro-skills of academic listening in his taxonomy of listening skills. The highly influential taxonomy of listening skills is still actively used and cited even to this day. Similarly, Brown (2007) also detailed seven macro listening skills. These skills can be seen in the table below.

Table 2.1 illustrates the Taxonomy of Listening Skills and seven macro listening skills adapted from Richards (1983) and Brown (2007).

**Table 2.1 *Micro and Macro listening skills***

Micro Skills
The abilities in Conversational Listening

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| 1. Remembering various parts of texts briefly                      | 20. Identifying the difference between communicative purposes to their context                   |
| 2. Distinguishing sounds in L2                                     |  |
| 3. Identifying stress patterns                                     | 21. Reconstructing or interfering with the circumstances, objectives, participants and processes |
| 4. Identifying the structural rhythm                               |  |
| 5. Identifying stress and intonation as informational content      |  |
| 6. Identifying the stressed and unstressed words                   | 22. Formulating intents, aims, settings and methods based on prior knowledge and experiences     |
| 7. Identifying shortened words                                     |  |
| 8. Identifying limits between words                                | 23. Predicting the result of the events  |
| 9. Identifying common word patterns                                | 24. Recognising the links between events   |
| 10. Identifying vocabulary used in the text                        |  |
| 11. Identifying keywords   | 25. Identifying the causation of events  |
| 12. Predict the word definition                                    |  |
| 13. Recognizing the grammar used in the text                       | 26. Identifying the explicit and implicit meanings   |
| 14. Identifying syntax patterns and tool                           | 27. Identifying and reconstructing   |
| 15. Identifying cohesion mechanism in spoken language              | 28. Extracting ideas and a logical framework from a dialogue                                     |
| 16. Awareness of grammar elements and sentences' elliptical shapes | 29. Processing different speech rate   |
| 17. Identifying sentence components                                | 30. Processing gaps, mistakes and corrections in speech  |
| 18. Identifying the major and minor components                     | 31. Identifying meanings from facial cues, non-verbal elements of speech and any other cues      |
| 19. Identifying meanings from various grammar forms                | 32. Using a variety of listening strategies appropriately to the goals and aims                  |
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33. Expressing understanding and confusion through spoken manner or unspoken manner

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The abilities in Academic Listening

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|---|---|
| 1. Identifying the lecture's objectives and domain            | 12. Following the lecture even with unfamiliar accent and different speech rate |
| 2. Identifying the lecture's topic and its development        | 13. Identifying diverse lecture styles  |
| 3. Identifying the links between discourse                    | 14. Identifying different registers, either informal or formal                  |
| 4. Identifying the function of discourse markers in a lecture | 15. Identifying jokes, deviation from topics as unrelated to the lecture        |
| 5. Identifying causation and the relationships                | 16. Identifying non-verbal hints and their meaning                              |
| 6. Identifying keywords of topic                              | 17. Identifying role and timing within the conversation during the lecture      |
| 7. Identifying the words' meaning                             | 18. Identifying and understanding instructions                                  |
| 8. Identifying cohesion's indicators                          |   |
| 9. Identifying different intonations and their meaning        |   |
| 10. Identifying the speaker's viewpoint regarding the topic   |   |
| 11. Following various lecturing methods                       |   |
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Macro Skills

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1. Recognising coherent speech patterns
  2. Understanding speech's functional roles relative to the aims, participators, and scenario
  3. Recognise events, participators and objectives of text by using information from the actual world knowledge
  4. Drawing connections between occurrences such as cause and effect, summarising, forecasting outcomes and making examples
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5. Distinguish the difference between the explicit and implicit connotations
  6. Understanding nonverbal signals part of speech like gestures and facial expressions
  7. Implementing listening strategies, for instance, noticing key terms and guessing the meaning and showcasing an understanding of the speaker's message
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The current study will employ a combination of micro and macro skills, which can be summed up in the learning objectives used in the current research, as illustrated in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2 *Listening skills used in the current study***

Listening skills	Learning objectives
1. Remembering brief portions of audiobook	1. Students are able to identify context, main ideas and detailed information from audio texts in the form of audiobooks
2. Identify vocabulary	
3. Identify keywords	
4. Predict word definition	2. Students are able to understand grammatical structure of speech and the role of these elements in audio texts in the form of Audiobooks
5. Identify sentence components	
6. Understand intents, aims, settings, and methods based on prior knowledge and experience	
7. Predicting events' ending	3. Students can understand explicit and implicit messages from audio texts in the form of audiobooks
8. Recognising link of events	
9. Recognising the causation of events	
10. Understand explicit and implicit meanings	4. Students can apply prior and experience from real life to make summaries, predictions and concrete examples of the contents of audio texts in the form of audiobooks
11. Processing different speech rate	
12. Recognising events, participators, objectives of audiobook by using prior knowledge	

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13. Drawing connections between occurrences

14. Implementing listening strategies

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Choosing appropriate teaching strategies for students' needs is crucial in teaching listening skills. As established before, there are two recognised listening process modes: top-down and bottom-up. Teachers can adopt them as listening strategies and implement them in the classroom. Renukadevi (2014) described the bottom-up strategy as great for focusing on specific information and analysing speech patterns since it relies on the discourse, while in contrast, the top-down strategy is suitable for distinguishing text's focal point, summarising, predicting and producing real-life examples. In principle, both strategies must be combined and implemented in a listening lesson for maximum effectiveness.

After all considerations on designing listening practice have been fulfilled, the desired outcome is a befitting listening task. Rost (2002) suggested that listening tasks can be separated into the forms of one-way tasks and two-way tasks. One-way tasks mean the listener will receive learning inputs from audio recordings, whereas in two-way tasks, the listener will converse with another person and respond. Regardless of the task a teacher may utilise, the common listening task can be divided into three activities: Pre-listening, During listening and post-listening.

Pre-listening activities often provide background knowledge, keywords, or unfamiliar vocabulary for the text given to students. Teachers could also allow students to make predictions by asking simple questions before listening to the text. Pre-listening activities promote confidence and motivation for the students since they already have a brief context of what they will listen to, thus lowering their anxiety.

A while-listening activity is done to test students' comprehension. During the actual listening session, a teacher might choose if it will be Intensive or

Extensive listening (Field, 2001). Intensive listening refers to the act of a concise listening drill; in general, it is done within short minutes and without repetition. Meanwhile, extensive listening is listening to a recording or recordings of similar topics several times. When teaching listening skills to EFL students, it would be better to let students listen to the material repeatedly to get them used to it. During the listening session, the teacher could provide questions or exercises for students to avoid making it a passive learning process. Students can be asked to make a summary, note keywords, generate the main idea of the text, or answer questions regarding the content. These tasks could also work as assessment tools for teachers.

Then, after listening to the material, teachers and students can do a review session as part of the post-listening activity. In this stage, teachers can assign students to reiterate what they have listened to, either in written or spoken form. Moreover, teachers could also take a more text-based approach and emphasise the grammar and new vocabulary gained from the text.

## **2.2 Study of the Relevant Research**

Over the years, there have been similar studies related to this current one. Kartal & Simsek (2017) conducted a study on 66 students of ELT departments of a state university of Türkiye to find the results of using audiobooks for their listening comprehension. The students were divided into control and experimental groups. This study is a mixed method design, using pre-test and post-test control groups as the quantitative method and a survey from a qualitative perspective. The control group only received lessons using physical books, while the experimental group received audiobooks and printed versions during lessons. The results indicate that the experimental group had improvement in their listening comprehension skills, pronunciation skills, as well as their learning motivation.

Mohamed & Mohamed (2018) did a study to investigate the impact of audiobooks in developing Saudi EFL students' listening comprehension. The study was done through a quasi-experimental design by implementing a Pre-

test and Post-test. The participants were EFL preparatory students enrolled in an English course at Northern Border University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Students are divided into an experimental group and a control group. Both groups listened to the same audiobook and did repetitive listening. However, in addition to that, the experimental group also did a silent reading of the text version of the book. The study found that audiobooks were beneficial in developing the experimental group's listening comprehension. Their post-test result was higher than that of the control group. There is also improvement in the experimental group's Post-test result compared to their Pre-test. This study also suggests that audiobooks must be implemented in the classroom to teach listening skills.

The third study by Çarkit (2020) investigated 8th-grade Turkish students' attitudes and opinions after receiving audiobook listening lessons. The research design used was Action Research. The researcher used a listening attitude scale for junior high school students, and a paired t-test was utilised for analysing pre-test and post-test results. Not only that, but students were also asked to write diaries and participate in semi-structured interviews. The data collected were later analysed using content analysis. The results concluded that audiobooks improve students' listening attitude. Students found audiobooks to be beneficial because they are easy to access, promote creativity and maximise students' use of the internet. However, the author also reported that audiobooks could not improve reading speed and may lead to attention deprivation during lessons.