

THE CONCEPT OF FREE VOLUNTARY LISTENING IN SUPPORTING MAHARAH AL ISTIMA' AL 'ARABIYYAH LEARNING

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Abstract. Listening skills (maharah al istima') are one of the skills that Arabic language learners must master. Istimah is in first place before Kalam, Qiro'ah, and Kitabah. Even though it is in first place, maharah al istima' receives less attention. This is proven by the lack of published Maharah al Istima' learning innovations. This research is a qualitative descriptive study which aims to describe the concept of Free Voluntary Listening in Supporting Maharah Al Istima' Learning. The data and data sources in this research are documentation from books, magazines, journals and previous research related to the topic. Data analysis in this research uses the Miles and Hubberman model through three stages, namely data reduction, data collection, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction is carried out by selecting all the data obtained according to the researcher's needs. Data comes from books, articles, journals and other references related to the topic of discussion. The selected data is collected and presented clearly and clearly. After that, in the final stage the researcher makes conclusions based on the data that has been presented. The results of this research show the general concept of free voluntary listening in maharah al istima' learning, the learning steps, and evaluation guidelines. In general, free voluntary listening in the learning of maharah al istima' provides students with the freedom to listen to objects of their choice according to their preferences. Teachers can also make agreements with students to listen to objects together. From here, three learning concepts emerge: Sustained Silent Listening, Self-Selected Listening, and Extensive Listening. These three concepts can be developed for learning both inside and outside the classroom.

Keywords: *Free Voluntary Listening; Maharah Al Istima'*

A. INTRODUCTION

Listening skills or maharah al istima' is one of the skills that an Arabic language learner must have. Hermawan said that maharah al istima' is the first element that must be mastered in learning Arabic. This is based on the natural human activity of understanding each other's language starting from hearing or listening. Furthermore, other skills such as speaking, reading and writing will develop over time (Hermawan, 2018). Apart from being a natural activity carried out by humans, good listening skills can support the development of aspects of intelligence. This is as stated by Gardner that people who have good listening skills also have good interpersonal intelligence. Therefore, listening skills can be a measuring tool to determine a person's level of difficulty in learning a foreign language, including Arabic (Aziza & Muliansyah, 2020). At the same time, scientific research emerged which stated that humans are only able to hear 30% of the knowledge they hear. Of this percentage, only 25% is absorbed (Khoiri, 2021).

In the context of maharah al istima' learning, Aziz Fahrurrozi mentions 2 factors that cause the limited knowledge that humans absorb. These factors are divided into linguistic and non-linguistic factors (Fahrurrozi & Mahyuddin, 2012). Tomy Azis detailed these 2 factors according to the results

of research he conducted on Arabic Literature students, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, University of North Sumatra. In this research, Tomy stated that linguistic factors in learning *istima'* consist of sound, vocabulary and grammar problems. The non-linguistic factors include lack of motivation, infrastructure and heterogeneous student educational backgrounds (Saragih, 2018). More specifically, Hamidah and Marsiah stated in their research that the problems with learning *maharah al istima'* are the pronunciation of dialogues that are too fast, there is foreign vocabulary that has never been heard or taught before, and conversations that are unclear. (Hamidah & Marsiah, 2020).

The problems mentioned are only some of the many problems that exist in learning *maharah al istima'*. If this continues, it could cause failure in learning *maharah al istima'*. This failure can result in failure in subsequent skill learning (Aziza & Muliansyah, 2020). Moreover, *istima'* is the first skill that an Arabic language learner goes through. Innovations in *istima'* learning to solve existing problems have not been widely implemented. This is proven by the lack of research on *istima'* learning published on reference search engines such as Google Scholar.

Some existing research only describes the problems of *istima'* learning and their solutions in general. Moreover, there are still very few references that examine the use of media in special learning. Therefore, this research intends to provide solutions to specifically overcome the problems of *istima'* learning. By designing the *istima'* learning strategy with the concept of free voluntary listening, it is hoped that it will be able to add color to *istima'* learning.

B. METHODS

This research is a qualitative descriptive research. This research aims to describe the design of *istima'* learning strategies with the concept of free voluntary listening. The data in this research was collected using documentation methods from books, articles, journals and recent research related to the topic. The collected data was analyzed using the Miles and Hubberman model which went through three stages, namely data reduction, data collection, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction is carried out by selecting all the data obtained according to the researcher's needs. Data comes from books, articles, journals and other references related to the topic of discussion. The selected data is collected and presented clearly and clearly. After that, in the final stage the researcher makes conclusions based on the data that has been presented.

C. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

1. The concept of Free Voluntary Listening

Basically, free voluntary listening is inspired by the concept of free voluntary reading. If free voluntary reading is an activity that makes reading a recreational medium (Astuti, 2014), then free voluntary listening makes listening a recreational medium. This means that someone can choose what they hear according to their wishes without making a report regarding what they hear. The objects heard are usually light things and do not require deep understanding. Therefore, listening in this way will attract more students' attention. This is because they do not feel forced to hear, but they hear of their own will. Besides that, students will enjoy the listening activities carried out more.

The success of *maharah al istima'* is adjusted to the learning objectives. In general, the learning objectives of *maharah al istima'* are to develop the ability to receive messages and respond to the learning material that is heard, to train understanding of what is heard quickly when in conversation activities, to develop aspects of thinking quickly and precisely so that you are able to analyze what is heard from the source. authentic (Munir, 2016).

In the context of *maharah al istima'* learning, the concept of free voluntary listening can be used so that listening activities become a vehicle for recreation. For this reason, the objects heard can be songs, news, podcasts, radio plays and poetry readings which are of course in Arabic. Students are

given the freedom to hear whatever they want. It doesn't stop here, students are also asked to note down the Arabic vocabulary they hear. More than that, students are also expected to understand the system of sounds they hear, intonation and rhythm, as well as explicit and implied information from what they hear.(Anwar, 2022).

Even though students are given the freedom to determine what they hear, the teacher still directs them to relevant objects. This means that there are still limitations that must be considered in choosing the object to be heard. Because the nature of the free voluntary listening concept is free and voluntary, the sources used are not related to the subject matter. The following are sources that can be used in free voluntary listening:

a. Arabic short film

The use of films as a learning medium is nothing new in the world of education. Film is an interesting learning medium, because with it students can enjoy moving visual images and sound effects simultaneously(Dewi, 2022). Based on this, films can make students use the senses of sight and hearing simultaneously(Fara & Naim, 2018). The short films recommended in the free voluntary listening concept are Arabic language films with a duration of 5, 10, 15, 20, up to 30 minutes. This is adjusted to the level of education. Films can come from Arabic or from Indonesia. The following is an example of a short film that can be used in free voluntary listening:

- 1) Inthiq Rasmiyyatan (https://youtu.be/edbh1_EaNac?n-wRb440wlpNTILN)
- 2) Al Ahkam Al Qur'an Al Karim Cartoon: Al Sidq (<https://youtu.be/Ab9UoB-vudY?si=SsNDPVKk1zgAuc80>)
- 3) Chanel contains Arabic cartoon films (https://youtube.com/@arabiccartoon9711?si=Kx-apgE1ot_m4L8)

b. Arabic songs

Like films, the use of songs as a learning medium is also nothing new. So far, the use of songs in istima' learning is determined by the teacher. This is proven by several studies that show teachers actively implement songs as a learning medium. In the context of free voluntary listening, students are given the freedom to choose the songs they want to hear. The songs heard are Arabic songs, either original Arabic songs or Indonesian songs translated into Arabic. With song media, it is hoped that a conducive learning atmosphere will be created and boredom will gradually disappear (Hasan, 2018). The following are songs that can be used as references in free voluntary listening:

- 1) Akhlaquna
- 2) Firru ila Allah
- 3) Hubb Al Khalish
- 4) Rahmatan lil 'aalamin
- 5) Prayer songs

There are lots of sholawat songs that can be used as objects of maharatul istima' such as sholawat nariyah, sholawat tibbil qulub, sholawat munjiat and so on. Even though these prayers are familiar, not everyone understands every word and pronunciation in these prayers.

c. Arabic poetry

Poetry is a series of words that are beautiful and dense in meaning. Poetry is built on several elements. The most prominent element is majaz, namely a beautiful language style that is able to amaze readers. There are many Arabic poems which, when translated, have beautiful meanings. For students who enjoy poetry, they can hear the reading of Arabic poetry. There are lots of Arabic poems written by famous poets and uploaded on YouTube such as Nizar Qobbani, Mahmod Darwis, Anis Mansour, Kahlil Gibran, and Nazek Al Malaika.

d. Podcasts

The use of podcasts as a learning medium has not been used for long. This is similar to Lailana and Ahsanuddin's research, that so far teaching maharah al istima' still uses audio recordings. Podcasts are one of the media developed in maharah al istima' learning so that learning is more varied, complex and easily accessible for all learners.(Aulia Rahmah & Ahsanuddin, 2022).

2. Maharah Al Istimah' Learning Activities with the Concept of Free Voluntary Listening

Maharah al istima' learning activities with the concept of Free Voluntary Listening can be carried out inside and outside the classroom. For classroom learning, of course you need a cellphone or smartphone. For schools that do not allow students to bring cellphones, this can be done in the language laboratory and computer laboratory. Students can use computers in the laboratory to search for objects they want to hear. By adapting the learning concept in free voluntary reading, in Free Voluntary Listening there are also 3 things that can be done, namely:

a. Sustained Silent Listening

If Sustained Silent Reading provides students with the opportunity to read any book they like, then in this context, Sustained Silent Listening (SSL) provides time for students to listen to objects they want to hear. SSL is done before the learning activities begin and takes approximately 10-15 minutes. The objects that can be listened to include films, songs, poems, podcasts, and so on. In SSL, students can choose any position to listen to the object they want to hear. After the SSL activity, students are not asked to report on the heard object but rather to carry out learning activities as usual.

In the context of the listening skill (maharah al istima'), the objects heard in SSL are objects in the Arabic language. Examples include Arabic-language films, Arabic songs, Arabic poems, and other objects that use the Arabic language. This SSL activity is expected to bring back students' focus on learning and introduce them to new vocabulary from the heard objects. Even though they may not understand the vocabulary initially, it is hoped that over time they will come to understand it.

b. Self Selected Listening

Not much different from Sustained Silent Listening, Self-Selected Listening also provides students with the opportunity to listen to objects they want to hear. The difference lies in the fact that Self-Selected Listening is not done before the learning activities but is instead part of the ongoing learning activities. The goal is to give students the opportunity to become competent listeners and observers in their field of interest.

Self-Selected Listening is carried out by giving students the freedom to listen to objects they want to hear. After listening, students are given the opportunity to discuss with peers and the teacher about the information obtained from the heard object. Teachers and students can also make agreements to determine the objects they want to hear so that they can listen to the same objects at the same time. After that, the teacher creates stimuli in the form of trigger questions or the like to create an active, interactive, and enjoyable learning atmosphere.

The interaction between teachers and students is crucial in the learning activities. This interaction can occur through class discussions, small group discussions, group assignments, and student collaboration (Anwar & Susiawati, 2023). In the context of Self-Selected Listening, the objects heard by students become the topic of class discussion. Each participant can share what they heard with classmates, while others can comment and ask questions. This approach makes the learning activities active by involving active participation from students.

c. Extensive Listening

Extensive Listening (EL) is developed from the concept of extensive reading (Mandiri dkk., 2022). EL is defined as listening in large quantities. It involves directing learners to listen to as many objects as they want. The longer the duration of the listened object, the better the EL activity. Therefore, EL

activities cannot be conducted in formal classrooms. EL activities need to be carried out independently by learners outside the formal classroom setting (Dods, 2022).

In the context of foreign language learning, such as Arabic, EL aims to enhance the listening skills of learners. Learners are given the freedom to choose the objects they want to listen to (Wahidah & Luthfiyyah, 2018). Not just one, but several objects according to their needs. The objects used as sources in EL activities can come from personal collections or be searched on the internet. By implementing EL, learners are given the opportunity to independently comprehend the content of the listened object. They can use a dictionary to look up foreign vocabulary or engage in discussions with peers to analyze the listened objects.

From the 3 concepts mentioned above, here are the steps for learning maharah al istima' with free voluntary listening:

- 1) Learning in the classroom
 - a) The teacher opens the lesson
 - b) The teacher conveys the learning objectives
 - c) The teacher gives students the opportunity to listen to the objects they want to hear. In this case there needs to be an agreement, whether they want to hear films, songs, poetry or podcasts. They also need to agree on the number of times the object is rotated.
 - d) The teacher asks students to write the mufrodat they hear from the object that has been heard.
 - e) Teachers can also encourage students to discuss with friends the explicit and implied information contained in the objects they hear.
 - f) The teacher asks students to look for the meaning of the mufrodat they hear
 - g) The teacher asks students to state the mufrodat written orally
- 2) Learning outside the classroom
 - a) The teacher asks students to independently find the object they want to hear.
 - b) The teacher gives students the freedom to determine how many times the object is rotated.
 - c) The teacher asks students to write vocabulary and information obtained from the objects heard.
 - d) Students present in front of the class the information obtained from the objects heard
 - e) Students collect notes from what they hear in the form of vocabulary and narrative.

3) Maharah Al Istima' Learning Evaluation Sheet with the Concept of Free Voluntary Listening

This Evaluation Sheet is an example of a guideline for assessing the quantity and quality of students' Arabic listening skills. This guide is still very simple and open to development.

Istima' Al Mufrodat Evaluation Sheet

Student's name :

The object heard :

Number of Replays :

No	Mufrodat heard	Meaning
1		
2		
3		
4		
....		
Amount		

Istima' Al Ma'lumat Evaluation Sheet

Student's name:

Objects heard:

Number of replays:

No	Information Heard	Meaning
1		
2		
3		
.....		
Amount		

From the evaluation sheet above it can be measured that:

- a) The fewer replays and the more information/information obtained, the more a learner has good istima' abilities.
- b) The more replays and the less information/information obtained, the more a learner has poor istima' abilities.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on what is explained in the results section, it can be concluded that learning maharah al istima' with the concept of free voluntary listening gives Arabic language learners the freedom to determine for themselves the objects they want to hear. These objects can be films, songs, poetry, podcasts, and so on. Even though there is freedom in determining what is heard, students are still tasked with recording new vocabulary and information obtained from the objects heard. Discussing what you hear with friends can also be done to make learning more meaningful.

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