

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

The past decades have shown a wide scope of audio and visual media advancements that language education and learning benefit greatly from. Among these advancements, no single device has contributed more noteworthy effect than the personal computer. There are many things that we can obtain from the computer, from reading graphical text to listening to an audio based media, or the combination of both of those elements, the possibilities does seem to be limitless. This breakthrough sparks the birth of the teaching method known as ‘Computer Assisted Language Learning’ (CALL) which has been around since the 1960s. essentially CALL is a method that centered around the use of technology as a means to achieve language mastery (Sperling 1997 as cited in Asrifan 2020).

Technology first entered the language classroom in the form of a language laboratory back in the 1950s and 1960s (Brown, 2001). One of the later breakthroughs is Text-to-speech (TTS) or sometimes called “Read Aloud Technology” which is a type of practical technology that reads digital text aloud. Text-to-speech is synthesis systems. Which means instead of using pre-recorded audio, it generates human-like voice based on the inputted text in the computer. it does so by converting written text to a phonemic representation to waveforms that output as sound. Even though it was originally designed for aiding people who have disabilities that prevent them from reading, theoretically it could be used in the English learning environment due to the fact that it is very accessible to the public

in the form of websites and applications (Readspeaker.com, Elevenlabs.io and Google speech services).

With this in mind, we can see the potential usage of TTS in English language teaching, especially in the field of listening. Nunan (1997) describes listening as the ‘Cinderella skill in second language learning’ and the one people usually overlooked. Due to this, many attempts were made to revolutionize listening learning, from the use of CD-ROM to the technological breakthrough that is the computer. Allah said in surah Al-Hadid verse 25 regarding the use of technology:

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا

الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ

عَزِيزٌ

Based on the verse above, it is implied that the use of technology is a valid way for society to advance and students are no exception to this rule. As a student, we need to utilize technology to the best of our ability to gain as many advantages as possible. And TTS is one of such technology. Even though it was designed to aid those who are in special needs, creative usage of TTS could transform it into an excellent choice of media in teaching.

Some studies on the utilization of TTS in the listening course (Moon 2020; Guoquan 2010; Tika et al 2018; Eman 2022) have been conducted in recent years. One of them is a recent study by Eman (2022) in “*Using Repeated Reading and Listening While Reading via Text To Speech APPs. in Developing Fluency and*

Comprehension.” Using a series of tests, they found that Repeated-Reading method combined with TTS has been shown to increase students’ capabilities in reading, fluency, and vocabulary acquisition, this showed that text-to-speech are effective self-study tool in improving students’ reading skills (p. 216).

This previous study researched the same area as the present study which is the utilization and effect of TTS in ELT. But, the present study is also differentiates from the previous study. while they are mainly focusing on reading skill which consists of fluency, comprehension, and vocabularies, this study aims to examine TTS as a medium to create listening materials

Moreover Stoker (2019) in his study regarding the teacher’s beliefs on the usage of TTS in the classroom, he pinpointed that TTS can be a good compensatory aid to struggling readers (p. 31.). it is also reinforced by Chiang (2019) that students perform better in TTS class compared to Teacher-led, their theory about this is that TTS use pronunciations similar to those of standardized English teachers (p. 88) making TTS a suitable option as a replacer for native speaker in creating a listening materials

Therefore, based on the backgrounds above, this proposed research attempts to investigate the utilization of TTS in the listening context. Focusing on the implementation and potential uses of the technology. Moreover, in the Indonesian context, there are not many studies related to TTS in the listening context, or TTS in general.

The study that the researcher conducts takes place MtsS Nur Ihya’iddin located in Pelaihari, Panyipatan district, Tanah Laut Regency South Borneo

Indonesia. Specifically researching one of the teacher affiliated with said school that uses TTS. The researcher observes the utilization of TTS as a means to create listening materials for the course.

B. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding in this study, the researcher is to give some information on key terms that are important to understand:

1. TTS

It refers to Text-to-speech, which is a synthesis system that creates human-like voice based on the text inserted in the computer. It does so by converting written text to a phonemic representation to waveforms that can be output as sound. The specific program that is being examined here is Elevenlabs.io. It is a freely available website that allows its user to generate an audio format based on texts.

2. CALL

Refers to Computer Assisted Language Learning, which is a method to increase language proficiency through the use of computer and provides more learning opportunity to improve student's language skill. TTS falls under one of its categories, which is the general software.

3. The Listening Skills

Refers to the listening skill in the English course, which is the ability to pay attention and effectively interpret what other people are saying. TTS is being used to teach students this skill in the related educational institute.

C. Research Questions

Based on the background above, the questions of this study that would be discussed are as follows:

1. How are the processes of creating listening materials using TTS performed by the English teacher?
2. How are the view of the English teacher with respect to using TTS as a method to create listening materials?

D. Research Objectives

Based on the research questions above, the objectives of this study that would be discussed are as follows:

1. To explain the processes of creating listening materials using TTS performed by the English teacher.
2. To know the view of the English teacher with respect to using TTS as a method to create listening materials.

E. Research Significances

Based on the background above, the significance of this study that would be as follows:

1. For EFL students, so that they can get insight on the possible utilization of TTS in English Language Teaching. by knowing the utilization of TTS the students can potentially use it in future class/presentations.
2. For listening teachers, they can get insight on the possible utilization of TTS in English Language Teaching. Moreover, the aforementioned listening

teachers can use TTS as a replacement of audio-based class activities due to its flexibility.

3. To be a reference for further research. Other researchers can get an insight of TTS in English Language Learning.