# Story-Listening in Indonesia: A Replication Study

*Beniko Mason, Ken Smith and Stephen Krashen*

## ABSTRACT

*This study reports on an attempted replication of four previous Story-Listening studies. Conducted with EFL students from five Asian countries, findings confirmed that subconscious vocabulary acquisition can not only occur from Story-Listening using Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation, but also confirmed that gains are durable.*

**Keywords:** Replication; vocabulary acquisition; Story-Listening (SL); Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation (CAS).

## Introduction

We present here a partial replication of four studies (Mason and Krashen, 2004; Mason, Vanata, Yander, Borsch, and Krashen, 2009; Mason and Krashen, 2018; Clarke, 2019), which investigated vocabulary acquisition in a foreign language resulting from hearing a story with visual and linguistic supplementation designed to make input more comprehensible (Krashen, Mason and Smith, 2018).

All four of these studies reported that:

(1) gains were found in vocabulary development from listening to stories,

(2) gains were durable, that is, present on delayed post-tests, and

(3) gains were greater than and more lasting than vocabulary development from direct instruction.

In this study, we attempted to replicate results (1) and (2), as no comparison group was involved.

## PROCEDURE

Subjects were 12 college students from five different countries: Malaysia (3), Indonesia (3), South Korea (4), the Philippines (1), and Japan (1). Subjects' proficiency levels ranged from beginner to high intermediate.

This study was done as part of a course in second language acquisition taught by two of the co-authors (BM and KS) at a university in Indonesia, which met for 17 days over three weeks (July 2 to July 18, 2019). The course was titled "Story-Listening and Guided Self-Selected Reading."

### Story-Listening

The teacher helped listeners understand potentially unfamiliar words using "Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation" (Krashen, Mason and Smith, 2018) such as drawings (Mason, 2019) and paraphrase, and writing familiar and unfamiliar words on the board. Using the students' first language (translation) was not possible as the instructors did not know all the students' first languages. It took about 30 minutes to present

the story in this way.

During the experiment one instructor told the story using Story-Listening methodology as described just above. A second instructor made sure that the instructor who was delivering the story used the words that were on the test.

**Measures**

In order to determine the vocabulary acquisition rate from hearing a story once, the "The Juniper Tree" [1] was selected to suit the students' interests. A pre-test (translation test) consisting of 31 words [2] contained in the story that were thought to be unknown to the students was given one day before they heard the story. The pretest results (see below) confirmed that most of the words were indeed unfamiliar.

The test simply asked students to provide a translation of the words in their first language. Five native speakers helped score the test: one professor from the Philippines, one student from South Korea, two Indonesian students, one Malaysian student, and the first author, a native speaker of Japanese. The first two authors sat with the other scorers and bilingual dictionaries were available to help in grading. Full credit was given when the translation was reasonably accurate, e.g. when "pious" was translated as "religious" in the participants' first language.

A post-test was given immediately after the students heard the story and a delayed post-test was given one week later. The post-test and the delayed post-test were identical to the pre-test. Subjects were not told that there would be a delayed post-test. The order of the words on the test was the same each time.

During the remaining class time, approximately 90 minutes, the students read a book and then heard another story. Two stories were included in each class session during the course. [3]

**RESULTS**

Subjects showed a clear and significant gain in vocabulary knowledge, with very little attrition between the posttest and delayed posttest (Tables 1 and 2). [4]

Table 1. Means & Standard Deviations (SD)

|  | Pretest (7/10) | Post-test (7/11) | Delayed Post (7/18) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mean | 9.25 | 16.92 | 16.33 |
| SD | 3.31 | 7.28 | 7.68 |

Table 2. t-test results (t-test with correlated samples)

|  | t | p |
|---|---|---|
| Pre-Post | 4.43 | 0.002[a] |
| Post-Delayed | 0.19 | 0.43[b] |
| Pre-Delayed | 4.71 | 0.0003[a] |

a = one-tailed test; **b** = two-tailed test; **df** = 22

The effect size (based on the pre-test and delayed post-test) was substantial, **d** = 1.29.

The Story-Listening session lasted 30 minutes, and the overall gain, from pre- to delayed post-test was 7.08 words, a gain of .24 words per minute. This rate is very similar to what has been reported in earlier studies of Story-Listening (Table 3).

Table 3. Vocabulary acquisition rates from previous studies

| Study | N | Rate from Story Listening |
|---|---|---|
| Mason & Krashen (2004) | 27 | .25 |
| Mason, et. al. (2009) | 7 | .10~.23 |
| Mason & Krashen (2018) | 21 | .17 |
| Clarke (2019) | 6 | .19 |

**NOTES:**

(1) Source: Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, Von dem Machandelboom, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (Children's and Household Tales - Grimms' Fairy Tales), no. 47. (https://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm047.html).Translated by D. L. Ashliman. © 2000-2002.

(2) The words on the test: 1) pious, 2) pare; 3) sigh; 4) sore; 5) eagerly; 6) drawer; 7) stoop; 8) cease; 9) bury; 10) to and fro; 11) bid; 12) bough; 13) clap; 14) soar; 15) perch; 16) threshold; 17) pincers; 18) claw; 19) gaze; 20) millstone; 21) heave: 22) pole; 23) goldsmith; 24) murder; 25) parlor; 26) chatter; 27) veins; 28) tear; 29) flame; 30) crush; and 31) flat.

(3) The experiment was done in the middle of the course, after participants had some experience listening to stories.

(4) It is possible that students' reading contributed to the positive results on the delayed Post-test: Students read between 240 and 1512 pages during the course (mean = 614 pages) and in their reading they may have encountered some of the words included in the story they listened to.

**REFERENCES**

Clarke, S. (2019). A replication of "Is Form-Focused Vocabulary Instruction Worthwhile?" (Mason & Krashen, 2004). *Nagoya Junior College Kiyo,* 57, 155-159. https://ci.nii.ac.jp/naid/120006594752/ [3/6.20]

Krashen, S., Mason, B., & Smith, K. (2018).

Some new terminology: comprehension-aiding supplementation and form-focusing supplementation. Journal of English Language Teaching, 60(6), 12-13. https://tinyurl.com/y7zbem9g [3/6/20]

Mason, B. (2019). Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation: CAS-Drawing. How to use prompters: http://beniko-mason.net/story-listening/ [3/6/20]

Mason, B. & Krashen, S. (2004). Is form-focused vocabulary instruction worth-while? RELC Journal, 35(2), 179-185. http://beniko-mason.net/publications/ [3/6/20}

Mason, B., & Krashen, S. (2018). American students' vocabulary acquisition rate in Japanese as a foreign language from listening to a story. Turkish Online Journal of English Language Teaching (TOJELT), 3(1), 6-9. http://beniko-mason.net/publications/ [6/6/20]

Mason, B., Vanata, M., Yander, K., Borsch, R., & Krashen, S. (2009). The effects and efficiency of hearing stories on vocabulary acquisition by students of German as a second foreign language in Japan. The Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching, 5(1), 1-14. http://beniko-mason.net/publications/ [3/6/20]

**Prof. Beniko Mason,** Shitennoji University Junior College, Osaka, Japan, Email: benikomason@gmail.com

**Prof. Ken Smith,** Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages, Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Email: shimingkang@gmail.com

**Prof. Stephen Krashen,** University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California, USA. Email: skrashen@yahoo.com

---

**Checklist for Manuscript Review**

1. Does this article present and/or discuss *issues that are important and relevant* to the teaching and learning of English in an ESL/EFL context?

2. Is the *title* clear, short and appropriate for the content of the article?

3. Is the *abstract* brief, clear, inclusive and consistent with the content of the article?

4. Is the *introduction* relevant, meaningful and purposeful?

5. Is the *literature review* relevant to the article and focussed?

6. Does the article establish a clear *rationale* for the study and state the *problem* clearly?

7. Are the *techniques and tools* used appropriate for the study?

8. Are the *results* clearly presented and discussed?

9. Are the *findings* based on a robust analysis of the data and clearly presented?

10. Are the *conclusions* appropriate and reasonable, and linked to other studies on the topic?

11. Are *implications* of the findings discussed in the article?

12. Are the *references* appropriate, current, sufficient and consistent with in-text citations?

[See 'Manuscript Submission Guidelines for Authors' on pages 46-48.]