

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS ONLINE LISTENING CLASS

Umiati Rui'yah¹, Hamiddin², Diah Retno Widowati³

University of Islam Malang^{1,2,3}

umi.ruyah1998@gmail.com¹, hamiddin79@gmail.com²,

d.retnowidowati@unisma.ac.id³

Abstract: Online learning has become global scale practice around the world following social distancing in the attempt to suppress coronavirus spread. Online learning are done with all teaching and learning activities through internet connection. In terms of ELT context, creative and conducive learning method needs to be developed to cover learning need, Listening is considered to be very complex to be adjusted in online learning environments as the activities involves complex learning method that highly dependent on direct supervision of the instructor. Suitable need to be developed in designing learning environment. Therefore, the researcher aims to conduct study about students' perception in online listening. This study used descriptive qualitative research method and semi structured interview as instrument. The data for this research collected from 10 students of English department from University of Islam Malang through online with the use of WhatsApp video call. The data are analysed using qualitative data analysis based on Miles and Huberman (1994) that consist of data reduction, grouping, coding, and interpretation to get the data as a whole. The result identifies that online learning activities in listening class focuses on revealing the learner with authentic material and encourages students to practice listening skill independently especially IELTS by providing the students with suitable and sufficient material. It also found that learning platform are applied effectively. The study also identifies that the participants have positive responses towards online listening such as enjoyable, practical and flexible, well delivered and facilitated, good instructor and more successful compared to previous semester.

Key Words: English Entertainment, Benefits, Language Acquisition

INTRODUCTION

The global scale practice of online learning has increased recently, as many countries in the world are unwilling to take the more risk of Covid-19 virus from the direct meeting at schools and universities (Bailey, 2020). Online learning is a teaching and learning method where the material delivered indirectly and teacher and students connects and interacts through network access using technological devices or application (Milliner, 2017). However, the application of online learning is not always suitable for every learning teaching and learning as some learning might requires direct interaction (Moorhouse, 2020). According to Payne (2020) When it comes to the use of technology is not a one size fits all approach as it rest on the types of technology implemented and also the content material being taught. There are possible issues in the application of online learning especially that involves with the requirements of having good communication such as participation in collaborative learning tasks, group presentations and group assessments (Susilowati, 2020).

Despite of its difficulties in the application that requires adjustment and improvements to meet teaching and learning standard, online learning also have more potential if used effectively. Many efforts have been done by both the institutions and the lecturers to achieve good results and effective method from this online learning. However, some responses from students may arise about this online learning system, especially for English courses (Rifiyanti, 2020). Thus, the learners' perception of English online learning is required to further motivate improvement in online learning. According to Lagerspets (2008) Empirical studies of perception is the use of everyday and non-technical conceptions of logic as the background.

Each people have their own perception about something, perception is a point of view that shows what do people think about something from one place to another. Hamacheck (1995) stated that each individual experience different way with what experienced by other people both visually or practically, thus, describes the different

perception as the way individual experience sensical stimulation from their environment that differs one to another. According to Jacobs, Pinto & Shiffar (2004) perception is a prominent element that influence the effective teaching and learning, Therefore, a student's perceptions about learning practice in the class are required to evaluate learning process and the data, this is useful for the lecturers to develop suitable learning and teaching materials, teaching media and motivation (Septyanti & Kurniaman, 2019).

In terms of ELT context, creative and conducive learning method needs to be developed to cover learning need in the sudden shift of face to face learning to online learning. Amongst any other language skill, listening is a complex skill that requires a lot of strategies to carry out. According to Martinez (2010) designing listening class suitable for fully online learning is not easy, there are potential difficulties that might be faced by teacher and students. Brown (2001) stated that listening involves receptive process in obtaining information by representing meaning from the speaker through imagination and mental process. The potential difficulties are vocabulary understanding and components of English language in listening (Harmer, 2008).

Listening is very complex skill compared to other skills for ESL and EFL learner, in his study it is found that listening difficulties are caused by lack of practice and knowledge to follow listening activity in the class (Schmidt, 2016). Developing effective listening activity, it is necessary to discuss the challenges of online learning in listening class such as getting the gist of fast talking speaker, lack of vocabulary and length of speech (Milliner. 2017). Learners might encounter some big problems in listening comprehension such as cultural differences, accent, vocabulary, and frequency of the language input (Jones, 2020). Bano (2017) stated that listening to second language input are seemingly similar to listening in the first language or mother tongue however the learners might having limited prior knowledge of the second language or having difficulties of getting the gist of fast speaking speakers.

Listening used for two purposes to gain an understanding and respond accordingly as well as to support other language skills development (Richards, 2005).

Listening skill is about to receiving the message that originated from sound and voice (Picciano, 2002). According to Adnan (2014) listening is a process of getting the message and meaning from taking attention to the information we hear. As receptive skill, listening has been shown to assist in the acquisition of pronunciation, vocabulary and syntactic knowledge (Lanning, 2015). However, according to Susilowati (2020) there is only limited amount of strategies in online listening class. According to Rumelhart (1980) it is inclined that these two kinds of processing interconnects to build an interactive processing which makes the third model for listening process.

Top-down process, refers to the use of larger units such as the schema, the knowledge of world, subject matter, genre and contextual knowledge to influence how the smaller units are perceived (Gu, Guangwei & Lawrence, 2009). Top-down processing goes from the prior knowledge about the meaning of language to predict what will be uttered by the signal (Richards (2008). The process that are included in top-down strategies are prediction, analysing the meaning, and summarizing (Guo, 2009). Meanwhile, bottom up process begins with the data collection through analyzed the organization and decoding process of collective oral information (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2019). Bottom-up process mostly involves retaining input while processing word and clause partitions to recognize important points in a discourse as well as recognizing syntactic correlation between aspects in the sentence while using intonation and stress to signify functions (Richard, 2008).

Previous studies have been conducted on learners' perception of online learning. The study conducted by Saifuddin, (2018) revealed that the students perceive e learning as beneficial to improve motivation, comprehension and help the readiness in the lecture. The study conducted by Konig (2020) show that information ICT becomes one major challenge in online learning, particularly digital teacher competence to utilize technology, development of teaching method to adapt with sudden change of learning model is influential in adaption to online teaching at the

COVID-19 school closures. Moreover, Hwaider (2017) discovered that students' difficulties are differentiated into linguistic and non-linguistic related difficulties. In term of non-linguistic problems, the main obstacle in teaching listening are related to incompatibility between learners, teachers, and teaching environment which contributes the most to the difficulties in listening skill. The linguistic related difficulties includes vocabulary, grammatical structure, pronunciation, stress, intonation.

From the previous study, the researcher found the importance of conducting research on studying the perception of learning activities implemented in listening class that undergone shift from regular direct meeting to online learning due to social distancing. There are many ways of teaching listening, however, as online learning becomes obligatory to avoid the danger of the pandemic, it is necessary to design appropriate method for online learning by understanding what students' need and what students' feel and think about the teaching strategies. Therefore, a study about students' perception in online listening class is needed.

METHOD

This study was implemented using qualitative method that explains factual and field data in the form of illustrations and narratives. In this study the researcher chooses the descriptive qualitative research model to describe the real-life data gathered during the data collection. In this research, the data were taken from 10 students in listening class of fifth semester English department students at University of Islam Malang. The researcher assumed that 10 participants is sufficient to represent population in qualitative research. In answering the research question, the researcher used online interview adapted from Anwar & Wahid (2021) about the perception in online learning and in this study adapted to suit research question about online listening class. The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions of structured interview that is done once without any additional questions.

The research carried out with method that formulated in accordance with the background of the study as well as literature review to get suitable method to conduct the research. In this study, data collection was implemented by using online interview to gain detailed information about students' perception on online listening class. The researcher administers the interview through online media of WhatsApp videocall due to social distancing and consideration of social distancing to ensure health and safety for both researcher and participants. The technique of data analysis is based on the qualitative data analysis model of Miles and Huberman (1994) that involves the data reduction, classification, display and conclusion. Reduction is the data reducing process of selecting important and necessary data by focusing, and simplifying the raw data from the data collection. Classification of the data are administered to gain theme or specification of different data and organize them to gain more specific data presentation. In this study the data is displayed using table, chart and some image support for more comprehensive result presentation. The researcher use the summarization of the finding and relate the analyzed data with theoretical studies and related literatures.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher conducted online interview with the participants and managed to identify students' perception in online listening class that consist of learning activities, media, strategies and assignment. According to the interview, here is the transcript based on the response from student.

"I think it is easier for me to understand listening via online as we can practice with the audio repeatedly." S1

"By utilizing technology, we can practice listening without limitation of time and space." S4

The researcher finds that there are benefits of online learning based on students' perception those are flexibility to learn anywhere and anytime and good utilization of technology. Rifiyanti (2020) also found similar result where most

students enjoy online learning because they can learn at home with flexible time. Moreover, Bano, (2017) stated that being able to access learning material online anywhere and anytime is one major beneficial feature in online learning that promotes independent learning..

The other benefit is its practicality with optimum utilization of technology. Moreover, the study also reveal that the material is easy to understand. However, this is in contrast with the statement of three students who are disagree because the explanation given by lecturer in online listening class are not clear.

“In my opinion, online listening is not really effective as it can’t guarantee that the students are focusing on online meeting, even worse if there are signal problems.” S8

Additionally, there is also student with neutral statement, for instance, student 6 stated that there is no difference between online and offline listening class. The data reveals that five of the students have positive response towards online listening class, two neutral and three have problems in listening class. Meanwhile, the problems in online listening class mostly caused by unstable internet connection, the poor quality of the material and lack of focus during online learning. Susilowati (2020) stated that connectivity problems is the major problems in online learning especially for those who lives in the area that lacks internet signal coverage.

In terms of learning activities, the researcher found that the participants have various answer despite of they have the same instructor. The data are presented in the following transcripts. According to the data, here is the transcript based on the interview from the responses of students. The result shows variety of listening activities such as listening to podcast, voice note, and video.

“Listening to podcast and lecturer’s voice note, or watching video that have been prepared for the material as well as listening to speeches and seminar.”

Aside from listening related activities, students also asked to do reading. The activities that involves video is also dominant in online listening class, this can be seen in the answer from students 2,4 and 6 that mention watching video as listening activity. The data indicated that the most frequent activity is related to IELTS practice. This can be seen that this activity is mentioned by many students that clearly mention the activity. The data are in the following transcripts.

“We are provided with audio, work sheet and IELTS practice”. S5

“The activities involve explaining material and recorded using voice recorder then submitted via Edmodo”. S7

Based on the data above, the researcher managed to find nine listening activities that focused on exposing students to authentic material, those are hearing podcast, listening to the lecturer via VN, watching videos predetermined by lecturer, watching YouTube, doing IELTS worksheet with audio, summarizing videos, recording, analyzing and discussing audio. According to Bano, (2017) providing authentic material for the students to learn and analyze is by far most effective method for teaching foreign language. The major benefit of using authentic material in teaching is exposing language learners to native accent, pace and culture in communication (Jones, 2020).

According to the data, most of the times the lecturer uses Edmodo in online learning class. The data shows that all the students mentioned the use of Edmodo.

“Through Edmodo, how to use it are the same with Google Classroom.” S3

Following Edmodo, the second most frequently used media is WhatsApp that mostly used for exchanging information. The use of WhatsApp mentioned by most of the participants except student 3. Here are some examples based on the transcripts from student 6 and 9 that mention the use of WhatsApp group.

“Edmodo is used to download assignments and sometimes use WhatsApp group.” S6

Some students also mentioned the use of zoom meeting but not as usual media in listening class. It can be assumed that the lecturer mostly use voice note feature on WhatsApp to explain the material to the students. In term of learning media, the researcher found that all the participants confirm about the use of WhatsApp group and Edmodo application as media for interaction and sharing material. Based on the interview, the researcher received responses regarding learning facilities and learning facility enables them to learn effectively. This finding is similar with Dewi (2019) which also found the use of WhatsApp for teaching listening, in her finding the teacher also utilize WhatsApp group to transfer recording and assignments. In term of the use of Edmodo, Tiprak (2019) found that Edmodo improve the students' learning performances and most of the students agreed about the implementation of Edmodo in blended learning.

In regards to learning facility, the response shows that almost all the participants are agreed that online listening class have sufficient and facility. Moreover, some students also perceive that the learning facility are easy to access and obtain. Milliner (2017) also found that the availability of materials and facility allows the students to learn ai=utonomously and develop their listening competence.

In term of strategies in online learning, the students grasp different strategies that suits them based on strategies given by lecturers. Based on the interview, the researcher collected transcript for student 1 to 10, the data are as follows.

“Yes, we are provided with strategies in IELTS such as reading instruction and exercise with friends.” S5

Therefore, it is indicated that student use strategy by paying attention to instruction before answering the items and also focused on analyzing the content. It also found that some students focused on analyzing important point in the text. Additionally, some students also mention that time management is important in IELTS listening section as it involves many questions with limited time between two items. Finally, to make listening easier it is suggested by the lecturer to learn listening

strategies from many sources. For instance, student 8 is instructed to watch videos about listening strategies and make summary of it.

“The lecturer instructed to watch video about strategies in listening IELTS and then instructed to make summary of it.” S8

The study also reveals that the lecturer also gives some strategies to support learning activities especially IELTS related strategies. The strategies explained are identifying accent, read the instruction and question carefully, practice, taking note of the important points and focus on key note. The lecturer also suggests the students to hear any audio material using headset during listening as well as time management during listening activities. Gilakjani, & Ahmadi, (2019) stated that listening strategies involves focus in understanding instruction and question items, pay attention to background, setting, stress, context and keywords. Additionally, Milliner (2017) stated that listening requires practice and careful attention to similar sound with different meaning and negative context.

In term of assignment retrieved in the class, students revealed that most assignments are doing IELTS practice and learn to create audio, script and worksheet in listening by recording conversation with friends as recorded audio material.

“Making summary, making script and recording conversation to make listening question items complete with answer key.” S5

Additionally, some students mention assignment such as making summary about seminar and podcast. Aside from making listening items, the assignment also involves the activities like measuring own skills based on the recording created as assignment before.

“The assignment is recording conversation with friend to make listening items with answer key, then, used for the exercise in the class to measure our listening skill.” S7

The finding about the assignment shows that the assignment are done in a step. First is analysis and listen to videos to improve listening then followed by making listening items based on IELTS type of test then finally test it in the classroom to measure listening skill. Ardiansah (2018) found significant improvement in listening after treatment using video, he also noted that watching video in listening allows the students to think analytically and improve their skills in listening.

In regards to the difficulties encountered by students in online listening class, the researcher found many difficulties. The most frequent indicated problem is internet connection.

“Almost no drawbacks but sometimes there is signal problems.” S2

“Lacking internet related facility especially in rural area.” S7

There is also student who encounter difficulties in understanding British accent. Moreover, some students also indicate lacking communication between students and lecturer, as well as the learning that are not conducted based on schedule.

“Have to focus on difficult British accent.” S3

“Lacking communication between lecturers and students, and many lecturers did not teach based on the right schedule and tend to change the time.” S5

Despite of all the difficulties, there are some students that indicated no problems in online listening class.

“No problems as it is already good because the lecturer explains the material and gives assignment properly. But sometimes we have to print text to make listening easier.” S6

The overall data reveals that, there are eight students who mention problems and the flaws in online listening and the other two perceive that they have no

problem. Konig (2020) stated that teaching listening faces many challenges in online distant learning, however, facilitating students to practice listening on their own is probably the best solution to progress within the limitation of online distant learning. According to the data, the most frequent problem is internet connection that is mentioned by four of the students. This is in line with Susilowati (2020) stated that connectivity problems are the major problems in online learning especially for those who lives in the area that far from the center of community that lacks internet signal coverage. These problems occur mostly on students who live far from the cities. The other problems are mentioned once by the students such as difficulties in comprehending British accent, lack of discipline in learning schedule, disagreement in printing material when online. Jones (2020) also noted that major problems the learners experience in listening comprehension are cultural differences, accent, vocabulary, length or the speed of the language input.

CONCLUSIONS

According to the finding and discussion, the perception in online listening class, the study identifies that most of the participants have positive perception towards online listening class. The data shows that the positive response stated are enjoyable, practical and flexible, well delivered and facilitated, good instructor. well improved compared to previous semester and successful. In terms of online learning activities in listening class focuses on exposing the learner with authentic material by watching and analyzing videos without subtitle, moreover, the lecturer also encourages students to practice listening skill independently especially IELTS as well as providing the participants with suitable and sufficient material. It is also found that learning platform are well utilized that supports practicality and flexibility. However, the study also identifies some difficulties that mostly caused by connectivity problems, the difficulty level of the material, difficult to understanding accent and the cost of packet data. This is in line with the previous studies that have similar problems about connectivity, comprehension and learning cost.

SUGGESTIONS

According to the conclusions, the researcher proposes suggestions for the reader as follows.

It is suggested for the students to utilize the facility provided by lecturer and practice listening skill independently outside listening class. The students can also use the material given by lecturer to practice at home.

For the lecturers and university, it is suggested to give develop more effective teaching method and strategies that suits online learning such as providing students with tryout of IELTS at the end of the semester. It is also necessary to direct the students access open source online material to support their learning.

For the next researcher it is suggested more to conduct more studies in online learning based on the teacher perception, in order to understand the facilitator's view about teaching in online learning.

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Advisor I,



Dr. Hamiddin, S.Pd., M.Pd.

NIP/NPP: 122005197932162