

THE STUDY OF EFL STUDENTS' EXTENSIVE LISTENING ACTIVITIES AT UNIVERSITY OF ISLAM MALANG

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Abstract

Listening is a basic language skill that is important in receiving oral messages to carry out communication with others more effectively. However, mastering listening especially in the EFL context requires a lot of practice, therefore language learners need to carry out extensive listening practice outside of class activities. Extensive listening can be defined as listening for pleasure that allows learners to receive both comprehensive and enjoyable input. Due to this reason, the researcher is interested in studying EFL students' extensive listening activities at the university. This study was carried out using descriptive qualitative research methods through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews as an instrument. The questionnaire is used to find 5 suitable participants for the interview from the students of the English department at the University of Islam Malang. The data for this research was collected online through the use of WhatsApp voice notes and video calls. The result of the interview is analyzed using qualitative analysis for more detailed data about extensive listening activities. The result showed that all students have a medium to a high level of perception towards both aspects of extensive listening such as enjoyment and benefit and give positive responses towards six kinds of extensive listening material such as English songs, movies, podcasts, audio, news, and speech. The result also indicated that extensive listening has many benefits, such as providing an enjoyable learning experience and environment, flexibility to be used anywhere anytime, and flexibility to choose material based on learning purpose and needs. Moreover, extensive listening also benefits language skills such as vocabulary, pronunciation, retention, comprehension, authentic material, and more importantly improvement in listening skills.

Key Words: Listening skill, extensive listening, activities.

INTRODUCTION

Listening is a basic language skill that is important to carry out oral communication that is done regularly. According to Brown (2004), the importance of listening skills is to receive an oral message that is much greater in use of time, words, effort, and attention than the oral counterpart whether in the workplace, school, or home. In building good communication with others, the individual must understand the meaning of the message conveyed by his partner during the conversation. In terms of the EFL context, teachers must provide the students with more exposure to the target language by incorporating extensive listening (Metruk, 2018). Extensive listening can be defined as listening for pleasure, as stated by Bozan in Renandya and Farrell (2016), extensive listening includes all types of listening activities that allow learners to receive a large number of understandable and

enjoyable input. Moreover, Extensive listening usually takes place outside the classroom: in the students' homes, in cars, or on personal MP3 players as they travel from one place to another (Harmer, 2007).

There are several types of extensive listening such as social listening, secondary listening, aesthetics listening, and passive listening (Solihin, 2017). Social listening is about what goes on in social situations where people chat. Anderson in Tarigan (2008:45) explains that social listening or listening needs attention and understanding of the speaker's role in the communication process, while secondary listening is about what happened by chance, for example, listening to music or paintings. "Secondary listening is listening accidentally and extensively. For example, when we are studying, we also can listen to the radio faintly" (Tarigan, 2008). Moreover, aesthetic listening is often called appreciative listening, such as listening to poetry, drama, and stories. Tarigan (2008) stated that "aesthetic listening is the last phase in listening activity" for example; music, poems, radio, or recording. Furthermore, passive listening according to (Tarigan, 2008) is the application of an utterance without conscious effort which usually marks our efforts when we are learning less carefully, hastily, and mastering a language. "Passive listening is listening that does not need much effort in responding to it."

There are many benefits of extensive listening. In this listening method, students can select listening sources and materials that they deem suitable for their English proficiency and their preference. Krashen (1985) emphasized this fact by stating that humans acquire language in only one way - by understanding messages or by receiving 'comprehensible input'. In extensive listening, learners receive lots of meaningful messages or, use Krashen's expression. The other benefit is the students are able to use entertainment as listening material such as movies, TV shows, radio programs, and Audiobooks (Bozan 2015). Extensive listening also develops listening fluency and automaticity in recognizing spoken texts that build learners' confidence and ability to deal with normal speech rate, recognize spoken words, and chunk for better comprehension, as well as improve fluency by building listening speed (Ivone & Renandya, 2019). Extensive listening is also known to improve listening comprehension primarily because it enables learners to process spoken language more accurately and fluently (Renandya, 2019). It improves comprehension and listening skills especially when it is conducted using multimodal input, such as in reading while listening, listening and viewing, and listening while viewing and reading activities (Chang, 2010). Furthermore, Wahidah and Lutfiyyah (2018) noted that extensive listening benefits the development of pronunciation and speaking skills, reducing anxiety and frustration, and gaining more focus, as well as enjoyment.

Several studies have been done in regards to extensive listening, for instance, a study conducted by Baraella and Linarsih (2020) aims to find out the listening sources preferred by the participants and how they are motivated to improve their listening ability through the use of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews on 30 participants. The results showed that students used captioned-provided websites as their media instruction in listening for pleasure to a variety of news. Moreover, Riadin (2019) aims to find out the students' enthusiasm and interest in using English songs in listening using interviews with 5 students and class observation. The results indicated that students give a positive response to the

implementation of extensive listening because it allows them to learn enjoyably. Moreover, the study also reveals some benefits such as flexibility, which can be learned anywhere anytime, reducing boredom, and making the students learn independently. Additionally, Fauzanna (2017) also conducted a study to investigate the effectiveness of listening journals in helping students understand the overall meaning. The study has been conducted on first-year EFL university students during their dictation and reproduction lessons. The researcher found all students accessed the assigned websites and practiced extensive listening.

METHOD

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative method to know the extensive listening activities of EFL students at the University of Islam Malang. Therefore, the researcher used a qualitative design to describe extensive listening activities in detail based on the students' direct answers. The participants of this study consisted of 19 participants from second-semester students of the English department, especially class 2C. The instruments used in this study are questionnaires and interviews related to extensive listening. The questionnaire used in this research is unstructured. The researcher used a questionnaire to find out the data about EFL students' extensive listening activities. The questionnaire was created by the researcher and has been validated and tried out by 19 fourth-semester English department students at the University of Islam Malang involved in trying out the questionnaire. The researcher used an online questionnaire through Google Form to obtain the data. This questionnaire consisted of 15 item statements about extensive listening with 8 items for benefit aspect and 7 items for enjoyment aspect statements about extensive listening. Another instrument is an Interview question, the interview question was intended to obtain more in-depth information regarding EFL students' extensive listening activities. The researcher conducted interviews online through video calls and voice notes on the WhatsApp application to obtain data. This interview was conducted by a researcher at the University of Islam Malang. The researcher used nineteen questions that have been determined by the problems studied.

The data are collected through several procedures, the first one is the distribution of the questionnaire. The researcher distributed the questionnaires to students through the Google Form that was sent via a link to WhatsApp and email, then the researcher asked the students to fill out the questionnaire. Meanwhile, the interview was conducted online through video calls and voice notes, it was conducted after the students filled out the questionnaire. After getting a questionnaire from students, the researcher will choose 5 students to be interviewed. Each participant takes 30-50 minutes. The researcher analyzed the data by tabulating the result of the questionnaire data in excel. Then, the researcher categorized the students according to the results of the data tabulation. After the students' grades have been decided, the researcher interviewed them to find out more deep information regarding the results of the completed questionnaire. Finally, the researcher described the findings by looking at the results of questionnaire calculation and interview.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

To identify students' extensive listening activities, the researcher divided the data based on two aspects, which are students' enjoyment level and students' benefit level. According to the data about students' enjoyment levels, eight students have a high enjoyment level of 42.1% of total participants and eleven students with a medium level of enjoyment and 57.9% of total participants.

Six students have a high benefit level or 31.6% of total participants and thirteen students with a medium level of benefit or 68.4% of total participants. The study by Iswahyuni (2019) also found related results of enjoyment in extensive listening activities due to the flexibility to choose their material. Furthermore, Le and Sa (2020) also found that students can select listening sources and materials that they deem suitable for their English proficiency and are pleasant for them as it is easier to understand. About the benefits of extensive listening, the result is supported by Krashen's (1985) theory about comprehensible input by understanding messages or by receiving comprehensible input as in extensive listening, learners receive lots of meaningful messages that help them improve their language skills. This is also in line with Ivone (2019) where extensive listening develops listening skills by recognizing spoken texts. Moreover, Yeldhalm (2016) also found the benefit of extensive listening implemented in the practice of language skills that enables the students to enhance their listening skills in the use of real-life context.

The result of the interview in terms of English songs shows that all participants are confirmed to prefer pop songs, a participant also likes all kinds of songs except for Rap songs, and others like to listen to rock songs. The data also showed that participants' perception about the benefit of listening to English songs in improving listening skills, the researcher found many benefits of English songs to listening skills such as fun media to learn, improving listening skills as well as knowing the correct pronunciation of the words as English songs and enhance the listeners' vocabulary knowledge by looking at the lyrics while translating. In regards to this, Tegge, (2018) also conducted a study on international language teachers' uses of songs in classrooms showed that teachers use songs to exercise listening comprehension and introduce vocabulary more often while developing an enjoyable environment for learning. Furthermore, Riadin (2019) also discovered that the benefit of English songs is to enable the students to get English language input in the form of lyrics supported by rhythm and musical instruments which creates an enjoyable experience. Moreover, Maneshi (2017) also found a similar result that shows many benefits of using English songs in learning English vocabulary such as pronunciation, faster memorization, and long-term retention.

In regards to English movies, the researcher confirms six categories preferred by participants, those are drama, action, fantasy, comedy, and romance. In response to the question of what types of English movies the participants like, participants 1 and 5 mentioned drama. The data showed the benefits of English movies, the researcher found that all the participants mentioned vocabulary as the benefit they can get from English movies, moreover, the participants also mentioned getting knowledge about pronunciation from the conversation that happens in the movies. Overall, the result indicates that vocabulary and pronunciation are the potential benefits that can be acquired through watching English movies. Pronunciation can be acquired through any monologue and dialogue shown in the movies along with vocabulary that can be in the form of common words, terms, slang, and idioms. This result is similar to Bozan (2015) in that every participant enjoys watching English movies and videos with subtitles in learning, this is because the visual aspects of the

videos are more comprehensible for them. Moreover, a study by Promsing (2017) found that English movies involve audiovisual learning experiences supported by conversation and narrative both in monologue and dialogue settings which provides more understanding of the context. Additionally, Dehaki (2017) also found that English audiovisual material in movies provides more listening comprehension as well as exposes the learners to authentic language materials that reflect how natives use languages in the show.

After extensive listening through the podcast, the result shows that only 3 participants liked the podcast. The preference also varied such as politics, education and motivational podcast. In terms of the effectiveness of listening to podcasts towards improving listening skills, the researcher found three reasons that contribute to listening ability, which is listening to practice. Other participants also mention the benefit of listening to a podcast is getting information. A study by Ahmed (2016) also revealed that podcasts provide a less stressful learning experience compared to regular listening audio, and the result of the study indicated that students that are taught using podcasts perform better in listening comprehension tests. As stated by Kavaliauskiene (2008) that listeners of podcasts generate more vivid images in their minds and have high levels of emotional involvement in the story, the result indicated that listening to English podcasts improves the proficiency in English, especially in listening comprehension. Moreover, a more recent study by Widodo (2018) found that the use of podcasts in language class facilitates the students with authentic listening material to practice their listening comprehension skills.

In regards to listening to English audio, 4 participants liked listening to the audio, the researcher also identifies some preferences such as conversation and description. Moreover, it is shown that the effectiveness of listening to English audio in improving listening ability, the researcher also found that there are benefits such as improving vocabulary and improving descriptive ability. However, in contrast, one participant stated otherwise that listening to English audio is not an effective method to improve listening ability if rarely practiced. In line with this, a study by Aryana & Apsari (2018) also found that giving the students assignment to listen to a conversation type of recording at home did not increase students' interest even though this method managed to increase their listening in the next meeting. However, a more recent study conducted by Putri (2019) indicated that giving students audio material in the form of an English book via mobile application does both improve students' listening comprehension skills and interest in learning. In this case, how the students perceive the use of English audio depends on what type of audio is given as the material.

Regarding English news, most students are confirmed to like English news. There are also some preferences mentioned by the participants about English news that they like such as sport, entertainment, and game as well as politics and health. Regarding the participants' perception of the effectiveness of English news in improving listening skills, there is some potential vocabulary in new fields such as politics, getting an update on vocabulary based on the change of language in the world. Moreover, other than getting new vocabulary and improving listening skills, the students can get the information from the news. The result of this study is in line with Adnan (2013) that listening to News reports by assigning students to listen to the English news gives them real experiences in understanding spoken language on many different topics, but many students are having difficulties in comprehending the spoken material due to the speed and too many difficult words in a news report. Moreover, Bell (2012) stated that learners still have problems identifying sounds and words although the news is clearly articulated, some problems with connected speech cause difficulties such as assimilation in the blending of words within their boundaries.

Another Extensive listening activity that can improve a listening skill is listening to English speakers, the data show that almost all participants except participant 2 like to listen to English speeches. The result of the interview also indicates some preferences such as motivational speech, education, and politics. In terms of the effectiveness of listening to English speech towards listening ability, the researcher found many potential benefits based on students' responses such as helping the acquisition of pronunciation that can't be acquired in reading and writing. But In contrast, some participants perceive listening to English speakers is not very effective, for instance, if the topic is not interesting. This result is in line with Basquille, (2012) which indicates the difficulties in listening to continuous speech such as getting the gist of the speaker and following the tempo of their speech, furthermore, some monotonous speech might bore the listener and break their concentration. In addition, Takaesu (2013) studied the use of TED Talk as listening material and found that most students give positive responses to learning activities where they chose material based on their preference and this method is proven effective in improving students' listening skills.

In answering the research question, the researcher also includes the data about the overall view of extensive listening. Based on participants' responses, the benefit of extensive listening is mentioned to offer more effective learning conditions as it provides peace for mind and soul, thus, making the brain easier to receive information. Moreover, the data also show that extensive listening enables the learner to learn more independently and allows practice based on the level and preferences. In addition, extensive listening can be practiced regularly which allows the students to practice more. In this case, the students' listening ability might be improved over time as the students practice frequently. This result is in line with Le and Sa (2020) that extensive listening benefits the students by being able to select their listening materials that are suitable for their learning purpose and needs. Moreover, the flexibility of extensive listening activities by the ability to choose their material will make the students enjoy learning material (Iswahyuni, 2019) The second benefit is an enjoyable learning experience that makes the students easier to follow through with learning activities. Iswahyuni (2019) stated that as the students enjoy the learning activities, it is easier for them to understand and pursue their learning purpose. Furthermore, Chang (2012) also indicated that the students learn more effectively in an enjoyable learning environment by being able to choose their learning materials. The third benefit is the ability to use material outside the learning course, for instance listening to songs and watching English movies that can be done at home. Ivone (2019) indicated that extensive listening material means the flexibility to make use of the material outside the school to further enhance the learners' listening skills.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The study concluded that all students have a medium to a high level of perception towards both aspects of extensive listening such as enjoyment and benefit. It also indicated that most students give positive responses to six kinds of extensive listening material especially English songs and English movies where all the students enjoyed those activities. Furthermore, the researcher also indicates that every extensive listening material has many benefits, such as providing an enjoyable learning experience and environment, flexibility to be used anywhere anytime, and flexibility to choose material based on learning purpose and needs. Moreover, extensive listening also benefits language skills such as vocabulary, pronunciation, retention, comprehension, authentic material, and more importantly improvement in listening skills.

In the consideration of the conclusion of the current study, the researcher suggested for the students to make use of any English source outside of the schools or university to improve

listening skills, because many open-source listening materials are both enjoyable and informative. It is also suggested for the teacher and lecturer to facilitate and direct their students to extensive listening material to improve the students' listening skills more effectively. As for the next researcher, this study suggests based on the limitation of the study. It is suggested to conduct a study using semi-structured interviews or deeper interview guidelines to get more detailed responses from the participants. Moreover, the researcher suggests collecting data on more students to cover more information from varied sources.

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