

Students' Perspectives on Extensive Listening through YouTube

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Abstract

The paper reports a case study method exploring the perceptions of 10 students enrolling a listening class in terms of their experience when taking extensive listening, primarily by using YouTube. A closed-ended questionnaire was delivered and FGD through a semi-structured interview was utilized as a data-collecting method. The results of exploring the students' perspectives indicated that: (1) they can do extensive listening via YouTube to improve their listening fluency anytime and anywhere; (2) they can learn the pronunciation of new vocabulary and grammar through extensive listening; (3) they can pertain the topic of aural text from context; (4) the speed change function and the subtitle function is occasionally used to solve their confusion on new phrases; (5) some commercials may be as information to support their English learning; (6) they find an unreliable or unstable internet connection in some cases. Therefore, it is suggested that teachers set the teaching and learning activities and environment that can encourage students to experience extensive listening. Besides, it is also suggested that the institution management provide good Internet accessibility in the teaching and learning environment.

Keywords: *English language education, higher education, curriculum, pedagogic discourse*

1. Introduction

Listening comprehension is considered fundamental in developing other language skills, especially speaking, when learning English as a second language. There are significant differences in listening comprehension in L1 and L2 contexts. In L2 learning, learners engage in the complex comprehension process of comprehending, integrating, and responding to spoken utterances. When learning English as a foreign language, learners need to be exposed to two basic language skills, namely receptive skills and productive skills. Receptive ability is represented by listening and reading, while productive ability is represented by speaking and writing. Although these four skills are independent, they are integrated systematically to support the learning process (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). In addition, developing listening and reading skills can increase the effectiveness of writing and speaking skills (Field, 2010; Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).

When students come to a listening class, they already predict the activities that will be done, starting from listening to instructions from the teacher about the material to be delivered, listening to recordings, and completing the tasks given. In the process of listening to materials, instructions, and recordings, a second language learner must understand oral language. Comprehending a foreign language is the same as being fluent in listening (Renandya & Day, 2020). It is not easy, meaning the students should practice listening to grab the spoken language automaticity, and language teachers should help them to develop their fluency in listening (Renandya & Farrell, 2011). Besides, there will be some learners' difficulties in listening proficiency. They come from a lack of word recognition, unfamiliar vocabulary, and the speed of the speakers. Therefore, teachers should provide some activities to develop students' fluency in listening. Listening fluency is the ability to automatically process sound input effortlessly, reorganize what is known, and achieve a satisfactory level of performance (Chang et al., 2019).

Two approaches can improve listening skills, intensive and extensive listening (Ivone and Renandya, 2019). The focus of intensive listening is more on form than overall meaning, which means pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary of short and difficult audio clips slowly and intently (Dodds, 2022). Students do not listen to texts that are appropriate for their requirements, interests, and levels because they need to follow a syllabus that learn language through formal instruction (Renandya & Farrell, 2011). Therefore, they have few exposures to L2 oral texts, so low-level students may feel frustrated and unmotivated to comprehend the text. In addition, the topic must switch quickly. Renandya & Day (2020) promoted intensive listening activities such as predicting content, identifying keywords, listening for gist, listening for details, comprehending, making inferences, and replicating. However, Chang & Read (2006) stated that those activities only focus on remembering the input. Accordingly, the goal of listening tasks may not only memorization, but students need to take part in more worthwhile language learning activities.

On the other hand, extensive listening focuses on exposing the students to a wide range of vocabulary, ideas of different speaking styles that the language sounds seem natural and comfortable, and various topics based on their interests (Renandya & Farrell, 2011; Ivone & Renandya, 2019). Extensive listening is enjoyable, so it minimizes students' anxiety levels. Therefore, it may boost the student's confidence and motivation to comprehend the text. Nunan (1996, in Nugroho, 2020) promoted some activities in developing listening fluency such as narrow listening and repeated listening. Even, in a limited listening activity, students will learn about multi-modal input from just text (vocab and grammar). To help students understand the relationship between spoken and written word forms that are offered at the same time, this multi-modal is repeatedly delivered in spoken text. This is the recurrence in certain activities-related understanding processes in extensive listening (Ivone & Renandya, 2019). Chang et al. (2019) revealed that the effective method to improve students' comprehension was through repetition followed by visual and background knowledge. The availability of a wide variety of extensive listening materials is made possible by

technological advancements and the internet. YouTube is a learning platform that can be used to develop listening and other English skills (Ivone & Renandya, 2019; Novawan et. al., 2021). YouTube is easy to modify and adapt in terms of content, speed, and presentation. Various kinds of content can be taken in part or in whole and even mixed with other materials of the same or different forms as learning materials. Learners can adjust the speed of the material to suit their level of understanding. Material can also be presented in various forms, such as aural, visual, or textual.

The above-explained theories and previous studies about the teaching and learning of listening indicated that students need to be exposed to not only intensive listening exercises but also extensive listening activities outside the classroom. Therefore, this study was conducted to capture the implementation of extensive listening in a vocational higher education context. By investigating the students' perceptions of the extensive listening activities that they have done, this study is expected to present the students' perspectives on extensive listening, the advantages, and the constraint(s) they may face during doing extensive listening.

2. Method

This study aimed to reveal the students' perception of the extensive listening activities which they have experienced through the YouTube platform; therefore, this study is conducted in the form of a descriptive qualitative. The data collecting methods used are close-ended questionnaires and focus group discussions (FGD) through semi-structured interviews. The participant was 10 students of a vocational higher education joining the academic listening course. They were required to listen to videos from YouTube outside the classroom once a week. YouTube platform was chosen because it contains different topics, strong visuals, adjustable speaker speeches, and authentic listening material. The extensive listening activities deliver three phases: pre-listening, which delivers an outline and brainstorming; while-listening, which includes developing extensive listening proficiency; and post-listening, which covers discussion, summary, and revision.

The instrument of the questionnaire had seven statements. The first to fourth statements were used to describe students' perceptions of the extensive listening process via YouTube, while the remaining statements discussed the difficulties of using YouTube for extensive listening. The following is the list of the questionnaire's statements:

1. I do extensive listening via YouTube anytime, anywhere, and any video to learn about English various topics; it helps me to improve my listening fluency.
2. I can listen better and learn the pronunciation of new words and grammar.
3. I have improved my ability to listen effectively and derive meaning from context.
4. Occasionally, an unfamiliar phrase will be repeatedly interrupted, and the speed change function and the subtitle function are occasionally used to solve the confusion.
5. Some commercials may make me lose my concentration while listening.

6. There is an unreliable or unstable internet connection in some cases.

The participants were required to select the 4-level Likert Scale response that best fit their situation when filling out the questionnaire. They were labeled as strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. The data obtained from FGD conversations were triangulated with the information obtained from the close-ended questionnaires. The discussions were taped and conversationally transcribed to obtain specific information. The FGD took deeper evidence about the benefits and challenges of using YouTube in improving extensive listening. The results of the questionnaire's data collection were examined with descriptive statistics and shown as percentages.

3. Findings and discussion

In this part, the results of the closed-ended questionnaire and the focus group discussion are presented and discussed in the following 7 sub-sections.

Since I do Extensive listening via YouTube, the activities could do anytime, anywhere to learn about various topics, which helps me to improve my listening fluency.

There are only 20 % of students didn't agree with the statement. On the contrary, 80% of students agreed with that statement. It was distributed in 60% strongly agreed and 20% agreed that extensive listening via YouTube is accessible in any place and anytime with any material chosen by themselves.

Excerpt 1

T : So, you do extensive listening via YouTube in any situation. Do you?

S6 : Yes Ma'am. Cheap and effective. Outdoor is more convenient.

S2 : in good timing. Not in tired time. *Ngantuk*, Ma'am...

S3 : and fast response in confirming the difficult word. Do not wait until tomorrow to see you, Ma'am.

T : Why?

S1 : Because we want to focus on the aural text.

S3 : I can pause and replay

T : Do you like to do the extensive listening via YouTube together with your peer or alone?

S3 : *berkelompok*, Ma'am. We can clarify the audio text together

T : The material you like the most is...

S1 : Moto GP

S 4 : Cooking tutorial

S 8 : Beauty tutorial, because *saya pengen jadi MUA* (Makeup artist) Ma'am.

From the EXCERPT 1 result, it is shown that the students could decide what to do and what to learn by themselves. Ivone & Renandya (2019) mentioned this term as students' autonomy in listening. The activities collectively foster independent learning behaviors crucial for lifetime learning. Learners become more capable as they set goals, choose their materials, and evaluate their learning. This enables them to consciously

perceive their learning according to their individual needs, priorities, and preferences. In addition, Nugroho (2020) said that extensive listening via YouTube provides authentic and interesting input to enrich the student's knowledge.

I can listen better and learn the pronunciation of new words and grammar

An average of 50% of students strongly agreed and 40% of students agreed with the statement. However, 10% disagreed.

Excerpt 2

- S7 : I cannot *membedakan kata* laugh /la:f/ dan love /lʌv/
S2 : You can do shadowing.
T : That's right. By imitating and practicing to pronounce them again and again. You acquire new vocabulary.
S5 : I do Ma'am, with the word aim, lime. Air white. I apply them in a sentence. *Kadang tak jarang saya melihat pergerakan bibir native Ma'am. Saya pause untuk mengulang.*
S8 : Because there is a video, I can identify the types of a spanner. The views of the open-end spanner, ring spanner, and combination spanner can be seen clearly.
S7 : *Tapi saya merasa sulit dan kadang lupa cara mengucapkannya, Ma'am.*
T : *Jangan putus asa. Diulang-ulang.*

When learning a second language, students prefer to learn the target language in a real-life community. They tend to use the language rather than simply learn it by doing different types of tasks. The result confirmed the previous studies from Metruk (2018) that shows or videos on YouTube can present authentic material, allowing students to learn the target language in its context. Authentic material can be in the form of tutorials, podcasts, and webinars. Martinsen et al. (2017) promoted the shadowing and tracking technique revealing a significant improvement in listening ability and pronunciation.

I have improved my ability to listen effectively and derive meaning from context

60% of the students decided to agree in response to the question. This distribution was determined by the percentages of students who felt 60% strongly agreed and 40% agreed with the statement. 20% of the students who responded stated they disagreed.

Excerpt 3

- T : How can you comprehend the audio text?
S : *dari gambar – gambar, Ma'am. Jadi speaker menyebutkan sesuatu trus kita konfirmasi dengan gambar yang ada.*
T : Is there any difficulty?
S : To make sure what I hear I do replay pause and replay, Ma'am... until I can get the topic that the speaker intended

Students have two skills for understanding audio texts, a bottom-up listening process that involves various sources of linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge paying attention to intonation, words, clauses, and sentences. The other is top-down, which has

to do with students' knowledge of the subject (Ardini, 2015). Furthermore, she noted that students use background knowledge collected and stored from multiple learning experiences in their comprehension of audio texts. Background knowledge involves what happened before and after. The situations, themes, and contexts help us to match incoming audio signals when determining a specific context or theme. Students use a combination of these two processes to understand audio texts.

Occasionally, an unfamiliar word or phrase will be repeatedly interrupted, and the speed change function and the subtitle function are occasionally used to solve the confusion.

The responses showed that 80% of the students agreed and 20% disagreed with the statement mentioning that they often use the pause, replay, and speed down features on the YouTube channel. Some students stated that they often used the subtitle feature.

Excerpt 4

- S4 : *fitur pause, replay dan adjust speed sering kita klik jika terdapat kata yang sulit dimengerti.*
T : *Seberapa sering?*
S4 : *sering, Ma'am... bahkan pakai subtitle daripada buka kamus.*

When the students find difficult words while listening to YouTube channels, they usually adjust the audio speed by clicking on the gear in the lower right corner. The speed setting will increase or decrease as needed. There is also a pause and rewind function. These features are useful for viewers or students who have difficulty understanding YouTube content. Furthermore, the subtitle feature is available on this channel. In line with what Ivonne & Renandya (2019) said, audio material supplemented with text makes it easier for students to gain a deeper understanding of the audio text, improve listening skills, and improve vocabulary. There is even a subtitle function in different languages of the world.

Some commercials may make me lose my concentration while listening.

There are 3 groups of students' responses in responding to the statement above. 70% of the students responded strongly disagree, while 20% of them responded agreed and the other 10% responded strongly agreed.

Excerpt 5

- S3 : This informs me of the Grammarly and QuillBot
S2 : *ya... and I know there is Mixue near me here*
T : Are you happy?
S1 : Not really Ma'am, *mengganggu, skip aja*
S8 : I buy the premium, it's a free ad.

While there are many different types of ads on YouTube, the most common and common are True View in-stream ads, which are usually shown before the video starts.

Finally, the ad lasts 3 - 5 seconds before offering an alternative to in-skip. The result of EXCERPT 5 showed that 70% of the students enjoyed the advertisement because many of them were informed about the language tool applications for learning English. However, 20% of students skipped the advertisement because they are consistent with the previous goal of accessing YouTube, while 10% of students avoid the ad without watching. It is in line with Asmara (2020) that ignoring ads on the YouTube platform may be caused by three factors: the previous goal in accessing YouTube, bad experiences in the past on certain products, and the clutter of ads that appear in the video.

Unreliable or unstable internet connection in some cases

For this statement, 100% of the students responded strongly agree. It turns out that the internet connection is often unreliable and unstable in the learning environment.

Excerpt 6

- S7 : *saya belum bisa mengakses YouTube, bu. Jaringannya error.*
S2 : Unpredictable weather is recently happening. Many mount explosives and earthquakes.
S5 : Yes, it may cause an unstable internet connection.
T : You can access it using a campus internet connection.
S10 : We cannot Ma'am ...
S9 : *Lemot, Ma'am...*

The EXCERPT 6 results showed that 100% of the students felt that the internet connection was unstable and unreliable. Therefore, administrators of learning environments are strongly advised to increase network bandwidth so that students can study without worrying about submitting assignments because they do not have a technical problem with the internet connection. Most students use personal internet data packages, so accessing YouTube becomes expensive.

4. Conclusion

The two main points can be drawn from the student's perception of implementing extensive listening using the YouTube platform in improving listening fluency. First, it can be concluded that, in improving listening fluency, extensive listening through YouTube is powerful. However, some challenges need to be managed and addressed properly. To maximize its strengths, extensive listening activities should be based on the institution's curriculum. It deals with listening instruction. Second, the internet provided by the institution's management needs to be expanded and well-maintained.

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