Extensive Listening Practice in EFL Classroom with Variety of News Websites

Yusawinur Barella[1], Andini Linarsih [2]
Universitas Tanjungpura Pontianak, Indonesia
Email: yusawinurbarella@untan.ac.id[1]
Email: andinilinarsih@untan.ac.id[2]

Abstract: One potential of extensive online listening materials is that, unlike intensive listening, EFL students can listen independently by using audio listening features. It encourages students to practice listening and to promote listening fluency and autonomous learning outside the classroom. However, little research has investigated how lower English proficiency students from non- English department in EFL setting, undertaking the process of extensive listening. This study requires some Indonesian students at the tertiary level to select the appropriate materials with their proper level of listening speed to the individual learner. It was a weekly assignment to practice listening outside their classroom. This study seeks to investigate the websites that the EFL students with low proficiency levels choose to do their extensive listening activities, the types of news that may interest the students to listen, and the perception of the extensive listening activities. The results showed that students use captioned- provided websites as their media instruction in listening for pleasure with a variety of news.

Keywords: Extensive Listening, News, EFL students, Websites

INTRODUCTION

Listening ability plays a pivotal role in real-life situations. Despite its recognition as a crucial skill in language learning, listening skills have received little attention to teaching in foreign language teaching.

In the most traditional classroom, predominantly in the EFL context, teachers primarily focus their listening instruction to passive activities, listening and answering listening questions, a more teacher-center approach, and lack of need analysis (Widodo & Rozak, 2016). These traditional listening instructions, so-called Intensive listening, may not be given students so many choices to pick their topics. They listen to the spoken language provided by the teacher that sometimes are not at their comprehensible level. For low beginner students in EFL settings, they mostly find the speaking rate is too fast to understand, too difficult to grasp the words uttered (Renandya & Farrell, 2011). Students may become 'frustrated,' 'tired,' and demotivated to practice

more listening (Waring, 2008). Thus, teachers usually play the audio more than once to make their students able to grasp the idea. This instruction is not ideal because it will hamper students from improving their listening proficiency.

Moreover, in real-life situations, people do not usually ask their interlocutors to repeat their utterances every time they speak. To elicit the information from the oral text, EFL learners demand more time and familiarize themselves with authentic language in a real-life situation to keep up with speakers' average pace. EFL students who encounter different linguistic system, they need to familiarize themselves with the sound si pronunciation. If they jump into oral language that closes to the speed of natural speakers, they may bounce back to demotivation. Like reading, to have listening fluency, EFL learners should be given exposure to authentic listening materials and consistently do listening practices. Thus, students should be given much exposure to authentic oral texts not only in the classroom but also outside their classroom with their right level of speech, (hereafter named Extensive listening).

The widespread——internet access nowadays, teachers are given more a variety of authentic learning resources using audiovisual materials such as video, TV programs, online learnings (Mayora, 2017). Teachers nowadays can get more accessible and downloadable listening materials to use in and outside the classroom.

Extensive listening refers to independent listening of large quantities of listening materials and resources to get pleasure, and it can be implemented both in and out of the class (Chang, Millett, & Renandya, 2019; Waring, 2008). Extensive listening includes a variety of listening materials and sources that are understandable and enjoyable input, such as on television, radio, video, podcasts, or audiobooks. Learners are allowed to choose any listening sources and

materials suitable for them and easy to understand (Vo, 2010). They can choose what they want to listen for pleasure, such as VOA learning English, BBC learning English, and Youtube. Therefore, extensive listening allows learners to choose any listening materials and sources they like either for pleasure or for language improvement. Consequently, it will improve the learners' listening competence and require some metacognitive strategies that learners may decide for themselves, such as listening only, listening while reading, or listening by reading and watching.

. There are ten major principles of extensive listening as the adoption of extensive reading principles by Day (2002), namely:

1. Easy listening material.
2. The availability of a wide range of listening topics.
3. Learners' autonomy to choose what to listen to.
4. The massive amount of listening practices.
5. Listening for pleasure, information, and general understanding.
6. Reading is its own reward.
7. Meaning-making activities to fostering students' metacognitive strategies application.
8. Listening at the student's own pace and convenience.
9. Teachers as 'scaffolders' and 'learning supporters' for their students (Widodo & Rozak, 2016).
10. Teacher as a role model of listening practices.

The fundamental principles urge the teachers' significant roles to the success of extensive listening practices. Teachers should provide some post-listening activities to make extensive listening activities more meaningful and well-structured tasks for EFL students who are accustomed to the rigid pattern of intensive listening comprehension controlled mostly by the teachers. Intensive listening merely focused

on how students able to find the right answers to comprehension questions. The listening task is successful if the students could provide the correct answers in a limited timeframe. However, the extensive listening program requires perseverance and learners'drive to apply as it requires more time to achieve students' proficiency development. Students may find extensive listening as a tedious and time-consuming and tiring process because they are accustomed to babysitting by their teachers.

There are many audio-visual and multimedia materials for extensive listening that can be accessed and free downloaded, such as audiobooks (www.readworks.org), podcasts, video podcasts (learningenglish.VOA.com). Teachers should inform the online resources of their students while control and monitor their progress through listening diary or journal.

Milliner (2017) reported on his lower intermediate university EFL students' self-selection of extensive listening websites. This study is a replicate study by Milliner (2017), who made a similar study about the five most extensive listening websites in a Japanese classroom. Although previous studies have emphasized pedagogical implementation in both ESL and EFL settings, most of the studies focus more on university students from the English department or university students with intermediate to advance proficiency level. Moreover, personal experience from the low proficient non-English major students is still rarely conducted but necessary. There are two research questions to be addressed in this study:

1. What kinds of listening materials and resources do students choose in their implementation of Extensive listening?
2. What do students feel and view their experience?

METHOD
Research Design

This study collected both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were obtained by analysing the document of the participants' listening activities. Qualitative data was collected through a semi-structured interview to in order to better understanding their feeling and experience.

Research Subject

A total of 30 participants were purposely selected for this study. They were non- English Department students at the social sciences department in West Kalimantan. The participants were taking a course subject named General English class. Most of the students (90 %) have lower English proficiency level, which can be seen from the English proficiency Tes overall scores are equivalent to 330 – 400.

Data Collection

The experiment was conducted from February to June 2019, in the second semester of the academic year 2018-2019. Before the data was collected, participants have information on the purpose of the survey and this study, information on choosing online extensive listening material, and how to fill out the listening log.

To find out the listening learning resources preferred by the participants and how they are motivated to improve their listening ability, the participants were given a questionnaire. Interviews were also conducted to find out more about the reasons for the answers to the survey.

Data Analysis

Document analysis is one of the systematic procedures in reviewing existing documents, both printed and electronic. Using data analysis

aims to reanalyse the data obtained, get a more in-depth understanding, to develop knowledge empirically (Corbin & Strauss, 2012; Rapley, 2007). Triangulation data is used in this study, which aims to obtain accurate data from different methods. Using a questionnaire, evaluated by listening logs and interviews are expected to get valid results and avoid bias as a result of research that comes from a single source.

The students need to do listening to the English news from—some suggested online resources. The instructor (author) suggested some online extensive listening websites that provide a graded level of listening material to visit. They, however, are given the freedom to select any other site that meets their interest. Each participant is required to do extensive listening activities twice a week and make a minimum of ten listening logs adapted from Milliner (2017) to submit for one semester (fourteen weeks). Listening log must provide some information about the names of websites, types of news, the length of news, and then they need to make their questions and answers. As they finished listening, their reports will be graded like 10% of the structured assignment. There were 648 listening logs to be reviewed. Their listening log will be scored like 10 percent of their mark. To elicit some information about the students' perception of extensive listening activities, the participants will do some interviews.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

The reports show that there are four sources of news that the participants mostly see for their news, namely VOA learning English, BBC News, CNN, and National Geography, as the most frequently visited sources. The four most selected websites by this group of students will be described in the following section:

VOA Learning English

Voice of America Learning English is a site of learning English consists of integrated skills (reading, writing, pronunciation, vocabulary, etc.). It provides a variety of materials from beginner level to Advance level. It includes interesting and simple video content that all learners would be easier to understand. The topics of the content cover daily life conversations, news world, and US history.

BBC News

BBC Learning English is an interesting and attractive site designed for English learners and the Teaching of English. Similar to VOA learning English, BBC Learning English also contains interesting video content. BBC News focuses on British English and daily live and culture in the United Kingdom. Starts from the lower Intermediate level, students with low levels will not find difficulties in understanding the content.

CNN

CNN contains English learning materials that focus on American Culture and provides reading and listening opportunities to increase English fluency. CNN offers a lot of free resources (TV shows, news programs, articles, etc.) that can help learners improve their English fluency. The news is ranging from World News, US Politics, Business, Health, Entertainment, Style, Travel, and Sport.

National Geography https://eltngl.com/

National Geographic Learning helps learners to learn about their world and develop their language skills. This site brings the world to the classroom. Learning through National Geography Learning, learners' experience provides workbook and cd for all levels. Starts

from the beginner to Advance level, learners do exercises provided by this site.

Table 1.

English Learning Materials Provided by The Sources

Website	Graded level	Monologic Speech	Dialogic Speech	Variety of Accent	Post listening activities	Transcript/subtitle	Video Provided
VOA Learning English	√	√	√		some times	√	√
BBC News		√	√			√	√
CNN		√		√			√
National Geography		√		√			√
Others (e.g., ABC news, Arirang, Ted Talks, ESPN)							

These four learning sources are then analysed according to the needs of the participants. From the table above, it can be said that all four material sources have monologic speech and provide the video. Among all the learning sources, only VOA Learning English has a graded level. This is one of the reasons why VOA learning English is the most preferred source of participants.

VOA Learning English also provides transcripts or subtitles, so participants can listen while reading subtitles. With subtitles, participants find it easier to understand what they hear, to reduce misunderstandings.

However, none of these learning resources provide pre-listening activities. Participants do not get a brainstorm about what they will hear. However, in some material in VOA learning English, there are Post listening activities where participants have the opportunity to test their listening skills by answering some questions provided after listening activities.

Table 2.

Preferred Websites watched by the participants

| Websites	News watched	Percentage (%)
VOA Learning English	281 news	42.58
BBC news	226 news	34.24
CNN	48 news	7.27
National Geography	20 news	3
ABC News	13 news	1.97
Others (Arirang, Ted Talks, ESPN)	60 news	10.92

From the data above, VOA learning English is a source of extensive listening material that is most preferred by the participants. Participants, as their learning material have selected as many as 281 news or around 42.58 percent. Followed by BBC News, which has a percentage of 32.24 with 226 news that has been watched.

Far below VOA Learning English and BBC News, only 48 news or 7.27 percent from CNN were watched by participants in this resource. Similar to CNN, National Geography dan ABC News have few students who watched and used this online news as their extensive listening materials.

Chart 1

Websites for Extensive Listening Practices
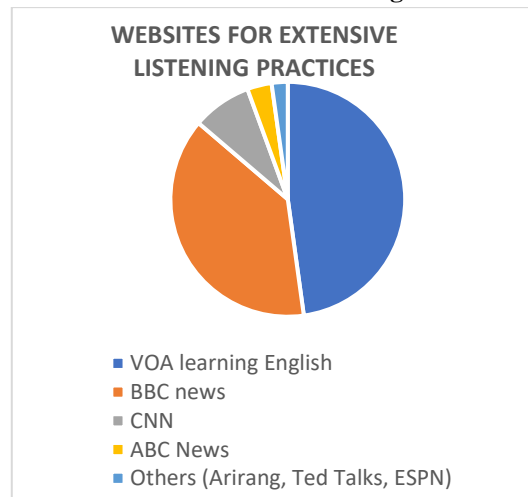
News categories

Each channel or news website has its categories in delivering news. Participants were allowed to choose a news website that they think is interesting or according to their interests. From

several choices of websites that have been widely chosen by the participants, are under five categories, namely, World News, Breaking News, Science and Technology, and Sports.

Table 3.
News categories

Category	News watched	Percentage (%)
World News	238 news	36.06
Breaking News	168 news	25.45
Science and Technology	84 news	12.72
Sport	50 news	7.58
Others	70 news	19.00

World News is the most favourite category of participants because it contains news from around the world. Participants chose a total of 238 world news or around 36.6 percent. According to them, World News is more exciting and often becomes a trending topic on social media. Listening to the news about World News is interesting because it usually is often the subject of discussion for college.

Breaking News becomes the second choice to be heard after World News. Participants listened as many as 168 news or around 25.45 percent. The participants thought that the report delivered by Breaking News is always the latest. Besides, the duration of news delivery in Breaking News is not too long, so it is not difficult to understand.

Science and Technology and Sport are the last two choices of the participants' favorite. Participants have watched around 84 news about Science and Technology (12.72%) and 50 news about Sport (7.58). According to them, by listening to the news that suited their interests, they felt their English vocabulary skills had improved.

Before participants started their extensive listening, they will first see the duration of the news they will hear and see. The longer the duration of the news delivered will make participants less focused. The data above shows the length of time the participants were interested in.

Table 4.
Length of time of News

Duration	News watched	Percentage (%)
1 minute	80 news	12.12
2 minutes	151 news	22.88
3 minutes	200 news	30.30
4 minutes	123 news	18.63
5 minutes	76 news	11.51
6-12 minutes	30 news	4.54

The most efficient time in learning listening skills is listening to the news with a duration of about 3 minutes. Most of the News watched was about 200 news or 30.30 percent. According to participants, by listening to news that is neither too short nor too long, they can easily understand the contents of the news. Participants can focus on and enjoy learning while listening. News that has a duration of about 2 minutes also attract the participants' attention to be heard. There was 151 news (22.88 &) selected by participants as their extensive listening material. They argued that by seeing the news with 2 minutes, all news could be understood easily. News with a duration of more than 5 minutes becomes an option that is not very attractive to participants. Only 30 news items or around 4.54 percent were seen and heard by participants. Bored are their reasons why they can't last more than 5 minutes while listening to the news. Participants felt that they were no longer focused and began to get confused with the news content when they heard for more than 5 minutes.

Discussion

Students respond to the benefits of listening to the news for their language learning. Below is the response of the participants after they listened to online news as extensive listening activities. Ninety percent of them gave a very positive response from this activity. Learning English

while listening to the news they enjoy makes learning more fun. Students response to extensive listening :

> "*Extensive listening helps me practice my speaking skills. Before I was introduced to extensive listening, I thought listening is difficult and boring. However, I changed my perception after I do the exercises given to me. Listening now becomes more easier, increases their vocabularies, and improves my confidence in listening. English video helps me increase my English vocabulary, as well as it helps me to speak English well with proper pronunciation. "*

> "*Extensive listening increases my motivation to learn English. It adds to my interest. I get used to some difficult words because after I listen to the same news many times, it trains my ears. Extensive listening also introduces me to the correct pronunciation. "*

Even though three students reported not to find it frustrated due to their limited vocabulary, even though they still aware of the benefit of listening, podcasts are often used as auditory EL materials (Alm, 2013; Cross, 2014). Podcasts on diversely interesting topics are accessible from many major news websites, such as CNN, BBC, PBS, NPR, Time Magazine, USA Today, and VOA, as well as podcast providers.

According to Cross (2014), podcasts can be authentic (developed not for language learning purposes), semi-authentic (modified from authentic texts for language learning purposes) or non-authentic (developed as language learning resources), graded or not graded. Language learning website such as *LiteracyNet*
(http://literacynet.org/learningresources/) has lots of authentic and semi-authentic texts on the site.

CONCLUSION

Listening comprehension is one of the English language skills that needed to be learned. Audio-visual aids may help to reduce EFL learners' listening test anxiety and enhance their listening comprehension scores without facilitating the retention of such materials. (Lee, Lee, Liao, & Wang, 2015).

Difficulty in listening begins with the listeners' trying to understand the words and structure of the language used. After that, they need to grasp the meaning of the intonation, remember all message and convey it in social and cultural situations immediately. The ability to listen to the participants is judged by whether the participants can understand the news that is heard and can deliver it without reducing the social and cultural value of native speakers. Also, learning materials that might not be interesting for the participants become one of the factors causing difficulties for participants to understand the news.

For this reason, teachers must continue to strive to find ways in which participants can improve their listening skills in ways they enjoy. By using online methods that are currently in high demand by many students, it is hoped that they can help them in the teaching and learning process. By choosing topics that they enjoy, students will more readily absorb knowledge, especially vocabulary, which can ultimately improve their English skills.

It is expected that the low English proficient- students' story in developing listening proficiency through extensive listening activities will be a fruitful source of aspiration for any teachers who are teaching students who are struggling to build their listening fluency.

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