

# Extensive Listening Class on ELT Students' Perspectives

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**Abstract.** Different language teaching experts have built a case in favour of extensive listening as an alternative approach that draws largely on the theoretical bases of and practical experiences from extensive reading. The current paper reports the experience of ELT students in Extensive Listening class in which they were supposed to find their own materials from the online media based on the broad topics given by the lecturer. This paper focuses on (1) students' perceptions related to the activities and materials; (2) students' problems during joining the lectures; (3) students' interests; and (4) students' view about the experience. The data were collected by using Likert-scale questionnaire. The students' perceptions show that the pedagogical implementation is positive which leads to a discussion of a number of implications.

**Keywords:** *Extensive listening, Online Materials, Students' Perceptions*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Input is a very important aspect in language learning and one way of providing language comprehensible input is through listening in which language learners find difficulty in understanding spoken input. There are ten listening problems found, those are speaking rate, distraction, unable to recognize words, new vocabulary, missing subsequent input, nervousness, sentence complexity, background knowledge, anxiety and frustration, and unfamiliar pronunciation[1]. In a different study, ten listening problems were also found based on teachers' point of view in China. These are related to speed, complex sentences, missing the subsequent information, long sentences, new broadcasts, speaker accent, background noise, word recognition, new words, and phonetic variations[2]. These difficulties seem unmotivated the learners in listening class[3]. These complexities are commonly found in English language learning in which English is the second or foreign language of the learners.

Extensive listening is believed to provide solutions for the problems. Extensive listening activities allow learners to receive a lot of comprehensible and enjoyable listening input[1]. In line with it, extensive listening strategies would definitely help guide the development of graded materials in terms of grading vocabulary, speed, length, accents, and content of texts [4]. It is also found that extensive listening activity help students increasing their motivation in listening class[3]. Another study reported that extensive listening (EL) becomes the addition to English listening activities inside the class. It is found that the whole activities of listening lead to a greater chance of more exposure not only on English listening input but also on English writing practice[5]. Extensive listening might be the kind of approach that may help EFL students deal with their listening problems.

The application of extensive listening in ELT class leads to positive responses. Five teachers showed their positive perceptions on the role of listening skill in EFL context and the integration of extensive listening[6]. They considered listening course as a paramount of importance in acquiring English since this skill supports other skills; therefore, the implementation of what so-called extensive listening is absolutely in great demand for listening teachers to help students optimize their listening skill.

The previous researches have shown the importance of conducting extensive listening activity. The extensive listening activity was done as an addition to English listening activities inside listening class[5]. Meanwhile, the other study[6] focusses on teachers' perception. The practice of extensive listening which is conducted as one of the compulsory courses for ELT students has not been conducted. Moreover, it is also important to analyse how the students' perspectives after taking the course need to be explored.

This paper focuses on the students' perspectives towards extensive listening. The perspectives, in this paper, related to students' perception found through hearing and sight in some cases, but mainly hearing.

In one of ELT programs in Indonesia, that is Universitas Brawijaya, listening skill is offered in four semester with three credits for the first until the third semester, and two credits for the fourth semester. In this university, Extensive Listening (EL) course, the students are supposed to find their own materials from the online media based on the broad topics given by the lecturer. The materials chosen could be in audio or video format. Certain website pages are also provided as references. However, the students are allowed to get the materials from other websites. A developed worksheet is attached in every session to guide the students in understanding the listening materials.

## 1.1 Research Method

This study was conducted in one public university in Malang, Indonesia. In this university, Extensive Listening becomes one of the compulsory courses for the fourth semester ELT learners. There were 120 students taking the course and they enrolled into 4 different offerings which were taught by two different lecturers.

The instrument used was a Likert-scale questionnaire which covered four dimensions, they are students' perceptions related to the activities and materials, students' problems during joining the lectures, students' interests, and the students' view about the experience. Each dimension was then elaborated into some questions. This questionnaire was designed and created by the writers, so it was not adapted or adopted. It was created to obtain the necessary information.

The questionnaires were distributed to the students after the final exam of specific semester and they brought it home. The questionnaires returned were 76. The result of the questionnaire would then be converted into numbers to make it easier to analyze. The result of each dimension was then calculated to get the average score. Based on it, we categorize into 2 classification, those are positive and negative. When the average of the students' respond is in between 1.00 – 2.50, it is considered as *negative* perception. When the responds' average is between 2.52 – 04.00, it is considered as *positive*.

## 1.2 Results and Discussion

By using four-Likert-scale questionnaire, the comment given by the students is ranged from 1–4; *very disagree* (1), *disagree* (2), *agree* (3), and *very agree* (4). Among the 35 items,

12 (twelve) items dealt with students' perception, 8 (eight) items were about students' problems, 7 (seven) items were related to students' interest, and the other 8 items dealt with their view about the class in general.

Based on the questionnaires given to the 76 students, the result is summarised in the following table.

**Table 1.** Result of the questionnaire of students' perception towards Extensive Listening class

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Average Respond</b>
<b><i>Students' Perception</i></b>	<b>2.92</b>
1 Material	2.90
2 Class activities	2.85
3 Teacher	3.05
<b><i>Students' Problems</i></b>	<b>2.85</b>
1 Understanding the material	2.63
2 Finding the material	3.07
3 Using worksheet	3.08
<b><i>Students' Interests</i></b>	<b>2.73</b>
<b><i>Students' View</i></b>	<b>2.88</b>

### 1.3 Students' Perception

The students' perception is derived from 3 aspects, those are materials, class activities, and teachers. All three aspects were responded positively by all students, as shown in Table 1 that the average respond towards these aspects is 2.92. It means that the students give positive perceptions towards the Extensive Listening course. Based on the material given by teacher, most of the students, or 61 out of 76 students, agree that the topic is very interesting and actual. Moreover, the topic is not too difficult as 71 students disagree with the statement *for me, the topic is difficult*. The same number of students also showed that they disagree with the statement *the topic is not actual*.

Dealing with the activity in the class, the students always try to download the material / video whether the materials are compulsory or not. There are 47 students who agree with the statement *I like downloading the materials which are not compulsory*. This positive respond is also derived from the freedom in choosing the materials. Although the teacher has decided the themes, they are supposed to find the listening materials which are in the form of either audio or video by themselves. Moreover, they are also able to use any websites they want. Their opinion is also shown in their written comment.

*This class help me to improve listening skill by giving us freedom to choose or find out video with certain topic. (SR&RF)*

*In general, this course do not make us get bored as we can find video based on certain topic by ourselves. (EF)*

*In my opinion, this course makes us free to find the materials which topics have been decided by the teacher. I think it is very fun. (VD&RA, 2018)*

Besides choosing the materials by themselves, the students seem like presenting their video/ material in the class, as 66 students agree with the statement about material presentation. Moreover, they also try to predict the content of the material / video before

listening to it. The presentation seems to be one important aspect that they like, as one of them wrote

*It is interesting because we are supposed to find the videos, either the ones instructed by the teacher or the ones that we like and understand. Besides, the class also make us to speak in front of other friends as we have to review the video that we have watched by doing presentation. (ASY, 2018)*

Dealing with the teachers, the students agree that their teachers give good respond toward the chosen video/material. Sixty two students agree with the statement. Besides, the teachers also give positive comments or responds related to the students' presentation. From the statement *the teacher give feedback toward my presentation*, there are sixty eight students who agree with it. Moreover, as the lecturers also give clear explanation dealing with the objective of the class, 70 out of 76 students agree with the statement *teacher / lecturer gave clear objective of the class*. These findings are also shown in one written response following the questionnaire.

*This course is interesting enough because the materials are related to students' interest, not the teacher's interest. Moreover, the meetings are well organised and the teacher gives feedback toward the students' materials and the problems they found. (FVA, 2018).*

From the result of these three aspects, it is clear that the students have positive perception towards the class. The materials are interesting for them and they are relevant with the objective of the class. It is also shown in the following comments.

*Extensive listening is the last listening class which is very interesting and the activity in the class is in line with the objective of the class. (MY)*  
*Overall, it is a good experience to have this class. (SA&MF)*  
*Extensive Listening class is very interesting. (RW)*

Those comments really support their positive perceptions towards Extensive Listening course that they have joined. All of them seems interested in the class as the materials are interesting, the goals are clear to understand, and the lecturers give positive responds in the class. Moreover, this course give them new experience in listening class because it is different from the previous listening classes.

#### **1.4 Students' Problems**

The questionnaire's statements related to this topic cover finding the materials, understanding the materials, and using the worksheet. All three aspects were responded positively by all students, as shown in Table 1 that the average respond towards these aspects is 2.85. Dealing with finding the video / material, 70 out of 76 students agree that it is easy to get the materials / videos related to the topics given. There are 69 students disagree with the statement *it is difficult to find the material/video*.

Dealing with understanding the material, 52 students agree that they often find difficulties in it. Therefore, they agree with the statement *I try to discuss with friends when I find difficulty*. It shows that they have big effort in understanding the material. It is also supported

with the next statement *to do the task, I play the video / material many times* which is agreed by 67 out of 76 students. In line with it, one of the students wrote

*In my opinion, this course is difficult, but it is interesting (MF)*

The difficulty to understand the material, on the other hand, is different from the others' written respond.

*In my opinion, this course is fun and it is easy to understand. Besides finding the video, we are also able to see the speakers' expression while they are speaking so that it is easy to understand what they are talking about. (MFK)*

*The class is more understandable comparing to other classes. (SZC)*

*In my opinion, Extensive Listening course is understandable and the teacher gives clear instruction. (SP)*

From those responses, it seems that the students do not have much problems in understanding the materials. By using video, they easily comprehend the contents as they can look at the speakers' expression during speaking.

Worksheet, then, becomes an important tool to help the students in this class. The average score related to this aspect is 3.08. It shows that the students give positive response towards worksheet usage. Out of 76 students, 70 of them agree and very agree with the statement *the worksheet helps me a lot to understand the material / video*. Unfortunately, none of the students gave written comments dealing with the use of worksheet in the class.

### **1.5 Students' Interests**

In this study, the term interest is related to students' concern in choosing the video/material. There are 7 statements dealing with their interests and the average responses dealing with it is 2.73. Sixty four among seventy six students agree that they download the video that they like and the one which is easy to understand. Therefore, they prefer to change or find different video or materials when they think that it is too difficult for them. There are 54 students agree with the statement *I will try to get other videos / materials when I got the difficult ones*. This difficulty is also supported by one student's written comment.

*Sometimes, the topic is boring and difficult to find. ()*

Besides the comprehensibility of the material, the accessibility of the videos becomes students' consideration in using the video as the material in EL class. There are sixty six students agree with the statement *I choose the videos which are easy to download*. They also prefer to choose the newest videos / materials although they do not concern with the production year. It can be seen from their response that 60 students disagree with statement *I choose the video based on the production time*. In short, the students' interest in choosing the video is based on the comprehensibility and accessibility reasons rather than the novelty of the video.

## 1.6 Students' General View

In the questionnaire, there are eight statements related to students' view about their experience. From the students' responses, it is found out that they give positive responses as shown in Table 1 in which the average response is 2.88. There are 39 students who agree with the statements *I can do the task everywhere* and *I can do the task anytime*. Then, among these 76 participants, 67 students agree that this EL class is interesting. This fact is also supported by the statement *the class is boring* in which 59 students show their disagreement. The next statement, that is *students are really enthusiastic with the class*, is agreed by 62 out of 76 students. However, when they have to find the material, only half of them (38 students) use the website proposed by the teacher, meaning that half of the participants tend to find the website by themselves. In this case, the students prefer choosing other websites because they can choose the ones that they really want. These facts are also found in their comments in the following. .

*This class is fun. (MF&MA)*

*In my opinion, this course is difficult, but it is interesting (MF)*

*Extensive listening course is not boring as the material of each student is different. As one of the students, I am interested in watching and listening the different kinds of the materials presented in the class. (AFP)*

*In my opinion, it is very interesting and it gives more vocabulary. (IJCA)*

In general, students find enjoyment in EL course. Although it is a regular one, the listening activities are mostly done outside the class. The freedom of choosing the materials, doing the task, and using the website make them more motivated.

The ELT learners gave positive responses toward the application of EL. Their' responses show their positive perceptions towards the materials, activities, and the teachers.

Although this study is taken from the students' point of view, some important points can be noted, especially dealing with the principles of Extensive Listening proposed by Renandya and Jacobs[7]. This course fulfil the first principle of Extensive Listening that is the objectives of EL programs should be made clear to everyone involved. Without clear, well-articulated objectives, the program is not likely to succeed.

The third principle of EL and ER that is the programs should make available reading and listening materials which are within students' linguistic competence are also fulfilled. Furthermore, the materials for EL should be pitched at or even below students' current level of competence. Therefore, when the students tend to choose and use the materials that they are able to comprehend, it is acceptable because these materials facilitate students' enjoyment to comprehend the language.

In EL, then, the role of the teacher is important as they should provide ongoing support to every student, especially those who need help most with their reading and listening. It is the 4th principle of EL and ER. In this study, the students' positive responses toward their teachers show that the 4th principle of EL and ER is fulfilled.

This finding also shows that with the rich visual elements that provide contextual support, learners find it easier to comprehend video than audio recordings. Therefore, they seem not to have problems dealing with the class. Students' often cannot understand much of what they hear not because the content is difficult or the language is too hard, but because the speakers speak too fast for L2 learners to process the incoming data. Because of that, repeated listening

practice via EL is believed to help learners accustomed to listening to speech at native speaker rate.

## 2 CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of extensive listening conducted in ELT program got students' positive responses. This positive perception leads to the students' motivation in learning spoken materials outside the class. The more motivated the students, the more materials they try to listen. It will result in more language input they have and it will help them acquiring the language. When the students are exposed to many different spoken materials, they will have more vocabulary in the foreign language which then may help them to have higher competence in language productive skills, speaking and writing.

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