

STUDENTS' ATTITUDE AND PERCEPTION TOWARD INDEPENDENT LISTENING USING LISTENING LOG

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Abstrak

Ada banyak cara yang bisa dilakukan untuk melatih kemampuan mendengarkan dalam berbahasa Inggris. Tidak hanya melalui kegiatan formal di dalam kelas, namun juga dapat dilakukan secara mandiri di luar kelas. Menulis jurnal mendengarkan termasuk salah satu kegiatan belajar mandiri yang dapat membantu siswa untuk melatih dan meningkatkan kemampuan mendengarkan mereka. Penelitian ini berfokus pada bagaimana para siswa melakukan kegiatan belajar mandiri diluar kelas menggunakan jurnal mendengarkan dan untuk mendeskripsikan persepsi mereka tentang kegiatan tersebut. Penelitian. Subyek dari penelitian ini adalah dua puluh tiga mahasiswa di kelas *Academic Listening C* di UNESA. Untuk memperoleh data, peneliti menggunakan wawancara semi terstruktur. Data dianalisis secara kualitatif dengan menerapkan tiga langkah; pengenalan & pengorganisasian, pengkodean & pengurangan, dan penafsiran & penggambaran. Hasil dari penelitian menunjukkan, jurnal mendengarkan merupakan kegiatan luar kelas yang seru dan menyenangkan. Jurnal mendengarkan juga membawa banyak manfaat untuk mahasiswa, seperti, menjadi lebih tahu tentang apa yang mereka butuhkan untuk proses belajarnya sendiri, memperoleh pengetahuan baru, memperoleh kosa kata baru dan meningkatkan kemampuan mendengarkan. Namun, beberapa mahasiswa menganggap bahwa kegiatan menulis jurnal mendengarkan adalah aktivitas luar kelas yang membosankan.

Kata Kunci: mendengarkan, kegiatan mendengarkan mandiri, jurnal mendengarkan

Abstract

Many ways could be done to improve listening skills in learning English. Not only through formal classes activity, but also through out-of-class independent learning. Conducting a listening log is considered as an independent learning activity that can improve students' listening skills. Therefore, this research aimed to find out how the students are conducting independent listening using listening logs and to describe students' perceptions towards the activity. The subject of this study were twenty-three students in the *Academic Listening C* class in UNESA. To collect the data, the researcher used a semi-structured interview. The data were analyzed qualitatively by applying three stages; familiarizing & organizing, coding & reducing, and interpreting & representing. The results of the study showed that conducting listening logs is fun and diverting as an independent listening activity. By keeping listening logs, the students also gain many benefits, such as becoming aware of their learning, acquiring new knowledge, learning new vocabularies, and improving their listening skills. However, some students considered keeping listening logs is boring as their independent listening activity.

Keywords: listening, independent listening, listening log

INTRODUCTION

Listening is one of the important language skills that we need, not only for academic purposes but for daily life as well. According to Rost (2002), listening is a vital input for learners. Graham (2002) considered listening as the most challenging skill. This argument supported by Schmidt (2016) statement that listening is one of the most challenging skills to contend with. Students often find it difficult when it comes to listening. According to Buck (2001) identifies numerous difficulties which can be confronted in listening tasks such as unknown vocabularies, unfamiliar topics, fast speech rate, and unfamiliar accents.

According to Hamouda (2013), other difficulties found are listeners' linguistic knowledge, background knowledge, learners' motivation and interest in the topic, and lack of concentration. One problem is causing other problems. For example, if students lack of background knowledge, they will feel that the tasks are too difficult. This problem is affecting the students' motivation and interest in doing tasks.

However, Lee (2017) stated that to solve the problem, simply give them more listening practice if they find it difficult. Without exposure to a lot of listening input and lacking particular attention to the sounds, words, and phrases that compensate this input, the listening skills of a student cannot grow efficiently and effectively. (Schmidt 2016). Therefore, listening tools and techniques focused on the students' interests and

abilities are of utmost importance in creating a learning experience for students to improve listening skills.

Moreover, as the education paradigm has changed from teacher-centered learning to learner-centered learning, it is necessary to appreciate and accommodate the diversity of needs of students (Biggs 1999). Students should be participating in learner-centered classes (Benson 1997) and take responsibility for their own learning, and create a plan of their own learning materials, techniques, and performance. Regarding the statement that learners with a sense of autonomy over what they listen to feel more confident and self-regulated (Graham 2006), designing a class that encourages students to communicate what they want to know and how they want to know is important.

Independent listening promotes a way to practice listening skills, which is in line with students' needs to conduct their own listening. Independent listening is a listening session conducted by the learners themselves. Independent listening happens outside the classroom, or it is usually called extensive listening. Renandya and Farrell (2011) reported that extensive listening requires all sorts of listening exercises that enable learners to get a great deal of understandable and pleasant input. The crucial point of extensive listening is to support the learners, regarding to that, learning resources or feedback must be meaningful. From this, it can be learned that extensive listening should be done at and particularly outside the school. Extensive listening involves anything, including large amounts of text and information. It can be quickly and effortlessly interpreted by students, a high level of comprehension, communicating without any tasks or questions (Waring 2013). Extensive listening is particularly inspiring when students choose the content they want, namely movies, TV shows, radio channels, audiobooks, etc. (Vo, 2013). All these materials help students improve their communication skills, particularly visual materials. If the learners do not understand the context of the language and are expected to understand it, they are annoyed, losing interest and stopping listening. Nevertheless, the students have the ability to pick their own content with thorough listening. Students are more motivated and involved because they select their own listening material. It alone has enormous potential to extend the listening skills of students outside the classroom and enable them to take a more involved and engaged part in their own learning selections (Holden, 2008).

Some models of tools have been promoted to help learners to do the independent listening activity. One of the models that useful for learners' is listening logs. Listening logs is a tool to share what students' needs and empower students on how to conduct their own learning.

Listening logs allows students to find the material based on their interest. Lee and Cha (2017) claimed that effective listening tools and approaches focused on the desires and strengths of students are of vital importance in creating a learning atmosphere for students to enhance their listening skills. It is crucial to create a learning process where the students can express what they want to learn. Listening logs is a journal or diaries to record students' listening activity. Listening logs will make the students able to practice their listening skills by discovering new vocabulary from many different materials. Listening logs can be used inside or outside the classroom. Listening logs are ongoing tasks. According to Gilliland (2015), the students report their participation in activities outside the classroom and reflect on their listening process.

The format of listening logs is the date, theme, website address (of the material), type of material (video/audio), duration of material, type of English used in the material, listening frequency, summary, interesting words, difficult words, and strategy to overcome any difficulties found.

The purposes of Listening Logs are:

1. To practice listening skill
2. To improve listening skill
3. To improve writing skill
4. To understand a variety of different topics
5. To gain more knowledge
6. To identify the learning problem
7. To learn new words
8. To become more confident
9. To learn how to keep a learning journal

Lee and Cha (2017) explained listening logs should be used to record the comprehensive listening process, which means listening logs with an emphasis on meaning. The learners are introduced to actual and real listening resources such as news, plays, and chat shows in a comprehensive study. Students use a range of tools to understand the cross-cultural and social aspects of communication (Lee and Cha 2017). The learners will show greater interest when they are in charge of choosing their own material, and they will continue practicing (Lynch 2009). Those are the concept used in learning listening using a listening log in order to make the student interesting in practice their listening skills so they can improve their listening ability.

There are main advantages of listening logs that the learners will be exposed to wide materials, and they can listen to various materials that they want. Listening logs enable students to listen to many kinds of materials that will expose them to a variety of English (Global Englishes). Listening logs help learners to develop a good

language learning habit because they can take control of their own learning. Listening logs additionally build metacognitive listening, as students reflect on experiences and decide where comprehension broke down and how to improve. The activities also expose students to new modes of communication, from specific educational language to informal interpersonal dialog.

On the other hand, there are several disadvantages of listening logs. Since listening log is an extensive listening activity, the teacher cannot directly supervise the students'. They may watch inappropriate materials, or instead, they will only watch their favorite series. In this case, the teacher needs to set a parameter for the types of materials that permissible. Listening logs will leads to a problem if the teacher does not give guidance.

Previous studies showed good results regarding the activity of conducting independent listening using listening logs. Keeping listening logs leads to the interest of the students in both the language and the learning process (Kemp, 2009). Lee and Cha (2017), in their research, also mentioned that learning logs builds self-confidence and helps them control their learning.

In this case, the activity of keeping listening logs for independent listening practice has been implemented in a listening class in one of the universities in Surabaya. The lecturer of the course introduced listening logs for the students for their out-of-class activity. Therefore, this research found out about how the students conduct their independent listening activity and their perception of listening logs. This research conducted qualitatively to gain a deeper insight into the issue. This research investigated how students do their independent listening using a listening log and how the students' perceptions about listening log.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research is to investigate and describe what the learners' do in conducting listening logs as a part of independent listening, and the students' perspective in conducting listening logs. To conduct the study, the researcher used a qualitative design. The researcher chose this research design because it is in line with the purpose of the study, which is to investigate and describe students' attitudes and perceptions during their independent listening, which will be described in the form of words rather than numbers.

The subject of the study were twenty-three students in the *Academic Listening Class C* of the English Department in UNESA. The reason why the researcher chose this class was the lecturer of the listening course implemented listening logs for students' independent listening activity as a part of the listening course. The participant has been keeping listening logs for two

semesters, which on their third semester and fourth semester. Therefore, the researcher was able to collect the data to answer the research questions accordingly. The researcher collected and analyzed the data in the middle of the semester, to be exact, during the middle exam.

The data in this study were collected through online interviews with all twenty-three students in a WhatsApp group chat. Oppenheim (1992) argues that interviews have a higher answer rate than questionnaires because respondents are more engaged and thus more motivated; make it easier to know more about the study than is normally mentioned in the cover letter to a questionnaire, and are better than questionnaires for dealing with more complex and more open-ended questions. In this study, the researcher used an interview to answer all the research questions. The researcher was conducting an online interview due to Covid-19 pandemic, which is not allowed to interview the subject directly. The researcher provided eleven open-ended questions to be asked to the participants in the group chat. Of all eleven items, seven questions were aimed to find out how the students conduct independent listening using listening logs, while four questions are given to find the students' perceptions. In the interview protocol, the questions related to how they do their listening logs and questions related to perception were used to find the students' perceptions. The researcher sent one interview question each day to the group, and all of them will answer directly in the group chat. To gain a deeper answer, the researcher was contacting them through WhatsApp's personal chat. The researcher took two weeks to get the data from the subjects.

In analyzing the data, this study used a theory proposed by Ary et al. (2010), which are familiarizing and organizing, coding and reducing, after that, interpreting and representing. Data analysis began with reading all of the students' answers carefully. Then the researcher classified the answers based on their levels, which are high, middle, and low levels. The last, the researcher interpreted the result of the study descriptively of how students do their independent listening using listening log and their perception towards it.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

How the Learners Conduct Independent Listening and using Listening Log

To answer the first research question that is "how do the learners conduct their independent listening using listening log?", the researcher has sent the participants

eleven questions including where and with who they write the log, what are the difficulties and how to overcome, students' preferred material, preferred topic, and so on.

The first question that given to the participants is where they usually write the log and whether they do it alone or in a group. Most of the participants answered they were usually writing a log in their house. Out of twenty-three participants, only two of them answered they could write a log anywhere. As they stated, *"I can do it anywhere such as campus while waiting for my lecturer"* or *"I do that anywhere as long as it is quiet and cozy enough to conduct listening, like café or campus corridor"*. They also prefer to conduct listening by themselves rather than in a group. They stated, *"It is more effective if we listen by ourselves, we can be more focused on the material"*. They add, *"Listen in a group is not a good choice because we will only talk about unnecessary things that are not related to the material. We ended up gossiping instead of writing the log"*. The next question that the researcher asked the participants is, *"What are the difficulties they found during listening and how you overcome the difficulties?"*. It was found that the difficulties that frequently showed were speed of speech and unfamiliar accent. This is also found in Lee's study (2017), that most of the students commented about the rate of speech as their main problem in listening. Some of them added that they often found unfamiliar words, and one of them stated that they barely understand the material. To overcome the difficulties, they pointed out some strategies, such as repeating the video or audio until they catch the information from the material and directly turned on the subtitle or transcription. Check the dictionary also mentioned to find out the meaning of the unfamiliar words or new vocabulary that they got from the material they listen to. Besides, two of them making a note to write down the main points for better understanding.

Next, the question was asked to find out whether the participants have any target in writing listening logs. In this context, the lecturer gave students a rule to write at least two logs in a week, and they should submit their logs at the end of the semester. To respond to this question, the participants mostly stated that they have no target in writing the log, the participants only following their lecturer instructions to write two or three logs in a week. As they said, *"The lecturer asked us to write three logs in a week, so I did, I never write more than that"* or *"I should do it weekly because the lecturer said to do so"*. Moreover, the participants only write a log when they are in a mood to listen to. They stated, *"I only listen and write a log only when I wanted to do that"*, and *"Sometimes in a week I didn't write any log, not even one, because I am too lazy to do that"*. They also added that they wrote a

listening log when the other assignment was done, so if they still have another task to do, they will not write the logs first. On the other hand, a few of them mentioned that they write their log only in a day before they submit it to the lecturer. They explained, *"Based on my experience, I wrote all of my logs in a night before the deadline"*.

The following question was given to find out why the participants conduct independent listening using listening logs. It showed that for the first time, they only conduct listening logs because it was their assignment from their lecturer. Moreover, as time goes by, listening logs becoming a good habit that allowed them to increase their listening ability. As they said, *"Like it or not, I should do that because it's the assignment, but then there's something missing if I didn't do the log"*. Then, *"Because the lecturer required us to do that, it turned out it was a good activity to train my ears, so I will be able to listen better"*. However, there is one participant who clearly stated that they do independent listening using listening logs only because they are asked to do that.

The next question that the researcher has sent is, *"What is your preferred site to find listening material for listening log?"*. The students gave various answers; most of them use YouTube to find material that they like. They also mentioned specific sites like BBC, VOA, British Council, and TED Talks. To add, some students mentioned random podcast and their favorite talk show, such as The Ellen Show and Tonight Show. Then, for preferred material, most of the participants prefer to listen to video rather than audio. They stated that video is more interesting because they can see the visualization of the material so that they will get a better understanding. Some of them added that listening to audio is boring. Of twenty-three students, only three of them prefer listening from audio because they want to focus on the topic itself rather than the picture. As they said, *"I always use audio because it is easier for me to focus on what the speakers' state"*. Also, *"I prefer listening to the audio, so there will be no distraction during listening"*. After that the researcher wanted to find out whether they used subtitle or transcription during listening with the question *"Do you use subtitle or transcription during listening to the material?"*, most of them answered they only use subtitle or transcription when they unable to understand what the speakers' implied in the material. Two students added, they turn on the subtitle or transcription only to make sure the spelling of certain words. Only one student stated they always turned on the subtitle or transcript every time they were conducting listening.

The Learners' Perception towards Listening Log

Of eleven questions that were given to the participants, the last four-question was aimed to find out

the students' perception towards independent listening using listening logs. The question "Based on your experience, do you think listening logs is a good independent listening activity?" aiming to find out students' opinions about listening logs. The answer showed that most of the participants agreed that listening log is an effective independent listening activity. However, they expressed in various words. They stated that by keeping listening logs, they could explore interesting material according to their interests and exposed to global knowledge from many sources that they listen to. Listening logs also allowed the students to listen to different accents from many countries. Moreover, few participants also added that, by writing listening logs, they not only improve their listening skills but also affected other language skills. Other language skills mentioned by the participants are writing and speaking. The next question, "Do you think listening logs can improve your listening skills?" was asked to find out whether or not keeping listening logs was able to improve their listening skill. All of the students' answers showed that listening logs were able to improve their listening skills. Most of them stated that it was one of the ways to help them to improve their ability because they get used to many listening materials. To add, they were more familiar with native speakers' accents and pronunciation. Besides, they also exposed to new vocabularies. Some of the participants feel confident whenever they have a listening test. Moreover, three of them implied that they were able to increase their score in English proficiency tests because of conducting independent listening using listening logs.

Since this is their 2nd semester of doing independent listening using listening logs, the lecturer decided to make it different than the last semester. In the previous semester, the students were free to choose their own listening material. However, this semester, the lecturer was the one who picked the topic for them. Based on this, the researcher was asked the participants whether they prefer to choose their own material, or they prefer the topic they got from their lecturer. It showed that most of the students prefer to choose their own material or topic because they were able to find a material to listen to their favorite site or channel. However, there were five participants answered that it is better to have the topic from their lecturer. They explained "*The topic from the lecturer was good, it was something that unfamiliar to me before, it makes me learn more*" or "*It is more efficient, we can directly listen to the chosen topic without confusing what should we listen this time, sometimes I run out of idea*". Then, "*As the lecturer, they have known what is better and suitable for our capacity, so it is better for me to get the topic from the lecturer*".

The last question was addressed to find out the students' impression of independent listening using listening logs. They showed various responses regarding the question. Most of the participants answered listening log is beneficial for them, especially in an academic context such as improving listening skills and other language skills, exposed to global knowledge, and train their ears to various English accents. They acknowledged that writing listening logs is fun and diverting. However, some of the participants also mentioned that writing listening logs is tiring, boring, and sometimes it is confusing.

Discussion

How the Learners Conduct Independent Listening and using Listening Log

In this part, the researcher presents the result of how do the learners conduct independent listening using listening logs, which used to answer the first research question.

Based on the results of the analysis, it showed that to make independent listening using listening logs more effective, all of the participants prefer to do it alone in their own house or room. Therefore, there will be no distraction and keep them focus on writing the log.

After that, the findings resulted that the most difficulties found were speed of speech, unfamiliar accent, pronunciation, and unknown vocabularies, which related to factors influencing listening anxiety that found by Kim and Cha (2013). Speech rate is the main problem faced by most of the students in understanding the material. These findings supported by Renandya and Farrell (2011), explained that the speech rate affects the student's in comprehending the material. Any rise in speech speeds seems to lead to a reduction in comprehension. Pronunciation also leads to a misunderstanding of the students. Modifying, lowering, and inserting sounds while speaking is very common for speakers. Because of this, it is very difficult for EFL learners to understand these words because they sound very different from when spoken in isolation (Renandya and Farrell, 2011). Among strategies to overcome the difficulties, turned on the subtitle or transcription was the dominant strategy done by the students. However, other strategies also mentioned, such as repeating the material, find out the meaning, and note-taking. By overcoming the difficulties by themselves, it will increase the students' awareness in their own learning (Rost, 2002).

Afterward, in writing listening logs, most of the students personally have no target in a week, despite the goal given by the lecturer to write at least two until three

logs in a week. However, few of them fulfill the lecturer's instructions to have two or three records done in a week.

Then, the researcher found that the participants, at first, were forced to conduct independent listening using listening logs. They mentioned that writing a log is complicated, but they have to do it because their lecturer obligates it. It turned out, as they get used to the activity, they started to get the benefit of conducting listening logs. However, there is one participant who did not get the enjoyment of keeping logs. They continue to perform independent listening using listening logs simply because it is an assignment from their lecturer.

Lastly, most participants tend to watch the video rather than listen to the audio. Only a few of them prefer listening to audio for their independent listening. This result is in line with Hemei's statement (1997), that video is preferred by both students and teachers because it is a rich and valuable resource. While listening to the material, most of them did not turn on the subtitle or transcription. They use subtitles or transcription only when they have difficulties dealing with the content.

The Learners' Perception towards Listening Log

At this part, the researcher presents the result of the learners' perceptions of conducting independent listening using listening logs that used answer the second research question.

Based on the question given to the participants about their perception, it can be concluded that conducting independent listening using listening logs found suitable for the extensive listening activity and brings many benefits for the students. The most mentioned benefits were gaining new knowledge, improving listening skills, and becoming more confident when it comes to listening practice or even listening tests. These findings also found in Chen's study (2016) about students' perceptions. Another benefit is, the students are exposed to various kinds of English. This is in line with Galloway & Rose's statement (2014), stated that diaries or logs stimulated the student to understand the various varieties of English.

Subsequently, based on the students' answers, it can be concluded that conducting independent listening using listening logs effectively help them improve their listening skill. It can be seen from students' responses, which explained they are becoming more familiar with the pronunciation of native speakers. It has also resulted that they are able to increase their score in English proficiency tests because of conducting independent listening using listening logs.

Furthermore, most of the students prefer to choose the listening material by themselves instead of the topic from their lecturer. By choosing their own material, the independent listening process becomes meaningful

and enjoyable since there is no compulsion. Besides, it also motivates them to do more listening exercises. As Kemp (2009) stated, the greater the motivation, the engagement in autonomous learning will be great as well. Nevertheless, few of them prefer to get the topic from the lecturer to make the listening process more efficient. Moreover, the chosen topic also allowed the students to not only listen to their favorite sites but also from other sites in order to expose the students to new knowledge, accents, and cultures. Students require guidance to be more versatile in their selection of materials (Chen, 2016).

Lastly, most of the participants showed a good response towards independent listening using listening logs. The students were having fun during the listening process. They mentioned that writing logs are an exciting and rewarding activity even though few students considered it a boring and confusing exercise. This is confirmed by Goh (2008), who claimed that for a long time, learners might become bored with the same learning pattern used repeatedly.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that the students tended to conduct listening by themselves in their room rather than in a group. They also showed ethical impacts after doing listening logs. They became aware of their own needs in learning. The students were able to overcome the difficulties they found during the listening process with a suitable strategy for their problem. It allowed them to reflect on their learning strategy. Conducting independent listening using listening logs also helped them to train their ears, so they become familiar with English sounds. Despite the fact that listening logs started as a forced assignment, they got used to the activity and gained many beneficial impacts in the end. Furthermore, in choosing listening material, the students preferred to watch a video rather than audio.

Next, it can be concluded that the students showed a positive response regarding their perception of listening logs. The students considered independent listening using listening logs is a good and useful independent listening activity. It brings many benefits, such as gaining new knowledge, gaining new vocabularies, becoming more confident in the listening test, and improving listening skills. Moreover, the students preferred to use the material they chose themselves rather than the ones selected by their lecturer. In the end, the students showed a good impression of independent listening using listening logs. They found it fun and diverting to write a listening log as their independent listening activity. However, few students still considered

writing listening logs as a tiring, boring, and confusing activity.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of the study, some suggestions are proposed by the researcher for future study, teachers, and students. Firstly, for future research, researchers should conduct a deeper study regarding independent listening using listening logs since the topic is still rarely discussed. Future researchers can conduct quantitative research to find out the effectiveness of listening logs in improving students listening skills. It is also possible for future researchers to conduct a correlational study to find out whether doing independent listening using listening logs is related to students' other language skills such as writing and speaking. Secondly, the teachers are suggested to modify the form of listening logs so the students will not get bored in conducting independent listening using listening logs. By providing a pleasant activity, the students will engage more in their independent listening using listening logs. Lastly, the students should reflect more on their independent listening activity, so it will result in better for their improvement.

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