

## **THE USE OF YOUTUBE TO SUPPORT EFL STUDENT'S LISTENING SKILLS**

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**Abstract:** Authentic material in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, particularly in listening, encourages students to apply actual language or authentic speech. In this digital era, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays a pivotal role for the teacher's resources to support the teaching-learning process in the classroom. The teacher can find free resources on the Internet by browsing Google, Yahoo, and YouTube. Using YouTube videos can improve students' listening skills as it brings many benefits to learners. YouTube is a tool of authentic material to support the student to focus more on listening. The teacher needs to encourage students' motivation in the teaching-learning process. Therefore, this study investigates how YouTube Video is a teaching tool to improve students' listening skills. There were eight participants from the English Department in a private university in Jakarta. The data was collected through class observation and interviews to observe EFL students' progress in the learning process of listening. This study revealed that YouTube video benefits EFL learners, such as improving students' confidence, enjoying the learning process, making the learning process more fun, and increasing students' interest in learning.

*Keywords:* Advantage, benefit, EFL students, listening skills, YouTube

### **INTRODUCTION**

In this digital era, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays a pivotal role in education. Educators around the world have embraced technology in their teaching and learning activities. In Indonesia, according to BBC (The British Broadcasting Corporation, 2018), Indonesian students are in the second-highest place globally in the use of desktop computers (54%) after the United States in 2018. Besides, there are 81% of students use technology to do their homework. This data indicates that Indonesian students are very responsive in dealing with technological developments. Therefore, teachers nowadays use online references to comply with this trend. Notably, in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, English teachers can easily access free websites to find authentic materials for teaching English skills.

As one of the English skills, listening is the most challenging skill for Indonesian students. Some studies found that listening skills are a complex subject for students (Suryanti, 2002). Martinez (2010) stated that listening skills are one of the most challenging English skills to be taught; listening skills are below. Also, Chen (2005) explored the EFL learners' barriers while comprehending listening during a training program. Some multi-faceted obstacles related to the internal factors of learners, such as their affective statuses, listening

habits, information processing capacities, English proficiencies, and their beliefs about their listening abilities. Other barriers were concerned with the nature of listening strategies and the listening material used.

In general, listening skills have five indicators: listening for Gist, Listening for Main Ideas, Listening for Details, Listening for Inferring Meaning, and Listening for determining listener's attention (Buck, 2001). However, this study only applies three strategies based on Listening Skill from The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) by Longman, and those are Listening for Main Ideas, Listening for Details, and Listening for Inferring Meaning.

Listening skill is a personal understanding of what he heard and relies on his understanding of the meaning (Hamouda, 2013). Therefore, the listening ability is not easy to implement. It requires considerable training to be able to master this ability. Listening skill is listening and receiving and understanding the information obtained and then giving the proper response to the information obtained with meaning. According to Huy (2015), cognitive strategy is used to help the student obtain their knowledge, such as understanding the meaning of words from contexts and linking new information. This fact is evident, then, that listening skill is not as passive as claimed. The models of cognitive processes include listening for main ideas, listening for details, listening for inferring meaning, listening for predicting, and listening for summarizing (Chen, 2013). Wilson (2000) and Harmer (2001), cited in Yusroh (2018), suggest that students are better at learning listening skills when they use audio-visual as a learning tool than an audio-based method. Students would be able to connect words and images that can help them analyze the language.

In teaching listening skills or other language skills, one of the essential things the teacher should consider is material (Mallapiang, 2014). To encourage the student to be ready with natural language, actual or authentic speech should be applied in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. Authentic material is one of the materials available to teach English in the classroom. Herod (2002) states that authentic material is ordinary tools not designed or explicitly produced for teaching language purposes. However, teachers may bring authentic material to the classroom to support their teaching-learning activity. Teaching materials are a crucial part of the teaching process, especially in language learning. One of the teaching materials can be found on the Internet. The Internet has a rich source for authentic materials. According to Cook (1981) stated "using authentic materials means using examples of language produced by native speakers for some real purpose of their own rather than using language produced and designed solely for the classroom. Authentic materials are not designed for pedagogical purposes; it means they do not come from a coursebook. Authentic materials are systematically not developed for language learning. Genhard (1996, cited in Dewi, 2018) categorize authentic materials into three following types: 1) Authentic listening viewing, such as radio, news, songs, cartoons, videos, etc, 2) Authentic visual materials, such as street signs, magazines, newspapers, pictures, postcards, etc, 3) Authentic printed materials, such as newspapers, sports, restaurants menus, etc, and 4) Realia or real-world objects, such as the doll, paper, etc.

Cook (1981) explains that there are reasons for teachers to use authentic materials in the classroom for teaching language, which are the most important: students' motivation and interest. Learning a language by approaching the native speaker allows students to understand

the language better, in other words, integrative motivation. Besides that, students' interest is significant to be teacher's attention. The contents of the materials are not so important as long as it keeps their interest in foreign culture alive. Gebhard (2009) expresses that using authentic material in class is the best way to prepare learners in communication to the real world. Handley (1993, as cited in Dewi, 2018) said that using authentic materials can help learners to improve functional proficiency in the language and will be able to use language communicatively in the real world when a teacher applies authentic materials in the classroom. Gilmore (2007), as cited in Akbari and Razavi (2016), agrees that using authentic materials in teaching language can improve students' proficiency level in four skills in language, cultural knowledge, and student motivation. According to Al-Azri and Al-Rashdi (2014), authentic material has two advantages: linguistic and non-linguistic.

Some advantages of employing authentic listening materials in the classroom are revealed in some previous studies, such as cited in Fithriyah (2015). The advantages of authentic materials are as follows: 1) It can increase students' motivation and independent learning because they can quickly obtain these materials from radio, movies, or television, 2) Students can have a meaningful experience with an actual language, 3) It presents cultural understanding, 4) It can provide various kinds of texts and sustain a small number of materials in listening, 5) The topic can be more exciting and relevant to the current issue, 6) It makes the teacher more creative in designing the lesson, and 7) The visual listening models can develop learners listening skills in richer language contexts.

Authentic materials can be found and accessed online via free websites. The Internet can provide authentic materials that encourage students to learn the language, including YouTube videos (Kumar & Tammelin, 2008). Since YouTube is one of the most popular online video websites globally (Almurashi, 2016), users will view, download, and share YouTube videos such as film clips, television shows, music, and instructional videos even the user is an amateur (DeWitt, Siraj, Alias, & Yusaini, 2013). According to Digital Information World (2019), YouTube is ranked as the second most popular website, with twenty-five billion users in March 2019 worldwide. YouTube is a video-sharing service where users can create their channels to upload, share videos, comments, explore, and post related videos (Biel, Aran, & Gatica-Perez, 2011). All users can share videos on YouTube freely, uploading the videos under proper categories (Yang, Hsu, & Suyanti, 2010). Inevitably, Alimemaj (2010), as cited in Jalaluddin (2016), says that YouTube offers plenty of authentic material created by people worldwide.

According to Sherman (2003), video on YouTube has two types; non-fiction videos and fiction videos. Non-fiction videos can be defined as videos that depict actual life events such as Tv news, sports programs, interviews and talk shows, documentaries, and educational videos. Meanwhile, fiction videos can be defined as imaginary people and events such as drama series, action films, and sketches.

There are some benefits of using YouTube revealed by some previous studies. YouTube could improve students' vocabulary, pronunciation, accent, listening, reading, writing, and speaking in learning English (Chabbra, 2012). Alqhatani (2014) states that YouTube is a rich source of authentic material to improve students' listening. Using video in listening brings many benefits to learners since they can enjoy language learning through

video, and learners gain confidence when they watch and listen to the video (Tomalin, 1991 as cited in Lestiyarningsih, 2016). Also, the class is more exciting, and students feel more enthusiastic and motivated in listening (Silviyanti, 2014). Potosi, Loaiza, and Garcia (2009) agreed that the videos should contain current and exciting topics to capture students' interest and motivate them to listen confidently. This study further discusses the advantages of linguistic and non-linguistic aspects (Guariento & Morley, 2001; Wilcox & Oaks, 1999, Weyers, 1999, as cited in Al-Azri & Al-Rashdi, 2014). The linguistic aspect refers to the students' performance in listening skills. On the other side, the non-linguistic aspect refers to students' performance during teaching and learning.

Since the previous studies employed interviews, questionnaires, and experimental design to collect the data, this current study implemented an exploratory study to investigate a particular situation regarding students' progress in exploring YouTube mainly, how EFL students get linguistics and non-linguistic advantages from YouTube to support their listening skills.

## **METHOD**

The study design was an exploratory study. An exploratory study is helpful for better understanding certain situations (Zikmund, 2003 as cited in Kelly, 2008). The exploratory study was selected to explore and understand student progress, problems, goals, and object perception (Berman, 2017). Triangulation was used in this study to collect the data resources, including class observation, listening practice, and semi-structured interviews. The class observation, participatory observation, in particular, was conducted to explore the benefits of using video to teach listening skills and investigate students' preferences. The class observation was video recorded to investigate the student's performance in the teaching-learning process regarding how students watched a video and answered the listening practice. The class observation was conducted five times, and the TED Talks YouTube Channel was used as a video resource. To this extent, the observation focused on students' gestures and behavior using designed rubric aspects. The aspects of the rubric are level of interest, accuracy, and manner. Then, the interview was conducted via Whatsapp phone call and recorded by a voice recorder. In analyzing the class observation data, this study observed the listening practice, corrected the student's answers for each meeting, coded, listed, classified, and recapped the data. In analyzing interviews, some steps were conducted, including transcribing, listing, classifying, translating, and recapping. All data collection was conducted before the pandemic.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The observation class was conducted with good preparation. The researcher acted as an instructor during the teaching and learning process. This class was held in five meetings attended by eight students who have been asked to take part in this study—all activities in the classroom were video recorded. The data taken from the designed class observation consists of student practice per meeting and students' actions in class.

Regarding the EFL Students' Listening before Using YouTube, the data was taken from Meeting 1, where students did their listening test without using video. This data aims to know

how linguistic advantage and non-linguistic students' advantage in listening before using video, as seen in Table 1.

**Table 1: Recap of Students' Listening Practice Results before Using Video**

P	M	Skills			Total
		LM	LD	LI	
1	1	1	3	1	5
2	1	1	2	0	3
3	1	1	2	0	3
4	1	3	1	2	6
5	1	2	3	1	6
6	1	0	2	2	4
7	1	2	3	3	8
8	1	3	3	1	7

Note:P: Participant; M: Meeting; LM: Listening for Main Ideas; LD: Listening for Details; LI: Listening for Inferring Meaning.

Moreover, regarding the EFL Students' Listening after Using YouTube, the data is from Meeting 2 to Meeting 5, where students did their listening test using YouTube video as authentic material. This data aims to know how far students explore using YouTube videos in listening practice, as seen in Table 2.

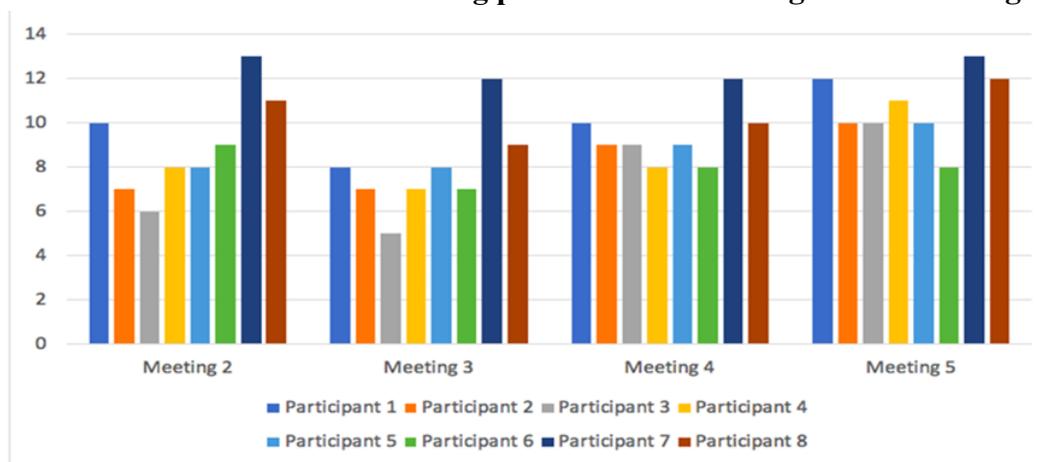
**Table 2: Recap of Listening Test Result after Using YouTube Video**

P	M	Skills			Total
		LM	LD	LI	
1	2	3	3	4	10
	3	1	4	3	8
	4	2	4	4	10
	5	3	5	4	12
2	2	1	4	2	7
	3	2	3	2	7
	4	3	3	3	9
	5	3	4	3	10
3	2	1	3	2	6
	3	1	2	2	5
	4	3	4	2	9
	5	3	4	3	10
4	2	2	4	2	8
	3	2	3	2	7
	4	2	3	3	8
	5	4	4	3	11
5	2	3	3	2	8
	3	3	3	2	8
	4	3	3	3	9
	5	3	4	3	10
6	2	3	4	2	9

	3	1	3	3	7
	4	2	3	3	8
	5	2	3	3	8
7	2	3	5	4	13
	3	4	4	4	12
	4	4	4	4	12
	5	4	4	5	13
8	2	3	5	3	11
	3	3	3	3	9
	4	3	3	4	10
	5	4	4	4	12

Table 1 and Table 2 shows that all students improved their listening practice in every meeting. Although the result decreased in some meetings, the students showed their improvement at the end of the meeting. After Meeting 5, most students can answer the task altogether. The improvement of students in every meeting is shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: The result of students' listening practice from Meeting 1 until Meeting 5**



The linguistic aspect starts elaborating how EFL students got some advantages from using YouTube in their listening practice. According to Otte (2006), as cited in Abbasian et al. (2016), linguistics is the effect that influences students' achievement. Based on the result of class observation, each student showed an improvement of score in every meeting. There were three sub-skills in listening practice questions: listening for main ideas, listening for details, and listening for inferring meaning.

Based on the students' listening practice results, Listening for Details was still the most mastered before and after. However, students were able to show a good development in Listening for Main Ideas and Listening for Inferring Meaning skills, both by increasing the correct answers given and the completeness of the answers. This data can be seen from the student's listening result at Meeting 1 before using video, where three students could not complete all the answers between Listening for Details and Listening for Inferring Meaning skills. For example, Participant 1 only answered 4 out of 5 questions on the Listening for Main

Ideas part, but in Meetings 2-5, she completed all the answers on each skill, including Listening for Main Ideas, even though there were still wrong answers.

Based on the class observation, the finding is to confirm the result of listening practice data. Participant 1 in Meeting 1 seemed confused in answering Listening for Main Ideas and Listening for Inferring Meaning but was more confident in answering Listening for Details. However, in Meeting 2, Participant 1 seemed confident in answering Listening for Inferring Meaning because sometimes she smiled while answering the Inferring Meaning skill part. Another example is that Participant 2 in Meeting 1 failed to answer the Listening for Inferring Meaning part correctly, but he showed development in the next meeting after treatment. Seen in the class observation of Meeting 1, Participant 2 showed disinterest in the listening process because there were several times he put his head on a pile of his hands that showed that he looked bored and was not interested in listening. From the data, Listening for Main Ideas and Listening for Inferring Meaning are more complex than Listening for Details. However, the use of YouTube on Listening practice helps students to develop each skill. In Meeting 3, Participants 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8 experienced a pretty drastic decrease in listening practice scores. According to the observations of each student, almost all students showed negative manners on the topic. For example, Participant 8 showed a decrease in answering listening practice seen in Meeting 2; she answered the questions correctly for 11 out of 15 questions (73.3%). Then, in Meeting 3, he answered 9 out of 15 (60%). The disinterest might cause this in the topic; seen several times, some participants yawned, and they looked indifferent during the listening process, which showed that the topic was boring and the language used was too tricky. Besides that, Participants 2 and 5 were still consistent in the results as in the second meeting. From the results of Participant 2 and 5's observations, they did not show significant reactions, but it was seen that they also experienced difficulties during the listening process.

Meanwhile, based on the interview results, the selection of topics played a critical role for students. They all agreed that the topic was one of the factors that could attract their attention. Interesting topics make students more focused to listen to the content of listening. It is also mentioned by Cook (1981) that there are several criteria in selecting authentic materials. First, the authentic material must motivate students. Second, they are not too ephemeral, meaning that teachers should use things up-to-date at their level. Third, they must be organized, meaning that the content must relate to the discussion or exercise. Fourth, language and content means that language and content must be chosen wisely, whether the content and language presented are suitable for use in education or not because authentic material uses language that is not modified, so teachers must be more careful in presenting the material. This finding is similar to Silviyanti's (2014) study about students' perceptions in listening through YouTube, which reported students' claims that interesting content increased their attention in listening. This finding showed that topic selection greatly impacted students' listening processes. Interesting topics can increase students' interest and concentration to understand the content and questions given. This study also has a positive effect on the teacher because if students' interests increase, the teacher's success rate in teaching will also be significant. Also, although YouTube is straightforward to use and has an open policy, sometimes the content might be unsuitable or too long to be displayed in class.

The second aspect was the non-linguistic advantage. Based on Gilmore (2007) and Sherman (2003), as cited in Al-Azri and Al-Rashdi (2014), non-linguistic refers to students' interests. Motivation is the essential key element in learning in general and in learning a language in particular. Based on the results of student observations in class and reconfirmed through analysis of video recordings taken at each meeting, using YouTube as a tool of authentic material motivates students in progress. For example, Participant 4 in Meeting 1 on the sub-aspect level of interest was rated low on the three sub-skills because she noted that she was not enthusiastic and confident when listening for all skills using audio-only. She always looked down as if she was not confident. However, in Meeting 2 after treatment, her level of interest improved because she enjoyed watching the video and her action showed that she was confident in answering all skills, especially in the part of Listening for Details. Based on her interview, she said that using video helped her understand the content quickly and motivated her to focus more on the listening section than using audio-only. Participant 5 in Meeting 1 seemed confused in answering the task and several times touched his eyebrows in parts of Listening for Main Ideas and Listening for Details. In Meeting 2, Participant 5 seemed to enjoy the video, and sometimes he laughed while watching the video and was confident in answering all skills, but sometimes he seemed confused in answering the Listening for Inferring Meaning part. Participant 5 also said that he was very motivated to learn listening using YouTube video because it provides various interesting topics that he believed he could not get when using tape-recorder. It showed that YouTube could attract students' attention during the listening session than using audio-only. Students will be more confident in doing listening practice through YouTube. YouTube made students enjoy their listening process. This finding is also mentioned by Finneman (1990) that authentic material positively affects both comprehension and motivation. It happens if students are adequately prepared in the use of authentic material. These findings are supported by Silviyanti's (2014) study about students' perception in listening using YouTube. She found that YouTube can increase students' motivation to listen to YouTube because YouTube can attract their attention while watching the video. Silviyanti's study was in line with the current study's finding where students are motivated to listen using YouTube because YouTube provides pictures and sounds simultaneously to enjoy the listening process.

Compared to the before and after using the videos, each participant showed various progress in each skill. All of them experienced ups and downs progress in each skill. Before treatment, almost all students got low scores in each skill: Listening for Main Ideas, Listening for Details, and Listening for Inferring Meaning. Also, three of them did not complete the task in the first meeting. Before using authentic material, students were less interested in listening because they did not pay attention and enjoyed the listening process. This tendency occurred due to the selection of topic and type of YouTube video.

In contrast to the results after using authentic material, in Meetings 2, 4, and 5, some of them increased, and some of them were consistent. This data shows that the use of authentic material affected students' interest and motivation in learning so that it indirectly increased student concentration in listening. Unfortunately, almost all students' scores decreased in Meeting 3 because the unfamiliar topic influenced students' interests in listening. It means that

teachers must be selective in choosing a topic for teaching listening because an exciting topic can encourage students to give more attention to the content.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

This study confirms the previous studies regarding some advantages of using YouTube as one of the authentic materials to support students' listening skills. As authentic materials, YouTube videos provide the real world on its videos. The real world on the videos provided helps students quickly gain background knowledge on topics by seeing situational and the participants on video. Then, use the original language produced by native speakers. Listening to content that uses a native language makes students closer to the original language itself. The original language is easier to find in real life, so it is easier for students to recognize the original language provided by YouTube than the modified one.

This study revealed two types of advantages, including linguistics and non-linguistics aspects. This study explored the students' progress from Meeting 1 (before using YouTube video) to four meetings (2, 3, 4, and 5, after using YouTube videos) which showed different results. The results are seen from the effect that influences students' achievement (linguistics aspects) and interests (non-linguistics aspects). From the linguistics aspect, this study found that YouTube supports students' listening skills by using familiar language that native speakers used on YouTube and comprehending by predicting speaker's expression and gesture when students have difficulty understanding the passage. YouTube brings a positive effect to students in learning listening and listening skills through YouTube helps students learn the actual language in the classroom. Then, using YouTube in learning listening skills allows students to learn about other cultures. It is very beneficial for students' knowledge in the real world because students can develop their knowledge of other's cultures. Also, using YouTube in listening skills allows them to improve their knowledge through current issues and broaden their vocabulary when discussing the current issue. Then, from the non-linguistic aspect, this study highlights that YouTube videos encourage students to improve their learning interests. Students agree that YouTube motivates them to learn listening skills. They felt that YouTube could increase their motivation to learn and focus more in listening sessions because they can watch the video while doing listening practice. It is fun to learn listening skills by using video because students do not get bored quickly. Also, this study showed that YouTube videos could increase students' interest and achievement in listening skills. Learning listening skills through YouTube can increase students' confidence because students are enjoying the teaching-learning process. Students will be better in real life with natural language because natural language is already applied in the classroom through YouTube.

Some problems and challenges of using YouTube videos were revealed in this study. Firstly, the accent of the speaker. Students found it was not easy to understand the speaker when the speaker had a different English accent. Some students said that sometimes when they do not understand the content because of the speaker's accent, they will predict the passage through the speaker's gesture and expression. Then, the speed of words. Students found difficulties in speed when they listened on YouTube because they could not control the speed. If the speaker talks too fast, then sometimes students become lazy to continue the rest.

This study recommends embracing other media in EFL classroom activities, particularly in listening class. This way, students can be more motivated and enthusiastic in the class. Due to the limited time spent and limited participants in this study, future studies can have more time and more participants to get a more profound result. Besides, future studies can further explore the benefits, problems, and challenges of using YouTube in other English skills to reveal different and essential results.

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