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The use of TED and YOUTUBE in Extensive Listening Course: Exploring possibilities of autonomy learning

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Abstract

This study explores how extensive listening can utilize internet based-media, namely TED and YouTube. The study also examines the researcher's reflection on his teaching practice by adopting the participatory action research framework. Participating in this study are EFL freshmen of a state university in Indonesia during the Extensive Listening course. The findings showcase several changes in the teaching-learning circumstances that affect the implementation of in-class activities. The students share that YouTube and TED help them enrich their English vocabulary. Further, they also state that the tasks create a more dynamic and less monotonous learning atmosphere. Overall, the use of YouTube and TED can be designed to be effective instructional media for Extensive Listening tasks.

Keywords: Extensive Listening, EFL classroom, reflective teaching, and participatory action research

Introduction

Teaching Extensive Listening (hereafter, EL) has been considered as a pivotal language teaching component, notably English in terms of the enhancement of their linguistic competence and motivation to learn a foreign language. Empirically, various investigative issues in relation to EL appear. To illustrate, myriad investigations of EL appeared as a response to establishing valuable, interesting, enjoyable English language learning (Antle, 2011; Onoda, 2012; Bozan, 2015). In addition, EL enables students to engage in their English language learning. EL can potentially lead students to undergo fascinating activities in English language learning because they can select listening teaching materials based on their own interests. Renandya & Farrell (2011) contend that tasks in extensive listening activities allow the students to receive abundant comprehensible and enjoyable input (e.g. TED & YouTube). Practically, the teachers

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seemingly act as a motivator and a course programmer encouraging the students to listen extensively to obtain valuable experiences and meaningful insight. In this case, the students are given opportunities to gain various language expressions from internet-based videos. At the same time, they are exposed to miscellaneous spoken expressions wrapped in such internet-based videos, such as speech videos, song videos and other audiovisual teaching resources contributing to the establishment of enjoyable classroom situations. Hence, they can select a variety of EL teaching materials to meet the students' English proficiency, enjoyable learning situations and facilitative teaching materials (Vo, 2013). By doing so, the students can acquire valuable experiences boosting their abilities to recognize English meanings and sounds available in the audio texts. Moreover, they could be directed to translate English words provided by the audio texts. Different from intensive listening requiring the students to comprehend intensively every piece of discourse provided, EL activities could generate and improve the students' automaticity during recognizing English texts. Also, it enables the students to practice listening micro-skills for knock-on effects such as tuning into pronunciation and noticing intonation patterns (Waring, 2003).

By repeating the process of listening spoken expressions in extensive listening activities, the students can increase their awareness and abilities in recognizing various Englishes vocabulary. Although the students may not need to understand the meanings of each word of the audio texts, the students are encouraged to guess the general meaning from the provided contexts. The students can list unknown words provided on the audio possibly increasing their vocabulary mastery. As a result, their vocabulary is enriched and their confidence will be increased.

To teach extensive listening, teachers should be able to provide an attracting environment. They should be encouraged the students to feel comfortable with exposure to English and to feel in control of their independent learning experience in extensive listening (Reinders and Cho, 2010). In addition, selecting teaching materials for EL should be based on the principle of extensive listening, namely 'listening for pleasure'. Therefore, such teaching materials designed in extensive listening activities should consider the students' cognitive levels.

Today, with the advancement in technology, gaining teaching materials of extensive listening is relatively easy for the teachers. Teachers have the opportunities to maximize the use of internet sources including TED and YouTube for the students. The internet actually can provide multimedia input including visual support, such as texts, captions, illustrations, photographs, etc., while CDs and tapes provide only audio input. Brett (1997) uttered that a multimedia listening environment including videos and audios in combination with text offers learners more

effective listening comprehension and performance than either audios or videos only (Brett, 1997).

TED, as one of the internet sources, provides more than 2000 talks which can be maximized for extensive listening activities. Since 1984, TED Talks has featured lectures from around the world on technology, entertainment, and design. These lectures are available to the general public and have been used by educators since going online in 2007 (TED Talks, n.d.). Free transcripts in English and subtitles in over 40 languages accompany most of the lectures, delivered by native and non-native English speakers. TED provides authentic teaching materials from the spoken expressions where the students learn the language for real listening and permit them to obtain information beyond language itself. This task can become challenging since it is not made for pedagogical purposes. It is often fast-paced, contains highly specialized vocabulary, and cover complex topics (Arntsen, 2016). As a result, teachers should be able to guide the students in order to choose the suitable topics based on their interests. Furthermore, teachers can guide the students to use YouTube in extensive listening activities. On the other hand, YouTube is seen as an online media in which trainers and learners learn through videos anywhere and anytime as long as there is available internet connection (Educause, 2006). Youtube consists of thousands of artificial and authentic videos facilitating the students to obtain various spoken expressions from those multimedia devices. YouTube video is also accessible and free from any charge fee which makes students easy to access it (Alwehaibi, 2013) and it is very suitable for extensive listening

Theoretical framework

The teaching and learning of Second Language Listening

It may sound too obvious to say that in order to become effective Second Language (L2) listeners, learners should do a lot of listening. Yet language learning practices carried out in many classrooms apparently dedicates very little time to the development of the listening skill (Graham & Santos, 2015).

There are some strategies in teaching-learning listening viewed from L2 learning. Strategies are often categorized into three types: metacognitive, cognitive and socio-affective (Graham and Santos, 2015). This categorization largely stems from the work of O'Malley and Chamot (1990), defining metacognitive strategies as "higher order executive skills that may entail planning for, monitoring, or evaluating the success of a learning activity" (p. 44). In listening, this might include such strategies as selective

attention, deciding to focus on specific aspects of what one is about to hear, and monitoring or verification (of any predictions made or of overall understanding, for example). By contrast, cognitive strategies "operate directly on incoming information, manipulating it in ways that enhance learning" (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 44). For example, learners might try to work out what an L2 word means in a passage by listening to how the speaker defines the word later in the same passage. Or, they might draw on clues from the overall context of the passage and their background knowledge of its theme to infer the meaning of the word. Socio-affective strategies are seen as those used to manage affective or emotional responses to learning, or to draw on peer/teacher support to complete an activity, although there are some debates as to whether they are really separate from metacognitive strategies (Macaro, 2006).

The principle of Extensive Listening (EL)

The notion of 'extensive listening' overlaps with 'narrow listening' in its focus on learners' interest as a starting point for the selection of what is to be heard. However, unlike in narrow listening, in extensive listening, listeners are not expected to have a full understanding but rather to have a general understanding and, most importantly, to find pleasure in the listening event. Advocates of extensive listening for L2 listening development (for example Renandya & Farrell, 2011) draw on a body of research on extensive reading pointing to the benefits of such practice and claim that extensive listening is also likely to improve learners' performance and attitudes. Further investigations are needed to foster our understanding about the effects of extensive listening (Siegel, 2011) and a key factor to be considered here is that research in this area needs to make a distinction between 'experience' and 'deliberate practice'. In a survey involving 118 ESL learners, Goh (2002) discovered that most respondents lacked direction and focus in their extensive listening practice, a result she attributes to the lack of structure and guidance characterizing such practice. In a similar vein, Field (2008) argues that success in extensive listening 'lies in preparing the listener' (p. 54), a point which takes us to the next key issue in listening pedagogy.

The use of YOUTUBE and TED in EL class

Nowadays, the use of technology for teaching grows very fast that teachers are encouraged to maximize its use in teaching. It can easily be found that these days there is a wide array of various authentic English language learning materials on the internet which can be applied for teaching English, especially for EL. Recently, there are two famous

applications namely YouTube and TED provided on the internet facilitating video resources for the students to listen extensively.

TED consists of authentic videos where the speakers shared their own personal stories, ideas, experiences with the audience. It can simply provide many interesting materials for the students where they can choose the most appropriate video based on their interest. Moreover, TED Talks are frequently delivered by non-native speakers which provide various accent and pronunciation that is very beneficial for the students to be aware of the spoken expressions provided. It can not be ignored that people across the world speak English with their unique accents. This situation absolutely can provide interesting and fascinating material to introduce students to varieties of spoken English. Moreover, this task is really beneficial and appropriate for the process of extensive listening in which the students can get valuable experience to develop their listening awareness.

Vasilevich (2016) also points out that TED includes 2000 public speaking presentations which can be applied to a lesson without designing extensive worksheets. These videos can be used as an out-of-class listening activity where the students are free to choose their own video to watch. This activity can be conducted outside the class followed by several activities (including discussion, debate, after speech interview, etc.). After listening to several TED video out-of-class, students can share what they have listened to with their peers. This activity can improve students' speaking skills which are beneficial for students to express their ideas on the topic. Moreover, they also can do a debate activity where they can give their argument from the video that they previously listened to. Teachers can facilitate the students to give their point of view and do the debate activity in the classroom. Furthermore, Critical Evaluation of Presentation Style activity can also be conducted as the follow-up activity after watching TED talks. This task enables students to assess the presenter's delivery skills and to analyze advantages and disadvantages of the speaker's presentation skills (tempo, distinctiveness, use of words and grammar, use of visual aids. etc.). Finally, they can also observe speakers' body-language in which they can critically assess the speaker's non-verbal behavior. As a result, the activity will be innovative and interesting.

In addition, youtube also provide millions of videos which can be used for extensive listening activity. According to data from the web traffic tracking service *alexa*, YouTube is the third most visited website in the world. Although the main function of YouTube is not for educational use, there are a few efforts to enhance its use in English language teaching including English learning channels that are already present, and other websites VoiceTube and HopeEnglish. It is also supported by Watkins and Wilkin (2011) who argue that YouTube remains a valid resource for

teachers seeking to enhance their lessons with lively, topical content, and further research into the use of the site (as well as other online video-streaming websites) would be very welcome for the EFL and SLA community. Considering millions of video provided on Youtube, students joining extensive listening task can easily get so many appropriate videos based on their level of ability and interest. Kelsen (2009) emphasizes that 'authenticity' of YouTube involves not only its content but the fact that it is often used by language learners, so it 'has the potential to connect learners with authentic English input through what is quite possibly already a part of their life experience. Videos on YouTube also can engage the students to get many new vocabularies, content and also grammatical awareness which is very influential in their second language development. Moreover, they will easily get an interesting and easy topic on YouTube by only typing the words on the search tab. It also can be linked easily to other videos having the same topic. As a result, their motivation to listen to the videos are enhanced.

With all the benefits laid out above, this study intends to explore 1) the use of TED and YOUTUBE in the extensive listening course to teach World Englishes; and 2) the researcher reflection on his teaching practice in the course.

Research Methodology

The method of this research was Critical Participatory Action Research as a "disciplined" way of making a change because many of the kinds of changes that occur in our lives are imposed, apparently random, or ill-considered (Kemmis, 2014). Kemmis further explains that unexpected or imposed changes sometimes generate frustration, dissatisfaction, or a sense of alienation for individuals or groups. When this happens, however, some people turn to critical participatory action research to reshape their lives or work – to change the arrangements they find themselves in and to take an active and thoughtful approach to change themselves, their practices and the conditions under which they practice. According to Kemmis, the design of this type of study involves: (1) planning, (2) acting and observing, (3) reflecting. In this study, there are two cycles and each cycle consists of three meetings.

Ten undergraduate students from the English education department participated in this project. The EL course is a regular class and conducted based on a regular schedule. Based on our preliminary observation, students did not enjoy participating in this course. They feel bored and less interested in joining this course. The teaching materials are not engaging enough for

the students. Thus, the aim of this study is to investigate to what extend the use of TED and Youtube videos in the Extensive Listening course.

This study was conducted for three months that consists of 6 meetings (each meeting time is 90 minutes). The instructional goals of the lesson follows the syllabus of the course which are to improve automaticity and comprehension of spoken text, to practice listening skills, to knock an effect such as tunning into pronunciation and intonation, and to build listening autonomy (Saputra, 2017). The tasks that the researcher set are modeling, self-selection of videos, EL through collaborative video viewing, discussion, self-monitoring and reflection (Saputra,2017).

Following Kemmis' (2014) action research scheme, there are three activities that the researchers do in every meeting. Firstly, at the planning stage, lesson plans and teaching materials using TED and YouTube videos were prepared. The first YouTube video used was "Horseman in the Sky". It is an old story of American civil war. A video displaying Sri Mulyani Indrawati' speech as managing director and chief operating officer of World Bank was used as the second video. In the third meeting, the researcher played a TED video about the speech of Step Vaessen as an Al Jazeera reporter, entitled "Hello Stranger!" With this video, students learned about Dutch accent and got some valuable advice on it. In the fourth meeting, the researcher showed a video of TED of Brian Christian entitled, "How to Manage Your Time effectively (according to machines)." In the fifth meeting, the researcher played YouTube video of Oprah Winfrey, entitled First Lady Michelle Obama, and Oprah Winfrey Hold a Conversation on the Next Generation of Women. In the last meeting, the researcher played a YouTube video, "The death of Kim Jong-Nam – 101 East.

Secondly, acting and observing activities were conducted. At this stage, the researchers implemented the lesson plan while collecting data. The researcher played the video without pausing and let the students listening to the spoken text and to understand the topic and to obtain important information. After listening to them, the students discussed what they have listened to and did the question-answer session.

Finally, at the end of the lesson, the students were asked to reflect on what they did in class and how they felt after the teaching-learning process. At this activity, students were also invited to give suggestions and negotiate the upcoming topics for the next meetings.

Data Analysis Method

The technique that is used in analyzing the data is data reduction, data display, drawing a conclusion (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Data reduction

Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written up field notes or transcriptions. Not only do the data need to be condensed for the sake of manageability, but they also have to be transformed so they can be made intelligible in terms of the issues being addressed. It means that the reduction is the way to analyze the data to help the researcher identify the phenomena and then the researcher can make the data in notes or transcriptions. In this research, the writer analyses the students' interview transcripts by outlining the sentences that come into the theory of Renandya and Farell (2010) that extensive listening is to find pleasure and general understanding in listening. In observing, the writer uses observation sheet which observes their activities and during extensive listening teaching-learning process.

Data display

Data display goes a step beyond data reduction. After reducing some data by choosing those which related to the required data, the researcher took the chosen excerpts and display them on the table. Meanwhile, the researcher also analyzed the data taken from observation to make a cross check with the data interview that had been selected.

Conclusion drawing

Conclusion Drawing involves stepping back to consider what the analyzed data mean and to assess their implications for the questions at hand. The writer stepped back to consider the analyzed data from data display that had been put on the table and related it to research background, theoretical studies, and aims of the research or research questions.

Implementation and discussion

In each lesson, the teacher conducted 5 activities: Modeling, (self-) selecting materials, EL through video-viewing, discussion, and self-monitoring and reflection. This section will discuss the implementation of these activities.

(1) Modeling: before the participants worked on video EL tasks, the researcher, who served as a teacher educator, demonstrated how to navigate video materials from TED and YouTube and how to select the topics. This teacher modeling facilitated the student teachers in completing a variety of pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities. The purpose of

providing modeling is to prepare student-teachers to comprehend the audio-visual text and accomplish the tasks.

(2) Self-selection of online videos of YouTube and TED: The participants were afforded the opportunity to choose their own videos based on a decision made in groups. By self-selecting listening materials (texts), they could see EL as a personal activity. They were encouraged to listen to a variety of video texts that they found easy, familiar, and useful. This was to build student teachers' autonomy to select spoken texts at their own convenience or based on their listening needs. Certainly, they could use resources available at their own time and needs.

(3) EL through video viewing: The participants were asked to view selected videos of 8-25 minutes on a daily basis. While viewing the videos, they discussed what they learned and possible challenges and concerns. This peer discussion while doing EL allowed the student teachers to engage in a meaning-making activity.

(4) Discussion: After the participants discussed the videos, they were asked to comment among groups. Throughout this discussion, the researcher monitored how the participants responded to each other. He sometimes encouraged the participants to become active in the discussion. In this discussion, the participants focused on different listening purposes, such as listening for pleasure, listening for information, and listening for understanding.

(5) Self-monitoring and reflection: Over the activities, the students were asked to self-monitor their own listening progress at least on a weekly basis. This self-monitoring and reflection was part of action learning (AL) in which the participants made sense of their experiences in video-mediated EL activities. Upon the completion of the activities, the participants were required to write a 300-500-words of reflective account of their experience with online video-assisted EL.

These EL activities using YouTube and TED videos showing manage to overcome the motivational issue identified from our preliminary observation in listening classroom, such as boredom, unwillingness to participate in class, and learning stress and anxiety. The researcher deployed modeling helping the students understand how to navigate and select learning materials. Self-selection on the video also triggers the students' curiosity and encourages them to find topic according to what they would like to learn. In video viewing, they are not burdensome and at the same time, the videos help them understand the topic because they do not only listen but also watch the pictures on the video. In this activity, students take charge of their own learning and explore what they would like to know. Meanwhile, the discussion, lead with some questions and answers, allows students to give opinion, react, and respond to the video material. The

students seem to enjoy the discussion of the topics since they are free to give opinion and interact with their peers. In self-monitoring, the students were asked to reflect on their learning on EL. This activity aims to gain feedback from the students as well as raising students awareness of how they learn and what they learn in the lesson.

Grounded in triangulated data from observational practices, the students seemed to be active, enthusiastic, and curious while participating in EL classroom activities. Likewise, viewed from interview results, the students verbalized that they underwent an encouraging, autonomous, and supportive learning atmosphere. Some students described that the lesson becomes less monotonous and more dynamic for the students to explore the materials that they selected. This provides them a personal space to learn. In some statement, students also shares that they are mostly benefitted in learning new vocabularies and varieties of English. With this in mind, the EL teaching and learning practices can also enable the students to employ internet-based teaching materials of EL (e.g TED and YouTube) for exploring World Englishes issues. This might be another potential topic to explore further.

Closing remarks

Conventional teaching practices may not provide any choices for making progress in extensive listening class. It has become a challenge for the researchers to gain an appropriate way to cope with the problem in it. Therefore, the use of TED and YouTube changed the atmosphere of teaching and learning extensive listening significantly. First, changes occurred on students perspective. Initially, the students thought that listening is a boring subject since the materials are not quite relevant to them. Specifically, the teaching and learning practices in EL class commonly lie on the employment of CD and textbooks. However, students had been led to change their perspectives after TED and YouTube were applied in their class. They seemed to revive and became more enthusiastic and curious about the listening teaching materials.. Second, the contents of TED and YouTube provide much information, new vocabularies, dialects and varieties of English from various speakers both non- and native speakers that definitely are able to improve their listening proficiencies. Lastly, with these activities, the teacher becomes more prepared and creative in choosing the materials with the help of reflective teaching.

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