# Students' Voices on Extensive Listening:
# Exploring Perceptions of Self-Selected Authentic Materials

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**Abstract**
Extensive listening, a pedagogical approach emphasizing large quantities of comprehensible input and integration of self-selected authentic materials, is increasingly recognized for its potential in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) acquisition. This current study aims to investigate the perceptions of 17 second-semester English Education students at PSDKU Aru regarding the use of self-selected authentic materials in their extensive listening projects. Employing a qualitative research design, the study utilized a questionnaire distributed at the 12th meeting to gather insights from the students who regularly engaged in weekly projects involving self-selected authentic listening materials from various online sources. The findings reveal a predominantly positive perception among the students, particularly concerning increased engagement and a heightened sense of autonomy attributed to their freedom in material choice. The students consistently reported perceived improvements in their listening skills, including enhanced comprehension, note-taking abilities, and vocabulary acquisition, contributing to their overall English proficiency. There were some challenges faced by the students, such as a lack of vocabulary and difficulty in understanding what the speakers say because of accent, speech rate, and the use of idioms and slang. Also, it was challenging to select suitable materials. However, some strategies are proposed by the students to overcome the challenges. Overall, the study concludes that integrating self-selected authentic materials into extensive listening pedagogy is highly beneficial, fostering motivation, engagement, and effective skill development among EFL learners.

**Keywords**: *Authentic Materials, Extensive Listening, Self-Selected Materials, Students' Autonomy, Students' Engagement*

## INTRODUCTION

Listening is a fundamental aspect of communication and language learning as one of the language skills besides speaking, reading, and writing. According to Rusmiati et al. (2024), it is crucial for receptive and productive language abilities. It involves the ability to receive, process, interpret spoken language, and respond appropriately in various communicative situations. For this

reason, Latupono and Nikijuluw (2022) highlight that listening can help learners improve their other language skills.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), one of the pedagogical approaches for listening skills is extensive listening. According to Ivone and Renandya (2019), the concept of extensive listening is similar to extensive reading, which promotes learning by doing. Correspondingly, the primary key characteristic of extensive listening is that it encourages learners to listen to a large amount of comprehensible input for general understanding and enjoyment rather than focusing on detailed analysis (Ivone & Renandya, 2019; Mandiri et al., 2022). The primary focus is understanding the general meaning rather than analyzing specific grammatical points or vocabulary items.

Another key characteristic of extensive listening is selecting appropriate materials that emphasise two points. First, extensive listening uses authentic listening materials. By exposing students to real-world language use, extensive listening can help learners overcome difficulties related to accent, vocabulary, speed, and the length of authentic listening materials; foster fluency, vocabulary acquisition, and confidence; and improve listening comprehension through consistent exposure to the target language (Hapsari & Ratri, 2014; Ivone & Renandya, 2019; Rusmiati et al., 2024). Exposing students to real-world language use is crucial for language learners, particularly in EFL settings where exposure to the target language outside the classroom may be limited. Second, to address the element of enjoyment, learners are encouraged to choose materials that they find interesting and engaging, which helps to maintain motivation and foster a positive attitude towards listening (Ivone & Renandya, 2019). Moreover, this self-selection process enables them to find materials that align with their interests, needs, and language proficiency levels, leading to a more personalized and enjoyable learning experience. Using self-selected authentic materials can help bridge the gap between the classroom and real-life communication, making learning more relevant and engaging.

Previous studies have explored various aspects of extensive listening, including its impact on language proficiency, the difficulties faced by learners, and the role of listening materials. However, despite the growing recognition of its importance, there is still a need for more research in this area. Specifically, there is a need for more studies on students' perceptions of extensive listening, particularly concerning the use of self-selected authentic materials.

This current study addresses the gap by exploring students' voices through extensive listening with self-selected authentic materials. It seeks to investigate students' perceptions of this approach, providing valuable insights into their experiences, preferences, and attitudes. By focusing on students' perspectives, this research can contribute to a deeper understanding of how extensive listening with self-selected authentic materials can be effectively implemented to enhance language learning.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Nature of Extensive Listening

Extensive listening is an approach in language education that involves learners listening to large quantities of comprehensible audio material. As Ivone and Renandya (2019) state, it is about learners listening to easy material. The primary goal of extensive listening is to improve overall

listening fluency and comprehension rather than focusing on detailed analysis of specific language points (Mandiri et al., 2022). Extensive listening often contrasts with intensive listening, which typically involves shorter texts and focuses on detailed understanding (Ivone & Renandya, 2019). Several sources emphasize that extensive listening should be enjoyable and stress-free, with learners choosing materials that interest them (Ni'amah & Kristanti, 2022).

Furthermore, extensive listening practice can be done inside or outside the classroom. When done outside the classroom, extensive listening can promote learner autonomy as learners can listen independently (Barella & Linarsih, 2020; Kobayashi, 2020). Newton and Nation (2020) in their book also highlight that in extensive listening, the quantity of listening is high, and learners listen to simplified or authentic materials they can understand.

## The Benefits of Extensive Listening

Research suggests that extensive listening offers several benefits for language learners. Exposure to large amounts of comprehensible input can lead to significant gains in listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and overall language proficiency (Rusmiati et al., 2024). By engaging with various audio materials, learners become more accustomed to different accents, speaking styles, and speech rates (Hapsari & Ratri, 2014). This increased exposure can also enhance learners' confidence and motivation as they experience success in understanding authentic language (Meikudy et al., 2024). Moreover, extensive listening can foster learner autonomy and self-efficacy as learners take responsibility for their own listening practice, in that way they can can improve their competence in the target language (Kobayashi, 2020).

## The Definition of Authentic Learning Materials

Authentic materials are a key component in extensive listening. These are defined as materials designed for native speakers of the language rather than specifically for language learners. Authentic materials are seen as a way to expose learners to real-world language use. Hapsari and Ratri (2014) suggest that authentic materials expose students to "real native speech in meaningful language use." Examples of authentic listening materials include podcasts, news broadcasts, movies, and other forms of spoken language that were not initially created for language-teaching purposes. Using authentic materials in the classroom can help bridge the gap between the classroom and the real world and prepare students for communication outside the classroom. Kobayashi (2020) emphasizes the importance of using authentic materials in extensive listening, arguing that these materials expose learners to the natural flow of language and help them develop listening skills for real-life situations.

## METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative approach to investigate students' perceptions of using self-selected authentic materials for extensive listening projects. The participants are 17 second-semester students from the English Education Study Program at PSDKU Aru who enrolled in the Extensive Listening course. Throughout the course, the students are assigned a project that requires them to independently choose listening materials from various online sources. They then create weekly reports based on these materials and present the reports in class.

The data will be collected using a questionnaire distributed at the 12$^{th}$ meeting of the Extensive Listening class. The questionnaire is designed to gather detailed insights into the students' experiences and perspectives on this approach to extensive listening. The questionnaire is divided into three sections to find out the information about materials and sources the students use, their perceptions of extensive listening with self-selected authentic materials, and their overall

reaction towards the project. Section two, the students' perceptions of extensive listening with self-selected authentic materials, consists of questions about students' engagement, achievement, autonomy, challenges, and strategies during the extensive listening project using self-selected authentic materials.

Then, the collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) states that thematic analysis is an appropriate tool for detecting, interpreting, and reporting patterns in qualitative data. This study employs thematic analysis to code data, identifying recurring themes and patterns that represent participants' experiences and perceptions of utilizing self-selected authentic materials for their extensive listening project.

## FINDINGS

The findings reveal that in terms of the materials and sources, the students used various authentic materials for their extensive listening projects, such as movies and songs, with YouTube as the primary source for these materials. Besides that, podcasts were also a popular choice, sourced from platforms like Spotify and social media. The students generally selected materials based on their interest in the topic, availability of transcripts or subtitles, and recommendations from other students. The difficulty level is another consideration when choosing the listening materials for their project.

Regarding the students' perceptions of Extensive Listening with self-selected authentic materials, the findings were divided into five themes. First, in the context of engagement, Many students expressed positive feelings. For example, Student 10 mentioned, "The project was fun, enjoyable, and meaningful because I can choose the learning materials based on my own interest." Meanwhile, Student 2 and Student 14 stated, "I like this project." Student 2 added, "I feel more relax doing this project than listening to audio or video in class."

Second, the findings reveal that the students' responses indicate a sense of autonomy in the extensive listening project using self-selected authentic materials. Most students felt more responsible for their learning by choosing their own listening materials. They also can learn at their own pace. Moreover, Student 1 said, "I can have this project not only for extensive listening class but also for my listening skill improvement after the class." It is in line with the statement of Student 2 that "this kind of learning material is very useful and will continue to learn using this format."

The next theme is about the students' achievement. Most students perceived that the extensive listening project using self-selected authentic materials improved their listening skills. They reported that the project helped them to better understand the content of the recording, practice taking notes, recognize new vocabulary, and improve listening strategies. Student 10 noted that the project "has helped me improve my English listening skills in a more enjoyable and structured way. This project also trained me to recognize new vocabulary and improve my listening strategies". Next, Student 13 stated that the project "help increase vocabulary in English as well as knowing idioms or slangs that appear and make the next project more fun."

The last two themes for section two are challenges and strategies. Most students agreed that the main challenge in this project was a lack of vocabulary. The next challenge concerns authentic materials not designed for learning materials. Student 4 admitted that "the speakers usually talk too fast and use some idioms or slang that make the contents difficult to understand. This also becomes another challenge for the students in finding suitable materials for the project, as experienced by Student 7.

In terms of strategies, the findings reveal that the students have similar strategies. Student 8 highlighted the importance of active listening and repeated exposure, stating, "It's better to listen to the recording more than once to enhance understanding." Meanwhile, Student 10 emphasized the benefits of a structured approach, noting, "With a clear format, I was able to focus better on understanding the content of the recording...". Student 17 mentioned that "it is important to choose the topic I am really interested in, for example fable and short story so that I can have more familiar words than new words."

The last part of the questionnaire is the overall reflection section. The students generally supported using self-selected authentic materials for extensive listening projects. Several students explicitly stated they "like this project" and found it "good enough." One student highly recommended the project, emphasizing its enjoyable and structured nature. They specifically appreciated how it improved their listening skills, note-taking abilities, vocabulary, and listening strategies. Another student offered suggestions for their classmates, advising them to choose topics that align with their interests to make the listening process more enjoyable and meaningful. They also recommended listening to recordings multiple times for better understanding. There was a suggestion to include songs and movies in addition to podcasts, stories, or interviews to enhance vocabulary acquisition and knowledge of idioms and slang.

## DISCUSSION

This section discusses the findings from the questionnaire regarding students' perceptions of using self-selected authentic materials in extensive listening projects, interpreting them in light of existing literature on extensive listening, learner autonomy, and authentic materials. The analysis is structured around engagement, autonomy, achievement, challenges, strategies, and overall reflection.

The findings indicate a generally positive perception among students regarding the use of self-selected authentic materials in their extensive listening projects. This point aligns with the core principles of extensive listening, emphasizing enjoyment and choice to foster a positive attitude toward learning (Ni'amah & Kristanti, 2022). Students frequently choose materials based on their personal interests, such as movies, songs, and podcasts, which are inherently more engaging than prescribed content. This personal connection to the material likely contributed to their reported high levels of engagement, reinforcing the idea that intrinsic motivation is a powerful driver in language learning. Ivone and Renandya (2019) state that students can be more motivated when they can choose the material independently.

A significant finding is the strong sense of autonomy students experienced by being able to select their own listening materials. This finding aligns with the concept of learner autonomy, where students take responsibility for their own learning processes (Barella & Linarsih, 2020; Kobayashi, 2020; Latupono & Nikijuluw, 2022). As Kobayashi (2020) suggests, extensive listening activities can significantly enhance learner autonomy, particularly when self-directed. The students' ability to choose materials from diverse online sources, including YouTube, Spotify, and news websites, empowered them to tailor their learning experience to their individual needs and preferences. This freedom of choice made the process more enjoyable and fostered a greater sense of ownership over their learning journey.

In terms of achievement, students widely perceived improvements in their listening skills, vocabulary acquisition, and overall English proficiency. This statement supports the established benefits of extensive listening, which contributes to language acquisition through consistent exposure to comprehensible input (Rusmiati et al., 2024). Students reported enhanced abilities in

understanding content, note-taking, and recognizing new vocabulary, indicating that the quantity and variety of self-selected authentic input facilitated practical skill development. The exposure to "real native speech in meaningful language use" (Hapsari & Ratri, 2014) provided by authentic materials appears crucial in developing these practical listening competencies.

In this current study, the students faced some challenges, such as a lack of vocabulary and difficulty understanding what the speakers say because of accents, speech rate, idioms, and slang. These challenges are also experienced by the students in the study conducted by Listiyanti and Listyani (2023). Another challenge revealed in this current study is about selecting suitable materials. In line with that, Mandiri et al. (2022) also noted that EFL students could face difficulties with extensive listening, such as comprehension issues or technical problems, which might be mitigated by the self-selection process that allows students to choose materials at an appropriate difficulty level.

Regarding strategies, students demonstrated an awareness of effective listening techniques, such as listening multiple times and utilizing structured approaches for understanding and note-taking. This strategy indicates that the project encouraged applying and developing metacognitive strategies, which are vital for adequate listening comprehension (Latupono & Nikijuluw, 2022). The iterative nature of listening to recordings more than once, as highlighted by one student, directly contributes to deeper processing and better retention of information. Related to this, Prastiyowati (2018) proposes some strategies that students can apply in extensive listening are giving pause and replay on unknown or unfamiliar words, guessing the meaning of unknown words, finding difficult words in the dictionary, predicting the content by using background knowledge; and making notes or rewriting the text.

Overall, the students' reflections overwhelmingly endorsed the self-selected authentic materials approach for extensive listening projects. The positive comments, strong recommendations, and recognition of improved skills underscore the value of integrating learner choice and authentic resources into extensive listening pedagogy. This suggests that when students are empowered to select materials aligned with their interests and proficiency, the extensive listening experience becomes more effective, enjoyable, and motivating, leading to tangible gains in language proficiency. Moreover, some students emphasized that doing extensive listening, especially using self-selected authentic materials, is really helpful to improve their listening skills, so they would like to do the activity for extensive listening class and their listening skill improvement after the class. For this, Gonulal (2022) asserts that the most effective method for enhancing listening skills is through regular practice; increased engagement in listening activities correlates to higher ability.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### Conclusion

This qualitative study explored the perceptions of 17 second-semester English Education students at PSDKU Aru regarding the use of self-selected authentic materials in extensive listening projects. The findings reveal a generally positive perception across several key areas, including engagement, autonomy, and perceived achievement in listening skills and overall English proficiency. The students reported feeling more motivated and responsible for their learning when they could choose their own listening materials from various online sources, primarily based on their interests. They also perceived that this approach facilitated the development of practical listening skills, such as understanding content, note-taking, and vocabulary acquisition. At the same time, a few challenges were explicitly mentioned, such as a lack of vocabulary and difficulty

understanding what the speakers say because of accent, speech rate, and the use of idioms and slang. However, the students have some strategies to overcome the challenges. The students' overall reflections strongly support the integration of self-selected authentic materials into extensive listening pedagogy.

**Suggestion**

Based on the findings of this study, the following suggestions are offered:

1. Educators are suggested to encourage students to self-select authentic materials for extensive listening projects. This fosters autonomy, increases engagement, and caters to individual interests, ultimately enhancing the learning experience.
2. Educators must provide clear guidance to maximize extensive listening learning, especially using self-selected authentic materials. They are also suggested to facilitate sharing and discussion in class to create opportunities for students to share their chosen materials, discuss their learning experiences, and exchange effective listening strategies. This will enhance the collaborative aspect of learning and provide valuable peer insights.
3. Future researchers are suggested to explore the long-term impact of self-selected authentic materials on students' listening proficiency and motivation. Investigating the correlation between the types of materials chosen and specific learning outcomes could also provide valuable insights into pedagogical practices.

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