

LECTURERS' CHALLENGES OF ONLINE LEARNING INSTRUCTION IN LISTENING CLASS

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Abstract

Teaching listening is assumed challenging among English Lecturers. However, there are relatively few studies that discussing the challenges of teaching listening especially in online setting. Therefore, this study aims to investigate lecturer challenges of online learning instruction in listening class. The data in this study were collected qualitatively using semi-structured interview conducted to one the EFL lecturer in university in West Java. The data were analyzed inductively using the stage of recording or interpreting. The data showed that lecturer's difficulties in listening via online are about determining the proper material as well as the stages in teaching listening. It is further explained that the lecturer had problem in matching and adjusting the learning objectives with the audio and the students' understanding. Due to the limited interactions between the lecturer and students directly, the lecturer had complication in determining the right material which fit to teaching objective as students' level of thinking. Thus, lecturers must prepare materials that are suitable for online learning conditions and packaging in such a simple and easy- to-understand instruction for the students. Regarding to that phenomenon's, the lecturers should carry out to explore the material and the packaging, such as, the lecturers can use TED-ED, Learning Management System, or Edmodo in the online class.

Keywords: *Challenges, Online learning instruction, Listening class*

INTRODUCTION

Developing the students' listening skills is directly related to putting forward the factors that take a part in the listening process. In other words, determining the factors that play a role in the listening process is of vital importance not only to the schools and families that educate students, but also to the institutions that train teachers (Kutlu, Aslanoglu, 2009). Second language acquisition (SLA) researchers (e.g., Hedge, 2007; Nunan, 1998) believe that L2 learners spend approximately 45% to 50% of their time on listening when they are engaged in communication in the target language. According to Krashen (1985) listening is one of the main mediain which language learners are exposed L2 and a key facilitation factor in learning that L2. Therefore, Ferris (1998) emphasizes the importance of listening by arguing that students' success in any academic context appears to be an insurmountable task if they lack the necessary listening skills.

However, Listening is considered as one of the difficult skills in English and it is not easy to make such online learning for listening class. According to (Susilowati, 2020) the difficulty is getting the core of speaker's conversation delivered quickly. Meanwhile, students only have limited opportunities to re-listen to the spoken material. Moreover, the limited knowledge of vocabulary and other components of English is also an obstacle. Bano (2017) in (Fauzi & Angkasawati, 2019) states that listening in the second language is not much different from listening in the first language,

nevertheless the learners have limited knowledge of the language being studied. So, from these difficulties, lecturers must think carefully about what techniques and activities are suitable for students' conditions, especially through online learning systems (Nurkhamidah, 2021).

In relation to online teaching listening, some related studies described on teaching and learning during pandemics has been conducted. Some of these studies focus on the challenges and difficulties in teaching listening and most of the results show that the challenges lie in the use of the technologies tools, materials, activities, techniques and strategies used. (Susilowati, 2020) (Rahmawati, 2021) (Utomo, S., Kusmayanti, E, S., Sulistyowati, T., 2019) (Aryana, s., & Apsari, Y., 2018) (Alrawashdeh, I, A., & Al-zayed, N, N., 2017) (Yasmine, 2019) (Penrod, Shaw, Nash, Dierkes, Collins, 2022) (Wise, Chiu, 2014) (Wise, Hsiao, 2018) (Durairaj, K. & Umar, I.N., 2015) (Jia, Hew, 2021) (Ningsih, Widjajanti, 2022). Furthermore, several studies also discussed about the students' perception of learning materials and activities applied in listening class. This aims to ensure that materials and activities are appropriate to be implemented in online learning (Nurkhamidah, 2021) (Sulisto, 2021) (Nurani, Widiati, 2021) (Ma'fiah, Sitoresmi, Yulianto 2021) (Rerung, 2018).

Based on the previous studies above, most of them focuses on the problem in media types, so further research is still needed with a different focus that is the challenges of online learning instruction. Therefore, this study aims to describe what lecturers' challenges towards online learning in listening class

METHODS

This research used a qualitative design include analyzing, describing and interpreting data. As Cresswell (2012: 236) states "Analyzing qualitative data requires understanding how to make sense of text and image, so that you can form answer to your research questions". Therefore given the purpose, this study to identify about lecturers' challenges of online learning in listening class.

The study involves a lecturer at one of the college in Garut. This lecturer was selected because she was required to apply listening in an online class during the pandemic. Hence, based on these considerations, it provided the basis for the teacher as a participant. Furthermore, regarding the code of ethics of learning, the lecturer participate to this study voluntarily.

As an instrument in this research, interview was employed. One type of interview used is semi-structured interview because it is an explanatory interview that is used most often in the social sciences for qualitative research purposes. The interview consists of several questions to lecturers to get some information related to the challenges of online learning instruction in listening class. The interview was conducted in Indonesia to facilitate communication so that there are no errors in translating this interview resulting in misunderstandings in transcribing the validity of the data.

In this study, the data were analyzed inductively through the stage of recording, transcribing, analyzing, and interpreting. This is in line with Thomas (2003) that the purposes for using an inductive analysis approach are to condense extensive and varied raw text data into a brief as summary format.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data shows that there are three main challenges of online listening class faced by lecturers, including: determining the level of difficulty in student's material, conducting the teaching stages, and lack of supervision

1. Determining the level of difficulty in student's material

Determining the level of difficulty in student's material is the first problem faced by lecturers in the online listening class, for example, the lecturer said:

“kendala saya kalo dari segi materi itu mencocokkan, misalkan saya ingin anak-anak bisa menginterpretasi, berarti dalam pemilihan audionya itu harus bisa memudahkan anak-anak agar bisa menginterpretasikan dalam segi jawaban dan dari segi responnya. Selain itu, kalau dalam listening itu tergantung habit, kalau anak-anak tidak terbiasa dengan mendengarkan dalam konteks bahasa inggris mau semudah apapun audio yang saya putar tidak akan paham. Jadi kadang, saya sudah menentukan audionya ternyata sulit diikuti dan sulit dipahami oleh mahasiswa.”

This indicates that lecturer has struggle in determining the materials based on the level of difficulties. For example, the lecturer said that listening is very dependent on habit, while students have different habits, so it is difficult to determine which students are fast in catching material and students who are not fast in it. In addition, lecturers also have difficulty in interpreting the material. For example, when the lecturer chooses audio that can make it easier for students to interpret in terms of responses and answers.

The findings above shows that obstacles in the material can be one of the challenges of online listening class, this result is confirmed with previous research conducted by Susilowati (2020) which found that preparing material packaging in such a simple and easy-to-understand instruction was one of the challenges faced by lecturers. In addition, Armion, Rahmatian, Safa, and Shairi (2017) agreed that the factors of listening difficulties are difficulty in concentration, high speech rate, failure to recognize words, fatigue due to the length of the text, failure to construct general meaning, and use of inappropriate listening strategies. Thus, according to Susilowati (2020) said that providing material that can be understood but does not deny the standard level of the material being studied will be very helpful during online learning because students cannot have effective time to ask their lecturers face-to-face.

On the other hand, adjustment of topics with learning objectives is also a challenge for lecturer, for example the lecturer said:

“Tantangannya menyesuaikan dengan topik yang saya ingin ajarkan ke anak-anak, kalo saya cuman ngajar listening tanpa ada persiapan artinya saya lihat video dan menyuruh anak-anak untuk menontonnya. Harus ada tujuannya saya kasih video itu buat apa ke anak-anak, contoh misalnya saya kasih video presentasi 2-3 menit ke anak-anak yang saya inginkan itu anak-anak bisa menangkap gambaran umum dalam video tersebut, ekspresi apa yang digunakan ketika membuka presentasi, struktur penyampaian seperti apa kalo seperti itu kan ketika kita sudah tahu nih saya pengen mahasiswa bisa ini nih, nyari audionya atau videonya itu bisa lebih mudah karena ada persiapan.”

This suggests that the lecturer has problem in adjusting the topic to the purpose of the material. For example, when a lecturer delivers material with a video, the lecturer wants students to be able to capture the general picture in the video, what expressions are used, and how the delivery structure is. So, it will be easier if the lecturer makes preparations in beforehand.

This research emphasizes that the purpose of listening learning is so that students can capture the material being taught, so that lecturers must prepare beforehand. This is with finding in a research conducted by Purnomo (2021), the teacher needs to have good preparation before learning to make online learning becomes effective and efficient. Moreover, Urrahman (2020) agreed that a successful online course needs to possess an elaborate lesson plan design, teaching materials such as audio, video contents, and technical support teams. Moreover, Besides that, (Keatley dan Kennedy, 2004) states that lecturer can use Top-down and bottom-up listening strategies for learning preparation. As result, the listener draws on prior knowledge of the subject, the setting or context, the text's genre, and the language. This prior knowledge sets in motion a series of expectations that aid the listener in deciphering what is said and foreseeing what will happen next.

2. Conductive the teaching stages

a. Pre-listening

In the initial stage of teaching, the lecturer faced some issues. For example, the lecturer said in an interview that had been done

“Kalo tantangan yang saya hadapi dalam pembelajaran online ini memang kadang kurang responsive dari anak-anaknya Misalkan dari pre listening ini karena listening itu erat kaitannya dengan speaking makanya saya nanya beberapa pertanyaan yang menjurus ke audio yang akan didengarkan sama anak-anak, jadi tantangan saya lebih ke karena tidak adanya volunteer anak-anak itu terpacu untuk aktif makanya saya tunjuk dan dari sana ada nilai keaktifan.”

It can be concluded, the lecturer has difficulty in responding and activeness from students, for example when the lecturer asked several questions that lead to the audio to be listened to, but the student did not answer the questions the lecturer asks, so the learning is less effective.

These findings are in line with the theory put forward by Purnomo (2021) said that one of the main problems that occurs in the English online learning is the students tend to be quiet and not actively participated in a discussion or question and answer session. In addition, Bhuana and Apriliyanti (2021) said that 86% of teachers implied that they had problem with student's participation. Besides that, Farrah and Zboun (2021) states that interaction with lecturer in online classes is less than interaction in face to face classes. This finding also are related with the previous research by Utama et al (2019) said that it was difficult for teachers to identity the students' involvement, furthermore, poor internet connectivity and technological knowledge among the student. Therefore, according to (Crawley et al. 2009) the absence of direct and visual interaction with the students make the teachers have to struggle with material delivery and student's involvement or participation. This is supported by a research according to (Kapasia, et al., 2020) during the covid-19 pandemic, students face problems related to depression anxiety, poor internet connectivity, and unfavorable study environment at home. In addition, Setyowati (2021) agreed that the student's lack of motivation and engagement to learn so that they perceive that online learning is not important.

b. While-Listening

In the second stage of teaching, the lecturer also faced some problem. In the interview, the lecturer said:

“Untuk memanager juga jadi tantangan tersendiri kalo buat listening terutama dalam while listening activities karena mereka harus mendengarkan, kita kan tidak tahu mereka mendengarkannya atau tidak. “

This means that while listening, the lecturer cannot monitor all students, so the lecturer does not know whether the student is listening to the material presented or not.

These findings related with the previous research conducted by Purnama (2021) which found that the limited ability of lecturer to monitor all student activities during online learning resulted in difficulties in controlling student activities during learning, especially when the lecturer explains the material through voice recordings, when students are in discussion groups, and when the students completing the assignments during online learning. As for the next study (Clarín, et.al, 2022) the teachers felt the challenge in keeping the students' interest synchronous classes because they cannot even see the student's gestures while the class is ongoing. Thus, according to Susilowati (2020) skilled lecturers are required for successful listening, tactics that focus on students' learning progress through good planning, monitoring, and assessment are required.

c. Post-Listening

In the last stage of teaching, the lecturer also faced some struggle. In the interview, in the interview the lecturer stated

“Kalo di post listening activities itu memberikan semacam tugas kepada anak-anak misalkan topiknya itu tentang mereka bisa mengidentifikasi intonasi, mereka bisa menelaah tentang inferring meaning makanya saya kasih tugas ke anak-anak silahkan cari video singkat kemudian kalian interpretasikan namun kadang yang jadi kendalanya itu mereka kadang susah untuk mencari materinya, ada potongan film subtitlednya Bahasa Indonesia, bukan tidak boleh sebenarnya tapi itu akan jadi gak autentik jadi mereka tidak akan belajar secara pronunciationnya langsung.”

This is denoted that lecturer have problems in giving assignments to students, for example, lecturers ask students to look for videos with the topic of identifying intonation, then ask students to interpret them, but the problem is that they are difficult to find the video or do the assignment.

This is equivalent with the previous theory from Oktrawirawan (2020) that the anxiety of these students stems from a lack of knowledge of the topic, a lack of time to complete assignments, limited internet connection, the introduction of technological problems, and the students' difficulty understanding the lecturers' explanations. Moreover, a solution that lecturer continue to strive for to overcome this problem is in accordance with the previous study conducted by Nurkhamidah (2021) that Teachers of English listening do post-listening activities utilizing a variety of resources and tasks, take into account the quantity of materials and tasks, check the audio quality, and offer a relevant worksheet.

3. Lack of Supervision

The last challenge in online listening learning is the lack of supervision, for example, the lecturer said

“Kalo lack of supervision memang betul dalam listening terutama dalam pengerjaan kelompok itu susah banget memanaganya dan akan sangat banyak waktu yang terbuang ketika mengerjakan tugas secara online dan itu secara berkelompok jika dilakukan langsung itu susah banget.”

This means the challenges in online lack of supervision are seen in wasting time on work the tasks together as a group.

This is the same thing with the previous theory from Purnama (2021) that the students group discussion that were made during the lesson also did not run optimally because many students were not active in discussion among themselves and most of them tend to finish their group assignments independently. Due to reviewing from Butcher and Sieminski (2006) that face-to-face interaction between students and teachers is essential for the supervisi's motivation, confidence-building, and knowledge enhancement, and distance supervision can become passive due to a lack of face-to-face interaction, leading to student dissatisfaction—which becomes the supervisors' biggest challenge. In addition, Yuculia (2021) examines that 67, 9% students are not able to learn effectively and 57, 1% students get difficulties to finish group work online.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

To conclude this research, it is not easy to conduct an English Listening class during the pandemic, especially for lecturer. As the main facilitator of knowledge transfer in the classroom, he experienced several challenges to this transformation. First challenge is the lecturer had barrier in determining the materials which are shoot to the students. In addition, the lecturer also was confused to determine the learning objective because there is a differences between online and offline learning that causes the topic not to be easily caught or accepted by students. In addition to that, the second challenge is in the stages of teaching such as pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening. In pre listening activities, the lack of student response is a barrier. In while activities, the lecturer cannot monitor all students, so the lecturer does not know whether the student is listening to the material presented or not. Meanwhile, in post activities the lecturer experience problem in giving the task to students and lack of supervision

In response to these issues, the lecturers should organize the online learning situation appropriately to increase the students' interaction and understanding. Thus, lecturers must prepare materials that are suitable for online learning conditions and packaging in such a simple and easy-to-understand instruction for the students. Regarding to that phenomenon's, the lecturers should carried out to explore the material and the packaging, such as, the lecturers can use TED-ED, Learning Management System, or Edmodo in the online class.

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