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Students' Engagement with Authentic Materials in Listening Learning: A Case Study

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abstrak – Menyimak merupakan salah satu keterampilan yang paling menantang bagi pelajar Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL) karena keterbatasan paparan terhadap bahasa Inggris lisan yang alami. Meskipun materi asli banyak digunakan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan menyimak, hanya sedikit penelitian yang mengeksplorasi bagaimana materi-materi tersebut memengaruhi keterlibatan siswa selama proses pembelajaran. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki keterlibatan perilaku, emosional, dan kognitif siswa dalam pembelajaran menyimak melalui materi asli di sebuah SMP negeri di Kabupaten Tuban, Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain studi kasus kualitatif yang melibatkan siswa kelas 8. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi kelas non-partisipan, wawancara terstruktur dengan siswa dan guru, serta dokumentasi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa materi asli mendorong keterlibatan aktif siswa. Siswa menunjukkan keterlibatan perilaku melalui partisipasi dalam tugas menyimak dan interaksi di kelas, keterlibatan emosional melalui antusiasme dan kesenangan, serta keterlibatan kognitif melalui penggunaan strategi menyimak seperti mengidentifikasi kata kunci dan memutar ulang audio. Strategi guru dan pemilihan materi yang tepat mendukung keterlibatan tersebut, meskipun keterbatasan kosakata tetap menjadi tantangan. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa materi asli berkontribusi pada pengalaman pembelajaran menyimak yang lebih menarik dan bermakna di kelas bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing (EFL).

Kata kunci – Materi Asli, Menyimak, Keterlibatan Siswa, Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Sebagai Bahasa Asing

Abstract – Listening is one of the most challenging skills for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners due to limited exposure to natural spoken English. While authentic materials are widely used to improve listening skills, limited studies explore how they influence students' engagement during the learning process. This study aims to investigate students' behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement in listening learning through authentic materials at a state junior high school in Tuban Regency, Indonesia. This research employed a qualitative case study design involving Grade 8 students. Data were collected through non-participant classroom observation, structured interviews with students and the teacher, and documentation. The findings indicate that authentic materials promote active student engagement. Students demonstrated behavioral engagement through participation in listening tasks and classroom interaction, emotional engagement through enthusiasm and enjoyment, and cognitive engagement through the use of listening strategies such as identifying key words and replaying audio. Teacher strategies and appropriate material selection supported engagement, although

limited vocabulary remained a challenge. The study concludes that authentic materials contribute to more engaging and meaningful listening learning experiences in EFL classrooms.

Keywords – Authentic Materials, Listening, Student Engagement, Efl Learning

INTRODUCTION

As globalization continues to connect people across the world, English has become an essential skill for meeting global challenges. It serves not only as a medium of communication but also as a means of expanding knowledge, fostering cross-cultural interaction, and improving career opportunities in an increasingly competitive international job market (Nurdianingsih et al., 2024). In the educational context, a curriculum consists of a structured framework of plans and guidelines that define learning objectives, instructional materials, teaching methods, and educational activities designed to achieve specific educational outcomes (Fatmasari et al., 2024). In Indonesia, English is included in the school curriculum as a compulsory subject, reflecting its importance in preparing students to participate in global society (Pajarwati et al., 2021). English, as a foreign language, can be acquired through a variety of learning resources, such as songs, films, books, videos, and educational games like crossword puzzles. These resources provide learners with opportunities to experience English in meaningful contexts and support the development of language skills (Prastiwi & Meiga, 2021).

In English language learning, students are expected to develop proficiency in four fundamental language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these skills, listening plays a crucial role as it serves as the primary source of linguistic input for learners. Through listening activities, students are exposed to authentic language use, enabling them to recognize phonological patterns, comprehend meanings, and gain a deeper understanding of how English is naturally employed in communication (Sadiqzade, 2024). In recent years, listening fluency has become an important focus in language teaching, as its integration into listening instruction enables learners to process spoken texts more efficiently, accurately, and comprehensively, thereby enhancing their listening comprehension (Rozak et al., 2021).

Despite its importance in developing language proficiency, listening comprehension continues to pose significant challenges for learners in EFL contexts. These difficulties are often attributed to the speed of speech, accent variation, limited vocabulary knowledge, and insufficient exposure to authentic language input. Listening comprehension can be particularly challenging when learners are exposed to naturally spoken English. Since authentic speech is typically delivered at a rate of around 150–180 words per minute, many EFL learners find it difficult to process information in real time. This difficulty often prevents them from fully understanding the message conveyed, which may negatively affect their overall comprehension (Vygotsky, 1978). In addition, listening materials used in classrooms are frequently artificial or simplified, which may not adequately represent real communication and may reduce students' interest and comprehension.

One pedagogical approach that has gained attention to overcome these issues is the use of authentic materials. Authentic materials are resources designed for real

communicative purposes, such as videos, songs, podcasts, interviews, and news programs. These materials allow students to experience real language use and provide exposure to natural expressions, cultural elements, and meaningful communication. Several studies have reported that authentic materials contribute positively to students' listening development and learning motivation.

In the Indonesian educational setting, several studies such as those conducted by (Kholipah, 2024) and (Madina, 2024) have shown that students respond more positively to authentic audio-visual materials than to textbook-based listening activities. Learners tend to feel more engaged and motivated when listening materials are related to real-life topics and presented through multimedia formats. However, most existing studies mainly emphasize learning results, such as improvement in scores or motivation levels.

Student engagement consists of three closely related dimensions: behavioral engagement, characterized by students' involvement in academic activities; emotional engagement, associated with learners' attitudes, interests, and emotional responses to learning; and cognitive engagement, which represents the extent to which students invest mental effort in understanding and constructing knowledge. These dimensions are considered fundamental to successful learning, as they encourage active involvement, foster positive attitudes toward learning, and support the development of higher-order thinking skills.

Therefore, this study focuses on exploring students' engagement in listening learning through the use of authentic materials at a State Junior High School in Tuban Regency. Using a qualitative case study design, this research aims to examine how students engage behaviorally, emotionally, and cognitively, as well as to identify the factors that influence their engagement during listening activities. The findings are expected to provide insights for teachers in designing more engaging and effective listening instruction.

Although numerous studies have confirmed the effectiveness of authentic materials in improving students' listening achievement and motivation, the existing literature remains largely outcome-oriented. The learning process itself, particularly how students engage with authentic materials during classroom interaction, has received limited scholarly attention. Moreover, studies that explicitly conceptualize engagement as a multidimensional process covering behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions are still scarce in the context of Indonesian EFL junior high schools. Therefore, this study fills this gap by shifting the analytical focus from product to process, offering an in-depth qualitative exploration of student engagement in listening activities using authentic materials. This study is novel in its emphasis on engagement as a learning process and its contextual contribution to EFL pedagogy in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHOD

The investigation of students' engagement in English learning was conducted using authentic materials in this study, which employed a qualitative research design. To gain a detailed understanding of students' experiences, viewpoints, and behaviors during learning activities, this study employed a qualitative case study approach. The

research aimed to explore how authentic materials were utilized in English classes and how they affected students' engagement.

The participants consisted of students from a state junior high school in Tuban Regency who were purposively chosen due to their involvement in learning English through authentic materials. The students came from one class and represented varied levels of participation, which allowed the researcher to obtain diverse perspectives on students' engagement in the learning process.

Data were gathered using three data collection techniques, namely classroom observations, interviews, and documentation. Classroom observations were conducted in a non-participant role to examine students' behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement during listening activities involving authentic materials. In addition, structured interviews were administered to selected students and the English teacher to obtain deeper insights into their perceptions and experiences regarding the learning process. Supporting documents, including attendance records and field notes, were also collected to complement and validate the findings obtained from observations and interviews.

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman, which encompasses three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During the data reduction stage, relevant information related to students' engagement and the factors influencing it was selected, organized, and refined. Subsequently, the data were displayed through descriptive narratives and thematic classifications to facilitate interpretation. In the final stage, conclusions were generated by identifying patterns, themes, and relationships within the data, while continuously verifying the findings against the available evidence to ensure their credibility and consistency.

Data triangulation was used to compare information from observations, interviews, and documentation in order to guarantee the validity and reliability of the study. In order to prevent misunderstandings, member checking also involved verifying important findings with participants. By educating participants on the goal of the study and guaranteeing their privacy and voluntary participation, ethical considerations were upheld.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings obtained from classroom observations, documentation, and interviews revealed that students demonstrated behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement during listening activities using authentic materials. Behaviorally, students actively participated in the learning process by paying attention to the teacher's explanations, completing listening tasks, asking questions, and discussing answers with their peers. Approximately 19 out of 23 students were actively involved in the gap-filling activities, indicating a high level of participation during the lesson. These findings support (Fredricks et al., 2004), who define behavioral engagement as students' active involvement and participation in academic activities. The use of authentic materials also appeared to encourage interaction and collaboration among students, which is consistent with Vygotsky, (1978) social constructivist perspective emphasizing the role of social interaction in learning.

The findings also showed positive emotional engagement. Students generally expressed feelings of enjoyment, enthusiasm, and interest during listening activities. Although some students initially experienced difficulties due to the speed of speech, unfamiliar vocabulary, and native-speaker accents, they remained motivated to participate and complete the tasks. These findings align with Fredricks et al. (2004), who describe emotional engagement as students' affective responses toward learning. They also support Krashen (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which suggests that positive emotions and supportive learning environments facilitate language acquisition. The authentic materials used in this study appeared to create meaningful and enjoyable listening experiences that helped sustain students' motivation.

In terms of cognitive engagement, students applied various strategies to understand the listening materials, including identifying key words, inferring meaning from context, discussing answers with peers, replaying audio, and using dictionaries when necessary. These strategies indicate that students actively processed information rather than simply completing the tasks. This finding is consistent with Fredricks et al. (2004), who characterize cognitive engagement as learners' psychological investment and strategic effort in understanding learning materials.

Overall, the findings suggest that behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement were closely interconnected during the implementation of authentic materials in listening lessons. Students who showed positive emotional responses, such as interest, enthusiasm, and enjoyment, tended to participate more actively in classroom activities and demonstrate greater effort in completing listening tasks. This active participation was reflected in their willingness to pay attention to the audio, discuss answers with peers, and seek clarification when encountering difficulties. At the same time, students employed various cognitive strategies, including identifying key words, interpreting meaning from context, and connecting new information with prior knowledge, to better understand the listening materials. These results show that authentic materials promoted engagement as a multifaceted learning process where behavioral, emotional, and cognitive elements mutually reinforced one another in addition to supporting listening comprehension.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how students engaged in listening classes using authentic materials at a state junior high school in Tuban Regency. The findings revealed that authentic materials promoted engagement across all three dimensions. Behaviorally, students actively participated in listening activities by paying attention, completing tasks, asking questions, and interacting with their peers. Emotionally, students showed positive responses such as interest, enthusiasm, and enjoyment, although some initially experienced difficulties related to speech rate and native-speaker accents. Cognitively, students employed various strategies to comprehend the listening materials, including identifying key words, inferring meaning from context, discussing answers, and utilizing supporting resources.

Overall, the findings indicate that authentic materials can create meaningful and engaging listening experiences that encourage students' active participation, positive emotional involvement, and deeper cognitive processing. Therefore, the use of

authentic materials may serve as an effective approach to fostering student engagement in EFL listening classrooms.

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