INVESTIGATING THE STUDENTS’ CHALLENGES IN EXTENSIVE LISTENING CLASS

THESIS
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Sarjana Pendidikan

NATHASA GRACIA PARAMITHA
112015001

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND ARTS
UNIVERSITAS KRISTEN SATYA WACANA
SALATIGA
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INVESTIGATING THE STUDENTS’ CHALLENGES IN
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Nathasa Gracia Paramitha

Abstract
Listening is one of the most important skill that must be mastered in learning a language. One way that learners can do to master their listening skills by doing Extensive Listening. Renandya (2012) states that Extensive Listening can produce some benefits for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students such as how to process the spoken language more accurately and fluently. This present study attempts to investigate the listening challenges encountered by English Language Education (ELE) Program students at Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana. Ten students from batches 2015 and 2016 who have taken Extensive Listening classes in the second semester of their first year were selected to be the participants of this present study. The data of this research were taken from the interviews done to the students. This present study shows that students feel speeches from the listening audios were too fast, and the utterances that the students listened were regarded as too complex. In addition, word boundaries were found to be blurry by the students. Also, the students’ challenges may occur because the speech had to be processed in a real time. Those were the major listening challenges encountered by ELE Program students. The findings of the study are expected to be useful for listening teachers. It is hoped that the teachers become more aware of the challenges faced by the students and later can help the students to deal with the challenges in Extensive Listening class.

Key words: challenges, extensive listening

Introduction
Previous research on the study of language learning concludes that Extensive Listening has earned relatively less attention in the L2 listening literature than Extensive Reading which has been investigated widely. Although listening is one of the important skill that must be mastered in learning a language, Renandya (2012) states that Extensive Listening can produce some benefits for the EFL students such as how to process the spoken language more accurately and fluently. It encourages the students to listen habitually to the audio
recording and it makes them able to deal with the normal speech rate, improve their words recognition skill, increase their bottom-up listening skill, and lead them to have better listening comprehension skill. Therefore, if EFL learners do Extensive Listening it will be easier for them to grab the meaning of content in listening audios than before they listen extensively.

Unfortunately, not all EFL learners have the same English proficiency level. Listening is also considered to be the most difficult skill for those who have a low proficiency in that skill (Bacon, 1989; Farrell & Mallard, 2006 as cited in Renandya & Farrell, 2010). Therefore, it would be better if the teacher could understand that not all EFL students are familiar with listening. It is because they are not living in an English speaking environment and they do not get the opportunity to expose English naturally (Susanti & Astika, 2016).

Eventhough Extensive Listening earned relatively less attention in the L2 listening literature than Extensive Reading, there are several studies which discussed the use of Extensive Listening for EFL students. Previously, there was a study that discussed the development of ELE Program at Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana students’ self-regulated learning strategies in an Extensive Listening class conducted by Susanti (2016). The study is conducted to investigate students’ self-regulated learning strategies and students’ development strategy in their self-regulated learning during Extensive Listening class. In addition, Zhang (2005) conducts an experiment that provided her middle school students in China with Extensive Listening activities by listening to numerous comprehensible and interesting stories which were read aloud by the teacher. Beside that, Renandya
and Farell (2010) replicated a study that have done by Zhang (2005) which was discussed about the challenges of Extensive Listening.

Different from the previous studies, this current study aimed to investigating the challenges encountered by the students at the ELE Program of Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana in Extensive Listening class. This investigation used a similar method by Susanti’s (2016) and Zhang’s (2005) studies which are used Nation & Newton’s theory of a cognitive map such as a network of linguistic information. However, both of these studies do not mention what are the challenges that encountered ELE Program of Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana students’ in Extensive Listening class. From this study, the researcher would like to discuss about the use of Extensive Listening, the benefits of Extensive Listening, and what challenges that usually encounter by the students in listening class. It is hoped that the teachers become more aware of the challenges faced by the students and later can help the students to deal with the challenges in Extensive Listening class.

**Review of Literature**

**What is Extensive Listening?**

Researchers believed that most of the people in the EFL context are familiar with Extensive Reading practice. The use of this practice is important in the acquisition of reading skill, where the students are expected to read some books extensively in a week. Then, they are ordered to write a report about the books that they have read. Renandya and Farrell (2010) found that Extensive Reading can improve the students’ recognition skill, vocabulary, reading
comprehension, fluency, and general language proficiency. The question is, whether this practice can be utilized in a different skill like listening? According to the scholars, Extensive Listening can be enforced to improve EFL students in their listening skill. Extensive listening here means all types of listening activities that allow learners to obtain a lot of comprehensible and enjoyable listening input (Renandya & Farrell, 2010, p. 5).

The practical thing that students can get from Extensive Listening it can be done outside the classroom. Furthermore, if the students want to develop their listening skill, they can practice it at home. Beside that, there are many online sources that can be used as the media to practice. Lee and Cha (2017) state that news, dramas, and talk shows are the authentic materials for the students to improve their listening skill. The authentic materials that are comprehensible to the students will successfully facilitate them to process the information from the audio or video record.

Extensive Listening has many benefits, but it will be discussed in the next part of this section. Nation and Newton (2009) as cited in Renandya (2010) state that Extensive Listening can provide learners with a cognitive map, for an example, a network of linguistic information from which learners can “build up the necessary knowledge for using a language”. Moreover, Siegel (2011) also points out that through exposure to extensive and various listening materials, the learners receive opportunities to practice and refine their listening skill, recognize linguistic and lexical features, and increase cultural knowledge related to the
target language. Thus, besides Extensive Listening can improve the learners’ listening skill, it can also increase the students’ target language knowledge.

Renandya (2011) states that, unfortunately, the students with lower English proficiency level cannot process their bottom-up skill. They are still at a level that is not efficient enough to process normal speech on the audio recording, eventhough they already acquired the basic of the listening skill. However, this problem can be done by practicing Extensive Listening frequently and extensively, as the students will get used to the move from the slow and controlled processing of language elements (such as sounds, words, phrases) to the faster, and automatic processing of these elements.

**Benefits of Extensive Listening**

Renandya (2011) states that Extensive Listening is the kind of practice that helps EFL students deal with their listening problems, especially for the students who have lower English proficiency level. This practice encourages them to listen to the audio recording frequently. Thus, they can easily catch the spoken text because they are already accustomed to listening to audio or video recording.

Listening researchers (for example Nation & Newton 2009; Renandya 2011, pp. 32-33) believed that these following points below are the benefits of Extensive Listening:

**Enhance learners’ ability to cope with the speech rate.** Mostly, lower proficiency students have difficulties with the fast speech from the audio or video recording that they listen to. They often consider the normal speech as being too fast. Thus, the teacher cannot directly ask the students to be able to listen fast
speech, but the teacher could give the repeated audio recording to make the students familiar with the normal speech of the audio.

**Improve students’ word recognition.** Also, the common phenomenon among lower proficiency students is hard to recognize the words that they listen from the audio or video. Moreover, if the teachers often repeat the spoken text continuously, this practice can help the students to develop their word recognition skill.

**Enhance students’ bottom-up listening skills.** The words often become the different forms in the speech. It is called speech phenomena such as, assimilation (e.g., *in class*- *ing class*), contractions (e.g., *going to*- *gonna*), and resyllabification (e.g., *went in*- *wen tin*). These things are common in speech and known as the cause of the listening problem. If the students have had enough listening practice, they will be accustomed to these features of the speech.

**Improve students’ listening vocabulary.** Spoken language is different from written language. Written language is easier to understand by reading it, but the spoken language tends to be less formal and often colored by nonstandard grammar and vocabulary. Extensive listening is designed to become a practice that improves students’ listening vocabulary.

**Help students become more fluent listeners.** Doing listening practice extensively increases the students’ ability to recognize the spoken words, phrases and sentences effortlessly. The practice gives a lot of emphasis on accuracy, and it will build fluency of listening to the students.
Give students a lot of opportunities to experience a high level of language comprehension. Repeated listening with the same material leads the students to get a better understanding. Dupuy (1999) reported that her lower proficiency students successfully got a higher degree of comprehensible after the third or fourth listening practice. As the result, when the students listen to the spoken text repeatedly, they will get the experience of the high level of language comprehension because this practice is the type of comprehension that is more likely leading to acquisition.

Enhance students general proficiency in the language. Extensive listening not only helps the students improve their listening skills. Demonstrably by the students who joined Extensive Listening class have reported that they also got improvements in their vocabulary, speaking, reading skills as well (Dupuy, 1999; Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Zhang, 2005).

Challenges of Extensive Listening

Extensive Listening can produce some problems that could be the challenges for the students, especially, for beginner learners and the students with lower English proficiency level. There are features that make spoken text particularly difficult for them.

These following causes were the comprehensible problem from Extensive Listening (Buck, 1995; Field, 2003; Renandya & Farrell 2011, p. 8):
Speech is fast. The novice EFL learners think that the spoken text in the audio or video record is perceived as being very or even too fast. Buck (1995) points out that the speech rate has a correlation with the comprehension success of the spoken text. For example, increasing speech rate, decreases students’ text, and when the speech rate reaches very fast mode, the comprehension becomes impossible. Thus, listening teachers should be aware of the critical level of the students that they can produce which is normally much lower than the advanced learners.

Speech is variable. The words often take on the different forms when it is woven together in the speech. Sometimes the words are completely articulated, but most of the time, they are changing. It is quite natural for the speakers to modify, drop and add sounds when speaking. This is the cause of English as a Lingua Franca that makes the leaners difficult to recognize the words because the pronunciation is very different from the isolation. For examples, "What is up?" maybe sound like "Sup?" where the question word "what" and the vowel sound /i/ in "is" are dropped.

Word boundaries are blurry. In the speech, words tend to blend with the surrounding words. Thus, it makes the boundary and words difficult to perceive. For example, the first part of the phrase "the standard the hotel achieves" may be perceived as "stands at the hotel" by the learners. Thus, it produced a comprehensible breakdown and a burden to the learners.
Speech has to be processed in real time. In reading, we can do pause, reread the part of the text that we do not understand and skip some of the words or sentences or even the whole paragraph. But we cannot do these if we miss what has just been said, there is no going back. We cannot ask the instructor to repeat the sentence. We only have little control over what the speaker is saying and the speech that the speaker conveys on his or her message. The serious problem for EFL learners usually comes from when they are listening to tape-recorded speech.

Zeng (2007) as cited in Renandya & Farrell (2010) found that the speech rate becomes the common problem that were encountered by Chinesse EFL college students in listening class. (See Table 1).

Table 1. Top ten listening problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening Problems</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Speaking rate</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Distraction</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Unable to recognize words they knew</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 New vocabulary</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Missing subsequent input</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Nervousness</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Sentence complexity</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Background knowledge</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Anxiety and frustration</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Unfamiliar pronunciation</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are top ten listening problems from these findings. However, the three most common listening problems are: speaking rate, distraction and the
students unable to recognize words that they knew. From this table above it shows that the speech rate becomes the most challenging problem in Extensive Listening. These three listening problems are interrelated to one another. Once they get distracted, they are automatically unable to continue processing the information from the audio recording due to the speaking rate is too fast. As the result, the students unable to recognize the words that they actually knew.

**Review of Previous Studies**

Susanti (2016) conducted a study which investigates 97 students, 24 male, and 73 female, from four listening groups. They were ELE program students from batch 2014 who were taking Extensive Listening. The purpose of this study was to investigate students’ self-regulated learning strategies and students’ development strategy in their self-regulated learning during Extensive Listening class. There are three findings in this study. First, in Extensive Listening class the students used six self-regulated learning strategies such as planning and managing time, organizing listening practice, rehearsing listening, coding information strategically, establishing productive study environment for listening, and using social resources for listening. Second, the students used the strategies under the category coding information strategically. Third, the students needed to practice listening more often and they realized that they needed the help of others (especially their friends) to understand the listening materials better.

Another researcher who conducted a study which is used a similar theory is Zhang (2005). She conducts an experiment that provide her middle school students in China with Extensive Listening activities by listening to numerous
comprehensible and interesting stories which were read aloud by the teacher. The first step that the teacher did is the reading-aloud sessions, and then he or she made sure that the speed is appropriate to the novice levels of English and the language used is comprehensible for the students. Therefore, the students could completely follow the stories. At the end of the six-week-long experiment (it was about 42 hours of listening sessions), Zhang's Extensive Listening students present improvement than the students who only received intensive and systematic listening strategy practice. It is supported by the result of listening tests which were better than before they did Extensive Listening activities. After the experiment, Extensive Listening students reported that they were better to understand the spoken text because they could catch the words more quickly than before.

From these reviewed previous studies above, the researcher found that there was a success of using Extensive Listening to improve the students’ listening skill. However, through this present study, the researcher was curious to find about what challenges that students often encountered in the ELE Program at Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana in Extensive Listening class. Also, the teachers become more aware of the challenges faced by the students and later can help the students to deal with the challenges in Extensive Listening class.
The Study

The aim of this study is to answer this following question: "What were the challenges that students of English Language Education Program – Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana encountered in Extensive Listening class?"

To address this question, the researcher used a qualitative research and the methodology that the researcher used is a phenomenological study to describe the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept phenomenon (Creswel, 2007, p. 57). According to Seidman (2006), as cited in Zacharias (2013), the purpose of this study is to asked the participants to reconstruct their experience about the topic under study. The approach generally uses open-ended questions because of the nature of the interview. This study is expected to dig deeper into students’ experience in Extensive Listening class about the challenges that they often faced and find out about the aspects that usually give an impact on the students’ performance in listening.

Context of the Study

ELE Program students at Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana, Salatiga had to take some listening courses because those are required courses. There are three courses that they have to take: Extensive Listening, Intensive Listening, and Academic Listening. These three courses have different contents and purposes but each course required to meet the lecturers four hours a week in one semester. Considering Extensive Listening as the basic listening course, the researcher choses this course as the context to investigate the challenges that the students often encounter.
Participants

This study involved 10 students to be the participants. The participants were from batches 2015 and 2016 who had taken Extensive Listening class in the second semester of their first year. It consists of 6 students from batch 2015 and 4 students from batch 2016. The criterion to choose the participants is the students who got the grade below B in Extensive Listening class because it is easier and more accurate to get the information of the challenges that encountered in Extensive Listening class from the lower proficiency students.

Data Collection Instruments

This study employs interviews as the instrument to collect the data. The interviews are conducted to understand more students’ experience when they joined Extensive Listening class. The researcher uses semi-structured interviews and asks a list of questions.

These following questions are adapted from Hamouda (2013) from his study about Listening Comprehension Problems Encountered by Saudi English Language Students in listening class:

1. How do you rate your listening skill?

2. Before you studied in university, what experiences did you have in gaining listening skills?

3. After you studied in university, at the time you were taking Extensive Listening Course, when and how much time did you practice listening, in and outside the class?
4. What difficulties did you face when you took Extensive Listening class?

5. How can teachers help their students overcome their listening problems?

**Data Collection Procedure**

The data of this research were taken from the interviews done to the students who had joined Extensive Listening class. The researcher asked the students several questions which is directed their experience during Extensive Listening class. Then, the researcher recorded the students’ answers by using her smartphone. The interviews of the participant spent around 8-20 minutes. Then, the researcher listened to all the recordings and transcribed it into Bahasa Indonesia. From the transcript, the researcher classified the students’ answers and analyzed the data by the theme that emerged in the interview section.

**Data Analysis Procedure**

To answer the research questions, this study used a thematic analysis. These themes (based on Buck, 1995; Field, 2003; and Renandya & Farrell, 2010) emerged during the data collection period:

1. Speech is fast
   
   Due to the previous study already proved if the fast speech becomes the most important listening comprehension problem for the novice learners.

2. Speech is variable
   
   The modifying sound in the spoken text makes the learners difficult to recognize the words.

3. Word boundaries are blurry
The words tend to blend with the other words. It makes the boundaries and words difficult to perceive.

4. Speech has to be processed in real time

The learners cannot pause and replay when they do not understand some of the words or sentences even the whole paragraph in the spoken text.

Findings and Discussion

The study revealed that there are four challenges experienced by students in Extensive Listening classes. The four challenges are similar to the themes mentioned in the theoretical framework (Buck, 1995; Field 2003; Renandya & Farrell 2010). The challenges can be classified into: 1) speech is considered too fast, 2) the utterances are regarded as too complex, 3) word boundaries are blurry, 4) and the speech has to be processed in real time.

Table 2 depicts the emerging themes into a ranked order of the number of participants about the challenges that the ELE Program students encountered in Extensive Listening class (see Table 2).

Table 2. The challenges that the students encountered in Extensive Listening class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes of Extensive Listening Challenges</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 The utterances are regarded as too complex</td>
<td>10 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 The speech is considered too fast</td>
<td>6 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Speech has to be processed in real time</td>
<td>4 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Word boundaries are blurry</td>
<td>4 students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following discussion will elaborate more on the most frequent to the least mentioned challenge in Extensive Listening amongst the participants.

From these findings, the first challenge that Extensive Listening students face are the utterances which were regarded as too complex. Second, the speech of the spoken text was considered too fast. The third finding is the speech has to be processed in a real time. The fourth finding is the word boundaries that the spoken text produced is blurry.

**The Utterances Are Regarded as Being too Complex**

It was found that the students had some difficulties in understanding the information of the spoken text because the utterances were regarded as being too complex. Matsuo (2015) claimed that the speech of spoken text has variable utterances such as the speaker uses intonation to express emotion and there were added or dropped sounds made by the speaker. Moreover, the modified sound made the students have barriers to recognize the words because when the audio recording was played, the students could not recognize the utterances from the audio recording. The following is the comment from Student E about the unclear pronunciation, which made the students unable to recognize the words from the spoken text:

**Excerpt 1**

In the written text I could understand what exactly the meaning of the words, I could recognize the word easily. Unfortunately, in the listening case, it was so hard to recognize the words, it was like I found a new word but actually, I was already familiar with the word before. I think I failed to recognize the words because the ways of the speaker pronounce the words are totally different. For example, the speaker said the word “close reverse” but grab different words, it was like closes reverse what? I thought it was Spanish. (Student E, January 31, 2019)
From the student E’s statement, it shown that the lower English proficiency students have difficulty to be fluent in listening skill because they found that the spoken text produced phonological changes which made them misheard the words that they have known before. Hamouda (2013) also believed that complex utterances make the students have difficulties in understanding the spoken text. It is because of the natural rapidness of speakers’ speech that produces unclear pronunciation. Moreover, if the student is not aware of what the new word sounds like when it is pronounced quickly and blended with other words, the student may fail to recognize the familiar words because of the way to pronounce the words are different.

Furthermore, various accents influence students’ sense of hearing. This was admitted by student D: “One day, my teacher plays a British audio recording and I got confused because the pronunciation seems strange and I have never listened it before. It makes it hard to understand what the speaker said.” This statement is the same as Lewis’s and Hill’s (1992) opinion as cited in Laadi, Ohoiwutun & Hastini (2014) that inconsistent pronunciation is difficult and tiring to listen to when the speaker likes to modify the sound. As a result, the students could not recognize the words properly because the speaker from the audio text was using British accent which is very difficult for the students to comprehend. Here is another statement coming from student C about the British accent problem from the audio recording:

Excerpt 2
The thing is, there were some videos that I picked using British accent because I am not familiar with a British accent it made me hard to understand it, such as grammar, pronunciation, and also vocabulary. I
ought to guess one of the words in a sentence but because I am lack of vocabulary I could not guess what the speaker means. (Student C, January 30, 2019)

The extract shows that unfamiliarity with the British accent makes the students encounter difficulty to understand the information when they are having listening practice. According to Hamouda (2013), the American accent is quite different from the British and Australian accent, such as the pronunciation and the intonation. Thus, the student could not receive the accurate information because the unfamiliar accent produced complex utterances.

**The Speech Is Considered too Fast**

While the speakers think that they speak in a normal or acceptable speed, it is inevitable to see that the students consider this type of speech to be spoken too fast. Renandya and Farell (2010) mentioned that the normal speed of speech is considered to be the most common challenges that the lower English proficiency students usually face during the listening class. The students perceived the normal spoken text as being very or even too fast. A participant, Student E, stated that the fast speech is one of the challenges which became the obstacle for the students to understand the information in the audio was about:

**Excerpt 3**

Especially when we listen to the audio recording, the speech is too fast, and it is hard to catch the meaning and understand what the speaker talked about. I tend to stop listening because I cannot follow the speed of speech from the spoken text. (Student E, January 30, 2019)

From the student’s statements above, the finding is in line with the study that was conducted by Hamouda (2013) that when the speaker speaks rapidly the students encountered difficulties to control the speed of speech. It is believed that
many novice students have the same problem. Moreover, fast speech makes it
difficult for them to understand the information of the spoken text. Once they
could not follow the speed of speech, they will stop to listen to the audio
recording.

Additionally, there was also another reason which is added by the student J
about fast speech problem: “And also, the speaker is a native speaker; the speech
is too fast I cannot get all of the information.” Souza and Mora (2014) believed
that the native speaker produces faster speech rate than how it is usually used by
the majority of non-native speaker. Besides, the students usually listen to lecturers
who speak English with Bahasa Indonesia accent, which is usually easier to
understand. Unfortunately, the audio text that the lecturer usually played was in
American and British accents which they thought were faster than the usual
speech that they usually listened to. There is also an opinion from the student D
about the fast speech that the native speaker produces:

**Excerpt 4**

Actually, the native speaker has a different pronunciation. So, I tried to
understand about what were they talked about and I think I was a little bit
in a problem because they had very good pronunciation and they spoke too
fast so I have to listen to carefully. Also, I was not familiar with the British
accent yet. So, I think it was too hard to deal with this problem. (Students
D, January 31, 2019)

Moreover, students who did not get much opportunity to listen to the
spoken language with a different accent will make it as the reason why they could
not follow the spoken text. Also, they rarely listen to another accent that makes
them thought normal speech produce fast speech.
The Speech has to be Processed in Real Time

Another interesting finding was when the students found a difficulty to understand the listening text when the speaker does not pause long enough. Renandya and Farrel (2010) pointed out that in listening there is no going back time. Therefore, the listeners could not pause, even replay the part that they do not understand or miss. In addition to that, the students only have little control over what the speaker is saying because the speech of the text has to be processed in real time. The following is the Student B’s confession about the difficulty in the listening class because she could not go back to the missing part only:

Excerpt 5
It is different when I do listening practice at home. I could pause and replay as much as I want the part that I missed. It helps me to understand the spoken text easily. But when I do listening practice in class the teacher gives 2 or 3 chances to replay the whole audio recording, I could not pause and go back in the missing part only. Sometimes I still did not get the whole information from the audio recording. (Student B, January 29, 2019)

The above statement shows that even though the students are given two to three chances to listen to the whole audio recording, they still could not get all of the information. Furthermore, the students added that giving pauses in some parts facilitated them to understand the spoken text easier. Hamouda (2013) believed that pauses give listeners more time to process the information from the spoken text. Moreover, Dunkel (1998) as cited in Hamouda (2013) supported that the listeners could have time to take a greater quantity of their note taking.

The direct effect experienced by the students who could not follow the real-time speech from the audio recording is they could not focus anymore for the next part of the spoken text. This statement is supported by students J. “So, I
could not focus for the next sentences, once I missed several sentences or words, I could not follow the spoken text anymore and I will be left behind.” However, Vandergrift & Goh (2012) argued that real-time speech happens so rapidly that listeners must automatically process any kinds of information from the spoken text similarly.

Besides, while the students have to listen to the audio recording without any pause, they also have to take note. Some students said that they felt overwhelmed because they were not able to multitask. Below is the student G’s comment:

**Excerpt 6**

I am not a multitasking person. It will be so hard for me if I have to take a note while listening to the audio recording. It makes me could not focus because I have to write and listen at the same time. Honestly, it makes me blackout and cannot follow what is the next information from the audio. I wish I could go back to the missing part but I can’t. (Student G, February 6, 2019)

From the comment, it could be concluded that the less proficient students found it difficult to multitask. de Brito (2015) also agreed that the lower English proficiency students have weaknesses to take note while listening because their capacity for multitasking and language proficiency were limited. As a result, the students could not maximize their note taking quality.

**Word Boundaries are Blurry**

In the listening context, the words tend to blend with other words. Schwartz (2016) pointed out that there are many research findings that already proved that English learners tend to listen to the word boundaries in the spoken text almost in the similar segmental sequences, such as “a nice man” vs. “an ice
Thus, it suggests that the listeners found it difficult to perceive the phrase in the spoken text. Below is the Student C’s comment:

**Excerpt 7**

It is difficult to listen to the phrase of the spoken text. I could not perceive the phrase well. Sometimes, I misheard the phrase, for example, I ever heard the phrase of “ears drop” but actually after we discussed it together in class it is supposed to be “tears drop”. It was very surprising for me until I think, was there something wrong with my ears? (Student C, January 30, 2019)

This finding shows that the listeners have to be careful with the word boundaries, which also caused the students to mishear the phrase. This problem happened in listening class especially for students who did not focus on listening to the spoken text.

Another component that hinders the students to recognize the word boundaries is the students’ lack of awareness. Below is the Student G’s comment who has poor phonological awareness in listening:

**Excerpt 8**

I am the type of person who is not aware of many things. I don’t care about the grammar even the pronounce letter and also how to spell the words. This was based on my experience and I think this is ridiculous. I ever misheard the familiar phrase because the speaker did not pronounce it clearly. I could not recognize the phrase. If I am not mistaken the phrase of “wake up” I listened to it as “made up” (Student G, February 6, 2019)

From the comment above, it can be inferred that phonological awareness is very important for the students. According to Hulslander, Olson, Willcutt, & Wadsworth (2010) as cited in Sieh (2016) phonological awareness is the ability of manipulating and analyzing the sound structure of the spoken language that produce ability to recognize the words. Knell at al. (2007) as cited in Li, Cheng and Kirby (2012) stated that phonological awareness helps the students to predict
the words in the spoken text. Therefore, when the students have good phonological awareness, their understanding will be get better.

Conclusion

The aim of this study is to answer this following question: "What were the challenges that students of English Language Education Program – Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana encountered in Extensive Listening class?" From this present study, the researcher found that there were four emerging themes of the challenges that the students encountered in Extensive Listening class: speech is considered too fast, the utterances are regarded as too complex, word boundaries are blurry, and the speech has to be processed in real time.

First, the challenge encountered by the students in Extensive Listening class is the utterances which were regarded as too complex. This challenge made the students unable to recognize, even mishear the words that they have known. Second, the students perceived the normal spoken text as being very or even too fast. They often stopped listening because they could not follow the speed of speech. Third, when the teacher played the audio recording, the speech of the text had to be processed in real time. Furthermore, the students could not pause, even replay the part that they did not understand or missed. Fourth, the words tend to blend with the other words that made the word boundaries were blurry. It can cause the students to mishear the phrase because the spoken text produced a similar segmental sequence sound.

The pedagogical implication can be offered to overcome the challenges encountered in Extensive Listening class. The students can improve their quality
of listening skill by being given a list of vocabulary words before doing the
listening practice. Therefore, the students could be familiar with the words to
which they are going to listen to (Walley, Metsala, & Garlock, 2003, as cited in
Dixon, 2010). In addition, the teachers have a very important role to give the
materials to the students. According to Renandya and Farrell (2010), as cited in
Hamouda (2013), the teachers have to find appropriate and interesting materials
for the students. Thus, the listening practice in class could become enjoyable
learning.

This study has several limitations, especially with the findings of the data.
This study only used the interview results done by the students as the instrument
of collecting data. Further research that the researcher suggest is to integrate
classroom observations, to explore more about the teachers’ and the students
strategies to deal with the challenges encountered in Extensive Listening class.
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References


Appendix

My name is Nathasa Gracia Paramitha. Currently, I am studying for my Bachelor Degree (S.Pd.) in Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana Salatiga. As a part of my study, I am conducting a research entitled “Investigating the Students’ Challenges in Extensive Listening Class”. Therefore, I would like to ask your assistance by answering the following questions in this interview. I use those questions in order to get information regarding your experiences when you joined Extensive Listening class. I really do appreciate your participation and your help in this research.

Below are the following questions (adapted from Hamouda, 2013):

1. How do you rate your listening skill?
2. Before you studied in university, what experiences did you have in gaining listening skills?
3. After you studied in university, at the time you were taking Extensive Listening Course, when and how much time did you practice listening, in and outside the class?
4. What difficulties did you face when you took Extensive Listening class?
5. How can teachers help their students overcome their listening problems?