



**EFL STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES IN USING
“WHAT IF” YOUTUBE CHANNEL TO
SUPPORT THEIR EXTENSIVE LISTENING
SKILL**



RISKA MAULIDAH
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A THESIS

**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of The Requirements for the Degree
of *Sarjana Pendidikan* in English Education**



By :

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Demikian nota pembimbing ini dibuat untuk digunakan sebagaimana mestinya. Atas perhatian bapak/Ibu, saya sampaikan terima kasih.

Wassalamu'alaikum Wr.Wb.

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MOTTO

*"All your hardwork will prove worthless unless you believe in
yourself."*

(Might Guy)



ABSTRAK

Penggunaan YouTube dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris oleh pembelajar English as a Foreign Language (EFL) telah berkembang pesat; salah satu contohnya adalah saluran YouTube "What If." Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi pengalaman mahasiswa EFL dalam menggunakan "What If" sebagai media pembelajaran untuk meningkatkan keterampilan menyimak ekstensif. Metode yang digunakan adalah narrative inquiry dengan analisis tematik terhadap pengalaman yang dikumpulkan melalui listening log mingguan dan wawancara semi-terstruktur. Partisipan dalam penelitian ini adalah tiga mahasiswa pendidikan bahasa Inggris yang telah mengambil mata kuliah extensive listening di sebuah perguruan tinggi Islam di Pekalongan, Jawa Tengah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa mengalami dua jenis pengalaman, yaitu positif dan negatif. Secara positif, mahasiswa merasa tertarik karena konten dari "What If" memiliki keunikan yang tidak biasa. Diskusi dalam podcast "What If" juga membantu mahasiswa berpikir kritis dan menambah wawasan mereka dengan cara yang lebih santai. Mereka juga merasakan pengalaman menonton yang imersif berkat penceritaan yang kuat. Durasi video yang singkat membuat proses belajar terasa ringan dan tidak membosankan. Ilustrasi yang ditampilkan membantu mereka memahami informasi dengan lebih baik. Secara negatif, mahasiswa juga menghadapi beberapa hambatan. Mereka merasa kesulitan memahami kosakata bahasa Inggris yang tidak dikenal. Kombinasi visual, teks, dan audio yang terlalu membebani membuat mereka kesulitan untuk fokus saat menonton. Selain itu, terlalu banyak pilihan topik membuat mereka bingung dalam menentukan video mana yang akan ditonton. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa saluran YouTube "What If" memiliki potensi sebagai media pembelajaran yang menarik dalam konteks menyimak ekstensif, namun tetap memerlukan bimbingan dan strategi penggunaan yang tepat.

Kata kunci: Extensive Listening, "What If", Students' Experiences

ABSTRACT

The use of YouTube in English learning by English as a foreign language (EFL) learners has grown rapidly; one example is the YouTube channel "What If." This study aims to explore the experiences of EFL students in using "What If" as a learning medium to improve extensive listening skills. The method used was narrative inquiry with thematic analysis of experiences collected through weekly listening logs and semi-structured interviews. The participants involved in this study were three English education students who had taken extensive listening courses at an Islamic campus in Pekalongan, Central Java. The results showed that students experienced two types of experiences, namely positive and negative. Positively, students felt interested because the content of "What If" had an unusual uniqueness. The discussion of the "What If" podcast also helped students think critically and increased their insight in a more relaxed way. They also felt an immersive viewing experience thanks to strong storytelling. The short duration of the video made learning feel light and not boring. The illustrations displayed helped them understand the information better. Negatively, students also faced several obstacles. They found it difficult to understand unfamiliar words in English. The combination of visuals, text, and audio that was too overwhelming made it difficult for them to focus while watching. In addition, too many topic choices made them confused in determining which video to watch. This study shows that "What If" YouTube channel has the potential to be an interesting learning medium in the context of extensive listening, but still requires guidance and appropriate usage strategies.

Keywords: Extensive Listening, "What If", Students' Experiences

PREFACE

Praises and gratefulness are sent to Allah SWT who has poured His grace and His gift and bestowed me guidance, health, and patience so that the writing process of my final project research entitled **EFL STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES IN USING "WHAT IF" YOUTUBE CHANNEL TO SUPPORT THEIR EXTENSIVE LISTENING SKILL** could be completed. It was submitted to English Education Department, UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan to fulfil one of the requirements for Degree of Sarjana Pendidikan. This study was accomplished because of many supports from several people. Therefore, on this occasion, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to:

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Researcher

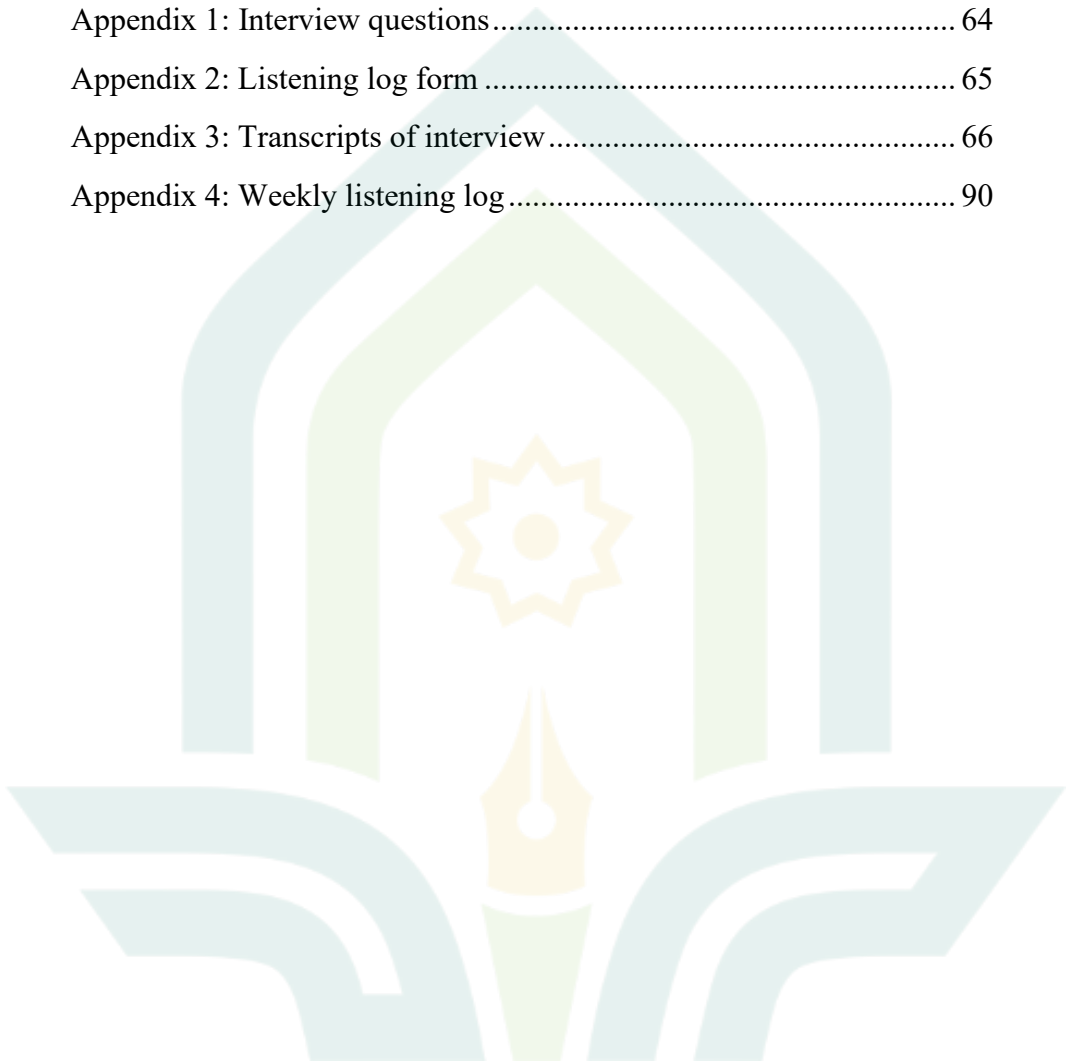
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Extensive listening refers to a type of listening activity where students listen to a variety of interesting and enjoyable materials. This kind of activity allows them to improve their general understanding of spoken texts (Renandya, 2012). It usually involves regular practice using content that students find fun and engaging. According to Renandya and Jacobs (2016), enjoyable listening materials give students more chances to explore how language is used in real situations and to learn from authentic sources. These benefits support the idea that extensive listening is one of the effective ways to help students improve their listening comprehension (Renandya & Farrell, 2011).

However, the practice of extensive listening often comes with some challenges that make it hard for students to fully understand the material (Yang, 2019). Based on short interviews with several students from the English Education Study Program at the university where this research is conducted, it was found that they also face similar problems. One of the biggest challenges is that they do not enjoy the activity because they have difficulty understanding the content. Many students said they often lose focus due to the fast pace of the video, unfamiliar vocabulary, and unclear pronunciation. In addition, the videos used as learning materials often do not match their level of understanding. These challenges are in line with what Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) explained, such as poor audio quality, different accents, difficult words, long listening texts, and fast speech.

These challenges can be divided into internal and external factors (Teng, 2002). Internal factors come from the students themselves, such as limited vocabulary, lack of grammar

knowledge, physical condition, and difficulty staying focused for a long time. External factors are related to the speaker, the content, and the listening situation. Renandya (2011) pointed out several issues, such as fast speech that can confuse beginners, unclear pronunciation, and unclear word boundaries. In extensive listening, students tend to enjoy the activity more when the material is appropriate for their level (Kristanti & Ni'amah, 2022). According to Day (2002), using interesting and suitable materials can help learners understand spoken language better. Extensive listening depends on a wide variety of materials, which are now easier to access thanks to technology. With the internet, teachers and students can find many engaging resources, such as YouTube videos (Adhitama, 2023; Fansury, Januarty, & Rahman, 2020; Mayora, 2017).

YouTube provides audio-visual content that allows students to watch and listen to materials at the same time (Naharir et al., 2019). According to Nunan (2016), using audio-visual media in listening practice helps bring variety and offers real-life context for students. Audio-visual aids (AVA) are also seen as useful tools to help improve students' pronunciation, especially for EFL learners (Education, 2022). Similarly, Kwegyiriba, Mensah, and Ewusi (2022) stated that AVA plays an important role in teaching and learning at different levels of education. In this case, YouTube—with its wide range of interesting AVA content—can be an easy and useful source to support language learning, especially pronunciation. YouTube is also considered an interactive platform for learning extensive listening because students can freely choose videos that match their interests (Cox, 2011; Rahman & Ja'afar, 2018). Learning extensive listening through YouTube can be fun and enjoyable, which helps students to focus better and understand the material more deeply (Khilda et al., 2021). Today's generation also prefers the ease of accessing learning videos through the internet, making YouTube a suitable platform for language learning (Brunner, 2013). Several studies have shown that watching YouTube videos has a positive effect on the academic performance

of EFL students. Shafwati (2021) found that using YouTube videos can improve students' listening skills by increasing their motivation and engagement. This is also supported by Poeryono et al. (2021), who explained that students are interested in using YouTube for listening practice because it offers useful resources, supports language understanding, provides engaging content, helps improve listening skills, and boosts motivation.

Using fun and interesting materials helps students enjoy and focus more during listening activities (Bozan, 2015). YouTube is not only used for entertainment, but also provides many videos that can support learning. The content can be fully or partly used in class and combined with other learning sources. There are many YouTube channels that mix entertainment and education, one of them is the “What If” channel. According to its official website, What If is a channel that shares videos exploring different life questions by asking “what if” something happened. The channel explains each topic using science, research, and creative imagination (www.whatifshow.com). Based on the researcher's own experience, this channel may help students improve their listening skills. However, students often use it only for listening practice, not as part of extensive listening. Therefore, this study aims to explore more deeply how EFL students experience using the “What If” YouTube channel, especially in supporting self-regulated learning through extensive listening activities.

1.2 Formulation of the Problems

This study focuses on a research question:

What are EFL students' experiences in using the “What If” YouTube channel to support their extensive listening skill?

1.3 Operational Definitions

Based on the title of this study, the researcher provides some definitions for each keyword or key term:

1. Extensive listening is all types of listening activities that allow learners to receive a lot of comprehensible and enjoyable listening input (Renandya & Farrell, 2011).

2. “What If” is a Webby Award-winning science web series set in Toronto that takes you on a journey through hypothetical worlds and possibilities, some in far corners of the universe, others right here on earth (www.whatifshow.com).
3. Students' experiences as a process of thinking and how they reflect on what happens in learning situations, which involves the active use of their minds and bodies (Dewey, 2004)

1.4 Aims of the Research

This study aims to explore EFL students’ experiences in using the “What If” YouTube channel as a medium to support their extensive listening skill.

1.5 Research Significances

1. Theoretical Significance: This research provides knowledge about students’ experiences in using “What If” YouTube channel in learning extensive listening.
2. Empirical Significance: This research provides insight into EFL students’ experiences in using “What If” YouTube channel, which can be a learning media for extensive listening.
3. Practical Significance: This study can inform EFL students that “What If” can be used as a learning media in extensive listening classes. For lecturers, this research informed English lecturers about the use of “What If” YouTube channel in extensive listening classes which can attract students’ attention and motivate them to learn English in a fun way.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of Findings

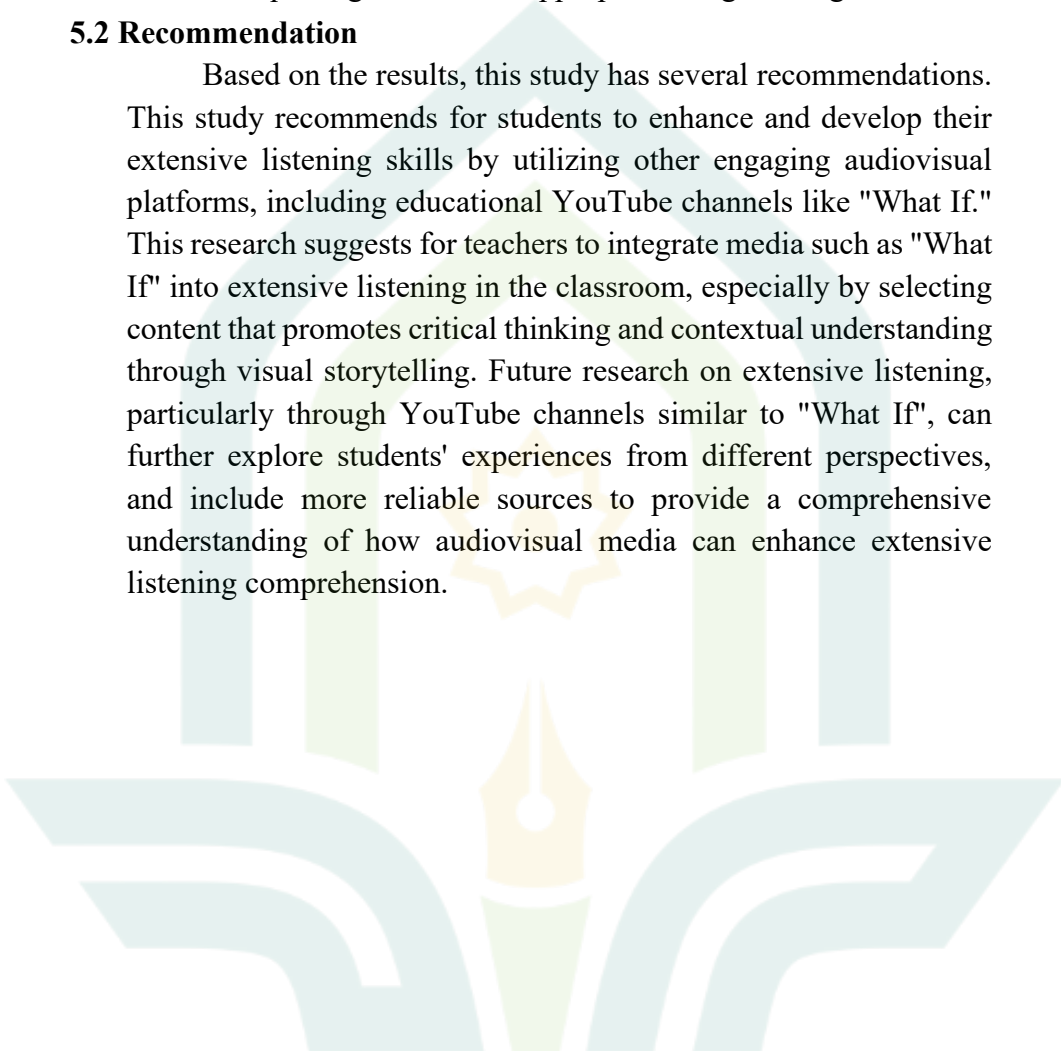
Based on the results and discussion, the researcher concluded that EFL students gained positive experiences when using “What If” in extensive listening. “What If” has topics that attracts students' attention because the discussion covers unique and intriguing things. “What If” also able to enrich knowledge and stimulate students' critical thinking through the discussion of interesting anti-mainstream topics in its podcast. This is supported by an immersive storytelling approach, which makes listening activities more lively and enjoyable. In addition, the short duration of the video allows students to absorb information quickly without feeling burdened, thus increasing their concentration and maintaining their interest. And finally, the visual illustrations in “What If” also help students clarify the concepts, so that the material is easier to understand. Based on these findings, “What If” Youtube channel could be a worthwhile option to consider as an enjoyable and effective medium for extensive listening.

However, the learning process with “What If” is also not free from obstacles that can be called negative experiences. Difficulty in understanding unfamiliar word, especially scientific terms. Unfamiliar words can be a barrier for students, causing frustration and reducing learning motivation. As a result, they may have difficulty connecting new information with existing knowledge, so that understanding becomes shallow and unsustainable. In addition, the rapidity of the narrative, the sudden appearance of text, and the high visual dynamics have the potential to cause cognitive overload, which can disrupt learners' focus. If the combination of elements is too much, it can overload the brain's information processing capacity, making it difficult for learners to digest and remember the information presented. As a result, they get distracted, and it becomes harder for them to understand. Finally, the large number of

topic choices available can cause decision fatigue, making it difficult for learners to determine the most relevant videos. The finding indicate that EFL learners experience negative experiences when using “What If” Youtube channel for extensive listening practice, and still requires guidance and appropriate usage strategies.

5.2 Recommendation

Based on the results, this study has several recommendations. This study recommends for students to enhance and develop their extensive listening skills by utilizing other engaging audiovisual platforms, including educational YouTube channels like "What If." This research suggests for teachers to integrate media such as "What If" into extensive listening in the classroom, especially by selecting content that promotes critical thinking and contextual understanding through visual storytelling. Future research on extensive listening, particularly through YouTube channels similar to "What If", can further explore students' experiences from different perspectives, and include more reliable sources to provide a comprehensive understanding of how audiovisual media can enhance extensive listening comprehension.



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