

BEYOND THE TEXTBOOK: AUTHENTIC LISTENING FOR DIVERSE LEARNER'S PROFILES

Agung Dwi Nurcahyo¹, Issy Yuliasri², Hendi Pratama³, Muh Syafei⁴

¹²³ Language Education Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

⁴English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muria Kudus, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: agungdnc2023@students.unnes.ac.id

Abstract

Traditionally, language instruction has relied on pre-recorded audio resources designed for pedagogical purposes, rather than authentic communication. While these materials offer linguistic structure, they frequently fail to captivate the diverse array of learners present in contemporary classrooms. This research examines the utilization of authentic listening resources, encompassing podcasts, news programs, video blogs, and social media contents, to enhance student involvement and address the varied needs of learners. Drawing upon data from a mixed-methods study conducted within intermediate language courses applied towards 72 students in listening class, this investigation analyzes the learning performance of students with diverse learning preferences, linguistic proficiencies, and cultural contexts to authentic auditory stimuli. The research indicates that authentic listening resources, when implemented with careful support through context-based instructions, significantly boost learner motivation, improve metacognitive understanding of listening strategies, and provide diverse opportunities for students at different proficiency levels. The article concludes by offering educators guidance on selecting and utilizing real-world materials across a range of instructional contexts.

Keywords: authentic listening, diverse learner's profiles, contextual teaching and learning

Introduction

For decades, language teachers have had to deal with a basic problem, in which the teaching materials used in the classroom are often the least like how people really use language. Audio recordings of textbooks provide a useful starting point for students, mainly because they use clear speech, simple vocabulary, and a structured way of taking turns. However, Field (2019) suggests that these materials might create a "protective bubble," which could make students less prepared for real-world conversations that often involve unexpected elements. Furthermore, the increasing diversity within language classrooms exacerbates this issue. Contemporary learners exhibit variance not only in their linguistic proficiency but also in their preferred learning methodologies, cultural contexts, prior

educational backgrounds, and specific objectives for language application. Therefore, innovations should be made in English Language Teaching (ELT) so as to accommodate the need of connecting English knowledge and English practical skills as well as to meet the profile diversity of ELT students (Esnaashari et al., 2023; Yue et al., 2021).

In response to this concern, there have been efforts made for designing student-centered English instructions (Silva et al., 2021). It is in the purpose of personalizing learning experiences (Sun, 2023), connecting the real-world contexts and classroom context in the purposes of bridging academic settings and social settings (Lago & Cruz, 2021), and fostering students' active engagement in learning activities (Kweldju, 2021; Nguyen & Schunn, 2025). Additionally, it

is also expected that student-centered learning can foster students' learning motivation by creating a supporting learning environment adaptive to their preferred learning styles (Heilporn et al., 2021; Ima et al., 2023). An instructional problem which still needs to be resolved is that "should ELT teachers/lecturers count on a single method or they can integrate various recommended instructional methods" to enhance student involvement and address the varied needs of learners?

A single method of teaching listening—whether from a textbook or real-life sources—will always leave some students behind and not push others enough. The meaning of "authentic materials" has changed significantly in the last few decades. Early definitions focused on materials "produced by native speakers for native speakers" (Morrow, 1977). In contrast, contemporary definitions of authenticity present a more complex concept, encompassing task, context, and learner perception (Vlachopoulos & Makri, 2024). Authentic listening materials encompass all spoken texts encountered by learners beyond the classroom setting, including podcasts, YouTube videos, radio interviews, movie excerpts, social media content, and spontaneous dialogues (Haerudin et al., 2023; Maftuh et al., 2021). This study examines the connection between two important aspects of modern language teaching: using real-world listening materials and the need to accommodate different learning styles. This study's main research question is: How can authentic listening resources be used strategically to engage learners with different skill levels, learning styles, and cultural backgrounds?

Methods

Research Context and Participants

This study was conducted over 72 students of Academic Listening class at the English Education Department of Universitas Muria Kudus. It was a case study applied

to investigate the use of authentic listening resources incorporated with contextual teaching and learning (CTL) method. The research participants were the students whose profiles were varied in the aspects of learning style preferences, linguistic proficiencies, and cultural backgrounds. In terms of learning style preference, the students' profiles were classified into visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic styles. Regarding the students' profiles, they were categorized into high, intermediate and low linguistic proficiencies.

Instructional Procedures

The instructional strategies used in this study refers to the procedures of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) incorporated with the use of authentic listening resources adopted from YouTube, Instagram, and other internet-based learning resources. The instructional procedures applied in this instructional strategy, in every learning session, by referring to CTL principles, are as follows: (1) Activating students' prior knowledge about the selected topic by administering a classroom discussion; (2) Giving guiding questions as guidelines in pre-listening activities, to be responded by students; (3) Listening to authentic listening resources (YouTube, Instagram, and other internet-based resources) and exploring the contents referring to the guiding questions; (4) Modelling the analysis of the selected authentic listening resources; (5) Collaborating in groups to discuss the results of the analysis; (6) Reflecting the learning performance; and (6) Authentic listening Assessment.

Research Instrument

This study used observation, portfolio and assessment as the instruments to collect the data. Observation was conducted to monitor the classroom interaction, students' engagement, the use of contextual materials, and feedback. Meanwhile, the portfolio was utilized to record students' individual and group

work. This instrument was assisted by a digital platform. Students periodically submit their work to the digital platform. Assessment was administered to describe the students' listening achievement.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

There were two types of data collected in this study, those are qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data were taken from observation rubrics and digital based portfolio. The observation rubrics recorded the classroom management covering the classroom interaction, students' engagement, the use of contextual materials, and feedback. Regarding the digital-based portfolio, the collected qualitative data were the students work performances covering individual and group work. As for the quantitative data, they were taken from the result of listening skills' assessment. In regards to the listening assessment, the evaluation framework referred to academic listening contents, in which topics of high order thinking skills (HOTS) were applied pertaining to learning levels suggested by Bloom's taxonomy.

The collected data taken from the observation and portfolio rubric were analyzed by recording and describing students' participation in responding the guiding questions available in each session of learning activities. Meanwhile, the collected data obtained from the listening assessment were quantitatively described by calculating the *mean* to The followings were the topics and guiding questions provided in the digital platform:

(A) Topic: Weather Forecast Report

The guiding questions are as follows:

- 1.) What days are mentioned in the audio?
- 2.) What activities does the reporter suggested to do on each day?
- 3.) On what day will the lunar eclipse happen?
- 4.) On what day was the reporter speaking?

5.) How is the temperature of each day?

(B) Topic: Homelessness

The guiding questions are as follows:

- 1.) What are the problems that may cause homelessness?
- 2.) What will you suggest to help homeless people?

(C) Topic: Listening to a Short Story

The guiding questions are as follows:

- 1.) What is the story about?
- 2.) What are the moral values of the story?
- 3.) Which character of the story do you like? Why?

(D) Topic: Saving the Earth

The guiding questions are as follows:

- 1.) What suggestions were given by the little girl?
- 2.) Think of some ideas in your opinion to save or conserve the environment in your surroundings.

Findings and Discussion

The study found that authentic listening resources contributed to (1) boosting students' motivation, (2) improving metacognitive understanding of listening strategies, and (3) providing diverse opportunities for students at different proficiency levels. The increase of students' motivation can be seen from the portfolio of students' participation in which among 72 students, there were only 2 students (2,7%) who did not complete their assignment, most of the students (97,2%) took part in the learning activities. Authentic listening resources were believed to contribute to students' learning motivation as can be seen from the engagement or the involvement of the students in the classroom (Maftuh et al., 2021; Zachrich et al., 2024). Authentic learning resources provided real-life contexts in which students were exposed to the real practices of communication. It is another supporting fact that learning occurs in social level and in individual level as suggested by socio-constructivists (Abu-Rasheed et al., 2023). In terms of instructional approach, context-based

learning helps students bridging the gap between theoretical concepts and practical implementation of knowledge. It is, in turn, impactful on strengthening language skills including listening skill. Contextual learning contributes to exposing students to meaningful communication practices. It is in line with the goal of English Language Teaching (ELT) is to train students to be able to communicate in a real context of situation (Kadwa & Alshenqeeti, 2020; Semara Putra et al., 2022).

In terms of metacognitive understanding, authentic listening resource practically assisted students to deal with effective listening strategies. As commonly understood, that being aware of situational and cultural context plays important role for someone to meaningfully respond to what they listen and see, through which they can participate in any English real context of communication (Putta et al., 2024). In this case, there should be intensive and regular exposure to English authentic learning materials to make students easily understand the textual and contextual meaning of the target language. By connecting the contexts and the structural construction of a language expression, students will be able to make appropriate meaning predictions on English expressions which are difficult to understand (Rudman & Dennhardt, 2023). The students' metacognitive understanding in their listening strategy was upskilled, in which through the implementation of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) principles, students can make a mapping on their own listening competence. Therefore, they can gradually make a learning reflection on their strong points and weak points of listening comprehension. Students with diverse learning profiles can personalize the listening practices according to their preferred learning styles. This type of learning practice occurred when students did their efforts to complete their portfolio assignments. In this case, learning

autonomy was fostered through individual and group work in completing their projects (Jubhari et al., 2022; Murillo-Zamorano et al., 2019; Yue et al., 2021).

In response to the efforts of accommodating the students' diverse preferred learning styles, the study found that the incorporation of authentic listening resources and CTL principles through the digital based portfolio's assignment had provided various opportunities for students at different proficiency levels. Based on the summative assessment of listening comprehension, it was descriptively apparent that students with low proficiency scored 80,87 at average, while those with intermediate proficiency scored 80,10 at average, and those with high proficiency scored 85,30 at average, as can be seen in table 1.

Table 1. Results of Listening Assessment

No.	Number of Students	Linguistic proficiency Level
1.	31	Low proficiency level
2.	31	Intermediate proficiency level
3.	10	High proficiency level

Based on the description of listening score summative assessment, given in table 1 above, it can be noticed that the students with low and intermediate proficiency level shared almost the same listening score (80,87 and 80, 10). Among the 31 number of students with low level of linguistic proficiency, there were 16 students with visual learning style, 10 students with auditory learning style, and 5 students with kinaesthetic learning students. Meanwhile, among the 31 students with intermediate level of linguistic proficiency, there were 29 students with visual learning style, 5 students with auditory learning style, and 6 students with kinaesthetic learnings. The study also found that there were 10 students with high level of linguistic

proficiency scoring the highest achievement (85,30). The profile backgrounds of those students were 3 students with high learning style, 5 students with auditory style, and 2 students with kinaesthetic. To be associated with the listening comprehension's achievement, it shows that the use of CTL principle integrated with the use of authentic listening resources helped the students with diverse backgrounds improve their listening skills (Maftuh et al., 2021; Zachrich et al., 2024) This alternative instruction has brought students to a learning environment where the students are encouraged to learn beyond the text. In the case of academic listening, this instructional approach enables students to explore the diverse information beyond the text. Through the activities based on CTL principles, students experienced High Order Thinking skills through their critical analysis connecting listening materials with the social dimensions in which a language is used as means of communication (Foo, 2025; Shu & Gu, 2023).

Conclusion

It is concluded that in response to the diversity of students' learning profiles regarding their level of linguistic proficiency, preferred learning style and cultural backgrounds, there should be accommodative instructions where learning activities in ELT's the classroom, including in listening class, can be connected with real-life settings where a language is applicable as means of social communication. The study proposed the positive contribution of the utilization of authentic learning resources with the support by CTL principles to improve students' academic listening's skills by means of boosting students' learning motivation, improving metacognitive understanding of listening strategies, and providing various chances for students with different proficiency level. This study has offered an alternative guideline on

choosing and using real-life materials through various instructional contexts. However, it is acknowledged that this study has limitations in terms of the research setting, participants and research methodology, in which it was conducted in the scope of academic listening class, with limited number of participants and by a descriptive research method. Future research should explore wider scope of setting and participants. It is also recommended for future research to use comparative research methods to present more reliable and explorative data of the research.

References

- Abu-Rasheed, H., Weber, C., & Fathi, M. (2023). Context based learning: a survey of contextual indicators for personalized and adaptive learning recommendations – a pedagogical and technical perspective. *Frontiers in Education*, 8(July). <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.1210968>
- Esnaashari, S., Gardner, L. A., Arthanari, T. S., & Rehm, M. (2023). Unfolding self-regulated learning profiles of students: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 39(4), 1116–1131. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcal.12830>
- Field, J. (2019). *Rethinking the second language listening test: From theory to practice*. University of Toronto Press.
- Foo, S. Y. (2025). Investigating gifted students' higher-order thinking skills in a differentiated learning environment: A case study. *Gifted Education International*, 41(2), 236–259. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02614294241305766>
- Haerudin, D., Hermawan, B., Ruhaliah, R., Wibawa, S., Awaliah, Y. R., & Hardini, T. I. (2023). Inventorying

- authentic teaching materials on Youtube for listening learning plan of Pupuh in elementary school. *Cakrawala Pendidikan*, 42(2), 549–564.
<https://doi.org/10.21831/cp.v42i2.46233>
- Heilporn, G., Lakhali, S., & Bélisle, M. (2021). An examination of teachers' strategies to foster student engagement in blended learning in higher education. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 18(1).
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-021-00260-3>
- Ima, W., Pattiasina, J., & Sopacua, J. (2023). Model to increase motivation and learning outcomes in learning history. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 17(2), 206–214.
<https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v17i2.20703>
- Jubhari, Y., Sasabone, L., & Nurliah, N. (2022). The effectiveness of contextual teaching and learning approach in enhancing Indonesian EFL secondary learners' narrative writing skill. *Journal of Research and Innovation in Language ISSN*, 4(1), 54–66.
<https://doi.org/10.31849/reila.8633>
- Kadwa, M. S., & Alshenqeeti, H. (2020). Developing students' translation competence: The role of tasks and teaching activities. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation (IJLLT)*, 3(11), 55–67.
<https://doi.org/10.32996/ijllt>
- Kweldju, S. (2021). Incorporating linguistic landscape into english word-formation task in an english morphology course. *Teflin Journal*, 32(1), 29–49.
<https://doi.org/10.15639/teflinjournal.v32i1/29-49>
- Lago, J. M. L., & Cruz, R. A. O.-D. (2021). Linking to the real world: Contextual teaching and learning of statistical hypothesis testing. *LUMAT*, 9(1), 597–621.
<https://doi.org/10.31129/LUMAT.9.1.1571>
- Maftuh, M., Mudofir, I., Aziz, M., Maaliah, E., & Fitriana, N. (2021). Using authentic materials to improve listening comprehension in ES classroom. *Proceedings of the First International Conference on Economics, Business and Social Humanities, ICONESB 2020, November 4-5, 2020, Madiun, Indonesia*, April.
<https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.4-11-2020.2304543>
- Morrow, K. (1977). *Authentic texts and ESP* (S. Holden (ed.)). Modern English Publications.
- Murillo-Zamorano, L. R., López Sánchez, J. Á., & Godoy-Caballero, A. L. (2019). How the flipped classroom affects knowledge, skills, and engagement in higher education: Effects on students' satisfaction. *Computers and Education*, 141(October 2018).
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2019.103608>
- Nguyen, J., & Schunn, C. D. (2025). Humanizing pedagogies and student-centered instruction in a networked improvement community. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 68(6), 584–593.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.1392>
- Putta, N., Gayathri, K., Kathula, D., Balakrishna, T., Naik, D. B., & Bhanu, S. H. (2024). Bridging language and culture: teaching English through multicultural literature. *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*, 5(6), 4040–4044.
- Rudman, D. L., & Dennhardt, S. (2023).

- Critical discourse analysis. *Qualitative Research Methodologies for Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy: Second Edition*, 169–186. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003456216-10>
- Semara Putra, G. B., Padmadewi, N. N., & Santosa, M. H. (2022). Authentic Materials Used by Senior High School English Teachers. *Jurnal Imiah Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, 6(1), 38. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jipp.v6i1.32412>
- Shu, X., & Gu, X. (2023). An empirical study of a Smart Education Model enabled by the Edu-Metaverse to Enhance Better Learning Outcomes for Students. *Systems*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/10.3390/systems11020075>
- Silva, R., Farias, C., & Mesquita, I. (2021). Cooperative learning contribution to student social learning and active role in the class. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 13(15). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13158644>
- Sun, X. (2023). Differentiated instruction in L2 teaching: two extensive reading programmes conducted during COVID-19 pandemic. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 17(2), 177–190. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2021.1979985>
- Vlachopoulos, D., & Makri, A. (2024). A systematic literature review on authentic assessment in higher education: Best practices for the development of 21st century skills, and policy considerations. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 83(November), 101425. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2024.101425>
- Yue, Y., Chi, C., Zhong, K., & Xu, X. (2021). Do learners' preferred learning styles affect learning outcomes and satisfaction in PLE: A pilot study of the supervised-PLE-IELTS Platform. *Journal of Educational Technology and Innovation*, 1(1), 51–77. <https://doi.org/10.61414/jeti.v1i1.21>
- Zachrich, L., Wagner, W., Bertram, C., & Trautwein, U. (2024). Really? It depends! How authentic learning material affects involvement with personal stories of the past. *Learning and Instruction*, 92(May), 101921. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2024.101921>