

CRITICAL LISTENING IN HIGHER EDUCATION: INSIGHTS FROM INDONESIAN EFL LEARNERS

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Abstract: This research aims to examine the practice of critical listening in higher education. This investigation involves fourth-semester students in the English Education Department of an Indonesian public state institution. This research utilized a qualitative case study. This study's data were collected using a triangulation method incorporating classroom observation, questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. In this research, the data were analyzed thematically. The results show that 1) students are able to identify subjectivity, evaluate speaker's arguments, and unfold speaker's argument as reflected on the critical listener competencies 2) critical listening activities successfully help students develop their language skills and exercise critical thinking skills that have yet to be covered in listening class. The findings of this study can provide educators with a starting point for implementing critical listening with EFL students. In other words, the findings may cast light on implementing critical listening in EFL classroom, including the general benefits and challenges students encounter.

Keywords: *critical listening; EFL in higher education; listening skills.*

INTRODUCTION

Since information and communication technologies have advanced, people can now freely share thoughts or information. However, data and concepts in information frequently contain fallacies, persuasion, and propaganda. Someone who can assess the accuracy and dependability of the knowledge or ideas they are exposed to is certainly essential in this scenario. Thus, a strong critical listening capacity is required for everyone to listen, evaluate, and make decision of the information or ideas presented to them (Basyoni & Medd, 2023; Yogaskara & Kurniawan, 2020). The concept of critical listening is rooted from critical thinking definition by Ennis (1991), which states that critical thinking is reasonable, reflective thought that focuses on deciding what to believe or do.

Nonetheless, despite the importance of critical listening, as stated by Welch & Mickelson (2020) and Bell (2018), teachers did not give teaching listening skills, especially critical listening, the priority it deserved. Other studies have shown that,

particularly in higher education, proper planning and adequate attention were not given to developing critical listening skills. According to their research, listening training in the start had not been applied, despite its relevance. Critical writing and reading are more common in EFL classes than critical listening. Beniche et al. (2021) found that students in higher education did well in argumentative writing because they understood how to present arguments and apply logic to support their positions on the assigned topics by the support of critical writing. In reading, Oroujlou & Sadeghi (2022) discovered that teaching critical reading skills improves critical thinking in challenging pupils. Critical reading practises in the EFL classroom can encourage students to ask systematic and critical questions. Prior critical thinking studies focused on writing and reading, not listening.

Critical listening in the classroom is underpracticed. In EFL classes, intensive listening is most usual. Gu (2018) states intensive listening activities limit students to interpreting the speaker's

true words, grammar, and sounds. Students solely focus on individual words, grammar, and information in attentive listening (Ahmadpour & Asadollahfam, 2018). EFL students in higher education need more than intensive listening, even though it's beneficial for them. EFL students in higher education need to employ critical listening to absorb and evaluate information using objective standards. In intensive listening, students, especially those who have limited listening experience, only estimate the answer which prevents students from completely understanding the content. Thus, critical listening is required for EFL students to understand and evaluate the listening contents.

Critical listening means that critical thinking and listening must be integrated as one skill. Also, since listening skills is a multi-layered process, students must be able to develop three different types of listening skills, which are discriminative (to distinguish sounds in the message), comprehensive (to understand the factual ideas), and critical listening skills (to evaluate and judge) (Bourdeaud'hui et al., 2021). Therefore, in critical listening, students are expected to understand and evaluate the information they acquire from the audio they listen to. As stated by Hyytinen et al. (2021), critical listening, part of critical thinking, identifies fallacies in presenting a topic. In other words, critical listening integrates students' comprehension and other cognitive abilities, which require them to question the received information and stimulate in-depth discussion in the classroom (Ediger, 2015; Ferrari-Bridgers et al., 2017). On top of that, the definition of critical listening as stated by Ferrari-Bridgers (2020), Ferrari-Bridgers, Stroumbakis, et al. (2017), and Ferrari-Bridgers, Vogel, and Lynch (2017) as "the listener's critical ability to (a) recognize patterns, (b) compare and contrast new information with prior knowledge while comprehending, (c) re-evaluate prior knowledge in light of new information, and (d) evaluate the content of a message (i) for adhering to specific patterns and structural requirements that constitute the message itself and (ii) for its completeness and accuracy, such as its lack of faults, illogicality, and omission of critical components" (Ferrari-Bridgers, 2020, p. 10).

To put it another way, critical listening involves listening carefully and actively to the listening material to comprehend, evaluate, analyze, criticize, and reform it based on personal experiences and objective criteria (Basyoni et al., 2020). Critical listening involves several levels, as

stated by Tubail (2015), which are reception, discrimination, comprehension, analysis, interpretation, realization, inference, evaluation, judgment, and response. From the critical listening levels stated by Tubail, it can be concluded that listening comprehension should cause a critical response to what is heard. This implies that the listener must be able to evaluate the speaker's intention from the message delivered in the audio (Khaydarova, 2023).

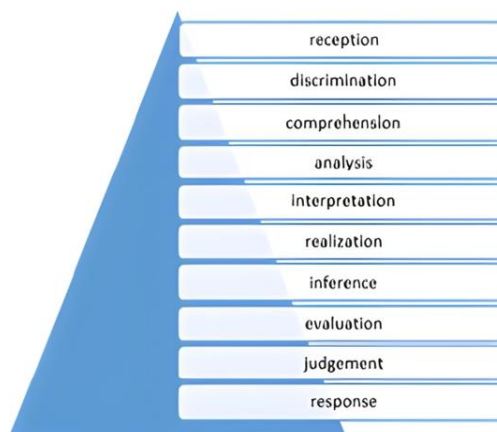


Figure 1. *Critical listening levels* (Tubail, 2015)

According to Helwa & Sabry (2021), critical listening necessitates that students take the role of decision makers. An essential skill for students is the ability to discern the intended objective of a speaker during a speech or a discussion. In this activity, it is crucial for students to conduct a thorough evaluation of the speaker's intended meaning in order to analyse the underlying purpose of the speech. The objective of analysing the purpose of the speech is to determine the extent of trustworthiness and reliability of the information conveyed by the speaker. Furthermore, critical listening can be understood as a cognitive process including inquiry and comparison, as highlighted by Helwa and Sabry (2021). It is fundamental for students to conduct an investigation into the speaker's background as they actively participate in the process of critical listening. The objective is to discover the extent to which the purported information sustains its credibility, and the extent to which the speaker's comments are grounded in their background's profession. In essence, critical listening entails a heightened level of comprehension whereby individuals delve into the information they receive, necessitating the analysis, evaluation, and judgement of its substance (El Gendy, 2020). Upon evaluating the provided material, students, in their capacity as critical listeners, are able to generate conclusions regarding the message.

The implementation of critical listening is in line with the characteristics of critical thinkers stated by DiYanni & Borst, (2020), which are “when someone is using critical thinking skills, they usually make insightful observations, thoughtful connections, insightful inquiries, and meaningful distinctions.” On top of that, in this study, critical thinking focuses on six dispositions that are proposed by Ennis (1991; 1996 as cited in Quinn et al., 2020), Reichenbach (2001), and Chaffee (2009) namely: 1) be open minded; consider other points of view than their own; (Ennis, 1991; 1996 as cited in Quinn et al., 2020); Reichenbach, 2001); 2) take and change position when evidence is sufficient (Ennis, 1991; 1996; Reichenbach, 2001); 3) care to understand and present a position honestly and clearly including to discover and listen to others' view and reasons, be clear about the intended meaning of what is said, written, or otherwise communicated (Ennis, 2011); 4) take into account others' feelings and level of understanding (Ennis, 2011); 5) view situations from different perspectives (Chaffee, 2009; Cottrell, 2005); and 6) identify the argument and communicate author's intended meaning of what is said and what is written (Chaffee, 2009).

The practice of critical listening in this study is also guided by the listening comprehension questions adapted from Barrett's taxonomy of reading comprehension. Barrett's taxonomy was developed by Thomas Barrett and involved five levels: literal comprehension, reorganization, inferential comprehension, evaluation, and appreciation (Amalya et al., 2020). The levels chosen to practice critical listening in the classroom are evaluation and appreciation. The levels are considered high-level questions requiring students to practice and apply their critical thinking. Since there has not yet been a previous study to design listening comprehension questions using Barrett's Taxonomy, this study would like to adopt the concept. Therefore, by implementing critical listening in the classroom, this study will focus on identifying the four critical listener competencies: (1) identifying subjectivity in the message, (2) evaluating the speaker's arguments, (3) analyzing and unfolding the speaker's intention, and (4) separating facts from opinions (Al-Musalli, 2001; Deveci, 2013; Ferrari-Bridgers et al., 2017; Floyd and Clements, 2005; Fogelson et al., 2016).

The concepts of critical listening are in line with the fundamental principles of Extensive Listening that are also applied in this study. Critical listening involves two stages: comprehension of the content

delivered and finding the specific information to be analysed in the video. Those stages are related to the principles of Extensive Listening by Ivone & Renandya (2019) which stated that students should select audio or video texts to listen to. They should have the freedom to choose spoken texts at their convenience or in accordance with their listening capabilities. Additionally, after choosing their preferred audio or video texts, students must be able to evaluate the chosen materials' reliability critically. Another extensive listening principle that supports critical listening is students are expected to comprehend the meaning of the spoken texts. In other words, students concentrate on the main idea or discourse of spoken materials. Students must interpret meaning from a specific perspective. One of the video sources used in this study is TED Talks, which can be accessed through YouTube. TED Talks have been used in several studies to promote in-depth listening. For instance, Puspita & Amelia (2020) stated that by utilizing TED Talks, students can get enough exposure toward authentic materials, so they can get a lot of input to improve their listening skills. Research data demonstrating that while some students' scores decrease, the majority of students' scores rise. Moreover, no declining score was discovered in the data. The finding proved that TED Talk is suitable to enforce critical listening that requires in-depth understanding in listening comprehension.

Moreover, intensive listening practice is also conducted in the lesson. As stated by Sastromiharjo et al. (2020), critical listening is a type of intensive listening activity to interpret, look for facts or truths, and make conclusions about a speaker's utterance with strong reasons and can be accepted by reason. In order to look for information from the audio, intensive listening requires students to understand the meaning of each discourse and, ultimately, to understand every sentence and word. The goal is for students to understand every sentence in the information. The concept of understanding sentence and word in intensive listening is in line with listening stage in critical listening stated by Sastromiharjo et al. (2020) which requires a listener to understand the language and meaning of language they listen to. Moreover, the principle of intensive listening adapted in critical listening is that students answer the questions provided by the lecturer (Gavenila et al., 2021). The students must find specific information in the audio in order to answer the prompted question given by the lecturer comprehensively. To conclude, extensive listening

and intensive listening support critical listening in grasping the big ideas and understanding the language of the passage.

Reflecting on the preceding paragraphs, it is clear that the research on critical listening needs to be further investigated. Thus, this study places a significant focus on the need for students to be able to listen critically in order to gather, evaluate, and use the information effectively (Din, 2020). This research aims to explore in the implementation of critical listening, which has not been well-explored yet, in higher education. Moreover, this paper aims to investigate how critical listening is implemented in a listening classroom and to discover the benefits and challenges students face in conducting critical listening lesson. Thus, in order to investigate the implementation critical listening in the EFL classroom, two research questions are provided: (1) How is critical listening implemented in the listening classroom? (2) What are the benefits and challenges of critical listening faced by students in the classroom?

METHOD

A qualitative case study is conducted in this study (Ebneyamini & Sadeghi Moghadam, 2018). A case study in this study focused on investigating one case concerning the implementation of critical listening. It is in line with the statement that a case study refers to an in-depth study that investigates an implementation of a particular theory or method which has not been much known in the certain case (Schoch, 2020). Critical listening hasn't yet been widely known and implemented in a classroom. For that reason, the case study was conducted to portray the implementation of critical listening in EFL classrooms.

This study involves fourth-semester English Education department students at a public state university in Indonesia, under the class Listening for Academic Purposes I as its participants. Regarding the choice of the level, tertiary level, it seems appropriate because English students in the fourth semester are expected to be given more exposure to academic listening, such as IELTS, particularly the fourth section that focuses on lectures and TED Talks. On top of that, the students will already have advanced critical thinking compared to students from the first year.

Triangulation techniques by means of classroom observation, questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews with students in regard to their experience throughout the listening course were employed for collecting the data in this study. The classroom observation was employed to

ensure that the four critical listener competencies were implemented in the classroom. The classroom observation was recorded to capture the engagement of the lecturer's instructions and students' responses during critical listening practice in the classroom. A questionnaire distributed was employed to discover students' points of view regarding the benefits and challenges of critical listening. A semi-structured interview for the chosen five students was also conducted to provide additional information from their responses to the questionnaire that need further elaboration. It should also be noted that the questionnaires distributed and interviews conducted are in Bahasa Indonesia; therefore, all questionnaire and interview transcripts will be translated into English in case they are chosen as examples for this paper. Moreover, of 40 students coming to the meeting, 34 students agreed to volunteer to participate in the teaching program and this was followed by their signing of a consent form. The data analysis used in this study is thematic analysis. Thematic analysis focuses on finding and defining implicit and explicit ideas within the data's themes rather than just counting the incidence of explicit words and phrases (Preiser et al., 2021). On top of that, as stated by Kiger and Varpio (2020), thematic analysis is a way of expressing data, but it also incorporates interpretation in the processes of selecting codes and generating themes. The thematic analysis used in this study is the four critical listener competencies stated by Al-Musalli (2001); Deveci (2013); Ferrari-Bridgers et al. (2017); Floyd and Clements (2005); Fogelsong et al. (2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings in this study are categorized into two in relation to the two research questions. The first is to explain the implementation critical listening focusing on the interactions between the lecturer and the students in the classroom. The second category is describing the benefits and challenges faced by students in critical listening.

The implementation of critical listening in the listening classroom

In respect to the first research question, the result of the data collection showed that students benefited from the implementation of the critical listening in the classroom since the critical listening practice focused on critical listener competencies helped them develop critical thinking and promote critical listening in the classroom. The critical thinking dispositions which

are appeared in this study were be open-minded; consider other points of view than their own; take and change position when evidences are sufficient; present a position honestly and clearly; be clear about the intended meaning of what is said, written, or otherwise communicated; view situations from different perspectives; and identify the argument and communicate author's intended meaning of what is said. On top of that, the critical listener's abilities reflected in the study were identifying subjectivity in the message, evaluating the speaker's arguments, analysing and unfolding the speaker's intention.

Critical listener competencies in critical listening practice

Identifying subjectivity in the message

The identifying subjectivity was established by instructing the students to identify the element of subjectivity in the given video. Identifying subjectivity in critical listening is in line with critical thinking ability, written by Singh (2018) which stated that critical thinkers must recognize that the truth is objective and not relative. Otherwise, the critical thinker's goal of analyzing and evaluating arguments in order to arrive at the truth is severely compromised. Thus, the subjectivity means that the content of the message is a personal construction aiming to achieve the objective of the speaker's personal belief (Lamont, 2020). The identification of subjectivity in the listening classroom is related to their analysis of a video related to gender equality. The students found that the video consists of subjectivity as it only highlights one side of the issue, which is the women being the most vulnerable actor, and hides the concern of other actors involved in the issue. The purpose of identifying subjectivity in the listening classroom is to exercise the listener's ability judgment towards a message. The excerpt 1 illustrates how the student identifies the element of subjectivity in the message.

"This video has subjectivity in my opinion because the narrator really focused on women's rights and they don't talk that much about the perspective of men and they don't really talk about the disadvantage of being a man. I mean like the responsibility that men have as like the one usually looking for money for the family. The video doesn't talk about both perspectives equally and it is evident that the video talks about more on women's rights rather than the responsibility that also comes from having the rights." (S12, April 7 2023, minutes 13:00)

Evaluating the speaker's arguments

In critical listening, students must be able to interpret and evaluate the content of the message. Evaluation, according to Marni et al. (2019), is the ability to evaluate evidence to strengthen conclusions and review the reliability of the information. In this context, as critical listeners, students should be able to criticize the content conveyed in the video. The instruction from the lecturer is also important for the students. The instruction used in the classroom also prompted the student's response to evaluate the speaker's arguments presented in the video. In this context, the lecturer asked the students whether the video presented balanced information by covering the perspectives of the actors involved. The excerpt 2 which is evaluating the speaker's arguments sourced from classroom observation shows that the students are able to evaluate the message in the video by mentioning that the title of the video can be misleading as it is not in line with the content of the video.

Excerpt 2 (April 7, 2023, minutes 32:10)

- L: "Do you think the men's voices are represented in the video?"
S: "I highlight that the title of the video is 'Gender Equality'. Then, it must contain some balanced information in it. I also agree if the title of the video is 'Justice for Women' or 'Empowering Women'. I will support those, and I think the video will consist more of how women are miserable, women can be successful, and I will support that. However, because the title of the video is 'Gender Equality' and the content of the video is more focused on women, men's voices are not represented in the video."

Analysing and unfolding the speaker's intention

The competency of analysing and unfolding the speaker's intention was reflected when the lecturer asked the students why the speaker in the video focuses on emphasizing one perspective of the issue. The prompted question was asked in advance so that the students are able to analyze the aim of the speaker's arguments, as shown in excerpt 3. In unfolding the speaker's intention, the student is able to explain the goal of the speaker in delivering the message. The finding is in line with one of important critical listening skills, which is the ability to recognize the speaker's objectives (Basyoni & Medd, 2023). By discovering the purpose of the speaker in the message, the audience can better determine whether prejudice or

propaganda tactics are being employed. In this context, the students analyse the reasoning and the goal behind the speaker's message conveyed in the video.

Excerpt 3 (April 7 2023, minutes 15:29)

L: "Why does the speaker seem biased to women in the video?"

S: "I think the speaker is being biased in order to persuade the audience about the gender transformative approach which favours women's rights."

Separating facts from opinions

During the implementation of critical listening in the classroom, as sourced from the classroom observation, there is no sufficient data to support this critical listener competency. The reason is mainly because the implementation of critical listening is not focused on how students can differentiate facts from opinions, but rather how students can comprehend, evaluate, and judge the content of the message. Moreover, the lecturer's instructions are mostly focused on identifying bias in the message and evaluating the contents delivered by the speakers. The evaluation of the speakers' message does not cater the competency of separating facts from opinions, but rather focuses on evaluating the speaker's message using available evidence as in line with the element of critical thinking by Li (2023).

Benefits for and challenges of the implementation of critical listening

In relation to the second research question, this study revealed that the implementation of critical listening had given some benefits and challenges for the students.

The benefits

Developing language skills

During the implementation of critical listening, students do not only listen and process the information inside their head but also learn how to respond to the information through writing and speaking. Thus, integrated language skills are also implemented in critical listening and beneficial for the students to assist in other language skills courses. The finding is in line with the study by Basyoni et al. (2020), which stated critical listening is significant because it motivates and develops ideas by employing scientific and efficient methods. It fosters the improvement of other

language abilities, such as speaking, reading, and writing, because they are inherently linked to listening. The development of critical listening leads to the enhancement of every other skill. It plays an essential role in generating meanings, rephrasing them, and evaluating them, which contributes to the renewal of knowledge.

A few examples of the statement are provided below:

"Since listening is a receptive skill, which in my opinion is the foundation for developing productive skills such as speaking and writing, critical listening is vital for this course in particular and also for other skills courses." (Questionnaire, Student 15)

"Critical listening is not only useful for listening skills, but also for other skills, such as writing and speaking." (Questionnaire, Student 26)

Analysing information critically

Based on the findings of this study, students revealed that critical listening helps them analyse the information they received from the videos presented in the classroom. 17 students who filled the questionnaire admitted that critical listening helps them identify the information presented in a video. On top of that, students found critical listening useful in assisting them to filter the information. As perceived by students, critical listening helps students in processing the information they got; whether the content is credible or not; and finding the context and the goal of the message stated by the speaker in the video. The information they received is also analysed from which voice is dominant and hidden from the speaker's statement. This finding demonstrates that students possess the ability to analyze information critically. The benefit aligns with the sub-skill of critical listening based on Basyoni et al. (2020) which is the ability to distinguish similarities and differences between ideas and perspectives in listening material.

A few examples of the statement are provided below:

"Through critical listening, I have learned to identify voices that aren't overly prominent and to search for strong voices from opposing sides." (Interview, Student 3)

"Critical listening helps students know the credibility of the information they receive, also helps students distinguish facts and opinions from the information we get, also helps us

process the information we get from an audio or video.” (Questionnaire, Student 20)

“By implementing critical listening, I can practice my skills in analyzing information provided by lecturers or other sources, identifying whether there is subjectivity in the information, and digging deeper into the source of the information.” (Questionnaire, Student 21)

Practicing critical thinking skills

Practicing critical thinking skills perceived by the students as one of the benefits of critical listening proves that the implementation of critical listening in the EFL classroom helps them be critical of the information received from the listening materials. This is in line with the interview with the student which stated that in implementing critical listening, critical thinking skill is required since the two concepts are similar. The difference between critical thinking and listening is based on the sources. For critical thinking, the sources may vary such as from posters, articles in a website, newspapers, and various media. However, for critical listening, the sources are focused on video or audio.

A few examples of the statement are provided below:

“Critical listening and critical thinking are conceptually related because the ability to think critically is required for critical listening.” (Interview, Student 1)

“Critical listening is very beneficial in this course, such as teaching the students not to be easily influenced by the video/audio that we listen to, and helping to be more critical and rational in responding to various information that I receive.” (Questionnaire, Student 4)

“With critical listening in this course I do not only learn to listen to what the speakers are talking about, but also practice critical thinking about the topics being discussed.” (Questionnaire, Student 32)

The challenges

Unfamiliarity with the topic

Students admitted that the lack of exposure to the topic presented in critical listening is a challenge for them to understand the context of the listening materials. Because of the unfamiliarity with the topic, students found it difficult in processing the information. This leads them unable to evaluate and judge on the listening material as they have no sufficient knowledge about the topic. However, the

students are able to overcome challenges by researching the topic so that they are well-informed regarding the presented topic in the classroom. Thus, the information they got from the video and the result of the research will be linked to the prior knowledge. After that, students will be able to relate the new information from the video and try to evaluate it with their previous knowledge. In line with the definition of critical listening provided by Ferrari-Bridgers (2020), Ferrari-Bridgers, Stroumbakis, et al. (2017), and Ferrari-Bridgers, Vogel, and Lynch (2017), students are able to compare new information with prior knowledge while comprehending and re-evaluating prior knowledge in light of new information.

A few examples of the statement are provided below:

“Because of the unfamiliarity with the topic of the video, I became confused about capturing the information or message the speakers were trying to convey in the video.” (Questionnaire, Student 17)

“Limited knowledge of the topic makes it difficult for me to follow the thoughts of the speaker and dig deeper into the information provided.” (Questionnaire, Student 21)

Fast-paced speech by the speaker

The fast-paced speech by the speaker also affects students’ understanding in critical listening. The students found it difficult to keep up with the speakers as they speak too fast hence it affects their comprehension of the listening material presented in the critical listening classroom. The finding is similar to study by Namaziandost et al. (2019) related to listening challenges in the classroom, the fast-paced speed is evident in the provided example: “It’s difficult to comprehend the video in a single watch. This is due to the fact that the speaker in the video speaks relatively quickly for me.”

A few examples of the statement are provided below:

“The speaker’s tempo is sometimes fast. On several occasions, I personally think the speaker’s tempo is too fast to be understood in one go.” (Questionnaire, Student 10)

“It’s hard to understand the video in one play. This is because the speaker’s speech in the video is still relatively fast for me.” (Questionnaire, Student 11)

Various accents of speakers

Students admitted that the various accents of the speakers in critical listening poses a challenge for them to understand the listening material. Moreover, it takes them more time to fully comprehend the information as they find it difficult to understand the whole information in one play. On top of that, students stated that in certain dialects, the boundaries between words tend to blur, such that some terms appear to "blend" with others. This is similar to what Mandiri et al. (2022) stated in their research, namely that word boundaries tend to become unclear; as certain words may appear to "blend" with others in certain dialects. Thus, students typically had to replay the video so they could fully comprehend the message presented in the video.

A few examples of the statement are provided below:

"The fast-paced, muddled accents make it tough for me to follow up with the video. Usually, I have to replay the video in order to comprehend what the speaker is saying." (Interview, Student 5)

"There are several accents that I think are still difficult for me to understand, for example, the British accent. The British accent that I usually listen to is mostly difficult to understand." (Questionnaire, Student 17)

"Sometimes how the speaker conveys the message in the video is one of the things that is rather difficult to understand because usually I'm not familiar with all accents, so it takes more attention to listen to what is being said." (Questionnaire, Student 24)

Range of used vocabulary

Students who responded to the questionnaire and were interviewed indicated that they find it difficult to understand the critical listening materials they listen to because of the wide variety of vocabularies utilized in those materials. It can also be inferred that the vocabulary used plays the largest role in critical listening comprehension. This factor arises from the fact that the participants' unfamiliarity with the vocabulary or informal used in the materials they listen to restricts their ability to comprehend said materials.

A few examples of the statement are provided below:

"While watching the video, I had difficulty understanding foreign terminology. If the vocabulary appears to be difficult for me to comprehend, I will search for synonyms that are

most similar to the context of the video." (Interview, Student 5)

"I experienced several problems in the critical listening session. First, unfamiliar vocabulary. I realized the problem was related to my limited range of vocabulary." (Questionnaire, Student 10)

"There are some words in the video that I don't know the meaning of, so I don't really understand the contents of the video." (Questionnaire, Student 22)

Technical difficulties: Internet connection and Device

Technical challenges are problems that study participants are stumbled upon related to the technical aspects of the activity. Since the materials were obtained online, the challenges in this area mostly related to the technicalities of accessing internet resources. Students who responded to the questionnaires, stated that the technical issues mostly focused on bad connections and audio playback issues are a challenge for them to understand the critical listening materials presented in the classroom.

A few examples of the statement are provided below:

"Most of the problems I experience when watching videos for critical listening on zoom are related to my device's weak internet network. So sometimes I can't hear clearly some of the contents of the video that's being shown due to lag or something like that." (Questionnaire, Student 7)

"It's because of bad internet connection and with the level of the video keep changing, sometimes when it comes to a complex video, a bad internet connection really affects my understanding of the narratives." (Questionnaire, Student 14)

Focus difficulties

From the questionnaire, students also admitted that they often get distracted because of their surroundings. Since the course is conducted online, students are in different environments and it is highly possible that their surroundings are not suitable for learning. The distraction led the students forget what the speakers were saying in the video. On top of that, as seen from the excerpt, it is possible that students faced a focus difficulty as they have different learning styles.

A few examples of the statement are provided below:

“My problem with critical listening is a lack of focus. When I watch the video, I become instantly confused. I actually watched the entire video, but I eventually forgot what the speaker was saying.” (Interview, Student 2)

“Some of the obstacles or difficulties encountered when watching videos using critical listening are when watching videos, there are environmental disturbances, such as a noisy environment or distractions from other people around which can interfere with focus and attention when watching videos.” (Questionnaire, Student 19)

“In addition, another obstacle that I experienced was not being able to focus when watching videos, as someone with an auditory learning style I prefer to just listen to the audio rather than watching videos.” (Questionnaire, Student 20)

CONCLUSION

In summary, based on the aforementioned findings and discussions, the incorporation of critical listening in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom demonstrated that students possess the ability to identify subjectivity in the message, analyse the speaker's arguments, and comprehend and assess the speaker's objective through the listening materials which is in line with the three critical listener competencies theory by Al-Musalli (2001), Deveci (2013), Ferrari-Bridgers et al. (2017), Floyd and Clements (2005), and Fogelson et al. (2016).

They stated that critical listening helps them improve their language skills and provides them with the opportunity to exercise critical thinking skills not yet covered in listening class. Clearly, critical listening enables EFL students to do more than simply comprehend the information; it also enables them to evaluate and analyze it. However, students encountered numerous obstacles when attempting to implement critical listening. Unfamiliarity with the subject is one of the obstacles of critical listening. According to students, their unfamiliarity with the topic presented in critical listening makes it challenging for them to comprehend the context of the materials. Additionally, the speaker's speech speed affects students' critical listening comprehension. In the critical listening classroom, it was difficult for the students to keep up with the speakers because they spoke too rapidly, affecting their comprehension of the material presented. As

acknowledged by the students, the numerous accents of the speakers in critical listening make it difficult for them to comprehend the listening material. Essential listening materials employ a wide diversity of vocabulary, making it difficult for students to comprehend what they hear. In addition, students admitted to being frequently distracted by their surroundings. Respondents to the surveys indicated that technical issues, such as weak connections and audio playback issues, are difficult for them.

The findings of this study can provide educators with a starting point for implementing critical listening in EFL classroom. In other words, the findings may provide information on the implementation of critical listening, including the benefits and challenges encountered by students in the classroom. As a suggestion for further research, it is important to include the critical listening competency, separating facts from opinions, which has not yet been covered in this research. Moreover, future study can conduct on the preferred critical listening materials, such as the topics of the materials, of EFL students to support the findings of this study.

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