

Extensive listening: Effects and experiences of high school students in Vietnam

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ABSTRACT

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High school students in Vietnam still struggle with listening skills after many years of learning English because of the forms-focused instructions. To improve students' listening skills, the study employed extensive listening skills. The current study employed mixed methods to examine whether extensive listening had any effects on high school students' listening performance. Participants were 100 high school students divided into 2 groups: the Experimental Group (EG) and the Control Group (CG). The EG was additionally exposed to extensive listening outside the classroom for around 06 months. The study used pre-and post-tests to measure improvement in the students' listening skills after the treatment, and an interview with 10 students in the EG to clarify their experiences with extensive listening. The study showed that extensive listening could help high school students improve their listening skills. Furthermore, students admitted that extensive listening benefited their general language learning and listening skills.

1. Introduction

English has evolved into an international language capable of facilitating communication between citizens of non-English-speaking countries. With the ability to listen, communication is possible. Additionally, it is established that effective listening skills significantly enhance oral production (Ivone & Renandya, 2019). The primary purpose of teaching and learning English as a foreign language is to deal with real-life contexts, but teaching and learning English in high schools in Vietnam is to equip pupils with reading comprehension and grammar for a long time (Hoang, 2008). Students cannot communicate in English after seven years of learning English in high school and two years in tertiary education (Hoang, 2010).

With the rise of instructional frameworks for international language degrees and communicative approaches, listening has received increasing attention and appears to be an inescapable component of EFL learning. Many teachers, educators, linguists, and EFL students are attracted to extensive listening (Chang & Millett, 2016; Mayora, 2017). There are some studies indicating how extensive listening contributes to improving students' vocabulary and pronunciation (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020). However, these studies were conducted in a short period (from 04 to 08 weeks); therefore, it might not be long enough to show the effects (Milliner, 2017; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020). Furthermore, many studies related to students' perceptions of extensive listening, the effects of extensive listening on listening comprehension,

and attitudes about extensive listening are conducted on a small scale; future researchers should select more participants to achieve a stronger relationship between extensive listening practice and listening comprehension (Fauzanna, 2017; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020; Nugroho, 2017). In addition, much research on extensive listening has been conducted with the participants, mainly university and primary students. Therefore, extensive listening studies, in which participants are high school students, should be carried out.

Moreover, as English has become a global lingua franca, effective listening is essential for communication and significantly enhances oral production (Ivone & Renandya, 2019). Despite extensive training, many Vietnamese students find themselves unable to communicate effectively in English after years of instruction (Hoang, 2008; Hoang, 2010). Although current curriculum frameworks emphasize an integrated approach to teaching all four language skills, assessments primarily focus on grammar and vocabulary, which may not adequately prepare students for real-world communication (Hoang, 2018).

Given this context, the present study aims to investigate the effects of extensive listening on the listening skills of high school students for sports at Nguyen Thi Dinh High School, specifically addressing two research questions:

1/ To what extent does extensive listening practice affect high school students' listening skills?

2/ What are high school students' experiences of extensive listening practice?

By examining these aspects, the research intends to provide educators with valuable insights into the benefits of extensive listening for developing students' listening skills. The findings are expected to assist teachers in creating effective programs and curricula that promote language acquisition and enhance student motivation. Ultimately, this study aims to contribute to the development of appropriate listening materials tailored for non-major English students, addressing the existing gaps in research and practice.

2. Theoretical basis

Listening is one of the most important skills that helps learners receive input, and extensive listening provides a variety of listening materials and forms of extensive listening practice (Matsuo, 2015; Renandya, 2011; Waring, 2008). In extensive listening, students had opportunities to select the content they wished to hear and were resolute in their refusal to listen to inappropriate materials (Holden, 2008).

In terms of extensive listening, several researchers define extensive listening as listening for enjoyment while understanding useful information (Field, 2008; Graham & Santos, 2015; Milliner, 2017; Rost, 2011). According to Field (2008), extensive listening can be defined as hearing for enjoyment with no obligation on the listener's part to maintain a reasonable level of comprehension. Likewise, Renandya and Farrell (2011) suggest that extensive listening encompasses all listening activities that expose students to much more understandable and enjoyable audio information. Rost (2011) states that students listen for enjoyment and feel at ease when engaging in extensive listening exercises. In conclusion, the current study adopts the definition of extensive listening, which is suitable for students' situation in reality, a strategy that delivers a great deal of enjoyment and understanding to listening for pleasure (Field, 2008; Renandya, 2012).

According to Ivone and Renandya (2019), extensive listening encompasses five distinct sub-categories, namely active listening (e.g., engaging in reading while listening), listening

while reading, exclusive listening, listening in conjunction with visual stimuli (e.g., videos), and integrated listening, reading, and viewing. In this study, the present researcher lets students concentrate mainly on “listening only.” Based on students’ learning conditions, combined listening, active listening, reading while listening, and listening and viewing are inappropriate.

Dupuy (1999) also pointed out that extensive listening can give students several opportunities to practice language comprehension at a higher level. It is desirable for our students to experience a better level of comprehension when listening to spoken text, as this level of comprehension is more likely to result in successful acquisition. Besides, Elley (1989) also suggests that extensive listening is a reliable method for acquiring understandable data, a necessary and sufficient prerequisite for second language acquisition. Additionally, extensive listening provides a critical condition for language learning by providing students with much more comprehensible input.

In this sense, according to Krashen (1985), language learners acquire that language by understanding the message in the input by hearing and reading. The input hypothesis states that language learners acquire the language when the level is slightly higher than the present level, called I+1. Language learners use contextual cues to guess and understand unknown grammatical items. Structures are acquired when language learners are exposed to enough comprehensible input. He claims that comprehensible input is better for developing grammar accuracy than direct instruction.

Listening is a crucial skill that enables learners to receive input, and extensive listening offers a wide range of materials and extensive listening practice formats (Matsuo, 2015; Renandya, 2011; Waring, 2008). Listening involves processing and understanding input information, with input being essential for generating output. Sufficient, comprehensible, and engaging listening materials are key to fostering effective listening acquisition (Le, 2013). However, language acquisition is hindered when students focus solely on form, neglecting content and meaning. This study examined the effects of regular listening practice, particularly on high school students’ listening skills. A review of the literature shows that extensive listening positively influences students’ listening comprehension. Establishing a framework is crucial for adding logic and significance to research, serving as a guide for investigation (Adom et al., 2018). The theoretical framework of this study is built on the principles of extensive listening.

Previous studies on extensive listening and research gaps

Research on the effects of extensive listening on language acquisition has yielded significant findings. This section organizes the relevant studies chronologically to demonstrate the benefits of the English Language (EL) as an educational tool.

Bozan (2015) examined 85 military college students in Turkey, using pretests and posttests to assess grammar and vocabulary proficiency. The study involved a semester-long treatment that included various resources such as movies and audiobooks. Results showed improvements in vocabulary and grammar, with students expressing increased happiness and comfort in using electronic learning tools. However, the study did not specify the materials used at home and focused solely on students with strong independent learning skills.

Similarly, Gonulal (2020) found that Turkish students improved their listening skills, pronunciation, and vocabulary after 28 weeks of listening to podcasts and vodcasts. The lack of a control group in this study limited the ability to compare extensive listening with traditional L2 instruction. In another study, Gavenila et al. (2021) reported improvements in vocabulary

and listening fluency among Indonesian university students, but they suggested further research at different educational levels for broader applicability.

In Vietnam, studies on the impact of extensive listening at the high school level are limited, though some research has focused on university students. For example, Duong and Nguyen (2022) studied 90 second-year university students using TED talks for 15 weeks, finding that this method effectively enhanced listening comprehension and made students more comfortable with reviewing vocabulary. However, the study lacked control over participants' home study habits. Pham (2015) also researched extensive listening at Nguyen Huu Tho High School, finding that it significantly improved students' listening competence and vocabulary knowledge over 10 weeks. Additionally, Nguyen et al. (2021) investigated incidental vocabulary acquisition among 32 second-year English majors at Dong Nai Technology University, revealing that extensive listening enhanced vocabulary acquisition. Nevertheless, this study's short duration and small sample size limited its reliability. Nguyen and Nguyen (2020) conducted a study with 325 eighth-grade students at the Asian International School in Ho Chi Minh City. Using a quasi-experimental design over a 12-week period, the research indicated that extensive listening improved vocabulary acquisition and listening skills, encouraging students to listen for pleasure. This study's findings highlight the benefits of extensive listening for junior high school students and suggest the need for further research across different educational levels in Vietnam. However, the previous studies did not address how high school students experience extensive listening or the specific practices they adopt during their extensive listening activities.

The above studies indicated two major gaps that further research needs to address. First, the previous studies have mainly focused on higher education (Bozan, 2015; Gavenila et al., 2021; Gonulal, 2020; Mayora, 2017; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2021) in which students are supposed to have high independent learning skills. It is also noted that little research has been conducted on high school students, especially in Ho Chi Minh City, to examine how high school students experience extensive listening and whether extensive listening has any effects on students' listening proficiency. Besides, many studies were conducted with relatively short-time experiments (from 03 to 08 weeks), which have not clearly stated the impact of extensive listening on listening comprehension (Mayora, 2017; Nguyen et al., 2021). Moreover, although previous studies focused on students' attitudes toward extensive listening, limited attention has been devoted to investigating how students experience extensive listening (Bozan, 2015; Gavenila et al., 2021; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020).

3. Methodology

This current study was conducted using a mixed method. This study involved quantitative and qualitative data because it would better comprehend the complicated issue (Dörnyei, 2007). The research design had both pre-and post-tests to examine the effects of extensive listening and interviews to explore students' experiences during their extensive listening project.

The study was conducted at Nguyen Thi Dinh High School for Sports-Gifted Students in Ho Chi Minh City, a public school known for training athletes. One of the researchers worked at this school; therefore, she could ask for permission from the principals and other stakeholders, such as students and students' parents, to participate in the project. With over 40 classes from grades 6 to 12, the school offers ten sports disciplines, including strengths in vovinam, taekwondo, badminton, and athletics. The school is well-equipped with sports facilities but lacks advanced teaching tools. Students, who often feel shy in English due to limited social and

linguistic knowledge, follow the general education curriculum while also engaging in rigorous sports training. With the convenience sampling method, grade 10 students, aged 15, were chosen as participants because they are not yet under the pressure of the national high school exam. They study English three times a week, with a basic listening proficiency bordering on the A2 level. The control and experimental groups of 50 students each were similar in gender distribution and English knowledge level, and most did not engage in additional English learning outside school.

In this study, the quantitative data were collected first. Soon after, the qualitative data was gathered to probe and explain the quantitative data with more details and examples to understand the situation better. The qualitative interviews illustrated how students experience extensive listening.

Table 1

Research Design for Extensive Listening

Week	Control group	Experimental group
01	Pre-test	Pre-test
02 - 24	No extensive listening	Extensive listening
25	Post-test	Post-test

Note. Data analysis result of the research

This experimental was conducted in around 06 months. In week 1, students in both experimental and controlled groups had to take tests. In week 2, the researcher introduced the listening materials and guided students in the experimental group on how to do extensive listening, such as reporting with a checklist, so that they could do their extensive listening at home. The students in the treatment group were offered a large bank of listening materials and finished their weekly reports. Additionally, students could the participants independently choose listening materials that met the criteria provided by the researcher.

After about six months of treatment, the students in both groups were given a post-test (KET) to ascertain their advancement in their listening skills. Later, some students in the experimental group participated in online or face-to-face interviews. Finally, the pre-test, post-test, and interview data were analysed.

The study used the Cambridge Key English Test 1 (KET) (University of Cambridge, 2020). Cambridge Key English tests have the reliability and validity of KET tests and are widely used in official exams worldwide. The KET listening examination comprises 25 questions divided into four sections with a total time limit of 30 minutes, including 08 minutes of transfer time. This is a standardized test by the University of Cambridge to test students' English ability internationally.

Semi-structured interviews were employed as the interview strategy. In the present study, after the treatment course of extensive listening, ten students in the experimental group were personally interviewed, and their verbal comments were recorded. The first ten students on the name list were selected to ask for their consent for the unstructured interviews, and they all agreed to participate in the interview. The interviews were conducted in Vietnamese. Each interview lasted approximately ten to fifteen minutes. The interview was conducted face-to-face or online, depending on the student's choice. The interviewees suggested the venues for these interviews to make them feel most comfortable and convenient.

During the experiment, every student in the experimental group received a set of materials suggested by the researcher in case they found it hard to search for materials. Materials are videos from the website: VOA Learning English (voaspecialenglish.blogspot.com), British Council (www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish), Talk English (http://www.englishenglish.com/listening/listen.aspx), Ello-online audio library (http://www.ellell.org/), News (http://www.NeWSy.com), Voice tube (www.Voicetube.com). Videos are about the topics in the main textbook, such as environmental issues, weather, jobs and careers, entertainment, and health. The length of the videos is equivalent to the length of the textbook conversations with topics similar to those in the textbooks they are studying.

Table 2*Research Design and Experiment Procedure*

	Study Design	Control Group (CG)	Experimental Group (EG)
1. Participants	Grade 10 learners	Grade 10 learners	Grade 10 learners
2. Initial Test	KET (Key English Exam by Cambridge)	KET (Key English Exam by Cambridge)	KET (Key English Exam by Cambridge)
3. Curriculum	Friend Global 10	Friend Global 10	Friend Global 10
4. Instruction & Activities	Classroom: Listening exercises from the Friend Global 10 textbook	Classroom: Listening exercises from the Friend Global 10 textbook	Classroom: Listening exercises from the Friend Global 10 textbook
	Beyond classroom: Listening tasks (Friend Global 10 workbook), No extensive listening (EL) practice	Listening tasks (Friend Global 10 workbook), No EL practice	Listening tasks (Friend Global 10 workbook), EL practice
	Material Selection	Researcher's choice	Researcher's suggestions and students' choice
5. Final Test	KET (Key English Exam by Cambridge)	KET (Key English Exam by Cambridge)	KET (Key English Exam by Cambridge)
6. Interviews	No interviews	No interviews	Interviews

Note. Data analysis result of the research

Before commencing this study, the researcher sought permission and authorization from the manager of the high school for Sports, a facility catering to exceptional students, to perform the research. The present researcher explained to students the purpose, benefits, and how much time they would spend before they agreed or declined to join. The teacher did not show test results with students' names to keep students' scores private and anonymous. The present researcher coded students' names in both groups. The researcher coded the names of the students by their numerical order. For example, the first student in the comparison group was encrypted S1-CG.

The interviews were transliterated and sent to the interviewees for checking, also known as respondent validation. This stage allowed the interviewees to review the data (Creswell, 2002). The transcripts were re-translated into English if no changes were requested. Finally, data were coded in themes and analyzed.

4. Results and discussion

The study results must be clear and concise. Use an appendix or additional documentation if needed.

4.1. Effects of extensive listening on students' listening skills

Before conducting the investigation, both groups were given the pre-test. The researcher utilized a t-test for independent samples to compare the mean pre-test scores of the two groups. This was done to determine whether the two groups had comparable listening skills. The results of the pre-test (KET) for the control and experimental groups are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Comparison in the Pre-test of the Control Group and Experimental Group

	Comparison group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-test	Control group	50	10.48	2.00	.283
	Experimental group	50	10.52	2.27	.322

Note. Data analysis result of the research

As demonstrated in Table 3, the experimental group had a slightly higher median score than the control group with M control group = 10.48 and M experimental group = 10.52. A statistical analysis using an independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether a statistically significant disparity existed amongst the average scores of the two groups on the listening pre-test.

Table 4

Independent Samples T-tests on the Pre-test of the Control Group and Experimental Group

	Lenene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
Pre test	Equal variances assumed	1.942	.167	-.093	98	.926	-0.0400	.42903	-.89139	.81139
	Equal variances not assumed			-.093	96.405	.926	-0.0400	.42903	-.89157	.81157

Note. Data analysis result of the research

According to the data presented in Table 4, the two-tailed significance value for the t-test assessing the equality of means was found to be .926. This value is marginally greater than the predetermined alpha level of .05. It is evident that, despite the Experimental Group (EG) having superior pre-test scores than the Control Group (CG), there was no statistically noteworthy disparity between the pretest scores of the two groups. Therefore, it was deemed suitable to conduct the quasi-experimental investigation. It can be inferred that the two groups exhibited comparable levels of listening comprehension prior to the commencement of the trial.

The mean scores are presented in the following manner: M (CG) = 10.48, SD = 2.00; and M (EG) = 10.52, SD = 2.27.

In addition, the assumptions of equal variances and normality were assessed in order to establish the reliability of the independent samples t-test. The test conducted by Leneve yielded an F value of 1.942, with a corresponding P-value of .167. The observed result exceeded the predetermined significance level of .05. This implies that there was no statistically significant discrepancy observed in the variances of the two groups.

4.1.1. The findings of the post-tests on both the CG and EG

After undergoing a six-month treatment, the students in both groups were administered post-tests. The outcomes of the post-test for both the control and experimental groups are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

Group Statistics on the Post-test of the Control Group and Experimental Group

	Comparison group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post test	Control group	50	12.22	2.62	.370
	Experimental group	50	14.42	2.46	.349

Note. Data analysis result of the research

According to Table 5, the treatment group still outstripped the comparison group regarding average score, with M control group = 12.22 and M experimental group = 14.42 of the total score of 25. The mean listening post-test scores of the two groups were compared to notice if there was a statistically noteworthy distinction utilizing an independent samples t-test. Table 6 below displays the differences between CG and EG on post-test.

Table 6

Independent Samples T-tests on the Post-test of Control Group and Experimental Group

	Lenene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
Post test	Equal variances assumed	.112	.738	-4.322	98	.000	-2.2000	.50900	-3.21010	-1.18990
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.322	97.643	.000	-2.2000	.50900	-3.21015	-1.18985

Note. Data analysis result of the research

Table 6 presents the findings indicating that there is a mean difference of -2.2000 in the posttest scores of the two groups. Additionally, the p-value of (.000) is significantly inferior than the predetermined alpha level of (.05). Therefore, a notable disparity can be observed in the posttest

outcomes amongst the Control Group (CG) and the Experimental Group (EG). The findings indicate that engaging in extensive listening activities led to improvements in students' listening skills, with the extensive listening group demonstrating superior performance compared to the control group.

4.1.2. The comparison between the results of the pre-tests and post-tests of Control group

The mean difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the CG is shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7

Results of the Paired Sample T-Test in the Pre-Test and Post-Test of the CG

	N = 50	Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	Pretest – Posttest of CG	-1.740	1.103	.156	-2.053	-1.427	-11.154	49	.000

Note. Data analysis result of the research

The researchers employed the paired samples t-test to investigate the extent of improvement in listening comprehension among the students in the comparison group. As maintained by the data presented in Table 7, there was a statistically meaningful discrepancy in mean scores amid the pre-test and post-test. This was determined by a paired samples t-test, where the two-tailed significance value was found to be 0.000, which is lower than the predetermined alpha level of .05. Moreover, it was readily ascertainable that the t-test yielded a value of -11.154. A statistically significant disparity was observed in the pre-test and post-test outcomes of the comparison group ($t = -11.154$, $df = 49$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). It is possible to argue that the CG students partly have their listening mastery after 6 months.

4.1.3. The comparison between the results of the pre-tests and post-tests of Experimental group

A paired samples t-test was applied to assess the potential improvement in listening competency among the experimental groups following the prolonged listening therapy. Table 8 exhibits the outcomes of the paired samples t-test.

Table 8

Results of the Paired Sample T-Test in the Pre-Test and Post-Test of the EG

	N = 50	Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	Pretest – Posttest of EG	-3.900	1.165	.165	-4.231	-3.569	-23.672	49	.000

Note. Data analysis result of the research

According to the data presented in Table 8, the paired samples t-test yielded a two-tailed significance value of .000, indicating statistical significance. This result was lower than the predetermined alpha threshold of .05. This indicates a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test assessments for the experimental group ($t = -23.672$, $df = 49$, $p = .000 < 0.05$). The scores of the experimental group in the post-test for listening showed improvement as a result of the intervention of intensive listening. The implementation of rigorous listening practices resulted in a notable enhancement in the listening comprehension skills of the experimental group, as evidenced by the outcomes of this research investigation.

Table 9

Comparison between Pre-Test and Post-Test Results

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pretest for CG	10.48	50	2.002	.283
	Posttest for CG	12.22	50	2.621	.371
Pair 2	Pretest for EG	10.52	50	2.279	.322
	Posttest for EG	14.42	50	2.467	.349

Note. Data analysis result of the research

The mean scores of both groups showed a statistically significant rise. While both groups showed improvement throughout the study, it was seen that the Experimental Group (EG) exhibited superior performance compared to the Control Group (CG), specifically in the domain of listening comprehension. The observed discrepancy could be attributed to the implementation of a comprehensive listening intervention.

The findings indicate that students who engaged in extensive listening outperformed the control group on the listening test, with statistically significant differences between the two groups' post-test scores. This outcome aligns with previous research by Bozan (2015), Duong and Nguyen (2022), Pham (2015), Nguyen and Pham (2019), Gonulal (2020), and Gavenila et al. (2021), which highlighted the positive impact of extensive listening on students' listening abilities. While earlier studies demonstrated improvements in university students, this study confirms that extensive listening can enhance listening skills among high school students as well.

The results further support Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis, which suggests that language acquisition is driven by comprehensible input. In this study, students who practiced extensive listening diligently gained more listening input, leading to an improvement in their listening skills. Both the control and experimental groups showed progress, but the experimental group achieved significantly better results. According to independent t-test results, the mean scores of the experimental group were statistically higher than those of the control group. Additionally, some students mentioned in post-interviews that they engaged in numerous out-of-class listening activities, which contributed to their language development.

The findings also support the idea that repeated listening practice enhances listening comprehension, as noted in Chang et al. (2018). Similar to Nguyen and Nguyen's (2020) assertion that practice sessions aid preparation for subsequent tasks, the students in this study

felt that regular listening exercises helped them improve. Several participants reported that their vocabulary and listening comprehension had significantly developed, echoing Pham's (2015) results that regular listening practice enhances lexical knowledge. Meier (2015) similarly found that exposure to extensive listening unintentionally boosts students' vocabulary acquisition, while Gonulal (2020) demonstrated that watching movies improved students' aural vocabulary knowledge.

4.2. Students' experience with extensive listening

The interview illustrated that students had many different experiences and made significant progress.

Excerpt 1: Listening to English has become a habit for me these days. Actually, I listened to the audio several times to get the main ideas and opened the subtitles later. It was meaningful to me because it contributed to developing my listening skills (Student 8-EG).

Second, many students maximized their time for practising listening skills and listening to the recordings at flexible times. To balance learning English with other subjects at school, many students use strategies that work for them. Some students practised listening when walking to school, having dinner, doing housework, etc. To support this idea, student 34-EG also said that (excerpt 2).

Excerpt 2: Listening with flexible time. I usually listened to the audio or your materials as much as I could. I often opened the records and repeated them when I took a shower, did housework, did things, did physical exercise, etc. It seems to be time-consuming, but I loved doing this (Student 34-EG).

Third, students shared that they practised extensive listening with the off-suggested materials list. Many students practised extensive hearing by listening to music or watching films, despite the instructor not requiring them. Besides, listening materials on social networks were always among the most popular options for students because they made learners feel satisfied and trending (excerpt 3).

Excerpt 3: Extensive listening practice outside the suggested works. Truly, I often practised my listening logs in the afternoon and usually listened to music on YouTube or watched short videos on Facebook and Instagram with subtitles. By watching English videos on social networks, I learned many things that were trending and improved my English comfort. It was very relaxing (Student 18-EG).

Additionally, a significant number of students reported an improvement in their listening abilities and vocabulary due to their participation in a comprehensive listening project. Several students who completed all assigned assignments within 24 weeks have reported notable advancements in their listening abilities. The post-test results indicated an improvement in the participants' listening scores (excerpt 4).

Excerpt 4: I strictly practised listening to a lot, and my vocabulary improved. This listening activity was an effective way to review old vocabulary. My listening scores on many tests at school were becoming better. My parents were happy with it. And, wao! Besides, I could understand many advertisements and short conversations on TV or social networks that I couldn't before (student 24-EG).

However, during the process of lengthy listening, students encountered some challenges, including issues related to the pace of the audio and the presence of advanced vocabulary. For example, student 28-EG shared, "Some of the speakers' voices were quite raucous; I couldn't

understand. However, when I changed it into Google's voice, I could understand." To defend this position, student 30-EG commented, "Some topics are pretty challenging. Regarding the topic of stocks, for instance, we found several particularly challenging terms and many words I could not guess the meaning".

When the participants exercised listening in the EG, another crucial issue relating to their listening difficulties was identified. This issue supported the responses to the second query regarding participants' experiences with EL. The results from the interviews indicated that certain obstacles had little impact on the participants' listening comprehension. More specifically, the most challenging obstacles they encountered were the foreign accent and vocabulary. However, these difficulties had a moderate impact on the auditory comprehension of the participants. This could imply that the current study assisted the participants effectively in overcoming these issues by providing them with the appropriate extensive listening materials and instructing them in selecting the most suitable materials for themselves. Overcoming the obstacles faced by the participants could increase their positive attitudes toward EL.

Moreover, the study discovered that students not only improved their listening skills but also developed a more positive experience with extensive listening. Unlike previous studies that mainly focused on the benefits of extensive listening without addressing students' experiences, this study explored their difficulties and strategies during the listening process. For example, students identified challenges related to memory, accents, and vocabulary, and some reported practicing listening during leisure time to improve their guessing skills and short-term memory. These practical experiences can help students better handle real-life situations in English.

The participants reported that they often comprehended the general context or main ideas of the materials despite encountering unfamiliar words. This suggests that students tend to focus on grasping the overall meaning rather than understanding every word - a goal in English language education as noted by McDonough et al. (2013). Additionally, students reported enjoying their listening practice, often engaging in it during other tasks without feeling pressured to take notes or look up unfamiliar words. This finding may explain some differences between this study and Bozan's (2015) research, as Bozan did not report on similar learner behaviors.

Finally, this study corroborates previous findings from Yuksel and Tanriverdi (2009) and Meier (2015), which suggest that extensive listening helps students acquire vocabulary incidentally. Students' flexible and relaxed approach to listening in this study allowed them to enhance their listening skills without direct vocabulary instruction.

The study offered several contributive values that distinguish it from previous research. Unlike earlier studies that primarily focused on university students or short-term interventions, this research extended the scope to high school students over a six-month period, providing a more comprehensive understanding of extensive listening's long-term effects. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative pre-and post-tests with qualitative interviews, which allows for a nuanced analysis of both performance improvements and personal experiences. This dual approach reveals not only the statistical significance of listening skill enhancements but also the practical strategies and challenges students face, offering a richer, more holistic view of extensive listening's impact. Additionally, the study addressed a critical gap by focusing on high school students in Vietnam, a demographic previously underrepresented in extensive listening research, thereby contributing valuable insights into the applicability and benefits of extensive listening in diverse educational contexts.

5. Conclusion & recommendations

The findings of this study contribute to the existing literature on enhancing the listening skills of non-major English students, particularly in a Vietnamese context. This study is an initial exploration into the impact of English Language (EL) instruction on developing learners' listening abilities, particularly at the high school level. The results demonstrate that extensive listening effectively enhances learners' auditory comprehension, unintentionally acquiring new words, and often dealing with real-world contexts. Second, the study demonstrates that extensive listening is an effective and stress-free method of instruction for EFL students. In addition, students can select appropriate materials for their proficiency and amusement.

Based on the findings above, some implications for teachers are suggested. From the beginning, it is vital for educators to support students with a comprehensive array of English language materials that include suitable pacing, familiar situations, and little reduction, as these hinder their listening motivation. Second, teachers should instruct students meticulously on selecting appropriate and enjoyable listening materials and conducting effective, extensive listening practice. Third, teachers have the ability to employ the English Language (EL) as a means to effectively include students in listening exercises both within and outside the confines of the educational setting. Finally, in order to optimise the outcomes of English Language (EL) practice, it is imperative that the teaching staff receive appropriate guidance and training on the efficient implementation of instructional strategies in EL.

In terms of students, it is imperative to foster a culture of promoting extensive listening among students beyond the classroom, as this practice serves to augment their verbal input. Second, students should be instructed in strategies that enable them to concentrate on the meaning of lengthy spoken texts before orienting them to the language. Third, students can choose the topics with which they are most familiar to reduce initial resistance.

Limitations and recommendations for future research

The research has several limitations. First, students were only interviewed after the extensive listening project. Before the project, some students may have listened extensively by listening to music or viewing films outside the classroom. In addition, no interviews were conducted with the students in the control group following the extensive project. It is possible to believe that students inside the control group may have participated in substantial listening activities beyond the classroom, such as listening to music or viewing films, in a manner akin to the students within the experimental group. Furthermore, the comprehensive study solely examined a certain subgroup of secondary school students, limiting its applicability to broader contexts.

More research is needed to determine whether extensive listening can substantially improve other students' listening skills. In conclusion, future research endeavours may benefit from considering the following suggestions in order to yield more favourable outcomes in the implementation of English Language (EL) practice for the enhancement of listening abilities among non-major English students.

SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTION

The manuscript clearly identifies a research gap; the manuscript opens new directions for further research.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

CRedit: **Le Van Thinh**: Supervision, Methodology, Writing, Editing; **Nguyen Ngoc Thuy Hang**: Conceptualisation, Methodology, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing, Software, Investigation, Formal Analysis.

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All authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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