



<https://jurnal.unigal.ac.id/index.php/jall/index>

JALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literacy), ISSN 2598-8530, September, Vol. 6 No. 2, 2022

Received	Accepted	Published
August 21 <sup>st</sup> 2022	August 28 <sup>th</sup> 2022	September 14 <sup>th</sup> 2022

## THE USE OF AUDIO TRIMMER AS AN ONLINE APPLICATION TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN ENGLISH LISTENING CLASS

**Rina Herlina\***

[rherlina85@yahoo.co.id](mailto:rherlina85@yahoo.co.id)

Universitas Galuh

**Etika Rachmawati**

Universitas Galuh

**Bambang Ruby Sugiarto**

Universitas Galuh

### ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the use of an online application-based Audio Trimmer in learning Listening in the English study program. The aim is to find out how the lecturer applies this Audio Trimmer application to Listening class and to find out the level of student satisfaction with the use of Audio Trimmer in Listening learning. This research is qualitatively designed with a case study approach with the research subject being all students from two listening classes, namely Extensive Listening and Academic Listening, and the data collection was obtained from student questionnaires in the form of a Likert scale questionnaire in the form of ten statements, class observation, and documentation of student achievements in listening courses. Then the research analysis includes data reduction, data display, and data verification. There are two findings from this study. First, the audio trimmer is used in listening courses at the whilst-activity and post-activity stages. Second, the student's perception shows that the audio trimmer is very supportive of listening learning. In conclusion, the audio trimmer in learning listening is very useful and of course highly recommended for English learners who will listen to English audio.

**Keywords:** Audio Trimmer, online application, Listening

### INTRODUCTION

Listening is one of the English basic skills which is very important for students to be mastered. If students have mastered Listening, then these abilities can be transmitted to the mastery of other language skills such as speaking, reading, writing, pronunciation, and others. But in reality, all language skills do contribute to each other (Walker, N, 2014).

According to Ramli (2018), listening is the main tool for absorbing incoming ideas and information. In addition, Gilbert (1988) argues that students from kindergarten to high

school are expected to practice listening frequently every day. Fatika & Rahayu (2021) concluded that both inside and outside the classroom, listening in everyday communication is most often used than other forms of verbal communication. Listening is the main activity of students at all levels of educational development (Coskun, A., 2010). Listening is the most frequently used language skill in the classroom (Kadaryanto, B., Aryanti, C.J., 2011).

During the listening process, various factors can affect the ability of the Listening learner. Among them are general factors and specific factors (Hayati, 2010; Flowerdew and Miller, 1992). Several factors that have become the focus of research include speech speed (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016), phonological features, and background knowledge (Long, 1990). All of these factors range from text structure and syntax to personal factors such as inadequate exposure to the target language, and lack of interest and motivation. Brown (1995) argues that all of these problems are related to the level of cognitive demands contained in the content of the text. Buck (2001) identified many difficulties that can be faced in listening such as unfamiliar vocabulary, difficult topics, fast speech rate, and unfamiliar accents.

In addition, Tompkins & Hoskisson (1991) in Nurani, Nugraha, and Sidik (2018) explained that listening is a process of receiving, understanding, and assigning meaning. Listening is not the same as listening. In the process of listening, a person receives the message uttered by the speaker but he may not understand or catch the meaning uttered. In the process of listening, there is a voluntary effort made by someone to understand and interpret the speaker's message. Listening also gives correlation to another language skill that is speaking and it makes rather than important (Sartika, Tahrin, & Hatim, 2022).

In English Education Program, the Listening class is one of four basic language proficiency courses that students must contract in the early semesters. Intensive Listening in the first semester, Extensive Listening in the second semester, Critical Listening in the third semester, and Academic Listening in the fourth semester. Listening most of all is very essential to improve students' ability in TOEFL Listening. The difficulty level of each stage of listening is different, ranging from intensive listening which only focuses on listening to basic English conversations, for example on how to say hello, ask for addresses, how to apologize, and how to ask and express opinions. Extensive Listening revolves around listening to longer narratives such as listening to speeches or news in English, Critical Listening revolves around listening to English conversations, discussions, or seminars, and Academic Listening revolves around listening to listening questions for TOEIC and TOEFL

which have the highest difficulty level. However, even though the level of difficulty of each Listening is gradual, students still think that everything is equally difficult so it has an impact on the final result of the achievement of the Listening course. 80% of the final score in Listening is a score below 50. Even to get a B score, it must be accumulated with attendance and assignments. Their complaint is the same. When they listen to English, they said it is too fast. Even though the English audio provided is a really normal and reasonable speed. Maybe just because English is a foreign language and they rarely practice listening to it.

Based on each of these levels of difficulty, of course, listening teaching media are needed that are able to make it easier for students to listen to English to a higher level of difficulty or a certain level of speed. Online Application-based Audio Trimmer is the answer to students' problems in listening to English because the application has a working method that can analyze any difficult English talk, so students will be very easy to analyze English audio conversations because the way the application works is to slow down audio to the lowest stage, which is level 1 out of 100. The online application-based Audio Trimmer has been applied to Listening lectures for the last two semesters. Students will use the application when they listen to words or phrases that are difficult to understand. The indicators of success are clear. Students no longer bother with English words that are difficult to understand. Judging from their listening achievement, it is also significant because there is no need to add assignments and attendance scores to achieve a B or A score. Because this study discusses listening teaching techniques using an online application-based Audio Trimmer, the case study is the right research design considering Case study is a research design to uncover a cause or event that is considered phenomenal.

One of the related studies is Saraswaty (2018) who is one of the previous Listening researchers who presented the results of his research in a journal entitled "Learners' difficulties and strategies in Listening Comprehension". The results of the study stated that there were many problems faced by students in listening to English audio, so several strategies were needed in teaching listening, including using media from Youtube". Instead, this research focuses on using an online application in the form of Audio Trimmer to help students listen to English audio.

Based on the explanation above, the research questions are as follows: How does the lecturer use online application media in the form of Audio Trimmer in teaching Listening courses? And how do students respond to the use of online Application-based Audio Trimmers in Listening courses?

## METHOD

The design chosen in this study is a Case Study under the consideration that the use of an online application-based Audio Trimmer has been applied to the Listening course for the last two semesters. Sugiyono (2013) argues that research using case studies or single case design is a case study research that emphasizes research only on a single case unit. The researchers focus on one particular object and studies it as a case. The research participant of this research is all English students who took Listening class. For the even semester of the 2021/2022 academic year, there are two Listening classes. They are Extensive Listening and Academic Listening. So that the research subjects will be taken from all students from both classes. Data collection was obtained from class observations, questionnaires, interviews, and documentation.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

*The lecturer's strategy in using online application media in the Listening course is Audio Trimmer.*

Audio trimmer application is used in listening courses because the way native English speakers speak English will be very confusing for students because English is still a foreign language in Indonesia and also because students are rarely taught listening material in their schools. The main point is they lack English listening practice.

Audio trimmer in listening courses is usually used at the whilst activity stage or at the main activity and only occasionally at the post-activity stage, namely the end of the learning activity. At the pre-activity stage, the audio trimmer application is never used because usually at the beginning of the learning activity it will be filled with greetings and prayers before starting learning activities and preparing listening material along with supporting listening materials as shown in the following table;

**Table 1. Observation Checklist**

Activity	Pre activity	Whilst activity	Post activity
Greeting and praying before starting learning activities.	V		
Preparing listening material along with supporting equipment for listening learning consisting of; audio trimmer, listening material, sound system, wifi, and laptop. (only available in the language lab).	V		
Lecturer's preface before beginning the session.			
Starting listening to the audio		V	
		V	

Discussion about vocabulary, grammar, and how to pronounce English words while using the audio trimmer again.	V
Conclusion	V
Assignment	V

Based on research data on the observation checklist, listening course students were given listening materials from websites and YouTube which certainly had no translated text, so students were required to understand audio listening in various ways. However, the lecturer offers a tool to make it easier for students to understand audio listening in the form of an audio trimmer. The way the audio trimmer works is to slow down the audio to a level of slowness that can make students clearly listen to the audio listening. From the beginning of the session, the lecturer asked students to observe the audio trimmer application including how to operate it so that they understand and are accustomed to using the application so that listening does not experience any problems.

The interview result with the listening course lecturer showed that the lecturer's explanation of how to use an audio trimmer in listening courses is the same as the observation checklist data. The following are the answers of the listening course lecturer to the three questions posed in the interview;

*First question; how do you use audio trimmer in listening? Before answering how I use the audio trimmer application. Let me state the reason why I chose the audio trimmer as support for listening to lectures. First, audio trimmer is an application that I obtained through a website that can make it easier for English learners to listen to native English speakers, no matter how difficult the speech sounds. Second, the way of operation is online and tends to be easy and can be used by anyone, that is, just click on the audio trimmer website and upload audio that contains parts of words that are difficult to understand and want to slow down. After that, it remains only to justify the level of the audio slowness until the clarity of the words is obtained. Therefore, I will always instruct all listening students from intensive listening, extensive listening, critical listening, and academic listening to always use the audio trimmer website application if they have difficulty to understand native English speakers. The way I give listening lectures using an audio trimmer is simple, namely in the whilst activity stage, which is at the core of the lecture. When students faced quizzes related to information from native speakers in audio, they automatically operate the audio trimmer or the lecturer opens the audio trimmer application on the laptop to check together English words that are biased or poorly understood. Audio trimmer is also often*

*used in post-activity to confirm students' understanding of unfamiliar and confusing English words.*

*Second question; Are there any significant problems that you have encountered in listening courses using an audio trimmer? If so, what is the solution? the problems encountered related to the use of the audio trimmer were not too significant, only technical problems, namely the availability of wifi or limited internet quota which suddenly ran out, because to open the audio trimmer an internet network was needed considering that the audio trimmer could not be downloaded and the operation had to be online. The solution is also simple, namely that there is enough internet quota available or makes sure the wifi is also safe. In essence, the problems encountered are usually technical problems.*

*Third question; What is your expectation of this application? Of course, my hope in the future regarding the use of audio trimmers in listening courses is that it will be easier to access, for example, available on the play store so that it can be downloaded and can be operated offline. The next hope is that the audio trimmer can be widely accepted by English language learners, not only in the English Education study program but also in schools.*

Based on the explanation of the observation checklist and the interview with the listening course lecturer, the findings of the number one research question, namely the audio trimmer, are used in listening lectures at the whilst-activity stage and occasionally at the post-activity stage. However, earlier in the lecture, students were warned to use an audio trimmer as one of the applications accessed from the website.

***Student perceptions of the use of an online application-based Audio Trimmer in the Listening course.***

Based on the results of student questionnaires related to the use of audio trimmers processed through SPSS, a list of Likert scale statements and their calculations can be seen as follows:

**Table 2. Likert Scale Questionnaire**

No	Audio Trimmer helps me to...	Strongly disagree	Disagree	No idea	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Increase my listening ability					
2	Increase my self-confidence in the listening course					
3	My motivation in learning becomes more intensive and better					
4	Able to listen to native speaker talk even at maximum speed					
5	Able to understand other subjects such as speaking, pronunciation, grammar, and English vocabulary because they get a lot of input from the listening process					

Table 2 is a Likert Scale questionnaire consisting of five statement items. Then, the process of calculating the percentage of the questionnaire is obtained through the SPSS application which results in the analysis of the frequency distribution data as follows;

**Table 3. The analysis of the frequency distribution of every item**

Item	Answer	Score	Frequency	%
1	Agree	4	3	7,5
	Strongly agree	5	37	92,5
2	Agree	4	33	82,5
	Strongly agree	5	7	17,5
3	Agree	4	28	70
	Strongly agree	5	12	30
4	No idea	3	2	5
	Agree	4	5	12,5
	Strongly agree	5	33	82,5
	No idea	3	1	2,5
5	Agree	4	32	80
	Strongly agree	5	77	17,5

Item no. 1 contained 7.5% who 'agree' and 92.5% who answered strongly agree with the statement that the use of Audio Trimmer helps me to improve my listening skills.

Item no. 2 contained 82.5% who answered 'agree' with the statement that the use of an audio trimmer increases my confidence in listening courses.



Item no. 3 there are 70% who agree who answered agree with the statement that the use of Audio Trimmer increases their motivation to learn listening more intensively

Item no 4 contained 12.5% who agree and 82.5% who strongly agree with the statement that the use of an audio trimmer is able to listen to native speaker conversations even with the maximum speed level.

In item no 5 there are 80% who agree and 18.5% who strongly agree with the statement that the use of Audio Trimmer helps them to be able to understand other subjects such as speaking, pronunciation, grammar, and English vocabulary because they get a lot of input from the listening process.

Based on the description of the Likert scale questionnaire in table 3, the findings for the second research question show that students' perceptions of the use of audio trimmers in Listening implicate that Audio trimmer helped students understand the utterances of native speakers or native English speakers. Therefore, they strongly agree with the audio trimmer to support listening courses.

Through triangulation checks to analyze research data, two findings from this study have been produced. The first finding is that the audio trimmer is used in listening class at the whilst-activity stage and occasionally at the post-activity stage. This is in line with the research results of Jin-Sung Kim and Mun-Koo Kang (2015) in their journal entitled 'The Effects of Improvement Listening skill of middle school students through English pop songs' stating that teaching English listening skills, especially pop songs English has been considered a very popular and effective way and listening practice patterns associated with songs can be very helpful. English pop songs can help students feel more confident and enjoy learning English at home as well as in the classroom. The result of the study showed that British pop songs increased their interest and motivation, which was found to be about twice as high a score after 10 months. The difference with this research is in the listening media. Kim & Kang's research uses English pop songs as the media, while this study uses Audio Trimmer media based on online applications. Because audio trimmers and English pop songs are tools to support success in listening learning, the two tools are the similarities to this listening research.

The second finding is the result of a questionnaire based on the perceptions of students who strongly agree with Audio Trimmer as a supporting medium for listening courses. This research is also in line with the results of research by Saraswaty (2018) who is one of the previous Listening researchers who presented the results of his research in a



journal entitled "Learners' difficulties and strategies in Listening Comprehension". The results of the study stated that there were many problems faced by students in listening to English audio, so several strategies were needed in teaching listening, including using media from Youtube". Youtube media with the use of online applications in the form of Audio Trimmer are both learning media that support success in learning Listening to help students listen to English audio. The difference with the latest research is that Saraswati focuses on listening teaching strategies, while the latest research focuses on the use of media in teaching listening.

One of the theories that have been discussed previously is from Buck (2001) which highlights the difficulty in listening to a fast speech rate, and foreign accents from listening or listening have been answered, namely by providing a website-based audio trimmer application as a tool to facilitate listening learners. . This has been tested and measured through observation tests, questionnaires, and interviews on Listening courses with clear stages.

## CONCLUSIONS

From the results of the research through the triangulation of questionnaires, observations, and interviews, two findings have been produced. The first finding is an audio trimmer used in listening class at the whilst-activity stage and occasionally at the post-activity stage. The second finding is the result of a questionnaire based on the perceptions of students who strongly agree with Audio Trimmer as a supporting medium for listening courses. So, the conclusion from the whole series of this research process is that Audio Trimmer media really brings significant benefits in understanding the intent, message, and accent of the utterances of native English speakers which is the core of listening lectures.

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