

# Extensive Listening in the ELF Classroom with ELLLO

## ELFプログラムにおける多聴の試み：ELLLOを用いたリスニング研究

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### ABSTRACT

*This teaching article introduces an extensive listening homework component designed around the website, ELLLO <ello.org>, a listening training repository featuring non-native English speakers. Students were asked to self-select listening texts from the ELLLO website and complete a short listening log entry for homework. In-class listening activities also featured ELLLO texts. Along with promoting this website for developing ELF students' listening skills, the authors hope this article will prompt teachers to consider introducing non-native speaker listening texts in their ELF classrooms to promote listening fluency and more effectively illustrate English use in international settings.*

**KEYWORDS:** Extensive listening, ELF, ELLLO, ELF listening, ELF classroom activities

### 1. INTRODUCTION

For English as a Lingua Franca students (hereafter ELF students) living in a more homogenous society like Japan, there are few opportunities to encounter English input outside of the classroom. To bridge this gap, teachers are introducing online media and incorporating tasks such as extensive reading into their syllabi. In an earlier volume of this journal, Magasic (2016) argued that online videos (webclips) are a welcome addition to an ELF classroom as they compliment ELF tenets and represent entertaining, stimulating and educational classroom tasks. Following on the work of Magasic, and the promotion of extensive watching by Saunders (2017) as well as Saunders and Ishimaki (2016), this teaching article also advocates the inclusion of audiovisual content in the ELF class syllabus. More specifically, the

authors will introduce a website (ELLLO) for developing ELF students' listening skills and ELF awareness. After introducing extensive listening (EL) and its value to language learners, an EL component and classroom activities utilizing the free listening website, ELLLO will be described.

### 1.1 Extensive Listening

Similar to extensive reading, extensive listening involves students listening to large quantities of self-selected texts at, or slightly below their linguistic level. The theoretical foundation for EL is drawn from Krashen's input hypothesis (1994) that argues language learners have to consume large quantities of comprehensible language input for the language to be acquired effectively. In EL, three core components are highlighted: (a) student selection of listening texts, which according to Lynch (2009) encourages student motivation to practice and continue practicing in their own time; (b) listening to large quantities and varieties of discourse, such as dialogic speech and different English accents (Gilliland, 2015; Renandya & Farrell, 2011; Walker, 2010); and (c) the level of the text needs to be at or below students' reading level. Following the theoretical foundation of this approach, the level of text must be prioritised, especially when the focus is listening. For many language learners, listening is significantly harder than reading as literacy training most likely preceded listening instruction. Moreover, as Waring (2010) highlighted, most students can only start to recognise specific linguistic features such as collocations and nuances of grammar and pronunciation when almost all of the words in the text are understood.

### 1.2 Use of Listening Logs in English Classrooms

A popular approach for incorporating EL into a class syllabus has been listening diaries or listening log components. Listening logs were defined by Gilliland (2015, p. 13) as "an ongoing assignment where students document their participation in out-of-class activities and reflect on how this involvement helped them improve their listening abilities." In her book chapter promoting the use of listening logs as a way to encourage students to engage in English study outside the classroom, Gilliland (2015) reported on intermediate and advanced English as a second language (ESL) students' perceptions of EL logs. Surveys of students who completed listening logs for several semesters revealed that the experience had encouraged them to seek out new genres of listening content. Students also reported that they were able to learn more deeply about the local culture (America) as well as improve their listening and critical thinking skills. Hubbard (2015) also reported on an online EL component he created for ESL students. Along with developing listening skills, the component aimed to promote vocabulary knowledge and the development of personal learning strategies. After EL, Hubbard observed improvements in his students' listening comprehension, reflective learning skills and a more motivated stance towards EL.

Focusing on Taiwanese university students listening to English content online, Chen (2016) reported on her students maintaining an EL diary. Reflecting on the program, Chen wrote that her students perceived the EL diary component positively, citing: gaining of new knowledge; improved listening skills; the promotion of

future study planning; and, increased self-confidence as benefits. In her conclusion, Chen noted that if the EL component is going to encourage independent learning after the course, teachers need to: establish reliable scaffolding, train students on how to use the technology, and carefully monitor students' self-selection of online texts.

### 1.3 Listening and the ELF Classroom

Rather than reproducing native speaker models, a number of experts in the field of ELF advocate exposing students to a broad range of English speakers and connecting them with practical activities focusing on the exchange of meaning (e.g., Björkman, 2013; Magasic, 2016; McBride, 2016; Walker, 2010; Yamada, 2015). In her book, *English as a Lingua Franca*, Beyza Björkman (2013, p.192) presented “the inclusion of non-native speaker accents in listening comprehension material” as the first item to prioritize when teaching an ELF informed English class. She went on to explain that non-native audio material provides practical examples of what students need to do when using English in international settings.

Exposure to listening texts featuring a range of accents has also been cited as having a positive impact on students' pronunciation skills. When teaching in a monolingual ELF context (e.g., Japan), where students have the same first language, Walker (2010) argued that communicative tasks may, in fact, be undermining students' pronunciation skills. To overcome this concern, one recommendation he gave was to expose students to a range of English accents as it encourages learners to accept variations and become better at comprehending different accents.

While experts advocate utilizing texts featuring non-native speakers, they fail to recognize the difficulty of finding appropriate texts online. Also, they do not introduce a list of specific websites for finding useful content. One suggestion was The Speech Accent Archive <<http://accent.gmu.edu/>> created by George Mason University (McBride, 2016; Walker, 2010). Saunders (2017) reviewed the major online video platforms over a range of measures, including ELF utility, and his report provides some assistance to teachers for finding more interesting, level-appropriate text during their busy, day-to-day teaching schedule. Similarly, if teachers opt to ask their students to select texts online, most language learners appear ill-prepared to undertake this task by themselves (Hubbard, 2015; Milliner, 2017). This issue can be observed clearly in the Japanese university context specifically, where it has been reported that students have limited digital literacies (Cote & Milliner, 2017; Gobel & Kano, 2014; Lockley & Promnitz-Hayashi, 2012; Murray & Blyth, 2011; OECD, 2015) and a lack of preparedness to study independently (Sakai & Takagi, 2009).

It was these challenges that led the authors to the language learning website, ELLLO <[www.elllo.org](http://www.elllo.org)>. In the following section, ELLLO is introduced followed by a description of how the authors incorporated ELLLO into their ELF class.

## 1.4 ELLLO

English Language Listening Library Online (ELLLO) is a website which provides free English listening activities. The website, created by Todd Beuckens, an English teacher based in southern Japan, contains over 2,000 listening texts. One feature that distinguishes ELLLO from other native-speaker listening resources is that the former contains video or audio featuring speakers from not only the inner-circle countries where English is spoken as a primary language by native speakers but also speakers from the outer, former British colonies, and expanding circles (Kachru, 1985). As a consequence, ELLLO provides a rich volume of authentic listening materials that enable students to experience the usage of English as a *Lingua Franca*.

Illustrated in Figure 1 below, along with the audiovisual content, the website presents additional listening activities. One of the biggest advantages of this site is that students or teachers can select content graded for different levels. Within the site, users can search for texts and apply filters for a theme, topic, country (accent) or activity. Texts are either audio or audio-visual and texts come in a range of discourse styles (e.g., monological and dialogical texts). Users can stream listening texts directly from the website, within the ELLLO mobile application or through the music streaming website/applications SoundCloud and the elllofriends YouTube channel. Evidenced in Figure 2, ELLLO users can simultaneously read-while-listening to a text, take a post-listening quiz (which is corrected by the website) and learn key terms or interesting language found within a text. All supplementary tools and activities are freely available as online-activities and users can download PDF worksheets connected to a specific ELLLO text.

## English Listening Lesson Library Online

Listen to over **2,500 FREE** ESL lessons with audio and video!



This week Abidemi discusses trip to Southeast Asia.



1464 Vietnam / Myanmar  
Abidemi talks about her summer break.

BEG 3  
AbidemiTodd

## Study Plans | Worksheets!

- Level 2 25 Lessons for Beginners
- Level 3 50 Lessons for High Beginners
- Level 4 50 Lessons for Low Intermediate
- Level 5 50 Lessons for Mid Intermediate
- Level 6 50 Lessons for High Intermediate
- Level 7 50 Lessons for Advanced

## Videos - One Minute English



#1460  
Are you prepared for a natural disaster?

INT 4  
Shalini



#1459  
Have you been stopped by the police?

INT 4  
Hanna Paul



#1458  
Have you had a bad job?

INT 4  
Diego Silvia

Figure 1. ELLLO landing page

The screenshot shows a browser window with the URL [www.ello.org/english/1401/1439-1464-VIETNAM-SRI-LANKA.htm](http://www.ello.org/english/1401/1439-1464-VIETNAM-SRI-LANKA.htm). The main content area features a video titled "Tips for Sri Lanka" by Danu, with a play button and a progress bar. Below the video is a "Vocabulary Challenge" section with a list of words: **situated - rule - possess - offering - illuminated - casket**. The challenge includes five numbered sentences with blanks for the words. To the right of the video is a "Printable Worksheet | Lesson Plan" section with a thumbnail of a worksheet. At the bottom, there is a "Get lessons via email for free!" sign-up form and a "Script" section with a transcript of the video content.

**Tips for Sri Lanka**  
Danu talks about some fun things you can do in his country.

Ad closed by Google  
Stop seeing this ad Why this ad?

Ad closed by Google  
Stop seeing this ad Why this ad?

Printable Worksheet | Lesson Plan

Ad closed by Google  
Stop seeing this ad Why this ad?

**Vocabulary Challenge**  
Complete the sentences with the words below.  
**situated - rule - possess - offering - illuminated - casket**

1. She used to \_\_\_\_\_ many nice things.
2. We gave the monks an \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Put the jewelry in the silver \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Where are the bathrooms \_\_\_\_\_?
5. The sky is \_\_\_\_\_ with stars.
6. A king must \_\_\_\_\_ his people.

Check Answers Reset

Get lessons via email for free!  
ELLO.ORG NEWSLETTER

Script

Widuri: Okay, Danu. So I heard that Sri Lanka has a lot of beautiful places. Can you mention some famous one?

Danu: Yes. Sure, Widuri. Sri Lanka is a beautiful island in South Asia. So I will talk about this famous temple known as the Temple of the Tooth Relic.

Figure 2. Example of an audiovisual text with Indonesian and Sri Lankan speakers in ELLLO

## 2. ELF CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS WITH ELLLO

### 2.1 Listening Logs

In the authors' ELF course, students were asked to select audio or video texts from ELLLO and complete an online post-listening questionnaire. Students were encouraged to complete one listening log entry a day throughout the 15-day intensive course. The listening and logging tasks would take students approximately six to ten minutes on average to complete. At the end of the course, each student's log data was reviewed to establish an EL grade (10% of overall grade).

To facilitate the log keeping process, the authors created a post-listening questionnaire in Google Forms (see Figure 3 and Appendix A). The questionnaire included ten questions relating to the listening experience. All responses were funneled into an online spreadsheet (Google Sheets) which could be accessed by the teacher and students to track progress and share interesting listening content. Even though students were free to choose whichever text they wanted to listen to, at the beginning of the course, the instructors provided training on how to (a) use the website and log effectively on a PC and smartphone, and (b) how to navigate the ELLLO site (e.g., how to find appropriate level and dialogic texts, how to search for different accents, and how to evaluate listening comprehension).

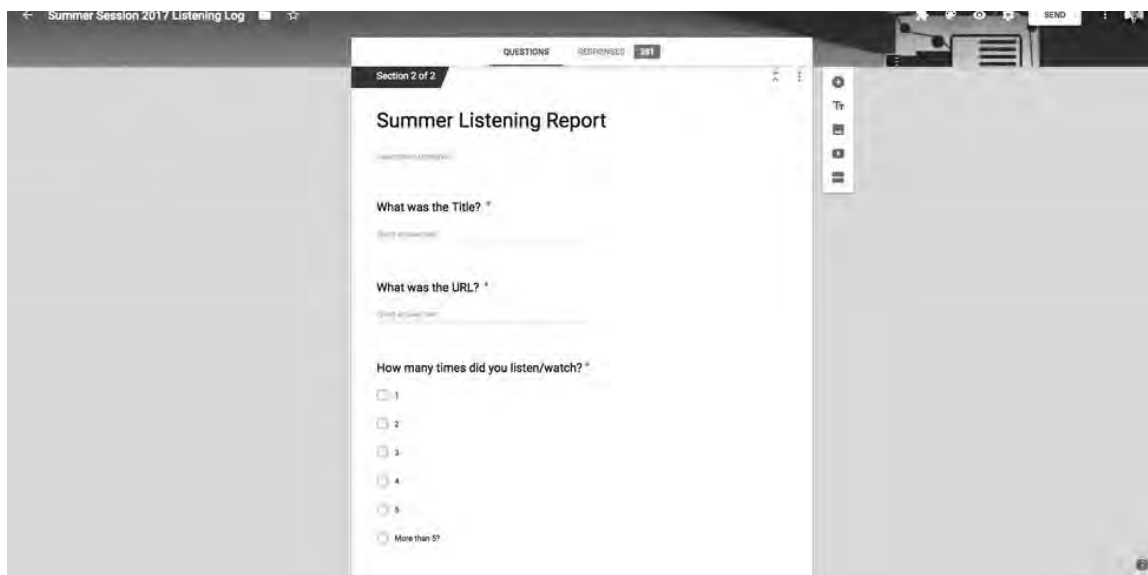
The image shows a screenshot of a Google Form titled "Summer Listening Report" displayed on a mobile device. The form is part of a "Summer Session 2017 Listening Log" and is currently on "Section 2 of 2". It contains three questions: "What was the Title? \*", "What was the URL? \*", and "How many times did you listen/watch? \*". The first two questions have text input fields. The third question has radio button options for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and "More than 5?". The form is overlaid on a blurred background of a smartphone home screen.

Figure 3. Example of the listening log used in this course

## 2.2 In-class Activities

### 2.2.1 Technical Training

In the classroom, at the beginning of the course, the teachers first introduced the ELLLO website using a PC. The procedure lasted approximately 10-15 minutes. To accommodate students' understanding of how to navigate the website, a worksheet was provided. Students were also trained on using the website and EL log on their smartphones so students could complete their homework more efficiently. For example, students were instructed on how to create links on their smartphone's home screen to the ELLLO mobile application and online listening log (Figure 4).




Figure 4. ELLLO and listening log links found on a student's phone's home screen

## 2.2.2 ELLLO Worksheets

In addition to the listening log component, a number of ELLLO’s downloadable worksheets featuring non-native English speakers were utilized in the classroom. Observed in Figure 5 below, ELLLO provides free, downloadable worksheets for a selection of listening texts that teachers or students can utilize for listening training. Activities include cloze exercises, speaking drills, vocabulary quizzes and vocabulary definitions. A useful addition to each worksheet is a QR code so students can quickly connect to listening texts with their smartphones.

[www.ello.org](http://www.ello.org)



**1439 Tips for Sri Lanka**  
Danu talks about a place in his home country of Sri Lanka.

**Widuri:** Okay, Danu. So I heard \_\_\_\_ Sri Lanka has \_\_\_\_ lot of beautiful places. Can you mention \_\_\_\_ famous one?

**Danu:** Yes. Sure, Widuri. Sri Lanka is beautiful island in South Asia. So I will talk about \_\_\_\_ famous temple known as Temple of \_\_\_\_ Tooth Relic.

**Widuri:** Tooth Relic?

**Danu:** Yes.

**Widuri:** Okay. Tooth Relic. What is it?

**Danu:** Tooth Relic. Tooth Relic is \_\_\_\_ tooth of Lord Buddha.

**Widuri:** Tooth?

**Danu:** Yes, tooth.

**Widuri:** Okay.

**Danu:** Yes. And \_\_\_\_ Temple of \_\_\_\_ Tooth Relic is *situated* in \_\_\_\_ city called Kandy.

**Widuri:** Kandy.

**Danu:** Yes. And I'm from Kandy as well.

**Widuri:** Oh yeah?

**Danu:** Yes.

**Widuri:** So it's close to \_\_\_\_ house?

**Danu:** My house is right next to \_\_\_\_ Temple of \_\_\_\_ Tooth Relic.

**Widuri:** Wow.

**Danu:** Yes.


**Widuri:** Okay. So tell me more about it.

**Danu:** Sure. So Temple of \_\_\_\_ Tooth Relic was \_\_\_\_ castle before.

**Widuri:** Castle.

**Danu:** Yes. There was \_\_\_\_ king *ruling* Sri Lanka. He's known as \_\_\_\_ last king of Sri Lanka. So in Sri Lanka, to become \_\_\_\_ king, you should *possess* \_\_\_\_ Temple of the – oh I'm sorry. You should, you must possess \_\_\_\_ Tooth Relic.

**Widuri:** Okay.



**Right Word!**  
Fill in the blanks with one of the words below.

- this      • some
- that     • any
- a         • the

**Quiz**

- 1) Sri Lanka is \_\_\_\_.

a) a volcano  
b) an island  
c) a temple

- 2) Danu lives \_\_\_\_ the Temple of the Tooth Relic.

a) next to  
b) far away from  
c) in the same city as

- 3) The temple was \_\_\_\_ of the King.

a) the only possession  
b) a favorite place  
c) a castle

- 4) If you wanted to be king, you had to \_\_\_\_ the Tooth Relic.

a) eat  
b) steal  
c) win

- 5) How is the relic displayed?

a) In a golden casket.  
b) With a lot of flowers.  
c) On a special tusker.

**Vocabulary**

**situated**

The Tooth Relic is *situated* in the city called Kandy.

Situated means located or placed. Sometimes the word is not needed but it is added for emphasis. Notice the following:

1. The pool is situated near a garden.
2. The exits are situated in the back.

**ruling**

There was a king *ruling* Sri Lanka.

When a person rules over an area, they have power to make decisions over people in the region. Notice the following:

1. He ruled the kingdom with an iron fist!
2. The people were ruled by the king.

**possess**

You must possess the Tooth Relic.

When you possess something you have ownership of it.

1. He possesses several nice cars.

Figure 5. Example of an ELLLO worksheet



### 2.2.3 Other Classroom Activities

During the ELF course, some other listening tasks were incorporated by the authors using ELLLO texts. These included:

- Shadowing
- Students re-creating ad-hoc versions of the text as a speaking task.
- Bottom-up listening activities. Two warm-up type activities included asking students to listen and mark changes of intonation and making a sentence or an utterance from the text and asking students to count the number of words. (Teachers interested in bottom-up approaches should see Siegel and Siegel [2015] for a detailed explanation of bottom-up listening activities).
- Role-play

While this list reports on how the authors incorporated ELLLO in their ELF course, teachers ought to consider some of the other listening tasks for ELF students suggested by McBride (2016, p. 91) as well as Walker (2010, p. 95-96) who focuses on using listening tasks to improve pronunciation skills.

## 3. DISCUSSION

Correlatively to the implementation of ELLLO into the ELF classroom, Björkman (2013), mentioned her suggestions for inclusion of ELF principles within the classroom as important for “providing the learner with modern and broad-based descriptions of language” (p. 191). After implementing ELLLO in their ELF class, the authors observed that the students were motivated to listen due to the variety of topics and themes. Moreover, students appeared to enjoy the challenge of trying to comprehend different accents. According to the listening log data, a large number of students mentioned that the listening texts in ELLLO were interesting.

The listening log component described in this paper also allowed the teachers to indirectly train students to become better independent language learners. This was achieved by introducing how to use technology and online resources for language learning purposes. ELLLO allows students to practice and fulfill a variety of different tasks such as watching a video clip, listening to an interview, reading the transcript, studying vocabulary, reviewing keywords and taking quizzes. As was introduced by Kruk (2013), digital resources introduced in this way can generate a more contextualized setting than a traditional classroom environment (p. 253). Moreover, as students are only accustomed to using digital devices in limited capacities, adding ELLLO into an English lesson creates chances for students to utilize their digital skills for language learning. Moreover, as students could access ELLLO via PC or smartphone, they could study anytime anywhere, which promotes greater autonomous learning.

Magasic (2016), in addition, noted Björkman’s (2013) recommendations for a more ELF informed classroom which involved the use of materials with a *variety of accents* to make an English course relevant to the ELF paradigm. ELLLO presents

a variety of Englishes shown in a wide range of communicative situations which can help raise students' ELF awareness. Having foreknowledge of the speakers' countries of origin while utilizing authentic listening materials in ELLLO prepares students to understand communication in ELF contexts where speakers have different mother tongues. Exposure to ELF communication helps learners understand that it is acceptable to speak with an intelligible accent and that encourages students to broaden their view of English as a Lingua Franca.

#### 4. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE PLANS

Extensive listening for the ELF classroom with ELLLO represents an effort by the authors to incorporate one ELF feature into their classroom. In its current form, this was a pilot study conducted with a small class. A study involving a much larger number of students is being undertaken to observe the effectiveness of the content on ELLLO for promoting listening skills and ELF awareness. The logs considered students' listening difficulties, and hopefully, this data can be utilized to enhance teaching methods and the selection of materials which effectively foster students listening fluency for ELF contexts. Also, in a future study, students' listening abilities will be measured before and after the treatment.

We hope our paper has presented a practical solution for listening instruction in ELF classrooms and that it encourages ELF teachers to consider how they can more effectively train students to become confident users of English as a Lingua Franca.

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# APPENDIX A

## Listening Log

11/21/2017

Extensive Listening Log

### Extensive Listening Log

A log of all extensive listening tasks completed in Spring 2017

~ Required

1. What is your name? \*

Mark only one oval.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1a7pvvMaoeTX7bdTkH5tgalH5KYfE3cpO6N3xIDWv688/ed4>

11

**2. Which class' homework is this report for? \****Mark only one oval.*

- 8/1  
 8/2  
 8/4  
 8/5  
 8/7  
 8/8  
 8/10  
 8/14  
 8/17  
 8/18  
 8/21  
 8/22  
 8/23  
 9/1  
 9/2

**Summer Listening Report****3. What was the Title? \***

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**4. What was the URL? \***

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**5. How many times did you listen/watch? \****Mark only one oval.*

- 1  
 2  
 3  
 4  
 5  
 More than 5?

**6. Was the listening monologic or dialogic? \****Mark only one oval.*

- Monologic  
 Dialogic

**7. Did you use English subtitles? \****Mark only one oval.*

- No  
 Yes

**8. What listening problems did you face? \***

*Check all that apply.*

- No listening problems
- Unknown vocabulary
- Couldn't focus on the next part because you were thinking about the previous section/words/concepts
- Couldn't chunk streams of speech
- Quickly forgot what was heard
- Could not understand the speaker(s) accent
- Could understand the words, BUT NOT the message/idea
- Could not understand the end of the story because you could not understand the introduction
- The speech was too fast
- Technological problems (e.g., video stopped, smartphone battery, file problems)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**9. What did you like about this listening? \***

*Check all that apply.*

- The topic was interesting
- The story was easy to follow
- The speakers accents
- The conversation was dialogic
- The conversation was monologic
- The video/pictures were interesting
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Reflection: Why did you choose this file? Did you like the content? How were the accents? What will you do differently next time? \***

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