

The Impact of Teaching Listening Comprehension by Audio and Video Aids on the Intermediate EFL Learners Listening Proficiencies

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Abstract: The instructing of listening comprehension at Iranian EFL contexts has been done in different strategies, for example, by doing fruition, correspondence, summarizing, note-taking, etc. Anyway, the consequence of the learners' listening proficiencies doesn't demonstrate the most extreme outcome. Therefore, the current research tried to investigate the effects of audio and video aids on teaching listening among Iranian intermediate EFL learners. To do this study, the researcher selected 40 homogeneous intermediate students and divided them into two equal groups. The two groups were the experimental groups (n=20) and a control groups (n=20). Then a listening comprehension pre-test was administered to assess the participants' listening comprehension at the beginning of the course. After the pre-test, the researcher practiced the treatment on the experimental groups. During the treatment sessions, The EG was taught by using authentic video, while the CG used audio Compact Disc (CD) as the teaching aid most often used by ESL teachers in teaching listening. After the treatment, the researcher administered a post-test to find out the effect of audio and video aids on teaching listening. When the data were collected, Independent and Paired Samples T-tests were run to analyze them. The means score of the posttests from the EG was higher than that of the control group. Moreover, the t test for the EG was higher than that for the CG which meant that the improvement in the EG was significantly higher than the listening achievements of the CG. The EG students taught by using audio and video achieved higher results in listening than the CG ones taught by audio compact disc (CD). As a result, the alternative hypothesis was accepted and null hypothesis was rejected which meant that there was a significant improvement in terms of listening achievements after the use of audio and video treatment.

Keywords: Audio-Visual Aids, Authentic Video, Teaching Listening

1. Introduction

Iranian students must be able to comprehend what individuals say to them in English as foreign language learners. It's because the respondents should be able to comprehend each other in communication in order to get the communication going well. If one of the respondents fails to comprehend the speech of his opponent because he fails to listen and gives no adequate response, the goals of communication may not be well accomplished. The students' listening skills should therefore receive better attention from the lecturer as listening is one of the language skills that cannot be overlooked [1].

Listening skills of learners of foreign language is not

derived naturally, as the language itself is not implemented in communication with society. Only in the classroom or among other foreign language learners on campus can students be able to exercise their listening. Students and lecturers are involved in the classroom listening process [2]. Some lists of exercises from a variety of listening materials are provided to the learners in the classroom. Probably the primary source of student listening is their lecturer's voice. It's because a lecturer talks about teaching learning process as he provides his students some directions and they should comprehend him. On the other side, listening to the lecturer can only be boring and monotonous; indeed, listening to other supplemented materials such as native speaker records could generate difficult experiences [3].

[4] In his book *Teaching by Principles* says that if it

provides some useful feedback to the learners, a classroom method has a good opportunity of achievement. The learners are attending the course because it's fun, exciting, difficult and not because their teacher needs some understanding from the course or reward. So, it will definitely be possible to provide some genuine listening materials to motivate students to join listening course [5].

A lot of listening materials have recently been obtained from recorded extracts, e.g. on CDs, tape records, videos, etc. It is claimed that generally a textbook with associated audiotapes is used to teach 'university-level listening classes. Some texts and some educators have been adding some video materials more lately. Although there have been many anecdotal reports about how motivating video is, few severe video use studies have been carried out [6].

Although, the significance of listening for second or foreign language acquisition is recognized, there is a lack of understanding on how to develop listening skill between learners and teachers. Listening has also received less research attention than other skills. Considering this issue, this field seems to require many more exploratory studies which might give us informative principles about pedagogy and research in relation to listening. Listening plays a crucial role in communication. It is believed that, from the total time spent on communicating, listening takes up 40-50%; speaking, 25-30%; reading, 11-16%; and writing, about 9% [7, 8]. Although teaching of listening comprehension has long been somehow ignored and poorly taught aspect of English in many EFL programs [9], listening is now considered as a much important skill in EFL classes and also in SLA research. Listening is an active process of comprehending and constructing meaning from both verbal and non-verbal messages [10]. Thus, it should not be labeled as a passive skill.

This assumption may be rooted in the fact that superficially learners seem to only sit in a language lab quietly, listen to some pre-recorded dialogues, and write the answers to some questions related to the oral stimulus. It is evident, then, that listening is not as passive as it has been claimed to be as it demands a number of complicated processes on the part of the learners. In normal listening laboratory classes, students listen to some educational listening tapes adopted for their level [11]. Although these materials are valuable, it seems to be a gap between what learners listen to in the lab and what they really listen in normal conversations in real life. There must be a solution to bridge this gap.

This research was started because the writer was concerned about the poor results of teaching listening to English to intermediate students. One of the basic competencies in the Curriculum that students have to learn is to be able to understand spoken and written texts expressing hopes and prayers, suggestions, offers, opinions/thoughts and their responses. These students are expected to be able to communicate their feelings in interpersonal conversations accurately and fluently. They also have to be able to respond to other people's feelings and expressions appropriately. The next basic competency for these students is to be able to construct spoken and written texts for expressing hopes and

prayers, suggestions, offers, opinions, thoughts and their responses. These students are also required to be able to respond appropriately to the meanings within the previous spoken and written texts, accurately and fluently [12].

Generally, these basic competencies cannot be achieved easily by the students. The listening standards are particularly difficult for the ESL learners where their exposure to English is limited. In order to cope with these challenges, teachers have to properly organize their listening lessons prior to the class. They need to carefully design their teaching strategies in order to successfully transfer the listening materials and skills to their ESL listening students [13].

This study aims to optimize the use of authentic videos to try to overcome some of the listening difficulties encountered by the students. Based on an interview with the English teacher at Iranian private institutes, it was found that they had tried several methods to deal with this problem. For example, they had already tried a direct method to enhance the students' listening skills. However, it seemed that that method did not significantly help develop the students' listening abilities. The communicative approach and the task-based approach had also been tried in the classroom by encouraging different listening practices in terms of short and long conversations with the students. Even though these approaches had enhanced the students' speaking abilities, it seemed that the students still had difficulties in understanding the conversations or recordings if the information was not familiar to them [14]. As a result, this led to an information gap between the recordings and the students. In order to enhance the students' listening skills, the author decided to concentrate on the use of authentic videos as audio visual aids to help the students learn to listen and understand spoken English better [15].

The use of audio-visual aids in language teaching has gained much importance nowadays. [16] Mentions several learning resources that can be considered as audio-visual aids viz: television programs, video films, motion pictures, synchronized audio-slide projectors, computers and computer-assisted instructions. [17] Has written that the term audio-visual is a compound word from audio and visual. Audio materials refer to those that can be heard and that are recorded in digital audio files, tapes or CDs. Every recorded dialogue, speech or song in English can be audio material for an ESL classroom. Then, visuals are materials that can be seen like pictures, posters, graphics, videos, charts, flash cards and of course films.

This study emphasized the use of video as an audio-visual aid for improving students' listening skills especially the use of authentic videos. This medium was selected to enhance the students' familiarity with normal rates of speaking English by native speakers. [18] Makes the point that learners should be fed as rich a diet of authentic data as possible. He asserts that if they only ever encounter contrived dialogues and listening texts, their learning tasks will be made more difficult in real life. Therefore, it is important for learners to listen to and to read authentic materials, indeed as many different kinds as possible. More importantly, this study was not only done to

investigate the efficiency of using authentic videos for teaching listening, but also to see the students' achievements for each aspect or sub-skill of listening after being taught by using authentic videos.

This study aimed to answer the following question:

RQ 1. Is there any significant difference in listening achievements among students taught listening using authentic videos and those who are taught using audio-compact discs (CDs)?

2. Review of the Literature

2.1. Listening

Listening has been defined by many researchers. [19] Defined listening as the ability to understand native speech at normal speed. [20] Said listening involves auditory discrimination, aural grammar, selecting necessary information, remembering it, and connecting it to the process between sound and form of meaning. According to [21], listening differs in meaning from sound discrimination to aural comprehension. [22] Defined listening as a process of understanding what is heard and organizing it into lexical elements to which meaning can be allocated. [23] Demonstrated that listening is understanding the oral language. Students hear oral speech, divide sounds, classify them into lexical and syntactic units, and comprehend the message. Listening is a process of receiving what the speaker says, making and showing meaning, negotiating meaning with the speaker and answering, and creating meaning by participation, creativity, and empathy. According to [24], listening is the process of receiving, making meaning from, and answering to spoken and/or nonverbal messages. [25] Defined listening as a complex process of interpretation in which listeners match what they hear with what they already know. According [25], listening helps us to understand the world around us and is one of the necessary elements in creating successful communication.

There are two distinct processes or strategies involved in listening; the top-down process and the bottom-up process. [26] Has written that listening is a combination or dual process. The two processes occur simultaneously and thus they are interrelated. Listeners use 'bottom-up' processing when they use linguistic knowledge to understand the meaning of a message. They build meaning from lower level sounds to words to grammatical relationships to lexical meanings in order to arrive at the final message [27]. Bottom-up processing helps students recognize lexical and pronunciation features to understand the text. Because of their direct focus on language forms at the word and sentence levels, bottom-up exercises are particularly beneficial for lower level students who need to expand their language repertoire. [28] Has said that when students become more aware of linguistic features of the input, then the speed and accuracy of perceiving and processing aural input will increase. In order to develop bottom-up processing, students can be asked to distinguish individual sounds, word boundaries, and stressed syllables, identify

thought groups, listen for intonation patterns in utterances, identify grammatical forms and functions, recognize contractions and connected speech and recognize linking words [29].

2.1.1. Listening for the Main Idea

Understanding the main idea in a voiced listening passage is an important listening skill in a similar way that understanding the main idea in a written passage is an important reading skill. The main idea is the major point of a statement or passage [28], it is the general broad concept of all the words expressed. It is the big idea, without any of the smaller details or additional unrelated information. The topic sentences of paragraphs contain main ideas which are often stated first. It is very common for the listening section in the National Final Examination (Ujian Akhir Nasional) to have questions about the overall idea in the listening material. Such questions may be worded in a variety of ways, for example, the students can be asked to identify the topic, the subject, the primary idea, or the main idea. These questions are really asking the primary point the speaker is trying to get across in what he is saying in the recording [30, 31].

2.1.2. Listening for General Understanding (Listening for Gist)

Listening for such 'general' comprehension means not stopping for every word, nor analyzing everything that the speaker includes in the text [32]. By encouraging students to have a quick listen to the recording before plunging into it for detail, teachers help them to get a general understanding of what it is all about. This will help them when and if they listen for more specific information [33]. Gist reading and listening, to get the "gist" of something is not a lazy option. The reader or listener has made a choice not to attend to every detail at first, but to use their processing powers to get the gist, i.e. more of a top-down view, of what is being said.

2.1.3. Listening for Specific Information

This sub-skill is applied when the students listen to something because they want to discover a particular piece of information. They know in advance, what kind of thing they are hoping to find out so they can ignore other information that does not interest them. Example, listening to a weather report to find out about the weather in your part of the country. In contrast to listening for gist, students frequently go to the spoken text when they want specific details [32, 34]. They may listen to the news, only concentrating when the particular item that interests them comes up. In the case of reading, they may quickly look through a film review to find the name of the director or the star. In both cases, the students ignore almost all the other information until they start to hear about the specific item that they are listening for.

2.2. The Use of Authentic Materials

The use of authentic materials in the classroom has been supported by many researchers. One of the first researchers to propose this notion was [35] who pointed out that authentic learning experiences provide learners an opportunity to

acquire the target language. [36] Has also stated that the language of the real world is what learners need to be exposed to because that language is uncompromising towards the learner and reflects real world goals and situations. Therefore, authentic materials need to be presented to the language learners because they reflect how the language is used in authentic communication. The application of authentic materials can also enhance the students' familiarity with forms of the language and its use in communications. Professionals in favor of using authentic materials assert that exposure to authentic materials should be introduced to learners at the earliest stages of language learning [37, 38] have claimed that early exposure to authentic texts will aid students to develop useful strategies for more complex tasks later on. Similarly, [39] have written that using authentic materials paves the way for students to experience real-world language learning materials. The findings of the above-mentioned studies have indicated that authentic materials can be useful in many ways. Such materials introduce students to how language is used in the real world and improve their overall language proficiency as well as improving reading and listening skills, communicative competence, and lexical and stylistic knowledge [40].

A variety of audio-visual (AV) aids are now being used for developing listening ability. Several studies have looked at the effectiveness of AV for teaching listening as this paper intends to do. As mentioned earlier, there are many advantages of using videos according to various experts. Furthermore, several researchers have used DVD movies as motivation for teaching learning listening e. g. [41]. He studied the use of DVD feature films in the EFL classroom to motivate students to learn to listen to English. He compared and assessed the use of captioned vs. non-captioned films with different learner levels. and developed selection criteria for choosing appropriate films. He used DVD feature films because DVD offered a variety of special features, including interactive menus, theatrical trailers, behind the scenes commentary, day-to-day language and subtitles and immediate scene access. Research has indicated that DVD feature films provide enjoyable language learning opportunities for students. The teacher should choose appropriate length films, either complete ones or segments, which are purposeful and tailored to students' learning needs and proficiency levels. Both captioned and non-captioned films benefit students in various ways. A teacher can aim at different aspects of language, by using both types of movies alternately. English-captioned films are a rich source of instructional material that provide good examples and excellent content in oral communication [42].

[43] Explores effect of using video materials in teaching of listening skills for university students. The purposes of this study were: (1) to foster listening skills of university students studying English with the use of video materials, and (2) to evaluate students' attitudes towards the use of video materials in teaching listening skills. The participants of this study were 41 first-year English major students in the second semester of the academic year 2012 at Thanks in University, Thailand.

They were selected by simple random sampling. The study was conducted over 20 teaching periods. The one-group pretest-posttest design was implemented in this study. The results showed the students' English listening comprehension ability increased significantly after learning with videos and students had positive attitudes towards using videos in teaching listening skills.

[44] Investigates effectiveness of using descriptive videos in learning listening. This research is aimed to determine impact of using descriptive video in learning listening to find out students' ability in learning listening at first year of SMK Islamiyah Ciputat. The method used in this research is the quasi-experiment with pretest posttest control group design. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded the use of descriptive videos to learn listening has a significant impact on students' listening ability.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

This study included 40 students who were chosen from classes at an English language institute. They took a placement test and their proficiency was determined as intermediate level through Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT). All of these students were male, ranging in age from 16 to 22. Then they were divided into two equal groups. The learners were randomly divided into two groups of 20, one experimental and one control group.

3.2. Instrumentation

The first instrument which was utilized in the present study to homogenize the participants was a proficiency test. This test was OQPT which was answered by all the participants in the current study. This instrument was used to gather information on the learners' proficiency. The second instrument was a listening pre-test. To realize current participants' listening comprehension level, a researcher-made pre-test was designed based on the students' materials. It was a listening comprehension test of 40 objective items including filling the blanks, true or false items, and multiple-choice items. After the treatment, a modified version of the pre-test was used for the post-test as the third instrument of the current study and it was given to the participants to assess their listening comprehension after the treatment period and to measure the impacts of interactive feedback on their listening comprehension skill. Validities of the pre-test and post-test were confirmed by two English experts. They were piloted among 10 intermediate EFL learners and their reliabilities indexes were calculated through KR-21 formula and they were 0.89 (pre-test) and 0.91 (post-test).

3.3 Procedure

In order to elicit relevant data from the respondents, the researcher administered the Oxford Placement Test to realize the participants' homogeneity level. Then the listening

comprehension pre-test was administered to assess the participants' listening comprehension at the beginning of the course. After the pre-test, the researcher practiced the treatment on the both groups. The treatment took 15 listening sessions, each one hour. All groups had the same materials and time of instruction. The EG was taught by using authentic videos as an audio-visual aid and the CG, by contrast, was taught using the audio recording usually used by the teacher for teaching listening. In spite of the different methods, both groups had similar materials provided by the researcher. Finally, a post-test of listening comprehension was employed after ten-session treatment to gather data. After collecting the data, they were analyzed through SPSS software, version 25.

3.4. Data Analysis Procedures

For answering the research questions, after gathering the needed data the researcher analyzed the data with the help of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) software version 25. Finally, Independent and Paired Samples t-tests were run to find out the effectiveness of audio-visual aids on teaching listening and also to compare the performance of control group with experimental group.

4. Results

This section analyzes the data collected based on the data collection procedure of section three. Independent Samples T-test and Paired Samples T-test were used to analyze the data; the results are reported in the following tables.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test).

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	EG	20	13.5500	.80948	.18101
	CG	20	13.2250	2.02273	.45230

Table 1 indicates the descriptive statistics of both experimental and control groups in the pre-test. As the results shows both groups performed almost equally in the pre-test.

Table 2. Independent Samples t-Test (Pre-test).

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest	Equal variances assumed	.836	.366	.667	38	.509
	Equal variances not assumed			.667	24.934	.511

Based on table 2, the significance value (.667) is higher than 0.05, so the difference between the pre-test of experimental and control groups is not significant at ($p < 0.05$). Both groups got almost the same listening scores in the pre-test.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics (Post-test).

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	EG	20	18.6750	.71221	.15925
	CG	20	15.5750	1.01664	.22733

Table 3 reports the control and experimental groups' scores in the post-test; as it is shown clearly above, the mean of experimental group in the post-test is 18.6750 and the mean of control group is 15.5750. It can be concluded that the authentic videos as an audio-visual aid had positive effects on the experimental participants' listening.

Table 4. Independent Samples t-Test (Post-test).

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Posttest	Equal variances assumed	3.411	.073	11.169	38	.000
	Equal variances not assumed			11.169	34.029	.000

Since the Sig. (.000) is less than the 0.05, the difference between the post-test of experimental and control groups is significant at ($p < 0.05$). According to the results of the Independent Samples t-test, the EG students who were taught using authentic videos performed significantly better than the CG students who were taught using audio materials only.

Table 5. Paired Samples t-Test (Pre vs. Post-test).

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	EG. Post – EG. Pre	5.12500	1.28631	.28763	17.818	19	.000
Pair 2	CG. Post – CG. Pre	2.35000	2.49262	.55737	4.216	19	.000

Since the Sig. is smaller than the 0.05, the difference between the pre and the post-test of the control group is

significant at ($p < 0.05$). The second t-test shows that the Sig. is less than the 0.05, the difference between the pre and the post-test of the experimental group is significant ($p < 0.05$). Thus, there was much more improvement in the EG compared to the CG. The EG, taught using authentic video, got a much more significant improvement than the CG, taught using audio compact discs (CD), the usual listening aid used by the teacher for teaching listening.

5. Discussion

The post-test results and the independent t-test from the EG was significantly higher than that from the CG which means that the implementation of authentic video positively influenced the students' listening skills. From the data analysis of the pre-test and posttest obtained from the EG, it can be seen that listening for specific information was the most enhanced listening sub-skill after the application of authentic video as an audio-visual aid. Although the other listening sub skills, listening for the main ideas, listening for the gist, and listening for detailed information also increased, listening for specific information improved more significantly than the other listening sub-skills. Using authentic video in the language classroom can be quite challenging for the students, but it was also more interesting at the same time. This could be due to the fact that using authentic video may bring the content and the subject matter to life for them that enabled them to make important connections in the world beyond the classroom. According to the analysis of the findings and the discussions, using authentic video as an audio-visual aid was a successful method for improving teaching of listening. However, some limitations may arise when applying this aid. The writer suggests further studies be done using a variety of authentic videos in order to obtain more information about their effectiveness for teaching-learning listening as well as for the other English skills in order to enrich our knowledge about the use of authentic video.

The results of this study also highlight the importance of supplementing textbooks and their accompanying materials with more useful resources. Classroom teachers need to realize the limitations of the textbooks they choose to use in their classes and make efforts to compensate for their shortcomings. Classroom teachers could upgrade their knowledge about language teaching and expose themselves to the most current pedagogical developments and new teaching materials. Teachers could be encouraged to complement their textbooks with additional materials that they consider beneficial to their students. Audio-visual aids can encourage learners to actively participate in class as it was shown in the audio-visual group and can increase their motivation toward classroom activities.

6. Conclusions

In the light of these findings, language teachers, especially in EFL contexts, can incorporate authentic video-taped materials into their language education processes, follow its principles in

the L2 classroom, provide L2 learners with rich comprehensible input, engage them in interactive activities or productive language use, such as teacher-student talks, small-group discussions, role plays, semi-structured interviews, and pragmatic assessment tasks, grant them pragmatic comment or information on the input features, raise students awareness towards pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of pragmatic competence, and help them make significant gains in pragmatic ability in the FL classroom.

Teachers should be well-trained in the use of video and how best to exploit its inherent advantages in a learning environment. Furthermore, the selection of the video content should be appropriate to the level of students' English proficiency. The topics of the content should be matched to their interests and their background knowledge in order to motivate them to learn. Authentic video material needs to be carefully chosen to ensure the level of difficulty is appropriate and the content is of interest to students. Videos containing difficult vocabulary or ungrammatical or incomplete structures should not be used. This includes videos in which the spoken language might contain many difficult or unneeded English idioms and expressions, or the rhythm, tone and phonological systems have different features from the students' first language which could contribute to misunderstanding or be difficult for non-native listeners to understand the content. Thus, students might not be able to discriminate the reduced or incomplete forms of language while they were watching the videos. In addition, [45] further explained that when the speaking rate is too fast, listeners will not have enough time to process the complete messages. This means that they will focus their attention more on lexical or grammatical processing than the meaning of the text. Therefore, they would not catch all the messages conveyed. Further research could seek to describe meticulously what teachers should precisely do with these videos in their own classrooms. It is also recommended other studies be conducted to investigate how students be trained to use such visual materials in their language learning. Moreover, teachers should encourage their students to use authentic videos in their learning inside and outside the class, emanating from the privilege these materials are highly beneficial in fostering mastery of English. Teachers also need to improve their ability in digesting videos' content in teaching English to change the way a given item is presented. This diverse effort will ultimately highlight constructiveness and feasibility of authentic videos, in a bid to use them effectively in textbooks, taking into account how to integrate such resources and to utilize them to bolster learners' oral performance. This will likely conduce to accrediting new syllabi relying heavily on authentic materials, in an endeavor to develop the EFL learners' prosodic competence.

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