DEVELOPING STUDENTS' LISTENING SKILLS THROUGH MODERN TECHNOLOGIES

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Abstract: Listening comprehension is an essential part of learning English, yet students may find it difficult to understand natural speech, unfamiliar vocabulary, and different accents. Modern technologies, including podcasts, educational videos, interactive platforms, and artificial intelligence tools, can provide additional opportunities for listening practice. This article discusses how digital resources may support listening development and identifies practical principles for using them in English language teaching. The article is based on a review and thematic analysis of selected literature rather than original experimental data. It argues that technology is most useful when it is integrated with clear learning objectives, guided tasks, feedback, and learner reflection.

Keywords: listening comprehension, educational technology, English language teaching, digital learning, EFL learners.

Introduction

Listening is one of the four principal language skills and plays an important role in communication. When learners listen to English, they need to recognize sounds, understand words and grammatical structures, and interpret meaning in context. These processes can be challenging, especially when speakers talk quickly or use unfamiliar accents and expressions.

Digital technologies have expanded the range of resources available to language teachers and students. Learners can access podcasts, videos, online exercises, and mobile applications both inside and outside the classroom. The purpose of this article is to examine how these resources can support listening comprehension and to offer practical recommendations for their use.

Literature Review

Listening instruction involves more than playing a recording and asking students to answer questions. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) emphasize the importance of listening strategies and metacognitive awareness. Students benefit when they learn to plan how to listen, monitor their understanding, and evaluate what they have understood.

Multimedia resources may also support learning when audio and visual information are appropriately combined. Mayer (2021) explains that

multimedia learning depends on how learners select, organize, and integrate information. For listening lessons, visuals can clarify context, but unnecessary images or on-screen text may distract learners. Therefore, digital materials should be chosen according to the lesson objectives and students' proficiency levels.

Methodology

This article uses a qualitative, literature-based approach. Selected academic books and educational resources were reviewed to identify recurring themes related to technology-supported listening instruction. The analysis focused on four themes: access to authentic spoken English, opportunities for repeated practice, feedback and learner autonomy, and potential limitations. No original experiment or survey was conducted; therefore, the article presents a discussion of existing ideas and practical teaching recommendations rather than new empirical findings.

Discussion

Authentic audio and video materials

Podcasts, interviews, short documentaries, and educational videos expose learners to different speakers and real communicative contexts. Teachers can use a three-stage lesson: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening. Before listening, students predict the topic and review essential vocabulary. During listening, they identify the main idea or specific details. After listening, they summarize the content or discuss it with a partner.

Interactive platforms and mobile learning

Interactive tools can combine audio or video with comprehension questions, gap-fill activities, and immediate feedback. Mobile devices also allow students to repeat difficult sections and practise at a convenient time. To keep this practice purposeful, teachers can ask students to maintain a listening journal that records the material, the main idea, new vocabulary, and difficulties encountered.

Opportunities and limitations of AI tools

AI-supported tools may help teachers create practice questions, explain vocabulary, or adapt tasks to students' proficiency levels. However, generated content should be checked for accuracy and suitability. Students should also continue listening to authentic human speech rather than relying exclusively on synthetic voices or automatically generated dialogues.

Technology does not guarantee successful learning by itself. Students may be distracted by unrelated content, and not all learners have equal access to devices or reliable internet. Teachers should therefore select resources carefully, set clear objectives, and provide guidance and feedback.

Practical Recommendations

The following recommendations can help teachers integrate technology effectively:

- Choose materials that match students' proficiency levels and lesson objectives.
- Ask students to listen for a clear purpose, such as identifying the main idea or specific information.
- Use subtitles strategically: first listen without them, then check difficult sections with captions if needed.
- Include reflection and feedback so learners can identify what they understood and what remains difficult.
- Provide alternatives for students who have limited access to devices or the internet.

Conclusion

Modern technologies can enrich English listening instruction by providing varied materials, flexible practice, and interactive activities. Podcasts, videos, mobile resources, and AI-supported tools may be useful when they are integrated into structured teaching. The teacher remains essential in setting objectives, selecting appropriate materials, supporting listening strategies, and giving feedback. Further classroom research could examine how particular tools affect listening performance among learners in different educational contexts.

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