

Developing English listening skills using multimedia for secondary school students

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Abstract

The study explores the use of multimedia resources in developing English listening skills among secondary school students. The research found that multimedia-based instruction significantly improved listening comprehension and increased motivation, engagement, and confidence. This suggests that multimedia can bridge the gap between classroom learning and authentic language use, helping students develop critical thinking and cultural awareness. The study recommends teachers adopt technology-enhanced strategies to improve listening outcomes and suggests further research to explore the long-term effects of multimedia learning and its integration with other language skills.

Keywords: English listening skills, multimedia, secondary school students

Introduction

Listening is one of the most essential skills in second language acquisition, serving as the foundation for communication and comprehension. It provides input for learners to process and respond meaningfully, making it central to the development of other skills such as speaking, reading, and writing (Brown, 2014). However, English listening comprehension has been widely recognized as a challenging area for secondary school students, particularly in contexts where English is taught as a foreign language. Learners often struggle with different accents, fast speech rates, unfamiliar vocabulary, and limited exposure to authentic listening materials (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). These difficulties are compounded when instruction relies heavily on traditional teaching methods, such as rote memorization or grammar-focused lessons, which rarely prepare students for real-life listening tasks. To address these challenges, educators and researchers have emphasized the role of multimedia in enhancing language learning. Multimedia refers to the integration of text, sound, images, video, and interactivity in teaching and learning environments (Mayer, 2009). When applied to English language instruction, multimedia can provide authentic listening input through films, podcasts, songs, and interactive applications, thereby simulating real-world communication. This exposure enables learners to practice comprehension in meaningful contexts while simultaneously developing cultural awareness and critical thinking (Zhang, 2018). Furthermore, multimedia-based learning has been found to increase motivation and learner autonomy. According to Mayer's (2009) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, the combination of verbal and visual input allows learners to process information more effectively. In language classrooms, multimedia creates a multisensory learning environment that caters to diverse learning styles, promotes active engagement, and enhances retention. Research by Bensalem (2018) also found that students exposed to multimedia resources showed higher levels of interest and confidence in their listening abilities compared to those taught with conventional methods. In the context of secondary education, integrating multimedia into English instruction is particularly relevant. Adolescents are generally familiar with digital technologies and often use multimedia in their daily lives for entertainment and communication. By incorporating these resources into classroom activities, teachers can bridge the gap between students' personal experiences and academic learning. Moreover, multimedia-based instruction aligns with 21st-century learning frameworks that emphasize digital literacy, communication, and critical thinking skills (Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 2019). Given these benefits, this study investigates the effectiveness of multimedia resources in developing English listening skills among secondary school students. Specifically, it explores how the integration of videos, audio recordings, and interactive applications can improve students' comprehension and engagement in the listening process. The study also examines learners' attitudes toward

multimedia-supported instruction, offering insights into its pedagogical implications. The findings aim to contribute to the growing body of research on technology-enhanced language learning and provide practical recommendations for teachers seeking innovative methods to strengthen listening proficiency.

The research falls under English Language Teaching (ELT) with a focus on developing listening comprehension skills. More specifically, it belongs to the field of applied linguistics and educational technology, since it investigates how multimedia tools (videos, audio recordings, interactive apps) can be used to improve listening skills in secondary education.

1. Use of Multimedia Resources

1) **Audio recordings & podcasts** → expose students to different accents, intonation, and authentic dialogues.

2) **Videos (movies, news, YouTube, TED Talks)** → combine visual and auditory input, helping learners use body language, facial expressions, and context clues.

3) **Songs & music** → improve rhythm, pronunciation, and vocabulary retention in a fun way.

4) **Interactive applications & language learning platforms** → allow learners to control playback, repeat, and practice comprehension at their own pace.

2. Teaching Strategies with Multimedia

1) Pre-listening Stage

- Activate prior knowledge (KWL chart, brainstorming).
- Introduce key vocabulary or background information.
- Predict content using visual aids (pictures, video preview).

2) While-listening Stage

- Provide focused listening tasks:
 - listen for main ideas,
 - identify specific information,
 - note key words.
- Use subtitles initially, then gradually remove them to build independence.
- Encourage multiple listenings (first for gist, later for details).

3) Post-listening Stage

- Engage students in discussions, role-plays, or summaries based on what they heard.
- Use multimedia clips as prompts for speaking and writing activities.
- Reflect on listening strategies: What worked? What was difficult?

3. Benefits of Multimedia for Listening Development

- Provides **authentic input** closer to real-life communication.
- Increases **motivation and engagement** (students enjoy videos, songs, apps).
- Supports **different learning styles** (auditory, visual, kinesthetic).
- Allows for **repeated and individualized practice** (pause, replay, slow speed).
- Enhances **cultural understanding** through exposure to diverse contexts.

4 Practical Examples

- Watching a short video clip (e.g., a news report) → students answer comprehension questions.
- Listening to a podcast → students identify the topic, speaker's opinion, and supporting details.
- Using a music video → students fill in missing lyrics, then discuss the message of the song.
- Applying apps like **BBC Learning English, Duolingo, or ESL Lab** for self-paced listening tasks.

5 Tips for Teachers

- Start with **short and simple materials**, then increase difficulty.
- Always **set clear objectives** (e.g., listening for gist, specific details, or tone).
- Provide **scaffolding** (subtitles, transcripts, guiding questions).
- Encourage **learner autonomy** by recommending multimedia for outside-class practice.
- Combine listening with **speaking, reading, and writing** for integrated skills development.

Characteristics of Developing English Listening Skills Using Multimedia

1. Authenticity

- Multimedia provides **authentic listening input**, such as conversations, news, songs, and interviews.
- Students are exposed to **real-life accents, intonation, and natural speed**, which traditional textbooks often lack.

2. Multisensory Learning

- Learners use **both auditory and visual channels** simultaneously (e.g., videos combine sound + images).
- This helps learners process information more effectively (Mayer, 2009 – Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning).

3. Interactivity and Engagement

- Multimedia resources (apps, websites, interactive videos) encourage **active participation** rather than passive listening.
- Students can pause, replay, answer quizzes, or interact with subtitles and transcripts.

4. Variety of Contexts

- Learners practice listening in **different situations**: conversations, lectures, songs, movies, podcasts.
- Exposure to **diverse accents and cultures** improves adaptability in real communication.

5. Motivation and Interest

- Multimedia (songs, films, games, apps) is enjoyable and **increases student motivation** compared to traditional drills.
- When students are engaged, they are more likely to persist in developing listening skills.

6. Flexibility and Accessibility

- Multimedia allows learners to **control pace** (pause, replay, adjust speed).
- Resources are accessible anytime via smartphones, tablets, or computers, promoting **autonomous learning**.

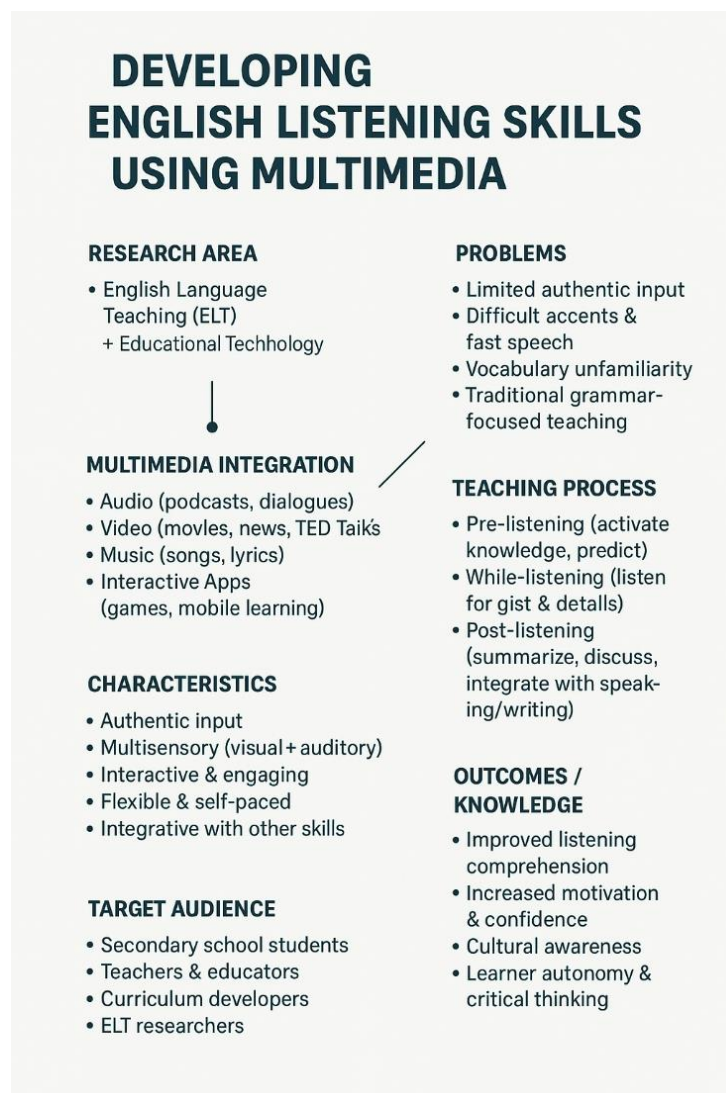
7. Integration with Other Skills

- Listening activities with multimedia can easily connect to **speaking, reading, and writing tasks** (e.g., listening to a video → summarizing → group discussion).
- This supports a **communicative and holistic approach**.

8. Support for Different Learning Styles

- Visual learners benefit from video and images.
- Auditory learners benefit from audio recordings and songs.
- Kinesthetic learners benefit from interactive apps and multimedia games.

Knowledge from Research



1. Nature of Listening Skill

Listening is a demanding skill that requires complex processing (listening, comprehending, interpreting, and inferring intent) (Brown, 2014). Learners often face problems with the speaker's speed, accent, and new vocabulary (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). Teaching listening skills should have clear steps, including pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening.

2. The Role of Multimedia in Listening Development

Multimedia provides authentic input through sound, video, music, and dialog. Supports multisensory learning through both visual and auditory channels (Mayer, 2009). Increase student motivation, interest, and engagement (Bensalem, 2018).

3. Instructional Strategies Learned

Using captioned videos helps build a bridge from beginner learners to listening without relying on subtitles. Podcasts and English language applications allow learners to listen repeatedly, adjust the speed, and learn at their convenience (self-paced learning). Integrating multimedia into activities such as discussions, summaries, or follow-up writing helps integrate listening skills with other skills.

4. Learner Outcomes and Benefits

Students who learn with multimedia have higher listening achievement than those who learn through traditional methods. Learners have a better attitude toward English, with increased confidence and motivation. Multimedia helps develop analytical thinking skills and cultural understanding through a variety of media.

5. Pedagogical Knowledge

Teachers should design multimedia listening activities with clear objectives. The use of media should align with the learners' ability levels and context. Multimedia should be used in conjunction with communicative teaching methods to develop real-life language use.

Summary of Knowledge Developing English listening skills with multimedia provides knowledge about Listening requires authentic and diverse input. Multimedia helps to reinforce motivation and create a natural learning environment. Using appropriate teaching strategies helps improve student achievement and positive attitudes.

Conclusion

The integration of multimedia tools into English listening instruction for secondary school students has proven to be highly effective in enhancing both engagement and language proficiency. Multimedia resources-such as educational videos, podcasts, interactive exercises, and language learning applications-offer diverse contexts and authentic listening materials that traditional textbooks often lack. By exposing students to various accents, speech rates, and real-life scenarios, multimedia helps learners develop not only their comprehension skills but also their ability to interpret meaning in different communicative situations.

Moreover, multimedia platforms provide opportunities for personalized, self-paced learning, allowing students to listen repeatedly, pause, and review materials as needed. This flexibility accommodates different learning styles and helps build students' confidence as they progress. The use of visual aids alongside audio content further aids understanding, making complex language structures and vocabulary more accessible.

The positive impact of multimedia on motivation and classroom participation has also been widely noted. Interactive tasks and immediate feedback keep students actively involved and encourage consistent practice, both inside and outside the classroom. As technology becomes increasingly central to education, the effective use of multimedia in developing English listening skills prepares students for the demands of the modern world.

In summary, multimedia not only enriches the learning experience but also addresses many challenges faced in traditional listening instruction. Its thoughtful integration into the secondary school curriculum is essential for fostering improved listening skills, greater language competence, and lifelong learning habits among students.

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