

USING AUDIO AND VIDEO MATERIALS FOR DEVELOPING LISTENING

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ABSTRACT

This paper gives information and concerns with the questions in the field of listening, especially using audio and video materials in it, a subject that gained strength and shape in the course of development of education. The research aims are to investigate the impacts of using videos as visual aids at the same time to find contribution of audio materials to teaching listening.

Keywords: Video materials, listening skills, authentic materials, listening comprehension.

INTRODUCTION, LITERATURE REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

In the last few decades foreign languages were learnt mainly by reading and translating, rather than listening. In the second half of 20th century researchers interested in how people learn both first and second languages and this led to an understanding that listening is probably the initial key skill. Many studies have been done [1;14] on this skill. Listening is the activity of paying attention to sounds and trying to get meaning from them. Even though, in the past, some assumed it was a passive activity, listening is an active process in which the listener must discriminate amongst sounds, understand words and verbal structures, interpret intonations, and retain the information gathered in order to interpret it in the context or setting [10;47]. From my point of view, it is high time to fully replace our previous teaching process to new one which works with audio as well as video materials.

James Whiting and Stuart Granoff from Plymouth State University quoted: "Herron, York, Corrie, and Cole (2006) compared two foreign-language classes: one that used a packaged curriculum with a video component as its primary means of teaching new material, and a second course that relied on a more traditional textbook with supplementary media enrichment". Vander plank (2009), in a review of research on multimedia in the second-language classroom setting, accepts that new technologies can have a general benefit on comprehension, but is concerned with the challenges and choices facing teachers who want to fully exploit digital technology in the language classroom and laboratory. If we want to check the approaches of listening comprehension we can mention Paul Brett statement which said "the new pedagogical approach to the improving listening comprehension that holds that the learners are interested in development listening by audio and video authentic materials". Studies of motivation and the use of multimedia or interactive video have demonstrated positive effects. In 2006 Wagner claims the presence of visual support would allow L2 listeners to make more valid inferences, and this could lead to improved L2 listening performance. Using such kind of materials not only increases the quality of teaching and the interest rate of students but also helps to make learning easier.

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 Krashen [8;36] in 1982 who pointed out that authentic learning experiences provide learners an opportunity to acquire the target language. Clarke [5;73-86] 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. As a student I should mention that finding authentic audio materials is complex since we should pay attention to the meaning and the condition. When it comes to songs, using them for young learners makes the process more productive because they learn and enjoy at the same time. 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 [3;462] have claimed that early exposure to authentic texts will aid students to develop useful strategies for more complex tasks later on. 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.

The advantages of using videos

Using videos has been closely associated with developing listening skills [4;507-523] Videos as learning materials have received a great deal of attention from educators and their effects have been positively reported in various areas. Extensive research has been conducted into the possible effects of using videos to enhance language learning: to provide a rich context for authentic discourse (R. Altman), to improve listening comprehension, to enhance learners' achievements and motivation, and to acquire a better understanding of non-verbal expressions.

There are many advantages of using video materials:

Firstly, there is a visual aspect, students can listen the target language and watch real movements as videos are dynamic, this helps them to remember better because visual memory is much stronger in many students and visualization can help to lessen misunderstanding for instance a child while watching video related to body parts may not understand which part is that but after watching it they may realize it in an easy way.

Secondly, most videos have subtitles, these help bridge between reading and listening. Teachers might cover them or simply not show them, it can only be used as helping aid.

One of another major advantages of using video is that it can provide samples of real-life situations Lonergan [7;308-327] pointed out that video is able to present "complete communicative situations.

Next, videos can be controlled. The pause button allows teacher to divide the long material into small short pieces. The rewind button comes to help when learners are confused, we can even avoid the long watch, with double pushing we can find the required moment.

CONCLUSION

I can say that the use of audio and video materials to develop listening comprehension is effective and enhances student's listening comprehension ability due to the combination of visual images and sound which stimulate student's perceptions. In addition, we should acknowledge the importance of the tone and speed of speech which are spontaneous, similar to that in daily-life situations.

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