

Developing Listening Comprehension Skill of EFL Students Through Integration of Digital Interactive Technologies and Digital Authentic Resources

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Publication Date: 2026/06/11

Abstract: The rapid development of digital educational technologies has had a significant impact on the education system, especially for teaching EFL listening comprehension. The aim of this scientific research is define how integration of authentic digital resources and digital platforms can be helpful for improving B2-level students' listening comprehension in higher educational settings. Basically, to teach listening comprehension for B2- level students, authentic digital resources selected from BBC World service, BBC news and other BBC channels and digital educational tools like Edpuzzle and H5P have been used in this research. The purpose of this study is examine the contribution of these audio-visual materials and interactive tools mentioned above to improve listening comprehension of B2-level students. 33 students studying for the second semester of the academic year in Samarkand state foreign language institute in Uzbekistan participated in the study. A mixed-method research, pre and post-tests, survey questionnaires, was used. The listening instruction was organized based on cognitive levels of Bloom's taxonomy. In order to do the activities interactive, digital platforms were used. The results of the research revealed that on the one hand, authentic digital videos helped B2-level students to understand real communicative contexts, natural speech and pronunciation, on the other hand digital interactive tools assisted with enhancing concentration, motivation and learner autonomy. It was concluded that teaching EFL listening comprehension through integration of authentic digital videos and interactive digital platforms cna create an effective learning environment for B2 level students.

Keywords: *Listening Comprehension, Digital Authentic Videos, Digital Interactive Platforms, B2 Level Students.*

How to Cite: Aytimbetova Ulbiyke (2026) Developing Listening Comprehension Skill of EFL Students Through Integration of Digital Interactive Technologies and Digital Authentic Resources. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 11(5), 4006-4009. <https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26may2246>

I. INTRODUCTION

The advancement in digital technologies has changed the education process, creating new approaches for language teaching. Transformation into digital education in teaching English, especially listening comprehension, has become an important component of educational process because it helps EFL teachers to integrate digital resources, online platforms in teaching and learning process. It is known that mastering listening comprehension remains one of the most challenging skills to acquire for EFL learners because of complexity of comprehending spoken language in real communicative situations. Understanding spoken language involves not only knowing linguistic forms, but also understanding pronunciation, interpreting meaning, processing speech speed and connecting contextual information with each other. Traditional textbooks used in language classrooms have limitations in authenticity and often fail to expose learners to real-life communication. Many EFL teachers have difficulty in teaching listening comprehension with authentic listening materials because they involves idiomatic expressions,

connected and fast speed speech, various accents. Authentic resources can be found on the internet, in most literatures using the term "digital" instead of internet, online has been a modern tendency. Connecting and finding digital authentic listening materials is fast and easy. Authentic videos from BBC channel in YouTube video hosting can expose EFL learners with natural communicative situations. Digitalization learning process enables EFL learners who have mastered digital skills give engagement to listen authentic videos. Furthermore, digital interactive tools like Edpuzzle and H5P, can support the learners autonomy and create self-paced learning environment. In spite of using digital resources in EFL language classrooms, there is still limited research investigating teaching EFL listening comprehension in digital learning environment. Moreover, EFL teachers have difficulty in finding appropriate approaches in digital education system. Many previous researches have focused on authentic materials and digital technologies separately. As a result, this research study aims to examine how the combined use of authentic digital videos with digital interactive platforms contributes the effectiveness

of enhancing B2 level university students' listening comprehension skills. The pedagogical effectiveness of the videos in BBC channels in Youtube and Edpuzzle and H5P interactive tools in EFL listening instructional practice is investigated in this study.

Research questions were become as the follows:

- How do digital authentic videos enhance EFL learners to listen?
- What is the role of digital interactive platforms?
- How do digital authentic videos and digital interactive platforms affect to EFL learners' engagement and motivation to listen?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

➤ *The Theory of Listening Comprehension*

From the perspective of Field (2008), listening demands instant processing, so second language learners need to acquire listening skill. Moreover, Rost (2011) mentioned that teaching second language learners to listen effectively is an important not only for their native language, but also obtaining second language, since it enables to be aware of linguistic forms such as phonology, vocabulary and syntactic forms.

According to Vandergrift and Goh (2012), understanding spoken language demands difficult mental operations such as interpreting speech, knowing contextual meaning and connecting information, predicting content. If a learner does not have ability to listen effectively, they face to misunderstand to spoken messages. From the point of view of Bacon (1989), listening is a complex process, since it demands from the listener to recognize sounds, knowledge of lexical elements, syntactic meaning and markers of discourse.

Harmer (1998) noted that listening the same speech voice every lesson enables learners get bored, so EFL teachers should provide different recordings including different accents and language varieties.

➤ *Digital Education, Digital Authentic Videos, Digital Interactive Platforms*

To understand natural speech, EFL learners should be provided with different listening materials, including authentic materials, not relying on only listening tracks in the coursebooks. There are numerous of digital authentic materials on the internet but selecting them EFL teachers need to consider their learners' engagement, proficiency levels and others.

According to Gilmore (2007), authentic materials are considered as original materials created by native speakers. These materials include various types of podcast, news reports, films, talk shows and others. The researchers Richards and Schmidt (2010) wrote that there are various types of authentic materials such as magazine newspapers, news programs, interviews, songs, advertisements. According to their senses, they are classified as written forms, auditory and audiovisual perceived by listening and watching

(Woottipong, 2014). Gilmore (2011) pointed out that the effectiveness of audio-visual materials mentioned in most literatures. Researchers determined that using authentic videos in listening classrooms not only improve EFL learners interest but also affect their motivation to listen (Luo, 2004; Kusumarasdyati, 2004; Heffernan, 2005). Subsequently, Li (2013), Safranjan (2015) completed authentic video materials introduce the learners the target language culture. Utilizing authentic videos have also positively impact on the students as they obtain necessary key elements of listening skill including predicting the content, contextual interference and detecting keywords (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).

III. METHODOLOGY

➤ *Participants*

33 first-year university students studying English as a Foreign language (EFL) participated in their second semester of the academic year. The students were B2-level learners according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The participants were selected as most students faced difficulties in understanding authentic spoken speech. Pre and post tests were used to collecting data for the research. Before the experimental instruction, the students' initial listening proficiency was determined through pre-test. After having been taught during second semester, a post-test was organized to evaluate the students' improvement of listening comprehension. Both tests involved authentic digital videos from BBC channels in YouTube. In addition to this, a survey questionnaire was conducted to investigate the students' attitudes to the authentic digital videos and the digital interactive tools.

• *Questionnaire*

A questionnaire was used to investigate students' attitudes toward authentic videos and digital interactive platforms. The questionnaire also examined learners' motivation, engagement, and perceived listening difficulties.

The materials were authentic videos selected from the channels such as BBC News, BBC world service , BBC Global and BBC Ideas in Youtube. All the selected videos reflect news reports, daily life situations, formal language style and were appropriate for B2-level students, speech clarity, educational value.

Digital platforms: Edpuzzle and H5P were used to create interactive video activities with instant feedback. For the experimental group, the lessons were conducted over second academic year. Listening activities were organized based on six cognitive levels of Bloom's taxonomy.

At the beginning of the semester, students were given an entrance test, and at the end of the semester, an exit test and a questionnaire were administered. According to the survey results, 84% of students reported a positive assessment of the use of digital resources and digital tools in the process of learning and strengthening listening comprehension. 10% of students had difficulty using digital tools, and 6% of students assessed this experience as negative. Of the 84% who positively assessed their experience of using digital

learning resources and tools, 74% noted that they were motivated to access assignments at any time and anywhere and to move on to the next exercise faster when working on exercises on digital tools. Accordingly, they expressed the flexibility of organizing the learning process. Also, as noted (76%), the use of digital resources allows you to get instant feedback on your progress, since it is done automatically. 57% of respondents noted that after completing exercises based on real videos in digital learning, the audio tracks provided for listening in the learning materials became much easier to listen to, which allows us to know that in digital learning, video conversations, lectures recorded in a real language environment are more difficult for students, but

after learning more difficult things, the tracks in the learning materials seem much easier. 48% of students positively assessed the variety of tasks, which allowed us to conclude that the learning environment is dynamic. Also, the ability to repeatedly return to the topics and materials covered for revision and the ability to work on the exercises repeatedly were noted as advantages of implementing digital learning.

Comparing the results of the pre and post-tests of students at the beginning and end of the semester, we can see that the average percentage of students' listening comprehension skills increased due to digital learning (Figure 1).

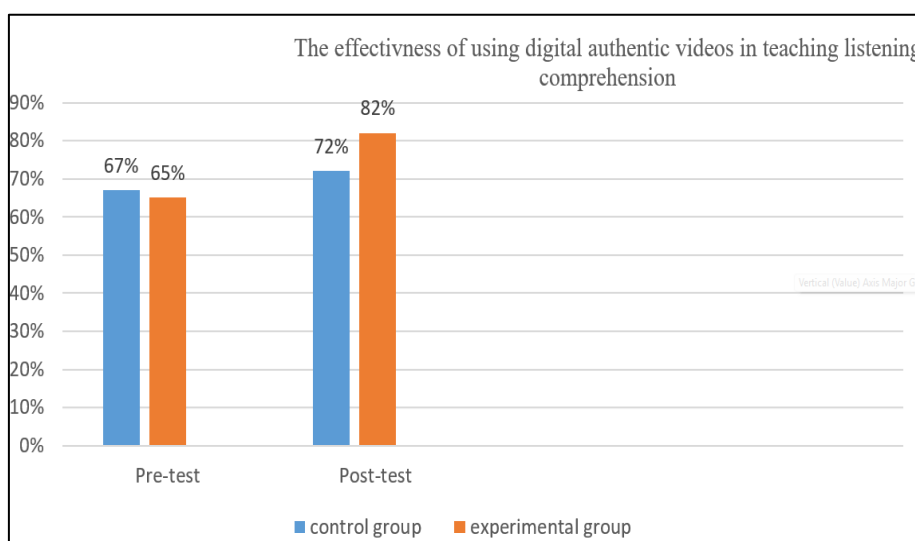


Fig 1 Average percentage of pre and post-tests.

The survey results show that students are generally satisfied with the introduction of digital resources and digital tools to develop listening comprehension skills in a foreign language. They believe that the interactivity, flexibility, dynamism and multimedia nature of digital tools have a positive effect on student motivation. The test results of experimental group indirectly indicate that listening comprehension is well mastered (the average percentage of the pre-test is 65%, the average percentage of the post-test is 82%), which indicates the effectiveness of the digital educational resources and tools used to develop listening comprehension skills in foreign languages of B2-level students in language departments.

IV. CONCLUSION

In this study the effectiveness of utilisation of authentic digital videos and digital interactive platforms to enhance EFL listening comprehension of B2-level students students was investigated. The findings illustrated that the combination of authentic digital videos from the channels of BBC news, BBC world service, BBC ideas in YouTube platform with digital interactive tools such as Edpuzzle and H5P, contributed positively to the improvement of EFL students' listening comprehension skills. The difference between pre and post-test results has showed a noticeable improvement in B2-level students' listening ability to

comprehend authentic spoken English. Moreover, the study found that usage of digital interactive platforms like Edpuzzle and H5P enabled the students to engage, motivate and participate actively for listening comprehension activities. Features of these tools such as embedded questions, immediate feedback, and interactive activities encouraged them to concentrate more carefully on video content and helped to facilitate comprehension. Additionally, authentic videos including natural speech, pronunciation patterns, and real-life communicative situations helped the students to develop linguistic, sociolinguistic and social-cultural competencies.

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