

Teaching Listening Skills to English-Majored Students Through Effective Strategies

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Abstract –This systematic research investigates efficacious methodologies for instructing English-major students in the acquisition of listening skills. By conducting an extensive examination of pertinent material obtained from several web databases. The significance of employing tactics such as active listening exercises and utilizing real materials in augmenting understanding and engagement among students majoring in English is underscored in the review. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize the difficulties that arise from differing degrees of expertise and cultural backgrounds when it comes to efficiently adopting these tactics. Notwithstanding these obstacles, the incorporation of listening skill education within the curriculum of the English major offers substantial prospects for enhancing student learning experiences. In the future, further study is required to fill in information gaps and investigate emerging technologies as potential means of improving the development of listening skills. The significance of continuous innovation and cooperation in enhancing instructional approaches to address the changing requirements of English-major students in their endeavor to achieve language competence and academic achievement is emphasized in this study.

Keywords: Listening skills, Listening Comprehension, Teaching Listening skills, English majored-students

I. INTRODUCTION

Effective communication skills are required for success in both academic and professional contexts, and listening is a critical component of communication. For English majors, improving their listening skills is critical for understanding lectures, participating in conversations, and engaging with real English resources. However, teaching and acquiring listening skills can be difficult for a variety of reasons, including disparities in language competency, cultural background, and individual learning styles.

In recent years, there has been a rising acknowledgment of the need to implement novel and successful techniques to improve listening training for English majors. This is especially crucial in today's globalized world, when English is increasingly being employed as a lingua franca in academic and professional settings. In response to these problems, educators and researchers have investigated a variety of tactics and techniques for improving listening comprehension and performance among English majors.

Teachers and students, moreover, confront several challenges when learning English as a second language. This prompted more study and the creation of novel teaching practices to increase English Language Learners' (ELLs) language fluency and abilities (De Brito, 2015). Arabi Zanjani and Izadpanah (2016) emphasize that learners are needed to acquire necessary abilities such as hearing, reading, writing, and speaking in order to be classified as language learners. These four talents are inextricably linked and cannot be employed independently.

However, several studies have shown that both instructors and students have overlooked listening skills, believing that they may be developed organically without any coaching (Abdalhamid, 2012). Although English is widely utilized in education across the world, including elementary and secondary schools, colleges, universities, seminars, and conferences, it has received insufficient attention in study (Yukselci, 2003). Another study excluded listening and speaking skills, which are classified as receptive language skills, mostly because



they are not tested (Sanjana, 2014). As a result, the educational system created good writers who, despite years of English study, lack proficiency in listening and communicating.

To maximize listening learning, it is necessary to apply effective teaching listening practices. Hashim, Yunus, and Hashim (2018) believe that educating students about learning techniques can help them progress as language learners. Despite the necessity of teaching and strengthening students' listening skills, many teachers underemphasized it. According to Lim (2013) all schools gave less emphasis to improving students' listening skills than they did to reading, writing, and speaking. Linang (2005) highlights a few factors that produce this problem:

- (i) Teachers assume that listening skills will develop spontaneously.
- (ii) Teachers lack effective ways for teaching listening skills.
- (iii) A lack of emphasis on teaching listening skills in teacher education programs.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to undertake a systematic evaluation of previous studies in order to assist teachers in learning more about listening tactics and using them in their future lectures. Students can eventually build their own most effective learning techniques (Basri et al., 2019). In order to achieve the objective of the study, the author endeavors to address the following question:

- What effective strategies are used to enhance listening comprehension among English-major students in EFL classroom?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Listening Comprehension

Listening comprehension is the capacity to hear and interpret spoken words. It entails not just hearing the words said, but also comprehending their meaning, context, and subtleties. Effective listening comprehension requires effectively evaluating the speaker's message, comprehending the key points, detecting supporting details, and deducing inferred meanings. Recognizing tone, intonation, and nonverbal clues helps you understand the speaker's objectives and feelings. Listening comprehension is required for effective communication, learning, and social engagement, as well as for language development and academic performance.

Listening skill varies from other language abilities in that it is a receptive skill, with the primary purpose of making sense of the speech and determining meanings rather than the language form itself (Sevik, 2012). It serves as the major mechanism of acquiring knowledge and new ideas (Hamouda, 2013). Santos (2018) describes hearing as the process of choosing and attributing meaning to sounds. In the listening process, students choose crucial information to hear. This is seen in our daily lives, when we implicitly try to lend priority to items we recognize and want to hear.

Previous research has shown that listening skills are frequently overlooked and underestimated. This includes a previous research in the context of learning English as a second language by Hamouda (2013), who concludes that the teaching of listening comprehension has been neglected and inadequately taught. Listening skill is frequently developed along with speaking competence. However, it has now taken its proper position in modern language curriculum development, where communicative skills are now emphasized (Vandergrift & Goh, 2009), since increasing listening comprehension abilities is essential for building communication competence (Choo & Md. Yunus, 2016).

2.2. Components of Listening Comprehension

Chastain (1988) identified four basic components of listening comprehension. The first component is the capacity to discern between all sounds, rhythms, and tones in the target language and their equivalent sounds in the original language. The second component is understanding the entire message delivered by a speaker. According to Rivers (1981), comprehension of spoken communications is dependent on a knowledge of

semantics, which entails converting sound sequences into syntactic understanding when the listener is unable to grasp the meaning of the word.

The capacity to store the input message in audible storage until processing is practicable is the third component. Teachers should encourage learners to practice extended listening in order to improve their auditory memory. As a result, when learning a foreign language, it is best to use your second language. The language's pace and complexity should match the learners' understanding ability. Language understanding improves auditory memory capacity. Significantly, the notion of improvement is clear. A gradual and consistent progression from fundamental to sophisticated expressions should be achieved. The presentation's pace should be adjusted based on the students' comprehension level (Chastain, 1988).

The third component is the ability to save the input message in audible storage until it can be processed. To improve students' auditory memory, instructors should provide extended listening chances. This suggests that when learning a foreign language, it is best to use the second language (L2). The speed and complexity of the language used should be adequate for the learners' understanding abilities. Comprehensible language acts help improve auditory memory. The notion of improvement is very important. One should endeavor to steadily and consistently go from fundamental to complex phrases. According to Chastain (1988), the presentation pace should be modified based on the students' capacity to comprehend.

Comprehension refers to the perception of communication at several levels, including syntactic, lexical, semantic, and verbal. Comprehension involves several steps. The first step is to determine the context. Practical language is distinguished by its communicative structure, which the listener must be aware of in order to understand the speaker's message. The second phase entails applying relevant past information to predict the speaker's message. The third stage is to forecast the broad substance of the communication. Auditory perception requires listeners to predict upcoming occurrences. According to Kaspar (1984), people analyze incoming information rather of devoting time to understand it in an unexpected and immediate manner. The fourth phase is to actively engage with the major topics offered in the listening text. It is suggested that listeners devote more cognitive resources to digesting unexpected material, and that if their prior knowledge is restricted, they depend more largely on language clues. The last stage entails using the audio script to support or contradict their previous hypotheses. When the participants' guesses match the audio script, they acknowledge and accept them as correct.

2.3. Potential Problems in Learning Listening Comprehension

Underwood (1989) identifies many hurdles and difficulties that learners may face when developing their listening abilities. Some of the potential issues include:

Lack of Vocabulary Knowledge:Learners who lack the appropriate vocabulary may fail to grasp spoken language input. Unfamiliar phrases or idioms might obstruct understanding, making it harder for students to grasp the key concepts or specifics of the auditory material.

Difficulty with Pronunciation and Intonation:Variations in speakers' pronunciation, accent, and intonation can make it difficult for learners to grasp spoken language. Speech tempo, rhythm, stress, and pitch differences can all have an impact on a learner's ability to recognize words and correctly understand meaning.

Limited Listening Strategies:Learners may use passive listening or decoding skills rather of actively engaged in the listening process. A lack of appropriate listening methods, such as anticipating, summarizing, inferencing, and assessing comprehension, might impede students' ability to extract meaning from spoken language information.

Overwhelming Amount of Information:Complex or lengthy listening passages involving a large amount of information can overwhelm students, resulting in information overload and trouble processing and remembering important elements. In the face of a bombardment of spoken language input, learners may struggle to prioritize information and focus on vital topics.

III. METHODOLOGY

The systematic review begins with framing the research question, aimed at identifying listening strategies utilized in ESL classrooms and interventions incorporating these strategies. Subsequently, a thorough literature search is conducted using diverse online databases. This search employs specific terms like “listening comprehension skill,” “listening comprehension strategies,” and “teaching of listening in ESL classrooms” to ensure comprehensive coverage of relevant studies. Articles retrieved from the search undergo screening based on title, abstract, and research questions to select those pertinent to the research objectives. Following selection, data from chosen articles are systematically extracted, tabulated, and summarized, facilitating comparison and analysis of findings. Synthesized evidence is then analyzed to discern prevalent listening strategies and interventions, while also identifying patterns, trends, and gaps in the literature. Finally, the findings are reported in a structured manner, detailing methodology, search strategies, selection criteria, synthesis methods, and discussing implications for ESL education practice and future research directions.”

IV. FINDINGS

In the realm of studying models and ways for teaching listening skills, scholars have identified many listening issues that warrant more investigation in future research endeavors. Learners who were exposed to both top-down and bottom-up techniques reported that top-down tactics were perceived as more immediate, whilst bottom-up strategies were found to be more readily applicable. Future researchers should be concerned about this gap, as observed by Berne (2004), while designing an intervention for teaching listening skill practices. Renandya and Farrell (2011) identify various challenges associated with the acquisition of listening skills. These challenges include: (i) rapid speech rate, (ii) variations in speech in terms of pronunciation, context, and accent, (iii) the stress of processing speech in real-time, (iv) the presence of blurred word boundaries that can cause confusion for listeners when they are not in the appropriate context or situation, (v) the inability to recognize familiar words due to differences in pronunciation and accent, (vi) the absence of subsequent input, (vii) sentence complexity, and (viii) limited background knowledge that impede listeners in accurately translating the intended meaning.

In the initial phase of this systematic review, two pertinent studies were examined to gain a comprehensive comprehension of models and strategies employed in the instruction of listening skills. Simultaneously, these studies aimed to address the primary research question of this study, which pertains to the models and strategies utilized by teachers in ESL classrooms for teaching listening skills. In their work entitled “A Study of Factors Affecting English Listening Comprehension and Strategies for Improvement,” Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011) examined a total of 56 previous studies in order to draw conclusions on the instructional approaches employed in the teaching of listening comprehension for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The ways for acquiring listening skills are outlined as bottom-up processing, top-down processing, and interactive processing. Bottom-up processing refers to the cognitive process in which listeners rely on their linguistic schemata, starting with the most particular and progressing towards the generic, to derive meanings from utterances. This impedes those learners who possess little verbal proficiency. Top-down processing refers to the utilization of higher-order schemata, which are pre-existing knowledge of context and circumstance, by listeners to understand the signals. The acquisition of contextual and situational information is necessary. Finally, the integration of bottom-up and top-down processing in interactive processing is considered a more efficacious approach in comparison to its predecessor.

Nguyen and Abbot (2016) introduced the metacognitive method and the dual focus on listening-for-comprehensions and listening-for-learning approach as additional ways for teaching the listening skill, in addition to the bottom-up approach. The objective of the metacognitive method is to facilitate listeners'



comprehension of the listening process and tactics, hence fostering the development of self-regulated learners who possess the ability to assume responsibility for their own learning. In the dual focus method, there are two distinct cycles or components of listening activities. The first cycle is the comprehension phase, during which listeners strive to extract meaning. The second cycle is the acquisition phase, which incorporates form-focused noticing activities or restructuring activities.

IV. DISCUSSION

The systematic review begins with framing the research question, aimed at identifying listening strategies utilized in ESL classrooms and interventions incorporating these strategies. Subsequently, a thorough literature search is conducted using diverse online databases. This search employs specific terms like “listening comprehension skill,” “listening comprehension strategies,” and “teaching of listening in ESL classrooms” to ensure comprehensive coverage of relevant studies. Articles retrieved from the search undergo screening based on title, abstract, and research questions to select those pertinent to the research objectives. Following selection, data from chosen articles are systematically extracted, tabulated, and summarized, facilitating comparison and analysis of findings. Synthesized evidence is then analyzed to discern prevalent listening strategies and interventions, while also identifying patterns, trends, and gaps in the literature. Finally, the findings are reported in a structured manner, detailing methodology, search strategies, selection criteria, synthesis methods, and discussing implications for ESL education practice and future research directions.

IV. CONCLUSION

In summary, this systematic research has yielded significant findings on the efficacious approaches for instructing English-major students in the development of listening abilities. Through the process of synthesizing the data derived from the literature review, a variety of ways have been found. These approaches encompass active listening exercises as well as the utilization of real materials. These approaches exhibit potential in augmenting students' understanding and engagement. Although it is important to take into account challenges such as different levels of proficiency and cultural backgrounds when implementing these strategies, incorporating effective listening skill instruction into the English major curriculum has the potential to greatly enhance student learning experiences. In the future, further study is required to fill in information gaps and investigate emerging technologies as means of improving the development of listening skills. In conclusion, this research highlights the significance of continuous innovation and cooperation in the progression of educational approaches to address the changing requirements of students majoring in English, as they strive to achieve language competency and academic achievement.

About the Authors

Lam Ky Nhan holds an M.A. in English Education from Can Tho University (2021) and serves as a dedicated English Department Lecturer at Nam Can Tho University, Vietnam. Currently pursuing a Ph.D. with an expected completion in 2026, his teaching passions include grammar, academic writing, teacher and learner motivation, and testing and assessment. He is committed to advancing English education and contributing to effective language teaching practices.

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