

ENGLISH-MAJORED STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF AUDIO-VISUAL SCRIPT EXPOSURE IN LISTENING COMPREHENSION LESSONS

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Abstract: *Pre-listening activities have been proven to be efficient for enhancing learners' English listening abilities. Nevertheless, there has been insufficient attention given to the impact of showing students audio scripts during while-listening stage on their performance and attitudes. To be specific, that students can see audio scripts is regarded as a highly effective instructional tool for enhancing their English listening comprehension skills because it allows them to clearly perceive and comprehend the listening content, as well as boosts their eagerness to acquire English language skills. The objectives of this study are first to gain some insight into the difficulties faced by 80 English-majored students at Dong Nai Technology University when it comes to listening comprehension. Accordingly, it examines their perspectives on the exposure of audio scripts at the stage of while listening. Questionnaires and interviews were employed as tools for gathering essential data. According to the questionnaires, students had significant listening challenges throughout stages of a lesson including lack of vocabulary, pronunciation skills, background knowledge, memorization, concentration, ability to process the information in a short time. Furthermore, the interviews revealed that the display of audio scripts not only improves but also motivates students in their learning journey. In short, the students found the application of audiovisual scripts as a facilitator in an English listening comprehension lesson.*

Keywords: *audiovisual aids; English listening comprehension; listening challenges.*

I. Introduction

Listening comprehension is an essential skill in language acquisition, as learners' poor listening skills can have a negative impact on their communicative competence (Nguyen & Tran, 2015). Nevertheless, Vietnamese university students often struggle to acquire

proficient English listening skills due to the lack of emphasis on this aspect during their English education in Vietnamese high schools (Duong & Chau, 2019). The reason for this is that the English language curriculum in Vietnam prioritizes exam-oriented teaching methods, where students are primarily trained for tests

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that assess their knowledge of grammar, reading, and vocabulary, rather than their ability to effectively communicate (Bui & Duong, 2018). Consequently, high school students have limited chances to hone their communication abilities, particularly their aptitude for listening. This disheartening circumstance results in students encountering difficulties with their listening and speaking abilities when they enter the higher education.

There is no longer any doubt that listening comprehension is a crucial skill in language acquisition, particularly in English as a foreign language (EFL) learning environments. However, the focus now lies on determining the most effective methods for teaching and attaining this competence.

Within the Faculty of Foreign Languages at Dong Nai Technology University, majored students are tested listening comprehension skills at their final exams. It is increasingly acknowledged that developing proficiency in English listening abilities is just as crucial as developing proficiency in other aspects of the English language. Nevertheless, a number of students continue to face difficulties in developing their listening comprehension skills, despite the diligent efforts of teachers to address this issue. The faculty's teachers have implemented a range of listening strategies to create effective listening lessons. These strategies include pre-listening activities to assist students in anticipating the type of information they will encounter; guidance to address misunderstandings and errors during the listening process; and feedback throughout the listening process. Nevertheless, the students still struggle with their English listening skills, primarily due to their limited proficiency in the language.

The majority of research has so far focused on the difficulties that students

have when learning English listening skills, as well as the challenges associated with using audiovisual media to effectively prepare students for pre-listening activities. In other words, there has been a scarcity of research undertaken to determine the efficacy of utilizing audiovisual medium to present listening scripts to students throughout the while-listening stage.

This study aims to examine students' perception of simultaneous integration of listening and reading the listening material. By utilizing two input devices, the comprehension of the text can be enhanced by the practice of reading the audio-scripts. Exposure to audio-scripts can alleviate students' anxiety related to difficulties in listening comprehension. Also, practicing listening with the audio-script is expected to facilitate their listening comprehension.

It means that there is a positive relation between students' listening skills and the use of audio visual aids. Hence, this study once again endeavored to gain some insight into listening comprehension problems that university students confront as well as examined the impact of showing students audio scripts in their learning process. The research questions were formulated as follows:

1. What problems do the students encounter when learning listening comprehension?
2. What do the students think about being exposed to audio scripts while listening?

II. Literature review

2.1. Listening comprehension skills

Learning occurs when understanding is achieved. To attain comprehension, it is more effective to offer scenarios that are abundant in input. Increased exposure to input by

teachers enhances the quality and quantity of output from learners. The topic that has been the subject of extensive discussions in recent years is how to provide learners with appropriate input. Consequently, teachers have consistently faced difficulties in enhancing the comprehensibility of audio material in listening lessons.

Gilakjani & Ahmadi (2011) identified factors affecting students' English listening comprehension skills and recommended that teachers establish an environment that allows students to practice listening skills and actively participate in the listening process. This shift from teacher-centered to student-centered approaches would transform teaching and learning methods. In addition, Rost (2011) identified four elements that impact students' listening performance during a test. The criteria include the medium of the input, the content of the input, the nature of the evaluation task, and individual listener factors. The input medium can consist of video or audio presentations, either on their own or accompanied by graphics or text enhancements. Enhancements have a tendency to enhance the performance of test takers by the use of video presentations, graphic cues, text subtitling, or selective captioning. Next, nature of the input pertains to dialect, speech rate, length, background, prepositional density, and amount of redundancy. The nature of the assessment task encompasses the use of visual context, the quantity of context provided, the clarity of instructions, the availability of question preview, and the types of cognitive processes involved. The final component is the individual listener's characteristics, encompassing memory capacity, level of interest, background knowledge, motivation, and preparedness for the test. A test taker who possesses weak memory abilities; lacks interest in

the test themes or the exam itself; has little background knowledge of the test topics or the test itself; and lacks motivation to perform well, will have a detrimental effect on their test performance.

2.2. Listening challenges

Listening is widely regarded as one of the most challenging English language abilities. According to Walker (2014), acquiring listening skills typically takes a significant amount of time and involves learners feeling a range of emotions, including frustration, exhilaration, and pride. Several research have been undertaken to investigate the causes and remedies for listening difficulties in EFL classrooms.

In Chao's (2013) study, an investigation was conducted on the listening difficulties experienced by EFL students in China during their listening examination. The findings uncovered issues pertaining to input and listener factors, specifically, the prevalent listening difficulties: rapid loss of information when encountering unfamiliar vocabulary, lengthy texts, and uncertainty over appropriate strategies to employ.

Bingol et al. (2014) found that EFL learners encounter multiple challenges when developing their listening skills. These challenges encompass accents, the quality of recorded materials, foreign terminology, cultural disparities, the duration and pace of listening, and physical circumstances. Furthermore, it is widely considered that throughout a lengthy comprehension exercise, a learner's understanding of the material is initially strong but gradually deteriorates as they continue. As a result of the psychological phenomenon, students frequently experience a lack of energy and excitement for studying by the end of the class (Juan and Abidin, 2013).

In Vietnam, Tran and Duong (2020) conducted a study to investigate the listening difficulties faced by almost 80% of eleventh-grade students at a Vietnamese high school. Their primary difficulties can be categorized as perception problems (such as struggling with English pronunciation and the pace of spoken material), parsing problems (encountering challenges with complex sentence structures that impede comprehension), and utilization problems (failing to grasp the intended message of a listening text despite understanding the meaning of individual words). Lastly, the difficulties associated with novel subjects were a frequent factor contributing to difficulties in understanding spoken information.

2.3. Audiovisual aids

The use of audiovisual aids stimulates the language learners' senses of seeing and hearing, and most of what is learned is through the sense of sight and the sense of hearing. The use of visual aids is effective at all levels of language learning, from beginners to advanced (Mishra & Yadav, 2014).

Visual information provided by audiovisual aids plays a crucial role in the teaching and learning process, particularly in the teaching language listening skills. A study conducted by Ardini et al (2019) revealed that the use of audio-visual learning media in the educational process enhanced the function of instructors as motivators. This was evident through the increased attention and motivation of students to actively participate in the listening activities during class. In order to enhance comprehension and alleviate potential anxiety associated with solely relying on auditory input, it is beneficial to supplement the sense of hearing with the sense of sight. This combination facilitates a more effective interpretation of the text by lowering the impact of the affective filter. Utilizing audio visual

aids can serve as an alternate method to enhance students' listening comprehension abilities and foster their motivation to learn, ultimately leading to improved academic performance. This assertion is supported by a recent study which affirms that videos can exert a beneficial influence on student engagement and motivation (Canning-Wilson, 2020). Besides, utilizing audiovisual tools in education has had a positive impact on students' ability to remember information, accurately pronounce words, understand written language, and enhance their writing skills, Ardiansyah (2018).

III. Research methods

3.1. Participants

The chosen samples consist of 41 second-year English majored students and 39 third-year English major students from the Faculty of Foreign Languages in the academic year 2023/2024. The population consisted of students enrolled in the classes where the researcher/teacher was responsible. The participants had an English competence at the B1 level as per the CEFR framework.

3.2. Research design

The researcher wanted to gather students' comments on the challenges they have in developing listening skills and their views on the effectiveness of using audiovisual scripts in the classroom. The study's quantitative data was gathered using an online questionnaire disseminated through Google Form for its convenience and flexibility. The survey was split into two sections: the first section gathers general data from students, and the second section consists of 10 questions about potential challenges in developing listening skills. The questionnaire uses a 4-point Likert scale with the answer options: usually, often, seldom, never. The questionnaire was disseminated

digitally and gathered two weeks later. After categorizing data based on study questions, the researchers utilized Google Form and Excel to accurately code the data for subsequent analysis.

The qualitative data was collected through observations and interviews with students involved in the teaching-learning process. The researcher recorded the students' attitudes and behaviors during the teaching-learning process based on observation sheets. The researcher served as an instructor in the classroom while conducting the research. Additionally, the researcher had a second teacher observe the class during the teaching and learning process. Five classroom observations were carried out, and then individual interviews were done with 20 students.

The qualitative data were gathered through interviews to elucidate unclear results from observations and to understand students' perspectives on using audiovisual scripts for acquiring English listening skills. After the classroom observations, the participants were asked to participate in an individual interview with the researcher. A casual interview technique was utilized to alleviate the pressure of being interviewed and encourage participants to express themselves more freely and openly. Participants' key comments and quotes were documented as field notes. The questions revolved around the benefits, effectiveness, and necessity of utilizing audiovisual texts. Every interview lasted between five and ten minutes. The gathered data were transcribed, categorized, and analyzed to address the research inquiries.

The study also utilized videos chosen from the textbook *Pathways: Listening, Speaking, and Critical Thinking 2, second edition*. The textbook utilizes engaging National Geographic narratives, images, videos, and information graphics to enhance

the classroom learning experience. The remarkable aspect of the *Pathways Listening, Speaking, and Critical Thinking series* is the inclusion of listening slide shows of lectures and presentations, which are the type of audiovisual aids examined in the study.

IV. Results and Discussion

4.1. *The students' perceived listening problems*

The students' responses indicate that the majority of them face significant challenges in listening comprehension, since the highest percentages are consistently found in the "usually" and "often" categories for most questions.

The data analysis for the items in the questionnaire is summarized in Table 1.

Approximately 91.3% of the participants acknowledged that they often felt uncertain about the content they had heard and were unable to identify all the sounds in the listening material. Moreover, the rapid pace of speech led to 83.8% of participants losing some information from the listening text. Furthermore, a same percentage of students reported experiencing an abundance of unfamiliar words (81.3%). 77.6% of the students found it challenging to concentrate on the listening exercises due to their lengthy duration. In brief, most students had difficulty identifying various sounds in the listening text, and the rapid speaking tempo led them to overlook some information in the text. Moreover, numerous students came across a plethora of unknown vocabulary. Most interviewees acknowledged that they lost concentration because of the long text.

The next results indicated that most students often struggled to retain information from lengthy audio tracks and found it challenging to comprehend new material in a short period of time. (93.8%). Overall, the students faced listening difficulties due

to the text’s length and the restricted time, which hindered their comprehension.

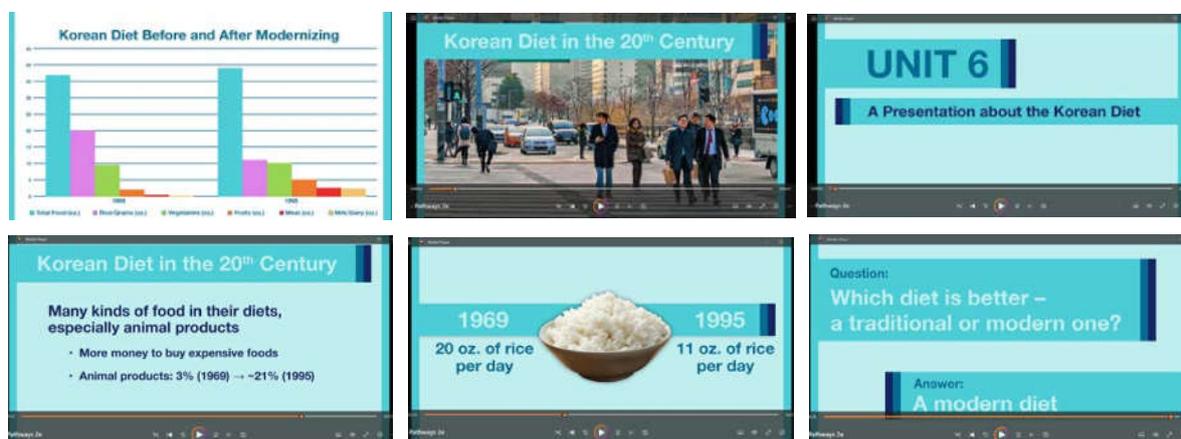
Results from the last four items showed that 81.3% of participants in the study struggled to comprehend the unfamiliar topics presented in the material they listened to. Approximately 75% of the participants felt they did not fully comprehend the intended message of the hearing text, in spite

of understanding the meaning of the words. 68.8% of individuals encountered challenges in obtaining detailed information, while 60% faced difficulties in identifying major themes. Many participants encountered challenges during the listening process, including unfamiliar topics, difficulty grasping the intended message despite understanding the words, and confusion in identifying the main idea and details of the listening material.

Items	Perceived problems		Never	Seldom	Often	Usually	Total
1	I find it hard to concentrate because of the lengthy text.	F	5	13	27	35	80
		%	6.2	16.2	33.8	43.8	100
2	Fast speech rate makes me miss some information of the text.	F	3	10	27	40	80
		%	3.7	12.5	33.8	50	100
3	I encounter many unfamiliar words.	F	2	13	30	35	80
		%	2.5	16.2	37.5	43.8	100
4	I cannot recognize many sounds	F	2	5	28	45	80
		%	2.5	6.2	35	56.3	100
5	It is difficult to understand a lot of new information in a short time.	F	2	3	25	50	80
		%	2.5	3.7	31.3	62.5	100
6	I forget phrases or sentences just heard because of the length.	F	2	3	30	45	80
		%	2.5	3.7	37.5	56.3	100
7	I have difficulties with unfamiliar topics.	F	3	12	30	35	80
		%	3.7	15	37.5	43.8	100
8	I can’t grasp the intended message though I know words.	F	7	15	28	30	80
		%	8.7	18.8	35	37.5	100
9	I get confused about the main idea of the text.	F	12	20	20	28	80
		%	15	25	25	35	100
10	I can’t get details or supporting ideas.	F	7	18	25	30	80
		%	8.7	22.5	31.3	37.5	100

Table 1. Questionnaire Results of the students’ listening comprehension problems

4.2 Some pictures taken from audio visual aids during while - listening stage in observation sessions.



4.3 Students' perceptions towards using audiovisual scripts

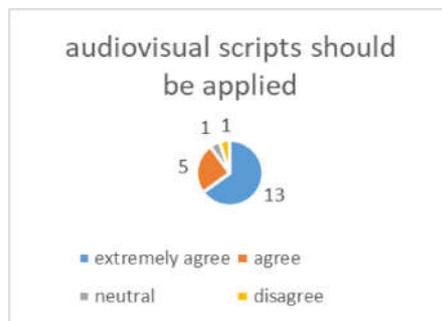


Figure 1. Interview Results of the necessity of audiovisual aids

After a learning process involving video aids, the outcomes strongly supported the use of audiovisual aids in listening classes. Figure 1 demonstrates that 90% of students (18 out of 20 students) strongly agreed or agreed on the need of utilizing video scripts to enhance their listening skills. Below are the responses to the question “To what extent do you agree that students should be exposed to audiovisual scripts while listening?”

The previous questionnaire revealed that students struggle with learning listening comprehension. However, they now appear to be highly convinced of the effectiveness of video materials, such as illustrative images, vocabulary show, word pronunciation, and data presentation. These materials aid in understanding information and engaging students in the lessons.

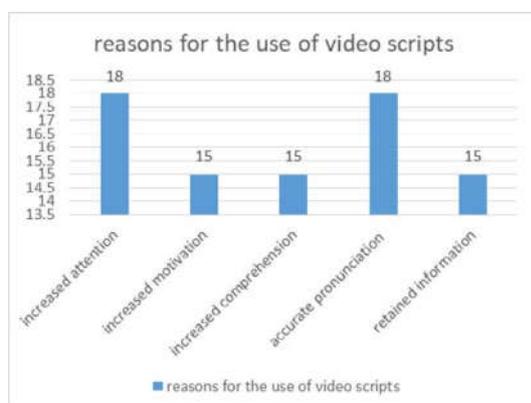


Figure 2: Reasons for the use of video scripts

The students also shared their views on the significance of video resources in enhancing their listening comprehension skills after watching scripts and listening to various video materials. See Figure 2.

The data indicates that most of the participants (18 out of 20 students) stated that they were unable to divert their gaze from the screen while listening to the content. An equal number of students agreed that they had opportunity to study vocabulary and its pronunciation. Also, the interviewee expressed a keen interest in the multimedia elements used to present the auditory text, such as graphics, graphs, and terminology. Fifteen out of twenty students acknowledged that they could comprehend and recall the material from the hearing text more effectively by viewing and jotting down the scripts. Consequently, the students were able to respond to questions more accurately at the post-listening stage, leading to increased confidence and motivation in the listening sessions.

V. Conclusion

The questionnaire results showed that nearly all students experienced several listening difficulties during their listening activities. Firstly, these students struggled to comprehend various English sounds and maintain pace with the listening content. The first language likely impacts the acquisition of new languages. Divergences in phonological systems between the native language and the second language could have an adverse impact on students' pronunciation. Students may encounter difficulties in connecting initial sounds, final sounds, and clusters, leading to potential misunderstandings and confusion (Sahatsathatsana, 2017). The students lacked sufficient vocabulary knowledge, background information, and attentiveness to completely absorb the listening texts in a short period of time. Additionally, most participants encountered discourse-related issues that hindered their comprehension

of the listening text's intended message, despite understanding the individual words. Finally, they struggled to distinguish between the main idea and supporting ideas in the listening text.

Using audiovisual scripts is indicated to enhance students' English listening comprehension. The interview results showed that the students had a favorable perspective of video materials utilized in the classroom, which aligns with earlier study by Sulaiman et al. (2017). Video materials offer several advantages over audio materials. They provide a supplementary virtual experience that enhances the realism and tangibility of the topic being learnt. As a result, the students become more attentive and motivated in the learning process. It also promotes the connection of ideas by aiding in the recollection of words when they are linked to facts.

Nevertheless, the study may have been influenced by specific limitations. The results could have been improved by considering the teachers' perceptions. Further research should consider using a range of real materials to assess their effectiveness in improving listening abilities. If teachers aim to enhance students' listening abilities using audiovisual materials or movies, they should ensure that the contents are tailored to the students' language proficiency level. Audiovisual materials have positive contributions to language learning as long as they are used at the right time, in the right place.

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QUAN ĐIỂM CỦA SINH VIÊN CHUYÊN NGỮ VỀ VIỆC VỪA NGHE VỪA NHÌN NỘI DUNG TRONG QUÁ TRÌNH NGHE HIỂU TIẾNG ANH

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Tóm tắt: Các hoạt động chuẩn bị cho người học trước khi nghe vào quá trình nghe hiểu tiếng Anh đã được chứng minh là có hiệu quả trong việc nâng cao khả năng nghe hiểu tiếng Anh của người học. Tuy nhiên, vẫn chưa có nhiều nghiên cứu về tác động của việc kết hợp trình chiếu nội dung bài nghe trong quá trình nghe lên năng lực cũng như thái độ của người học. Cụ thể, việc áp dụng cách vừa nghe vừa nhìn nội dung được coi là một phương pháp giảng dạy hiệu quả trong việc nâng cao kỹ năng nghe hiểu tiếng Anh cho người học vì nó cho phép người học nhận thức và hiểu rõ ràng điều đang nghe, đồng thời làm tăng sự hào hứng tiếp thu các kỹ năng tiếng Anh của người học. Những mục tiêu của nghiên cứu này đầu tiên là tìm hiểu những khó khăn mà 80 sinh viên chuyên ngành tiếng Anh tại Đại học Công nghệ Đồng Nai gặp phải khi học môn nghe hiểu. Theo đó, nghiên cứu xem xét quan điểm của sinh viên về việc tiếp cận nội dung nghe theo cách vừa nghe vừa nhìn. Bảng câu hỏi và phỏng vấn được sử dụng làm công cụ để thu thập dữ liệu cần thiết. Theo bảng câu hỏi, học sinh gặp khó khăn đáng kể về kỹ năng nghe hiểu tiếng Anh trong suốt các giai đoạn của bài học bao gồm thiếu từ vựng, kỹ năng phát âm, kiến thức nền tảng, khả năng ghi nhớ, sự tập trung, khả năng xử lý thông tin trong thời gian ngắn. Hơn nữa, các cuộc phỏng vấn cho thấy rằng việc tích hợp các nội dung nghe nhìn không chỉ cải thiện mà còn thúc đẩy sinh viên trong hành trình học tập của mình. Tóm lại, sinh viên nhận thấy việc áp dụng cách vừa nghe vừa nhìn nội dung như một công cụ hỗ trợ trong quá trình học môn nghe hiểu.

Từ khóa: khó khăn trong việc nghe hiểu; nghe hiểu tiếng Anh; phương tiện hỗ trợ nghe nhìn.

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