

# The Application of Audio and Visual Aids, Methods, and Instruction to Enhance English Language Learners' Listening Skills

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## **Abstract:**

These days, technology has made it possible for people to complete tasks quickly in all fields, including education. It facilitates the process of instruction and learning. More encouragement is needed for students to advance in their English more quickly. This article explains how students' English study can be enhanced by auditory and visual resources. There is more to learning English than just the resources found in the classroom. This study intends to demonstrate how watching films or videos on smart phones and television can assist students improve their English and to establish whether watching videos on electronic gadgets can be a useful tool for learning the language. By using these resources, students can learn more about English, including a variety of engaging themes that enhance their proficiency with the language in addition to the materials covered in the classroom and on the eLearning platform.

**Keywords:** audio, visual, Smartphone, television, listening skill

## **Introduction:**

In today's world, individuals and institutions assume that information which is broadcast will be heard and heeded by all concerned. The air waves are used daily to communicate headline news; emergency decisions; weather warnings; campaign appeals; calls for help in locating escaped criminals, missing or kidnapped persons, relatives of individuals unable to establish their identity, and owners of unidentifiable animals and articles; information about saleable products and services; and to provide instruction along many lines.

Within any week on radio and television there is also available a variety of entertainment. Music, art, science, literature, and sport may be heard through a single broadcaster, an interview, a panel, a symposium, a dramatization, a demonstration--to mention but a few types of presentation. Often the participation of listeners is secured through a studio audience or by telephone. Music is frequently used to establish a mood for an otherwise nonmusical program. The responsibility placed upon the listener is the heavy one of selection, for what he hears will be no better than what he dials. And what he gains from the experience will be directly related to his competence as a listener.

The tremendous impact of mobile and television may be gauged from the number of sets in homes and from the amount of time spent in listening and watching to programs. Over 1.2 billion mobile users and 600 million smart phone users are active in India. About 66 per cent of the homes are equipped with television sets, a majority having more than one. Over 905 satellite TV channels are active in different languages. About two-thirds of the automobiles in this country are radio equipped.

The whole world is an "audible book" for today's youth. Training in how to listen will determine, in no small measure, how well young people differentiate truths from half truths, facts from opinions, sensations from emotions, propaganda from education.

Though smart phones and television listening may seem to be a one-way process, it actually does not need to be. The listener can react critically, can take notes, and later through discussion with others, through reading relevant material, and through writing to the station can clarify misinterpretations and can register approval or disapproval.

What young people listen to on smart phones and television can change their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviour patterns. If the change is to be for the good of the individual and of society, instruction in how to listen is as urgently needed as is instruction in how to read.

Long before smart phones and television were invented, listening was a rich source of information, verification, entertainment, and inspiration. But these inventions, like sound films, added a range of speakers not available to any individual on a face-to-face basis. These new media also created a listening environment in which half-listening, not listening at all, or talking to a companion while listening are not looked upon as undesirable listening habits.

Teenagers have on occasion transferred such habits of listening to the classroom and the school auditorium. Yet long before mechanical devices were invented for measuring listeners' boredom, teachers recognized signs and symptoms of inattentive, inaccurate, unimaginative, and unresponsive listening.

The new inventions and the new knowledge from child study and human relations training have served to convince teachers of the need for a developmental listening program in secondary schools.

Research studies reveal that listening is a factor in scholastic achievement, that poor listeners can be helped to improve their skills, that listening is subtly modified by attitudes toward the speaker, the situation and the audience, that mass listening is modified by the social nature of the situation (the same listener responds variously to the same speech in different audience contexts), that poor listening with or without hearing impairment retards normal language development, and that listening is so important in business and industry that many large enterprises have offered to their employees (at all levels) training courses in listening.

With this evidence of research and knowledge of individual development and of the importance of training in human relations, the teacher is aware of the need to help the student improve his attitudes, skills, and habits of listening and is ready to create a school environment conducive to effective listening.

To listen creatively adds flavor to life. The individuality of the speaker, his attitude of friendliness or antagonism, the interest of his experience, and the sense of belonging which the listener feels in the midst of conversation give him a glow or satisfaction at the same time that he can live vicariously in the lives of others.

The good listener finds pleasure in daily conversation; and in the informal programs of radio, television and smart phones which offer him a comfortable way of learning what happens to his fellow men, why people act as they do, what they think, and how they feel. If one is capable of responding to the flavor as well as to the substance of words, he has a never failing clue to the quality of feeling and thinking of the speaker, to his mood at the moment, and even to the region from which he comes. These experiences he will pass on to others, for ideas for conversation and letter writing often spring from talk remembered in colourful context.

Life for young people, as well as adults, is filled with many hours of waiting for buses, cabs, trains, plans; for delivery of goods; for a turn to be served; for a show to begin; for an appointment with friends, doctors, and others. In such situations, a listening ear can relieve tension and reduce impatience, for the person who listens to the sounds and words around him is pleasantly diverted.

Listening is also a rich source of information and a valuable extension of familiar knowledge. Through smart phone and television today one comes into contact with life in every corner of the globe. One may learn, as well, what happened in the corner of the world, share markets up-downs, weather telecast, elections result in the various states, live sports, and where the Prime minister is inaugurate the mega project for the development of the country.

At the same time he may enjoy the thrill of a Shakespearean play, hear a poet read from his own work, or listen and watching the favourite actor on the small screen in their hand sets.

Research has proved also that alert and accurate listening is an asset in the worker, and that attentive and responsive listening is necessary to successful supervision. One firm has reliable evidence that the improvement of listening ability on the part of all members of the staff improved both morale and productivity. In addition, the good listener improves as a speaker, for he learns from others a sense of organization and a consciousness of how words, used with precision and imagination, can capture attention and convey meaning.

In the schoolroom, as well as in political, social, and service clubs, listening is a major element in influencing others and in getting work done on a co-operative group basis. Group discussion, planning and decision depend for their effectiveness as much upon the listener as upon the speaker. Ability to follow a carefully prepared report and skill in selecting from ideas presented the one best suited to the needs of the moment are listening skills basic to carrying on business in groups.

In the schoolroom where modern methods aim to help young people learn from one another in co-operative group activities, failure to follow the ideas of another may mean loss of information vital to the problem in hand. The teaching of listening, therefore, has won an important place in the language arts program of the school.

The listener-whether in a conversational small group or an auditorium situation-can contribute to the better listening of others. He can and should assume responsibility for correcting any physical interference with effective oral communication. If the public address system is not working and no one is taking care of it, the listener should rise to announce that the public address system is not operating. If the listener cannot hear and there are no closer seats available, he should rise to ask the speaker to speak louder. If the speaker is too close to the microphone or is using too much volume, again the listener has responsibility for bringing this fact to the speaker's attention.

If the temperature or lighting in the room interferes with the speaker's or the listener's comfort, he can and should take the necessary action to have corrections made.

If persons near the listener are conversing or otherwise distracting attention from the speaker, the good listener can courteously but firmly solicit their quiet attention.

If a question period is announced, the good listener will ask a pertinent, briefly worded question. If no questions are asked, after a short pause, the good listener may rise to offer a motion of appreciation for the inspiration (or whatever is the appropriate comment) of the talk.

Few students in high school are naturally good listeners. Some arrive in the college with an emerging skill in group discussion procedures, in listening to each other and interrupting courteously, in

offering and seconding motions, in asking questions following a talk, and in participating as listener and as speaker in informal conversation situations face to face.

Purposeful grouping within a class during instruction periods can facilitate listening as a means of effective learning and gracious living. In classes continuously kept as a whole (25 or more in one group), many are likely to listen passively without profit to themselves or stimulus for the speaker. In groups of ten or fewer students, they are challenged to listen alertly and responsibly.

Evidence was found that whenever a teacher identified a listening problem and provided instruction, the attitudes and habits of his students improved and his personal satisfaction in teaching increased.

Stimulating immediate and alert listening to an announcement over the public address system was found to be one means of reducing the amount of listening needed by eliminating the occasion for repetition. A reduction in the number of such messages, as well as improvement of the wording of those sent, was achieved by training students to listen for the important items in the announcement and to appraise the message for its clearness, conciseness, and appropriateness for delivery over the public address system. Through discussion, students discovered that some of these messages should have been written and sent to the individual classrooms concerned. Some of the announcements could have been timed for a cafeteria period, thereby interrupting fewer class sessions.

Oral delivery of messages, interruptions caused by a student's bringing an oral message for some individual can be handled by a student host or hostess. Training can be given to all members of the class in how to listen and how to record the message. During the year, each student in the class may be given a turn as host or hostess. This experience has concomitant learning for the listener and eliminates needless interruption of the entire group.

Interruption of teacher by groups when a teacher is working with one group and a student from another group interrupts to ask help for his fellows, neither group profits. Such interruptions can be channeled so that: good listening environments are maintained. Co-operatively the teacher and students may plan that any group wishing help may write the name of its chairman on the chalkboard and the teacher, as soon as convenient, will come to listen to its problem.

Annoyance caused by students' failure to listen immediately and alertly. The need for alert and prompt listening is recognized by teachers in all fields. The habit of alert listening from the first word can be developed when the teacher and students together explore the personal and social advantages of giving prompt attention. Together, they can decide upon cues for everybody to stop what he is doing to listen to the teacher, to a classmate, to a visitor, or to the presiding chairman in an assembly.

Having established the rationale for prompt and alert listening, the teacher may give specific training in a variety of purposeful situations. Using questions to focus attention during listening, checking what was heard and remembered against a written or mechanically recorded copy of what was said, and appraising, at regular intervals, student progress in listening comprehension and enjoyment are ways to sharpen skill and to help the class understand the importance of prompt and accurate listening.

Such training given in an English language arts class will be utilized wherever applicable if every member of the faculty is aware of what has been taught and not only expects but requires his students to use what they know.

Every teacher in the junior and senior high school, both in his home-room and classroom relationship with students, can bring about improvement in listening. One means is to discuss with his

students the talks and the sound films they have listened to in the classroom, the club, and the auditorium.

Prompt attention to the speaker should be required, for it is an essential of learning and a requirement of courtesy.

Listening to relate new information to old is a skill which can be sharpened in every subject area. Previewing an announced discussion and listing pertinent questions can help the student to identify what he already knows, believes, or thinks about the subject to be discussed. Doing this will stimulate him to listen for what is new and for what confirms or refutes his ideas or beliefs. Remembering what is heard becomes easier when the alert listener selects and makes special mental note of what he desires to recall.

Students become better listeners if they listen for specific things. The class, for example, may be divided into small groups, each listening for a different point. Group 1 may be asked to listen for new ideas; Group 2, for familiar ideas aptly expressed; Group 3, for the speaker's plan of organization; Group 4, for effective ways used by the speaker to hold or to reclaim attention; Group 5, for quotable phrases or sentences; Group 6, for unsupported generalizations; Group 7, for clues to questions to be raised in the discussion period.

After the talk, each listening group is allowed five minutes to share within the group what was heard. One member is chosen by the five as their spokesman in the general discussion. What each representative brings out will help the entire class to see what can be done in purposeful listening. Discussion under the guidance of the teacher will also reveal how listeners can focus their attention and how they can school themselves to remember whatever they decide they will want to recall.

When possible, it is desirable to play back a recording of the talk so that all listeners may re-listen to check their skill in

1. Sensing the speaker's organization,
2. Discovering new ideas, familiar ideas, quotable phrases and sentences, unsupported or questionable generalizations, or unwarranted inferences, and
3. Being alert to a need for questions to clarify or to extend what the speaker said.

From time to time, when several students or the entire group are presenting ideas orally, it is useful to have two or three students serve as listeners with specific purposes. These listening observers may later assist their classmates in an appraisal of how well the students listened, how well they participated in the discussion, and what, at any point or points, seemed to block the flow ideas.

Listening to playback of which a discussion is a revealing experience to all participants, those who took part orally and those who served as "listeners with specific purposes."

Every student would profit from the experience, at least once during the year, of taking the role of listening-observer for the class as a whole to check on the flow of participation, the relevancy of questions and comments, and the quality of thinking evident in the discussion.

From such activities the substance of a discussion is learned. Equally important, the techniques of effective participation as listeners and as speakers are identified as guides to self-improvement.

Designating listening groups with specific assignments is also a useful technique in a discussion after viewing a film. If a documentary film is being viewed, groups may listen for new ideas, familiar ideas in a fresh context, well-supported generalizations, unsound inferences, emotional appeal, use of music, sound effects, quality of voice, or whatever aspects the teacher and student agree upon in advance.

For films presenting a story, these items prove useful guides: How does dialogue reveal character? How does action relate to words? How do environmental sounds create a sense of reality?

Students should note, however, that to be effective listeners they must eventually be able to listen for all these things at once. The less than satisfactory attitudes and habits in some school assemblies, an example of which has already been given, may be a transfer by students of their habits of passive listening to radio, television, and sound films. Or, ineffective listening may be caused by lack of training in how to listen to the kind of presentation offered in the assembly. A less likely reason is that the program is inappropriate for the teenage audience.

Improvement of listening through student-teacher planning committees, the involvement of students in planning, in preparing listeners for the kind of program to be presented, and in evaluating both the presentation and the audience's reactions increases the value of assemblies as listening opportunities. Student-teacher planning committees soon identify the kinds of speakers whose personal magnetism can hold the attention of the entire assembled group without previous preparation of the students for the event. There are some speakers and some topics; however that require preliminary discussion with the teacher to create readiness on the part of students if they are to get the most out of the program.

Different listening skills required by different programs. Varied programs require varied listening skills. If the teacher takes the opportunity to discuss with his students the kind of listening skills required by the program to which they are going, the quality of listening and of behaviour will both improve. For example, if the program is a play or a dramatic skit, listening to the flavor as well as the substance of dialogue, responding to facial expressions and gestures as accompaniments of spoken words, hearing environmental sounds which influence feelings and actions of characters all of these aspects of listening need to be learned if one is to have maximum enjoyment and appreciation of the program. It is helpful, too, to provide time in the first period following the assembly to encourage students to share what they have heard and how they feel about it.

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