

## Pedagogical Use of Authentic Video Materials to Enhance Listening Skills of University Students

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**Abstract:** The objective of the study is to develop listening skills of the university students studying English using authentic video materials and to evaluate the statistical significant differences through assessment of pre and posttest of the students. The sample of this study comprises of 50 first-year legal studies students in the first semester of the academic year 2016 at REVA University, Bengaluru. The participants were a heterogeneous group of students. The method of teaching using authentic video material was implemented; the data was analyzed and interpreted through qualitative and quantitative analysis. This analysis included pretest and posttest data. The t-test was used to compare the improvement of listening competency of the students. The mean of pre-test = 15.84 and posttest = 26.1. The value of  $\alpha = 0.05$  which is lower than the t test value = 2.423 indicates the significant difference between the pre-test and the posttest. The post test scores are higher which favors the difference of the study. Therefore, students enhanced English language listening skills through using authentic video materials.

**Keywords:** Authentic Video Materials, Listening Skills, Legal Studies students.

### INTRODUCTION

#### Importance of listening skills

Listening is one among the four skills which makes the process of learning English a complete one. Underwood [9] defines listening as the “activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear”.

Though reading, speaking and writing skills are also important, listening skills play a major role in the learners’ development of communicative skills. Listening is not merely keeping quiet when another person is speaking. It is a process where the sounds communicated are critically interpreted and acted upon by the listener [4]. Despite its importance, this competency is often ignored in the academic setup. The learners work on their reading and writing skills as they are guided to do so. Also, the lack of assessment in listening skills in colleges has further been the reason for listening skills to be neglected. Although listening is an active skill, it is regarded as a passive process. “Listening, like all acts of perception, is a dynamic, active process involving the communicator and the recipient” [8]. Learning to listen effectively is highly essential to all the students. Underwood [9] opines that if the learners fail to learn effective listening, “they will be unable to take part in the oral communication.” It could be disastrous to a students’ career if the student is unable to communicate effectively in a variety of real life situations such as giving interviews or interacting at workplace. Listening is a skill essential throughout a student’s life. Listening practices are beneficial as they can give students useful input to activate their

utterances. In order to do this the students, require exposure in the target language.

Incorporating authentic videos to teach listening skills can provide students the necessary exposure.

#### Language learning through authentic video materials

The term authentic signifies “language samples that reflect a naturalness of form and an appropriateness of cultural and situational context that would be found in the language as used by the native speakers” [6]. With the advent of technology audio-video input is easily accessible. It is a resource which does not remain unnoticed. Videos in particular have the ability to draw one’s attention and get the students interested in the words being said. Using authentic videos enables the teacher to stretch the boundaries of the classroom. It gives learners the opportunities to learn the language they will encounter in their day to day routine, more than a teacher can cover on the same topic in a class. Sherman [7] in his book about authentic videos explains its uses. According to him it is good “for its own sake”. This means that people want to

be able to understand news, advertisements or movies. It is also essential for “comprehension of the spoken language” videos give the necessary contextual background. The visual dimension acts as an added advantage for better comprehension. It develops the learner’s contextual understanding. It acts as an endless resource of various accents, vocabulary and many styles of discourse. It can also be used as specific language items. Furthermore, authentic videos are a “window on English Language culture” students can learn more while watching than by just reading or listening. Lastly, it is also a ‘stimulus’. Videos from real situations such as a speech, a news report, conversations between two or more people, can lead to further discussions and generate topics for writing assignments. It will assist the students to build their functional proficiency while communicating in the real world. Videos also help the students to decipher the message as they can pick the non-verbal clues such as gestures and body movements. Bacon [1] claimed that authentic texts benefit non-proficient students too. Underwood [9] maintains that using videos is most advantageous as the learner can see “The speaker and the immediate context in which he/she is speaking”. In the course of using an authentic material, teacher not only teaches listening and language skills, but also transfers knowledge about various topics through news, documentaries and other videos. It keeps them informed about what is happening around the world.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

According to a study conducted by Herron [3], authentic videos have a significant impact on the listening comprehension of the American University students of French. A comparison was made between video and text-based materials. In the experiment the controlled group was taught using texts while the experimental group was taught using ‘semi-authentic’ videos. The videos included ‘dramas’ based on authentic situations. It also included clips from French films and television advertisements which made it authentic.

Woottipong [10] studied Thaksim University students’ development in listening skills. An experiment was conducted where the students were taught 10 units of instruction using videos which comprised of documentaries about environment, adventure and culture. The results of the pre-test and post-test taken before and after learning through videos point out that the use of video materials to develop listening comprehension seemed effective among these students. Hatab [2] investigated the effectiveness of aural authentic materials on the listening comprehension of students from Al Aqsa University. The researcher first took a diagnostic test and then constructed a ‘suggested program’ which met the demanding needs of the university students. The content of the program consisted of aural authentic material where the situations related to students’ life. The

findings of the post test revealed that the suggested program comprising of authentic materials had a large effect on students’ achievement.

Authentic videos can also be derived from YouTube which can be utilized for teaching listening skills. Medoukali [5] conducted a research on Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. The case study focused on developing learners’ listening comprehension through YouTube Videos. YouTube videos were blended within the process of Language teaching. The students were found to have a positive attitude towards learning listening using YouTube videos. The students admitted that it is a ‘good way to break the routine of usual study’.

### **Objectives**

- To develop listening skills of university students studying English through using authentic video materials.
- To evaluate the statistical significant differences through assessment of pre and posttest of students listening skills through using authentic video materials.

### **METHODOLOGY**

- **Sample**  
The sample of this study is 50 first-year legal studies students in the first semester of the academic year 2016 at REVA University, Bengaluru. The participants were a heterogeneous group of students.
- **Duration of the study**  
The study was conducted during the second semester. It involved 20 periods of an hour each. Two periods were utilized for conducting the pre-test and the post-test and the other 18 periods were used for teaching the prepared modules.
- **Instruments**
  - 15 units of lesson plans for class teaching.
  - 15 authentic videos extracted from various sites which were of 3-5 minutes duration. The videos comprised of TED Talks, BBC News reviews, interviews, conversations in real life situations, news, product descriptions and lectures on academic topics.
  - Pre-test comprising of 3 audios and 30 questions for a total of 30 marks to find out the students’ level in listening skills prior to the listening practice given through videos.
  - Post-test comprising of 3 audios and 30 questions for a total of 30 marks. The post- test was used to analyze the students’ improvement in their listening skills after they practiced using authentic videos.
  - Language laboratory

### Procedure

This experimental study was conducted in the language laboratory of the university. The research was conducted with a group of 50 students. Their proficiency was assessed by first conducting a pre-test. The researcher found out the students' level in listening skills. Having assessed their listening skills, authentic videos were used in class to enable the students to develop their listening skills. Teaching sessions were conducted for a duration of 18 hours in total, each session lasting 60 minutes. Every session was based on a specific lesson plan which focused on various aspects of listening skills. The lesson followed the following format:

- Students' knowledge of the topic
- Finding what the students already knew about the topic through group discussions/students' teacher interactions/brainstorms.
- Listening comprehension
- Discussion of answers
- Reviewing the new vocabulary/idioms/phrases
- Focus on the varying speaking styles based on situations.
- Group discussions to find out the students' opinion on the topic

The syllabus comprised of authentic videos comprising speeches, conversation, interviews, academic lectures, news reports, product descriptions in advertisements, court scenes and debates thus giving students exposure to real life situations.

At the end of these 18-hour listening skill practice sessions, a post-test was conducted to analyze the extent of improvement in students' listening skills using authentic video materials.

### FINDINGS

The method of teaching using authentic video material was implemented; furthermore the data was analyzed and interpreted through quantitative analysis. This analysis includes pretest and posttest data. The t-test was used to compare the improvement of listening competency of the students. Statistical mathematics was used to get the t test values. Dependent sample t-test was calculated to find significance of pre-test and posttest. Two tailed tests are done to disprove the null hypothesis. The mean of pre-test = 15.84 and posttest = 26.1. The value of  $\alpha = 0.05$  which is lower than the t test value = 2.423 which indicates the significant difference between the pre-test and the posttest. The post test scores are higher which favors the difference of the study.

### DISCUSSION

The result of the study shows that teaching using authentic video materials improves students' listening skills and the ability to combine visual images. They are exposed to various accents, vocabulary and

grammar. They are able to comprehend varied rates of speech. They are able to build a connection between the classroom and the real world situations which help them to relate between practicing and learning. The study also found that students were more attentive and interested to learn language than reading text books and conventional learning. Watching videos, the students could understand and interpret the meanings conveyed through gestures and pictures.

### CONCLUSION

The results of the research conclude that there is a significant difference in the T-test that proves the students have improved listening skills using authentic video materials for teaching. If the teachers use innovative strategies of choosing relevant video materials according to students' level they will develop listening skills. Practice of watching the videos improves listening skill, makes a clear process of productivity and functions benefiting some innovative researches. Videos play an important role in acquiring pedagogical strategies while learning. Authentic materials such as movies and news are rich with the context of real life.

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