

The Role of Audiovisual Media in Enhancing Listening Skills at Junior High School

Pajrian Noor¹, Fikri Fuadi Azmy², Raudatul Aslamiah³

¹ English Language Education, Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Kalimantan Selatan, Indonesia

² English Language Education, Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Kalimantan Selatan, Indonesia

³ English Language Education, Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Kalimantan Selatan, Indonesia

Abstract. This study investigates the role of audiovisual media in enhancing students' listening skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. Listening is frequently considered one of the most challenging language skills for learners because it requires the ability to process pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and meaning simultaneously. Despite its importance, listening instruction is often overshadowed by other language skills such as speaking and reading. Therefore, the integration of audiovisual media has been increasingly recommended as an effective strategy to support listening instruction. This research employed a descriptive qualitative design involving one English teacher and ten students at SMPN 5 Simpang Empat in the academic year of 2025/2026. Data were collected through classroom observation, interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. The findings reveal that audiovisual media plays an important role in enhancing listening to comprehension, increasing students' motivation, and supporting contextual understanding of spoken English. Students reported that audiovisual materials such as videos, songs, and multimedia presentations helped them understand pronunciation, meaning, and context more effectively than traditional textbook-based learning. However, the implementation of audiovisual media also faces several challenges including limited classroom facilities, unclear audio equipment, time constraints, and classroom management issues. These findings suggest that while audiovisual media offers significant pedagogical benefits for listening instruction, successful implementation requires proper planning, adequate technological support, and teacher training.

Keywords: Audiovisual; Listening Skill; Role of Media

1 Introduction

Listening plays a fundamental role in language learning because it provides the primary input for acquiring a second or foreign language. According to Rost (1994), listening is the channel through which learners receive linguistic input necessary for language development.

¹ Corresponding author: fajrian.yzb@gmail.com

However, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, listening is often neglected compared to other language skills such as speaking, reading, and writing. Teachers frequently emphasize productive skills, particularly speaking, because they are more visible and measurable in classroom assessments. In the Indonesian context, this imbalance can be observed in many secondary school classrooms where listening activities are limited. Learners often struggle to understand spoken English due to unfamiliar pronunciation, rapid speech, or limited vocabulary. Walker (2014) argues that listening is a complex cognitive process involving prediction, interpretation, and meaning construction rather than passive hearing. Listening is widely recognized as one of the most important skills in language learning. According to A. Anderson & Lynch (1988), listening involves understanding spoken language by interpreting pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and intonation. Rost (1994) further explains that listening provides the primary input necessary for language acquisition. Kline (1996) describes the listening process as consisting of several stages: receiving, attending, understanding, responding, and remembering. Effective listening requires concentration and active interpretation of spoken messages. Teaching listening requires structured instructional stages, including pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities. Harmer (2007) emphasizes that teachers should provide contextual clues, activate background knowledge, and encourage learners to predict meaning before listening.

One promising approach to improving listening instruction is the integration of audiovisual media. Audiovisual media refers to learning materials that combine sound and visual elements such as videos, films, television programs, and multimedia presentations. R. H. Anderson (1976) defines audiovisual media as a combination of electronic sound and images that deliver information simultaneously. Audiovisual media offers several advantages in language learning. Daniel (2013) states that audiovisual aids increase students' interest and motivation. Arsyad (2009) also notes that audiovisual media helps learners understand abstract concepts more easily. Despite these benefits, teachers often face obstacles when integrating audiovisual media into their instruction. Nova (2017) identifies limited facilities and technical issues as common challenges. Omariba et al. (2016) also report that the preparation and implementation of audiovisual materials can be time-consuming. Audiovisual media combines sound and visual elements, allowing learners to process language through multiple sensory channels. According to Arsyad (2009), audiovisual learning materials stimulate both visual and auditory senses, which can improve comprehension and retention. Previous studies have demonstrated that audiovisual media can significantly improve listening comprehension. Hardiah (2019) found that audiovisual materials helped students better understand spoken English and increased their motivation during listening activities. Similarly, Nasution et al. (2022) reported that students who learned through audiovisual materials performed better in listening tests compared to those who used traditional teaching methods. Despite its advantages, the integration of audiovisual media in classroom practice often encounters challenges. Teachers may face technical issues, limited facilities, or insufficient training in using digital media effectively (Bolandifar et al., 2016; Nova, 2017). Several studies have investigated the use of audiovisual media in language teaching. Çakır (2006) highlighted the effectiveness of video materials in improving language learning motivation. Mamun (2014) found that audiovisual aids created a more dynamic classroom environment and improved student engagement. Rahman (2018) concluded that audiovisual materials significantly improved students' listening comprehension. Based on these issues, this study aims to explore the role of audiovisual media in enhancing listening skills at SMPN 5 Simpang Empat. The study focuses on two research questions:

1. What is the role of audiovisual media in enhancing students' listening skills?
2. What challenges do teachers face when using audiovisual media in teaching listening?

By answering these questions, this research is expected to contribute to the development of more effective listening instruction in EFL classrooms.

2 Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to investigate the role of audiovisual media in enhancing listening skills among secondary school students. Qualitative research allows researchers to explore participants' experiences and perspectives in depth (Creswell, 2017). The study was conducted at SMPN 5 Simpang Empat during the 2024/2025 academic year. The participants consisted of one English teacher and ten students. Data were collected using three main techniques: observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Classroom observation was conducted to examine how audiovisual media was used during listening activities. Interviews were carried out with the English teacher and students to explore their perceptions regarding the use of audiovisual media. The collected data were analyzed using the model proposed by Miles & Huberman (1994), which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

The findings of this study are based on data collected through classroom observation, interviews with one English teacher, and interviews with ten students at SMPN 5 Simpang Empat. The data analysis revealed several key themes regarding the role of audiovisual media in enhancing listening skills and the challenges faced by the teacher in implementing such media in the classroom.

First, the findings indicate that the teacher possesses sufficient knowledge about audiovisual media and its potential benefits in English language learning. During the interview, the teacher explained that audiovisual media such as videos, PowerPoint presentations, and digital materials prepared using Canva could make learning more interesting and engaging for students. The teacher stated *that audiovisual media allows students to see images while simultaneously hearing spoken language, which helps them understand the lesson more easily*. This reflects the teacher's awareness of the pedagogical value of combining visual and auditory input in language learning. The use of audiovisual media also enables teachers to present authentic language materials, including dialogues, conversations, and expressions used in real-life contexts.

Second, students demonstrated highly positive perceptions toward the use of audiovisual media in listening activities. Most students reported *that learning through videos or songs made the classroom environment more enjoyable and less monotonous compared to traditional learning methods*. Students mentioned *that audiovisual materials helped them understand how words are pronounced and used in real communication*. Several students also stated *that audiovisual materials made it easier for them to understand the context of conversations because they could observe visual cues such as facial expressions, gestures, and situational backgrounds*. These elements helped them interpret the meaning of spoken language more effectively.

Third, audiovisual media was found to increase students' motivation and participation in the learning process. Students explained *that they felt more enthusiastic when the teacher used videos or songs in class*. The presence of moving images and sound stimulated their curiosity and attention. As a result, students were more actively involved in the listening

activities and were more willing to participate in discussions after watching the audiovisual materials.

However, the findings also revealed several challenges in implementing audiovisual media in the classroom. One of the most significant challenges reported by both the teacher and students was technical problems related to classroom equipment. The teacher explained *that sometimes the speakers did not function properly, resulting in unclear audio during listening activities*. Some students confirmed *this issue and stated that unclear audio made it difficult for them to understand the content of the videos or audio recordings*. Another challenge identified in the findings is the limited frequency of audiovisual media usage in classroom practice. Although the teacher recognized the benefits of audiovisual media, she reported *that such media were not used regularly in every lesson*. The teacher explained *that preparing audiovisual materials required additional time and effort, which sometimes made it difficult to integrate them into every lesson*.

In addition, several students mentioned difficulties related to vocabulary and speed of speech in audiovisual materials. Some students reported *that native speakers in videos often spoke too quickly, making it difficult for them to follow the conversation*. Others stated *that unfamiliar vocabulary sometimes prevented them from fully understanding the content*. Overall, the findings suggest that audiovisual media has a positive impact on students' listening skills by increasing engagement, providing contextual clues, and improving comprehension. However, the effectiveness of audiovisual media depends on adequate classroom facilities, careful lesson planning, and appropriate selection of materials that match students' language proficiency levels.

3.2 Discussion

The results of this study highlight the significant pedagogical value of audiovisual media in improving students' listening comprehension in English language learning. Listening is widely recognized as a complex cognitive process that involves decoding sounds, interpreting meaning, and connecting spoken language with prior knowledge. Therefore, the integration of audiovisual media can support learners by providing additional contextual information that facilitates comprehension.

One of the key findings of this study is that audiovisual media increases students' motivation and engagement during listening activities. Students expressed that lessons became more enjoyable when the teacher used videos, songs, or multimedia presentations. This finding supports the argument proposed by Daniel (2013) that audiovisual aids play a crucial role in stimulating learners' interest and attention in the classroom. When students are more interested in learning activities, they are more likely to focus on the listening task and actively participate in classroom discussions. Another important aspect highlighted in the findings is the role of audiovisual media in supporting comprehension through visual context. Unlike traditional audio recordings, audiovisual materials provide visual cues such as facial expressions, gestures, body language, and environmental context. These elements help learners interpret the meaning of spoken language even when they do not fully understand every word. According to Arsyad (2009), learning that involves both visual and auditory channels can improve comprehension because learners receive information through multiple sensory pathways.

Furthermore, the findings show that audiovisual media can expose students to authentic language input. Authentic materials such as videos or films present natural pronunciation, intonation, and conversational patterns that are rarely found in textbook dialogues. Rost (1994) emphasizes that exposure to authentic spoken language is essential for developing listening competence because it reflects how language is used in real communication.

However, despite these advantages, the implementation of audiovisual media in the classroom is not without challenges. One of the major issues identified in this study is the limitation of classroom facilities. Technical problems such as malfunctioning speakers or insufficient equipment can significantly reduce the effectiveness of audiovisual learning activities. Similar findings were reported by Nova (2017), who explained that inadequate technological infrastructure remains a major barrier to integrating audiovisual media in many schools. Time constraints also emerged as a significant challenge in the implementation of audiovisual media. Teachers often need additional time to prepare audiovisual materials, set up equipment, and design appropriate activities that accompany the videos or audio recordings. Omariba et al. (2016) argue that the preparation of technology-based learning materials requires careful planning and can increase teachers' workload.

In addition, the findings reveal that students' limited vocabulary and the speed of speech in authentic audiovisual materials may create comprehension difficulties. When students encounter unfamiliar words or rapid speech, they may struggle to follow the conversation. Therefore, teachers need to provide pre-listening activities such as vocabulary introduction, prediction tasks, and contextual explanations before playing audiovisual materials. Despite these challenges, the overall findings of this study confirm that audiovisual media can significantly enhance listening instruction when used effectively. Teachers should carefully select audiovisual materials that match students' language proficiency levels and learning objectives. In addition, schools should provide adequate technological facilities to support the integration of audiovisual media in language classrooms. In summary, audiovisual media serves not only as a motivational tool but also as an important pedagogical resource that supports comprehension, contextual learning, and authentic language exposure. When combined with appropriate instructional strategies, audiovisual media can create a more engaging and effective learning environment for developing students' listening skills.

4 Conclusion

This study examined the role of audiovisual media in enhancing listening skills among students at SMPN 5 Simpang Empat. The findings indicate that audiovisual media plays a significant role in improving listening to comprehension, increasing student motivation, and creating a more engaging learning environment. Despite these benefits, teachers face several challenges when implementing audiovisual media, including technical limitations, limited time, and classroom management issues. The integration of audiovisual media into listening instruction can significantly improve students' listening abilities when supported by adequate infrastructure, careful planning, and teacher training.

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