



Focussing on the Development of Listening skills of Collegiate students USING VOA APPLICATION with special reference to Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology

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Abstract

Viable listening comprehension skills are essential as the world gets to be more and more worldwide. Listening has a significant role both in daily life and in educational life. It is a most important skill in English language learning. When students listen to English language they face a lot of complexity. Because it is not a noteworthy part of many course books and most teachers do not pay attention to this in schoolrooms. This paper shows a new way to practise English language listening through a new application VOA. A few students were selected from Sathyabama University. Initially, they were given a test to assess their listening skills without using the application. Next, they were instructed to use this application for a certain period of time and were given a test to assess their listening skills. There was a great improvement after using "VOA". This paper proves that by using the application "VOA", one can improve his or her listening skills to a great extent. It occurs almost without effort. VOA provides effortless learning of language by simply listening to the audios and videos provided. The learner is exposed to language data and the results imply that listening tactics can be taught.

Keywords: Developing, listening skills, college students, VOA, application

INTRODUCTION

Generally, it is observed that the language learners, show much interest in multimedia lessons, through which they can perform in a better way than in the conventional method of classroom teaching. Since they are free to access the lessons anytime, copy and transfer to their required platform, the learners immerse themselves in multimedia zone. As far as the questions concerned, the scripted method of language development through listening encourages multiple choice questions. Usually find the most difficult. This often is because they feel under unnecessary pressure to understand every A several key factors that affect learners' literacy

development the learning context, texts and tools, literacy activities, and the learner and it also shows the aspects of each of these factors that are possible to influence through instruction. The students should also make it a point to familiarize themselves with the jargons and new words by making reading a habit be it reading newspapers, articles, books, magazines etc. Writing provides a learner with physical evidence of his achievements and he can measure his improvement. It helps to consolidate their grasp of vocabulary and structure, and complements the other language skills. Listening and reading are the receptive skills because learners do not need to produce language, they receive and understand it. These skills are sometimes known as

passive skills. The productive skills are speaking and writing because learners are applying these skills in a need to produce language. They are also known as active skills. Listening is a receptive language skill which learner's word. The listener has to get oriented to the listening portion and be all ears. The listener is also required to be attentive. Anticipation is a skill to be nurtured in Listening. In everyday life, the situation, the speaker, and visual clues all help us to decode oral messages. Effective reading instruction explicitly and systematically targets each component skill that needs to be developed and supports the integration of all of them. According to the literature world, basic education aims to make the learner gain necessary skills for life by developing his /her communication skills, self-learning and ability to use critical thinking to deal with science and technology. English oral communication skills are part of the skill set and learners should be supported to gain these skills. In today's world, communication is more important. People devote less time to listening to one another. Listening has become a rare gift. Listening builds a career in the workspace. Listening requires concentration and focus. All positive human relationships are underpinned by effective listening. To effectively improve our listening skills on English VOA learning English application helps a lot. The details discussed below make readers understand more about the application.

ABOUT VOA

VOA stands for VOICE OF AMERICA. The main aim of VOA application is to provide news, information for millions of English learners. VOA was launched in 1959. More than half a century English newscasts and features was a primary fixture of VOA's international shortwave broadcasts. VOA started to include more English teaching materials to expand their line of products from 2014. The service has become more popular and known as learning English. VOA can be downloaded in Android and iPhone mobiles. VOA is an Android application aimed at making VOA easier to access on mobile devices in raising economic power. VOA also telecasts news around the world. It gives time to time updates with latest news. The tune in is at the top of every hour, every day of the week. VOA

provides contests in 44 international languages and dialects. On TV, radio and digital properties it operates the world's largest international news media network. There are more than 3,500 employees working around the world. It provides notification with new updates. Hear radio podcasts on demand. In case of any problem arise contact with voamobilesapps@gmail.com. Be sure to include the device model (for E.g.: Samsung S3 and generating system for Eg: 4.3) and give a brief description of the issue. Audio quality in VOA applications can usually be adjusted between high and medium, to speed up the voice. VOA application is provided with different speeds such as 0.25x, 0.5x, 0.75x, 1x, 1.25x, 1.5x, 1.75x, and 2 x. More over text size also can be maximized and minimized with indicated plus (+) and minus (-) options. User can choose mode of the screen light while watching the video or reading the content, provided options like normal mode, reading mode and night mode can help eyes look with better vision. VOA allows users to upload, view, like, comment on video. While watching a video viewer can like the video if they enjoyed watching it, with provided white heart at the top right Corner, when you hit the like option it turns into red heart. VOA application has superior video quality. While watching video on phone select your preferred video quality provided in the application with three options such as low, medium and high. Viewers are also able to notice how many of them visited the video, it is designated with an eye mark. VOA has some requirements that have to be followed by the user, that are... while commenting it must be in English. In order that shouldn't violate any copyright or trademark by posting any material Wontedly. They are compelled users to stay on topic. Moreover there shouldn't be calling for brutishness or personal attacks and for provocative language. VOA possess their own word book consists of a-z vocabulary. The words which are used in VOA broadcasting are explained in this book. The first edition was published in 1962. The list of words has changed since then, as the language itself has changed. It is a list of words used in particular English programs on television, radio and internet. Apart from this the book also holds the following topics. It gave an outline of parts of speech following that it

has words list and definition. Another special information of words such like common prefixes, common expression, numbers, days, months, also can gain knowledge about chemical elements, organs of the body, business terms, computer terms, detailed about US branches of government furthermore specific info about Presidents of the U. S. Besides, that book is provided with map of U. S and map of world. The vocabulary is limited to about 1,500 words and the sentences are managed to be short. The maintained speed is slower than normal. VOA employees or designated officials will approve programs before it is posted on the site, it is done only by the officials. Individuals cannot upload any video or audio. By using a website called www.voa.com special English. Com , we can download transcripts and audio files of VOA programs. Programs that are broadcasted on the radio, internet and television are advanced. VOA application has an advantage of distributing content directly to the users email inbox. The newsletter is free when they sign up using their email I'd. It won awards like" Best mobile media and publishing app in 2015 GSMA global mobile awards" "Best multicultural app in 2014 Appy awards',"best mobile service in the meffy awards". The version of this application is 1.0.3. The downloads are about 50,000 having a size of 11.37 which are offered by VOA(voice of America). These are updated on 19-june-2015.To say little about the description of the logo it contains of the peacock blue coloured background of the three letters VOA, V is designed in fired red colour, letter O takes background colour and marked a small white play button in the middle of letter O. And the letter A is coloured in Royal Blue, altogether looks attractive, and can be easily identified.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As Lundsteen (1979) states, "listening is the first language skill to appear. Chronologically, children listen before they speak, speak before they read, and read before they write" (p. xi). What Lundsteen emphasizes; that is, listening is the basis for other skills, is true for second language (L2) as well as first language (L1) acquisition. As stated by Cross (2009b) the most important problems for second language listeners occurred in word recognition. The reason is that "cues in connected

speech can often be inconsistent and unreliable for marking word boundaries and the range of conventions which the listener needs to know can be broad". According to Brown (2001), Listening competence is universally larger than speaking competence|. Listening involves making sense of spoken language, normally accompanied by other sounds and visual input, with the help of our relevant prior knowledge and the context in which we are listening|| commented Schmitt (2002). According to Morley (2001) and Rost (2001), listening is the most important skill for language learning because it can be mostly used in normal daily life and develops faster than the other language skills which indicate that it makes easy the development of the other language skills. Vandergrift (1999) defines listening as "a complex, active process in which the listener must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation, retain what was gathered in all of the above, and interpret it within the immediate as well as the larger socio-cultural context of the utterance" (p. 168). Another aspect of learning good listening can come from direct lessons on listening. While many teachers feel they cannot fit these lessons into their already-filled school days, these lessons "about specific listening skills can make students better listeners" (Jalongo, 1991).Dr.Mercy Gnana Gandhi (2015) commented that "The sound and pictures bring liveliness to the classroom, enhancing active participation of the both teachers and students". "The sound and picture bring liveliness to the classroom, enhancing active participation of both teachers and students".

THREE TYPES OF LEVEL

There are three types of levels, They are Benning level, Intermediate level, Advanced level. The first level, is created by certified American teachers- LET'S LEARN ENGLISH and LEVEL 1, LEVEL 2 programs are designed. 'Ask a teacher '- is a new program where learners can ask questions and the teacher answers it. Following binning level there is an intermediate level here it is discussed about the opportunity for learners if they can build their vocabulary, speaking skills, and improve the ability to communicate for work, school and everyday life.

For an upper beginner’s audio program and captioned video- English in a minute, English@ the movies, every day grammar TV and learning English TV are programmed using vocabulary.At last it has discussion about advanced level which gives information of the Classic literature can be read by advanced English learners with American stories, learn idioms and expressions with words and their stories, and study with every day grammar.

HOW TO INSTALL VOA APPLICATION ON ANDROIDS AND IPHONE MOBILES

Firstly go to a play store available in the Android phone or iphone. Likewise go to the magnifying glass icon in the top right corner of the screen and type “VOA- learning English” into the search bar, then tap “GO”. Furthermore tap the VOA- item. Doing so will take you to VOA -learning English application page and then click on “INSTALL”, in the right side of the screen. tap “ACCEPT” when promoted. Next wait for VOA learning English application to finish downloading. Finally tap “OPEN”. Finally VOA learning English is now installed and set up on your Android you can begin using VOA learning English when you want to use it.

ADVANTAGES OF THE VOA LEARNING ENGLISH APPLICATION

Users have two benefits using it -learning English and staying in touch with the newest information from all over the world. It is an excellent application; it will help all the users of the application to learn a daily English used by native speakers. By getting VIP membership, users can enjoy the app without ads in the middle and can download lessons. Here you can learn grammar, vocabulary, idioms, improve your listening and speaking skill. It is a good application to improve your English and understand as quickly as listening to the audio with provided context for more convenience colouring of the context with respective audio is also provided. Application is very easy to use; it lists all the material by category. Users can also create knowledge outside the country. A

good choice is to listen to interesting articles about a lot of things around the world. While listening to news, users can keep updating themselves about the things that happen in the world. Audio is at normal speed. It doesn’t make the listener sleep. It is easy to understand English with their clean accents. It is a clean way to understand so many words and a good source of trending news, interesting stories and a way of learning English at the same time. It improves pronunciation and vocabulary in English language. Users are provided with daily subjects and education benefits. Being an English learner, listening and subtitling at the same time is really helpful to improve our English listening skills. It has more than 3k videos with professional ways to learn English. It is very useful for ESL learners. It’s a great application for students who want to work on their listening skills. This helps a learner to learn English comprehensively with a broad vision to develop this language in an absolute sense. The size of font helps for good vision. Videos, stories and photos can be downloaded for offline watching, reading and listening. Users can share their favourite stories, videos, and photos via Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and e-mail. We learn English language especially because we “live at a time where the ability to speak English fluently has become a must, especially for those who want to advance in a certain field of human endeavour. VOA focuses on speaking, at times, to improve the oral production of the learners. This app maximises individual knowledge on English vocabulary.

Research Methodology

To investigate this issue, this research evaluates the performance of university learners using English as a second language. The learners are allowed to hear the audios version of VOA application through the computer in the digital class. The study was conducted with 20 students of third year B.A English literature at Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology in Chennai. A pre- test and post- test were conducted after the experiment to find out the result of using these online resources.

Table:1 Results of the Listening activity (Control Method)

SI.NO	NAME OF THE STUDENTS	MARKS	PERCENTAGE

1.	PALLAVI	23	46
2.	SHARATH	40	80
3.	VASAVI	28	68
4.	CHARUSHEELA	42	84
5.	POORNIMA	25	58
6.	VAIDYANATH	35	70
7.	RAHUL	41	82
8.	SRINATH	37	74
9.	VARSHA	36	72
10.	PRAVALLIKA	33	66
11.	RAJI	32	64
12.	ALBERT	36	72
13.	HASSAN	28	56
14.	VENKATESH	30	60
15.	VANITHA	31	62
16.	LAVANYA	25	50
17.	HARITHA	36	72
18.	CHINNA	34	68
19.	DHARMI	29	58
20.	RANJANI	37	74

Table :2 student marks after listening to VOA application (Experimental Method)

SI.NO	NAME OF THE STUDENTS	MARKS	PERCENTAGE
1.	PALLAVI	35	70
2.	SHARATH	42	83
3.	VASAVI	44	88
4.	CHARUSHEELA	30	60
5.	POORNIMA	45	90
6.	VAIDYANATH	39	78
7.	RAHUL	49	97
8.	SRINATH	43	86
9.	VARSHA	44	88
10.	PRAVALLIKA	40	80
11.	RAJI	42	84
12.	ALBERT	46	92
13.	HASSAN	38	76
14.	VENKATESH	40	80
15.	VANITHA	41	82
16.	LAVANYA	35	70
17.	HARITHA	46	92
18.	CHINNA	44	88
19.	DHARMI	39	78
20.	RANJANI	47	94

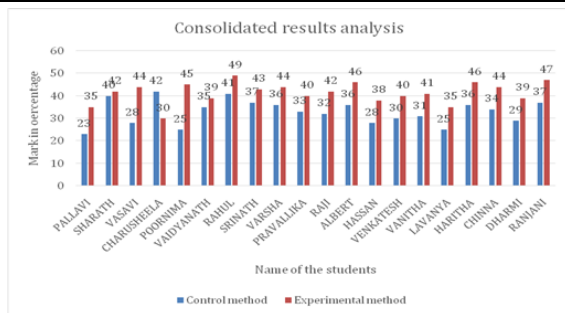


Fig:1 Comparison of Students' Performance

Conclusion

This study discovered the advantage of online tools in better listening skills of English language. From this study, it is evident that the learner of English language can improve their listening skills very smartly and quickly using these online resources. VOA news is as an effective language learning tool despite its slight disadvantages. It is a professionally-designed app with scientific and creative basis. In addition, due to an increase in the population of iPhone users all over the world, developed an iPhone version of this app could made it more popular and noticeable. Results suggest that student were strategic in podcasts suitable for their interests and proficiency levels, overall, they found learning from podcasts not only convenient but also useful in enhancing their language proficiency and world language. Their general satisfaction with the experience can be attributed to factors including freedom of choice, meaningful practice and close integration with the syllabus. However, students also experience frustration with podcasts containing unscripted, authentic content delivered at a fast speech rate. The extensive new collection of the videos and text provided by VOA- software application gives a varied and interesting set of resources for practicing a range of English language- American English from grammar to reading and vocabulary building to developing research skills. On opening the app we can have options like- audios, videos, programs, playlists. In the first section we can find audios -with text, easy to follow with listening to audio. We can find videos-English in a minute; English @ the movies; News words; Every day grammar. However, oral language hardly ever functions as a mean to

gain knowledge, to explore ideas and to learn English skilfully.

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