



Reflective Listening: Enhancing Listening Skills Among Secondary School Student

Khadija Abbas

M. Phil Scholar, Department of Education, University of Gujrat, Gujrat, Pakistan.

Email: chkhadi22@gmail.com

Dr. Mobeen-ul-Islam

Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Gujrat, Gujrat, Pakistan.

Khadija Ijaz

MPhil Scholar, Department of Education, University of Gujrat, Pakistan.

Citation

Abbass, K., Islam, M. Ul., Ijaz, K. (2025). Reflective listening: Enhancing listening skills among secondary school student. *Open Access Education and Leadership Review*, 3(1): 33-42.

WEBSITE: www.mdpi.com

PUBLISHER: MDPIP

ISSN (Print): 3006-8746

ISSN (Online): 3006-8754

Abstract:

This research article explores the effectiveness of reflective listening techniques in enhancing listening skills among 10th-grade students at Government Girls High School Bhagowal. The decision to prioritize interpersonal skills, specifically listening, was motivated by the belief that these skills contribute to a student's holistic development and future success. The study aimed to evaluate baseline listening skills, identify challenges, implement reflective listening techniques, measure progress, explore impacts on interpersonal skills, gather feedback, and compare findings with existing research. Major indicators measured vocabulary, listening comprehension, interest, focus, and active listening. Statistical techniques involved calculating pre- and post-intervention average scores and presenting results through bar graphs. Results indicated overall improvement in students' listening skills after implementing reflective listening techniques. The average score increased from 20 to 23.6, showcasing positive impacts on comprehension and engagement. Student feedback supported the effectiveness of the intervention. The findings provide insights for educators, highlighting the potential of this approach in fostering positive teacher-student relationships and overall academic success. Further research with a larger and diverse participant group is recommended to validate and extend these findings.

Key Words: Interpersonal Skills, Listening Skills, Reflective Listening, Statistical Techniques, Listening Comprehension.



Copyright: © 2025 by the authors. Licensee MDPIP, Mardan, Pakistan. This open-access article is distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>. Reproduction, distribution, and use in other forums are permitted provided the copyright owner (s), the original authors are credited, and the original publication is cited.

Introduction

Effective communication skills are essential for academic success and personal development, with listening being a fundamental component. Listening skills encompass the ability to actively receive, interpret, and understand verbal and non-verbal information, playing a crucial role in various aspects of life, including education, work, and interpersonal relationships. Research suggests that individuals with strong listening skills tend to perform better academically, collaborate effectively in team settings, and build stronger interpersonal connections (Brown & Peterson, 2008). Reflective listening, a communication technique rooted in empathy and active engagement, has emerged as a promising approach to enhancing listening skills. In reflective listening, the listener is empathetic and sympathetic by paraphrasing or summarizing the message and feel of the speaker. Reflective listening enhances deeper engagement, respect for one another, and better understanding of the material being communicated (Fogle, 2017). Reflective listening has scientifically been proven to not only enhance listening understanding but also improved interpersonal relationships and conflict resolution (Rogers & Farson, 1957). The connection between listening skill and reflective listening is complex yet beneficial. Reflective listening is an individual advantage of enhanced listening skill through active participation, empathy, and understanding. Through careful hearing of others and their feelings and concepts, a further understanding of what is being heard occurs, resulting in better listening skill (Spreckelmeyer & Bohlmeijer, 2018).

The students will be likely to face difficulties in creating effective listening skills, especially where normal learning processes do not satisfy individual learning needs to the highest extent. Due to such difficulties, the ongoing research attempts to improve listening skills of class 10th students at Government Girls High School Bhagowal using reflective listening skills. By establishing a facilitative learning environment using active participation and empathy, reflective listening is intended to improve the performance, comprehension, and communication of students.

Government Girls High School Bhagowal's choice of listening development through reflective listening skills is directed through a set of fundamental concerns and pillars. First, listening skills are the foundation of intellectual accomplishment and personal development and are most elementary in following instructions, contributing, and understanding intricate details. Hence, the transmission of listening skills among students has long-term impacts in intellectual accomplishment and long-term success.

Reflective listening, being a communication ability characterized by empathy and active hearing, provides an effective method of improving listening. Greater involvement, focus, and better comprehension of the information presented, reflective listening can improve hearing comprehension and foster more positive interpersonal relationships among students.

The Government Girls High School Bhagowal is also the specific setting of this research. Located in a middle-class society with a diversified socio-economic structure, Government Girls High School Bhagowal is vulnerable to certain issues of resource inadequacy and lowest degree of exposure to facilities of high-level learning. It is towards this that one can take an examination of the innovative pedagogic method such as reflective listening in a bid to solve these issues and cultivate students beyond their points of failure to support their learning process. In all, this subject has been selected on account of the importance of listening skills to academic performance, the capability of reflective listening towards the augmentation of the same, and the case study of Government Girls High School Bhagowal. With this study, we strive to contribute towards accumulating knowledge in effective communication strategies and their effects on academic performance as well as better enhancing a student-friendly learning atmosphere.

Review of Literature

Listening is also a vital component of effective communication and of the most meaningful kind in most areas of higher studies, business, and life. Various studies have been done on the varied methods and techniques to improve the listening skills of the students with special focus on new method and technology support in making maximum understanding as well as communication skills possible. Gokce (2022) brought to the fore multimedia and video resources employed in the development of English listening as abundant audiovisual resources could be harnessed to enhance comprehension and memory. Munby (2011) also added to the contribution taking into perspective the evolution of listening activities through

technology platforms such as Moodle and Audacity. Munby's research demonstrates the capability of technology-supported learning environments to offer personalized and interactive listening to learners.

Ramos and Valderruten (2017) wrote on the acquisition of listening and language through mobile apps. Their research sets the advantages of mobile learning platforms in the development of independent learning and familiarity with real listening materials. Apart from this, Yaacob (2021) stressed the role of video podcasts and YouTube in young learner listening skill and exemplified the potential of online multimedia in learning listening skills outside the classroom. These studies identify the significance of new pedagogies and infrastructure technology in listening skill development and effective communication within multicultural classrooms.

Solihat and Utami (2014) is notably beneficial in elaborating on the potential for the use of the advantages of music, English songs, as a study aid in enhancing the listening capacity of the students. What their research offers is the fact that English song usage can offer an innovative and dynamic learning environment, which will result in heightened motivation and active engagement by the student. Furthermore, the musicality and repetition of songs can help students build listening skills in the areas of comprehension, pronunciation, and vocabulary. As cited in the results of Solihat and Utami's (2014) research, your study can also depict the effectiveness of using interactive and interesting listening materials like reflective listening procedures in improving students' listening skill. Ocak (2012) explored the construction of young learners' listening skill with the use of songs. Ocak's research is a descriptive report on the potentiality of using songs as an instrument in developing young students' listening competence. Music is included in instructional sessions, yet teachers can aid learners in achieving participatory hearing and comprehension processes that inspire intriguing and stimulating learning procedures. The music and rhythm aspect of songs engages students and leads to the memorization of linguistic form and words, thus enhancing overall listening capacity. This indicates incorporating music-based exercises, along with reflective listening skills, can be included as part of an integrated solution to enhance listening capability in students.

The research "Using Authentic Aural Materials to Develop Listening Comprehension in the EFL Classroom" documents the impact of authentic listening material use in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. Leila (2012) uses authentic aural material, including podcasts, radio shows, and interviews, expose learners to the natural use of language and actual contexts and thus develop their listening skill. By utilizing authentic materials, the learners can optimize the processing capacity of natural speech, intonation, and accent, which plays significant roles in actual listening comprehension. In this paper, the utilization of authentic listening material is focused on developing effective and relevant learning experience to improve the construction of listening comprehension in EFL setting.

Joiner (1991) explains that listening must be taught to be acquired in language acquisition, with a focus on the ends and the means of effective teaching in listening. Teach listening must, Joiner asserts, enhance learners' skills to interpret talk in different settings and interpret sound to give it meaning. This is consistent with the demands of the present study to improve the listening ability of students by fostering reflective listening skills. He further suggests that interactive and motivational drill exercises must be included in listening training to encourage active participation and understanding. Reflective listening as a process where the student paraphrases or summarizes the talking to show understanding is in line with Joiner's call for interactive pedagogy. It is with reflective listening skills that instructors can provide students with avenues through which they can actively listen to materials and report what they have acquired and hence learn effective listening skills. In addition, Joiner (1991) suggests giving students a chance to practice listening with actual and true material. This, in contrast to the nature of the present study, is implementing reflective listening skills in the classroom since students can practice actual listening material and adapt reflective listening steps so they can listen and respond to oral content efficiently. By developing the facilitative learning environment with the use of reflective listening, teachers enhance the listening capacity of students as well as prepare them for effective communication scenarios.

Listening Skills

Listening skills can be termed as the ability of an individual to accept, comprehend, and decode word and non-verbal messages that are being communicated. Listening can be efficient through concentration, reception of message, and needful response or feedback. Listening is a critical aspect of effective communication and interpersonal communication. Listening

skills, a difficult communication arena, are made up of numerous parameters through which efficient listening and comprehension take place. The following are the parameters examined to assess listening skills:

Vocabulary

This parameter is used to examine students' vocabulary and word and phrase usage when they are subjected to oral text. It assesses their understanding and decoding of vocabulary in contexts like class lectures, discussions, and instructional texts.

Listening Comprehension

This is a parameter that measures students' overall understanding and knowledge of information they listened to while carrying out listening activities. It is a measure of whether they can comprehend main ideas, details, and inferences of verbal content, such as identifying major ideas, summarizing information, and making inferences.

Interest

Interest parameter focuses on the extent to which the students are interested and enthusiastic during the time they practice listening. It focuses on the way they are going to be involved in voluntary participation in listening practice, for example, their attention, interest, and satisfaction with the information being shared.

Focus

Concentration is another important parameter that measures the intensity of attention and readiness among learners while listening to audio material. It tests their ability to stay focused on the work, suppress distractions, and engage the listening material actively without dozing off or getting bored. This parameter measures the demonstration of active listening skills like questioning for confirmation, giving feedback, paraphrasing and summarizing what one is hearing. It measures the capacity to participate actively in the process of listening with evidence of understanding and making a response from the speaker's message. With the measurement of such variables, the study undertook a comprehensive evaluation of students' listening ability and ability to comprehend, engage, and respond appropriately to aural inputs.

Materials and Methods

Research strategy is mainly action research on education issues and implications towards embracing and criticizing new approaches to enhance the process of teaching and learning, the focus of my study is on enhancing the listening skill using a new method of reflective listening.

Population and Sampling

Population for this research is students of 10th grade in Government Girls High School Bhagowal. The population is specifically selected because the research is meant to determine the effectiveness of reflective listening skill in developing listening skills among students at a secondary school level. Convenient sampling is used to choose 5 participants from the population of interest.

Convenient sampling is used since it is convenient and readily available, and the researchers can sample participants based on how easily accessible they are and if they are willing to take part in the research. It is the right strategy for this study because it enables the use of participants from the school community, with a view to logistical difficulties as well as the time factor. The sampling method is the choice and recruitment of the participant who fulfills the inclusion requirement for the study. The inclusion requirements in this case are that the participant is a Government Girls High School Bhagowal 10th-grade student and that they agree to participate in the research.

Recruitment of the participants takes place while in school, and they give consent prior to their recruitment into the study. The sampling method is designed to produce a representative sample of students within the target population based on ethical standards for informed consent and voluntary participation.

Instrumentation

A test instrument is prepared to assess the listening ability of students prior to and post-reflective listening interventions. The test instrument is comprised of multiple-choice questions, listening comprehension passages, and qualitative questions to assess a range of aspects of listening ability such as vocabulary, comprehension, interest, concentration, and active listening. Several procedures are followed when constructing the test instrument, such as content review, pilot testing, and item analysis, to identify whether it is valid and reliable.

Content Review

The test instrument is carefully reviewed for content by a professional panel of experienced teachers and linguists. The review of the content is to determine the relevance, understandability, and consistency of the test items to the target constructs and goals of study. Test item revisions are guided by expert panel inputs to ensure that the test items are appropriate to assess the listening ability of the students for the study purposes.

Pilot Testing

Pilot testing of the test tool is carried out with a sample of a few students from Government Girls High School Bhagowal who are not part of the main study sample. Pilot test tries to find out whether there are any ambiguities, difficulties, or problems with the instructions and test items. Information gained from the pilot test participants is utilized to make amendments and finalize the test tool for application in the main study.

Item Analysis

The last test instrument is item analyzed to determine the reliability and validity of each test item. Item analysis entails examining statistical characteristics of test items, such as item difficulty, item discrimination, and reliability coefficients. Poor-performing test items or those that lack reliability are rewritten or dropped from the final test instrument to maintain its psychometric characteristics.

Data Collection

Measurement is performed by administering the test tool to participants at two points in time: prior to the introduction of reflective listening interventions (initial level) and after intervention completion (final level). The test tool is given under controlled settings in a bid to offer consistency and reliability of measures of data collection.

Intervention

Reflective listening interventions are integrated as integral components of the daily teaching activities and pedagogy of the classroom in Government Girls High School Bhagowal. The interventions include various interactive teaching strategies that promote reflective listening skills, such as group discussions, role-playing exercises, audio-visual presentations, and reflective journaling. These interventions aim to create a supportive learning environment that encourages active engagement, empathy, and effective communication among students.

Results and Findings

Data from the initial and final level assessments are analyzed using appropriate statistical methods to measure progress in listening skills. To analyze the data and draw research findings, I used simple statistical techniques and presented the results using bar graphs. Pre- and post-intervention average scores of five students:

Pre-Intervention Average Score

$$(15 + 18 + 20 + 23 + 24) / 5 = 20$$

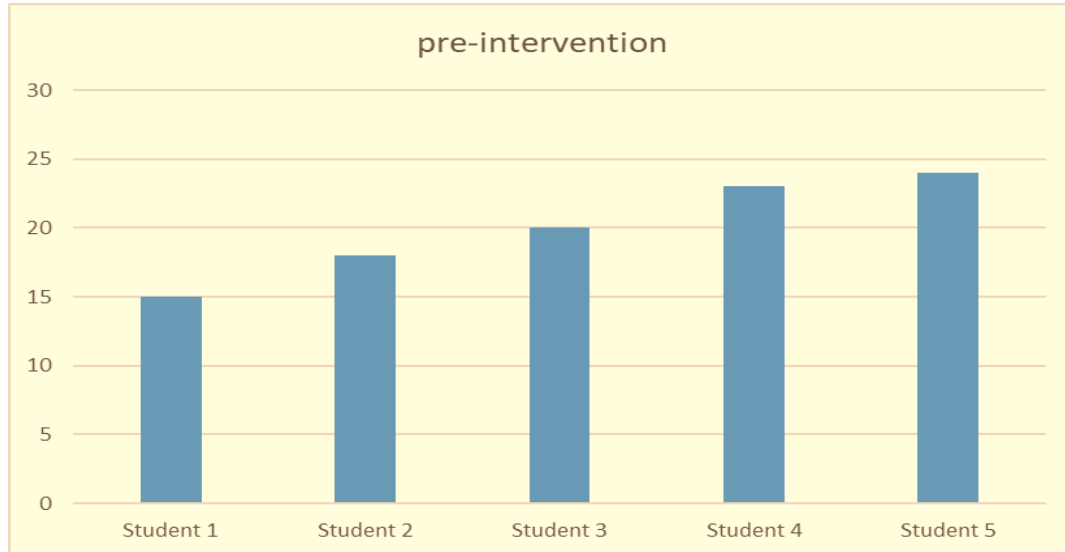
Post-Intervention Average Score

$$(19 + 20 + 24 + 26 + 29) / 5 = 23.6$$

Represented the pre- and post-intervention scores on individual bar graphs:

Graph 1

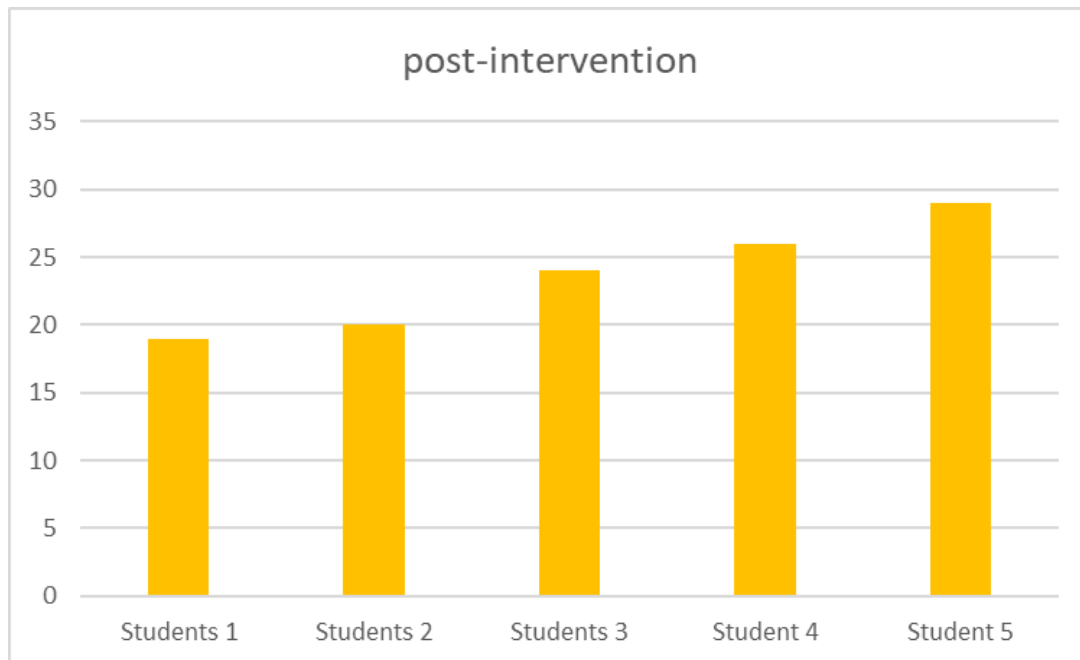
Pre Intervention Results, Bar Graph – Pre-Intervention Score, X-axis (Students): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Y-axis (Marks): 0 to 30



We have the same five students, and their results have changed after the intervention.

Graph 2

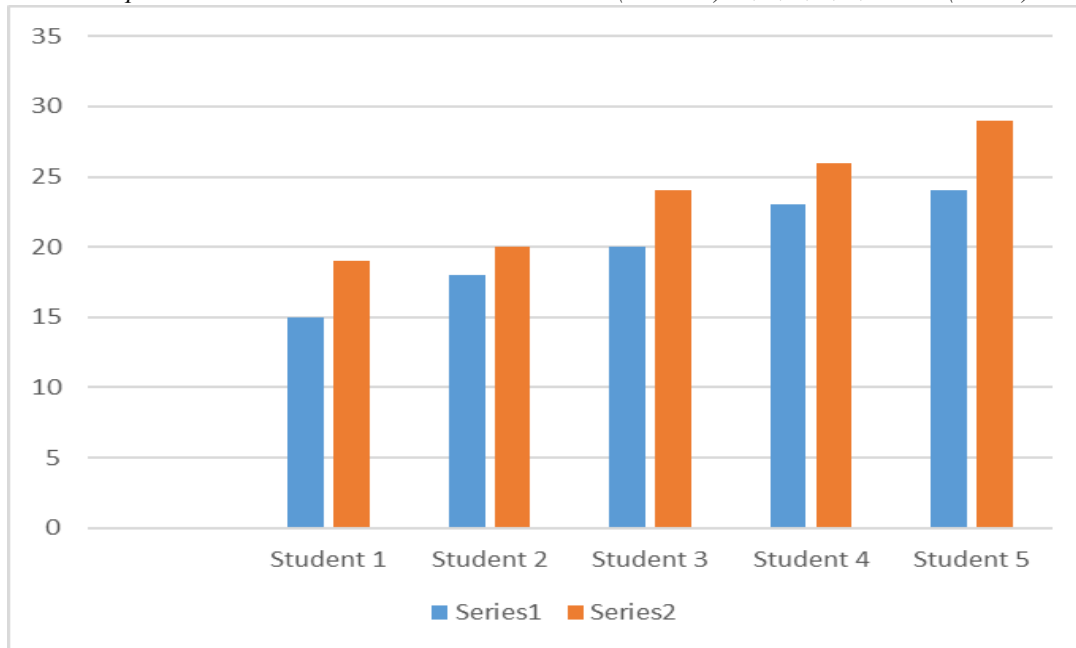
Bar Graph – Post-Intervention Scores: X-axis (Students): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Y-axis (Marks): 0 to 30



Graph 3

Comparison Graph: A comparison bar graph to visualize the change in scores after the intervention:

Comparison Bar Graph – Pre vs. Post-Intervention Scores: X-axis (Students): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Y-axis (Marks): 0 to 30



Graph 4

Individual Improvement



Following the application of lesson plans that incorporated the reflective listening technique, noticeable improvements were observed in the listening skills of all five participants. The students' average score rose from 20 marks before the intervention to 23.6 marks afterward. Across all cases, post-intervention scores surpassed pre-intervention results, clearly indicating that the reflective listening approach had a beneficial influence on enhancing students' listening abilities.

Percentage improvement for each student

Formula: $(\text{post} - \text{Pre}) \div \text{Pre} \times 100$

Calculate each:

Student 1: $(4 \div 15) \times 100 = 0.266666... \times 100 = 26.6667\% \rightarrow \text{round } 26.67\%$

Student 2: $(2 \div 18) \times 100 = 0.111111... \times 100 = 11.1111\% \rightarrow 11.11\%$

Student 3: $(4 \div 20) \times 100 = 0.20 \times 100 = 20.00\%$

Student 4: $(3 \div 23) \times 100 \approx 0.13043478 \times 100 = 13.0435\% \rightarrow 13.04\%$

Student 5: $(5 \div 24) \times 100 \approx 0.20833333 \times 100 = 20.8333\% \rightarrow 20.83\%$

Mean of these individual % gains = $(26.6667 + 11.1111 + 20 + 13.0435 + 20.8333) \div 5 \approx 18.33\%$

Overall % change using group means = $(\text{Post mean} - \text{Pre mean}) \div \text{Pre mean} \times 100 = (3.6 \div 20) \times 100 = 18.00\%$

Table 1

Percentage Improvement for Each Student

Student	Pre-Score	Post-Score	Gain (Post-Pre)	Percentage Gain (%)
1	15	19	4	26.67%
2	18	20	2	11.11%
3	20	24	4	20.00%
4	23	26	3	13.04%
5	24	29	5	20.83%
Mean	20.0	23.6	3.6	18.33%

Graph 5

Gain Scores



Discussion

The results of the current research establish that the use of reflective listening skills in the classroom positively impacted the listening skills of the students, leading to increased understanding and enhanced performance on listening tests. The results highlight the merit of reflective listening as a teaching method that not only enhances understanding but also enhances student participation in the learning process. In addition, the research demonstrates how these methods can promote active listening, greater understanding, and empathy among students. It is therefore suggested that teachers and school principals adopt reflective listening techniques to create more inclusive and engaging learning environments, which promote students' communication ability and academic achievements. However, care needs to be exercised in generalizing these findings. The limited sample size—only five students—featured on the study—limits the ways conclusions may be extrapolated. More studies with larger and diverse populations of students must be conducted to test the consistency and stability of such findings.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study emphasizes the efficacy of reflective listening skills to enhance the listening abilities of 10th-grade students in Government Girls High School Bhagawal. There were evident improvements in understanding, classroom participation, and active participation that followed the intervention, highlighting supportive teaching practices' role in fostering effective communication. Still, some limitations need to be noted. Convenience sampling might not fully reflect diverse experiences and learning requirements of a broader student population. Moreover, the limited time span of the intervention might not mirror the sustainability of improvement in the long term. As such, despite these limitations, the research provides significant insights into how reflective listening can enhance students' academic development and overall development. To build on this work, educators and policymakers should actively consider integrating reflective listening strategies into regular classroom practice as a means of strengthening students' interpersonal and communication skills. Future studies should emphasize longitudinal studies that follow the long-term effects of reflective listening interventions on listening skills as well as on general academic outcomes. It would also be crucial to experiment with these strategies on various grade levels and settings to determine how adaptable and effective these strategies are under different conditions. In addition, teacher professional development needs to become a priority, which would prepare teachers with the knowledge and abilities to implement reflective listening daily in the classroom.

In conclusion, though reflective listening shows definite promise for enhancing students' listening ability, ongoing research and collaborative pedagogy are necessary to maximize its potential. By making communication and interpersonal skills central to instruction, schools can equip learners not just to be successful academically but also in personal and future professional spheres.

Declarations

Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate: This study strictly adhered to the Declaration of Helsinki and relevant national and institutional ethical guidelines. Informed consent was not required, as secondary data available on websites was obtained for analysis. All procedures performed in this study were in accordance with the ethical standards of the Helsinki Declaration.

Consent for Publication: Not Applicable.

Availability of Data and Materials: Data for this study will be provided upon a written request to the corresponding author.

Competing Interest: The authors declare that they have no competing and conflicts of interest.

Funding: Not Applicable.

Authors' Contribution: Equal contributions.

Acknowledgement: The authors would like to acknowledge and thank all the contributors for their contributions.

References

- Brown, S. W., & Peterson, R. A. (2008). *The effect of listening comprehension on academic Achievement*. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 100(2), 301–310.
- Fogle, T. (2017). Reflective listening: Improving communication and empathy in classrooms. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 85, 45–54.
- Gökçe, A. (2022). Multimedia and video resources for developing English listening skills. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 18(1), 543–560.
- Joiner, E. G. (1991). Teaching listening: Ends and means. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 135–150). Newbury House.
- Leila, A. (2012). Using authentic aural materials to develop listening comprehension in the EFL classroom. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature*, 1(2), 56–67.
- Munby, I. (2011). Technology-supported listening activities: From moodle to audacity. *Language Learning & Technology*, 15(3), 30–45.
- Ocak, G. (2012). The use of songs to develop listening comprehension in young learners. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 55, 1100–1107.
- Ramos, J., & Valderruten, C. (2017). Mobile apps and language learning: Improving listening skills through digital resources. *CALICO Journal*, 34(2), 179–195.
- Rogers, C. R., & Farson, R. E. (1957). *Active listening*. Chicago: Industrial Relations Center, University of Chicago.
- Solihat, D., & Utami, L. (2014). The use of English songs in teaching listening skills. *Journal of English and Education*, 2(2), 36–45.
- Spreckelmeyer, K., & Bohlmeijer, E. (2018). Reflective listening and empathy in educational contexts. *Educational Psychology Review*, 30(4), 1121–1139.
- Yaacob, N. (2021). The role of video podcasts and YouTube in developing listening skills among young learners. *Asian Journal of Education and e-Learning*, 9(1), 22–30.

**Submit your manuscript to MDPI Open Access journal
and benefit from:**

- Convenient online submission
- Rigorous peer review
- Open access: articles freely available online
- High visibility within the field
- Retaining the copyright to your article

Submit your next manuscript at ➔ mdpi.com

Note: Open Access Education and Leadership Review is under the process of recognition by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan in the Y category.

Disclaimer/ Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions, and data contained in all publications in this journal are solely those of the individual author(s) and not of the MDPI and/ or the editor(s). MDPI and editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to the people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions, or products referred to in the content.