# NEW TRENDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION:
# USING MOVIES TO TEACH LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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## Abstract

Listening is a significant and vital skill in EFL instruction, a domain which is nowadays opening doors to the field of technology to support teaching. This article tackles the issue of using multimodality to teach listening comprehension in the EFL classroom. The current investigation focuses on how the use of multimodality can improve the teaching of listening comprehension and help EFL learners. This article studies the incorporation of movies in a formal learning setting to teach listening comprehension as it studies whether teaching listening comprehension is limited to audio only or visuals have to be used in order to teach listening comprehension and enable the learners to get meaning.  The participants were divided into two groups. The first group was asked to watch a movie twice, whereas, the second group had to listen to a podcast twice. Each group was asked to take notes while watching the movie and listening to the podcast. Then, a post-test has been administered to measure their understanding. The results demonstrate that students understand and perform better with the help of visual while developing their listening comprehension skill.

**Keywords:** Multimodality/ Listening Comprehension/ EFL Classroom/ Teaching-Learning Process/ Movies / Audio: Listening Practice.

## INTRODUCTION

The listening skill is one of the four pillars of language learning. Rebecca (1993), claims that " Listening is a fundamental language skill, but is often ignored by foreign and second language teachers". In other words, foreign language teachers usually assume that their learners' listening proficiency would develop unconsciously and effortlessly, which is wrong. Firstly, foreign language teachers and learners should be able to distinguish between listening and hearing. Clarifying the hearing process, Stephen and Lucas (1998, p. 56), convey that "It involves the vibration of sound wave on our eardrums and the firing of electrochemical impulses from the inner ear to the central auditory system of the brain, but listening involves paying close attention to, and making sense of, what we hear." Further, Rost (2002, p. 27), adds that "Although both hearing and listening involve sound perception, the difference in terms reflects a degree of intention".

Attempting to define the listening skill, Rost (1994), claims that " Listening is considered to be a part of oracy,

a capacity to formulate Thought verbally and to communicate with others, so it is the skill that underlines all verbal communication". In conclusion, the listening skill is primordial for any interaction and so for language acquisition. According to Bozorgian (2012), listening skill development is the key factor for other skills' development (speaking, reading, and writing). As a matter of fact, Morris and Leavy (2006), investigate the relationship between listening comprehension and phonological improvement. The findings indicate that developed listening comprehension skills tend to develop "preschoolers' phonological awareness". In addition, two additional investigations carried out by Badian (1999), and Bergman (1999), report that developed listening skill comprehension plays the role of a facilitator in "developing reading comprehension" for "middle school" learners. Moreover, Bergman (1999), adds that listening and reading "stories" simultaneously would increase the students' reading competence.

According to Linebarger (2001), human beings cope with their daily lives "experiences" due to the listening skill. Further, Hunsaker (1990), adds that a boundless amount of children's acquired knowledge occurs through their listening comprehension. Many investigations focused on investigating the fostering of the listening skill in foreign language acquisition. Particularly, through the use of movies. For instance, Wang and Miao (2003), investigate the use of videos to teach "listening comprehension". The findings reveal that videos represent an effective and facilitator tool to enhance listening comprehension. Thus, many investigators focused on movies' integration in foreign language classroom for listening comprehension instruction. In addition, Long (2003), analyzes the "prospects" of incorporating movies to teach listening comprehension in order to depict the advantages, drawbacks, movies collection, usefulness, and possible suggestions. Moreover, Jiang (2006), investigates the prospects of using English movies to teach listening comprehension. This study aims at investigating the effects of English movies' usage to teach listening comprehension in a foreign language classroom in Algeria.

# 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Brown (2008), listening comprehension represents the core of language acquisition. Yet, it is neglected by teachers and researchers. Focusing on the listening skill, researchers like Feyten (1991), Janusk (2002), Pinell and Jaggar (2003), Vandergrift (2007), and Goh (2008), reveal that the listening competence is not taught but tested inside the classroom. In this connection, Feyten (1991), investigates the link between the learners' listening competence and foreign language learning performance. The results indicate that the connection between learners' listening competence and foreign language learning development is "statistically" remarkable. Indeed, Floyed (1985), claims that listening requires making sense of what is said and heard. Accordingly, Krashen (1982), claims that foreign language learning is based on understanding spoken utterances. Further, Rost (1994), argues that making sense of spoken messages is a prerequisite for language learning. Moreover, Nunan (2003), claims that it is due to listening comprehension that language acquisition takes place.

In recent years, the teaching of foreign language discovered modern approaches and strategies. According to Ur (1989), developing learners' listening comprehension represents the most challenging endeavour for both EFL teachers and learners as well. Likewise, Norris (1993), suggests that it is fundamental for teachers to put in practice new teaching methodologies to develop their learners listening skill and the use of movies represent an effective teaching strategy that would match students' interests. However, the use of movies should be associated with a note taking and report process to assess students' comprehension.

Investigators like Bowen (1982), Lonergan (1984), Tomalin (1986), Hanley, Herron & Cole (1995), Markham, Peter & McCarthy (2001), Sempleski (2003), and Guichon & McLornan (2008), argue that the integration of pictures would develop learners' listening comprehension. Likewise, Rahayu (2007), investigates the impact of movies on developing the learners' listening comprehension of "narrative" texts. The results indicate that the learners' comprehension of narrative texts had been remarkably developed due to the use of movies. In addition, Shen (2011), investigates the use of English movies in Lanzhou Jiao Tong University and contends that the use of movies enhances learners' motivation and performances. According to Sadiman (2005), movies are designed as videos that combine images and sounds together. Thus, this combination attracts learners attention and lead to their active engagement and motivation. In addition, it also allows the retention of grammars rules, new information, and vocabulary acquisition.

In this perspective, Saricoban (1999, p. 121), highlight that the effective movie duration to develop learners' listening skill would be short and should not exceed 10 minutes, for the purpose of capturing learners' interest and building their comprehension gradually. According to Van Duzer (1997), movies offer authentic situations, real pronunciation and punctuation, and this would highly motivate the learners. In line with this, Miller (2003), claims that learners are able to grasp "paralinguistic features" due to movies' usage in the classroom. He adds that movies provide correct pronunciation, and punctuation as it articulated by native

speakers. Further, Porcel (2010), claims that movies' usage in the classroom would develop the learners listening as well as speaking skills, would enrich their vocabulary acquired knowledge, and equip them with proficient pronunciation and intonation. She concludes by arguing that using movies represents an extremely fruitful and productive task.

## 2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The use of technology has invaded the domain of education, due to its advantages of improving learners outcomes, capturing their attention and enhancing their motivation. However, some educational teachers hesitate to incorporate technology into their classroom . The aim of this paper is to provide a clear picture of both learners and teachers' attitudes towards the use of movies in order to enhance listening comprehension for foreign language learning. This paper seeks to address the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of using movies on learners' listening comprehension?

2.  How do learners perceive movies usage in foreign language classrooms?

3. What are teachers perceptions regarding the integration of movies into their foreign language classrooms?

4. How does the use of movies impact the whole learning process?

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Participants

The informants taking part in this inquiry were two groups of 30 EFL learners divided into two groups, and 10 EFL teachers at the University of Badji Mokhtar Annaba, Algeria. First group subjects were 8 females and 7 males. Whereas, the second group subjects were 9 females and 6 males. All the participants were from the same social background, their ages varied from 19 to 21 years old. While the teachers were 6 females and 4 males and their ages vary from 30 to 45 years old with the same technological basic skills.

### 3.2 Instruments

Three major data collection methods have been applied for gathering data: an experimental study, a questionnaire, and an interview. The experimental study is based on conducting a note-taking test and a post-test to compare the participants' results. However, the questionnaire consists of 4 closed questions in order to guarantee that the questionnaire won't be time-consuming and that the learners won't get bored. While, the interview was held with teachers, it consists of 4 open-ended questions to give them space and freedom to provide their opinions.

### 3.3 Procedure

The investigation's aim is to study the effects of using movies to teach listening comprehension, at the University of Algeria, for third-year students. Firstly, the researcher has to study the learners' perspectives concerning the integration of movies in foreign language classrooms. Secondly, the researcher studies the teachers' perspectives regarding movies usage in foreign language classrooms to teach listening comprehension. Thirdly, the researcher divides the participants into two groups. The first group was asked to watch a movie twice, whereas, the second group had to listen to a podcast twice. Each group was asked to take notes while watching the movie and listening to the podcast. Then, a post-test has been administered to measure their understanding. Finally, the researcher compares both groups' notes and post-test results.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Results

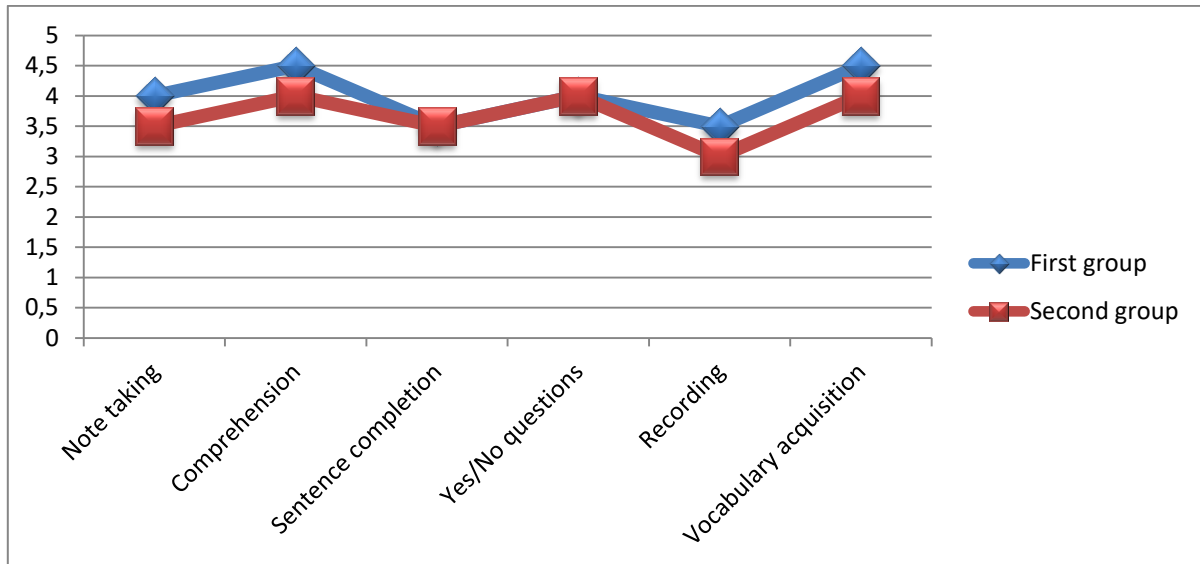**1. The impact of using movies on learners' listening comprehension**



**Figure 1: Comparing movies use and audiotape effects on listening comprehension**

Figure 1 shows that there is the use of movies has a great impact on learners' listening comprehension. As it indicates that first group learners had higher results in note taking, comprehension, recording, and vocabulary acquisition. However, it shows that both groups had similar results in sentence completion and yes/no questions.

### 4.2 Learners Attitudes towards Movies Usage in Foreign Language Classrooms to Teach Listening Comprehension

**1. Do you agree with the use of using movies in a formal learning setting?**
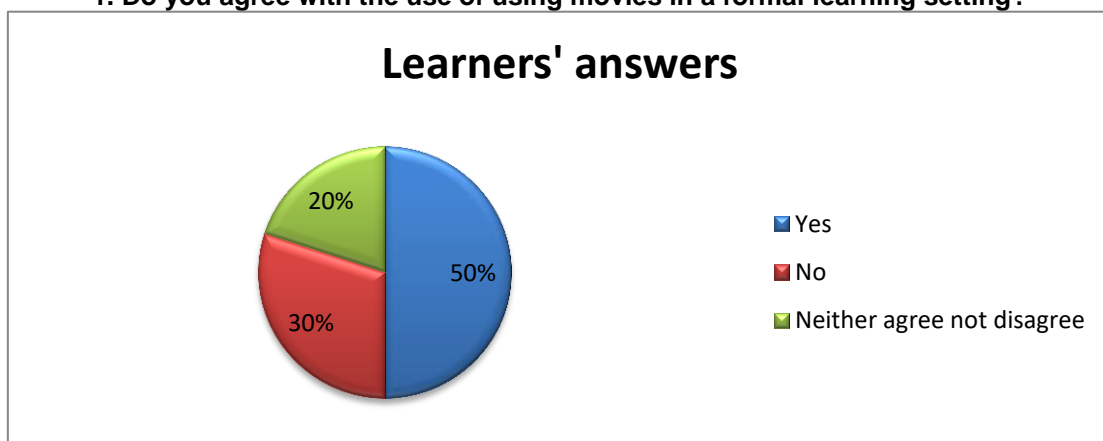


**Figure 2: Learners' Perceptions Regarding the use of movies in EFL Classrooms**

Figure 2 shows that 50% of the learners approve the use of multimedia in a formal learning setting. Whereas, 30% rejected the idea, and the remaining 20% were confused and sceptical and did not provide a definitive answer.

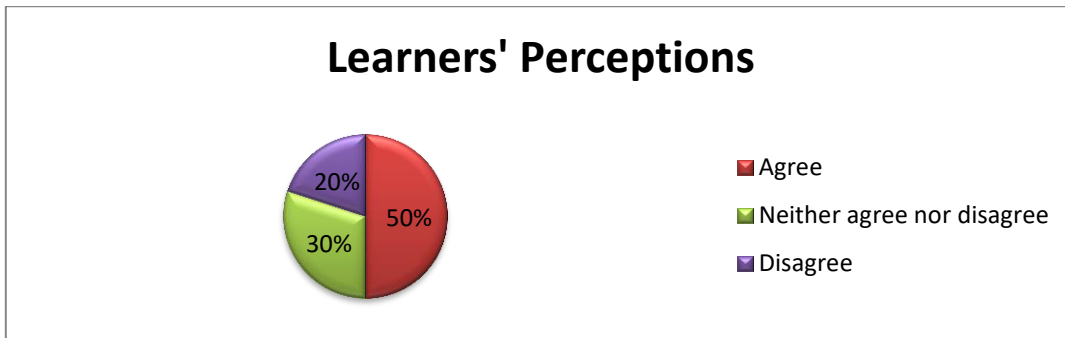**2. Do you feel that movies usage is really enhancing your listening skill?**



**Figure 3: Learners' Perceptions Regarding the effects of movies**

Figure 3 indicates that 50% of first group learners agreed that using movies is really enhancing their listening comprehension. However, 20% disapproved the idea that movies usage developed their listening comprehension. Whereas, 30% of first group learners did not share definite perceptions towards movies usage's impact as they claim the assistance and help other resources.

## 4.3 Teachers Perceptions Regarding the Integration of Movies into Their Foreign Language Classrooms

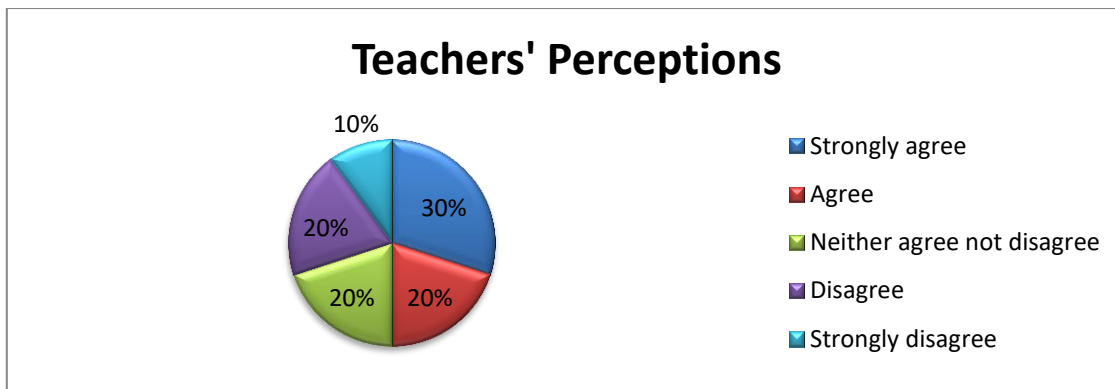**1. Do you approve using movies to enhance the listening skill?**



**Figure 4: Teachers' Perceptions Regarding Using Movies to Enhance the Listening skill**

Figure 4 indicates teachers' perceptions towards the use of movies to enhance their learners listening comprehension. It shows that 50 % of the teachers share positive attitudes regarding the use of movies to teach listening comprehension. In other words, 30 % of them strongly agreed and 20 % agreed the incorporation of movies. Whereas, 20% of them did not provide a definite answer. Finally, 30 % of the teachers share negative perceptions, as 20 % of them disagreed and 10 % strongly disagreed.

**2. Do you notice that your learners' listening comprehension improved as a result of movies usage?**
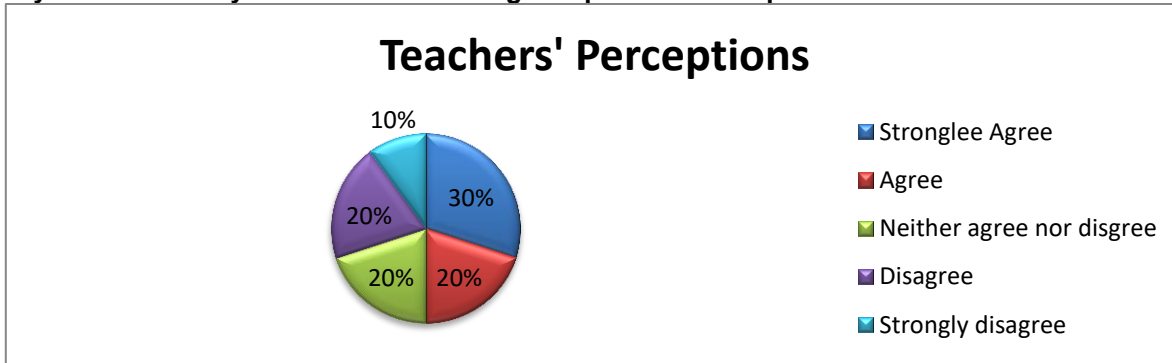


**Figure 5: Teachers' Perceptions After Integrating Movies to Teach Listening Comprehension**

Figure 5 shows teachers' feedback on their learners' listening comprehension after using movies. It indicates that 30 % of the teachers strongly agreed and 20 % agreed that movies' usage developed their learners' listening comprehension. Whereas, 20 % of the teachers neither agreed nor disagreed claiming the use and assistance of other resources. However, 20% of them disagreed that using movies enhances their learners' listening comprehension and 10 % of them strongly disagreed this fact.

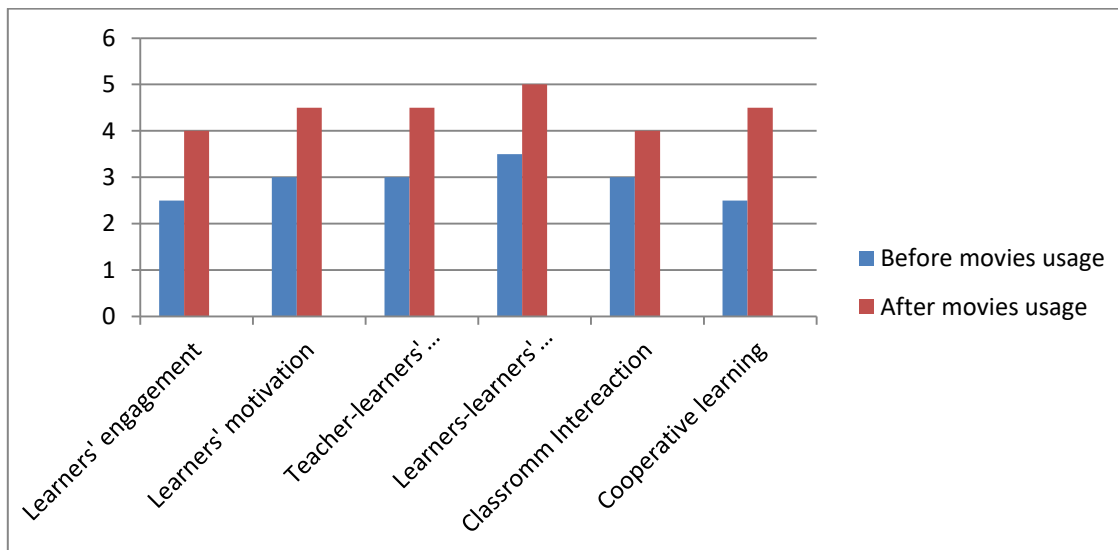**3.Movies' usage impact on the whole learning process**



**Figure 6: Movies Impact on the Learning Process**

Figure 6 demonstrates the impact of movies' usage on the whole learning process. It compares between both groups in order to depict the areas of differences. As a results, it shows that the first group (the one that used movies) displays significantly higher results in learners' engagement, learners' motivation, teacher-learners' relationship, learners-learners' relationship, classroom interaction, and cooperative learning.

## 4.4 Discussion

The date above identifies the effects of using movies to develop foreign language learners' listening comprehension. The results demonstrate how successful might be the use of movies as it would enhance the learners' listening comprehension and develop the whole learning process at the same time. According to the results, using movies would increase learners' comprehension and vocabulary acquisition which would be beneficial for the acquisition of the subsequent skills. In addition, it enhances note taking and recording. Moreover, movies' usage increases the learners' engagement in their learning process, their motivation, and their interaction inside the classroom. Further, it develops both teacher-learners and learners-learners' relationship, and encourages cooperative learning. Evidence from the literature claims that movies' usage constitutes a modern teaching strategy and the data indicate that the majority of the learners and teachers share positive attitudes towards this modern teaching tool.

## CONCLUSION

This investigation focused on the use of movies to teach listening comprehension in a formal learning setting. It investigated the learners as well as teachers' perceptions regarding the use of movies for academic purposes and their potential recommendations. The objective was to enhance the teaching of listening instruction. The findings indicate that the use of movies represent a modern and innovative teaching method. In addition, the results reveal that both teachers and learners share positive attitudes towards the integration of movies in a formal learning setting to develop listening comprehension instruction. More importantly, the objective of developing the teaching of listening comprehension consists of developing the learners' understanding, vocabulary acquisition, and the learning process. Inevitably, enhancing the listening skill results in developing the skills that follow (speaking, reading, and writing) as it provides and stores the required knowledge.

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