USING BBC AUDIOS FOR IMPROVING ENGLISH LISTENING SKILLS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENT

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ABSTRACT
This research investigates whether using BBC Learning English audio content in the classroom can improve first-year undergraduate students' listening skill and vocabulary development in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environment. Recognizing the limited emphasis on listening skills in traditional language instruction, particularly in non-native contexts, this study employs a mixed-method action research approach through three instructional cycles. Quantitative data were collected through pre- and post-listening vocabulary performance tests, as well as assessments of the students' listening abilities. Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and student's evaluation forms. The intervention involved guided listening sessions with carefully selected BBC audio extracts, supported by activities before, during, and after the listening tasks. The results indicated a statistically significant improvement in students' listening skills and vocabulary acquisition. This supports the idea that thematic, authentic audio input combined with teaching strategies can be very effective for language learners. The research highlights important pedagogical implications for EFL instruction, as well as the value of authentic digital media in enhancing communicative and learner-centered language learning processes.

INTRODUCTION
In today's globally connected world, the ability to communicate effectively in English is increasingly essential, particularly in academic and professional settings. Among the four foundational language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—listening comprehension is crucial and complex. Listening is more than just hearing; it involves actively decoding and interpreting meaning from verbal input, often in real-time, and is closely tied to the development of vocabulary, pronunciation, and cultural understanding (Nurrohmah, 2023 & Bai, 2024). By engaging in listening activities, learners can assimilate language structures, vocabulary, and accurate pronunciation, which can later be utilized in their language output. Furthermore, strong listening abilities enable individuals to comprehend and respond appropriately in various communication contexts, ranging from casual chats to formal presentations, which are essential in daily, academic, and professional environments (Regina & Devi, 2022).

Listening skills encompass various interconnected elements that collectively enhance the effectiveness of the listening process. A key part of listening is paying attention, understanding sounds, recognizing meaning, connecting new knowledge with old memories, keeping

information, checking the reliability of the information, and providing the right response. All of these elements cooperate to give you good and complete listening skills (Ikha'a, 2023). Because of new technologies, fresh ways to use technology in language learning have become possible. The name "Podcast" is put together from "iPod" and "Broadcast." According to Rime et al. (2022), a podcast is an episode of spoken audio that can be played on the web and comes from anyone who chooses to produce it. Podcasts make it possible for learners to listen to real conversations and score well on language tests. Numerous studies have demonstrated that BBC audio serves as a valuable resource for enhancing listening activities. Widiyarto et al, (2021) discovered that BBC audio can enhance students' listening comprehension skills. Furthermore, the research conducted by (Sembiring & Katemba's , 2023) indicated that utilizing BBC audio improve students' listening comprehension and significantly supported their understanding of English listening. Listening comprehension is an engaging process of creating meaning and is achieved by utilizing knowledge to interpret incoming sounds. According to Darmayanti (2022), podcasts are highly organized and give natural examples, and teachers have adapted them well to help students listen. BBC Learning English is notable among various podcast platforms because of its educational aspect, different subjects, and access to all. It has several listening materials like "6 Minute English," "English at University," and "The English We Speak," which are suitable for learners of different English levels. They offer an opportunity for people to learn how to speak British English using a wide range of vocabulary and interesting topics from technology and culture. Although many studies have examined the use of podcasts and multimedia materials in English language instruction, there has been limited research on the impact of BBC Learning English audio content on listening skills and vocabulary acquisition, particularly at Sindh University. Most existing research focuses on general podcast usage or broad digital learning strategies, often applied in technologically advanced classrooms. However, the challenges faced by students in rural areas, such as limited exposure to authentic language, weak listening abilities, and a lack of formal online learning opportunities, have not been thoroughly investigated. This gap in research can be addressed by evaluating the effectiveness of structured BBC audio-based listening practice within real classroom settings. This study will adopt a mixed-methods action research approach to provide both quantitative measures and qualitative analysis.This study aims to investigate how effectively BBC Learning English audio resources improve vocabulary learning and listening comprehension among University of Sindh first-year English language learners. Additionally, this study aims to determine if regular exposure to organized audio content can enhance vocabulary development and foster learner autonomy in an EFL context. The results support teaching strategies that incorporate digital listening materials to improve language proficiency.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

Q:1. To what extent do listening activities using BBC Learning English audios improve students' listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition?

Q:2 How do students perceive the impact of listening activities using BBC Learning English audios on their vocabulary development and listening comprehension skills?

LITEATURE REVIEW

Listening is crucial for communication. When teaching languages, the focus should be on improving students' listening skills. It is believed that anyone can learn to listen, which is a valuable skill. By enhancing our ability to listen, we can avoid many conflicts and misunderstandings, increase productivity, and improve our capacity to persuade, influence, and

negotiate (Yurko, 2022). Furthermore, it is claimed that ineffective listening can lead to misinterpretations of communications, while successful listening helps build stronger relationships with speakers by showing that you are attentive and understanding. Listening involves more than just hearing; it requires additional steps to grasp the meaning, such as focusing fully, analyzing, assessing the speaker's message, and responding to what has been heard. According to Simanjuntak (2024), listening skills are essential for students to acquire. It is important to prioritize listening skills over other abilities because they have a significant impact on the development of other language skills. In communication, listening is essential as it shows that hearing is a crucial component of learning English that EFL students need to acquire. Smith (2024) emphasizes this by stating that continuous exposure to well-structured, authentic audio input improves comprehension skills, particularly in ESL and EFL students. BBC audio recordings expose students to real-world language usage that is both pedagogically meaningful and cognitively stimulating.

Hasibuan and Male (2020) also stated that the use of technology provides engaging and enjoyable learning experiences due to the diverse resources available. The difficulties mentioned pose a unique challenge for teachers in developing students' listening abilities. Technology can serve as an excellent resource for teaching English to non-native speakers. Technology, such as BBC Audio, makes our lives easier. It has been developed and is extensively employed in education (Fitria, 2022). Currently, many colleges and institutions use websites and applications to assist students in learning how to listen more effectively. Websites and apps have been created in English to help learners of all levels develop their listening comprehension. The use of technology in the classroom, such as BBC audio, was well-received and enjoyable, according to feedback from students as reported by Khan et al. (2021). Their results indicate that students achieved better outcomes during the learning exercise. Technology has been developed to improve students' listening skills. This technology aims to address the benefits and drawbacks of technology as perceived by both teachers and students. Mansur and Utama (2021) suggest that educators, acting as facilitators, should select appropriate technology, such as BBC audio, to use as a teaching aid. This technology should serve as a complement throughout the learning process, being effective, efficient, and relevant for the students.

BBC AUDIOS AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL TOOL:
The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) has an educational platform named BBC Learning English. This resource offers various materials for learning English, such as films, podcasts, essays, tests, and interactive game s to support learners. It covers topics from grammar and vocabulary to pronunciation, business English, and idioms, making it thorough. Available at no cost, BBC Learning English is suitable for all learners, from beginners to advanced learners, and it helps them gain confidence in using English in daily life (Munawarah, 2022). BBC Learning English, as part of the BBC World Service, provides free text, audio, and video resources for teachers and students worldwide who want to learn English. According to Seitan Khashan & AbuSeileek (2023), BBC Learning English is among the top educational resources and technical tools for learning and improving English. Barella and Linarsih (2020) state that BBC Learning English is a captivating website designed for English language instructors and learners. The website periodically creates video and audio files. Users can access and listen to the digital audio podcast files for free on any device that supports MP3/MP4 files, including smartphones and computers. BBC podcasts are a great way to improve vocabulary, pronunciation, and comprehension.

HISTORY OF BBC LEARNING ENGLISH:

BBC Learning English has a rich history dating back to the 1940s when it was launched as part of the BBC World Service to support English-language learning for listeners abroad. Initially, it focused on radio programs to teach spoken English and pronunciation, primarily for colonial and post-colonial countries where English was becoming important for administration, commerce, and education. During the 1980s and the 1990s, the service started offering printed transcripts, teacher support materials, and language broadcasts for many skill levels. As there was heightened demand for English, BBC Learning English added information about current news, events, and science news to help people from all over the world use the language more accurately. As soon as the internet arrived in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the BBC understood how useful digital means could be to educate people. It opened an independent website that gave access to audio lesson archives, interactive grammar challenges, educational videos, as well as training for teachers. The station made a big change in 2003 when it introduced themes such as 6 Minute English, the English We Speak, and English at University, which were original and soon popular in schools across the world.

TECHNIQUES OF TEACHING LISTENING SKILLS:

Listening, as a receptive language skill, requires active participation, strategic teaching, and scaffolding assistance to guide students from passive listening to productive learning. One of the well-documented models for teaching listening is the three-phase model, which organizes instruction into three sections: pre-listening, during-listening, and post-listening activities. This model enables teachers to support students' cognitive and metacognitive processing sequentially as they engage with oral language.

In the pre-listening phase, learners activate their prior knowledge, predict future content, and reduce anxiety. Teachers often introduce key vocabulary, pose thematic questions, or provide relevant images and titles to prepare students to contextualize the recording. The pre-listening phase narrows the focus of listening and enhances students' attention (Rahmati, 2025). During the while-listening phase, students are encouraged to underline important points, recognize signal words, or complete gap-fill transcripts. This practice is crucial for developing decoding accuracy and constructing dynamic meaning, especially when using authentic resources such as BBC Learning English podcasts (Kochkorova, 2025). Podcasts like "6 Minute English" or "English at Work" consist of short, themed material that is ideally suited for timed listening, with built-in breaks and facilitative questions to support comprehension. Post-listening activities involve reflective and productive tasks such as summarizing, comparing interpretations, and discussing how the content relates to personal or cultural experiences. This stage enhances retention and allows for integrated language use by encouraging both speaking and writing responses based on listening input (Wu, 2024). BBC Learning English effectively implements the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) by providing multimodal materials to meet a wide range of learning requirements and preferences. These resources often feature interactive transcripts, visual annotations, built-in dictionaries, contextual vocabulary banks, comprehension tests, and downloadable PDFs, all of which contribute to a rich multimodal learning experience. This combination of aural and visual input is consistent with Mayer's (2021) cognitive theory of multimedia learning, which states that learners process information more efficiently when delivered across several sensory channels.

According to Lizbeth and Valeria (2022), there are drawbacks to BBC Learning English in addition to its benefits that may lead to learners becoming passive listeners. Due to the lack of a tutor and the incomprehensibility of some material, students are unable to ask numerous questions. Learning on this website can become tedious and repetitive if used excessively. Some students face difficulties because they struggle to understand spoken English. Even though most students are good at hearing, they find it challenging to comprehend the teacher's words during listening exercises in class. This is a common challenge for students. They struggle to listen effectively because they lack sufficient vocabulary and practice in listening. Putra and Dianti (2022).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
RESEARCH DESIGN:
The research design follows action research and went through three cycles with 1st year students of English department. This study was conducted to find out if BBC audio materials could improve students' understanding of language and vocabulary. The research design uses a mixed methods approach, with both qualitative and quantitative methods. Vocabulary and listening comprehension were tested both before and after intervention; these results were then processed with SPSS software. Interviews were conducted, and after each week students filled out the evaluation forms. The research design followed the thematic analysis model designed by Braun and Clarke (2006) while using NVivo software to analyze the data.

RESEARCH METHOD:
To follow the mixed-methods approach, the quantitative aspect was set up to find out how BBC audio-based instruction affected students' listening skills, especially in terms of learning new vocabulary and comprehension. This research mainly used pre-tests and post-tests. The pre-test was carried out before the first cycle of action research to check how much the participants understood in the focused listening area. The tests were based on three carefully chosen BBC audio clips that were appropriate for the students' skill level and corresponded to the learning objectives. The test assessed students' listening comprehension and vocabulary with multiple-choice, true/false, and short-answer questions. The results provided the data that guided the instructional intervention's design, ensuring that it met students' individual needs. Following the pre- test, a structured intervention was implemented over three weeks. During this phase, students were exposed to a series of BBC Learning English audios, different from those used in the pre-test. Each audio lesson was accompanied by a set of targeted exercises and classroom activities focusing on listening comprehension strategies and vocabulary development. After completion of all three cycles of intervention, a post-test was given to the same students to check their performance both before and after the intervention. The purpose of the post-test was to measure any improvement in students' listening comprehension and vocabulary after the instructional treatment. The comparison of pre-test and post-test findings allows for an evaluation of the effectiveness of BBC audio-based instruction in supporting students' language development.

The researcher utilized the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyze the gathered data. Initially, descriptive statistics were employed to summarize the test performance. To determine whether the differences between pre- test and post-test scores were statistically significant, inferential statistical techniques, specifically the paired sample t-test, were subsequently applied. This approach allowed the researcher to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention in enhancing students' listening skills.
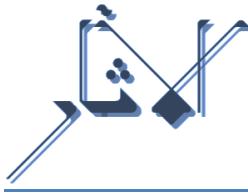
RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLING:

In this particular study, research was conducted at the University of Sindh, Jamshoro (main campus), which is a government institution recognized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan. The researcher, who is also a teacher at this university, selected first-year students from the Department of English as the sample group. A total of 50 students participated in the study. The sampling method used was non-random, specifically convenience sampling, where participants were chosen based on their accessibility and availability to the researcher.

DATA COLLECTION:

The present study collected data from 50 undergraduate students from the English department at the University of Sindh. The participants were selected based on their voluntary participation, and informed consent was obtained before the commencement of the study. The researcher conducted classroom-based action research, which involved a structured data collection process consisting of a pre-test, an intervention phase, and a post-test. To begin, a pre-test was administered using listening materials from three carefully selected BBC Learning English audio clips. This test was designedto assess the participants' initial listening comprehension and vocabulary levels. Following the pre-test, the intervention phase lasted three weeks, during which the students were exposed to various BBC Learning English audios and engaged in a variety of listening-based activities and exercises aimed at enhancing their listening skills and vocabulary. Throughout the intervention, the researcher observed students' involvement and participation and collected their feedback using evaluation forms after each cycle to observe their improvement and attitudes toward the listening activities. Following the treatment session, a post-test with a similar structure to the pre-test was administered to assess any improvements in students' listening comprehension and vocabulary. In addition, semi-structured interviews with selected students were performed to gather qualitative insights into their experiences, attitudes, and issues when accessing BBC audio assets. To implement this plan, data were collected from various sources, including pre-tests, post-tests, evaluation forms, and student interviews were then examined and compared to establish the intervention's success.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY:

The study maintained reliability and validity to ensure that the findings were accurate and consistent. The same group of first-year students from the same department and class took part in the study. The use of the same test style and structure for both the pre- test and post-test, which were created using BBC Learning English audio resources, ensured reliability. The same materials, test items, and classroom activities were used throughout the treatment phase.
Validity was ensured by connecting the test items and exercises with the specific goals of listening comprehension and vocabulary development. The evaluation form used to test students' listening skills was based on an instrument given by Grundman (2002), indicating that the data-gathering method is valid.

THE INTERVENTION: Three Cycles of Action Research:

The pedagogical intervention was structured around three weekly cycles, each implementing the Plan-Act-Observe-Reflect model with increasing sophistication.

Cycle 1 (Foundation Building):
Plan: Introduce foundational listening strategies using accessible BBC audios ("A Talk About Motivation," "Discourse Markers," "Gulliver's Travels"). Focus on pre-listening vocabulary activation and basic comprehension.
Act: For "Discourse Markers," students predicted content from keywords, listened for specific markers, and performed a role-play using them. For "Gulliver's Travels," visual aids and event-ordering tasks were used to scaffold understanding of the narrative.
Observe: Students were more engaged with relatable topics (motivation). However, fast speech and literary vocabulary in "Gulliver's Travels" posed significant challenges, necessitating more repetition and teacher support.
Reflect: The importance of pre-teaching vocabulary and using visual scaffolding was confirmed. Student feedback indicated a preference for collaborative, discussion-based post-listening tasks.

Cycle 2 (Skill Development):
Plan: Address challenges from Cycle 1 by incorporating shorter clips and explicit strategy instruction. Audios: "How Learning Changes Lives," "Understanding Signposting Language," "Identifying Stance Markers."
Act: In the "Signposting" lesson, students completed a cloze exercise with a transcript missing key linking words. In the "Stance Markers" session, they sorted phrases like "I believe" and "It appears" by their level of certainty.
Observe: Students showed marked improvement in identifying the structure of arguments. Lower-proficiency learners benefited significantly from pair work and access to transcripts, becoming more confident in detecting speaker intent.
Reflect: The strategic use of transcripts and collaborative tasks was highly effective. Students reported that learning vocabulary through quiz-style exercises and sentence creation was particularly beneficial.

Cycle 3 (Consolidation and Application):
Plan: Challenge students with more complex, abstract topics to foster autonomy. Audios: "Understanding Cause and Effect," "Do Emojis Make Language Better?," "Presentations."
Act: For "Cause and Effect," students reviewed linkers (e.g., 'therefore,' 'due to') and completed a gap-fill task identifying causal relationships in the audio. For "Emojis," they engaged in a debate, applying vocabulary related to tone and digital communication.
Observe: Students demonstrated increased independence, managing faster speech and participating in critical discussions. They actively used contextual clues to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words.
Reflect: The cycle successfully consolidated skills. Students explicitly valued the acquisition of formal signposting phrases for academic contexts.

DATA ANALYSIS:
Quantitative data from the pre- and post-tests were analyzed using SPSS (Version 22). Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) were calculated for both tests. A paired-sample t-test was then conducted to determine if the difference in mean scores was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

Statistics involving both groups of data:

The pre-test and post-test scores for the students were calculated using standard data cleaning procedures to ensure accuracy and consistency. After confirming data completeness and normality, a Paired Samples t-test was conducted using SPSS version 22 to compare the scores before and after the intervention.

Paired samples statistics

Paired Samples Statistics		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pretest	13.88	50	2.7759	.3887
	Posttest	15.24	50	2.1218	.2971

Source: SPSS 22

From Table 4.2, the mean score improved from 13.88 in the pre-test to 15.24 in the post-test, indicating a significant enhancement in student performance after utilizing BBC Learning English resources. In this instance, we look at paired sample t-test

A Paired Samples t-test was conducted to assess whether the observed difference in Scores was statistically significant. The null hypothesis stated that the average output of the students is the same before and after listening to BBC audios. Whereas the alternative hypothesis states that the average output of the students is not the same before and after listening to BBC audios.

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-test - Post-test	-1.36000	3.29972	.46665	-2.29777	-.42223	-2.914	49	.005

Source: SPSS 22

The results showed t (49) = -2.914, p .005 within a 95% confidence interval [-2.29777,-0.42223]. Since the p-value (0.0054) is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis at the 95% confidence level. This means is statistically significant evidence that the average student output difference before and after listening to BBC audios. Therefore, the intervention (listening to BBC audios) has a positive impact on student learning outcomes. The results indicate that the intervention using BBC Learning English podcasts was highly effective in improving students' listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition.

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS:

The thematic analysis of qualitative data provided rich, nuanced insights into how the intervention impacted students, revealing five core themes. To analyze the data, thematic analysis was carried out using NVivo 12 software, which facilitated systematic coding and theme generation. This process aided in identifying common patterns and insights related to the learners' experiences, challenges, and suggestions concerning the integration of BBC Learning English audio resources into their language development.

Theme 1: Impact of BBC Audio on Developing Listening Skills

All the participants found the BBC audio materials useful because they helped them listen better, learn new words, and understand more about speaking skills. It was mentioned by the interviewees that they now knew the basics, participated in talks, and recognized different English accents. It was highlighted that repeating real speech several times made it easier for them to process spoken words naturally.

This conclusion agrees with Gilmore (2007) and Field (2008), who mention that real materials aid in the improvement of both top-down and bottom-up listening.

Theme 2: Vocabulary Learning in Context

Many of the activities described involved picking up new vocabulary because of the BBC's audio help. Students appreciated hearing new words and expressions used naturally within the context of everyday conversations, which they found more effective for memorization than traditional rote learning. Increased exposure to colloquialisms, technical terms, and different accents improved participants' lexical range. This aligns with Nation's (2001) argument that listening to rich, contextualized input is a highly effective approach to vocabulary acquisition in second language learning.

Theme 3: Enhanced Engagement and Cooperative Learning

The interviews revealed that students preferred audio-based sessions over traditional practice methods. Most participants expressed that the interactive listening exercises— such as working together, engaging in group discussions, and taking quizzes—kept them motivated and encouraged. They found that using real-life topics and diverse audio materials significantly enhanced their engagement.

This reflects the views on education held by Vygotsky (1978), along with Richards and Rodgers' (2014) approach to teaching languages. Sharing what each person meant, and working together with a partner, as suggested by the results, made students learn the material more effectively.

Theme 4: Challenges with Audio Speed, Accent, and Setting

According to learners, some problems with BBC recordings exist, namely the use of fast speech, the presence of strong accents, and vocabulary that is sometimes hard to follow. Several students found it necessary to go over some parts of these recordings several times to grasp everything being taught. In the classroom, background noise and poor sound quality further made it hard for the students to pay attention and get all the information because certain sounds prevented them from coming into contact with the information they should have received. Flowerdew and Miller (2005) though a real audio helps, high-quality support is needed to make it effective for students.

Theme 5: Student Suggestions for Improvement

Those who responded gave useful tips to make listening better. Experts advised that transcripts and slower recordings should be used, and they added that post-listening activities such as reviews and discussions will help. Students pointed out that giving them vocabulary lists ahead of listening activities would help them pay more attention when they listen. Vandergrift and Goh (2012), say that effective listening skills can be taught through providing support before listening, scaffolding the process, and encouraging learners to be independent.

DATA TRAINGULATION:

To verify the data's accuracy and make it reliable, this study used data triangulation by collecting info about scores, interview results, and student feedback. Using several methods increased the credibility of the research study by showing how BBC audio files developed students' ability to pay attention to sound. High scores in the tests proved students did much better, and surveys showed they could use new vocabulary, understand things better, and felt more confident—which all agreed with the measurable results. Besides, when the researcher looked at open-ended feedback in evaluation documents, the researcher could see that the findings from the interviews were supported. Combining different kinds of data made sure that the research results confirmed the strengths of the intervention and also revealed the reasons behind how students viewed it (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This approach enhanced methodological rigor, offering a well-rounded and compelling analysis of the impact of audio-based learning material.

DISCUSSION: Synthesizing Quantitative and Qualitative Evidence

The findings of this study present a compelling case for the integration of BBC Learning English audio resources into EFL curricula. The results indicate that the application of BBC Learning English audio helped learners with their listening ability. The mean score improved from 13.88 in the pre-test to 17.06 in the post-test, indicating a significant enhancement in student performance after utilizing BBC Learning English resources. The results showed $t(49) = -2.914$, p .005 within a 95% confidence interval [-2.29777,- 0.42223]. Since the p-value (0.0054) is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis at the 95% confidence level. This means is statistically significant evidence that the average student output difference before and after listening to BBC audios. Therefore, the intervention (listening to BBC audios) has a positive impact on student learning outcomes. The statistically significant improvement in test scores ($p = .005$) provides robust quantitative evidence that the intervention was effective in enhancing listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. This aligns with previous research by Widiyarto et al. (2021) and Sembiring & Katemba (2023), who also found BBC audio to be a valuable tool for improving listening skills.

The qualitative data, however, offers a deeper explanation for *why* and *how* this improvement occurred. The reported development of listening skills can be attributed to the prolonged and scaffolded exposure to authentic language, which gradually built students' tolerance for the ambiguity and speed of natural speech, a process supported by the findings of Latifa and Nur (2025). The thematic analysis revealed that students were not just hearing more English; they were actively developing metacognitive strategies—planning their listening, monitoring their comprehension, and using resources like transcripts to solve problems—which is considered a cornerstone of successful language learning (Goh & Vandergrift, 2021).

The gains in vocabulary are a testament to the power of incidental and contextualized acquisition. As students encountered new words and phrases within meaningful dialogues about motivation, emojis, and presentations, they formed stronger and more elaborate mental connections than would be possible through rote memorization of decontextualized lists. This finding strongly supports the arguments of Chugcho and Vega (2023) and Nation (2001) on the efficacy of learning vocabulary from rich, contextualized input.

Furthermore, the dramatic increase in student engagement and motivation was a critical factor. The "real-life" relevance of the BBC topics transformed listening from a chore into a meaningful and enjoyable activity. This emotional engagement is not merely a pleasant side-effect; it facilitates deeper cognitive processing and enhances long-term memory (Gonulal, 2022). The collaborative, interactive tasks fostered a supportive learning community, which was especially beneficial for lower-proficiency students, reducing anxiety and building confidence. The challenges identified by students are not failures of the method but rather indicators of the authentic nature of the materials. They highlight the necessity of the very scaffolding provided by the action research cycles: pre-teaching vocabulary, allowing for repetition, and providing transcript support. This aligns with Flowerdew and Miller's (2005) assertion that authentic materials must be carefully mediated by the teacher to be fully effective.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS:

This action research study conclusively demonstrates that the systematic integration of BBC Learning English audio resources can significantly improve the listening comprehension and vocabulary knowledge of university-level EFL students. The mixed-methods approach not only confirmed a statistically significant gain in test scores but also illuminated the pedagogical processes and learner experiences that underpinned this success. The study underscores that technology alone is not a panacea; its effectiveness is derived from its integration within a reflective, student-centered, and strategically scaffolded pedagogical framework.

Recommendations for Stakeholders

For EFL Teachers: Move beyond scripted textbook audio. Adopt a structured three-phase (pre-, while-, post-) listening framework using authentic resources like BBC Learning English. Explicitly teach listening strategies, provide vocabulary scaffolding, and use transcripts as a learning tool, not a crutch. Foster an interactive classroom environment where students can collaboratively construct meaning from what they hear.

For Curriculum Designers: Formally recognize listening as a discrete and assessable skill within the syllabus. Allocate dedicated time for its development and provide teachers with training and resources on how to effectively use authentic digital media. Develop resource banks of level-appropriate, authentic materials linked to curriculum objectives.

For University Administrators: Invest in the necessary technological infrastructure, including reliable internet access, quality audio equipment, and quiet learning spaces. Support professional development workshops focused on technology-integrated language teaching and action research methodologies.

For Students: Take ownership of your learning by engaging with BBC Learning English outside the classroom. Practice active listening strategies, such as predictive listening and selective note-taking. Regularly listen to a variety of podcasts to build fluency and familiarity with different accents and speaking styles.

For Researchers: Conduct longitudinal studies to investigate the long-term retention of skills acquired through podcast-based learning. Explore the impact on other language skills, particularly spontaneous speaking. Replicate this study in different cultural and institutional contexts to validate and refine the findings.

In conclusion, this research affirms that in an increasingly digital world, resources like BBC Learning English are not merely supplementary aids but are central to creating dynamic, effective, and motivating language learning experiences that prepare students for the realities of global communication.

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