

TEACHING LISTENING SKILLS WITH ONLINE DIGITAL TOOLS

Djabbarova Nozima Kamalitdinovna
Senior teacher,
National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulugbekh,
Foreign Philology Faculty
English philology Department,
E-mail address: nozima_djabbarova@mail.ru

Abstract : This article presents some facts about digital tools for online teaching. In pandemic period teachers started to teach online as a blended learning. Some parts on platform and other on zoom classes. These web pages which we discussed in the article helpful for conducting classes online via zoom. An explanation of how teachers and learners can use this web pages and teaching strategies to enhance the learning process is presented. The major part of the article presents and discusses pedagogical recommendations for teaching listening skills with digital tools. Web pages which are recommended for using in zoom classes or online platforms. Every web page has its opportunities and problems for using as a student and teacher. We will see these problems in our article and give some suggestions for solving these problems.

Key words: listening skills, webpage, online digital tools, platform, bottom up and top down listening, listening lab,

INTRODUCTION

Language is a medium of communication, which helps the members of a community in the society, to communicate and interact with one another. This involves both verbal and non-verbal communication. Language focuses on listening and reading that can be named as passive or receptive skills, while speaking and writing can be named as, active or productive skills. Listening is one of the important skills in learning a language. The process of acquiring a language starts with listening and ends up in the production of writing. After birth, a child hears variety of sounds and can distinguish among them. Every language has a

common and a natural sequence for the development of the language skills. Listening skill is ranked first of all the four folds. This highlights the importance of listening skill in the life of human beings. Students normally face and encounter listening problems especially in foreign languages.

This article presents facts about digital tools for online teaching. An explanation of how listeners and teachers can use this web pages and teaching strategies to enhance the learning process is presented, with a review of the existing research base on how second language listening is taught. The major part of the article presents and discusses pedagogical recommendations for teaching listening skills.

Listening and speaking are often taught together, but beginners, especially non-literate ones, should be given more listening than speaking practice. It's important to speak as close to natural speed as possible, although with beginners some slowing is usually necessary. Without reducing speaking speed, it is possible to make a language easier to comprehend by simplifying vocabulary, using shorter sentences, and increasing the number and length of pauses in speech.

Given the importance of listening in language learning and teaching it is essential for language teachers to help their students become effective listeners. In the communicative approach to language teaching, this means modeling listening strategies and providing listening practice in authentic situations: those that learners are likely to encounter when they use the language outside the classroom.

The research available on second-language listening comprehension is insufficient. Comparing with other skills W. Goh said that "there are fewer insights about the process of listening and the way it is learnt". Similarly, D. Richards stated that: "there is little direct research on second language listening comprehension". As for that, we are doing this research not only to help students with better listening but also to contribute a small part to enrich the listening research which has been done so far.

THE MAIN PART.

Today, in order to learn foreign languages, it is recommended to study not only grammar but also basic skills equally. To improve your listening skills, many websites are ready for us to use openly today. For example, to develop listening and pronunciation, we can cite the following web pages as an example.

- Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab
- YouGlish
- News in levels

The first web page we would like to suggest to the learners and teachers was created by Randall Davis. He was created many webpages for learners. ESL Cyber Listening Lab has been providing online English listening comprehension activities for ESL and EFL learners since 1998.

We can visit his other Web sites at DailyESL.com, EZslang.com, and Trainyouraccent.com for more practice. Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab website provides a way for ESL students to improve their listening skills outside the classroom by providing autonomous learning materials. However, low-achieving students or those with limited computer skills use the tutor's instructions. Although the site includes "tests" for listening, the main purpose of the site is not to test students' listening ability; rather, students can explore ways to learn how to develop their listening skills by performing a variety of pre-, post-, and post-listening activities. This page has its own set of laws and regulations, and there is a huge amount of material available for use. Resources for teachers and students to listen to a wide range can be very useful and can be used in zoom lessons or online lessons. Topics can be easily modified depending on the complexity of the interesting all-round exercise sequence. I would recommend all language learners to use this web page.

The next web page about different podcast pages. Using podcasts to develop listening skills A podcast is an audio file that a student or reader can

download to their computer, phone, or mp3 player and listen to whenever they want. They are the best way to work on your or your students' listening skills because you can listen to them as much as you want. If you feel like an adventure, you can manipulate the files to make them run faster or slower, or just to listen to a part of the whole program. Podcasts now cover almost every topic you can think of. We can subscribe to nearly 30 series that cover topics such as science, movies, history, teaching, language and stories. There is something for everyone. You can find a list of some of my favorites and podcasts for English learners at <http://independentenglish.wordpress.com/podcasts>. Most podcasts are free and you can find them in a variety of ways. I find most of the podcasts I listen to on the BBC Podcasts page, the Apple Podcast app (which is automatically installed on Apple devices), or through the iTunes Podcasts tab, but just a search on Google will help you. For example, try a "movie review podcast" so you stay under the examples. Once you find a podcast you like, what can you do with it? As a student, do the following exercises: Read a brief summary of the podcast. Guess the three things the presenters are talking about. Listen and check. Choose ten words, phrases, or phrases that presenters will use. Play bingo. How many did you hear? If you listen to the same podcasts regularly, you will start to notice that the same phrases appear over and over again. Play two minutes of the podcast. Stop and then predict what you will hear. Keep listening. Are you right? Repeat this at several different points in the podcast. Listen to the full podcast without stopping. Record a summary of what you hear or record audio content. Listen again and see if you can add more information. Repetition improves your confidence. Choose a grammar like the current perfect that you want to improve. Focus on listening to it. How many times have you heard that? In what contexts is it used? Listen to the speaker and repeat. Whisper under your breath. Repeating this several times can help your pronunciation.

As a teacher, you can use podcasts in class or at home. Use the clip from the podcast to open a new theme. For example, if you're talking about the

environment, try something from the BBC's Earth Costing series. Search for programs in the BBC Identity series starting in the spring of 2016 for the personality theme. Play a clip from listening to the textbook, then a podcast for native speakers. Students should think about the differences between the two, such as how fast the speech is, how easy it is to give turns, and how easy it is to distinguish different speakers. They can then evaluate how easy it is to understand, and you can suggest ways to work in the areas where they face the most problems. Ask students to choose a podcast to listen to their homework. You can give them some guidance or let them choose what they like. In the first ten minutes of the next lesson, students talk about the podcasts they listened to, why they chose it, how easy or difficult it was to understand, and what they learned from it (language or topic). Doing this on a regular basis works as part of a broad listening scheme.

YouGlish is the helpful website for checking pronunciation. YouGlish uses YouTube to improve your English pronunciation. With more than 50M tracks, YouGlish gives you fast, unbiased answers about how English is spoken by real people and in context. I think that being able to watch a video so you can listen to the pronunciation of a word in context make Youglish a unique tool.



We all glish for English!

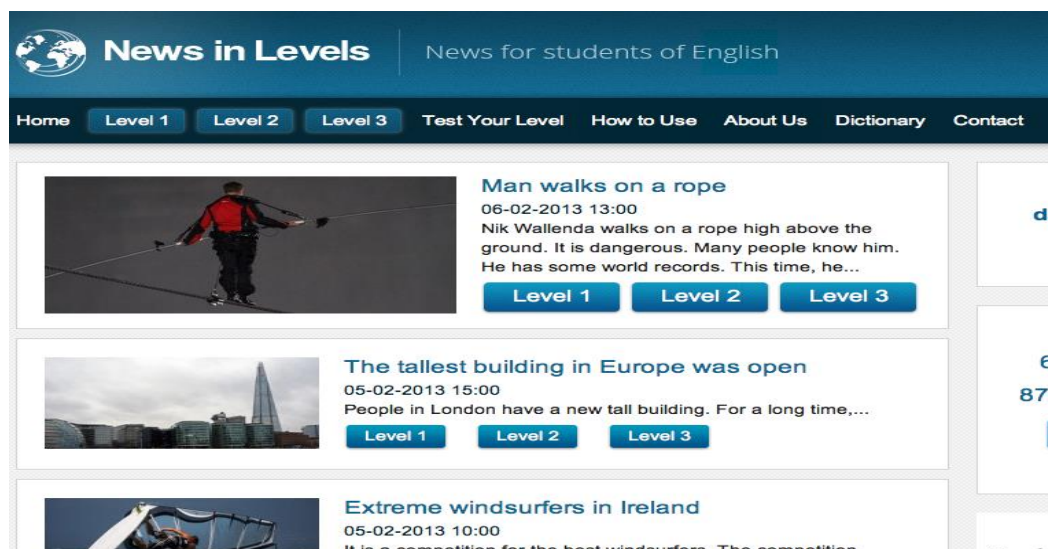
What do you do if you don't know how to pronounce an English word? Look it up in the dictionary. But what if you can't find it in the dictionary? I recently learned about the YouGlish.com website. How it works? There is a huge amount of content available on YouTube. Some YouTube videos contain transcripts. YouGlish allows you to search these entries. Type in a word, hit Enter, and you get a video of someone saying that word. The video will automatically start with the corresponding sentence, so there is no need to search for the desired location. If you need more examples of your word pronunciation, simply click the big arrow button to go to the next video result. You can check how this word is pronounced separately in British, American or Australian accent.

Sometimes we come across words during the lesson that are a little difficult for the teacher and the student to pronounce, and this page is useful for us. Then we need to develop the skill in students to open the internet and go to the YouGlish page and teach them to listen to words in different accents. During the pandemic period, zoom was used very often in lessons and was found as a necessary page for students and teachers.

In addition to that, you can watch videos and read the subtitles. There has been increasing interest in pronunciation teaching and learning in parallel with recent developments in technology. Thanks to these developments, we have witnessed a number of applications and websites focusing on pronunciation. As Levis (2007) stated, computers can be utilized for individualized instruction, frequent practice through listening discrimination and focused repetition exercises, and automatic visual support. In this respect, YouGlish, a website which relies on YouTube videos to present target vocabulary through videos from a variety of genres, offers an invaluable resource for English language learners (ELLs) to improve their pronunciation.

The next useful web page is the *News in Levels* page, which helps us to develop listening skills. It is difficult to write all advantages of this page, it is mainly a page that engages the listeners with its quick change of content and

exercises which are divided into levels. This is a news site designed specifically to help readers master the English language. “Simple” best describes News in Levels, and that is a compliment. Because the site’s purpose is help students master the English language, it eschews any overly distracting imagery or animations. Instead, users get a neatly produced, blog-type layout of news stories. Each entry features three buttons corresponding to the reading level in which a user would like to see the story.



While News in Levels aims at those for whom English is not a first language, the site’s tiered presentation of news articles also makes it a handy general classroom tool for the elementary level. A given news article is offered in three versions. Version 1 is written in the most simplistic manner possible. The sentences are short, the words are simple and only the most important factual elements are covered. Version 2 gives the user a slightly more complex version of the story. These articles feature more sophisticated sentences and offer more background on the story. Readers who are ready for Version 3 get a story that would not look out of place on any news site.

Another site benefit is the inclusion of news items from around the world. This gives students a glimpse at what is going on globally and a sense of how other cultures present the news. Both early readers and ELL students will get a lot of

mileage out of News in Levels. ([Jason Tomaszewski](#)) Find high interest, leveled news articles (and lessons) for English language learners. Although this site was designed for ESL/ELL it could be very useful in any elementary classroom looking for informational texts that can be differentiated for various reading levels (great for meeting Common Core standards). This tool could be used with any readers to increase comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary skills. There are three difficulty levels. Complete the *Test Your Level* exercise in the pop-up box after you first get to the home page to find out what level will be best for you. Many of the lessons include audio and practice exercises. In addition, interesting pictures pique the students' interest. The same story is presented in all of the various levels. The vocabulary at lower levels repeats at the higher levels with more vocabulary added as the level increases. Definitions for the vocabulary words, below the reading, assists with English meanings. The audio is hosted on YouTube. At the time of this review, most of the news story content was fine for all ages. How could you use it in the classroom? Add this website to your classroom computers, websites, and newsletters for parents of ESL/ELL students or beginning readers. This tool is especially helpful at the beginning of the year, as you are learning students' reading levels. Use this tool to differentiate in all primary classes. Although this site was created for English Language Learners, it could still be used by all students including gifted and learning support. Differentiate for your advanced/gifted students in elementary, while meeting Common Core standards of Informational Text. Use these news articles as informational text meeting your Common Core goals. Assign students of different levels the same story at the appropriate level or build skills by sharing the same story as a class. Challenge groups to compare the stories in pairs. Have students create a visual presentation of the story.

CONCLUSION

Auding or listening and comprehension are difficult for learners because they should discriminate speech sounds quickly, retain them while hearing a word, a phrase, or a sentence and recognize this as a sense unit. Pupils can easily and

naturally do this in their own language and they cannot do this in a foreign language when they start learning the language. Pupils are very slow in grasping what they hear because they are conscious of the linguistic forms they perceive by the ear. This results in misunderstanding or a complete failure of understanding.

When auditing a foreign language pupils should be very attentive and think hard. They should strain their memory and will power to keep the sequence of sounds they hear and to decode it. Not all the pupils can cope with the difficulties entailed. The teacher should help them by making this work easier and more interesting. And all these web pages are could be the sample tasks for online classes. This is possible on condition that he will take into consideration the following three main factors which can ensure success in developing pupils' skills in auditing:

- linguistic material for auditing;
- the content of the material suggested for listening and comprehension;
- conditions in which the material is presented.

YouGlish and News in levels web pages have good content and material for listening and comprehension. Pod casts also useful for auditing and improving listening and speaking skills at the same time.

As a teacher we should do needs analyses then after we can give listening materials according to their interest and levels. All these web pages are authentic and interesting sources for learner and for teacher.

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