



The Impact of Mass Media Exposure on Enhancing Listening Skills and Language Competence: A Case Study of Undergraduate Students at Benghazi University, Al-Wahat Branch

Salah Abobaker Almabruk Shahat *

English Department, Faculty of Arts and Science Al-Wahat, University of Benghazi, Libya

أثر التعرض لوسائل الإعلام على تعزيز مهارات الاستماع والكفاءة اللغوية: دراسة حالة لطلاب المرحلة الجامعية في جامعة بنغازي، فرع الواحات

صالح ابوبكر المبروك شحات *

قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، كلية الآداب والعلوم الواحات، جامعة بنغازي، ليبيا

*Corresponding author: salah.shahat@uob.edu.ly

Received: June 07, 2026

Accepted: July 15, 2026

Published: August 10, 2026

Abstract:

This study investigates the influence of mass media consumption—including television, radio, and digital content—on the development of English language listening skills and overall language competence among undergraduate students in Libya. Despite the critical importance of listening in language acquisition, learners often face challenges related to instructional limitations and exposure to authentic linguistic input. Employing a descriptive quantitative methodology, this research gathered data from 50 undergraduate students at the Faculty of Arts and Science, Al-Wahat, Benghazi University, through a structured 15-item survey. The findings reveal a significant correlation between mass media exposure and enhanced listening proficiency. While 95% of participants reported that media exposure contributes positively to their language development, a substantial gap exists between student engagement with independent media and classroom practices, as 70% of respondents indicated that media resources are not utilized in their formal instruction. The study concludes with pedagogical recommendations for integrating diverse media formats into the curriculum and enhancing students' media literacy to optimize language learning outcomes.

Keywords: Mass Media, Listening Skills, Language Competence, Libyan EFL Learners, Media Literacy.

المخلص

تبحث هذه الدراسة في تأثير استهلاك وسائل الإعلام، بما في ذلك التلفزيون والإذاعة والمحتوى الرقمي، على تطوير مهارات الاستماع في اللغة الإنجليزية والكفاءة اللغوية العامة لدى طلاب المرحلة الجامعية في ليبيا. على الرغم من الأهمية الحاسمة لمهارة الاستماع في اكتساب اللغة، غالباً ما يواجه المتعلمون تحديات تتعلق بمحدودية التدريس والتعرض للمدخلات اللغوية الأصيلة. باستخدام منهج كمي وصفي، جمع هذا البحث بيانات من 50 طالباً جامعياً في كلية الآداب والعلوم بالوحدات، جامعة بنغازي، من خلال استبانة منظمة مكونة من 15 سؤالاً. تكشف النتائج عن وجود ارتباط وثيق بين التعرض لوسائل الإعلام وتعزيز كفاءة الاستماع. في حين أفاد 95% من المشاركين أن التعرض لوسائل الإعلام يساهم بشكل إيجابي في تطور لغتهم، توجد فجوة كبيرة بين تفاعل الطلاب مع وسائل الإعلام بشكل مستقل وبين الممارسات الصفية، حيث أشار 70% من المستجيبين إلى أن الموارد الإعلامية لا تُستخدم في تعليمهم الرسمي. وتخلص الدراسة إلى توصيات تربوية لدمج صيغ إعلامية متنوعة في المنهج الدراسي وتعزيز الوعي الإعلامي للطلاب لتحسين نتائج تعلم اللغة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: وسائل الإعلام الجماهيرية، مهارات الاستماع، الكفاءة اللغوية، متعلمو الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في ليبيا، الوعي الإعلامي.

1. Introduction

Most people think listening is just about hearing sounds, but it's actually much more complicated than that. When we really listen to someone, we're doing a lot of mental work—we're not just picking up words but also noticing how they're said, the tone of voice, and even what the person's body language is telling us. This is especially true when you're trying to learn a new language.

For Libyan students studying English, listening can be one of the hardest skills to master. The problem is that most of what they hear in class is either their teacher speaking (who might not be a native speaker) or recordings from textbooks that sound nothing like real people talking. This is where mass media comes in. Things like TV shows, news broadcasts, podcasts, and YouTube videos give students a chance to hear how English is actually spoken in real life.

The media we're talking about includes all the different ways information gets shared with lots of people at once—newspapers and magazines, radio and TV, and of course everything on the internet. According to the researcher Chomsky (1996), "competence" means the internal knowledge we have about language that lets us understand and create new sentences we've never heard before.

Media helps build this competence by exposing learners to all kinds of different language in natural contexts.

The researcher decided to do this research because the researcher noticed that many Libyan students really struggle with listening. They have trouble with fast speech, different accents (especially when watching international news channels), and understanding cultural references that native speakers take for granted. Some

students think media doesn't help, or they find it too difficult and give up. So, the researcher wanted to find out if media actually does help, and if so, how we can make it work better for students.

1.1 Problem Statement

The main thing the researcher wanted to figure out is whether there's a real connection between using mass media and getting better at listening in English. More specifically, the Researcher wanted to know if students who watch, listen to, or read English media are better at understanding spoken English than those who don't.

Research Question: Is there a relationship between using mass media and improving listening skills for Libyan students learning English?

1.2 Objectives and Significance

The researcher goal was pretty straightforward the researcher wanted to see how media affects listening ability. This matters for two reasons:

- Theoretical importance: It helps us understand what makes it hard for students to learn from media and what makes it easier.
- Practical importance: the researcher wanted to come up with some useful tips that students and teachers can actually use to make media a better learning tool.

2. Literature Review

People have been studying listening for a long time. Paul Rankin's research back in 1926 showed that we spend more time listening than doing any other kind of communication. But it took until the 1940s for teachers to start paying serious attention to how listening should be taught (Janusik, 2010). For years, speaking got all the attention in language classes, but now we know that listening is just as important and needs its own specific teaching approaches.

Different researchers have broken down listening into different stages. Wolvin and Coakley (1996) described it as a process that includes:

1. Receiving: Actually, taking in the sounds and information
2. Understanding: Figuring out what it means and thinking about how to respond
3. Remembering: Keeping the information in your mind long enough to use it
4. Evaluating: Deciding what's important and what's not
5. Responding: Giving feedback to the person who's speaking

Mass media includes all kinds of communication technologies that reach lots of people. There's print media (newspapers, magazines, books), electronic media (TV, radio, music), and digital media (phones, computers, internet stuff).

Some really interesting research has been done on media and language learning. Dvorghets and Shaturnaya (2015) looked at how using American and British media in English classes helped students think more critically about what they were hearing and reading. They found that media doesn't just teach language—it also helps students become better thinkers. Other studies have shown that using

technology and media in class can get students more excited about learning and help them stay motivated when they might otherwise get bored or discouraged.

3. Methodology

For this study, the researcher decided to use a descriptive quantitative approach. That means the researcher collected numerical data through a survey and then analyzed it to see patterns and trends. The students the researcher studied were all from the English Department at Benghazi University's Al-Wahat campus. the researcher got responses from 50 students across all different semesters.

The survey had 15 questions that were all multiple choice. the researcher designed these questions to cover three main areas: (1) what students' listening habits are like, (2) how often they use different types of media, and (3) what they think about how media affects their English. After collecting all the surveys, the researcher counted up the responses and turned them into percentages to make the patterns easier to see.

4. Results and Discussion

When the researcher looked at all the answers from the 50 students, some clear patterns jumped out at me. Here's what the researcher found, broken down by topic.

4.1 How Students Engage with Listening and Media

The numbers show that students are pretty active in trying to learn English, but there are some interesting differences in what they prefer:

- Listening in class: 90% of students said they listen to English during their lessons. But 10% mentioned that teachers sometimes use Arabic instead of English, which means the learning environment isn't always consistent.
- Using media: 90% listen to English TV or radio. When the researcher asked specifically about BBC radio, 85% said they tune in regularly because they think it helps them hear clear pronunciation and correct grammar.
- Reading: 55% read magazines or newspapers in English. Most of these students said it helps them understand how sentences are put together properly.
- What they like: 95% said they actually enjoy listening to English, which is great because it means they're motivated. But here's something telling—50% said they prefer learning on their own compared to only 20% who prefer university lectures and 20% who prefer practicing at home. This makes me think students don't completely trust their classes to give them enough listening practice.

4.2 What Students Think About Media's Impact

Students had really positive things to say about how media helps them:

- Overall improvement: 90% said listening to media makes their English better. They mentioned things like hearing different ways of speaking and how media presents information in interesting ways that keep them engaged.
- Study support: 95% said media helps them with their studies by giving them context for what they're learning and filling in gaps that the textbook leaves out.
- Listening specifically: This was the most dramatic result—100% of students said media improves their listening skills. Everyone agreed on this, which really

backs up the idea that hearing real, natural English helps with understanding different accents and speech patterns.

4.3 What's Happening in the Classroom

Even though students are super enthusiastic about media, there's a big disconnect happening in class:

- Teacher encouragement: 80% said their teachers tell them to listen to English outside of class. But only 60% said teachers actually use media during lessons (like showing videos or using data projectors).
- The big problem: 70% of students said their teachers don't use mass media in class at all. Instead, they stick to old-school methods like writing on the blackboard. This is a huge missed opportunity.
- Student satisfaction: Despite all this, 85% said they're satisfied with how they're being taught. The Researcher thinks this probably means they don't know what they're missing out on rather than actually being happy with the current approach.

Difficulties in Listening During Lessons

Do you think students find difficulties listening during the lesson?

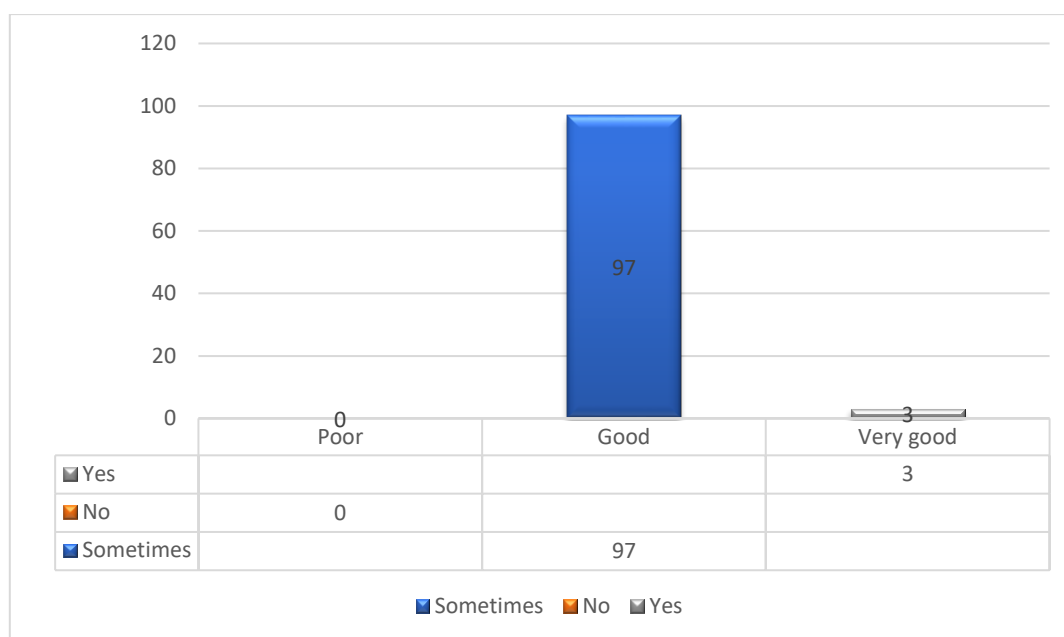


Figure 1: Student Difficulties with Listening Comprehension During Lessons

Looking at this chart, it's clear that almost everyone (97%) struggles with listening at least sometimes. The main issues seem to be unfamiliar words and fast speech. Only 3% said they can understand everything without problems, and those students probably have more experience or practice than the others. This really shows that listening is a skill that takes work to develop.

Impact of Technology in Teaching Listening

Do you think using technology in teaching listening affects you?

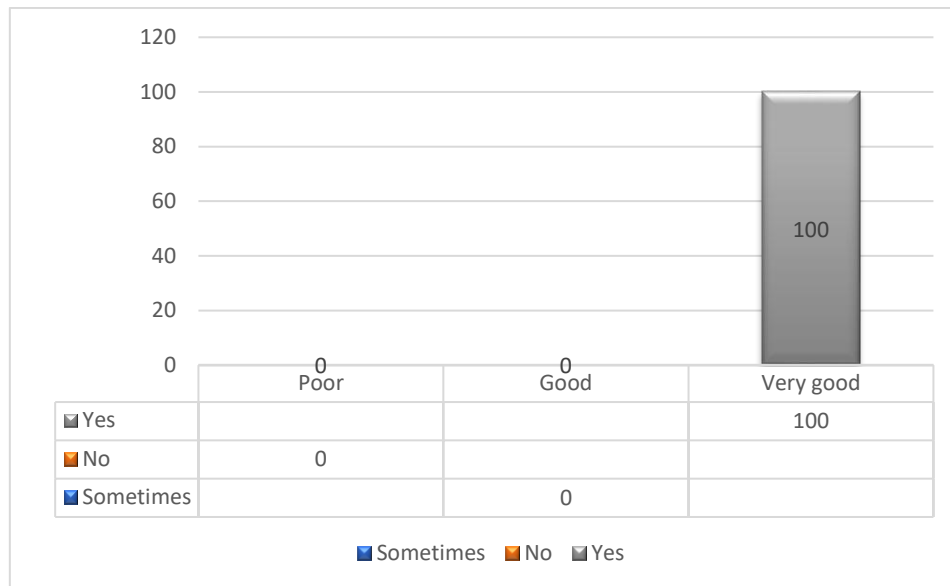


Figure 2: Student Perspectives on the Importance of Technology in Teaching Listening

Every single student who took the survey said that technology is important for improving listening. This tells me that students are eager to use modern tools and want to get better. The fact that everyone agreed on this point suggests that using technology could be one of the most effective ways to help students with their listening problems.

Catching Teacher's Speech During Lessons

Do you think students can catch the teacher's talking during the lesson?

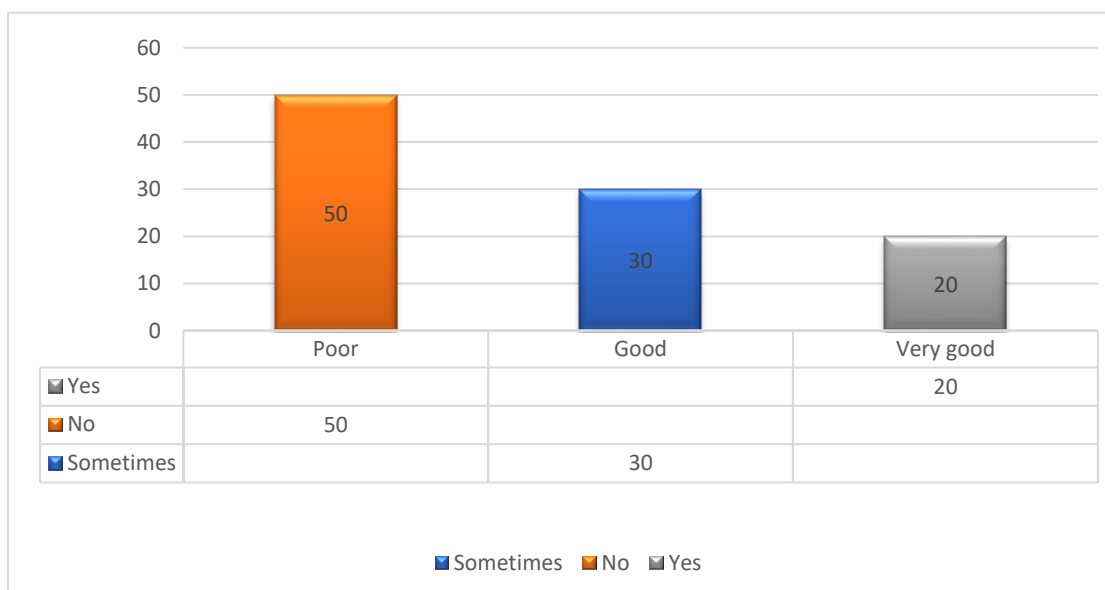


Figure 3: Students' Ability to Follow Teacher's Speech During Lessons

Half the students (50%) said they have trouble following what the teacher is saying in class. This could be because of poor hearing, difficulty concentrating, or the teacher's voice being hard to understand. Another 30% said they have trouble sometimes, which is also worrying. Only 20% can consistently follow the teacher's speech, which means a lot of students are probably missing important information during lessons.

4.4 What All This Means

The numbers give us a clear answer to the research question: there really is a strong, positive connection between using mass media and getting better at listening. Almost all the students (between 90% and 100% depending on the question) said media helps them. This fits with what ⁽⁵⁾ found in their research about the benefits of using media in English classes.

But here's the strange thing. Even though students are really motivated to use media on their own—watching TV, listening to the BBC, going online—this doesn't seem to carry over into the classroom at all. The fact that 70% of teachers don't use any media in their lessons is a huge waste of potential. By not using things like videos, podcasts, or even simple online content, teachers are missing a chance to connect with what students are already interested in. This might actually be slowing down how quickly students could be improving their listening.

The finding that 50% of students prefer learning on their own is a pretty clear sign that they feel they have to fill the gaps left by their formal education. Students are taking matters into their own hands, which is good, but it also shows that the system isn't giving them what they need.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This research set out to see if there's a relationship between using mass media and becoming a better listener in English for Libyan students. The answer is a clear yes. Students who use media—whether it's TV, radio, or online content—believe it helps their English, especially their listening. These sources give them exposure to real accents, new vocabulary, and cultural information that textbooks just don't provide.

But there's a big problem. Even though students are excited about media and using it on their own, teachers aren't bringing it into the classroom. This gap between what students want and what's actually happening in class needs to be fixed if we want to help students learn as effectively as possible.

Based on what the researcher found, here are my suggestions for students and teachers:

For Teachers:

1. Use media in lessons: Bring in videos, audio clips, and online materials. Use transcripts to help students follow along. This connects what happens in class with the real world.

2. Get proper training: Teachers need to learn how to use technology in their teaching. Without training, even teachers who want to use media might not know how to do it effectively.
3. Speak clearly and at a good pace: Teachers should talk at a speed students can follow and be careful about pronunciation. If students can't understand the teacher, they're not going to learn much.
4. Make it interactive: Instead of just playing audio or video, create activities around it—prediction exercises, comprehension questions, group discussions about what students heard.

For Students:

1. Practice actively: Write down what you hear (dictation). This helps you learn how sentences are put together and improves your overall understanding.
2. Follow your interests: Listen to things you actually care about—sports, politics, entertainment, whatever. When you're interested, you'll pay more attention and learn more.
3. Take notes: Don't just listen passively. Write down key points. This helps you focus on the main ideas rather than getting lost in details.
4. Keep practicing on your own: Since many teachers aren't using media in class, keep doing what you're already doing—listen to podcasts, watch news channels, and use online resources.

For Schools and the Education System:

1. Update the curriculum: Include media literacy and structured activities that use media in the English curriculum.
2. Invest in resources: Buy language lab equipment, projectors, and improve internet access so teachers can actually use media in their classes.

If everyone works together to make these changes, Libyan English classes could become much more dynamic and effective. Students have already shown they're motivated and willing to learn—teachers just need to meet them halfway and use the tools that are already available.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

References

- [1] Chomsky, N. (1996). *Syntactic Structures*. The Hague: Mouton.
- [2] Dvorghets, O. S., & Shaturnaya, Y. A. (2015). *Developing Students' Media Literacy in the English Language Teaching Context*. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 200, 192–198.
- [3] Janusik, L. A. (2010). *Listening pedagogy: Where do we go from here?* In A. D. Wolvin (Ed.), *Listening and human communication in the 21st century* (pp. 193–224). Oxford: Blackwell.
- [4] Paul Rankin's (1926). *The Measurement of the Ability to Understand Spoken Language*.

[5] Wolvin, A., & Coakley, C. G. (1996). *Listening (5th ed.)*. Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown Publishers.

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