

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY APPLICATION IN DESIGNING SUPPLYMENTARY MATERIALS FOR LISTENING COMPREHENSION SKILL FOR FIRST-YEAR ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS IN ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AT UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS-TECHNOLOGY FOR INDUSTRIES

ỨNG DỤNG CÔNG NGHỆ THÔNG TIN TRONG VIỆC THIẾT KẾ TÀI LIỆU
BỔ TRỢ CHO KỸ NĂNG NGHE HIỂU CHO SINH VIÊN NĂM THỨ NHẤT
KHOA NGÔN NGỮ ANH, TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC KINH TẾ - KỸ THUẬT
CÔNG NGHIỆP

Nguyễn Thị Lệ Thủy

Khoa Ngoại ngữ, Trường Đại học Kinh tế - Kỹ thuật Công nghiệp

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Abstract: This article introduces the application of information technology in the design of listening supplementary materials for first year English language students at University of Economics-Technology for Industries. Beside main textbook used in class, the authors would like to supply students a useful material for listening comprehension skill. By analyzing the difficulties students faced when learning listening comprehension skill, as well as understanding the factors that affect the process of teaching listening comprehension skill in class, the group of teachers have applied information technology in designing supplementary materials to achieve rich and effective listening lessons

Keywords: applying technology, supplementary material, listening comprehension skill.

Tóm tắt: Bài nghiên cứu giới thiệu ứng dụng công nghệ thông tin trong việc thiết kế tài liệu bổ trợ kỹ năng nghe hiểu cho sinh viên năm thứ nhất ngành Ngôn ngữ Anh trường Đại học Kinh tế Kỹ thuật Công nghiệp. Bên cạnh tài liệu chính thức được sử dụng trong lớp, tác giả muốn cung cấp thêm một tài liệu bổ trợ hữu ích. Thông qua việc phân tích những khó khăn sinh viên gặp phải khi học kỹ năng nghe hiểu, cũng như việc tìm hiểu các nhân tố ảnh hưởng đến quá trình giảng dạy kỹ năng nghe hiểu trên lớp, nhóm giáo viên đã ứng dụng công nghệ vào việc thiết kế tài liệu bổ trợ để mang lại một giờ dạy nghe hiểu phong phú và đạt hiệu quả nhất.

Từ khóa: ứng dụng công nghệ, tài liệu bổ trợ, kỹ năng nghe hiểu.

1. INTRODUCTION

The explosion of Information Technology in particular and Science and Technology in general in the 4.0 era has had a strong impact on the development of all sectors in social life. The application of technology in the teaching process is urgent and popular in all universities in the world as well as in

Vietnam, and that application has contributed to improve the quality of learning and teaching and bring fame to these schools.

Thanks to technology, foreign language learners have access to multicolor, updated resources and will learn more effectively and teachers can exploit more updated resources for teaching. Listening comprehension is a skill that teachers have to worry about beside

course books in class, the preparation of supplementary materials has rich and useful content to help learners access the standard language of native speakers, familiarize with many different voices with many different topics.

Therefore, the topic "Application of technology in designing supplementary materials to improve listening skills for first-year English major students of the English Language Department at UNETI" has been chosen to apply an innovative method in teaching practical language to English language students in the first course of UNETI applying information technology to bring the highest efficiency in teaching English. It helps teachers in the English department realize the importance of using technology, using facilities and technology equipment provided by the school and outside and improve the effectiveness of supplementary material development and the quality of teaching listening skills for students.

1.1. Factors affecting the quality of listening comprehension teaching

It can be said that, among the four skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, Listening comprehension skill is understood by many students as the skill that they encounter the most difficulties. According to Duzer, C.V. (1997), there are four important factors affecting the listening comprehension process of foreign language learners: listening topics, speaker's voice, listening content and visual aids. In addition, from practical learning and teaching, our group of authors finds that a technical factor that contributes significantly to the listening process is the quality of sound.

In the process of teaching listening comprehension to suit first year students of the English Language Department, Speak out

course book has been selected. In addition to that basic listening material, our research team also investigated and explored to provide some additional materials for teaching and learning more effectively. The fact that the main teaching material also has some limitations such as the out-of-date content of listening in the lessons, unattractive and unsuitable topics for Vietnamese culture or society and the voices in the speech are all from one source.

With some of these problems and the ability to access modern information technology for teachers, we can completely overcome the above-mentioned disadvantages in order to improve the efficiency of listening lessons for English Language students in particular and students from UNETI in general.

1.2. Current listening teaching materials and setting

After direct observation and statistics, we found that foreign language classes were arranged in rooms such as small rooms 204, 206, 304, 306... in buildings HA8, HA9 which are suitable for a foreign language class. All classes have computers with English-language-ready software pre-installed in the machine connected to the TV and wired with audio wires suitable, very high clarity for learning listening skills. In addition, all teachers are provided with teaching materials from abroad, so the quality of books is very good, the software for teaching is very effective. Moreover, teachers all equip themselves with teaching aids to serve for the pronunciation, listening and speaking more clearly for good teaching. Especially starting from the second semester of the 2019-2020 school year, Foreign Languages Department has been equipped with a lab room with full audio-visual equipment, computers, screen, television to ensure each student has a computer and a

separate headset connected to the teacher's server. This has great effect on language learning.

1.3. The process of applying information technology to the design supporting materials

English major students, especially first-year students, always consider listening comprehension to be a very difficult skill. In fact, when learning and practicing this skill, they often face difficulties due to the following factors such as listening topic, the voice of the speaker, the content of the listening lesson, image assistance and disk quality. Being aware of the tremendous impact of these 5 factors leading to the quality of teaching and learning of the subject, we have set up a very serious work plan in selecting additional materials that are suitable for topics are taught in the Speak out curriculum, in addition to updating new information consistent with the current understanding of social and cultural understanding. Taking materials from different sources also ensures the diversity of spoken voices, creating students with English, British, American, British-Canadian and English-Australian accents. This helps students not be surprised at the fact that life has to listen to voices that are not real English.

1.4. Synthesis

In order to have compelling supporting material both in terms of content and form, we have paid special attention to how to illustrate and present exercises so that they are compelling. We have used photoshop software to scan, crop, zoom in and out, edit and create effects for photos...

In addition to the exercises available from the textbooks, the author group compiling supplementary listening materials also focuses on designing more activities to guide,

inspire students to learn new lessons, or activities. After the listening session, students will have the opportunity to apply the knowledge they have just learned, besides developing speaking and thinking skills. In order for these activities to come alive, we also pay attention to the presentation design so that they are interesting by using additional pictures related to the lesson's topic. This is done with the powerful support of Google Image lookup tool.

To facilitate the synthesis and collection of audio files, the authors unanimously selected materials from sources using CDs or sound files on computers. Due to such priorities, the latest listening materials such as Pathways, Life... and listening materials on the Internet are the best choices. With current copy and copy cutting technology we have more options for each topic and the opportunity to bring more knowledge to the students. The instructions for each exercise in the supplementary material are correctly read by the software in the native language, so there is no inconsistency between the instructions and the content.

2. APPLICATION IN TEACHING

Success in composing and designing audio for supplementary listening materials is the motivation for us to strive further in our work. In the past, students often thought that their listening results were not good because the quality of the tapes was not good, the content was not good or not attractive. This is true, poor sound quality greatly affects the psychology of students when listening test. The listening may not be difficult, but due to psychological stress, students cannot complete it with high scores. To overcome this situation and meet the very practical needs of our students, we strive to select materials with reliable sources, high-quality

standard audio files and high-quality audio files for them to practice more daily. This helps a lot to improve the mid-term and final exam results. Thus, it can be said that the application of information technology software applications helps us a lot in finding supplementary materials as well as listening exercises suitable for students to practice.

Gradually the teacher helped students to realize that learning a language not only learns the outer shell but also delves into exploring it, finding the inner core to see the difference between this language and other languages. In this way, the language that the learner holds becomes an effective tool to support the learner not only in learning but also in work and life.

Besides, when the teachers themselves are the pioneers in the use of information technology applications in teaching, the students themselves can also recognize the dynamic enthusiasm fast and light create from his teachers. This will lead students to invest time and effort in finding a variety of resources for large assignments or presentations. Through watching game shows, movies from teachers, students can think and organize their own extra-curricular activities in English, their language skills will be increasingly developed and partly reach our educational goal of training them in addition to the basic knowledge in textbooks and help them improve soft skills for later work.

3. METHODOLOGY RESEARCH

For the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of supplementary listening materials for first-year students, we have completed the survey of freshman students, who are using the basic Speak out curriculum and Language practice group teachers are directly teaching the Speak out curriculum. In the survey of students, we distributed 65 votes and collected 65 votes. For teachers, we issued 15 votes, collected 15 votes. The content of the questionnaires for both teachers and students is divided into 3 main content groups about quality of documents such as topics, activities, presentation of documents, disks quality, listening files and recommendations to improve the quality of supplementary listening materials for first year students.

Despite our best efforts in the investigation process to obtain the most objective results, our investigation remains inevitable. The subjects we surveyed are first-year students who directly use the supplement, while they have no opportunity to compare what they are using with other documents.

As for teachers, in order to improve the quality of supplementary materials contribute to the completion of the main classroom curriculum, further to contribute to improving the quality of learning and teaching listening comprehension.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Assessment from Students

Table 1. Assessments from Students

Items	Agree	Percentage	Disagree	Percentage
Topic	60	92.3%	5	7.7%
Content	55	84.6%	10	15.4%
Pre-Listening Activities	60	92.3%	5	7.7%
Post-Listening Activities	62	95.3%	3	4.7%
Dis and audio	49	75.3%	16	24.7%

Survey results show that students feel quite satisfied with this supplementary materials. 92.3% of the students surveyed agreed with the topics in supplementary materials. 84.6% of the students agreed with the content of listening lessons which was interesting, updated and practical. This proves that finding topics and listening contents is great. Selected topics are very practical or topics that students are interested in such as happiness, activities in free time but students also expect that topics and content will be more updated. Supplementary activities before and after listening to the design of supplementary materials are also received positive feedback from students. 92.3% of the students said that the pre-listening activities helped them prepare for the listening exercises and 95.3% of the students agreed that the after listening activities helped them to use and memorize the language structure appears in the listening text. In addition, students also suggested that

supplementary materials should be more clearly presented, adding pre- and post-listening activities, especially review exercises. Some students want to have a synthesized part of the structure so that they can apply well the listening structure to other communication skills and give tips or suggestions to take a better listening test.

In terms of disc and audio files, the quality of the disc is quite good, the files are clear, but sometimes the volume between the small and large sections is not really equal, because when cutting auxiliary materials from the internet, the editing team is not really focus on this issue. In fact, when asked about the sound quality between the songs, it was quite different, 35% said that the difference is much while 21% of the students said that the difference was not significant and 9% said that the quality was good.

4.2. Assessments from Teachers

Table 2. Assessments from Teachers

Items	Agree	Percentage	Disagree	Percentage
Usefulness	13	86.6%	2	13.4%
Content and Topic	14	93.3%	1	6.7%
Pre-Listening Activities	13	86.6%	2	13.4%
Post-Listening Activities	13	86.6%	2	13.4%
Dis and audio	12	80%	3	20%

86.6% of teachers feel satisfied with supplementary materials and think that this document and the official textbook will help the teaching of listening comprehension skills for first year students more effectively. All teachers said that the selected topics are interesting, practical and the number is enough for first year students. 93.3% of teachers value topics and content of listening comprehension. About pre- and post-teaching activities, teachers also think

that helping students prepare and use the language structures that appear in the listening is necessary, the quality of disks and audio files of supplementary materials, teachers commented that the sound quality was quite good. Teachers also believe that the difference between lessons is both in sound quality and difficulty of the exercises and need to be overcome.

4.3. Suggestions

The topics and number of topics are very relevant, but the content needs to be updated further. Before and after listening activities should be designed to be even richer, especially after listening activities. Exercises should be composed from easy to difficult. Difficult words should be provided before listening. At the end of the listening sessions, there should be a summary of the structures and test tips that students can apply to their communication skills.

5. CONCLUSION

In short, we recognize that the application of technology to the field of foreign language teaching is an inevitable direction of the 4.0

technology era today. Furthermore, the technology we currently have in our hands allows us to design supplementary materials for better teaching.

However, our topic just stopped at referring to the use supplement for listening skill only. Therefore, this study opens a path for future research on the use of technology to design supporting materials for other skills, and will further develop its own customized learning materials. Those studies will help us to have a more comprehensive view of technology with teaching and learning foreign language.

REFERENCES

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SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES

(For teachers)

We are from Practical Language Group in English Department at UNETI carrying out a survey about "Information technology application in designing supplementary material for listening comprehension skill for first year English major students of English Department at UNETI". Our team would appreciate your supporting by answer the following questions.

1. According to you, which following materials will help in teaching listening skill for first year students at UNETI effectively?

- A. Materials collected by teachers
- B. Couse books from well-known publishers
- C. Both A and B

2. Your comment about topics in supporting materials

- A. Interesting
- B. Useful
- C. Not interesting
- D. Useless
- E. Other opinions:

3. *Your comment about topic quantity:*

A. Too much

B. Enough

C. A few

4. *What is your comment about content of listening materials?*

A. Interesting

B. Update

C. Useful

D. Necessary

5. *Do you think that the difficulty among exercises is suitable for students and*

A. Yes

B. No

C. Other ideas:

6. *What do you evaluate about pre and post-listening activity? For example:*

Pre- listening: Do pictures and questions encourage your students to prepare well for listening activity?

A. Too much

B. Much

C. Enough

D. Little

E. Too little

Post-listening: Do post-listening activities help you to encourage your students use language structures in listening comprehension?

A. Too much

B. Much

C. Enough

D. Little

E. Too little

7. *What is your comment about listening supporting materials?*

A. Very attractive

B. Attractive

C. Suitable with content of the course book

D. Other ideas:.....

8. *What is your comment about CD quality?*

A. Very good

B. Good

C. Normal

D. Bad

E. Very bad

9. *Is sound quality equal among listening exercises?*

A. Yes

B. No

10. What is your suggestion to improve listening supporting materials?.....

Thank you very much for your co-operation!

APPENDIX 2

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

(For students)

We are from Practical Language Group in English Department at UNETI carrying out a survey about “Information technology application in designing supplementary material for listening comprehension skill for first year English major students of English Department at UNETI”. Our team would appreciate your supporting by answer the following questions.

You are a student from NN13A.....

1. *Your comment about topics in supporting materials*

A. Interesting

B. Useful

C. Not interesting

D. Useless

E. Other opinions:

2. *Your comment about Topic quantity:*

A. Too much

B. Enough

C. A few

3. *What is your comment about content of listening materials?*

- A. Interesting
- B. Update
- C. Useful
- D. Necessary

4. *Can you learn English usages from native people through listening comprehension?*

- A. Yes
- B. No

If yes, which degree?

- A. Very much
- B. Much
- C. Enough
- D. A little

5. *Is the difficulty among exercises equal?*

- A. Yes
- B. No

6. *What do you evaluate about pre and post-listening activity? For example:*

Pre- listening: Do pictures and questions encourage your students to prepare well for listening activity?

- A. Too much
- B. Much
- C. Enough
- D. Little
- E. Too little

Post-listening: Do post-listening activities help you to encourage your students use language structures in listening comprehension?

- A. Too much
- B. Much
- C. Enough
- D. Little
- E. Too little

7. *What is your comment about listening supporting materials?*

- A. Very attractive

B. Attractive

C. Suitable with content of the course book

D. Other ideas:

8. *What is your comment about CD quality?*

A. Very good

B. Good

C. Normal

D. Bad

E. Very bad

9. *Is sound quality equal among listening exercises?*

A. Yes

B. No

10. *What is your suggestion to improve listening supporting materials?*

Thank you very much for your co-operation!

Thông tin liên hệ: **Nguyễn Thị Lệ Thủy**

Điện thoại: 0915191153 - Email: ntlthuy@uneti.edu.vn

Khoa Ngoại ngữ, Trường Đại học Kinh tế - Kỹ thuật Công nghiệp.

