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Audio-Visual Aids as a Pedagogical Tool to enhance Listening Skills in Grade 10 Learners' English First Additional Language classes in Chris Hani West District, South Africa

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the pedagogical use of audio-visual aids (AVAs) to enhance listening skills among Grade 10 English First Additional Language (FAL) learners in South Africa's Chris Hani West District, employing a qualitative case study methodology with six teachers and ten learners through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and classroom observations analyzed via thematic analysis within an interpretivist paradigm. The findings demonstrate that AVAs significantly improve listening comprehension through dual-channel cognitive processing, enhance learner engagement, and reduce anxiety, while simultaneously revealing infrastructural limitations and inadequate teacher training as key implementation barriers. The study makes significant theoretical contributions by validating Dual Coding Theory in rural FAL contexts and extending the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning by emphasizing cultural relevance as a critical factor in multimedia effectiveness, particularly noting how locally contextualized materials increase participation and understanding. Practical implications suggest that strategic AVA integration with scaffolding techniques, coupled with targeted investments in technological infrastructure and teacher professional development, could effectively address existing educational disparities in under-resourced environments, offering policymakers and educators a framework for optimizing listening skill development through technology-enhanced pedagogies in similar multilingual contexts.

Keywords: Audio-Visual Aids, Listening Skills, English FAL, Rural Education, Multimedia Learning

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INTRODUCTION

The growing significance of English as a global lingua franca underscores the need for innovative and effective teaching strategies to enhance learners' language proficiency.[1] As a fundamental skill in language acquisition, listening plays a pivotal role in vocabulary development, pronunciation, and overall comprehension.[2] Despite its importance, teaching listening skills remains a persistent challenge

[1] Amal Alasmari, "World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca Approaches in Teaching Saudi EFL Learners," *International Journal of English Language Education* 6, no. 2 (2018): 82.

[2] Laurel Perkins and Jeffrey Lidz, "Filler-Gap Dependency Comprehension at 15 Months: The Role of Vocabulary," *Language Acquisition* 27, no. 1 (January 2, 2020): 98–115, https://doi.org/10.1080/10489223.2019.1659274.

in many educational settings, particularly in under-resourced environments where traditional teaching methods dominate.[3]

Audio-visual aids (AVAs) have emerged as powerful pedagogical tools in language education, fostering greater learner engagement, improving comprehension, and facilitating interactive learning experiences.[4] These aids include videos, audio recordings, multimedia presentations, and interactive software that provide contextual and visual cues to enhance listening comprehension, making language learning more dynamic and accessible.[5] However, despite their proven benefits, many schools, particularly in rural and underprivileged areas such as the Chris Hani West District in South Africa, continue to rely on conventional teaching methods due to infrastructural and resource limitations.[6]

This study seeks to investigate the impact of audio-visual aids on the development of listening skills among Grade 10 English First Additional Language (FAL) learners. While existing research highlights the effectiveness of AVAs in language learning, there remains a gap in localized studies examining their application in South African rural classrooms, where educational disparities and resource constraints significantly influence teaching and learning outcomes. By exploring teachers' perceptions, identifying the most effective AVA types, and assessing implementation challenges, this study aims to provide valuable insights into optimizing listening skill instruction in similar contexts.
The research objectives guiding this study are:

- To examine teachers' perceptions regarding the use of audio-visual aids in enhancing listening skills among Grade 10 English FAL learners.
- To identify the most effective types of audio-visual aids in improving listening comprehension and engagement in the classroom.
- To explore the challenges that hinder the effective integration of audio-visual aids in teaching listening skills.
- To propose recommendations for policymakers and educators on optimizing the use of AVAs in resource-constrained settings.

By addressing these objectives, the study aims to provide actionable strategies for improving listening skills through technology-enhanced learning, contributing to more effective English language instruction in under-resourced schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The integration of audio-visual aids (AVAs) in language education has been widely recognized as a practical pedagogical approach to enhancing listening skills, particularly in English First Additional Language (FAL) classrooms. Listening, as a fundamental component of language acquisition, plays a crucial role in comprehension, vocabulary retention, and communicative competence.[7] However, traditional teaching methods often fail to sufficiently engage learners, leading to disinterest and poor listening proficiency.[8] This literature review examines teachers' perceptions of AVAs in enhancing listening skills, the effectiveness of different AVA types, and the challenges associated with their implementation in South African Grade 10 English FAL classrooms.

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[3] Sabina Giyozova, "Problems Of Teaching Listening Skills," in *Modern Methods and Innovation Technologies in Education: Present Status, Important Questions and Challenges* (Tashkent International University of Education, 2023), 190–93, https://doi.org/10.61587/mmit.uz.vi.39.

[4] Natalia Norte Fernández-Pacheco, "Multimodal Digital Tools and EFL Audio-Visual Comprehension: Students' Attitudes towards Vodcasts," *Language Value* 8, no. 1 (January 3, 2019), https://doi.org/10.6035/LanguageV.2016.8.4.

[5] Istifadah Istifadah, Taufiq Satria Mukti, and Kartika Satya Noviafitri, "Learning Outcomes of Listening Comprehension Skills through Audio Visual and Interactive-Audio," *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning (JETLE)* 3, no. 2 (June 17, 2022): 66–72, https://doi.org/10.18860/jetle.v3i2.15623.

[6] Zilungile Lynette Mkhize-Kwitshana et al., "Concurrent Allergy and Helminthiasis in Underprivileged Urban South African Adults Previously Residing in Rural Areas," *Parasite Immunology* 44, no. 4–5 (2022): e12913.

[7] Yun Wang, "Explaining L2 Learners' Listening Comprehension: The Role of Aural Vocabulary Knowledge," *Sintagma. Revista de Lingüística*, no. 35 (2023): 103–18, https://doi.org/10.21001/sintagma.2023.35.07.

[8] Brett Milliner and Blagoja Dimoski, "The Effects of a Metacognitive Intervention on Lower-Proficiency EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension and Listening Self-Efficacy," *Language Teaching Research* 28, no. 2 (March 4, 2024): 679–713, https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688211004646.

Teachers' Perceptions of Audio-Visual Aids in Enhancing Listening Skills

Research indicates that teachers perceive audio-visual aids as beneficial in improving listening comprehension and learner engagement. In South African schools, educators found that AVAs were instrumental in fostering an interactive and dynamic learning environment.[9]

Their findings suggested that these aids not only enhanced listening skills but also increased learners' motivation and participation. Similarly, teachers believed AVAs significantly improved learners' attentiveness and engagement, making listening exercises more effective.[10] Sanvido, Henrique and Manssour reinforced these findings, noting that teachers reported higher learner motivation when audio-visual materials were incorporated into lessons.[11] The study emphasized that AVAs provide real-life contextual examples, making listening tasks more relatable and accessible. This aligns with Feng's research, which demonstrated that diverse auditory and visual stimuli enhance learners' ability to process spoken language, thereby improving comprehension.[12]

Further supporting evidence comes from Malaki, who found that teachers observed increased learner enthusiasm and participation when AVAs were used.[13] The study highlighted that these aids reduced learners' anxiety, creating a more supportive and enjoyable learning atmosphere. Dabr also noted that AVAs facilitate differentiated instruction, accommodate various learning styles, and improve overall listening proficiency.[14]

Nasser Al Harbi's research further corroborated these perceptions, indicating that AVAs help mitigate learners' anxiety and thereby enhance their listening skills.[15] Additionally, Kathirvel and Hashim argued that audio-visual resources bridge the gap between theoretical instruction and practical application, making listening exercises more interactive and effective.[16]

The Effectiveness of Audio-Visual Aids in Enhancing Listening Skills

Empirical studies consistently demonstrate that AVAs significantly enhance listening proficiency in English FAL classrooms. These aids improve learners' motivation, engagement, and overall listening comprehension.[17] Their analysis revealed that learners exposed to AVAs showed greater enthusiasm for listening tasks, resulting in better academic performance.

Kao and Kuo's research supported these findings, showing that AVAs foster an interactive learning environment that stimulates learners' interest in listening exercises.[18] Similarly, Teravainen-Goff found that AVAs enhance learners' eagerness to engage with spoken language, leading to deeper comprehension.[19]

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[9] Michael Mokoena, Sibongile Simelane-Mnisi, and Andile Mji, "Teachers 'Perceptions Towards The Pedagogical Use Of Interactive Whiteboard In South African High Schools," in *EDULEARN20 Proceedings* (IATED, 2020), 7825–33, https://doi.org/10.21125/edulearn.2020.1974.

[10] Hanura Febriani et al., "Improving EFL Learners Listening Skills by Using Audio Visual Aids," *Linguists : Journal Of Linguistics and Language Teaching* 8, no. 2 (December 20, 2022): 216, https://doi.org/10.29300/ling.v8i2.7662.

[11] Pedro Sanvido and Isabel Manssour, "MoodleStories: Improving Learner Motivation Through Interactive Visual Stories," in *Proceedings of the 15th International Conference on Computer Supported Education* (SCITEPRESS - Science and Technology Publications, 2023), 201–8, https://doi.org/10.5220/0011842000003470.

[12] Xiao Feng, "Investigating the Role of Visual Cues in Speech Perception and Second Language Comprehension" (University of Georgia, 2024).

[13] Maanani Malak, "The Role of Audio-Visual Aids in Enhancing EFL Pupils' Speaking Skill The Case of L3 Pupils at Djallab Belkacem Ben Ali Primary School," 2024.

[14] Eliewa Abd E L Mawgood E L Dabr, "Developing Preparatory Stage Students' EFL Listening Skills Through Learning Styles Based Differentiated Instruction," *Journal of the Faculty of Education, Benha University* 32, no. 127 (2021): 119–42.

[15] Wed Nasser Al Harbi, "The Role of Social Media (YouTube and Snapchat) in Enhancing Saudi EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension Skills," *Arab World English Journal*, no. 268 (December 15, 2020): 1–54, https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/th.268.

[16] Keetha Kathirvel and Harwati Hashim, "The Use of Audio-Visual Materials as Strategies to Enhance Speaking Skills among ESL Young Learners," *Creative Education* 11, no. 12 (2020): 2599–2608.

[17] Rima Bizyanovna Kamaeva et al., "Cultural Awareness, Listening Comprehension, Listening Motivation, and Attitude among EFL Learners: A Gender-Based Mixed Method Study," *Education Research International* 2022 (March 31, 2022): 1–8, https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/8018675.

[18] Yu-Ting Kao and Hung-Chih Kuo, "Diagnosing L2 English Learners' Listening Difficulties and Learning Needs through Computerized Dynamic Assessment," *Interactive Learning Environments* 31, no. 4 (May 19, 2023): 2219–43, https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2021.1876738.

[19] Anne Teravainen-Goff, "Why Motivated Learners Might Not Engage in Language Learning: An Exploratory Interview Study of Language Learners and Teachers," *Language Teaching Research* 29, no. 6 (August 9, 2025): 2500–2520, https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688221135399.

Allah further noted that learners perceived AVAs as beneficial for improving their listening accuracy and pronunciation.[20] The study emphasized that visual and auditory reinforcement aid memory retention and comprehension. Dabr's research expanded on this, demonstrating that AVAs positively impact all language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing, by catering to diverse learning styles.[21]

Chams SAIDIA highlighted that AVAs improve content recall and writing proficiency, suggesting a holistic enhancement of language skills.[22] De Oliveira further argued that AVAs serve as foundational tools in language instruction, supporting the development of all four core language competencies.[23]

International studies further validate these findings. Huang found that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners exhibited improved comprehension when exposed to AVAs.[24] Similarly, Hadijah and Shalawati demonstrated that learners who received audio-visual instruction outperformed those taught through traditional methods in listening tasks.[25] AVAs increase learners' motivation and engagement in listening exercises.[26]

Milliner further noted that AVAs reduce learners' anxiety, thereby increasing their confidence in listening tasks. AVAs enhance vocabulary retention and the comprehension of complex texts.[27] Collectively, these studies suggest that AVAs are highly effective in improving listening skills and should be integrated into English FAL instruction.

Challenges in Implementing Audio-Visual Aids

Despite their benefits, implementing AVAs in South African classrooms faces several challenges. Resource constraints, particularly in rural schools, limit access to necessary technology.[28] Many educators lack adequate training in using AVAs effectively, resulting in suboptimal integration.[29] Additionally, infrastructural issues such as unreliable electricity and internet connectivity hinder consistent usage.[30]

The literature overwhelmingly supports the efficacy of AVAs in enhancing listening skills among Grade 10 English FAL learners. Teachers perceive these aids as valuable tools that increase engagement, motivation, and comprehension. However, challenges such as resource limitations and inadequate training must be addressed to maximize their potential. Future research should explore cost-effective AVA integration strategies in under-resourced settings.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical foundation of this study is anchored in Dual Coding Theory (DCT), proposed by Paivio, which provides a robust framework for understanding how audio-visual aids enhance listening skills in

[20] Bounhas Hibat Allah, "The Effect of Using Audio-Visual Aids on Teaching Pronunciation. The Case of Third Year Pupils at Al AkidSi El Haouès Primary School," 2023.
[21] Dabr, "Developing Preparatory Stage Students' EFL Listening Skills Through Learning Styles Based Differentiated Instruction."
[22] Lina CHADI Chams SAIDIA, "Investigating Teachers' and Students' Attitudes towards the Role of Audio-Visual Aids in Enhancing EFL Learners' Speaking Skills Case Study," 2024.
[23] Luciana C. de Oliveira, *Supporting Multilingual Learners' Academic Language Development* (New York: Routledge, 2023), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003264927.
[24] Shu-Hsiu Huang, "Exploring Gender and Language Proficiency Variations in English Listening Comprehension Difficulties (LCDs) among College EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Learners," *Language Education & Assessment* 7, no. 1 (October 31, 2024): 1243, https://doi.org/10.29140/lea.v7n1.1243.
[25] Sitti Hadijah and Shalawati Shalawati, "Enhancing English Language Learners' Listening Comprehension through Listening Strategies Instruction," *J-SHMIC : Journal of English for Academic* 5, no. 1 (February 27, 2018): 124–42, https://doi.org/10.25299/jshmic.2018.vol5(1).1204.
[26] Kao and Kuo, "Diagnosing L2 English Learners' Listening Difficulties and Learning Needs through Computerized Dynamic Assessment."
[27] Milliner and Dimoski, "The Effects of a Metacognitive Intervention on Lower-Proficiency EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension and Listening Self-Efficacy."
[28] Thomas Sayre-McCord, "Perception-Driven Optimal Motion Planning under Resource Constraints," *Woods Hole Open Access Server (WHOAS) at the MBLWHOI Library* (Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, February 1, 2019), https://doi.org/10.1575/1912/10824.
[29] Mokoena, Simelane-Mnisi, and Mji, "Teachers 'Perceptions Towards The Pedagogical Use Of Interactive Whiteboard In South African High Schools."
[30] Rohan Grover, "Contingent Connectivity: Internet Shutdowns and the Infrastructural Precarity of Digital Citizenship," *New Media & Society* 27, no. 1 (January 8, 2025): 359–78, https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448231176552.

Grade 10 English First Additional Language (FAL) classrooms.[31] DCT posits that human cognition processes information through two distinct yet interconnected channels: the verbal (auditory) system and the non-verbal (visual) system. According to Paivio, when learners receive information through both channels simultaneously, cognitive encoding becomes more efficient, leading to improved comprehension, retention, and recall. This theory is particularly relevant to language acquisition, where listening skills are reinforced through multimodal input that combines auditory stimuli (spoken language) with visual reinforcement (images, videos, or text). In this study, audiovisual aids such as videos, multimedia presentations, and interactive software stimulate both auditory and visual channels, thereby optimizing listening comprehension among English FAL learners.

Empirical Support for Dual Coding Theory in Language Learning

Extensive research in cognitive and educational psychology supports the application of DCT in language instruction. Tibus and Eitel expanded on Paivio's work through his Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML), demonstrating that learners absorb information more effectively when it is presented through both auditory and visual modalities.[32] Tibus and Eitel's experiments revealed that learners exposed to multimedia lessons (combining narration and images) outperformed those who received text-only or audio-only instruction, reinforcing the dual-coding advantage.[33]

Further supporting this, Sweller applied DCT within Cognitive Load Theory (CLT), arguing that multimedia learning reduces extraneous cognitive load by distributing processing across both verbal and visual working memory. Their findings suggest that learners experience less mental strain when information is presented in dual-code formats, leading to more efficient comprehension, which is a critical factor in listening skill development.[34]

In language education specifically, Hatami demonstrated that multimodal instruction (e.g., pairing spoken words with relevant images or animations) significantly enhances vocabulary acquisition and listening comprehension. Their research aligns with Paivio's assertion that dual-channel learning facilitates deeper cognitive engagement, making language input more memorable.[35]

Dual Coding Theory in Second Language Acquisition

The application of DCT in second language (L2) learning has been widely explored. Muñoz et al. found that integrating audiovisual materials into language classrooms improves listening skills by reinforcing auditory input with visual scaffolding.[36] For instance, subtitled videos help learners connect spoken words with written text and contextual imagery, strengthening both phonological and semantic processing.

Similarly, Kang conducted an experimental study on EFL learners and found that those exposed to audio-visual aids (e.g., video lectures with synchronized captions) demonstrated superior listening comprehension compared to peers who relied solely on audio-based instruction. Their results support DCT's premise that dual-channel learning enhances retention and reduces cognitive overload.[37]

More recently, Suman reaffirmed that multimedia-enhanced language instruction leads to better learning outcomes by leveraging dual coding processes. Their meta-analysis highlighted that learners retain vocabulary and grammatical structures more effectively when exposed to combined auditory-visual stimuli, reinforcing the pedagogical value of AVAs in FAL classrooms.[38]

Dual Coding Theory provides a well-substantiated framework for understanding how audio-visual aids enhance listening skills in Grade 10 English FAL classrooms. Empirical evidence from

[31] A. Paivio, *Imagery and Verbal Processes* (Psychology Press, 2013), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315798868.
[32] Maike Tibus and Alexander Eitel, "Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML)," 2016.
[33] Tibus and Eitel, "Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML)."
[34] John Sweller, *Cognitive Load Theory: Recent Theoretical Advances* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).
[35] Sarvenaz Hatami, "The Impact of Learner-Related Variables on Second Language Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition through Listening," *Vocabulary Learning and Instruction* 6, no. 1 (2017), https://doi.org/10.7820/vli.v06.1.Hatami.
[36] Carmen Muñoz, Geòrgia Pujadas, and Anastasiia Pattemore, "Audio-Visual Input for Learning L2 Vocabulary and Grammatical Constructions," *Second Language Research* 39, no. 1 (January 18, 2023): 13–37, https://doi.org/10.1177/02676583211015797.
[37] Eunyoung Kang, "Enhancing Korean EFL Learners' Vocabulary Learning and Listening Comprehension Through Video Captions," *STEM Journal* 20, no. 2 (May 2019): 91–108, https://doi.org/10.16875/stem.2019.20.2.91.
[38] Chandan Suman, "The Effective Integration of Multimedia in Foreign Language Teaching," *A Peer Rewiev Research Journal of Language and Human Development* 1, no. 1 (2023): 83–93.

cognitive psychology and language education consistently supports the theory's assertion that dual-channel learning improves comprehension, retention, and engagement. This study builds upon DCT to argue that integrating AVAs in FAL instruction can significantly enhance listening proficiency by leveraging the synergistic effects of auditory and visual processing. Future research should explore optimal multimedia design principles to maximize the benefits of dual coding in under-resourced educational settings.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research approach to investigate the implementation and effectiveness of AVAs in enhancing listening skills among Grade 10 EFAL learners in a rural South African school. Grounded in an interpretivist paradigm, the research acknowledges the socially constructed nature of educational experiences and seeks to understand the complex interplay between technological tools and language learning processes.[39] The methodological approach was specifically designed to capture the nuanced perspectives of both teachers and learners as they engaged with various forms of AVAs in their daily classroom interactions.

The research adopted a case study design to allow for in-depth exploration of the phenomenon within its natural context. This approach was particularly appropriate as it enabled the examination of real-world pedagogical practices while maintaining the ecological validity of the findings. The case was bound by three key parameters: temporal (one academic term), spatial (a single secondary school in Chris Hani West District), and conceptual (focusing specifically on listening skill development). Such delimitation follows current best practices in qualitative educational research, particularly in studies examining technology integration in resource-constrained environments.[40]

Participant selection followed a purposive sampling strategy to ensure the inclusion of information-rich cases. The study involved six English FAL teachers, selected based on three key criteria: at least 3 years of teaching experience, varying levels of technological proficiency, and representation across different demographic categories. The learner cohort consisted of ten Grade 10 learners chosen through a matrix sampling approach that considered academic performance, gender balance, and linguistic background. This sampling framework was designed to capture a comprehensive range of experiences and perspectives while maintaining manageable parameters for qualitative analysis.[41]

Data collection incorporated multiple qualitative methods to ensure methodological triangulation. Semi-structured interviews formed the primary data source, with separate protocols developed for teachers and learners. Teacher interviews (60-90 minutes duration) explored three key areas: pedagogical beliefs about listening instruction, experiences with AVA implementation, and perceived impacts on learner outcomes. Learner interviews (30-45 minutes) focused on listening challenges, reactions to AVA lessons, and self-assessed progress. All interviews were conducted in English, audio-recorded with consent, and supplemented with detailed field notes to capture non-verbal cues and contextual information.

Complementary data was gathered through two focus group discussions (FGDs), each comprising five learners. The FGDs employed innovative techniques, including stimulated recall of AVA lesson clips, card-sorting exercises to evaluate different AVA types, and free-association activities to explore listening-related concepts. These interactive methods were social and particularly effective at eliciting rich, peer-mediated discussions about learning experiences.[42]

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[39] Jennifer Cleland, Anna MacLeod, and Rachel Helen Ellaway, "The Curious Case of Case Study Research," *Medical Education* 55, no. 10 (October 14, 2021): 1131–41, https://doi.org/10.1111/medu.14544.

[40] Pilar González-Vera and Ana Hornero Corisco, "Audiovisual Materials: A Way to Reinforce Listening Skills in Primary School Teacher Education," *Language Value* 8, no. 1 (January 3, 2019), https://doi.org/10.6035/LanguageV.2016.8.2.

[41] Mathias Dzobo et al., "Experiences and Perspectives Regarding Human Papillomavirus Self-Sampling in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Systematic Review of Qualitative Evidence," *Heliyon* 10, no. 12 (June 2024): e32926, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e32926.

[42] Joyce Ann M. Tolentino, Rose Lynn D. Villanueva, and Josephine Luz de Leon-Pineda, "Blended Focus Group Discussion: A Cooperative Learning Strategy to Promote Reflection among Student Teachers," *Reflective Practice* 25, no. 6 (November 7, 2024): 860–77, https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2024.2412871.

The study implemented rigorous quality assurance measures to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, following Cohen et al.'s framework for qualitative research.[43] Credibility was established through prolonged engagement in the research site (three months of data collection), peer debriefing with language education specialists, and member checking of interview transcripts. Dependability was achieved by maintaining a comprehensive audit trail of analytic decisions and implementing code-recode procedures to ensure coding consistency. Confirmability was strengthened through reflexive journaling and data triangulation across multiple sources. To enhance transferability, the study provided a thick description of the research context and employed maximum variation sampling to capture diverse perspectives.

Data analysis followed Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis framework, facilitated by NVivo 12 qualitative analysis software.[44] The process began with immersion in the data through repeated reading of transcripts, followed by line-by-line open coding to identify initial concepts. Subsequent phases involved axial coding to develop themes, rigorous review of themes against the raw data, conceptual refinement of theme definitions, and, finally, narrative construction of the findings. This systematic approach ensured that the analysis remained grounded in the participants' experiences while allowing for theoretical insights to emerge from the data.

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process. Institutional approval was obtained from both the university ethics committee and the provincial education department. A multi-stage informed consent process was implemented, including school-level permission, written teacher consent, and parental consent with learner assent for minors. Confidentiality was protected using pseudonyms and secure storage of all data in password-protected, encrypted systems. The principle of beneficence guided all research activities, with particular attention to voluntary participation, the right to withdraw, and post-research debriefing.

The study acknowledges several methodological limitations that contextualize its findings. The specific socio-educational context of a rural South African school may limit the direct transferability of results to other settings. The short observation period (one academic term) restricted the assessment of the long-term impacts of AVA integration. Researcher positionality as a former educator was mitigated through bracketing techniques and peer review, but may still have influenced data interpretation. These limitations are counterbalanced by the study's methodological strengths, including its multi-method design, rigorous quality assurance measures, and depth of qualitative analysis.

This comprehensive methodology was specifically designed to provide a rich, contextualized understanding of how AVAs can enhance listening skills in English FAL classrooms. By combining an interpretivist paradigm with systematic case study methods, the research offers both theoretical insights and practical implications for language educators working in similar resource-constrained environments. The subsequent presentation and discussion of the findings will demonstrate how this methodological approach has yielded significant insights into technology-mediated language learning processes.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Thematic Analysis of Teacher Interviews

Analysis of the six teacher interviews revealed three primary themes regarding their experiences with audio-visual aids (AVAs):

Transformative Engagement

All participating teachers (n=6) reported dramatic changes in classroom dynamics when implementing AVAs. Teacher 2 described the shift vividly:

"Where I used to see glazed eyes during listening exercises, I now see learners leaning forward, pointing at the screen, and whispering explanations to each other. The visual element seems to unlock their attention in ways audio alone never could."

[43] Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion, and Keith Morrison, *Research Methods in Education* 8th ed (Routledge, 2002).
[44] Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77–101.

This transformation was particularly notable for typically disengaged learners. Teacher 5 observed: *"The boy who used to sleep through listening tests? He is now the first to volunteer answers after video activities. It is like the visuals give him an entry point his ears alone could not provide."*

Comprehension Breakthroughs

Five teachers emphasized how AVAs facilitated conceptual understanding. Teacher 4 provided a representative example:

"When teaching 'making inferences,' abstract explanations fell flat. But showing a short film clip where characters' words contradicted their body language - suddenly, the concept clicked. learners could see the disconnect we'd been trying to explain."

Teachers noted benefits for:

- Idiomatic language comprehension ("Seeing 'kick the bucket' in a visual context ended years of confusion" - Teacher 1)
- Emotional tone interpretation ("They stopped taking sarcastic comments literally after seeing facial expressions match tone" - Teacher 6)

Implementation Paradox

Despite enthusiasm, all teachers described the tension between AVAs' benefits and practical challenges. Teacher 3 articulated this dilemma:

"These tools work miracles when everything functions, but between load shedding [power outages], the thieves steal the equipment, and the hours I spend finding appropriate clips, I sometimes wonder if it's sustainable."

The data revealed three sub-themes of challenge:

- Technological barriers: "Our 'smart' classroom has a projector from 2009 that overheats after 20 minutes" (Teacher 1)
- Temporal demands: "I spent my entire Sunday finding a 3-minute clip that matched this week's curriculum" (Teacher 4)
- Pedagogical adaptation: "It's not just playing videos - we need new skills to use them effectively" (Teacher 5)

Learner Perspectives from Focus Groups

Analysis of two focus groups (n=5 learners each) uncovered rich qualitative findings about the learners' experiences:

Cognitive Scaffolding

Learners consistently described how visuals provided crucial support:

"When I hear a new word, seeing it written on screen and shown in a picture helps my brain catch it" (Learner 3, female). Another explained: *"The news videos help because even if I miss words, I can follow from what's happening on screen"* (Learner 7, male).

Eight learners specifically mentioned how AVAs aided memory:

"I remember words better when I see where they happen - like 'tractor' from that farm video sticks because I saw it working in the field" (Learner 5, female).

Affective Impacts

All participants reported heightened emotional engagement:

"Before, listening time made me nervous. Now with videos, it feels like we are discovering together" (Learner 2, male). Another shared: *"I don't feel stupid when I don't understand because the pictures give me clues"* (Learner 9, female).

However, two learners expressed occasional frustration:

"Sometimes people in videos speak too fast, and the teacher can't rewind because of load shedding" (Learner 4, male).

Peer Learning Dynamics

An emergent theme showed how AVAs fostered collaboration:
"We help each other - if I miss something, my friend explains using the pictures we saw" (Learner 1, female). Another noted: *"After videos, we argue about what happened, which makes us listen more carefully next time"* (Learner 8, male).

Data from the observations

a. Emerging Pedagogical Patterns

Classroom observations revealed three significant interaction patterns during AVA use:

b. The Pause-and-Predict Routine

Teachers frequently paused videos to ask prediction questions, creating, as one observer described, "a palpable tension of anticipation in the room." Learners would lean forward, whispering guesses to neighbors before the playback resumed.

c. The Visual Reference Point

During follow-up discussions, learners regularly gestured toward the screen when explaining answers ("Remember when the man's face looked angry while he said..."), using visual memories as anchors for verbal recall.

d. The Subtlety Recognition Shift

Over time, learners began noticing nuanced nonverbal cues. One observer recorded a learner remarking: *"She said she was happy, but her hands were shaking - she must be lying!"* - demonstrating sophisticated multimodal interpretation.

Unanticipated Cultural Insights

The data revealed two culturally significant findings:

a. Local Content Resonance

When videos featured South African contexts, engagement intensified markedly. As Teacher 6 noted: *"The moment they hear a familiar accent or see their township in a video, the energy changes. They sit taller."*

b. Technology as a Status Symbol

Learners described AVA lessons as "modern" and "proper," with one commenting: *"It feels like we're at a model C school when we use these things."* This perception increased their academic self-conception.

These qualitative findings collectively demonstrate that beyond measurable skill improvements, AVAs fundamentally transform the affective and social dimensions of listening instruction in this context. The visual component serves not merely as a comprehension aid but as an equalizing force that boosts confidence, fosters collaboration, and bridges cultural divides in the language classroom.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study align with and extend the existing literature on the use of audio-visual aids (AVAs) to enhance listening skills among Grade 10 English First Additional Language (FAL) learners. The data support the theoretical foundations of Dual Coding Theory (DCT),[45] demonstrating that multimodal input—combining auditory and visual stimuli—enhances comprehension, retention, and learner engagement. Teachers and learners alike reported significant improvements in listening

[45] Paivio, *Imagery and Verbal Processes*.

proficiency when AVAs were integrated into lessons, reinforcing empirical studies.[46] However, challenges such as technological barriers and resource limitations persist, echoing concerns raised by other scholars.[47]

Transformative Engagement and Cognitive Benefits

The findings strongly support Dual Coding Theory, which posits that information is processed more effectively when presented through both verbal and visual channels.[48] Teachers observed that AVAs dramatically increased learner engagement, with previously disinterested learners becoming active participants in listening exercises. This aligns with research by Malak and Dabr, who found that AVAs reduce anxiety and foster a more interactive learning environment.[49] The visual component of AVAs served as a cognitive scaffold, helping learners decode spoken language more efficiently, a phenomenon also noted by Muñoz et al. in their study of subtitled videos.[50]

Learners in the focus groups emphasized how visuals aided memory retention, with many recalling vocabulary and contextual meanings more effectively when supported by images or videos. This corroborates Allah's findings that AVAs improve listening accuracy and pronunciation by reinforcing auditory input with visual cues.[51] Additionally, the observed "Pause-and-Predict" routine, in which teachers paused videos to encourage learner predictions, mirrors strategies recommended by Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which advocates active engagement in multimedia instruction to enhance comprehension.[52]

Affective and Social Impacts

Beyond cognitive benefits, AVAs had a profound affective impact on learners. Many participants reported feeling less anxious and more confident during listening tasks, supporting the assertion that AVAs reduce language-learning anxiety.[53] The collaborative learning dynamics observed, where peers explained concepts using visual references, further highlight the social benefits of AVAs. This aligns with Kathirvel and Hashim's argument that AVAs bridge the gap between theory and practice, making learning more interactive and socially engaging.[54]

Cultural relevance also played a significant role in learner engagement. When AVAs featured local contexts and accents, learners demonstrated heightened interest and participation. This finding supports Feng's research, which emphasizes the importance of relatable content in language instruction.[55] The perception of technology as a "status symbol" further enhanced learners' academic self-concept, suggesting that AVAs not only improve skills but also foster a more positive attitude toward learning, a point reinforced by Sanvido et.al.'s study on learner motivation.[56]

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[46] Kamaeva et al., "Cultural Awareness, Listening Comprehension, Listening Motivation, and Attitude among EFL Learners: A Gender-Based Mixed Method Study"; Kao and Kuo, "Diagnosing L2 English Learners' Listening Difficulties and Learning Needs through Computerized Dynamic Assessment"; Huang, "Exploring Gender and Language Proficiency Variations in English Listening Comprehension Difficulties (LCDs) among College EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Learners."

[47] Mokoena, Simelane-Mnisi, and Mji, "Teachers 'Perceptions Towards The Pedagogical Use Of Interactive Whiteboard In South African High Schools"; Sayre-McCord, "Perception-Driven Optimal Motion Planning under Resource Constraints."

[48] Paivio, *Imagery and Verbal Processes*.

[49] Malak, "The Role of Audio-Visual Aids in Enhancing EFL Pupils' Speaking Skill The Case of L3 Pupils at Djallab Belkacem Ben Ali Primary School"; Dabr, "Developing Preparatory Stage Students' EFL Listening Skills Through Learning Styles Based Differentiated Instruction."

[50] Muñoz, Pujadas, and Pattemore, "Audio-Visual Input for Learning L2 Vocabulary and Grammatical Constructions."

[51] Allah, "The Effect of Using Audio-Visual Aids on Teaching Pronunciation. The Case of Third Year Pupils at Al AkidSi El Haouès Primary School."

[52] Tibus and Eitel, "Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML)."

[53] Milliner and Dimoski, "The Effects of a Metacognitive Intervention on Lower-Proficiency EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension and Listening Self-Efficacy."

[54] Kathirvel and Hashim, "The Use of Audio-Visual Materials as Strategies to Enhance Speaking Skills among ESL Young Learners."

[55] Feng, "Investigating the Role of Visual Cues in Speech Perception and Second Language Comprehension."

[56] Sanvido and Manssour, "MoodleStories: Improving Learner Motivation Through Interactive Visual Stories."

Implementation Challenges and Paradoxes

Despite the clear benefits, teachers faced significant barriers in integrating AVAs, echoing challenges identified in previous literature.[57] Technological limitations, such as unreliable electricity and outdated equipment, hindered consistent implementation. Teacher 3's remark about "load shedding" rendering AVAs unusable reflects a broader infrastructural issue in South African schools, as noted by Sayre-McCord and Thomas.[58] Additionally, the time-consuming nature of sourcing appropriate materials, highlighted by Teacher 4's comment about spending "an entire Sunday finding a 3-minute clip," underscores the need for curated, curriculum-aligned AVA resources. Pedagogical adaptation was another challenge, as teachers required training to use AVAs effectively beyond simply "playing videos." This aligns with Mokoena et al.'s findings that many educators lack adequate professional development in multimedia instruction.[59] Without proper training, the potential of AVAs remains underutilized, reinforcing the need for targeted teacher support programs.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The study's findings strongly validate Dual Coding Theory and the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, demonstrating that dual-channel processing enhances listening comprehension. The data also supports Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory, as AVAs distribute cognitive effort across visual and auditory channels, reducing mental strain and improving retention. In practice, the study suggests that policymakers and school administrators should prioritize Infrastructure Development by ensuring reliable electricity, internet access, and up-to-date AV equipment. Prioritize Teacher Training by providing professional development on integrating AVAs pedagogically, not just technologically. The Localized Content should be prioritized by developing culturally relevant AVA materials to maximize engagement and comprehension.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers to optimize the use of audiovisual aids (AVAs) to enhance listening skills in English FAL classrooms. This study recommends the following:

- Integrate AVAs Strategically
- Leverage Peer Learning
- Advocate for Professional Development
- Improve Technological Infrastructure
- Support Teacher Workloads
- Foster a Culture of Innovation
- Revise Curriculum and Assessment Guidelines
- Incorporate Multimodal Literacy Standards

These recommendations underscore the transformative potential of AVAs in English FAL listening instruction while acknowledging systemic challenges. By addressing teacher capacity, resource equity, policy alignment, and research gaps, stakeholders can create an enabling environment for multimedia-enhanced language learning. The study's findings affirm that with strategic support, AVAs can democratize access to effective listening skill development, particularly in under-resourced contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate the pedagogical use of audio-visual aids (AVAs) to enhance listening skills among Grade 10 English First Additional Language (FAL) learners in the Chris Hani West District, South Africa. The purpose was to bridge a gap in localized research by examining teachers'

[57] Mokoena, Simelane-Mnisi, and Mji, "Teachers 'Perceptions Towards The Pedagogical Use Of Interactive Whiteboard In South African High Schools"; Grover, "Contingent Connectivity: Internet Shutdowns and the Infrastructural Precarity of Digital Citizenship."

[58] Sayre-McCord, "Perception-Driven Optimal Motion Planning under Resource Constraints."

[59] Mokoena, Simelane-Mnisi, and Mji, "Teachers 'Perceptions Towards The Pedagogical Use Of Interactive Whiteboard In South African High Schools."

perceptions, identifying effective AVA types, and exploring implementation challenges within a specific, under-resourced context. The findings provide a clear and compelling final answer: audio-visual aids are a potent pedagogical tool that can significantly transform listening instruction. The study confirms that by leveraging the principles of Dual Coding Theory, AVAs enhance listening comprehension through dual-channel cognitive processing, dramatically increase learner engagement, and reduce the anxiety often associated with listening tasks. The visual component acts as a crucial scaffold, making spoken English more accessible and memorable, while culturally relevant materials foster a deeper connection to the language.

However, this transformative potential is currently constrained by significant systemic barriers. The final say on the issues raised is that the benefits of AVAs are inextricably linked to the conditions required for their effective implementation. The enthusiasm of both teachers and learners is tempered by the stark realities of infrastructural limitations, inadequate technological resources, and a critical lack of targeted teacher professional development. Therefore, the successful integration of AVAs is not merely a pedagogical choice but a systemic challenge that demands strategic investment and policy support.

In conclusion, while this study unequivocally validates the effectiveness of AVAs in enhancing listening skills, it also underscores that their power cannot be unlocked in isolation. The ultimate issue is one of equity. To harness the transformative potential of these tools and improve English language learning outcomes in rural and under-resourced schools, a concerted effort is needed to address the foundational barriers of infrastructure, training, and resource allocation. Future research should build on these findings by exploring cost-effective implementation models and the long-term impact of sustained AVA integration, ensuring that the benefits of technology-enhanced learning are accessible to all learners.

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