# ENHANCING LISTENING SKILLS WITH THE HELP OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: PRACTICAL APPROACHES AND ONGOING CHALLENGES

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**Abstract**

Listening is a fundamental skill in language learning, yet it is often one of the most difficult for learners to develop. With the growth of Artificial Intelligence (AI), new tools have emerged that can support listening practice in more flexible and personalized ways. This article explores how AI can be used to enhance listening skills in English language teaching. Drawing on existing research, it shows that AI can provide adaptive input, instant feedback, and increased exposure to authentic language (Holmes et al., 2019; Luckin, 2018). At the same time, challenges such as overdependence on technology, limited contextual understanding, and unequal access to digital tools remain important concerns (OECD, 2021; UNESCO, 2021). The article argues that AI is most effective when it is used to support, rather than replace, traditional teaching practices.

**Keywords**

Artificial Intelligence, Listening Skills, English Language Teaching, Adaptive Learning, Educational Technology

## 1. Introduction

Listening plays a central role in language learning. It is often the first skill that learners develop, and it strongly influences speaking, vocabulary acquisition, and overall comprehension. However, many learners find listening difficult because it requires processing language in real time, often with unfamiliar accents, speed, or vocabulary.

Traditionally, listening practice in the classroom has been limited to recorded materials and teacher-led activities. While these methods are useful, they do not always provide enough variety or flexibility for learners with different needs. In recent years, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has started to change how listening is taught and practiced.

AI-based tools can now adjust the level of difficulty, recommend suitable materials, and provide immediate feedback. According to Luckin (2018), such personalization can make learning more effective by matching content to individual learners. Holmes et al. (2019) also note that AI can increase learners' exposure to language by offering a wide range of listening input.

Despite these advantages, the use of AI in listening instruction raises important questions. Teachers need to understand how to use these tools effectively, and it is not always clear how much learners should rely on them. This article examines how AI can enhance listening skills and what challenges may arise in the process.

## 2. Materials and Methods

This study is based on a qualitative review of research related to AI in education and language learning. Key sources include Holmes et al. (2019), who discuss the broader role of AI in teaching and learning, and Luckin (2018), who focuses on personalized learning through technology.

In addition, reports from OECD (2021) and UNESCO (2021) were used to explore wider educational and ethical considerations. These sources provide a useful foundation for understanding both the opportunities and risks of using AI in language education.

The study also considers common AI-supported listening tools, such as adaptive learning platforms and speech-based applications, to connect theoretical insights with practical use in classrooms.

## 3. Results

The findings suggest that AI can significantly enhance listening skills, particularly by increasing flexibility and personalization. One of the most important advantages is that AI allows learners to access materials that match their level. For example, learners can listen to texts that gradually increase in difficulty, which helps build confidence and comprehension over time (Luckin, 2018).

Another key benefit is immediate feedback. Some AI tools can check comprehension through interactive tasks and provide instant responses. This helps learners understand their mistakes quickly and adjust their learning strategies (Holmes et al., 2019). In addition, AI can offer features such as subtitles, playback speed control, and repetition, which allow learners to manage their own learning more effectively.

AI also increases exposure to authentic language. Learners can access a wide variety of accents, topics, and speaking styles, which is often difficult to achieve in a traditional classroom setting. This exposure is important for developing real-world listening skills.

However, the results also highlight several challenges. One issue is that learners may become too dependent on supportive features, such as subtitles or translations, which can reduce their ability to understand spoken language independently. Another concern is that AI systems may not always provide meaningful feedback, especially when it comes to deeper comprehension or interpretation.

Access is another important factor. Not all learners have equal access to the technology required to use AI tools effectively, which can create gaps in learning opportunities (OECD, 2021). Furthermore, ethical concerns related to data collection and privacy need to be carefully considered (UNESCO, 2021).

## 4. Discussion

The findings show that AI can be a valuable tool for enhancing listening skills, but its effectiveness depends on how it is used. While AI offers flexibility and personalized learning, it cannot fully replace the role of the teacher. Teachers are still essential for guiding learners, selecting appropriate materials, and helping students develop deeper understanding.

A balanced approach is therefore necessary. AI can be used to support independent practice, allowing learners to spend more time listening outside the classroom. At the same time, classroom activities can focus on discussion, interpretation, and critical thinking, which AI cannot easily replicate (Holmes et al., 2019).

Teacher awareness is also important. Educators need to understand both the strengths and limitations of AI tools in order to use them effectively. Without proper guidance, learners may misuse these tools or rely on them too heavily.

Finally, ethical and practical issues must be addressed. Schools and institutions should ensure that AI is used responsibly and that all learners have fair access to the necessary resources (UNESCO, 2021).

## 5. Conclusion

Artificial Intelligence is creating new opportunities for improving listening skills in English language teaching. It offers greater flexibility, personalized learning, and increased exposure to authentic language. These advantages can make listening practice more effective and engaging for learners.

At the same time, AI has clear limitations. It cannot fully replace human guidance, and its use raises important questions about access, accuracy, and ethics. This article has shown that AI is most effective when it is used as a supportive tool alongside traditional teaching methods.

In the future, further development of AI technologies may improve their ability to support listening comprehension more deeply. However, the role of the teacher will remain essential in helping learners make sense of what they hear and develop real communicative skills.

## References

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