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The Effectiveness of Audio Repetition in Enhancing Listening Comprehension

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Abstract

Listening comprehension is a fundamental skill in language acquisition, yet it remains one of the most challenging aspects for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. One of the strategies proposed to support listening development is audio repetition—allowing learners to listen to audio materials more than once to aid in understanding and retention. This research aims to examine the effectiveness of audio repetition in enhancing students' listening comprehension skills. Conducted with a group of 40 eleventh-grade EFL students at a senior high school in Indonesia, the research employed a quasi-experimental design. The participants were divided into two groups: the experimental group received listening instruction with audio repetition (each audio was played twice), while the control group listened to the same materials only once. A pre-test and post-test were administered to both groups to measure improvement in listening comprehension. The results indicated a significant increase in the post-test scores of the experimental group compared to the control group. Students exposed to repeated audio demonstrated better understanding of main ideas, specific details, and contextual meanings. Furthermore, the repetition helped reduce anxiety and improved students' confidence during listening tasks. Interviews and questionnaires supported the quantitative findings, showing positive student perceptions of audio repetition as a helpful tool in learning listening. The findings suggest that incorporating audio repetition into classroom instruction can be an effective strategy to improve EFL students' listening skills, especially in contexts where exposure to English is limited. Teachers are encouraged to utilize this method, particularly at the intermediate level, to scaffold students' comprehension and promote more active engagement with listening texts. Future studies may explore the optimal number of repetitions and its impact across different proficiency levels.

Keywords: Audio Repetition, Listening Comprehension, EFL Learners, Language Acquisition, Listening Strategies

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I INTRODUCTION

Listening is one of the four core skills in language learning, alongside speaking, reading, and writing. Among these, listening often poses the greatest challenge for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners due to its complex cognitive demands. Unlike reading, where learners can take time to process written texts, listening requires the ability to understand and interpret spoken language in real-time. Difficulties in vocabulary recognition, unfamiliar accents, rapid speech, and background noise are common obstacles that hinder learners' ability to comprehend spoken English effectively.

In many EFL classrooms, especially in non-English-speaking countries like Indonesia, the teaching of listening is often underemphasized. Learners typically have limited exposure to authentic spoken English outside the classroom. Moreover, in a typical listening assessment or activity, audio is often played only once, which does not reflect the learning needs of students still developing their aural processing skills. These limitations can negatively affect their motivation and confidence.

One strategy that has been widely discussed in language pedagogy to support listening development is **audio repetition**—the practice of allowing learners to listen to audio materials more than once. Audio repetition is believed to facilitate comprehension by giving learners additional time to decode, process, and understand the input. However, while this strategy seems intuitively helpful, empirical evidence on its effectiveness, particularly in the Indonesian high school context, remains limited.

Based on these considerations, this research seeks to answer the following problem: **"Does audio repetition significantly enhance the listening comprehension of EFL students at the senior high school level?"**

To address this question, the research adopts a **quasi-experimental approach** involving two groups of EFL learners: an experimental group that is given access to repeated audio listening and a control group that listens only once. By comparing the pre-test and post-test results between the two groups, the research aims to determine whether repetition leads to measurable improvement in listening comprehension.

In addition to quantitative analysis, qualitative data is gathered through questionnaires and short interviews to explore students' perceptions and experiences of the audio repetition process. This mixed-methods approach is intended to provide a more holistic understanding of both the effectiveness and the learner response to this strategy.

The focus is not only on the final outcomes (scores) but also on the **learning process**, including how repetition affects confidence, engagement, and concentration. The research aims to offer practical insights for teachers seeking to implement listening strategies in EFL classrooms, particularly those in similar educational settings with limited English exposure.

Previous research has explored various strategies to improve listening comprehension, such as using visual aids, subtitles, pre-listening tasks, and note-taking techniques. For example, Vandergrift (2007) emphasized the role of metacognitive strategies in listening, while Brown (2004) highlighted the importance of authentic materials. However, **research specifically focusing on audio repetition as a core intervention remains limited**, especially in Southeast Asian contexts. Some research (e.g., Chang & Read, 2006; Rost, 2011) have shown that listening more than once can lead to better comprehension, particularly among lower-proficiency learners. Nonetheless, many of these studies were conducted in university settings or among adult learners. In contrast, this research targets **senior high school students** (Grade XI), a group that is often underrepresented in listening comprehension research.

The **novelty** of this research lies in:

- Its focus on **repetition as the sole manipulated variable** in a structured listening activity.
- Its application in the **Indonesian EFL high school context**, providing localized insights.
- Its combination of **quantitative outcomes and qualitative learner perceptions**, offering a more comprehensive understanding of how repetition functions in real classroom practice.

Moreover, while audio repetition is commonly used in informal settings (e.g., students replaying YouTube videos), there is a lack of systematic implementation and analysis in formal classroom instruction. This research bridges that gap by presenting empirical data that supports or challenges the pedagogical value of this strategy.

By exploring the effect of audio repetition on students' comprehension, this

research not only contributes to the body of knowledge in EFL listening instruction but also offers practical pedagogical implications. The ultimate goal is to empower teachers with evidence-based strategies that are easy to apply and effective in supporting students' listening development.

II RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed a **quasi-experimental design** with a **pre-test and post-test control group** approach. This design was chosen to determine the causal relationship between the use of audio repetition and students' listening comprehension. The quasi-experimental method allows the researcher to compare the learning outcomes between an experimental group (with audio repetition) and a control group (without repetition) under controlled but realistic classroom conditions.

The core variable in this research is **audio repetition**. The **independent variable** is the repetition of audio listening (twice for the experimental group), while the **dependent variable** is students' performance in a standardized listening comprehension test.

The research was conducted at an Indonesian public senior high school named SMA Perti PPMTI, during the second semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. The school was selected based on accessibility, the availability of English listening instruction, and the willingness of teachers and students to participate.

A total of **40 students from the 11th grade** (equivalent to the second year of high school) were selected through **purposive sampling**, based on the following criteria:

- Students were enrolled in an English course that included a listening component.
- Students were available during the research period.
- Students had a relatively similar level of English proficiency, based on school records and teacher recommendations.

The participants were divided into two groups:

- **Experimental Group** (20 students): Received listening instruction with audio repetition (each audio played **twice**).
- **Control Group** (20 students): Received listening instruction with **one-time audio playback**.

Both groups received the same materials, time allocation, and teacher guidance, with the only difference being the frequency of audio playback. The research utilized both **quantitative and qualitative instruments**, namely:

a. Listening Comprehension Test

A standardized listening test was used as both **pre-test** and **post-test**. The test consisted of 25 multiple-choice items measuring:

- Understanding of main ideas
- Identification of specific details
- Recognition of inference and speaker's purpose
- Vocabulary in context

The test was adapted from past national exams and validated TOEFL Junior listening items to ensure reliability and appropriateness for the high school level.

b. Student Questionnaire

A Likert-scale questionnaire was administered to the experimental group to assess students' perceptions of the audio repetition strategy. The questionnaire included 10 items covering areas such as:

- Motivation and interest during listening
- Perceived difficulty of the task
- Confidence and comprehension
- Usefulness of repetition in understanding spoken English

c. Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 5 randomly selected students from the experimental group to gain deeper insights into their

experiences with audio repetition during the treatment period.

4. Procedure of this research:

The reserach was conducted over a period of **four weeks** with the following procedure:

a. Pre-Test

Both the experimental and control groups took the same listening comprehension pre-test to determine their baseline listening proficiency. The pre-test scores were analyzed to confirm that both groups started from a relatively equal level of understanding.

b. Treatment (Listening Instruction Sessions)

The treatment consisted of **four listening sessions** (once per week). Each session was 45 minutes long and involved:

- Pre-listening activity (vocabulary introduction and prediction)
- Listening to a short audio passage (monologue or dialogue)
- Comprehension questions (multiple choice)

In the **experimental group**, the audio was played **twice**, with a short pause between repetitions. In the **control group**, the audio was played **once only**, without repetition. After each listening activity, both groups discussed their answers with the teacher and received brief feedback.

All audio materials were selected from adapted TOEFL Junior and authentic listening sources appropriate for senior high school level.

c. Post-Test

At the end of the fourth week, both groups took the same listening comprehension **post-test**, which was equivalent in difficulty and structure to the pre-test but used different audio content.

d. Questionnaire and Interviews

After the post-test, the experimental group completed the questionnaire. Five students were also interviewed to provide qualitative feedback about their learning experience with repeated listening.

The collected data were analyzed using both **quantitative** and **qualitative** methods:

a. Quantitative Data Analysis

Pre-test and post-test scores were analyzed using **descriptive statistics** (mean, median, and standard deviation) and **inferential statistics**:

- **Paired Sample t-test** was used to measure the difference between pre- and post-test scores **within each group**.
- **Independent Sample t-test** was used to compare **post-test scores between the experimental and control groups** to determine the significance of the treatment effect.

A significance level of **p < 0.05** was set for all statistical analyses. The software used for data processing was SPSS version 26.

b. Qualitative Data Analysis

Responses from questionnaires were tabulated and analyzed descriptively. Interview transcripts were coded and categorized to identify common themes related to students' perceptions of audio repetition, motivation, and challenges faced during listening activities.

6. Validity and Reliability

To ensure the **validity and reliability** of the study:

- The listening test was **pilot-tested** with 10 students from another class and reviewed by two English teachers.
- Internal consistency of the questionnaire was measured using **Cronbach's Alpha**, with a result of $\alpha = 0.87$, indicating high reliability.
- Interviews were cross-validated through triangulation by comparing results with questionnaire data and classroom observations.

7. Ethical Considerations

The research followed ethical guidelines, including:

- Obtaining **permission from the school** and English teachers.
- Gaining **informed consent** from students and their parents.
- Ensuring **confidentiality and anonymity** of all participants.

Allowing participants to **withdraw** at any time without penalty.

III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Results

a. Pre-test and Post-test Score Comparison

To determine the effectiveness of audio repetition, a comparison of students' pre-test and post-test scores was conducted for both the experimental and control groups. The mean scores are presented in the table below

Group	pre-test Mean	post-test Mean	Gian score
Experiment	61.3	78.4	17.1
Control	60.7	68.2	7.5

From the data above, it can be seen that:

- Both groups experienced an increase in listening scores.
- However, the experimental group, which received **audio repetition**, showed a significantly higher gain in score (17.1 points) compared to the control group (7.5 points).

b. Paired Sample t-test (Within Groups)

To test whether the improvement within each group was statistically significant, a paired sample t-test was conducted:

- **Experimental Group:**
 - $t(19) = 8.73, p < 0.001$
 - Interpretation: There was a significant improvement in listening scores after using audio repetition.
- **Control Group:**
 - $t(19) = 3.21, p = 0.004$
 - Interpretation: There was a modest but significant improvement even without audio repetition.

c. Independent Sample t-test (Between Groups)

To compare the post-test scores between the two groups:

- $t(38) = 4.56, p < 0.001$
- Interpretation: The difference in post-test scores between the experimental and control group is statistically significant, indicating that **audio repetition had a positive effect** on students' listening comprehension.

d. Questionnaire Results (Experimental Group)

A Likert-scale questionnaire was administered to assess students' perceptions of using audio repetition. Key findings:

- 85% of students agreed or strongly agreed that repetition made it easier to understand spoken texts.
- 80% stated they felt more confident when listening for the second time.
- 90% reported that repetition helped them catch details they missed the first time.

These results support the idea that repetition not only improved comprehension but also **reduced anxiety and increased focus**.

e. Interview Findings

From the interviews with five students in the experimental group, several key themes emerged:

- **Improved Focus:** Students felt more focused during the second playback, having already predicted the general idea.
- **Reduced Pressure:** Knowing that the audio would be repeated made students feel more relaxed and less afraid of missing information.
- **Learning Strategy:** Some students used the first listening to grasp the context and the second to answer questions or catch details.

These qualitative results are consistent with the quantitative findings and reinforce the value of audio repetition as a **pedagogical tool**.

2. Discussion

a. Effectiveness of Audio Repetition

The findings clearly show that students who were exposed to repeated audio playback **significantly outperformed** those who listened only once. This supports previous research by Chang & Read (2006) and Vandergrift (2007), who also found that repetition helped learners retain information, especially at lower or intermediate levels of proficiency.

The effectiveness of repetition in this study can be explained through **Cognitive Load Theory**: when students listen only once, their working memory is heavily taxed. Repeating the audio reduces this cognitive load, allowing better processing and storage of information.

b. Repetition Enhances Comprehension Skills

The improvement in listening scores suggests that repetition supports multiple aspects of comprehension, such as:

- **Decoding main ideas**
- **Recognizing details**
- **Inferring speaker intent**
- **Understanding vocabulary in context**

By listening twice, students had the opportunity to confirm their initial understanding and revise interpretations based on the second exposure.

c. Psychological Benefits of Repetition

Beyond comprehension, repetition had a **positive psychological effect**:

- **Reduced Anxiety**: Students were less stressed and more confident during listening tasks.
- **Increased Motivation**: Success in answering comprehension questions after repeated listening led to more positive attitudes.
- **Greater Engagement**: Students were more involved and willing to discuss the listening content after having clearer understanding.

These findings align with Brown (2004), who emphasized the emotional and motivational role of listening strategies in language learning.

d. Pedagogical Implications

The results offer practical implications for language teachers:

- **Incorporating audio repetition** into listening lessons is a **simple yet powerful**

technique, especially in classrooms with limited English exposure.

- Teachers can combine repetition with **guided listening tasks**, such as note-taking or prediction, to further enhance effectiveness.
- Repetition can also be used selectively—e.g., only repeating challenging sections or parts where students made errors.

However, it is important to balance repetition with **authentic listening situations**, especially for more advanced learners who need to train themselves to listen accurately in real-time.

e. Limitations and Further Research

Despite the positive findings, the study has several limitations:

- The sample size was relatively small and limited to one school.
- The duration of the intervention (4 weeks) may not reflect long-term effects.
- Only one type of repetition (two-time playback) was tested.

Future research could explore:

- The **optimal number of repetitions** for different proficiency levels.
- The effect of **self-paced repetition** using digital tools (e.g., podcasts, YouTube).

Comparison between **repetition and other strategies**, such as using subtitles or visual aids.

IV CONCLUSION

This research aimed to investigate the effectiveness of audio repetition in enhancing the listening comprehension skills of EFL students at the senior high school level. Based on the results of pre-test and post-test comparisons, statistical analysis, questionnaire data, and student interviews, it can be concluded that **audio repetition significantly improves students' listening comprehension**.

The experimental group, which received audio input twice during listening activities, showed greater improvement in identifying main ideas, specific details, and contextual meaning compared to the control group, which listened only once. The results of both the paired and independent sample t-tests confirmed that this

improvement was statistically significant. Moreover, students in the experimental group expressed positive perceptions toward the use of audio repetition, highlighting increased confidence, reduced anxiety, and greater comprehension as key benefits.

From a pedagogical perspective, audio repetition proves to be a simple yet effective strategy that can be easily implemented in classroom settings. It supports learners in processing spoken language more thoroughly and provides a valuable scaffold for those who struggle with real-time listening tasks. Especially in EFL contexts where exposure to English is limited, repetition can bridge the gap between classroom instruction and real-life listening demands.

However, the study also acknowledges its limitations, including the small sample size and short treatment duration. Further research is recommended to explore long-term impacts, the optimal number of repetitions, and comparisons with other listening strategies.

In conclusion, **audio repetition is a beneficial instructional approach** that enhances both the cognitive and affective aspects of listening comprehension. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate this method as part of their listening instruction to support students in becoming more confident and capable listeners.

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