

Teaching Listening to Young Learners with the Help of Online Tools

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Abstract. *The article deals with using online tools for teaching listening to young learners in the English lessons. The author describes the stages of teaching listening to primary school students, suggests online tools that can be used in class at each stage and gives the fragment of the English lesson at primary school illustrating the usage of various online tools during pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening activities.*

Keywords: *primary school, English lessons, teaching listening, online tools.*

In the modern information society it is impossible to imagine teaching without digital tools that make the learning process more interesting, motivating, creative and effective in many ways. Information technologies are widely used at the English lessons in primary school, in particular, for teaching listening comprehension.

Teaching listening to young learners comprises three stages: pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening. Pre-listening is aimed at motivating primary school students to listening an audiotext and helping them to understand it easier. This stage includes anticipation, prediction and communicative tasks. While-listening implies active listening to an audiotext and comprehension check that presupposes verbal and non-verbal responses. Post-listening stage is aimed at developing speaking and writing competences and includes various creative activities based on the audiotext [1, p. 76-78]. Digital online tools can be used at all three stages of the listening process but the choice of these tools depends on the activities and exercises that they can provide.

The pre-listening stage includes such activities as reviewing known vocabulary and pre-teaching unknown vocabulary, activating students' prior knowledge by showing pictures or realia, involving students in the specific topic using graphic organizers (word maps, T-charts, listing), etc. [2, p. 133]. In the process of predicting the content of the audiotext the students can also finish the title, chose the pictures to the text, make up the story in pictures, etc. [1, p. 77]. To do such activities in a digital form the students can use such online tools as Wordwall, LearningApps, Wiser.me, Quizlet, Canva, Google Apps (Google Slides, Google Docs, Google Sheets), etc.

During the while-listening stage the teacher should try various techniques to make input comprehensible, for example, gestures, body movements, visual clues like pictures and flashcards, T-charts, mind maps, Venn diagrams, timelines, etc. For checking comprehension such activities can be used as listen and point, listen and move, listen and do, listen and colour, listen and draw, listen and sequence pictures in the correct order, listen and match, listen and complete a graphic organizer, etc. [2, p. 134-137]. The examples of non-verbal responses are pointing to the right picture, clapping hands, finishing the drawing (adding the missing objects), correcting the colour of the picture, crossing out the wrong information and others. Verbal responses

can include such activities as filling in the grid, restoring the text (jigsaw), detecting mistakes, filling the pauses, retelling in chain, etc. [1, p. 78]. At this stage it's worth using such online tools as Edpuzzle, LearningApps, Wiser.me, Google Apps (Google Forms, Google Docs, Google Sheets), MindMeister, Kahoot! and other online generators that can help the teacher create comprehension check exercises.

The post-listening stage should involve students into creative work in oral or written form, for example, making posters, interviewing, role-playing, creative writing, shape writing, creative retelling [1, p. 78]. The students can discuss or do tasks in groups, perform a play, make a story, perform dialogues, dramatize a dialogue with substitution, compose and sing songs, chants, perform real-life tasks as buying a movie or theatre tickets, ordering in a restaurant, etc. [2, p. 134-137]. These activities can be done with such digital tools as Canva, Voki, Prezi, Storybird, Book Creator and other digital tools that contribute to developing students' creative speaking and writing.

To illustrate the ways of using digital online tools for teaching listening at the English lesson in primary school let us take the story about travelling [3]. At the *pre-listening stage* the teacher encourages students to exchange information about the topic spinning the wheel created in the program Wordwall [4] (see Fig. 1) and answering the questions written on the wheel.

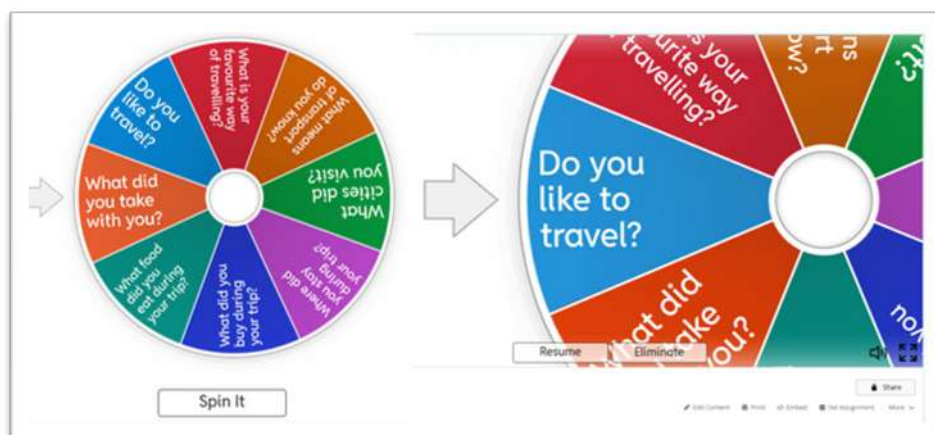


Fig. 1. The wheel with questions created in Wordwall

The teacher also reviews the known vocabulary and teaches some unknown words that will be mentioned in the audiotext using the online tool Quizlet [5] (see Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Cards with new words created in Quizlet

To predict the content of the audiotext the teacher asks the students to put the pictures from the video in the correct order. The students analyze the screenshots on the slides of the presentation made in Canva [6] (see Fig. 3) and write the numbers of the slides according to the right succession.

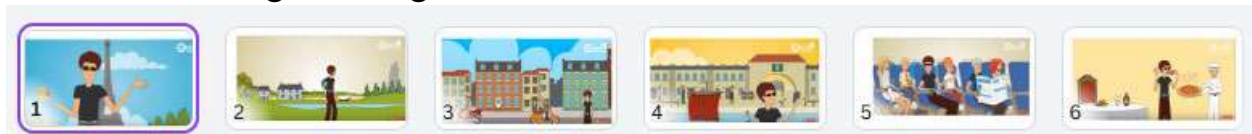


Fig. 3. Presentation with screenshots of the video created in Canva

At the *while-listening stage* the students listen to the audiotext accompanied by the video with notices in the program LearningApps [7] (see Fig. 4), check their predictions and answer the questions in the pauses (active listening).

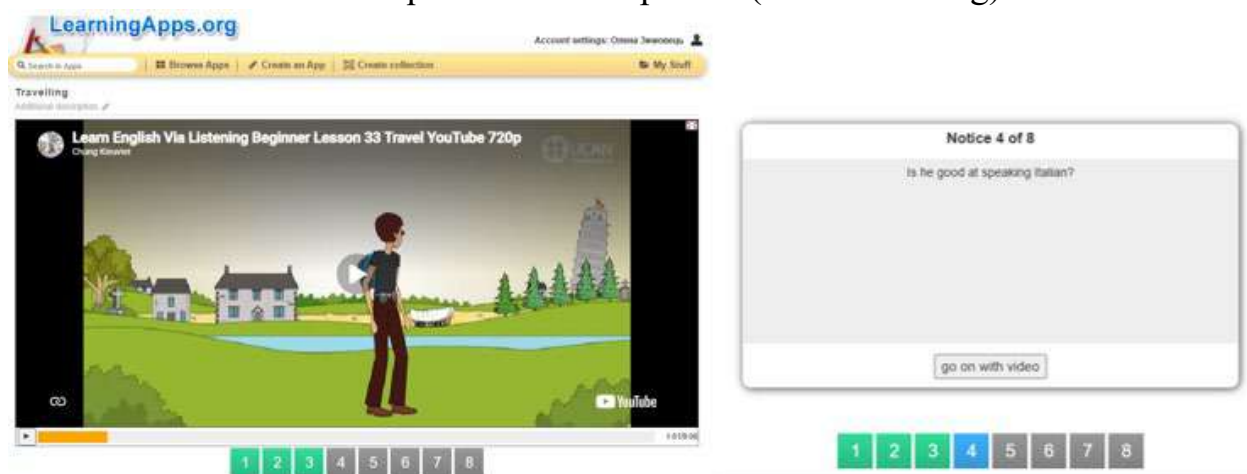


Fig. 4. Video with notices created in LearningApps

For comprehension check the students play the game in Kahoot! [8] (see Fig. 5) on their mobile phones (the quiz can consist of true/false or multiple-choice questions).

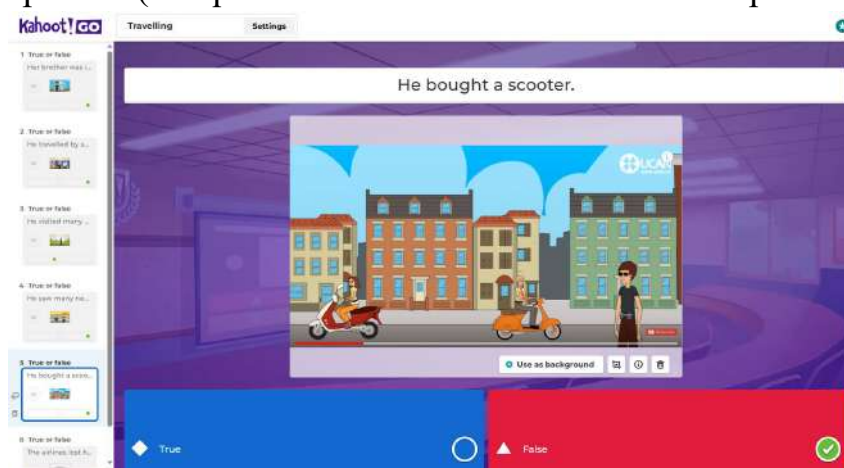


Fig. 5. A quiz created in Kahoot!

The *post-listening stage* includes making stories about students' trips based on the audiotext. The students can do it orally with the help of the program Voki [9] (see Fig. 6) or in a written form using the tool Storybird [10] (see Fig. 7).



Fig. 6. A student's story created in Voki



Fig. 7. A student's book created in Storybird

Thus, there is a wide choice of online tools that can be used in the process of teaching listening to young learners in the English lessons. Teachers can design their own exercises, flashcards, quizzes, presentations and other materials necessary at each stage of working with the audiotext. Besides, primary school students can create their own stories, books, songs, chants and do various creative activities using online tools that contribute to the development of their speaking and writing skills.

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