

Role-playing as a Technique to Enhance Listening and Speaking in EFL Contexts: The Case of Third-year LMD Students

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Received 05/05/2022

Accepted 23/05/2022

Published. 16/06/2022

Abstract: Times New Roman 12 (not more than 10 Lines)

The English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners seem to care more about developing their speaking and communication skills and have little idea about the strategies they need to improve their listening abilities. This research aims to investigate students' difficulties during listening comprehension in an oral expression class, and to identify the different strategies they use to improve this receptive skill. Data was collected through a questionnaire that targeted third-year LMD students. The findings showed the participants give more attention to speaking and care less about improving their listening abilities. Teachers need to identify and understand their students' problems and difficulties to provide them with effective listening strategies, authentic materials, and motivating techniques in their learning activities.

Keywords: Listening Comprehension, Listening Strategies, Oral Expression, Role-Play Technique

1.Introduction:

or interpreting information from an aural input. It necessitates concentration, linguistic knowledge, and listening strategies. EFL learners find the experience of good listening comprehension a challenging mission as a result of limited exposure to listening activities. They need to recognize instructional tasks in opposition to lecture content and use specific strategies to facilitate understanding long extensions of speech, for example, they ask for clarifications or repetition, decipher the information, and negotiate meaning to avoid getting lost. Learning how to use language in a drama class is related to the integration of the audio-lingual method. This method involves mainly role-plays, dramatizing, and physical activities because it is very important for the participants to feel what is happening around them, experience the different situations that people may encounter in daily life, and discover their real potential in growing into more interesting contexts.

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2. Literature Review

It is noticed that teachers avoid teaching the listening skill more often due to the lack of learning resources, some technical issues, and limited adequate technical matters which disable them from bringing listening practices to their classroom (Hadijah and Shalawati, 2018). Widhiasih states that listening skill enhances the ability to identify others' speech and understand the topic they are talking about (2019). Practice can make students more familiar with the language and they will acquire new words, the correct pronunciation, and even spelling to be able to use them in daily life since they lead to improving listening and speaking as well. That is why the first logical step suggested for achieving oral fluency or accuracy is considering and improving the learner's ability to listen (ibid).

Bowen and Madsen (1985) argue that although listening is considered a passive skill, the listener goes through the reception of information, analyzing and interpreting the oral signals to create what is then the recreation of the speaker's message (qtd. in Mashori, 2004). According to Darti & Asmawati (2017), language input is provided by listening to and hearing others speak which is necessary to acquire language. Buck (2002) reveals that listening takes a larger portion of communication compared to the other language skills (qtd. in Widhiasih, 2019). For Underwood (1989), it is also a process of learning something new each time (qtd. in Puspitasari and Hanur, 2016). Students spend the majority of their school days listening i.e., most of what they know and learn is through listening. Rost (1994) states that listening is a part of oracy and the ability to construct thought verbally to communicate with others (qtd. in Guettal, 2008).

During oral activities, Chen & Liu (2010), and Zhai (2015) state that not all teachers focus on listening. This might create proficiency problems and may cause students to fail. Thus, listening comprehension should get more attention, and teachers need to consider its importance for their students' progress to accomplish active and effective attachment, and help them turn out to be articulate members of society (qtd. in Sumalinog, 2018). Communication combines both parties (student and teacher). Listening and speaking skills are the two pillars that shape communication (Emiroglu, 2014).

Listeners sometimes face difficulties dealing with the listening skill, such as lack of attention and concentration, which generates some kind of shield that disables them from improving. Stephen (1998) explains that despite the ability to process about 400 to 800 words a minute, the listener can take in all the speaker's words and still do not grasp it since thinking interferes (qtd. in Guettal, 2008). Some learners are not used to the rate of speed native speakers use while talking due to their slow and deliberate learning of spoken English.

Puspitasari and Hanur (2016) state that Foreign Language (FL) learners usually panic at the thought of listening unless they get a chance to hear something multiple times besides problems in pronunciation, speech speed, inability to repeat, limited vocabulary stock, lack of concentration, visual support, etc. Underwood (1989) argues that these problems should be solved (qtd. in Hadijah and Shalawati 2018). That is why the use of interactive video technology is suggested to encourage students to listen often and keep practicing because the issues mentioned above can be figured out through practice as well as applying the right strategies to help them manage their listening habits and anticipate problems during the activities (ibid).

As suggested by O'Malley and Chamot (1990), a combination of language learning strategies is important. Two main types were differentiated and categorized, meta-cognitive and cognitive strategies to have the best potential results together. The teacher can also encourage pair work to engage students in role-plays after creating their own dialogues or synopses based on the selected text (Mashori, 2004). Field (2008) believes that using developed strategies is crucial to strengthen the listening ability as well as activate their procedural knowledge of strategy use (qtd. in Chou, 2017). Cao and Lin (2020) highlight the importance of improving one's listening comprehension by spending long periods listening to recordings and radio programs after class. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) also recommend six categories of interactive listening tasks such as description, discussion, debates, creative dictation, role-play simulations, or interviews (qtd. in Chou, 2017).

Some drama techniques may include miming, language games, group discussions, role-plays, and simulation. All together can be a good choice for the teacher since all learning skills are interrelated and must be taught equally. These techniques can develop listening and speaking skills, especially the role-play technique owing to its importance and ability to combine all the other techniques. As a result, everyone in the class can be entertained while playing, develop fluency in their speaking, listen to each other, be motivated for better performance and promote a mutual reaction (Kovács, 2014). According to Moody, the most famous drama activities in the foreign language context are mainly role-playing and improvisation (1997). Students discover a new world through drama. For Dickenson and Neelands, role-plays bring life to stories and enable social learning (qtd. in Lloyd, 2014). Students learn moral and social themes growing close to drama activities. They get the chance to imagine and develop their critical thinking skills because different themes allow learners to be engaged in different situations, play different roles and encounter various plots.

Samantaray (2014), furthermore, suggests that the role-playing method quickly overbalances the difficulties a teacher might encounter and improves both listening and speaking skills. Students become assertive and patient, build up competency in skills of inference, analysis, and evaluation, and start to speak more to explore, extend, clarify, and reflect on their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences. Drama can be strongly related to the acquirement of language skills and communication. Students can enhance their speaking skill through the practice of role-plays and learn more about native speakers' pronunciation.

3. Research Questions and Methodology

This study was conducted to explore the importance of listening in oral expression class and how drama activities such as role-play can be helpful to develop listening comprehension and communication skills. Due to the habit of speaking in this class, students do not fully grasp the significance of the listening skill or how to successfully improve it. The research addresses three main questions: (1) Can the listening skill be improved in an oral expression class? (2) To what extent do learners use the right strategies in a listening task? (3) What are the most useful techniques to be used in oral activities?

The study was carried out with the participation of 80 third-year LMD students majoring in English at the University of Mostaganem, Algeria. Their ages range from 20 to 24 years old and only a case of an older student (aged 32). Data was gathered through a quantitative approach using an interviewing questionnaire. A descriptive method using statistics via Google forms. was employed to analyze the findings and suggest solutions for the listening problems .

The questionnaire consists of four main sections :

- 1 .Background information
- 2 .Speaking skill in Oral Expression class
- 3 .Listening comprehension in EFL Classes
4. Role-play in EFL Classes

4. Results and Discussion

The factors that mostly cause listening difficulties include the lack of three main elements which are practicing listening, using the right listening strategies, and the proper exposure to various kinds of listening activities and materials. The research also reveals that different accents of the speakers, pronunciation, speed of speech, vocabulary deficiency, lack of concentration, anxiety, fear of public speaking, and the shortage of listening instruments are the major causes of low listening skills. Findings from the study indicate that the main cause of the lack of listening strategies is the wrong way of monitoring the class and the application of proper methods and activities. The results are shown through pie charts and graphs. Each section will be thoroughly explained, followed by a discussion and some of the participants' quotes?

4.1. Section 1: Background Information

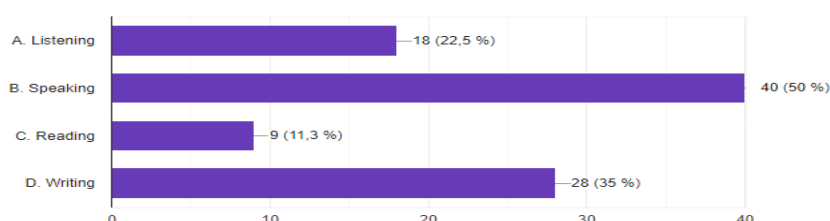
Section 1 includes the responses of 80 participants about two questions on the skill they believe is hard to develop and whether they like having oral expression class in their third-year curriculum. Neither age nor gender is an issue in this study but it is preferable to have results from both sexes.

Skills' Difficulty Classification

Informants were asked such a question to know which skill is hard to develop from their experiences. As shown in figure 01, the majority of participants believe that speaking is the hardest skill to develop. It is followed by writing and listening.

Figure 1. Skills' Difficulty Classification

Which skill do you think is hard to develop?



Students do not pay attention to the importance of listening or how it is connected to speaking. For them, speaking is challenging and hard to be good at.

4.2. SECTION 2: Speaking Skill in Oral Expression Class

Section 2 investigates the importance of the speaking skill in oral expression class to know how well learners are good at speaking and whether they are ready to ameliorate it to communicate better and be good speakers.

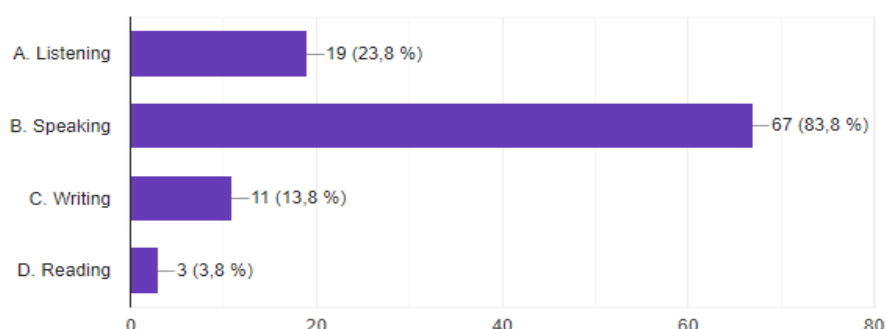
Skills' Importance

As figure 02 shows, 67 (83,8%) of the informants believe that speaking is the skill that deserves attention. It is followed by (23,8%) for listening. Again, listening is not given much importance compared to speaking. Third and fourth places go to writing and reading respectively. Listening is a fundamental language skill; however,

most teachers ignore or misuse it while teaching the second language. They should pay more attention to this skill (Guettal, 2008).

Figure 02: Skills' Importance

Which skill do you think should be given more importance?

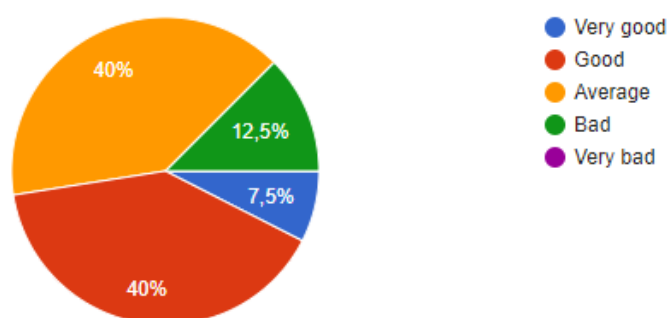


Students' Proficiency Level of Speaking

To be more specific, participants were asked to state their level of speaking to identify the common proficiency level they have. As a result, there was an equality of (40%) between good and average, while, low had a share of (12,5%). Only 6 participants (7,5%) classified their level as very good and none was classified as very low (00%). A total of 80% of the participants believe strongly that their speaking abilities are good enough. Again, learners believe that oral expression classes are only for speaking.

Figure 03: Students' Proficiency Levels of Speaking

You think your abilities in speaking are:

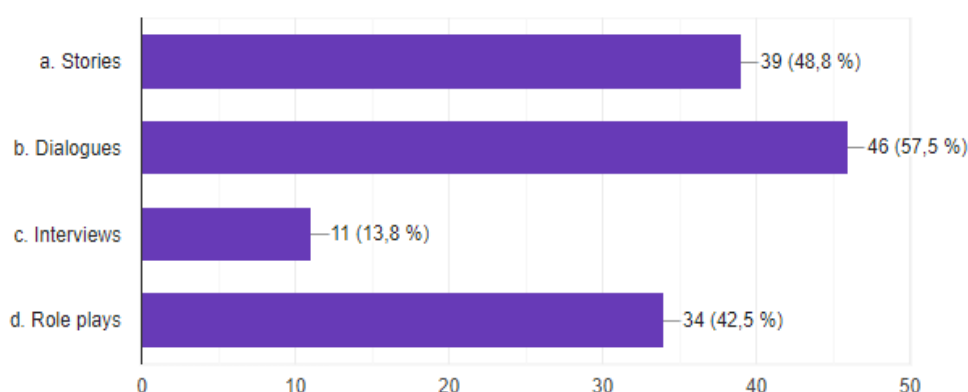


Main Activities used by Teachers to Enhance Speaking

The informants were asked to mention the main difficulties they encounter while speaking. Even learners with good abilities did not hesitate to mention the complexities they may come upon. 78 participants mentioned some of them as follows; the inability to speak fluently, pronunciations of new or long words, public speaking starting with their classmates, shyness, lack of proper words or vocabulary, making mistakes while speaking, anxiety, fear of mispronunciation and the reaction of their classmates, the inability to talk fast or swiftly, the inability to express one's self once stressed or nervous, lack of words and expressions, lack of speaking practice, and not having someone to talk to once disturbed.

Figure 03: Main Activities Used by Teachers to Enhance Speaking

What are the main activities used by your teacher to help you enhance your speaking skill?



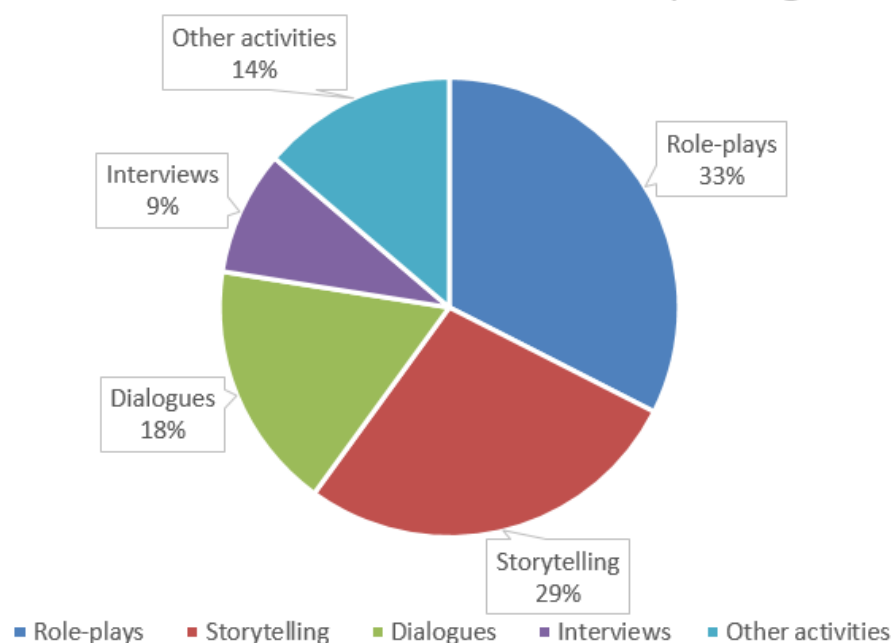
Some students find it difficult to keep ideas connected and get easily distracted and forget everything at the same moment. They struggle with the lack of formality in speech, rare practice of the language, wrong pronunciation, and lots of grammatical mistakes. Having tip tongues most of the time and mispronunciations hold them back from speaking as well as the inability to focus in class and having difficulties in understanding new or unfamiliar words.

This question figures out if students have got the chance to practice activities that enhance their speaking skills or not. As figure 04 shows, dialogues dominate the results with (57,5%). It is followed by stories (48, 8%), then, role-plays (42,5%), and finally interviews only (13,8%). It is revealed here that teachers consider dialogues as the best activity to help their students enhance their speaking skills.

Students' Preferable Activities in Speaking

The question aims to discover which activity learners prefer to have or practice in oral expression class. First, 33% of informants prefer role-plays in their oral class as shown in figure 04 below. They provided the following reasons, they feel comfortable and can share ideas and exchange information. They can speak more often to one another, enjoy playing roles with others, and get the opportunity to enrich their vocabulary. They also enjoy acting and pretending to be someone else. Besides, role-play activities improve their skills in memorizing, help them overcome shyness and public speaking, dare to speak up, and speak more often without fear. They can express their ideas in their own way and improve their pronunciation. Role-plays are enjoyable, fun, and contain interesting topics. Role-play activity is not only acting but includes dialogues, interviews, games, and storytelling. In language teaching, this kind of method contains a lot of beneficial learning skills. It certainly appears to take in an extremely varied collection of activities ranging from highly-controlled guided conversations to improvised drama activities; from simple rehearsed dialogue performances to highly complex simulated scenarios (Maley, 1991).

Figure 04: Students' Preferable Activities in Speaking



The second category involves storytelling and is chosen by 29% of the participants. They believe that it helps them enhance their speaking and listening skills as well as speak freely when narrating a story of their own. They draw the listeners' attention and keep them interested and not bored, and teach them new things about life. Storytelling is a source of information and makes the speaker more expressive than before. Stories include interesting topics and morals. That is to say, retelling events of a story is challenging, develops students' critical thinking, and strengthens self-confidence.

As for dialogues, 18% of students believe they are beneficial. They can learn more when conversing with others, they make them speak without stress or fear, and they feel good and relaxed when they talk to others. They also learn new words and refresh their vocabulary. They help them interact and improve their communicative skills and pronunciation and share ideas and knowledge. Dialogues are more effective and helpful in oral expression classes. They could be fun and involve discussions of different topics. They're interesting and enjoyable.

Only 07 Students (09%) prefer interviews and said that they help them improve their way of speaking and make it more formal which includes, correcting their mistakes, training the brain to listen first, and then, respond to questions. They help them improve their oral skills to speak more than usual and they are easy to practice.

A few students prefer other activities such as short discussions, public speaking, or talking about free random topics or story creation in group work. Other students (11) suggest open discussions to share and discuss opinions. The reason why they prefer such activities include the opportunity to speak more in an interactive way to learn from others' experiences, overcome the constant fear of speaking a foreign language in front of an audience, grow their knowledge, and test their speaking

abilities to learn to be creative and improvise when necessary. There's only one informant who didn't provide an answer while another said that he's open to all activities since they all involve speaking.

Again, participants still talk about activities and show interest in them but no one mentioned the importance of listening in such activities or how they can be effective and helpful other than improving their speaking skills. So far, they seem to lack knowledge about the connection between the two skills.

4.3. SECTION 3: Listening Comprehension in EFL Classes

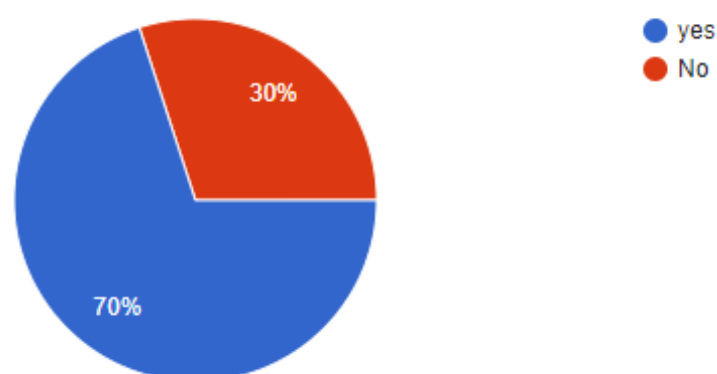
In this section, all informants ought to answer different questions about listening skills.

Students' Level in Listening

70% of them opted for being good at listening. The first question aims to know the students' opinion of themselves and how well they know they are good listeners. The other 30% said no and this category of students is the one that needs attention and guidance to help them develop their listening abilities and skills. Even though 56 participants believe they are good listeners, this will be tested in the following questions.

Figure 05: Students' Level in Listening

Do you think you are good at Listening?



Difficulty of Listening

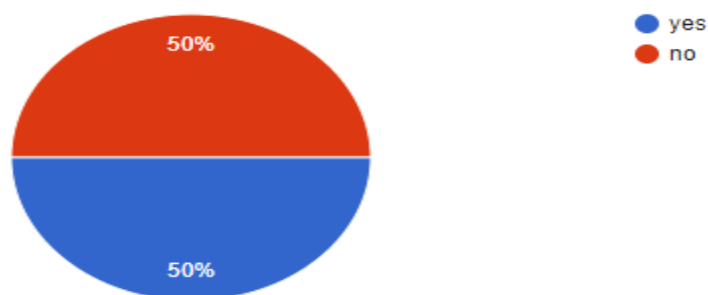
Figure 06 shows equality of 50% which means half of the 80 informants think that listening activities are difficult to practice. This may include different reasons that would be discussed later. As shown below, the percentage has changed compared to the previous one.

Now, half of the learners declare that listening is a bit harder though some of them previously stated that they are good at listening. This could mean that they still

have problems during such activities that focus mainly on listening. Students are not at an excellent level in listening which is the result of having low confidence in their

Figure 06: Difficulty of Listening

Do you think Listening activities are difficult to practise?



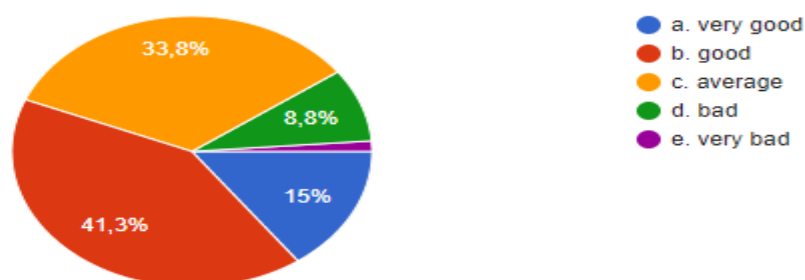
listening abilities and low perceptions. As a consequence, they make less effort to improve their listening comprehension even though they have few listening strategies such as listening carefully to the lecturer, having discussions with friends, and using the internet or social media for communication (Sari and Fithriyana, 2019).

Students' Abilities in Listening

Figure 07 represents to what extent the informants know their level of listening. 33 of them (41, 3%) consider their abilities to be good. Those who believe they are average had the second place with (33,8%) and only 12 (15%) of them believe they are very good. 7 (08, 8%) participants consider their abilities in listening as bad leaving one student who rated his abilities as very bad. This category of students needs more attention to be helped and carefully guided on how to develop their abilities and make them as good as the others. At this stage, the number of learners who believe they are good at listening decreased. They are not sure about their abilities in listening as the questions continue to be more specific.

Figure 07: Students' Abilities in Listening

You think your abilities in listening are:



Later, the informants were asked to mention the main difficulties they encounter. The question aims to extract as many answers as possible to identify the possible impediments that students believe they face during listening to have an idea about the situation and find solutions to overcome them. 77 of the informants shared some

common difficulties that hinder the development of their listening skill and learning in class. These difficulties include the different accents of the native speakers or when they talk fast and all words seem to be connected like a chain, different pronunciation of words, unfamiliar words that hamper understanding and general comprehension, dialects that are not well known, distractions made by other classmates, mishearing words and mistaking them for others, long speeches or audios, memorizing problems, the inability to retell a story, the inability to respond after listening, the inability to understand native speakers, lack of vocabularies or background knowledge and getting easily distracted.

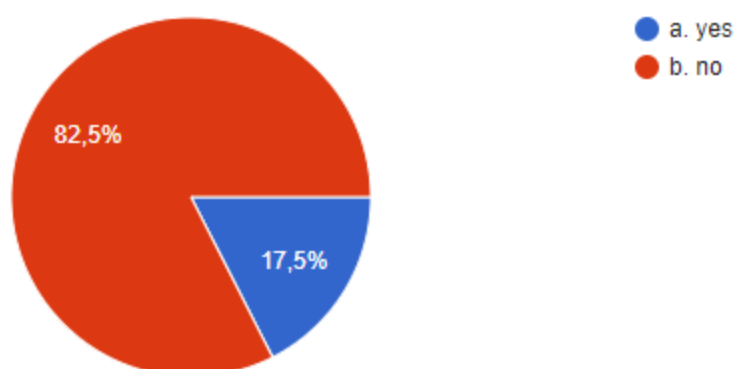
A student, however, called himself a bad listener and two informants said that they had a lot of difficulties but didn't mention them. Only one student considers himself to be a good listener and has no difficulties. Others were either not sure of having any listening problems or none. One informant provided no answer.

Retelling a Story Test

After knowing the participants' opinions of their own listening abilities, this question aims to test their listening skill through the use of a story. A very good listener will be able to retell the story after listening to it once. However, 82, 5% of the informants answered no. They were asked after that to provide the reason behind such difficulty. Their answers include the inability to remember everything which is mainly related to memory, lack of concentration, missing words or details, zoning out especially when the story is too long, being slow at grasping everything at once, forgetting ideas that might be essential, getting the general idea at first listening only, skipping details, and sometimes the narrator speaks fast.

Figure 08: Retelling a Story Test

After listening to a story once, can you retell it the same it was told?



Two students clearly said that it is impossible to retell a story after the first listening without providing any reasons. Whereas, another informant prefers paraphrasing the story to make it sound more original. One student mentions that his abilities in listening were not so good. Moreover, numerous informants state that they cannot use the narrator's exact words and prefer retelling the story with their own

words or summarizing it, or just providing an overview. Others prefer hearing the same story told by another person such as a teacher or classmate rather than a native speaker to be able to understand, while others relate it to memory weakness or issues. Unlike the previous reasons, a couple of informants can keep the same chain of events yet they would be retold differently or some modifications could be added to the story.

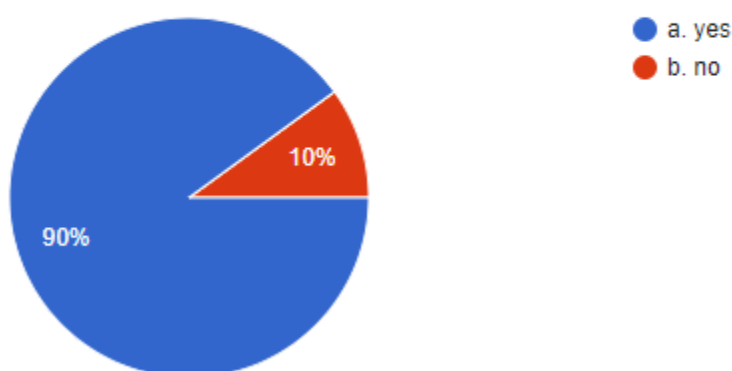
According to their answers, some students know exactly where the real difficulty in listening lies, and their reasons touched on important factors such as the length of the audio, vocabulary, and the right strategy. However, only one student was very confident in retelling the story after the first listening; he says, *"I have enough vocabulary and a good memory which help me remember the whole story with its details"*. Listening to a story once is not sufficient for the majority of the informants. They suffer from different and various hindrances which reduce their level and affect their learning process. Successful listening is connected to the right strategies listeners use. Strategies can be a means that helps students manage their tasks and improve their listening. Broughton et al. (2003) insist that the best way to achieve that is to teach them effective ways of approaching their listening and getting involved actively in the listening process (qtd. in Widhiasih,2019).

Speaking and Listening Connectivity

Figure 09 below indicates that 90% of the informants agree that listening and speaking skills come hand in hand. This question aims to know and recognize the participants' opinion of such a combination and whether they know its importance. They believe that they are connected and the next question asks them to give reasons to justify their answers.

Figure 09: Speaking and Listening Connectivity

Do you agree that Listening and speaking skills come hand in hand?



72 of the informants tried to explain why listening is as important as speaking and how they are connected. The majority of answers include the fact that listening and speaking complete each other. When you listen well, you'll be able to speak and respond and having a good skill in both helps learners have a full understanding of a conversation or a dialogue. Good listening helps gain the same accent as the speaker especially the native one, even the correct pronunciation of words. Listening enriches

the learners' vocabulary and corrects their grammar for future use. It builds up comprehension and comprehension leads to good speaking and vice versa. Listening and speaking are both needed in daily life discussions and conversations.

The process of learning a specific language depends on developing the listening and speaking skills. These two skills should be developed together to achieve better results and master the language. Besides, enhancing listening is the first step in language learning. Listening paves the way for learners to speak with confidence and without making mistakes. It helps them enrich their knowledge to be used later with new and different speakers. Comprehension and communication depend on good listening because one needs, first, to understand the topic/message and then to respond and communicate, answer and express. Listening means focusing on what is being said to be used later in the conversations.

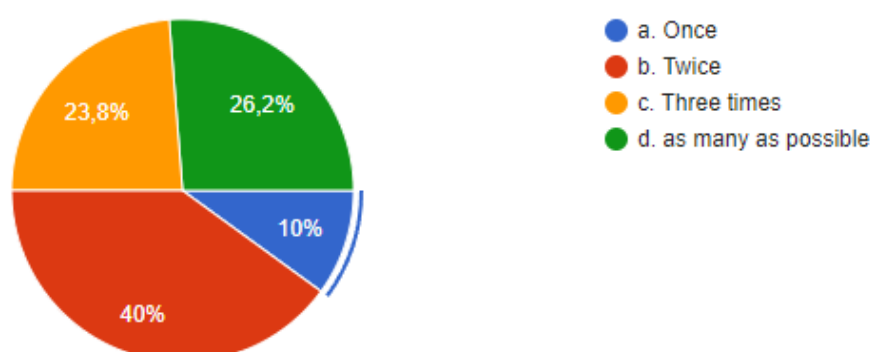
All in all, listening is a part of speaking and they complete each other. According to two participants, speaking is way easier than listening, and listening for information could be harder than just speaking in general. Only two participants didn't provide an answer.

Students' Ability to Answer Questions in Listening Activities

As figure 10 reveals, only 10% of the participants consider themselves capable of doing the listening task/test after listening to the spoken passage once only. Although 40% of them need to listen to the audio twice, there is still a category that feels that it is not enough and needs three times or more to be able to answer properly.

Figure 10: Students' Ability to Answer Questions in Listening Activities

How many times you need to listen to an audio in order to understand and answer?



After that, the informants were asked about the listening strategies they usually use in the classroom to either complete a task or answer oral questions. This question aims at discovering the main strategies students know and use while listening or whether they have any. Only 08 participants use note-taking as a listening strategy. They mention that these notes include the main expressions or ideas they hear. Others

use abbreviations in order not to waste time. They believe note-taking is helpful to remember things later.

A larger number of informants (13) have no listening strategies except that they listen to the speaker carefully and try to understand and remember details and keywords. However, this may have drawbacks such as forgetting or missing important ideas/details as soon as the spoken text/lecture is over. Only students with a strong memory could achieve proper listening which is very rare in this case. Moreover, 10 informants out of 80 have no listening strategies and rely only on concentration. They focus while listening and try to be attentive.

Three participants depend on their imagination to remember what they listen to. They try to picture them or whatever the teacher is saying by following the events of the story. The rest do not either have any strategy to use or consider watching movies, videos, and role-plays or listening to stories, audios, and interviews as listening strategies. Other participants' answers vary between summarizing the listening text, trying to understand all the words, repeating the events in their minds, simplifying the story, or asking the teacher for contexts to be able to answer the questions. Whereas, 07 informants state that they have no listening strategies at all.

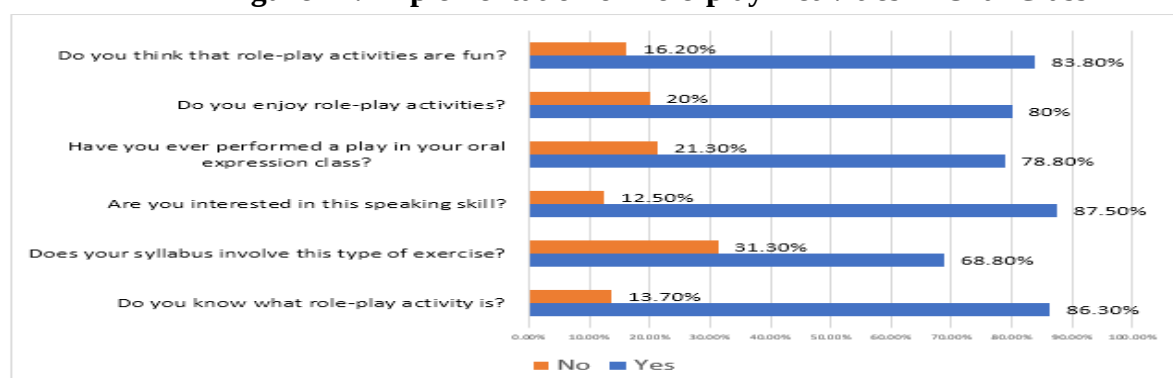
4.4. SECTION 4. Role-plays in EFL Classes

This section explores the integration of role-plays in an oral class. Teachers may use a range of different activities to help students discover various topics to ameliorate their abilities and learning skills. It is crucial to know whether teachers use the right methods and techniques that help improve their students' capacities.

Implementation of Role-play Activities in Oral Class

Figure 11 contains a series of questions related to the implementation of role-play activities in an oral class and the participants' opinions of their use. 69 of them know what role-playing is and 55 have it as a part of their syllabus. 69 of them are interested in such a technique because it involves speaking, and 63 of them got the chance to perform a play in their oral expression class. Moreover, 80% of the participants enjoy role-plays and more than 80% think they are fun. Using drama techniques such as frozen images and role-plays are effective for learning and teaching since they keep learners actively engaged in the lessons. As a result, learners will be motivated to speak publicly in a comfortable zone presenting their views in front of the class. This makes learning easy and fun at the same time (Athimoolam, 2013).

Figure 11: Implementation of Role-play Activities in Oral Class

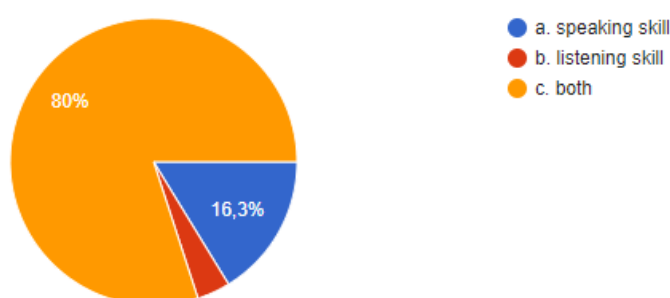


The Usefulness of Role-play Activities in Speaking and Listening

64 of the informants (80%) believe that role-play activities can help them develop both listening and speaking skills. The majority (16,3%) of them believe that speaking alone can be improved in role-plays, while the smallest percentage (3,8%) is dedicated to those who believe listening is developed during role-play activities.

Figure 12: Usefulness of Role-play Activities in Speaking and Listening

You think that Role play activities are helpful for you to develop your



Some students have clever answers about how the two skills can be attached and try to explain the connection between the two skills. This proves that role-play activities can be useful and help to improve both skills rather than just one. In this section, informants are classified into three main categories. First, those who believe that role-play activities enhance both skills. Second, those who believe role-playing has other benefits, and third, those who think role-playing benefits the audience as well.

The first category (role-playing as a technique to enhance both skills): 64 of the informants believe that listening and speaking are connected and allow performers to speak and listen simultaneously. Role-plays help them to be good listeners and fluent speakers. This oral technique involves groups that exchange dialogues driving them to listen when others are speaking and take turns to speak. Performers, as well as the audience, have to listen carefully to what the speaker says and both skills are needed to perform properly. Role-plays can come in a form of a discussion where actors have to apply and monitor both skills. For them, Role-play activities are not only about acting but also a process that involves listening, focus, comprehension, and responding when necessary. Listening to other speakers and classmates, in this case, teaches them a lot. Role-play activities are not only exchanging lines but exchanging knowledge, pronunciation, and vocabulary. In such activities, students speak to their partners and are compelled to listen for a common understanding.

The second category: Some informants spoke in general about how beneficial role-play activities are. They believe role-playing is a source of spoken information and helps them be ready for unfamiliar or difficult situations. They learn to overcome their shyness and hesitation. Role-plays allow them to remember their lines and train their memory through practice. They bring joy and fun to the classroom.

Consequently, they make them feel comfortable and avoid listening problems since they have the same level. They learn to speak more and improve their speaking. Moreover, while performing their roles, students can speak and correct each other's mistakes. Role-play activities strengthen their self-confidence to speak without fear or stress.

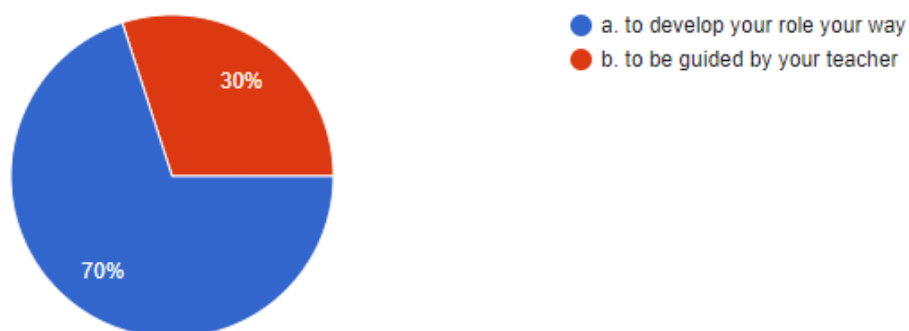
The third category: informants believe that role-plays are so useful that even the audience benefits from them. They learn lots of new words and expressions to use later for communication and the correct pronunciation of the actors especially if they are native speakers and their listening abilities improve.

Students' Preferences in Role-playing

The question that follows in this section asks informants which topics they prefer to perform through plays. It is very crucial to know the topics that interest learners to integrate the right activities chosen by the teacher especially if they choose role plays. Students are open to almost every interesting topic that exists nowadays. They are drawn to up-to-date topics because they want to share what they know about specific themes as well as learn from what their classmates bring to the classroom.

Figure 13: Students' Preferences in Role-playing

When dealing with role plays, do you prefer:



To develop a character in a play, students need to be able to have critical thinking and use their imagination. This also triggers the learner's hidden thoughts and prepares them to expect what the others might say or react to their role. All participants had a reason behind choosing their answers. 70% of them were in favor of developing their roles alone to be able to share as many of their ideas as possible and exchange their way of thinking. Others want to feel comfortable practicing them easily. They want a chance to develop their roles and learn to impersonate them. Some informants desire to write their lines and choose the words that suit them well.

Moreover, a couple of participants prefer to show their abilities because developing their roles helps them grow and widen their imagination to learn self-reliance. Others consider it a challenge for them and to be proud of their achievements. It is an opportunity to express their thoughts and have their touch. The rest of the answers belong to 30% of the informants who welcome the idea of being guided by

their teacher to develop a role in their play. They believe the teacher knows their level. That would make them feel responsible and willing to perform the role. For some of them, the teacher is resourceful and more experienced. He/she could suggest ways and new strategies to improve their skills. Another couple of participants need the teacher's guidance and good advice since some tips in class could be helpful, their opinion and suggestions are interesting. Others do not mind some assistance and welcome any other ideas or modifications.

There is only one participant, however, who says that he hates being guided and might not like the teacher's suggestions or modifications. Only one informant did not provide an answer. Students can learn correct pronunciation, acquire new vocabulary and be fluent in the process, not to mention, the chance to foster interculturality (Korkut and Çelik2, 2021). This will allow students to observe the persons in roles and how they act (exterior perspective) as well as interpret what the actors are thinking (interior perspective). As a result, students conceive that different behaviors have been characterized by different cultural standards. They may learn to respect and comprehend different cultures as they shape a new perspective (Giebert, 2014). Furthermore, students can speak a lot about different themes in oral expression class, share ideas and listen to each other, then, in post-listening, they could role-play a job interview for example using the information they have heard before and attained. Listening can come together with other skills practice (Richards and Burns, 2011).

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

Teachers and learners believe that listening is acquired naturally through doing all other language activities such as reading aloud, listening to the teacher's voice, practicing conversation exercises, or listening to audio recordings. Consequently, listening is neglected as a teaching subject. However, to tackle this phenomenon properly, foreign language teaching should take a different approach to teach listening and avoid exercises for testing listening, not vocalized written texts or spoken conversation. Teachers ought to start to use sounds and sound input to build up meaning and meaningful linguistic units. There are two types of knowledge listeners need during the listening comprehension process. The first is linguistic knowledge which is concerned with lexis, syntax, phonology, and discourse structure. The second is non-linguistic knowledge which involves comprehension features such as topic, different contexts, and most importantly general knowledge about the world and the way it works. These two types of knowledge are applied in listening comprehension teaching through the use of top-down and bottom-up processing to understand what learners go through as they learn to listen.

Two different types of listening experiences exist. There is a situation where a listener finds himself listening for pleasure in a relaxed way without concentrating on every word but simply listening without making any efforts to beat linguistic difficulties. This type of listening is called extensive listening and is mainly used to keep students motivated. The other situation involves a listener who finds himself

listening with great attention to catch and remember a series of necessary instructions. It is called intensive listening and is broadly used in listening practice nowadays. It aims at challenging students to make more efforts in learning the language as well as develop their listening skills. Teachers should use short passages to apply intensive listening which does not usually exceed a few minutes since they would be played several times.

Unlike grammar teaching, listening comprehension is a vital yet difficult task to be achieved by foreign language teachers since there are no specific rules to follow. Knowing what listening involves helps the teacher choose or design activities for learners as well as facilitates the process of knowing the real role of the teacher in developing oral language skills.

It is proper for learners to listen casually to a great quantity of spoken language distributed at different rates, accents, and intonations to help them become used to its nature and gradually develop listening fluency. Listeners possess the ability to comprehend and deal with aural input conveyed at an ordinary speed without being too much worried about decoding word meaning. As long as fluency is improved, comprehension will come along (Chang, 2018). Other strategies help bring positive feedback such as slow reading by the narrator to help understand the whole picture, the ability to know accents and understand the feelings of the character, faster reading, and listening to the narrator's voice was exciting and the text was read with much feeling. Again these reasons proved that extensive listening is much more helpful than reading only (ibid).

Teacher-in-role is a drama convention that involves the teacher making him/her possess a significant role that keeps everything under control, facilitates, and leads. This technique casts changes in the drama class where students and teachers cooperate and interact inside the drama transforming the traditional discourse into an aesthetic dialogue and granting learners new experiences and opportunities for interaction (Park, 2013).

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