DEEP LISTENING: TRANSCRIBING VIDEOS TO ENHANCE LEARNERS' FL LISTENING SKILLS

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Abstract
Deep listening is an educational approach that involves a high degree of concertation to decode a message. Transcribing is one of the most usual activities within this approach. This research aims to assess the efficiency of the deep listening approach among engineering degree students taking the subject of English B2. The students had to transcribe six videos in a period of twelve weeks, and their progress was measured with three listening tests that the students had to complete before, during, and after the twelve weeks. Their results were compared to those of a control group that watched the same videos. However, their exercises consisted of responding to open questions about the content of each video. Results showed that the experimental group had more significant progress than the control group, especially during the first six weeks of the experiment. In conclusion, the deep listening approach, more concretely transcription, seems to be a valuable resource for teachers that helps learners further develop their listening skills.

Keywords: Deep Listening, Transcription, Listening Skills, Foreign Language Learning.

1. Introduction

The acquisition of language skills is an integral part of the foreign language learning process. There are four primary language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. These skills can be categorized as productive or receptive, as well as written or oral. When classified as productive and receptive skills, listening and reading are placed into the receptive category, while speaking and writing are categorized as productive skills. Conversely, when considering written and oral skills, reading and writing belong to the written group, while listening and speaking constitute the speaking one. In addition to these skills, foreign language learning also involves various components, such as lexicon, grammar, or pronunciation, which require different approaches for their acquisition, such as memorization, understanding, or application (Krathwohl, 2010). Language skills

require unique strategies for development, and each skill also needs a distinctive method of instruction. This article focuses on the development of listening skills within the framework of the deep-listening approach, which involves concentration and exposure to active listening techniques.

Deep listening is an approach that has been used in the foreign language classroom and promotes learners to process and understand spoken language actively. It involves a further effort to concentrate on the audio, and presumably, this practice leads to better results in comparison to other methods. This paper aims to measure the impact of 15 hours of practice with the deep-listening approach among 16 bachelor students of the subject English Language at B2 Level (CEFRL) and compared it to 19 other students who followed a less active listening approach. This paper also introduces a literature review examining the concept of deep listening, its relevance to foreign language learning, and the factors that contribute to successful deep listening. Our hypothesis is that demanding a high degree of concentration through the deep listening approach will help learners achieve better results than students involved in less active listening exercises.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Development of Language Skills in a Foreign Language

Learning a foreign language is a complex process that entails the development of various language skills. This process requires the learners' hard work, concentration, and practice to master a foreign language. In this sense, learning a foreign language is not only about memorizing concepts but also entails the development of language skills that can be applied in real-life situations. The development of language skills in a foreign language is similar to other non-linguistic or intellectual activities, such as running a marathon or learning how to drive a car. In both cases, the individual must engage in continuous training to develop the necessary physical and mental abilities.

To this purpose, developing language skills in a foreign language requires a combination of different approaches and techniques. The first step is to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the language's structure, including its grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Learning how to read, write, and speak the language fluently is also important. However, memorizing concepts alone is not enough to develop language skills. A practical approach involving frequent practice and training is the optimal method to develop language abilities.

Some linguists consider immersion in the language to be one of the most effective strategies for developing language skills (Harmer, 2015; Larsen-Freeman, 2018; Nunan, 2014). Immersion involves surrounding the learners with the language through listening, reading, writing, and speaking in a natural context. This approach helps learners get used to the rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation of the language and learn new words and phrases in context. Immersion can be

achieved through various means, such as living in a foreign country, watching TV shows and movies in the target language, listening to music, and practicing conversation with native speakers. According to Krashen (1982), language acquisition occurs through exposure to meaningful language input rather than memorizing rules and vocabulary.

Another effective way to develop language skills is through communicative language teaching (CLT), which emphasizes using language for communication in real-life situations. In the words of Richards and Rodgers (2014), this approach encourages learners to use the language actively rather than passively by engaging in tasks that involve speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The focus is on using the language for a purpose rather than on memorizing grammar rules and vocabulary lists. According to Littlewood (1981), communicative competence involves not only knowing the rules of grammar and vocabulary but also being able to use them appropriately in communication. This approach helps learners to understand the context of the language and to develop their language skills in a more natural way.

At last, new forms of technology have also brought further opportunities for foreign language learning (Levi, 2009; Stockwell, 2010). Technology can provide learners with access to authentic materials and language resources, as well as opportunities for practice and feedback. Some apps provide learners with exercises that cover all aspects of language learning, such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and listening comprehension. They also provide learners with instant feedback, which helps them to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to focus on areas that need improvement.

2.2. Listening and Deep Listening

In the context of foreign language learning, the ability to listen effectively is essential for successful communication and comprehension (Buck, 2017; Graham, 2020; Vandergrift, 2020). However, many learners struggle to develop this skill, particularly when it comes to processing and understanding spoken language. One approach that has gained increasing attention in recent years is deep listening, which involves actively engaging with spoken language to enhance understanding and comprehension. This section reviews the concept of deep listening in foreign language learning, including its theoretical foundations, practical applications, and potential benefits.

The concept of deep listening draws on several theoretical frameworks, including those from linguistics, psychology, and education. From a linguistic perspective, deep listening can be seen as a process of decoding and interpreting the sounds, words, and phrases of a foreign language in order to derive meaning from them. This learning process involves recognizing the phonological and syntactic patterns of the language and understanding its cultural and contextual nuances (Krashen, 1982). From a psychological perspective, deep listening can be

seen as a process of active engagement with spoken language, which involves attending to the words themselves and the speaker's tone, emphasis, and nonverbal cues (Brown & Yule, 1983). This approach is consistent with theories of cognitive processing, which suggest that attention and memory are critical factors in effective language learning (Baddeley, 1992).

In the context of foreign language learning, deep listening can be fostered through a range of practical strategies and techniques. One fundamental approach is to provide learners with opportunities to engage with spoken language in various contexts, such as through listening to authentic materials, engaging in conversational exchanges, or participating in group discussions (Nation & Hunston, 2013). These activities can be supplemented with targeted listening exercises, such as dictation, comprehension questions, or note-taking, which can help learners develop their ability to process and understand spoken language (Vandergrift, 2016). Other strategies that can be used to promote deep listening include focusing on using context clues, prediction, and summarization, which can help learners derive meaning from spoken language even when encountering unfamiliar words or structures (Rost, 2002).

For the interest of this paper, our strategy using this approach is the transcription of audio. Transcribing oral documents in a foreign language helps students improve their listening skills. Transcribing audio means converting spoken language into written form, which can then be used to practice pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Transcription is particularly helpful for language learners who aim to improve their listening skills and develop fluency in a foreign language. Other authors have previously introduced research on the practice of transcribing as a learning task in the foreign language classroom. See Cooke (2013), Ferdiansyah and Nakagawa (2013), Hoskins, Sasaki and Johnson (2004), Kotani and Yoshimi (2018), Lynch (2001), Mennim (2011), or Stillwell, Curabba, Alexander, Kidd, Kim, Stone and Wyle (2010), among others.

Transcribing audio recordings allows students to practice listening to natural language, which can be more challenging than listening to language learning materials (Danan, 2016; Sheppard & Butler, 2017). Authentic language introduces colloquial language, idiomatic expressions, and cultural references that are not usually taught in language courses. Transcription helps learners recognize new vocabulary and grammar structures and improves pronunciation (Derwing & Munro, 2005; Karimi, 2013). Moreover, it enables learners to monitor their progress by comparing their transcriptions to the original audio and correcting their errors (Patkin, 2021; York, (2020). Additionally, it enhances learners' writing skills as they are required to produce organized and coherent transcriptions (Grace-Kim, 2023; Williams & Larkin, 2023).

Transcription exercises involve the process of listening to an audio recording in the target language and subsequently writing it. Noumeir (2006) explained that transcriptions involve converting audio data into a written document. In the context

of music, Klapuri and Davy (2006) suggested that transcription entails converting an acoustic signal into some type of notation. However, Duranti (1997) added that transcription is also akin to fixing fleeting events, such as utterances or gestures on a paper or electronic device, to analyze them rather than only writing down oral discourse. Thus, from a multimodal perspective, transcription may have utility in language teaching, though its primary objective remains developing language skills and acquiring linguistic forms.

As previously mentioned in the literature, the practice of transcription represents a viable approach within the foreign language classroom, as affirmed by scholars such as Clark (1993), Hoskins, Sasaki, and Johnson (2004), and Rowe (2012). The inspiration behind this pedagogical technique can be traced to the concept of deep listening, where students engage in activities that require intense concentration while listening and simultaneously completing exercises, particularly dictation activities (Clark, 1993). Such activities can be classified as bottom-up approaches, emphasizing the recognition of words and the conveyed message rather than top-down interpretations of the message (Sheppard & Butler, 2017). According to Hoskins, Sasaki, and Johnson (2004, p.3), deep listening dictation exercises entail "transcribing while listening to an academic lecture followed by carefully correcting the transcription and then listening reflectively while reading the self-corrected transcription". Thus, it seems that students who make a concerted effort to concentrate on their language learning tasks are more likely to improve their language proficiency and skills.

Furthermore, transcribing exercises in the language classroom offers students the advantage of working at their own pace, allowing them to progress according to their individual capabilities. As Tsui and Fullilove (1998) noted, transcribing activities promote learners' ability to decode spoken language into written form, which complements top-down activities prioritizing fluency over form. In this sense, it helps learners improve their listening skills by forcing them to focus on what they are hearing and identify the individual sounds that construct the language (Brown & Yule, 1983; Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). By listening closely and repeatedly to the audio, learners can also improve their ability to identify and distinguish between different accents and dialects (Yibokou, 2023)

This approach enables students to listen to audio fragments repeatedly and individually, providing ample opportunities to comprehend and transcribe the message. Thus, learners can avoid any anxiety caused by the speaker's voice, pace, accent, vocabulary, the situational context of the conversation, and the audio quality in class (Renandya & Farrell, 2011; Underwood, 1989). In addition to improving listening skills, repetitive exposure to vocabulary helps language learners acquire new language structures and lexical items. Researchers such as Meier (2015), and Smidt and Hegelheimer (2004) suggested that this learning could be a focal method for helping learners acquire new vocabulary and language forms since it is a way of input like reading. In the words of these authors, by transcribing audio recordings, learners can be exposed to new vocabulary and

phrases that they may not have come across otherwise, leading to an expansion of their language skills. Additionally, this method can help learners understand how to use the new vocabulary and phrases appropriately in their intended contexts. Similarly, this practice can also improve their language by exposing them to the language's grammatical structures and patterns. By analyzing how sentences are constructed and how words are used in context, learners can develop a better understanding of grammar rules and improve their ability to use them correctly.

As a result, the development of listening skills can have a range of benefits for foreign language learners, including improved comprehension, increased confidence, and enhanced communication skills. By enabling learners to engage more fully with spoken language, deep listening can also promote cultural sensitivity and intercultural competence as learners become more attuned to the nuances of the language and the contexts in which it is used (Byram, 1997).

In conclusion, deep listening could be considered a suitable approach that enables learners to comprehend and process spoken language more efficiently and effectively. This theoretical framework has explored the concept of deep listening, its significance in the context of foreign language learning, and the various factors that contribute to its successful implementation. A thorough examination of a diverse range of academic sources has been conducted to explore the theoretical underpinnings of deep listening, as well as practical approaches and methodologies that can help learners develop this skill in the area of foreign language learning.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants were 35 students enrolled in the subject of English B2 in a bachelor's industrial engineering degree at Universitat Politècnica de València. The experimental group consisted of 16 students from group EB2B3, and the control group had 19 students from group EB2B2. Their age range was between 19 and 22, and Spanish was the only nationality within the groups. The students who were considered and accepted for this study were those who had completed the six exercises and the three listening tests.

The subject English B2 is divided into three blocks, which involve sixty teaching hours in total. The distribution is as follows: thirty hours of theory, fifteen hours of practice in the classroom, and fifteen hours of practice in a computing laboratory. Each session is two and a half hours long, with two weekly sessions for twelve weeks. Thus, there are twelve theory lessons, six practice lessons in the classroom, and six other practice lessons in a computing laboratory.

The theoretical and practical hours of class combine the study of the English language and its use. In contrast, the computing laboratory sessions focus on the learners' individual and autonomous reinforcement of reading and listening skills

and further practice of the language with self-correcting written exercises. Our experiment was implemented within fifteen hours of practice in a computing laboratory, distributed in 6 sessions.

3.2. Tools

Six videos were used during the semester, lasting between 2:59 and 6:40 minutes. Whereas the experimental group had to transcribe the videos, the control group had to answer some questions related to their content. Regarding the transcriptions, students had to transcribe a maximum of 4:00 minutes in cases where the video length exceeded four minutes. These videos were extracted from the website [1]'Harvard Business Review'. They were individual speeches (3) and interviews between two participants (2). It should be noted that these exercises were combined with the regular material of this subject, six worksheets extracted from the book 'Communicating Across Cultures' (Dignen, 2011).

Three listening tests were designed to assess participants' progress with the material available on the website 'Learn English' [2]developed by the British Council. The material selected belonged to the B2 level (CEFRL), which included twelve exercises. Our tests contained three listening exercises each, with two multiple-choice exercises and a true or false one. Nine exercises were used, and each test contained twenty items.

3.3. Procedure

Our first step was to measure the learners' initial level with one of the three tests. After establishing their initial level, the students started the subject. In addition to the completion of some listening exercises from the book 'Communicating Across Cultures' (Dignen, 2011), during their theory and practice in-class time, the students also had to do an additional listening task every two weeks during their computing laboratory sessions. While the control group listened to a video from the website 'Harvard Business Review' and responded to a series of open questions (4-6), the experimental group watched the same video and had to transcribe a maximum of four minutes from audio to text. In addition, the students also had to complete a worksheet with other listening and comprehension exercises from the same book (Dignen, 2011), which did not involve transcribing.

In order to analyze learners' progress, the participants took the pre-test on the first day of class and two post-tests during the semester, the first on the seventh week and the second on the twelfth week, the last week of their semester. Results were compared to determine the progress of each group of students.

[1] Source: https://hbr.org/

[2] Source: https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening/b2-listening

4. Results

As previously explained, the participants were divided into experimental and control groups. Depending on their group, each student had to complete a series of exercises distributed in six sessions and do three listening tests to monitor their progress. Whereas the experimental group had to write transcriptions, the control group responded to open questions after watching the same video. The three listening tests were used to monitor the learners' progress and compare their performance as a group. Table 1 shows the participants' individual results in each of the three listening tests, with 20 being the highest possible score.

Table 1. Participants' test results.

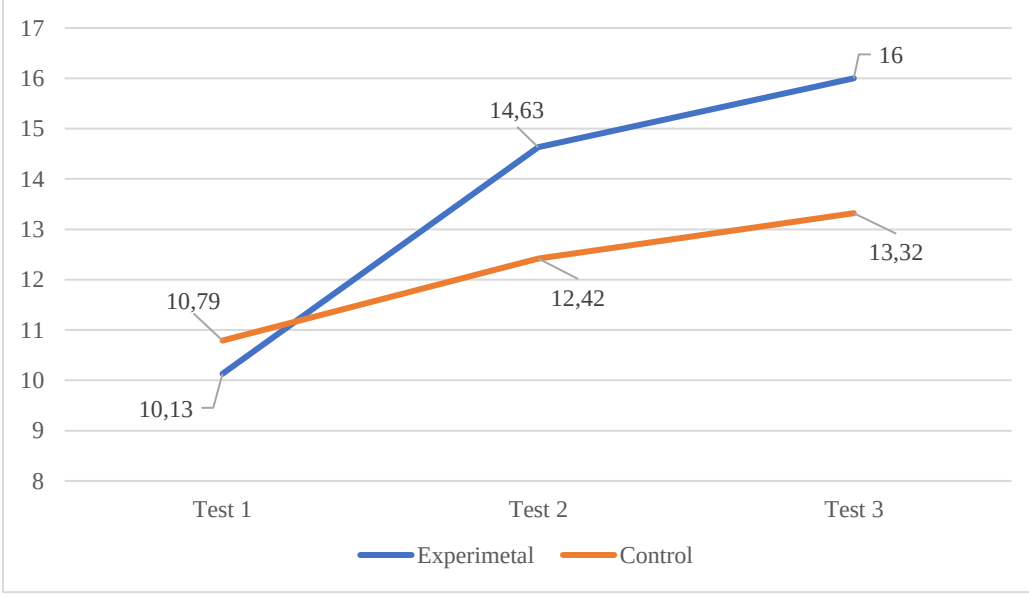
	Experimental G.			***Control Group***		
Particip.	**T.1**	**T.2**	**T.3**	**T.1**	**T.2**	**T.3**
1	12	17	18	8	10	11
2	10	14	15	12	14	15
3	10	15	17	14	15	15
4	9	12	14	10	12	13
5	14	18	20	6	8	10
6	11	17	18	9	11	11
7	10	16	16	16	17	16
8	11	17	16	16	15	18
9	6	11	14	8	11	13
10	8	13	14	12	13	15
11	11	18	17	15	18	17
12	13	19	19	13	13	15
13	6	9	13	11	13	13
14	8	10	12	11	12	14
15	11	13	15	8	10	11
16	12	15	18	10	12	13
17				7	9	11
18				9	11	10
19				10	12	12
Mean	**10.13**	**14.63**	**16.00**	**10.79**	**12.42**	**13.32**

Results revealed that the experimental group's progress was superior to that of the control group. The initial test showed that the control group scored slightly higher than the experimental group. As shown in Figure 1, the mean result of the experimental group was 10.13 out of 20, and the same for the control group was 10.79. In this case, we can determine that the percent variation between the experimental and the control group was -6.16%. We also observed that the range of marks within the experimental group was between 6 and 14, and 6 and 16 within the control group.

After six weeks and three practices in the computing laboratory, the experimental group scored considerably higher on the second test. In this case, the experimental group scored 14.63 out of 20, whereas the control group scored 12.42. The percent variation between the two groups showed that the experimental group was superior, with a 17.74% advantage. In addition, their progress was different, and whereas the progress by the experimental group was 44.44% compared to the previous test, the progress by the control group was 17.54%. The range of marks was between 9 and 19 within the experimental group and between 8 and 18 within the control group.

During the last week of class, the students completed another equivalent test. After twelve weeks and six practices in the computing laboratory, the experimental group scored a mean result of 16.00 out of 20, whereas the result from the control group was 13.32. At this point, the percent variation between the two groups showed that the experimental group was 20.16% superior. Furthermore, the progress by the experimental group was 58.02% in comparison to the first test and 9.40% compared to the second test. On the other hand, the overall progress by the control group was 27.29% when compared with the first test and 7.20% in comparison with the second one. Finally, it should be noted that the mark range was between 12 and 20 within the experimental group and 10 and 18 within the control group.

Figure 1. Participants' listening skills progress.



5. Conclusion

This research concludes that deep listening can be a practical approach to enhance learners' listening skills. Our research has shown the extent to which a group of learners who trained their listening skills with two different approaches differed in terms of their progress. In this respect, those students who had been transcribing texts obtained better results in the listening tests than those who had followed a less active approach.

As explained by previous literature, the deep listening approach requires the learners' active participation. In this study, the participants had to transcribe from audio to text. From a cognitive perspective, learners need to concentrate in order to recognize and decode each word conveyed in the video or audio track. As a result, the learners' degree of concentration is more intense than in other less active approaches (Clark, 1993).

As suggested by Hoskins, Sasaki, and Johnson (2004), we expected that the experimental group would obtain better results because students who make a concerted effort to concentrate on their language learning tasks are more likely to improve their language proficiency and skills. These results could be compared to other non-linguistic disciplines; for example, in sports, athletes who complete more intense exercises tend to progress better than those who do the same exercise with an inferior degree of intensity or passivity.

A relevant finding in this study was the fact that the learners' progress was different between the two periods. The first period consisted of the first six weeks, during which progress was made between the first and second tests. In contrast, the second period refers to weeks seven to twelve, and the progress of this period can be measured by the difference between the second and the third tests. As observed, the progress during the first period was superior to the second; this pattern was repeated among the experimental and control groups. We think their exposure and initial training to a specific format of activities and their quick adaptation could be the reason for this difference.

In conclusion, deep listening seems to be a practical approach that educators should consider helping learners enhance their listening skills. In this sense, it should be acknowledged that our proposed activity demands intensity and prevents students from being involved in other tasks; it requires exclusive focus on the activity for success. In an age in which the number of distractions has considerably increased in comparison to any previous time before the digital era, exercises that demand concentration and intensity can also help learners overcome their difficulties to escape from either some internal or external distractions that interfere with their cognitive performance.

In further research, this study could be extended by using more participants or other transcriptions. We could only measure their degree of motivation before and after the completion of the activities or their degree of stress to determine if any of these variables could have interfered with the results. One of the difficulties

that we encountered was the reduced number of participants. The proposed exercises were part of the students' assessment; however, some students did not complete all the activities or the tests, and as a result, they were not included in this study.

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