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**Enhancing EFL Learners' Listening Skills Through
Repetition Techniques Using Short Stories**

The Case of First-Year Middle School Students in Algeria

*Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for Master's
Degree in English Civilization and Literature*

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to **my parents** for their stupendous support,

to my great family, and

to all my best friends.

Abed Elkader

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Special thanks are owed to my supervisor Mrs. Korichi, S., whom I have been fortunate to have as a supervisor; she gave me her time, guidance and valuable comments, and without her, this work would not have been completed and accomplished. I am also grateful to all my teachers who have helped me throughout my university years. I would also thank the friendly students of the department of English at Laghouat University, who took part in this dissertation.

Abstract

The present study investigated the use of the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM), as a teaching method for EFL learners at middle school and the reaction of both teachers and students towards it. First year middle school students have English as a foreign language, academically, for the first time in their education career; they are, then, vocabulary enrichment seekers. The teachers' unawareness of the students' need for a start-up package of basic vocabulary for progression towards mastering EFL is inevitable. This study investigated ALM application and use on first-year middle school. The focus was placed on enhancing the student's listening skills and vocabulary achievement in the view of teachers. The study explores the repetition technique, using the audible short stories. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that if ALM was used appropriately to teach English to first-year middle school students through repetition techniques, using short stories, this would enhance learners' listening skills, and boost vocabulary storage. To prove this hypothesis, two questionnaires were designed and administered to a group of first year middle school students and teachers across Algeria respectively, to collect data about their attitudes concerning ALM as a teaching method for the teachers and the repetition techniques for the students, with the use of short stories. Results showed that the sample students have the ability to learn vocabulary and sentence patterns easily, while the teachers are the guides who follow the process of students' learning during every class, which gives an advantage to learners to acquire more expressions because of the teachers' academic instructions.

2.3. Teaching Listening Skills to EFL Learners.....	28
2-3-1. Increasing Confidence to Listen.....	29
2-3-2. Learner Setback with Listening Comprehension.....	30
2-4. Improving Listening Skills Using Repetition Techniques.....	32
2-4-1. Drilling Repetition.....	32
2-4-2. Spaced Repetition.....	33
Conclusion.....	34

Chapter Three: Data Presentation and Analysis

Introduction.....	36
3.1. Research Method.....	36
3.1.1. Research Population and Sample.....	36
3.1.2. Research Tools.....	37
3.2. Findings and Discussions.....	37
3.2.1. Questionnaires' Analyses and Discussions.....	38
3.2.1.1. Students' Questionnaire Description.....	38
3.2.1.2. Students' Questionnaire Analysis.....	39
3.2.1.3. Background Questions.....	39
3-2-1-4. Classroom Inquiry Questions.....	42
3-2-1-5. The Opinion Question.....	46
3-2-2. Teachers' Questionnaire.....	48
3-2-2-1. Teachers' Questionnaire Description.....	48
3-2-2.2. Teachers' Questionnaire Analysis.....	48
3-2-2-3. Class Information.....	49
Conclusion.....	61
General Conclusion	62
References	65
Appendices	70
Resumé	75
ملخص	76

List of Abbreviations

APP: -----Application

ALM:-----Audio lingual Method

EFL:-----English as a Foreign Language

GTA:-----Grammar Translation Approach

CLM:-----Communicative Learning Method

CBI:-----Cost Benefits Analysis

CH:-----Chapter

Q:-----Question

A:-----Answer

%:-----Per cent

List of Figures

Figure 1: Ebbinghaus' Forgetting Curve and Review Cycle.....	17
Figure 2: Five Stages of Listening Process, by Tumibay (2017).....	23
Figure 3: Students' Gender Frequency.....	39
Figure 4: Students' Motivation Frequency	40
Figure 5: Students' English Level	41
Figure 6: Student's Frequency of Problems in Listening	42
Figure 7: Students' Problems of Listening	43
Figure 8: Student's Videos in English Watch Time.....	44
Figure 9: Students' Videos Comprehension	44
Figure 10: Students' Quantity of Learned Words.....	45
Figure 11: Student's Duration of Memorized Words.....	46
Figure 12: Students' Opinions about Short Stories.....	47
Figure 13: Teachers' Gender.....	49
Figure 14: First Year Middle School Teachers.....	50
Figure 15: Teachers' Convenient Number of Students.....	50
Figure 16: Teacher's Opinion Decreasing the Number of Students	51
Figure 17: Teacher's Judgment about Their Students' Enjoyment of Learning English	52
Figure 18: Teacher's Judgment of their Students' Level of Listening	52
Figure 19: Teacher's Methods of Teaching in Class	53
Figure 20: Teacher's Technology Usage in Class.....	54
Figure 21: Teacher's Type of Technology Usage	54
Figure 22: Teachers Preference of Learned Words per Session	55
Figure 23: Teacher's Frequency of Repetition for Memorization.....	56
Figure 24: Teacher's Ways of Attracting Student's Attention	57
Figure 25: Teachers' Control Regaining Methods.....	57
Figure 26: Teachers' Opinion about Short Stories and Anecdotes Implementation.....	58
Figure 27: Teacher's Opinions about Administration Support.....	59
Figure 28: Teachers' Opinion about the Government Contribution.....	59

General Introduction

During my school career, I have found that among the most beneficial and workable ways in learning a foreign language is through practising much listening. I personally have tried to learn three different foreign languages by memorizing patterns of sentences from listening to simple and short stories. I discovered that this type of approaching the target language has helped me improve my accent, as well as my listening skills boosted to a good level without even knowing the meaning of these sentences. This was my first inkling that individual learners might have different ways to solve the same language problem; each equally valid, but different! I have become curious about how EFL students learn through listening and repeating. The notion of language learning methods, especially the Audio-lingual method, has intrigued me. It has been realized for long that Audio-lingual method (ALM) is an appropriate teaching method for EFL learners, especially for young learners, for its use of repetition technique.

The present study is an attempt to highlight some views on ALM, use and implementation. In EFL context, this method of teaching has been proposed for several decades as one that gained well reputation. The researcher in this study investigates ALM application and use on first- year middle school, focusing on enhancing the student's listening skills and vocabulary achievement. The study explores the repetition technique, using the audible short stories. The study emphasizes also the utility of ALM to drill the students by the use of grammatical sentence patterns to train their ears, to be able to listen correctly and to have a general idea about the sentence meaning.

To conduct the study, the researcher selected first- year middle school students at Laghouat, as a case study, to determine how ALM is implemented to teach English as a foreign language. However, this could not be accomplished due to the interruption that happened because of Covid-19 pandemic; instead, the researcher went on another path and a

new sample to collect data. Online groups of English language middle school teachers, from diverse cities, across Algeria are chosen, and as for students, the researcher asked colleagues who have relatives who study in first-year middle school and get them to participate. Two questionnaires were used to collect data, one devoted to students, and the other to teachers, about what helps EFL students enhance their listening skills, and fixing any other problems that may face them during the listening process.

Thus, the following questions were posed:

1. What are the most effective ALM techniques that are used in teaching EFL learners' listening skills?
2. Can first-year middle school students' listening skills be enhanced through repetition techniques, using short stories, in EFL class?
3. Can first-year middle school students' vocabulary items be enriched through repetition techniques, using short stories, in EFL class?

There are different types of learners in the classroom which will make a challenge for the teacher to find the appropriate methods, styles, and strategies to deliver such knowledge to his students in the classroom. Accordingly, it can be hypothesized that if ALM was used appropriately to teach English to first-year middle school students through repetition techniques, using short stories, this would enhance learners' listening skills, and boost vocabulary storage.

This study aims to have a general overview about Audio-lingual method; precisely the focus is on the repetition technique. The most benefits of ALM on teaching EFL listening skills using short stories for first year middle school students are addressed. It seeks to clarify its process when teaching language and its functional impact when learning new words or sentences so as to improve EFL learners' listening skills. This study will also introduce some

proposal instructions for teachers when using ALM to let the learner develop his listening skills.

The study had some limits to be considered. First, time limits: this study was applied during the months of the holiday (an exceptional holiday) of the academic year 2019/2020. Second, spatial boundaries: this study was limited to some middle school teachers of English in different cities of Algeria, using online basis. Then, objective limits: the results of this study were determined based on the tools used in the current study, represented by questionnaires devoted to middle school teachers and students.

We all have innate skills on listening when we are born, but after we grow up, some may learn how to improve these skills and some may lose interest keeping on. Improving listening skills can be a significant step for a language learner; it should help him gain more and better cognitive abilities. Listening is the main skill used to communicate on the target language. In order to understand the process of ALM and its effects on listening and vocabulary enhancement, one must get back to the previous studies conducted in the field.

First, Setiawan (2011) in his study "The Use of Audio-Lingual Method to Improve Students Oral Past Tense" discussed the use of audio-lingual method to improve students' oral past tense of the tenth grade students of SMA Kesatrian 1 Semarang (Senior high school in Semarang, Indonesia). The objectives of his study were to implement the audio-lingual method in teaching/learning process and to know the extent of using audio-lingual method to boost students' use of past tense in oral communication. He came to conclude that using repetition drills, especially the substitution drill and transformation drill, were the most effective when delivering simple past tense.

Next, Hartati (2012) spoke about "The Influence of Audio Lingual Method on the Students' Vocabulary Achievement at the First Year Students of MTsN Leuwimunding"; in

his study, he attempted to find out how first year students of MTsN (MTs Negeri Middle school in Indonesia) would acquire vocabulary through the audio-lingual method in order to use it in spoken or written forms. He argued that this method played an important role in the four language skills. In that, by mastering vocabulary, students will be able to produce many sentences either in spoken or written discourse.

Another study by Saifuddin (2016), entitled "Phonetic Symbols through Audio-lingual Method to Improve the Students' Listening Skill", stresses the importance of ALM in improving listening skills through phonetic symbols. Saifuddin made his research focusing mainly on testing how English students were able to differentiate phonetic symbols; his research was most likely successful; he also used Classroom Action Research design as he considered it helpful because of its practical advantage to solve problems to the young learner based on the researcher experiments. He explained that Audio-Lingual Method was one of the alternative methods to make the EFL classroom more effective.

In teaching English through developing listening skills, Beghou's (2016) study "A general analysis Teaching English Oral Expression and Listening Comprehension at the Department of Letters and English Language, University of Constantine 1: Past and Present Ups and Downs", spoke about Oral Expression and Listening Comprehension and how they were taught in the classical and LMD systems, and the methods that were used; he considered his teaching career as variable experiments throughout many years, observing several samples of both students and teachers how they were taught.

From this standpoint, the researcher conducted the current study in an attempt to uncover the role of ALM in teaching English as a foreign language to first year middle school students in the view of teachers to enhance listening skills and vocabulary achievement through repetition, using short stories. In light of the aforementioned, the significance of this study lies in the findings it offers. The study helps to sensitise instructors and middle school teachers of

English in Algeria to the importance of ALM as a teaching method with its set of strategies and techniques to be used in the classroom to improve the listening comprehension skills of the learners and enrich their vocabulary.

The framework of this study is composed of three chapters: two theoretical and one practical. In the first chapter, ALM and its historical background was presented, giving a sample of few previous studies and perspectives on the implementation of Audio-lingualism and its results in other parts of the world. The first chapter, also, discussed two main techniques frequently used in ALM: the repetition drill and the spaced repetition, and their after effects on EFL learners whether they were positive or negative. The second chapter dealt with the listening skill: its definition, its stages and the various types of listeners, as well suggestions of some principles to develop the listening skills for EFL learners. The chapter Concluded with highlighting repetition techniques that would enhance learners' listening skills. Last, the third chapter is about the case study and field work. It included the research method used, the presentation and discussion of the results, and ended with a few suggestions for future projects.

Chapter One

Audiolingualism in Foreign Language

Teaching

Introduction

This chapter will mainly focus on the theoretical side of Audiolingualism as a teaching method. The first and foremost point to tackle is the historical emergence of the method, investigating its historical roots and what it derived from and its first uses. Defining the method and its processes in EFL classroom will be also highlighted, by providing previous perspectives from different scholars and researchers across the world, and delving deeper into Audiolingualism techniques identifying the most used and efficient (drilling repetition and spaced repetition). This chapter will, finally, discuss the effects of repetition techniques on the learners, positively and negatively.

1-1 The Emergence of Audio Lingual Method

The audiolingual method was used first as a teaching method during the Second World War. "During the first part of the Cold War era, the US Foreign Service Institute published Audio-lingual-based instructional materials on several African languages" (Byram, 2000, p. 30). The audiolingual method is a method for teaching EFL learners which emphasized the teaching of listening and speaking before reading and writing. This method is a combination between behavioural psychology and linguistics. (Hasanah and Dahniar 2017)

When using Audiolingualism as a teaching method, it is required to have a fine understanding to its process of learning. One should shed light on the historical overview to the emergence of this method and how it started as a teaching method in the past. At first, the establishment of Audiolingualism method was not intended for academic purposes, but it was introduced in order to serve the US army objectives; hence, the development of ALM started during the Second World War (Wilfried, 2001). The US government found it a great tool to enhance its language personnel quickly and effectively. Therefore, the government financed

many programmes supervised by universities to increase the number of military unites who can read and write the foreign language (Matamoros-González et al., 2017).

The main factor of ALM emergence was the start of World War II, which created the need to appoint a large number of American servicemen all over the world. Consequently, in need to teach those soldiers with better verbal communication skills, the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) was established in 1942. In effect, it had emerged before 1942, because in 1941, it was adopted by the University of Michigan where the first English Language institute in the U.S was created. The director of this institute tried to develop this method by using the basic principles of structural linguistics¹. The director of the institute was Charles Fries who applied the principles of structural linguistics to language teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

In 1941, the world war came to the Pacific which made the Americans think of boosting their forces by reinforcing their soldiers' skills in communication so it became a necessity to teach the languages of the enemies. That put a struggle to the US army due to the foreign languages not taught at schools or universities. "In setting up such courses, the trainers could make use of the experience American linguists had gained in the study of American Indian languages" (Byram et al., 2000, p. 399). That fact was the cause of establishing new methods of teaching in order to put these people through training courses to be ready to speak and read common exotic languages.

By the end of the 1950s, the Audiolingual method gained more attention to foreign language teaching in the U.S which led the language teaching specialists such as Charles Fries

¹ Structural Linguistics developed in the post-First World War period. Structural linguistics is an approach to linguistics, which stresses examining language as a static system (chronic) of interconnected units. It is originated in the work of the Suisse linguist Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* published in 1916 by his students. It involves collecting a corpus of utterances and then applying discovery procedures in an attempt to classify all of the elements of the corpus at their different linguistic levels (McGregor, 2009).

to think about promoting a method that suits the conditions of the U.S. College and university classrooms, depending on experiences of the army programs (Freyberg, 2006).

1-2 Audiolingualism Definition

Many linguists and psychologists such as B.F Skinner, Leonard Bloomfield and Charles Fries were involved in developing ALM since its first appearance during the Second World War; each with his own definitions and explanations according to their own specialty may it be psychology, linguistics or even sociology. "Rather than emphasizing vocabulary acquisition through exposure to its use in situations, the Audio-lingual method drills students in the use of grammatical sentence patterns" (Anggraeni, 2007, p.13).

Bloomfield, for instance, was one of the American linguists who led the development of structural linguistics (Meier, 2012) in the United States the early decades of the 20th century. "Bloomfield had produced a pamphlet, setting out the guidelines for anyone wanted to undertake the study of a language for which there was no formal training available" (Byram et al., 2000, p. 399). That figure has been considered as one of those who put the first basics of the army method and made it ready to be used in schools; it showed successful results in teaching foreign language. Byram et al. (ibid) further stated that:

[Bloomfield] emerged as the 'trained linguist'. This was someone who knew the ins and outs of the language, who instructed the informant. In short he was the person who knew how to process and re-work the raw materials supplied by the informant and make them ready for use in the classroom.

The birth of Audio-lingual method appeared when behaviourist psychologists such as B.F. Skinner were forming the belief that all behaviour (including language) was learnt through repetition and positive or negative reinforcement. ALM principles were developed in the

University of Michigan by Charles Fries, in 1945, who gave it also the name of Michigan Method (Byram et al., 2000).

Teaching EFL students in a class or group which may include students of all ages is intensely focused on a practical effort. Making students active participants is an effective strategy to create fluent English speakers, "Younger students especially are adept at distinguishing and producing the sounds of a foreign language, but they need systematic training, from the start, before adolescent embarrassment sets in to build up their confidence progressively and repeatedly" (Buck & Wightwick, 2013, p. 26). Between the two world wars, the United States involved itself in the teaching of English as a second language, using either a modified direct method approach², a reading-based approach³, or a reading-oral approach⁴ (Darian, 1972).

In the last few decades there were other proposed teaching methods aside from ALM (Direct method, Aural-Oral method); some were by American teachers due to the large number of immigrants at that time such as Conversation Method. The Audiolingual Method was taken from the army method also called Aural-Oral approach, Structural approach and Pattern Method, reflecting its military roots (Koonthar et.al. 2018). In addition to Bloomfield's contribution into the emergence of ALM; it was also developed by university scholars, including Charles Fries who was trained in structural linguistics. Thus, Audiolingual method was derived from Behaviourist Language Theory which was based on structural principles, correlated with the use of habitual learning with repetitive drills (Febri,

² It is a method for teaching foreign languages that uses the target language, discarding any use of mother tongue in the classroom Brown, H. D. (2000)

³ The reader-centered approach, based on reader-response criticism, emphasizes the individual as a reader-responder. It argues that reading a literary text is part of a complex process that includes a collaboration between the writer, the text, and the reader Russell, D. L. (2009)

⁴ The Reading-Oral Approach or situational language teaching is based on a structural view of language. Speech, structures and a focus on a set of basic vocabulary items are seen as the basing of language teaching Richards, J. C. & Rogers, T. S. (1986)

n.d). "In Behavioral theory, human behaviour is the result of learning, so it can be changed by manipulating and creating learning conditions" (Budiman, 2017, p. 112).

1-3 Perspectives on Audiolingualism

Since its emergence 1950s, ALM has been a sore topic of interest for many researchers and scholars who had different points of view towards the method such as Richards and Freeman. Both defined and developed the method according to their own perspectives. Some others studied the application of ALM in the educational systems in their respective countries; we take the example of Mei (2018) and his study in China.

Mei (ibid) explained in his research the importance, the uses and the advantages of Audio-lingual Method. He argued that ALM principally focuses on listening and speaking, and many teachers of English preferred to use it in their classes, and had notable results concerning the development of their student's learning potential. Consequently, many of outstanding junior and senior schools are adopting this teaching method to train their students' oral competence. According to Mei several teachers in China were motivated to use ALM and apparently the implementation was great success and very productive. From the student's perspective, ALM provided them with more opportunities for practising English; this method suggests adopting English in the teaching and learning process, so that students can have the approach to use English. Besides, the Audio-lingual Method emphasises the importance of sentence patterns (Mei, 2018). He wanted to show that ALM has a special feature which is the use of English when listening and speaking, hence the use of less native language (L1) when teaching beginners. In this way, ALM can train learners' English thought process "Although we now advocate meaning learning, we can't deny the benefits of recitation, especially for those beginners" (Mei, ibid, p. 49). As such, the Audio-lingual Method requires EFL teachers to try and use English while teaching only, or use very little mother language (L1) during the

teaching process. This practice, as Mei stated, will lower the interruption from (L1) thought patterns, thus gradually cultivating learners to think in English patterns.

As a matter of fact, most foreign language beginners get used to translating what they have listened to, into their mother tongue for memorization; because beginner's minds got used to their mother tongue language patterns, and before they need to express them out, they will translate what they acquired to target language with the help of thinking pattern of their mother tongue (Alharbi, 2010). Therefore; if both teachers and students involve English in learning, they will become familiar with the target foreign language at a certain level, and get used to it gradually (ibid).

Furthermore, compared with grammar memorization, sentence pattern practice is more easily mastered and applied by learners precisely beginners. Some linguists have proved the effectiveness of pattern teaching in foreign language, such as Krashen (1983). In the light of the characteristics of the ALM, thus, it would be better to apply it to teaching English beginners (Saun, 2014). From the perspective of psychology, children and students in preschool age do well in imitation and repetition, since they have not yet developed the cognitive system and their acquisition completely, as Saun explained.

A study conducted by Richards and Rodgers (2001) showed that ALM including other few methods such as the direct method can be categorized under the Behaviourist trend. "Practitioners of this approach viewed that repeating phrases through the controlled practice of common language patterns and language chunks would lead to mastery of the target language" (González et al., 2017, p. 969). However, unlike the GTA (Grammar-Translation Approach), in the Audio-lingual Approach, the reliance of drills emphasised the repetition of oral structural patterns.

According to Cuadrado and Cuadrado (2016), ALM emphasis is on enhancing students' learning skills through developing their pronunciation, grammar, responsiveness and capacity. To achieve the best findings, the Audio-lingual Method, also, applied audio materials in this processes besides books. Auditory materials would provide learners with more practice and the books with written input. This created sort of connection between reading and listening so students had to listen, read, and memorize structures, parts of phrases, and even complete dialogues. In recent time, "EFL teachers also use visuals, songs as audio materials, or a combination of both visual and audio resources to make drills more interactive" (González et al., 2017, p. 969). Similarly, to boost the practice of drills, teachers regularly make use of language laboratories, in order to help the learners achieve a higher quality in listening and repetition practice (González et al 2017).

ALM considers language teaching as the same as teaching a behaviour or developing a habit for the students, stated Xia (2014). According to him, speech that is drilled by the teacher is supposed to be spoken by the students and not written; therefore, the language patterns are what should be taught and not the knowledge that comes with it. For Xia's (2014), drilling is an essential technique when using ALM. He describes drilling as 'habit forming' where the students receive language over and over and try to mimic it until it becomes a normal part of their speech, through drilling texts and dialogues into the students again and again to the point where they can recite them by heart.

Yet, throughout the learning process, the students make mistakes and errors. According to Alakkam and Rayhan (2013), the teacher's role, within this method, is to prohibit the making of these mistakes and direct the learners towards avoiding errors in the future and not bother correcting instantly all the time or stating what is right and wrong. In effect, correcting constantly would encourage the students to form the habit of making mistakes. "One main teaching responsibility of the teacher is that he or she should try his or her best to prohibit

students making mistakes; the existence of mistakes may stay in the habit which is called mistake acquisition" (Xia, 2014, p. 561).

ALM is basically a teacher-based method; thus, it requires teachers to provide basic and standard pronunciation close or equal to native speakers. Language labs and tape recorders should be used during class to minimize non-native speaker teachers burden of delivering high quality speech (Sarıçoban, n.d.).

1-4 ALM Techniques

The Audio Lingual Method is an emphasis on vocabulary and training in the grammatical sentence pattern for EFL learners, based on the context and without error. Thus, it is believed that much practice of the dialogues would develop oral language proficiency depending on the ability or the qualification of speaking.

Larsen-Freeman (2000) presents sets of techniques that can be used in a classroom following the ALM teaching. The first set is content; it evolves around using drilling in various forms. First, repetition drill: it is basically a learner's repetition of the teachers' model instantly and as quickly as possible. Second, chain drill: where the learners complete each other in a circular chain around the classroom, whether it was answering questions, reciting a passage, reading a text and so on. Third, single slot and multiple slot substitution drill: mainly a repetitive exercise where the learners are supposed to substitute a word or a phrase relying on "cue (s)". Transformation drill is another form, wherein the learners derive other forms out of a provided passage, for example transforming an indirect statement to interrogative sentence. Then, question and answer drill: learners should answer the questions asked by the teacher quickly or the opposite; provide a question to a stated answer. Finally, expansion drill (backwards build-up): the learners are expected to collect the parts of a divided passage starting from the last part moving back up to the first part.

A second set of techniques, for Larsen-Freeman (ibid), is somewhat entertaining and recreational. First, dialogues: the learners role-play characters from dialogues and each one of them would have to memorise their lines. Second, minimal pairs- analysis: the instructor offers two words that sound the same and then asks the learners to differentiate between them. Third, complete the dialogue: certain parts of the dialogue are deleted, for the students to fill them up. Then, grammar games: using repetition the instructor should design a certain amount of grammar exercises in the form of games.

1-4-1 Repetition Technique

Importantly, repetition technique is an oral process used in the audio lingual method in order to make learners memorize words, sentences, expressions, messages and even utterances. It is a technique which is based on quantity and not necessarily on quality; it is considered as a simple and easy technique that is used by instructors who depend on Audiolingualism as a teaching method for EFL learners (Xia, 2016). The repetition technique has various applicable ways during teaching sessions; among these ways one can mention two of them: Repetition drill and spaced repetition.

1-4-2 Repetition Drill

It is often referred to as dull and uncreative, as Alawiyah (2017) put it; it does not stimulate students to think critically or develop higher literary credit, so in general it is not a very lucrative method. However, for EFL students, especially beginners who need a kickstart in developing their listening skills in the target language, repetition drill is a medium that many instructors resort to for starting EFL programmes. The language learners merely have to listen and repeat the utterances that the instructor conveys to them. "This may be used for the presentation of new vocabulary and will be useful for pronunciation class." (Alawiyah, ibid, p. 19) In learning a foreign language the students are imitators of the teacher like an orchestra leader does; they always follow the instructor's directions (ibid).

The term drill promotes the acquisition of a language through repeated training whether it is by repetition, rehearse or practice for the objective of becoming proficient in a certain skill (Lim et al., 2012). Repetition drilling remains a useful technique to provide fluency and accuracy in the target language's phonetics; it also helps the learners in recognizing and distinguishing between difficult sounds and utterances. It gives the learners safe space for experimenting and producing the language they feel confident with, as it is not a creativity based method (Kartikasari et al., 2014); on top of that, it helps the student notice the correct forms and pronunciations of certain words and phrases and raises the level of the consciousness of the language. Hence, drilling gives the learners more opportunities to get feedback on their performance by the instructor or their fellow peers and finally it improves memorization of language patterns for better oral communication (ibid).

In sum, that drilling is considered as a repetition technique which is used in EFL classes, therefore, to practice oral speaking and to give the students chances to develop their ability of understanding the texts provided (Alawiyah, 2017).

1-4-3 Spaced Repetition

Virtually, however, for short spans of time the repetition drill has been considered as the most effective technique in Audiolingualism. However, for longer intervals, the space repetition technique allows learners to maintain and keep information acquired, memorized for longer periods of time. As such, "with any considerable number of repetitions a suitable distribution of them over a space of time is decidedly more advantageous than the massing of them at a single time" (Ebbinghaus, 1964, p. 89). According to Baranov (2018) spaced repetition nowadays has been developed to match the current technology, and several applications have been programmed around, accordingly.

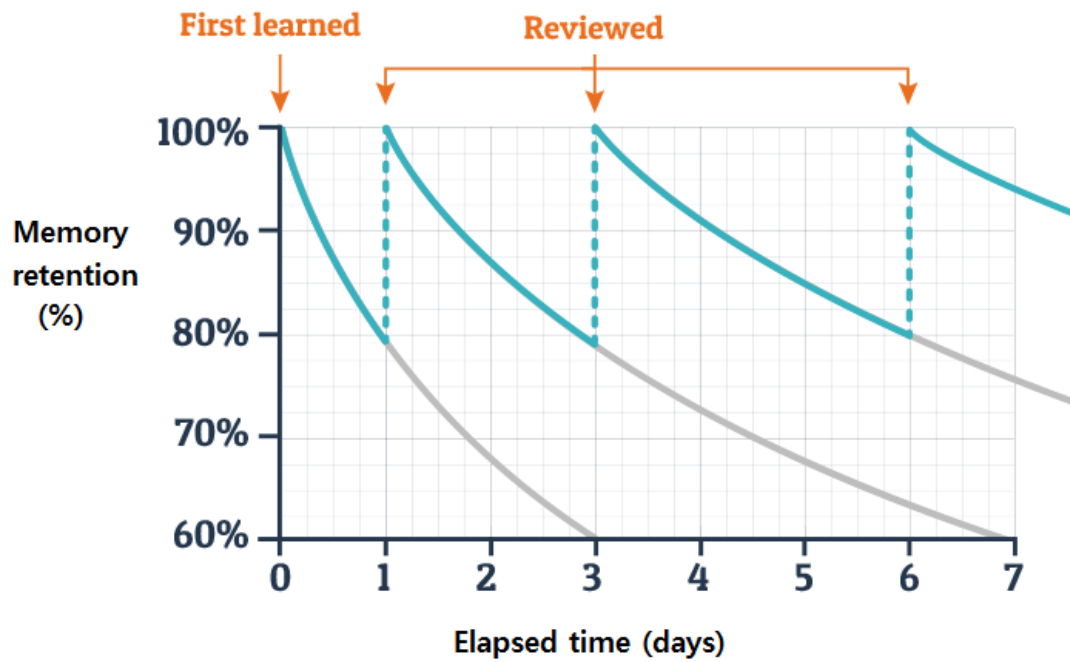


Figure 1. Ebbinghaus' Forgetting Curve and Review Cycle

(Chun, 2018, p. 56),

Contrary to the repetition drill which mostly focuses on short term training and heavy practice during one session, spaced repetition, instead, provides learners more than one single opportunity to retain information. According to the spacing effect by German psychologist Hermann Ebbinghaus⁵, the human mind tends to remember information that has been reviewed multiple times over long time intervals rather than multiple times over short time intervals (See the figure below). The forgetting curve shows that memory gradually loses information over time if not reviewed (Baranov, 2018).

For Tabibian et al. (2018, p. 3988), "our ability to remember a piece of information depends critically on the number of times we have reviewed it, the temporal distribution of the reviews, and the time elapsed since the last review". By experience most learners find out that learning something is always better when it happens regularly over long term exposures rather than heavily practiced in a single session, i.e., distributed rather than massed learning.

⁵Hermann Ebbinghaus) see appendix (1), p. 70

The spacing effect neglect quantity and emphasize quality; the quality, in this case, manifests in the "when" practice happens. Initially, studying the concept and then reviewing or practising it over spaced durations of time generally leads to a much better learning experience than having the repetition happen in tight temporal succession (Kang, 2016); in both cases the total study time is equal. Spaced repetition, according to Kang (2016), has been proved to be much more efficient in developing the retrieving and the recalling process for learners than the drilling repetition.

Having said that, spaced repetition is the use of up-to-date technology, in order to help learners better memorize and practise languages and skills in a form of software that uses complex algorithms for establishing learning programs, to facilitate the learning experience; notably the most famous applications include: SuperMemo, Anki, LearnObit, and Doulingo (Baranov, 2018).

In sum, spaced repetition technique can boost memorization much more than the drill repetition technique because of its effect on quality rather than quantity. In that, this technique has more potential in developing the memory's retrieving and recalling processes. Spaced repetition will appear more in the future technologies due to its high effectiveness in enhancing learning skills, as Baranov (ibid) explained, especially in teaching languages, as well as its use of several learning tools in EFL class.

1-5 The Effects of ALM on EFL Learners

Comparing ALM to other teaching methods such as the Communicative Learning Method (CLM), there would be weaknesses and advantages over it or over other methods in general. At its core ALM is formed around linguistic structural principles, it shines in developing sentence patterns through conditioning, helping learners to respond correctly to stimuli through modification and reinforcement (behaviourist principles). Thus, ALM builds a habit for learners to think in the target language, in this case English, instead of the mother

language, as ALM generally encourages the use of English only in the classroom (Degeng et al. 2017).

With that being said, ALM has its own advantages and disadvantages, when talking about its effects on EFL learners. Positively reviewing these effects, the first thing to discuss is complexity. ALM stands out as one of the simplest and easiest methods for teaching EFL compared to other methods especially for young learners (First Year Middle School Students). It is also quite adaptive to system changes, and this gives instructors more space and time to adapt to new curriculum changes (Mart, 2013).

While keeping structural linguistics in mind, another positive review for ALM is linearity; which is prominent across the static and constant learning process. In most cases, programmes using ALM often start with basic levels of learning to higher levels such as starting from phonetic sounds moving to whole sentences. Linearity helps the learners set their expectations as they see fit according to what they have previously been exposed to (Kumai, 2018).

Other methods such as Grammar-translation may seem a bit chaotic compared to ALM as it is a bit more orderly and often mistake free "An attempt is made to minimize the possibilities for making mistakes both in speaking and writing by using a tightly structured approach to the presentation of new language items " (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 66). This encourages learners of various levels to participate in activities without been restrained (Samawiyah & Saifuddin, 2016). Another positive review for ALM is instant feedback; learning using this method requires immediate response from the learner's side and immediate reinforcement from the instructor. However, Kumai (2018) argues that ALM started facing more and more criticism since 1970 to the point where it became mostly obsolete, where many other methods of teaching language have replaced it.

Moving on to negative reviews on ALM, the first thing to notice is the tedious and tiresome repetition drills during the classroom for young learners (Beginners), as well as adult learners (Intermediate or Advanced). This builds dissatisfaction and even hatred if the learning process is prolonged more than necessary towards the learnt language (Bem & Almeida, 2004). Another negative point to be considered would be the closed system of teaching when following the ALM method; in that it limits the sources of information to the instructor only. This pattern of practice provides learners little space for productivity outside the classroom. Thus, the learners build a sense of reliance on the teacher only for information and neglect any other outside sources (Roh & Lee, 2017). Basically, the biggest flaw of ALM is the total focus on syntax progression, on passive listening (limited vocabulary and phonetics) and on speaking to a small degree (repetition or parroting), making by that the learner a receiver more than an actual active learner, diminishing the learners potential in critical thinking and analysis (Kumai, 2018).

Conclusion

To sum up, ALM is considered as a method that can be implemented in order to teach the learners English language. Occasionally, it is best to use it as a start-up teaching method for novice EFL learners, especially, if they are young, as it boosts the students' listening skills and to some extent pronunciation, even though it is lacking grammatically. The emphasis of this method is put on vocabulary and sentence patterns; this gives little space to error making, hinders the learners' creativity outside the classroom's atmosphere. Accordingly, although this method can be a fast and reliable method to drill EFL or other languages quickly into the knowledge of the learners, ALM should step aside for other methods to take place.

Chapter Two

Enhancing Language Listening Skills in

EFL Classroom

Introduction

Most of the researchers agreed on the point that learning to listen to the target language improves language learning abilities. If learners' listening skills were developed effectively, this would enhance the ability to learn and adapt new information, vocabulary and knowledge. Improving listening skills in the EFL classroom is important for both the teacher and the student, as listening is the root of the ALM. Some teachers and tutors who believe that improving listening skills does not have a priority in developing EFL students and that it should not take a big consideration when teaching such a language. This chapter will introduce the main challenges that face EFL learners' listening skills and strategies that would help overcome them. The chapter highlights how listening skills would be improved based on ALM, exploring its effects in the EFL classroom. It seeks to analyse the use of repetition as one ALM techniques in practice and its role in developing listening skills in EFL learners' acquisition.

2-1 The Role of Listening in EFL Acquisition

As a matter of fact, listening is viewed by some as the weakest skill of EFL students who encounter different kinds of listening problems to be developed. Yet, it is no longer impossible to enhance these skills in learners. Instructing simple and understood learning strategies, which are very common nowadays in the international education systems, would be useful. As such, improving listening skills is a process that depends mainly on practice. In the light of ALM, listening skills comprehension is much more related to what the learner already has as knowledge about such subjects than extracting meaning from incoming speech (Khuziakmetova & Porcheskub 2016). To understand how students acquire a foreign language, it is important to have an idea about the process of listening and its main stages.

2-1-1 Stages of Listening Process

Listening is a very active process; it implies combining what one listens or hears with other information that he/she is already familiar with or already experienced it before. In EFL class the teacher may face other challenges that are "the different levels of listening" corresponding to each student in the classroom, (active listening, selective listening, and empathetic listening, and ignoring listening); in order to define these levels we need first to understand the process of listening. To put clear, "listening process takes place in five stages of hearing, understanding, remembering, evaluating, and responding" (Renukadevi, 2014, p. 61).

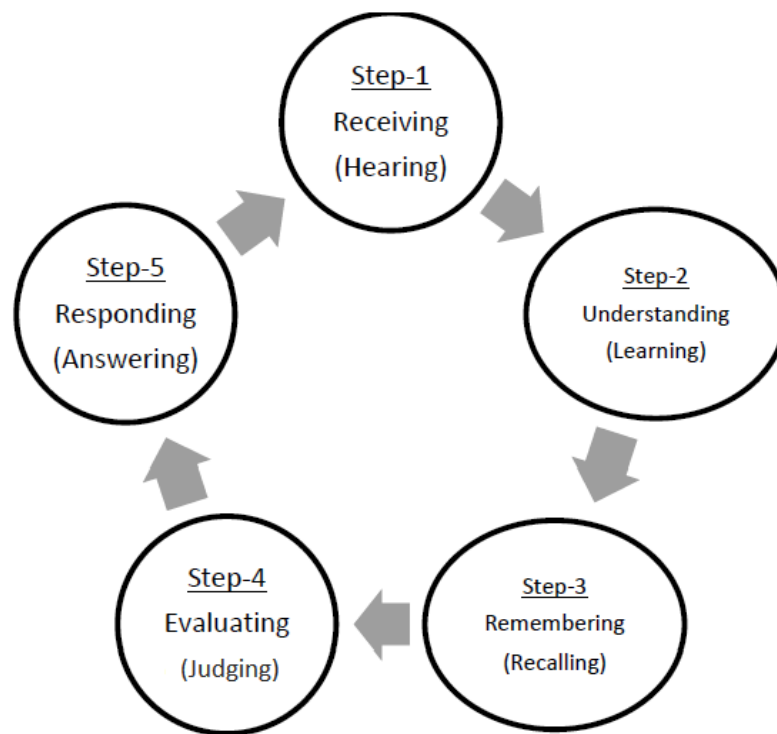


Figure 2: Five Stages of Listening Process, by Tumibay (2017)

The first step is receiving (Hearing), which is a physical process that involves sound waves that enter the human ears. Hearing is not necessarily listening, but listening is

necessarily hearing (Gulam n.d). Second, understanding (Learning) is a mental activity where the learner tries to comprehend the meaning of the acquired sounds. The third step is remembering (Recalling); it has a relation with the ability of the mind to recall previously acquired information at certain times. The next step is evaluating (Judging) the messages, which varies widely from a listener to another by judging the message according to each one's opinions and prejudices, as well as analysing the received information; the last stage in this process is responding (Answering) here the learner provides his/her own feedback to the instructor; the reaction can be emotional or intellectual (Gulam n.d).

2-1-2 Types of Listeners

Generally agreed upon, the types of the students in EFL class are four; active listener is considered as the perfect listener who uses all the stages of listening in a proper way, actively interacting with the instructor and giving constant feedback; the teacher faces less problems with this kind of listener. Second is the selective listener who only remembers the parts that they prefer and may ignore some others which they do not like. Empathetic listener is emotional who reflects the others' feelings; the empathetic listener actually is someone who truly understands the emotions of others through empathetic listening. The final type is the ignoring listener who never pays attention to the messages heard. This can lead them to face problems in their relations due to their hearing, but never listening; they cannot recall or remember (Gulam n.d).

2-1-3 Challenges in Teaching Listening

As a language teacher, one of our challenges will be to develop a vision of where listening fits within your teaching. While language teachers are progressing, inevitably they try to think of how they might plan to find alternative listening activities, and what goals and expectations to set for their students so as to gain valuable language input.

Some researchers agreed in points that the problems in listening were accompanied with the four following factors: the message, the speaker, the listener and the physical setting (Renukadevi, 2014). The problems were believed to be due to the speech rate (the speed of delivery), new terminology and concept, difficulty in focusing and the physical environment, as well as pronunciation. There are several reasons why the learners feel listening is difficult. Firstly, the lack of effort to understand each and every word during listening to the target language, especially in acquiring a foreign language; In that students are unable to transfer their mother language skill easily to a second language. Second, failure or laziness to build up their vocabulary gradually and this, greatly, reflects in their listening and keeps them low spirited in acquiring the language skills, as well as the problem of the students that have a different pronunciation and accent as they stick to one particular expression (ibid).

2-2 The Main Principles to Develop Listening Skills

As listening is considered a language skill itself, however, it can be developed by other methods, among those methods there is the Audiolingual Method which is still used commonly in language classes in the recent decades, and, thus, habit-formation drills have remained popular among teachers and students. In this concern, Liubinienė (2009, p. 89) argues that “in language classes an audio-lingual method was considered to be very important for students to develop a better pronunciation, to train comprehension skills.”

2-2-1 Using Intrinsically Motivating Techniques

While this principle can be applied to almost any technique, it is still an important concept to follow when teaching listening. It is important to get to know the cultural background of the students as well as understanding their interests and goals, taking into account their experiences in life. This can be both facilitating and interfering in the process of listening. Since the students may have different backgrounds, it is necessary to try to find the closest

and common ground as well as try to put the students caught up in the activity so they feel self-propelled toward the objective of the class (Gu, 2018).

2-2-2 Keeping Calmness and the Students Focused

Respecting the speaker is well demanded in the class to have the best results of listening, teaching students not to talk while others are speaking until they finish. "If we were supposed to talk more than we listen, we would have two tongues and one ear," Mark Twain (n.d). When somebody else is talking, the listener should follow what he/she is saying, without interrupting; talking over them or finishing his/her sentences for him/her. When the other person has finished talking, the listener may need to clarify to ensure he/she has received the message accurately.

The teacher as an organiser should guide students to focus on the speaker, let them listen deeply in the class, in order to clear and throw other things out of their minds. The human mind is easily distracted by other thoughts (e.g. what's for lunch; what time do I need to leave to catch my bus; is it going to rain). Encouraging such kind of respect is highly desirable. As such, students have to be asked to put out other thoughts of their minds and concentrate on the messages that are being communicated within the target topic, and avoid unnecessary interruptions. These behaviours disrupt the listening process and send messages to the speaker that you are bored or distracted. The teacher must be impartial and take control of his interactions, less irritated and prevent the person's habits or mannerisms distract him from what is really saying (Gu, 2018).

Every student in the process of learning English as a foreign language approaches a specific problem from a unique perspective. Each learns differently due to the use of his/ her own style and strategies that differentiate him/her from others. Everyone has a unique way of speaking; some students are, for example, more nervous or shy than others, some have regional accents or make excessive arm movements, some may like to pace whilst talking;

others like to sit still (Gordon, W. P. 2017). As effective teachers, there is a need to build-up students' confidence, as well as respect and interaction by helping them listen better rather than testing their listening abilities (Harmer, 2001).

2-2-3 Taking the Whole Picture and Listening for Ideas

One of the most difficult aspects of listening is considered to be the ability to link together pieces of information to reveal the ideas of others. To overcome this, it was suggested to maintain proper concentration, focus, and get rid of distractions; this becomes easier. In this concern, Gu (2018) presented some tips to be respected and pursued by EFL teachers to reach effectiveness. First, teachers have to implant in their students to listen for ideas not just words, as they need to get the whole picture, not just isolated bits and pieces. Students should create a mental model of the information, whether it is a picture or an arrangement of abstract concepts. They have to listen to keywords and phrases and do not rehearse what they are going to say after the speaker is done talking. In that, they think about what the other person is saying rather than what they are going to respond with. Third, students should be encouraged to be attentive and relaxed, and not distracted by their own thoughts and feelings. Gu further explained that students should be empathetic and feel what the speaker is feeling (sad, joyful, fearful and so on), and convey those feelings through their facial expressions and ideas; by doing so, effectiveness as a listener can be assured. Empathy is the heart of good listening (Gu, *ibid*).

2-2-4 Opening an Argumentative Conversation to Ensure Understanding

A good listener will listen not only to what is being said, but also to what is left unsaid or only partially said. As it is known, humans are not impeccable; they may make mistakes sometimes unintentionally; hence, both the teacher and the student need to correct each other

and take the responsibility of their faults. In effect, many of particular conversational affronts happen all the time. Sometimes, people's questions lead them in directions that have nothing to do with where they thought they were going, moving far away from the original topic. When noticing that a particular question has led the speaker astray, the other partner should take responsibility for getting the conversation back on track. The focus should be placed on what is being said, ignoring the styles of delivery, being patient and giving the speaker time to continue the flow of his/her idea, without any interruption. A good listener will let go of preconceived ideas; by having an open mind, he/she can more fully empathize with the speaker (Gu, 2018). If the speaker says something that the listener disagrees with, then he/she ought to wait and construct an argument to counter what is said, respecting the views and opinions of the other. Reflecting the speaker's feelings, whether are hidden or unclear, is the aim of the student-listener who can occasionally paraphrase the content of the message, or show understanding through appropriate facial expressions and an occasional well-timed "affirmations". Using gestures such as nodding or words to encourage speakers to continue is really a virtue. Then, the student-listener should be taught to maintain eye contact to show their listening concentration and understanding of what is being said (ibid).

2-3 Teaching Listening Skills to EFL Learners

Among the four fundamental skills in any language (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), listening for the learners is a little bit troublesome; therefore, it becomes neglected quickly during the classroom. This may be due to the students' lack of knowledge on the target language, in general, and the communication skills in particular. For teachers to develop the listening skills of their students, they should take a set of preparations and guidelines, to lead their students towards effective ways to listen properly and successfully. For this process to be fruitful, a teacher can adopt a few arrangements during the classroom,

teach the students strategies and provide them with activities to exercise those strategies (Gordon, 2017).

2-3-1 Increasing Confidence to Listen

The first thing for teachers to highlight, in this point, is to help students avoid any confusion between listening skills and literacy skills. When first introducing a new listening text, story, video or song, the teacher has his students focus on listening only and not on subtitles or a written text yet; this is a simulation to real life circumstances as there are no subtitles and students have to just listen. Later on, as explained by Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016), he/she can provide them with scripts and subtitles as well as literacy related activities. This strategy gives students with poor literacy skills an equal start to those with average or excellent literacy skills who would often want to see and read the words they listen to. Using this strategy, instead, makes them concentrate on listening only. As mentioned above, this strategy encourages students to listen and understand without seeing any subtitles or written scripts at the same time; this can be a major confidence booster when they discover how much they actually understand just from listening (ibid).

An even more effective strategy to develop listening skills is using Top-Down and Bottom-Up processing training. “It is the difference between looking at a forest, or studying the individual trees within it” (Harmer, 2001, p. 201). Many teachers tend to use Top-Down activities for conclusive events such as asking comprehension questions, predicting scenarios and listing items, in some way, absorbing the overall picture. Bottom-Up activities, on the other hand, often used to enhance listening skills by focusing on pronunciation drills, grammar exercises and vocabulary memorization. Bottom-Up processing directly focus on word and sentence levels, and are mostly beneficial for lower level students (Beginners). The listener achieves understanding by stringing the detailed elements together to build-up the whole. For the sake of developing Bottom-Up processing, teachers may ask the following

during activities: recognize sound patterns, individual words and stressed syllables; listen for utterances; identify grammatical forms and functions; spot linking words (Khuziakmetov & Porchesku 2016). Yet, it is probably most useful to consider acts of listening as interactions between top-down and bottom-up processing.

Additionally, limiting translation's use is another strategy the students need to master to be able to understand and respond to whatever they listen to, without relying on translating every word in their minds, especially when they are listening rather than reading. Instant translation is a habit that needs to be limited, because learners tend to panic when they lose the meaning of a word or two in a passage, and then when using dictionaries or electronic translators, ideas of meanings can be overlapped. It might seem like an easy and comfortable method to learn a language, but if it builds into a habit, students will find it difficult to speak English fluently. Certainly, this no longer means ignoring translation all together, especially when encountering difficult words or hard to understand phrases. Providing students with synonyms and antonyms will help grow their understanding of English as a foreign language and enrich their vocabulary use. This in itself for some students can be a real confidence booster (Gilakjani & Sabouri 2016).

2-3-2 Learner Setbacks with Listening Comprehension

According to Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) there are a lot of difficulties that learners face during the listening process, and the role of the teacher, here, is to be aware of and avoid them. What follows are some of those difficulties, as presented by Bingol et al. (2014).

Accent: listening comprehension can be reduced significantly when there are too many accents present in one classroom, especially if the teacher is affected with an accent that is too unfamiliar for the learners to comprehend. For instance, a teacher with a Scottish English accent teaching a class of Africans, or a non-native speaker teacher using Irish teaching a

class of Algerian students English, the accent familiarity gap is too wide which makes the listening process almost impossible.

Difficult and unfamiliar vocabulary: listening texts containing too many unfamiliar words make it harder for other learners to form contextual meanings or comprehend topics mentioned. When students know the meaning of words they listen to, their interests peek and their minds open towards the text. A lot of words have more than one meaning and if they are not used accurately the students will get confused; “if listeners do not know half of the words in a text, they will have difficulty in understanding the text as a whole” (Harmer, 2001, p. 203).

Length and speed of listening: providing low level students with long passages and at the same time expecting them to understand most of all, it is a major mistake. Instead, presenting passages shorter than three minutes long would be more effective, as the learners lose their concentration quite fast; length plays its part in text’s comprehensibility. With equal importance to length, speed also has an influence. If the speakers talk too fast, the learners may have serious problems in comprehension, especially if combined with unfamiliar accents or vocabulary (Bingol et al., 2014).

Other problems that may hinder the listening comprehension process are the cultural differences and, to a lesser extent, the quality of recorded materials. When dealing with cultural differences, the learners should be familiarized with the cultural background of the target language to minimize the errors and mistakes committed during the listening process. About the quality of recorded materials, it is advised to use high quality sound systems to avoid any mishearing or misunderstanding (Bingol et al., 2014).

Listening comprehension is not the simplest process and for it to be taught proficiently, strategies must be used simultaneously. EFL Learners have to understand the passage as they

listen to it, memorize the information, link it with the following and adjust their comprehending.

2-4 Improving Listening Skills Using Repetition Technique

When teaching EFL, repetition is a process based on mastering and firmly grasping the content of the original text, which is at the same time the process of reproducing the content. In general, the use of constant repetition is bound to leave an impact upon EFL learners' memorizing, understanding and summarizing abilities, all through the use of the listening skill. Generally agreed upon, repetition can be classified into two: drilling repetition and spaced repetition.

2-4-1 Drilling Repetition

According to Cong (2016), repetition can be classified into two processes of different levels. The first type of repetition requires a low level of memory; that in turn emphasizes the drilling repetition. This implies that learners have to repeat passages again and again to achieve a certain level of familiarity with it, for the end goal of enhancing memory. Learners are often asked to repeat important items (vocabulary, phonetics, expressions.), and use strategies like rhyming sentences or adding or correlating keywords; all of them can help strengthen the learners' memorization. This way is usually beneficial for acquiring new words or reciting articles, etc. The second classification is repetition of the complex task which is a process that concentrates on understanding, retelling and recreation; also, learners in this type, use their own language to reorganize and summarise texts. It also opens a small window for oral practice. Although this strategy is a bit more demanding in terms of attitude and conditions of understanding, and to a slightly higher extent memory, drilling can significantly strengthen the learners' listening skills starting from familiarization of the words going through sharpening memory, till reaching understanding and comprehension.

2-4-2 Spaced Repetition

EFL learners face serious problems with vocabulary. The lack of knowledge in the language's terminology often disheartens and discourages people to actually listen and comprehend what the speaker is saying; i.e., comprehension is gradually degraded. Fortunately, the spaced repetition technique is considered as one of the best solutions for this problem. The spaced repetition technique has been developed over the years; since it has been tested efficiently in 1978 by Landauer and Bjork, till the present day, going through the use of traditional flashcards and manual reminders for the duration of the learning process, till the use of automated, up to date, algorithm driven technology (Karpicke & Roediger 2007). This technique stimulates the learners to acquire many elements of language (words, pronunciation, and sentence patterns) and retain them for as long as possible. To better understand this technique, the example of one of the most famous applications that use spaced repetition as an algorithm to teach EFL can be considered; it is Anki:

Anki allows the user to upload audio passages in the front of the flashcard and put the translation in the back; so in addition to learning how to write a word or a phrase, one can also listen to its pronunciation; then, the user rates the difficulty as he/she sees fit. It offers four options of difficulty:

Easy 75% to 100% comprehension, reviews the card again in seven days

Good 50% to 75% comprehension, reviews the card again four days

Hard 25% to 50% comprehension, reviews the card the next day

Again 00% to 25% comprehension, review the card again as soon as possible

Obviously, the levels above are subjective to each user and his/her capacity of learning different items. Each time the user reviews a card, Anki recalculates the interval accordingly, and ultimately the reviewing of these cards will have longer and longer intervals of time

between each review, to the point where the user does not have to review them for years (Khan, 2020).

One of the earliest studies conducted by Gordon (1925) illustrates the difference between instant repetition and spaced repetition; college students were asked to learn the Athenian oath. One group of students heard the oath six times in a row; another group heard it three times on one day and three more times three days later. In four weeks, both groups were asked to recite the oath; the group that learned the oath through spaced repetition outperformed the other group by levels. The group that used instant repetition did better in the first day. While drilling repetition may seem more effective than spaced repetition in the short term, spaced repetition produces durable long term learning (Kang, 2016).

Conclusion

Listening comprehension is a skill that is underestimated in EFL context; it is clearly the weakest skill of EFL learners who are hindered by it. If learners do not learn how to listen effectively they will never learn how to speak properly since listening is an important supplier of input; "consciousness and formation of proper listening comprehension strategies can aid learners to benefit from the language input they are receiving" (Vandergrift, 1999, p. 170). When the instructors neglect such an important source of input, the learning process in general becomes disfigured. Therefore, developing and applying strategies that guide learners to enhance their listening skills can give outstanding results. Listening comprehension is probably the hardest skill to learn; so necessarily, it is the hardest to teach; however, it is quite manageable if the right methods and strategies are used in the right place and time, as Ulum (2015) said.

Chapter Three

Data Presentation and Analysis:

Questionnaires Analysis

Introduction

The present study aimed at investigating the effects and after-effects of using ALM in a general basis, and the repetition techniques in particular, using short stories as listening material, so as to boost listening skills in an EFL classroom, targeting first-year middle school students, as well as their teachers. The main purpose of the study is to identify listening problems that may face the students, and to provide the teachers who use ALM with solutions to overcome those problems by including the use of short stories in an audial form to improve the listening comprehension skills of the students and enriching their vocabulary in the target language. Repetition techniques were the focus.

3-1 Research Method

The researcher relied on the descriptive method; through which he tried to consider listening problems for first year middle school students and provide the EFL teachers with suggestions on how to resolve those problems, taking some on line middle school teachers and students across some states in Algeria, as a case study. It is a method of searching for the present, which aims to prepare data to prove certain hypotheses. The researcher believes that the descriptive method falls within the mechanism of scientific research in general, as its aim is to describe phenomena only as they are in reality. As there are two types of samples used in this research, the data was analysed separately. A questionnaire was used as a tool to collect data, one for students and another for teachers of English at Middle School. A qualitative method, hence, was used to analyse the teachers' and students' responses to questions.

3-1-1 Participants

The researcher used two questionnaires, one for first year middle school students, and the other one is for the teachers who teach or (taught) first year middle school. Due to obstacles beyond the researcher's capacity, the study was limited in samples and participants' selection; so, the questionnaires instead of distributing them to students and teachers of one or some

middle schools in Wilaya of Laghouat as a case study, they were both posted on social websites (mainly Facebook). A group of online English Language Middle School Teachers-Algeria and a group of some colleagues who had relatives as first year middle school students represented the study sample. Unfortunately, these online groups (these groups contain more than thirty thousand members) were from diverse cities (Across Algeria). For the sake of avoiding any misunderstandings, student's questionnaire was translated into Arabic language in order to make it easy for students who were not so familiar with English language. Although study population was large, our data cleaning resulted in 19 valid questionnaires for statistical analysis for students' and 32 questionnaires for teachers.

3-1-2 Research Tool

To investigate the role of ALM in teaching English as a foreign language, and the use of short stories through repetition techniques, so as to boost listening skills in an EFL classroom, and basically in enhancing vocabulary enrichment, a necessity of a questionnaire as tool of research is thought of. Since there are two types of samples used in this research, the data was analysed separately. The students' questionnaire was used to identify and clarify weaknesses concerning listening in an EFL class, and suggest a way of learning English language vocabulary through the use of short stories. The teachers' questionnaire, on the other hand, was designed to identify the Audio lingual aspects during the English language teaching process in order to find out some solutions concerning developing listening skills and improving EFL acquisition skills of their students.

3-2 Findings and Discussions

The questionnaires used in this study are expected to give an overall view of EFL intake of first year middle school students and teachers alike, all concerning the ALM part of EFL teaching. The analysis of the questionnaires should apply the literature discussed in the previous chapters. The teacher, then, has an encouraging and monitoring role, advising,

assisting, and providing feedback on drafts, making some elicitations and supplements if necessary.

3-2-1 Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire items aimed to determine the main handicaps in students' listening skills. They help to highlight the difficulties and problems that learners encounter in EFL classroom. The participants were asked online to read each statement or question in the questionnaire carefully and tick or answer what best corresponded their view of it. There were no correct or incorrect responses, only their opinions. The researcher had faced some problems in collecting the distributed questionnaires. Therefore, the request for individual help from colleagues who have relatives as first year middle school students was longed for, to participate in the questionnaire. In the end, 19 questionnaires were gathered for analysis.

3-2-1-1 Students' Questionnaire Description

The questionnaire contains eleven questions. They are either background information collecting questions, during classroom inquiry questions or opinion based questions. The first section (Background questions) consists of four questions asking respondents to describe themselves through gender, age, level of English, and motivation to learn English. The second section is about the students' abilities in learning EFL, and mainly listening. Last but not least, the third section deals with the students' opinions about the implementation of short stories as a useful material to boost listening skills and vocabulary improvement.

3-2-1-2 Students' Questionnaire Analysis

On the basis of deeper reading into the theories of foreign language teaching and learning in general, and listening skills' development in particular, the researcher designed his questionnaire. The analysis of the questionnaire allows us to make a summary of the middle

school students' needs and difficulties in listening improvement, basically as beginners in EFL learning process.

3.2.1.2.1. Background Questions

The informants were asked about their personal information and their learning background. Of nineteen (19) students in each group, six were male, while thirteen were female; they were within the age range of 12 to 14 years. The other question within this section of the questionnaire was concerned with the participants' motivation and feeling. How much do they like learn English language? The fourth question, however, is designed to get an idea about their level at English language. There were no correct or incorrect responses, only their opinions. Results obtained are presented as follows:

Q1: What is your gender? A: 1- Male 2- Female 3- Prefer Not To Say

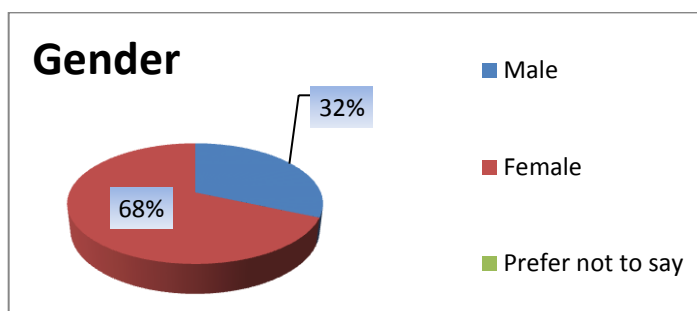


Figure 3: Students' Gender Frequency

Out of the six males (32%) four of them answered in Arabic. Out of the thirteen females (68%) four of them answered in Arabic. Since the questionnaire was posted online and was not conducted as a field work, collecting such information (Gender) is important to investigate the commitment of both genders when it comes to studying via the internet. Apparently, females are heavily present in this questionnaire. Females tend to spend more time at home, therefore more time on social media. In addition to the fact that females' number is noticeably bigger than males' in Algerian demography.

Q2: How old are you? (Open answer) A: Age ranges from 12 to 14.

Since the questionnaire is devoted to first year middle school students it is natural that the range of age is from 12 to 14.

Q3: Are you motivated to learn English? A: 1-Yes 2-No 3-Not sure

The relationship between motivation and the process of learning English as a foreign language, particularly the listening skill is very strong. To be motivated is to be moved to do something. A motivated learner is the one who has the drive as well as the desire to do something and achieve a specific goal; he/she devotes considerable effort and practice to fulfil it. The following figure presents the students' responses towards their love learn English.

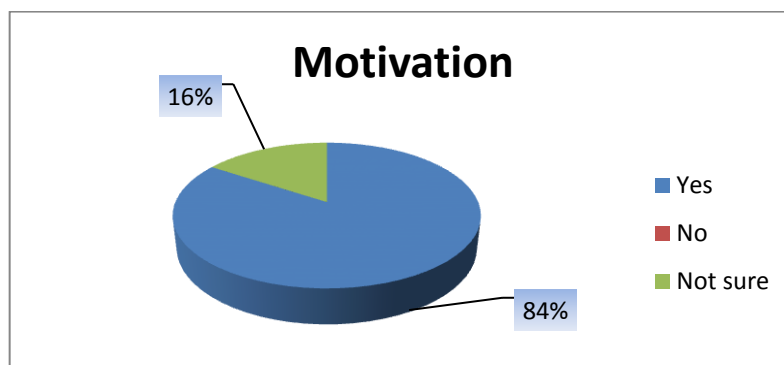


Figure 4: Students' Motivation Frequency

The first thing to notice is that none of the participants are uninterested in learning English (00.00%). (84%) of the respondents were motivated, while (16%) were not sure. This implies that the participating students have high level of passion towards EFL and to its learning. This desire stemmed from the need to improve skills in learning English as an international language and the means of development. This would be relevant to their future dreams since they were still young.

Q4: What is your level at English? A: 1-Weak 2-Average 3-Good 4-Excelent

Aiming at assisting learners to become skilled judges of their own strengths and weaknesses; this question was designed as optional. Asking learners about their viewpoints on their learning improvement and level can give useful insights to language teaching practice. To this end, a 4-likert scale is used to gather the students' responses.

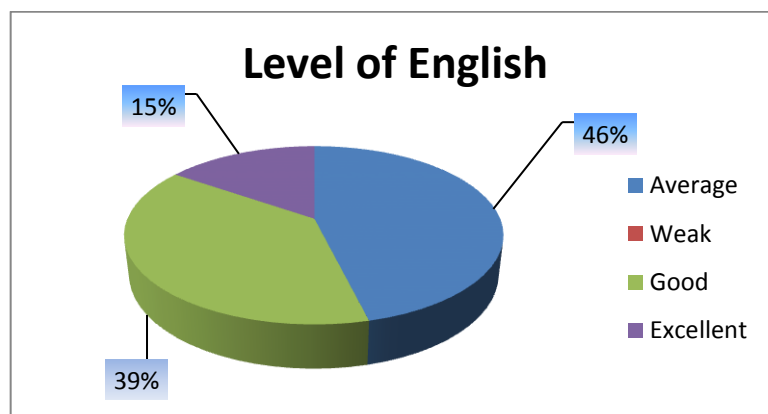


Figure 5: Students' English Level

It can be noted that this question is optional, six of the participants didn't answer. It is quite difficult for students who have only just met the language academically to actually rate their level in it. Hence, this question is optional; there would be no pressure on the participants to answer it without certainty. Having involved in self-evaluation, the students felt happy and more comfortable. In fact, this way of assessment is favoured to get better results that help in designing future syllabi.

3.2.1.2.2. Classroom Inquiry Questions

The purpose of these questions is to investigate the students' performance in EFL in general and determine the problems they face while they are exposed to it. Listening problems were the focus. The section is divided into six questions. These were about students' problems with listening to English and its type, how much they understand words, they learn and

memorize during each session, duration of retaining word after memorization. Results obtained were described as follows.

Q5: Do you face any problems with listening during English class?

A: 1-Rarely 2-Sometimes 3- Always

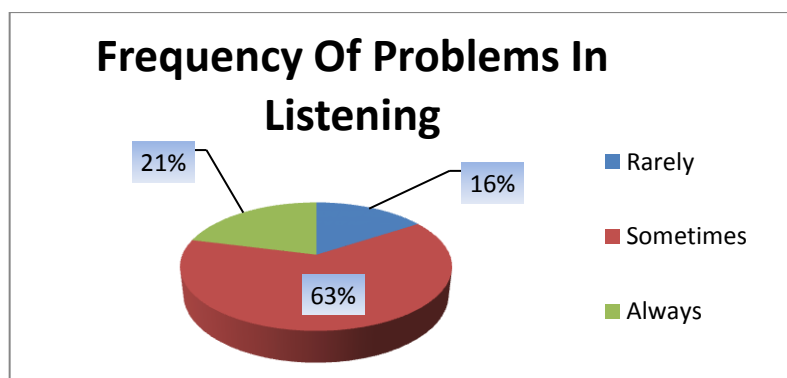


Figure 6: Student's Frequency of Problems in Listening

This figure indicates that apart from four participants (21%) who face serious listening problems during class, it is noticed that more than half of the participating students (63%) have problems with their listening capabilities during lessons. Interestingly, (Q4) (39%) of them of them have confirmed their "Good level" at English. This finding is logical since this is their first year experience with English language. It is a new experience; mainly with sounds that seem different from French; for them English is difficult to follow. Reasons for this problem were gathered from the responses of the following question.

Q6: What do you think the problem is?

A: 1- I can't focus 2- I can't hear the speaker 3- I hear sounds without knowing the meaning
4- I don't like English

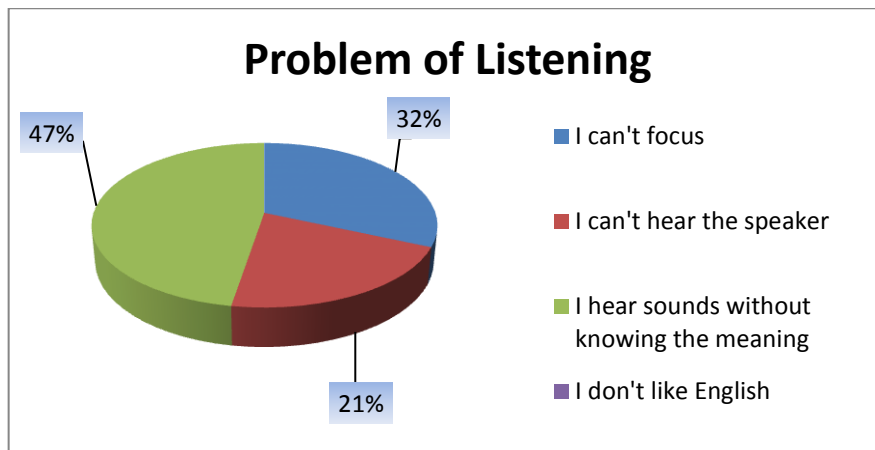


Figure 7: Students' Problems of Listening

The majority of answers of this question (47%) give the impression that vocabulary capacity of the students is quite limited, listening to words without understanding them. This fact is understandable since most of Algerian students engage in learning English face to face only when reaching first year middle school. (21%) of the respondents cannot hear the speaker; this is again due to new way of sound production, transmission then obviously its perception. It is a new language to hear. As for those who said they cannot focus (32%), It seems that they considered English as funny, hence, they may behave as clowns or spend their time commenting on teachers' behaviours.

Q7: Do you watch videos in English? A: 1-Yes 2-No

This question was designed to identify the students' use of tools to deal with English language, chiefly listening to it. Watching videos was selected for the purpose of being an audio-visual tool.

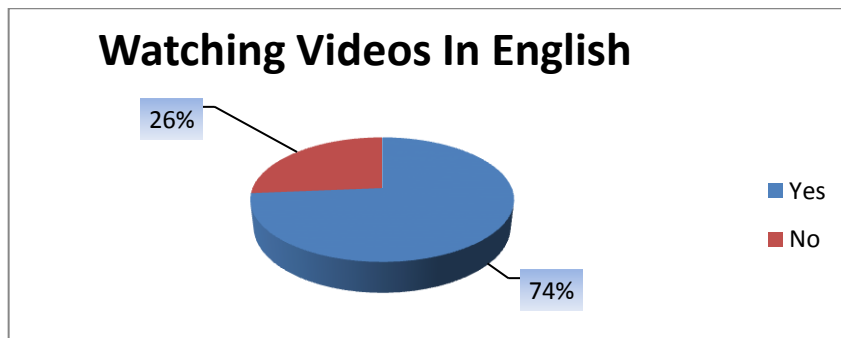


Figure 8: Student’s Videos in English Watch Time

Surprisingly, more than two thirds of the participants do watch videos in English, which shows that most of them are interested in learning English since they like it. Referring back to (Q3), the result of (74%) of the participants watching videos in English is acceptable since they are motivated to learn EFL. Yet, the desire to watch videos does not imply understanding its language. The following question was to know to what extent they understand the language of the video, regardless its type. The researcher forgot to add a question about the kind of watched videos.

Q8: If you do watch videos in English how much do you understand?

A: 1- I understand few words 2- I understand more expressions 3- I understand nothing

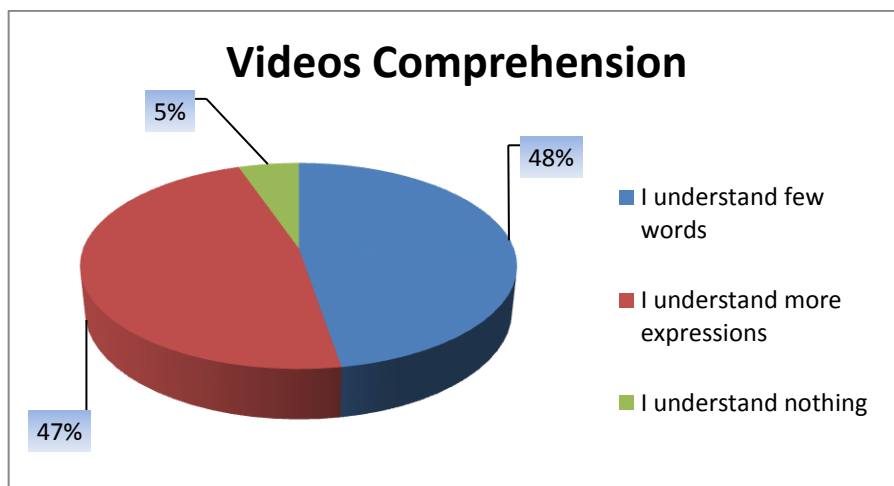


Figure 9: Students’ Videos Comprehension

Participants are split, in an equal footing, between those who understand little spoken English (48%) and those who understand more spoken English (47%). Reasons vary from a student to another. For example, those who have answered "few words" may watch videos of a complex level of English such as movies or documentaries ...etc., or they simply have limited vocabulary. On the other hand, those who have answered "more expressions" may watch simple videos such as children songs or basic educational programs, or they probably possess a wider range of vocabulary.

Q9: How many words you learn and memorize during each session?

A: 1- One word 2- Two words 3- Three words or more

Moving back to classroom, students were asked about their abilities to memorize and learn vocabulary in English when listening either to the teacher, or a material used by the teacher.

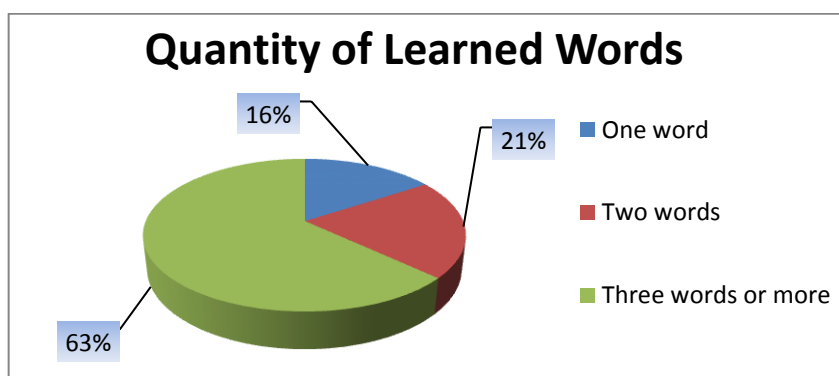


Figure 10: Students' Quantity of Learned Words

In the figure above, (63%) of the participants feel they have the capacity to learn and memorize three or more words per session. This goes hand in hand with (Q3), where (84%) of the students are mentally ready to learn more English on this part of the sample of students can boost acquisition of vocabulary by levels more.

Q10: For how long do you retain a word after memorizing it without repeating it?

A: 1- One day 2- Three days 3- Week or longer

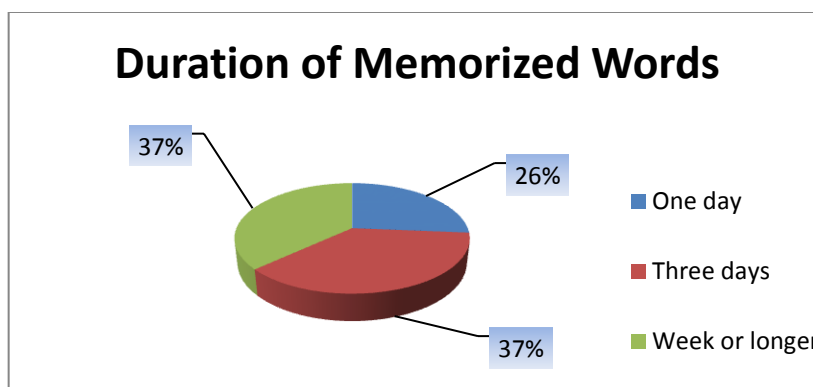


Figure 11: Student's Duration of Memorized Words

According to (Q9), it was noticed that the majority of the students (63%) were confident enough to learn at least three words per session and referring further on to (Q10), they were even more confident in their memorisation ability (53%). Based on these statistics, using spaced repetition through mobile application or laptop programs, spaced repetition was not used very much previously in technology, but nowadays it is well known and spread. Particularly on this sample (53%) can give maximum beneficial results when learning EFL vocabulary.

3.2.1.2.3. The Opinion Question

The point of this question is to see if the students would agree on the implementation of short stories as a technique of learning English to further study the use of it with the teachers.

Q11: Would you prefer to listen to a short story during class? A: 1- Yes 2- NO

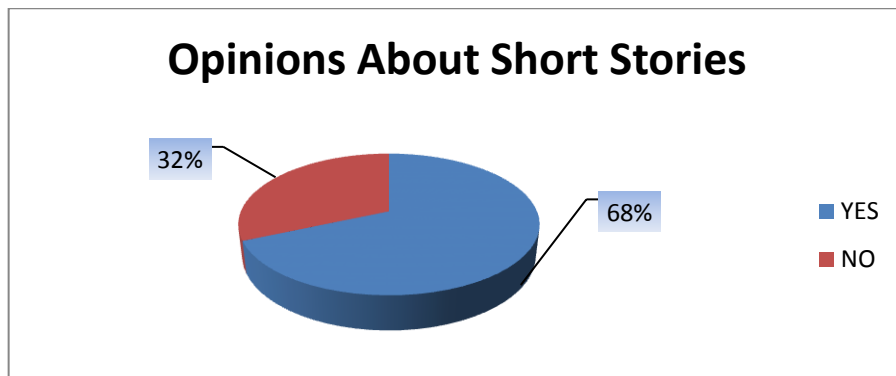


Figure 12: Students' Opinions about Short Stories

Two thirds of the participating students are pro-short stories implementation as a listening material with (68%); the other (32%), however, some seem to dislike the idea of short stories as a listening material. As the analytical results of this question shows that most of students like to listen to short stories, so they find it exciting and beneficial to learn EFL. However; not everyone prefers to listen to short stories because students may find it boring or not interested in.

To sum up, the students' questionnaire is designed to explore listening problems of first-year middle school students in the learning process of EFL level. Findings revealed that (63%), in (Q5), of the students faced problems in listening comprehension as a whole; other (21%) of respondents faced serious and grave problems. This was may be due to the limited vocabulary the student's possess. In Q6, (47%) of the sample students used to "hear sounds without understanding the meaning", which proves that the use of ALM along with its repetition techniques would be inevitable to help solve these difficulties significantly. Especially, if we consider that most students (84%) in (Q3) have opted for their right mentality to learn English. Also, according to (68%), regarding (Q11), of the students showed their approval towards the use of short stories with end morals; this material also proved helpful towards fixing listening problems in the view of students.

3-2-2 Teachers' Questionnaire

To conduct this study, it was suggested that there was a need to enhance the students' listening skills in their foreign language learning process in order to produce positive language learning outcomes. With specific reference to the ALM techniques such as repetition, using short stories as helpful material in solving their listening problems. This research has been undertaken to investigate systematically how EFL learners at middle school level can orchestrate and improve their potentials in listening skills, in the view of the teachers of English responsible of that grade. To this end, a questionnaire was designed and devoted to a sample group of teachers.

3-2-2-1 Teachers' Questionnaire Description

The questionnaire contains eighteen questions. Teachers are asked to provide information about their classes (student numbers, level of discipline, capacity of learning, and so on) in the first section of the questions (seven first questions). The second series of questions (eleven questions) is simply designed to direct the teachers towards ALM and its techniques, mainly repetition in EFL classes, and depict their reactions and opinions about its helpful use. This questionnaire was posted online to social groups of first-year middle school teachers specifically. Despite of the research tool's limitation in gathering the intended data, teachers' responses' rate was, noticeably, high. A total of 32 teachers were able to respond to the questionnaire, during the second-term of the academic year 2019-2020.

3-2-2-2 Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The analysis of the teacher's questionnaire allows us to make a summary of the middle school students' needs and difficulties in listening improvement in EFL learning classroom. It was intended to gather information about their methodology in boosting the students' abilities in understanding English language when it is spoken. The questions selected according to the

objective of the study and focused more on the ALM techniques as means. The environment or atmosphere of teaching English in Algerian middle schools in the view of teachers was also targeted by the researcher. Results were presented in graphs using percentages.

3.2.2.2.1. Class Information

The researcher monitored the frequencies of answers of the teachers to obtain sufficient information about the teacher and his class. Results of the first question indicated that the majority of the sample teachers were female (81%), while only (19%) represented male teachers. Consider the following graph:

Q1: Gender A: 1- Male 2- Female 3- Prefer not to say

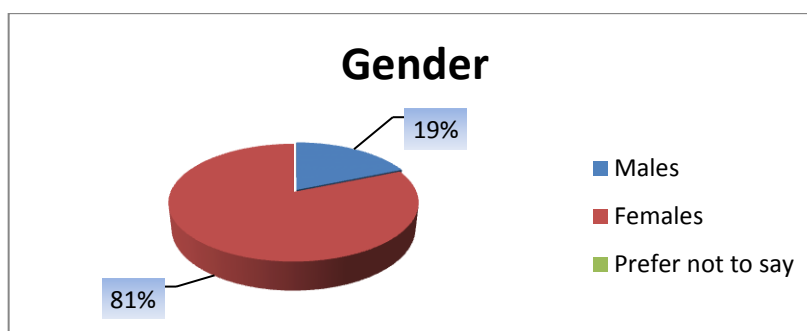


Figure 13: Teachers' Gender

As a matter of fact, it is noticed that results of gender frequencies in most questionnaires in several domains of research were similar, and in favour of female. This fact is mainly due the demographic nature of Algeria, where female numbers remains always high since independence time, as a result of the Algerian War of Independence. As for the second question, the teachers were asked about their experience in teaching first-middle school students to validate the homogeneity of the sample and, thus, findings. Results obtained are as follows:

Q2: Do (Did) you teach English first year middle school? A: 1-Yes 2-No

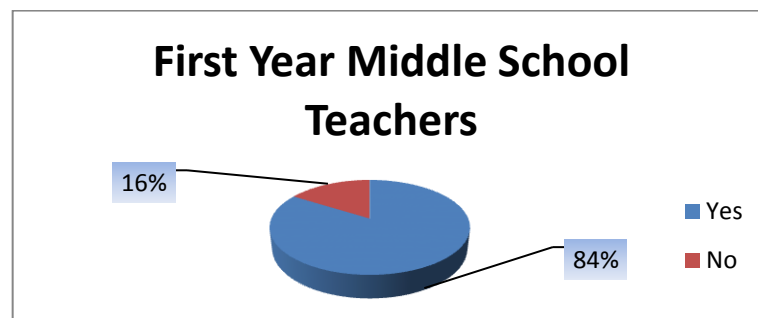


Figure 14: First Year Middle School Teachers

It can be clearly noticed that a great portion of the participants are valid samples for this research. This does not mean the other quarter of the participants is invalid (Further details in the upcoming questions). Convincingly, teachers of English should have passed through teaching first years or grades before the others, to get experience gradually.

Q3: How many students are there in your class?

This question was about the atmosphere of teaching the foreign language in terms of the size of the class. This fact may affect the students' abilities to learn and teacher's readiness to teach. Findings resulted in similar statistics, estimating the classroom size to an average of 30 to 35 students per class. When further asked about whether they seem comfortable with size or not, the teachers' response varied.

Q4: Are you comfortable with the number of students in your class? A: 1-Yes 2- No

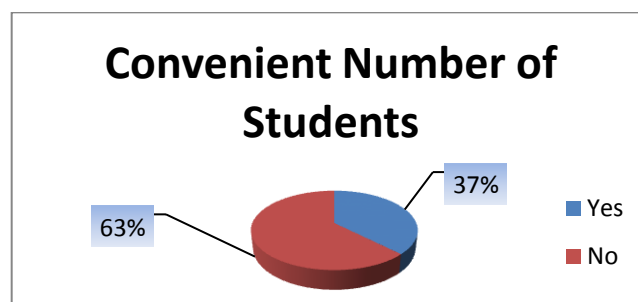


Figure 15: Teachers' Convenient Number of Students

The figure shows that almost two thirds of the participating teachers (63%) are not satisfied with the number of students in their own classrooms, which may affect their answers slightly in the upcoming questions; while (37%)of the respondents seemed satisfied. Having large classes is a serious problem in teaching in a general basis, and EFL context, in particular. In listening sessions, the teacher may have a hard time delivering the right information amidst the potential chaos due to the large number of students in one classroom; this may result in various listening difficulties to the student, as well as speaking problems for the teacher, mainly vocal folds' deficiency.

Q5: Do you think that decreasing the number of students can boost listening for your students?

A: 1- Yes 2- No 3- Not sure

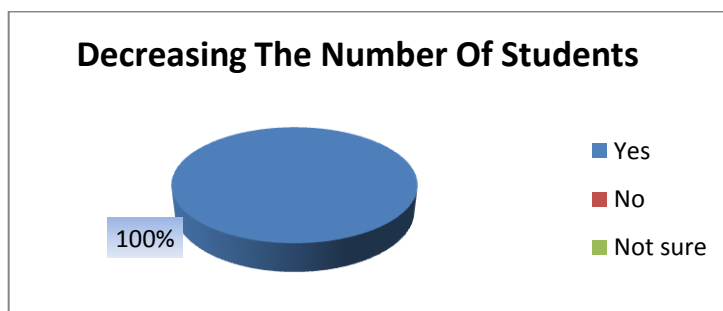


Figure 16: Teacher's Opinion Decreasing the Number of Students

It seems that all the participants (100%) do agree with the idea of "less students more listening"; even those who are comfortable with the range of 30 to 45 students in one classroom would prefer fewer students to work with for maximum efficiency when using ALM as a teaching method. This means more time and more work for each student individually. Yet, in reality, this aim can hardly be achieved in Algeria. Nevertheless, an effective teacher should find other ways to overcome the problem of size, and look for how to make his/her students enjoy the sessions.

Q6: How many of your students enjoy learning English?

A: 1 -Some of them 2 -Most of them 3 -All of them 4- None of them

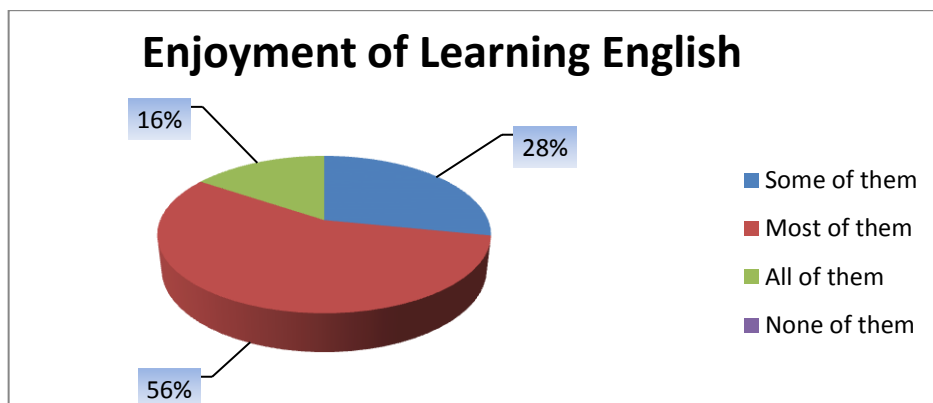


Figure 17: Teacher’s Judgment about Their Students' Enjoyment of Learning English

When asked about their students’ enjoyment of English sessions, it is noticed that more than half of the teachers (56%) think that most of their students actually enjoy studying English which goes hand in hand with (Q3) from the students’ questionnaire (Are you motivated to learn English?). However, enjoyment does not mean learning, and entertaining does not imply teaching. When asked further about their students’ concentration and listening abilities, answers varied and presented as follows.

Q7: Do you think that your students listen well to you?

A: 1- Yes they listen very well 2- Sometimes 3- They listen poorly

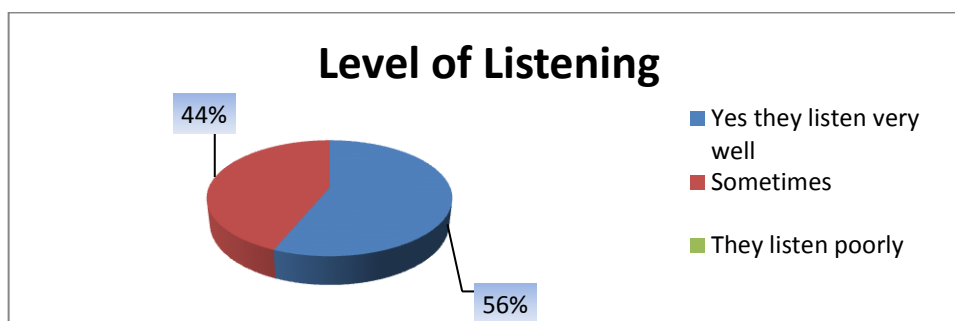


Figure 18: Teacher’s Judgment of Their Students' Level of Listening

The participating teachers are nearly divided in their views as to whether their students listen to them occasionally or all the time. This research focused more on teachers who face problems concerning the level of listening comprehension of their students, by providing the teachers a set of principles to develop the listening skills of their students to refer to. (56%) of the respondents agreed on their students' potentials in listening, while (44%) considered that their students used to face some difficulties from time to time, but they were not so poor. This clarifies the simplified language used by teachers and their endeavour to help beginners to understand the target language.

Q8: When teaching English, what is your priority?

A: 1-Vocabluary 2- Speaking 3- Grammar 4-Reading and writing

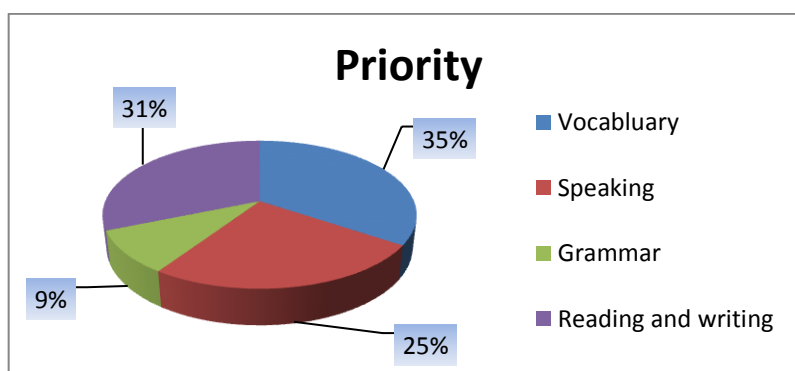


Figure 19: Teacher's Methods of Teaching in Class

For the (35%) who prioritize vocabulary when teaching EFL for first year middle school students, ALM and its drilling techniques would be more convenient and comfortable to use, especially for these young learners. Reading and writing for the (31%) are more important, most likely for those teachers who use the direct method in teaching EFL. As for speaking (25%), the communicative learning method (CLM) is apparent. The remaining (9%) obviously use the grammar translation method. This interpretation is subjective; sometimes teachers have no single and specific method to follow; instead, an eclectic method may be adopted. In Algeria, CBA method is maintained.

Q9: Do you use technology? A: 1- Yes 2-No

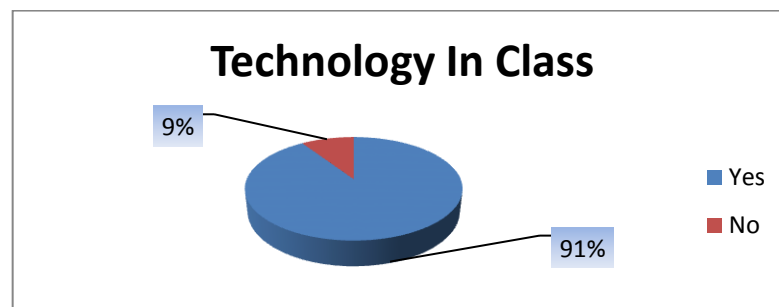


Figure 20: Teacher's Technology Usage in Class

Apparently, the majority of the teachers do use technology (91%). And just (9%) do not. In recent time, technology means are prevailing at the different levels and in all domains, and educational sector is not exceptional. Students themselves are far away from traditional ways of learning, mainly languages with the advent revolution of technology. Further, the sample teachers were asked about which materials and tools were used in classroom.

Q9.1- If yes, which kind do you use? A: 1-Audio 2-Visual

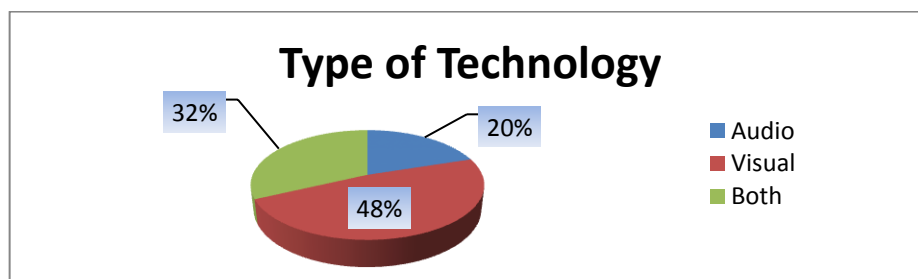


Figure 21: Teacher's Type of Technology Usage

Findings showed that, as clearly noticed in the figure, (20%) answered with audio option only while the others (48%) used visuals only, and (32%) of the respondents used to use both of them. The kind of audio-visual means which were adapted in their classes constitutes the following concern.

Q9.2- Specify what tools do you use? E.g. Tapes, Data show...etc. (Open answer)

This type of question is open-ended, since the means that may be used by teachers are different. For of the five teachers who used both audio and visual tools (32%), they mentioned mobiles, laptops, and speakers. The teacher who used only audial technology selected the laptop as the material used. The other teachers, however, mostly used data show.

Q10: How many words do you prefer your students to learn per session?

A: 1- Three or less 2- From four to seven 3- Eight or more

Concerning vocabulary learning, teachers were asked about their intended goal in helping students enrich their terminology in English language. To this end, they estimated the number of terms learnt per session as follows.

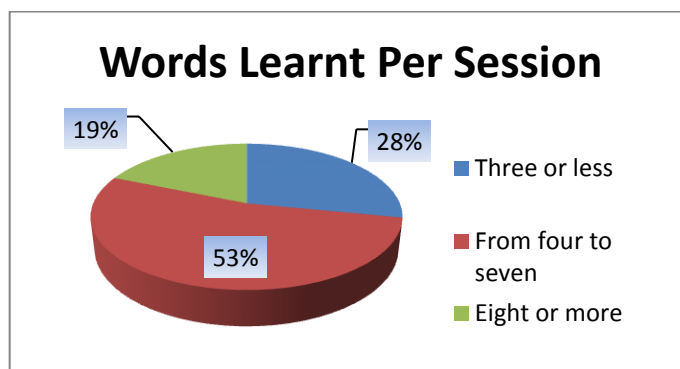


Figure 22: Teachers Preference of Learned Words per Session

Most of the teachers (53%) tried to get their students memorize an average amount of words (of four to seven); the other (19%) went even beyond seven. This is mainly due to the fact that the learners were quite young, fresh, and mentally ready to acquire new languages, and according to (Q9) from the students' questionnaire, where (65%) of the students learnt three words or more, the decision of (four to seven) words per session seems to be logical for both students and teachers. (19%) of the teachers who preferred (eight or more) learnt words per session can be considered ambitious but not necessarily over the limitation of the students. As for the (28%) of the participating teachers decision who prefer (three or less) learnt words

per session can correlate with the (Q9) (18% two words) and (17% one word) students answers.

Q11: How many times do you repeat a word or a phrase per session for the students to memorize? A: 1- One time 2- Two or three 3- Four or more

This question was designed to know the utility of repetition techniques in boosting listening skills, and thus, enriching vocabulary learning. The following figure presents the results found.

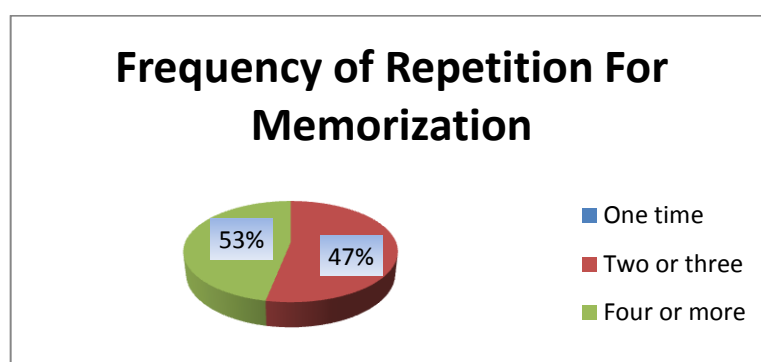


Figure 23: Teacher's Frequency of Repetition for Memorization

Repetition is evident in this question, where almost half of the participants (47%) presented a word or a phrase two or three times to be memorised and, hence, learnt; while the other half (53%) stretched the repetition even more (four or more times) for the students to memorize. According to behaviourist principle, the more repetition is done, the more learning occurs.

Q12: According to you, how do you make your students listen to you willingly? (Open answer)

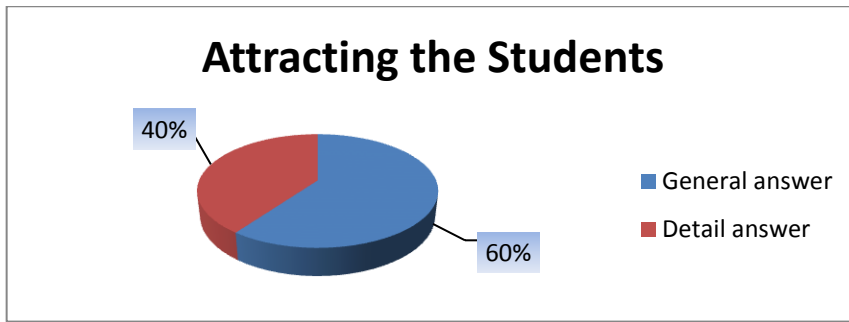


Figure 24: Teacher’s Ways of Attracting a Student's Attention

This question is open; in that teachers were free to answer the way they like, according to their background knowledge. 30 out of 32 participants have answered this question. Most of the answers (18 teachers out of 30), representing (60%), where general in nature for instance: Attracting their attention through fun and interesting topics ...etc. However, some teachers (12) (40%) gave detailed answers, for example: hook them with a story, educational songs or imposing educational games...etc. The point of this question is to determine how many teachers were able to and care about developing listening skills of students.

Q13: In case of chaos during the session, what do you do to regain control?

A: 1- Take it by force 2- Involve students in activities 3- Interact with students individually

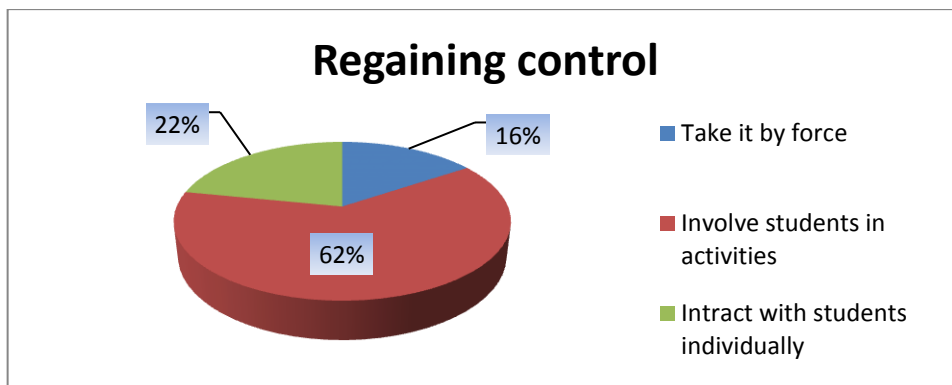


Figure 25: Teachers’ Control Regaining Methods

Interacting with students individually can be somehow tedious and exhausting for the teachers, especially when the classroom is full of students, but apparently (22%) preferred

this way for controlling the classroom again. One of the most efficient ways to regain order in classes is through exercises and activities to occupy the students, and as expected most teachers (62%) preferred this way. Taking order by force (shouting or hitting the board or the tables) should be avoided and resorted to as a last option. Hence, the percentage of teachers who use it is noticeably low (16%).

Q14: Do you think using short stories or anecdotes is beneficial for learning English?

A: 1- Yes 2- No 3- Maybe

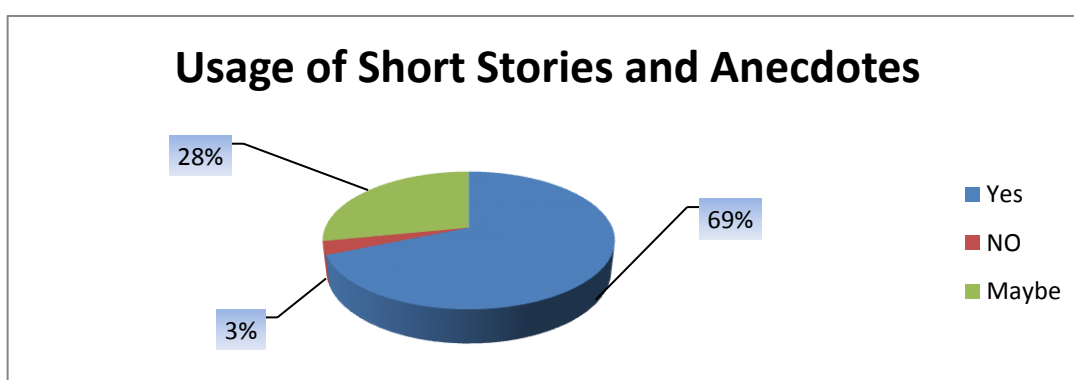


Figure 26: Teachers' Opinion about Short Stories and Anecdotes Implementation

Moving to short stories as an example of material used to make students enjoy learning, and hence enhance their listening capacities, (69%) of the participating teachers approved its utility. These statistics from the teachers' questionnaire go in line with the statistics from the students' questionnaire (Q11), where (65%) of the students would enjoy a story in English from time to time. (28%) of the teachers were not sure about the result of using short stories as a teaching material; the reasons behind this may differ (limited time, uninterested students, unavailable materials, or fear of wasting time...etc.). Just one teacher (3%) is against the idea of using short stories during class as he/she saw no benefit or the negatives outweigh the positives.

Q15: Does the administration of your school provide you with the appropriate tools that can help you during classes? (Optional)

A: 1- Yes, they provide everything 2- Some times, not everything 3- Nothing

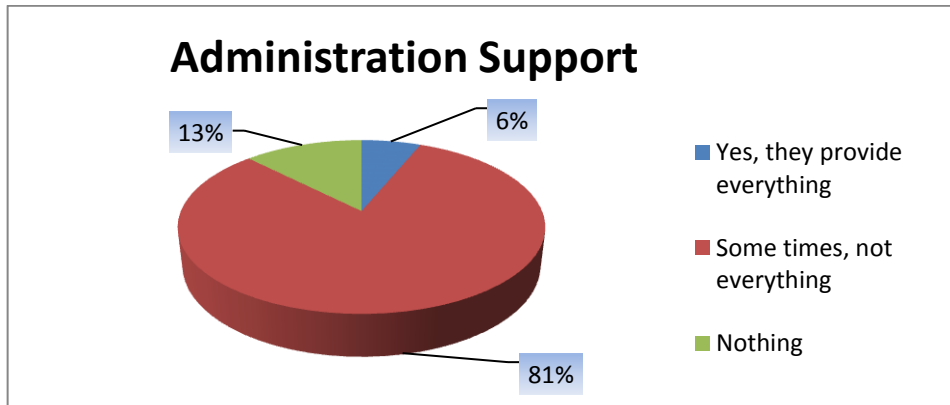


Figure 27: Teacher's Opinions about Administration Support

This question is designed for pedagogical purposes; that is why it is optional for the convenience of the participating teachers. Hence, results showed that 16 out of 32 (50%) of the participants answered this question. (81%) of the respondents complained about the lack of the administrations' support; this may affect the efficiency of teaching during class.

Q16: Do you think that the government should provide the students and teachers with a better environment in middle schools? (Optional) A: 1- Yes 2- No

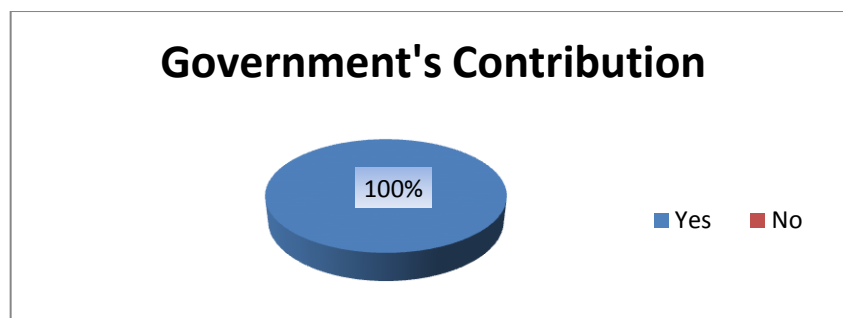


Figure 28: Teachers' Opinion about the Government Contribution

This question is also optional for the same purpose of the previous one (Q15). (100%) of the respondents (16 out of 32) agree that better educational environment than what is

currently available in Algeria, should be the focus of the government. The aim of any teacher is a suitable environment, as well as motivating and stress-free atmosphere that could help in the learning/teaching process; thus better results would be achieved.

In sum, the teachers' questionnaire was directed to extract the teachers' opinions and methods when dealing with EFL learners, especially the teachers who use ALM as a teaching method. Results indicated that a good portion of the participants did use it primarily (35%) (Q8). The first thing to notice is the teachers' dissatisfaction with the number of students in their classes (63%) (Q4); this is considered as the first obstacle towards fixing listening problems for EFL students, and according to the participants answer in (Q5), all of them (100%) agreed on decreasing the number of students present in one class for better educational environment. Comparing (Q6) from the teachers' questionnaire with (Q3) from the students' questionnaire, it can be felt that the teachers have a strong grasp of their students mentality when it comes to the motivation of learning EFL.

This research recommends the use of ALM when teaching EFL for first year middle school, with reference to (Q8) (35%) of the participating teachers who concentrate on teaching vocabulary as the core of ALM. Apart from that portion, the remaining (65%) (31+25+9) should consider also using ALM, since their students were first year middle school learners. It is better to develop vocabulary and familiarization of English sentence patterns (CH2, 1-5 ALM techniques), especially if the learners are young (12-14 years old). The use of technology was quite popular among the participants (91%) (Q9); this research encourages the use of spaced repetition (flash cards) especially applications that use spaced repetition as an algorithm (CH2, 2-5-2 through spaced repetition). Among the participating teachers two of them had specified that they used flash cards as a teaching technique to boost vocabulary learning. According to (Q10) (53%) of the teachers expected their students to learn four to seven words per session, plus (19%) who expected eight or more words learnt per session, if

this is the case, using ALM and the repetition techniques should prove the best option. As for the implementation of short stories as a teaching material, (Q14) (69%) of the teachers supported this idea along with (Q11) of the students' questionnaire where (65%) of the students approved it.

Conclusion

After analysing the results from both students' and teachers' questionnaires' taking their perspectives and reactions towards EFL, in general and ALM in particular, we conclude that ALM as a teaching method should be much more effective than any other method for both the teacher and student at least for the first year middle school level. In students' questionnaire the majority of the students declared their passion and motivation to learn English; they also stated their capacity to learn and memorize new words, which gives ALM and the repetition techniques the upper hand as the best option to teach them EFL, in addition to the usage of short stories and anecdotes as learning materials.

On the other side of the study, most of the teachers are aware of the benefits of ALM as a teaching method, but the current circumstances to deliver a hundred per cent effectiveness are rough and difficult. The teachers stated clearly their frustration towards their administrations' decisions concerning the study situations for their students. (Q15) (81%) of the teachers argued that their administrations' support is not that impressive, and also according to (Q16) (100%) of the teachers the government should do a better job in improving the educational environment. One of the participants wrote the following in (Q16): *"Yes it would be better if we had special classes with computers where we can work in groups the teachers will guide the learners will learn by themselves especially for listening"*.

General Conclusion

It is necessary to promote better educational environment for both teachers and students. Education in general prerequisites students to have a certain level of learning skills and one of the most important is listening. Therefore, teachers at middle schools that use ALM as a teaching method could apply the recommended techniques to foster EFL learning such as spaced repetition and drill repetition in order to develop better listening students. Moreover, for administrations, and to better prepare teachers to perform more effectively in the classroom, the study can give instructions on how to manage and handle students to listen more professionally and accurately. The study attempted to answer the following questions

1. What are the most effective ALM techniques that are used in teaching EFL learners' listening skills?
2. Can first-year middle school students' listening skills be enhanced through repetition techniques, using short stories, in EFL class?
3. Can first-year middle school students' vocabulary items be enriched through repetition techniques, using short stories, in EFL class?

The findings of the study and analysis of both questionnaires confirm the hypothesis that if learners have better listening skills, increasing vocabulary storage and the familiarization process with EFL through sentence patterning is not only possible but very effective. This study aimed to highlight ALM use in an EFL classroom focusing especially on the repetition technique. It also proposed instructions and guides for teachers who use ALM as a teaching method, to better develop their learners' listening skills. Although not all students approved the use of short stories as a fruitful material in class, still the majority would enjoy listening to one from time to time; this is if the teacher would allow it and most teachers do. Over all outcome of the case study showed that implementing ALM in EFL classroom and in this case

first year middle school level can produce outstanding results concerning listening comprehension skill development, and a special use of repetition can enhance the learners' vocabulary capacity and their sentence pattern familiarization.

Having said that, employing ALM in EFL classroom as a start-up teaching method particularly for beginners would help to enhance the students' listening skills (pronunciation, vocabulary). Middle school learners, as beginner learners, need to accomplish their vocabulary in order to pave the way towards mastering the target language.

Recommendations

Promoting the use of ALM in EFL class, mainly with first-year middle school students in Algeria, at least for half of the educational year, this would better prepare students towards mastering English as a foreign language. The following are some recommendations which English teachers and students can benefit from or adopt as principles when ALM is present:

- Teachers should focus primarily on ALM and the repetition techniques when teaching beginners in EFL classes.
- Teachers should take advantage of their students' excitement to learn English and try to drill as much vocabulary as they can before the students get bored.
- Learners should be allowed to use applications during class that help their language acquisition such as flash card app and E-dictionaries and vocal assisting apps.
- Teachers should not restrict their students to them as the only source of information, but encourage them to look for other sources outside the classroom such as; videos, documentaries, English dictionaries, or online lessons.

Regarding the design of the study, it would have been more appealing if the questionnaires were administered physically and not online and to one education facility instead of multiple. Interviewing first year middle school learners face to face about the short

stories inclusion as a learning material and noting their reactions would have been more informal than directing a simple question of yes and no.

Limitations of the Study

At first, the researcher intended to conduct the case study in the fieldwork which could be more professional and the results will be more precise when testing participants (students) face to face, as well as making interviews with first-year middle school teachers. Unfortunately, the pandemic (Covid19) was already spread and the researcher had no chance to reach the educational centers. Thanks to some friends' suggestions I found other ways such as asking mates' relatives (their brothers and sisters who study in first-year middle school) to answer the questionnaire papers (online documents). The students' samples are not sufficient to rely on due to the current pandemic, contrary; teachers were founded considerably in meeting groups (Facebook groups). Therefore; to conduct the researcher's case study I wrote two questionnaires for both teachers and students of first-year middle school; they were posted in several online groups. Regarding the design of the study, it would have been more appealing if the questionnaires were administered physically and not online and to one education facility instead of multiple. Interviewing the first year middle school learners face to face about the short stories inclusion as a learning material and noting their reactions would have been more informal than directing a simple question of yes and no.

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Appendices

(1)

Memory: A Contribution to Experimental Psychology by Hermann Ebbinghaus

Hermann Ebbinghaus (1850-1909) was a German psychologist who pioneered the experimental study of memory, and is known for his discovery of the forgetting curve and the spacing effect. He was also the first person to describe the learning curve.


In 1885, he published his groundbreaking *Über das Gedächtnis* ("On Memory", later translated to English as "Memory: A Contribution to Experimental Psychology") in which he described experiments he conducted on himself to describe the processes of learning and forgetting.

Ebbinghaus made several findings that are still relevant and supported to this day. First, arguably his most famous finding, the forgetting curve. The forgetting curve describes the exponential curve that illustrates how fast

we tend to forget the information we had learned. The sharpest decline is in the first twenty minutes, then in the first hour, and then the curve evens off after about one day.



Hermann Ebbinghaus



Humans more easily remember or learn items when they are studied a few times over a long period of time (spaced presentation), rather than studied repeatedly in a short period of time.

AZ QUOTES

Language learning after World War II was dominated by 'the Army

The 1st step towards Audiolingualism

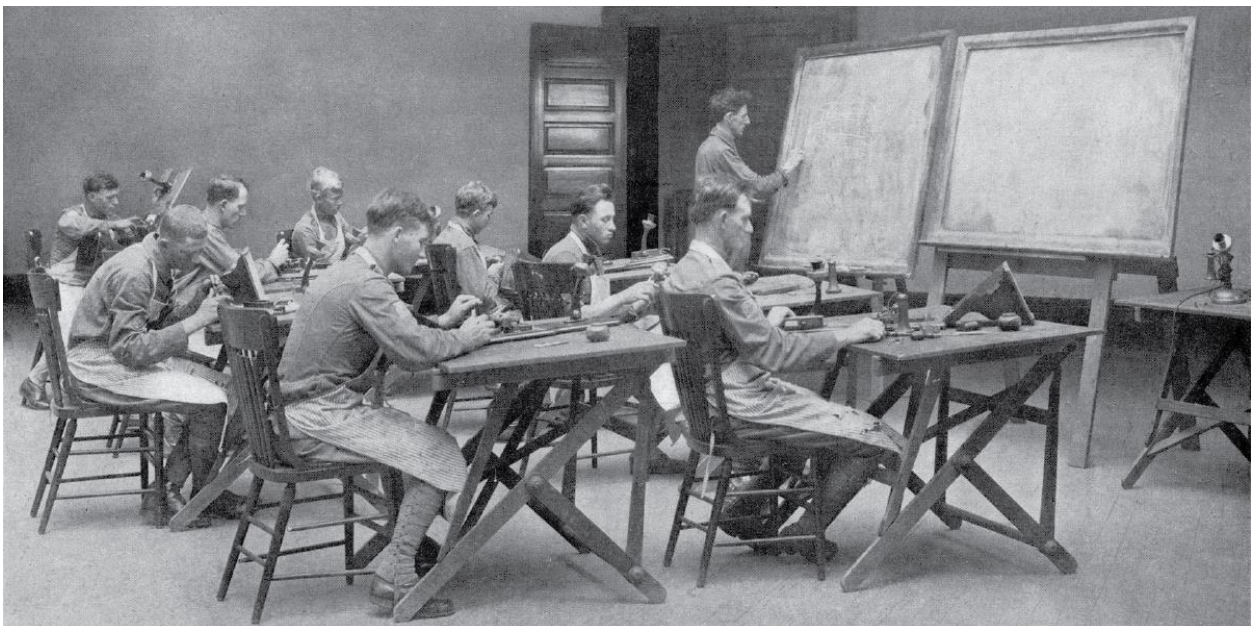
...was "Army method".

It was **based on** Leonard Bloomfield's technique (*informant method*) of **memorization** and **repetition** in simple foreign language patterns.

In brief, the **linguist**, without knowing the language, was trained to **absorb** its **basic structure from the informant/native speaker** and together with students "**gradually learned how to speak this language, as well as to understand much of its basic grammar**" (Richards, J.C. et-al. 1987).



Leonard Bloomfield, 1887 - 1949, [American linguist](#)



method's— a curious mix of psychology, linguistics and military drills.

Photo of a military drilling class in the U.S during the WWII. 1940

Photo: Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-P0422-0004 / CC-BY-SA

Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

You are kindly invited to answer the following questions in an attempt to explore your listening skills problems. Your cooperation means a great deal to this study. Please, take your time to answer this questionnaire carefully. The information obtained helps in a better understanding of your background language experiences.

Section One: Background Knowledge

1. **Gender ***
 - Male
 - Female
 - Prefer not to say
2. **How old are you? ***
3. **Are you motivated to learn English? ***
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not sure
4. **What is your level in English? ***
 - Weak
 - Average
 - Good
 - Excellent

Section Two: Classroom Inquiry Questions

5. **Do you face any problems with listening during class? ***
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Always
6. **What do you think is the problem? ***
 - I can't focus
 - I can't hear the speaker
 - I hear just sounds without knowing the meanings
 - I don't like English
7. **Do you watch videos in English?**
 - Yes
 - No
8. **If you do watch videos in English how much do you understand? ***
 - I understand Few words
 - I understand more expressions
 - I understand nothing

9. How many words you learn and memorize during each session? *

- One word
- Two words
- Three words or more

10. For how long you retain a word after memorizing it without repeating it? *

- One day
- Three days
- Week or longer

Section three: Opinion Question

11. Would you prefer to listen to a short story during class? *

Yes / No

(3)

Teacher' Questionnaire

Dear teacher,

You are invited to answer the following questions in an attempt to explore your students' listening skills' problems, investigating your suggestions to improve their listening abilities. Your cooperation will contribute to the completion of this study. Please, take your time to answer this questionnaire carefully.

1. Gender *

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

2. Do you (Did you) teach English, first-year middle school ?

- Yes
- No

3. How many students are in your class? *

4. Are you comfortable with the number of students in your class? *

- Yes
- No

5. Do you think that decreasing the number of students can boost listening for your students? *

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

6. How many of your students enjoy learning English? *

- Some of them
- Most of them
- All of them

- None of them
- 7. Do you think your students listen well to you? ***
- Yes, they listen very well
 - Sometimes
 - They listen poorly
- 8. When teaching English, what is your priority? ***
- Vocabulary
 - Speaking
 - Grammar
 - Reading and writing
- 9. Do you use technology in class? ***
- Yes
 - No
- 10. If yes, which kind do you use?**
- Audio
 - Visual
- 11. Specify what tools do you use? (E.g. tapes, data show ...etc.)**
- 12. How many words do you prefer your students to learn per session? ***
- Three or less
 - From four to seven
 - Eight or more
- 13. How many times do you repeat a word or a phrase per session for the students to memorize? ***
- One time
 - Two or three
 - Four or more
- 14. Personally, how do you make your students listen to you willingly?**
- 15. In case of chaos during the session, what do you do to regain control? ***
- Take it by force
 - Involve students in activities
 - interact with students individually
 - Others
- 16. Do you think using short stories or anecdotes is beneficial for learning English? ***
- Yes
 - No
 - Maybe
- 17. Does the administration of your school provide you with the appropriate tools that can help you during classes? ***
- Yes, they provide everything
 - Sometimes, not everything
 - Nothing
- 18. Do you think that the government should provide the students and teachers with a better environment in middle schools? ***

Résumé

Cette étude a réalisé l'utilisation des répétitions techniques comme méthode d'instruction pour les étudiants de la langue anglaise comme une langue étrangère et les réactions des professeurs et les étudiants envers ces techniques. Le problème des étudiants de la 1er année moyen pour apprendre la langue anglaise comme une langue étrangère se traduit en premier que cette langue n'est pas familier et en deuxième l'enrichissement vocabulaire. La cause de ce problème est que les étudiants de la 1ère année moyenne Entrent en collision avec cette langue comme une langue étrangère académique pour la première fois durant leur parcours éducatif; ce problème peut être causé par l'ignorance des professeurs pour les besoins des étudiants d'un coup de pouce de vocabulaire pour continuer d'apprendre la langue anglaise comme une langue étrangère. Dans cette étude, les répétitions techniques et les histoires courtes comme un outil, et tout ça pour développer les compétences des étudiants. Pour conséquent ; on peut émettre l'hypothèse que si un apprenant avait déjà un haut niveau d'écoute, ces techniques de répétition augmenteraient son stockage de vocabulaire si la bonne technique qui peut convenir au type d'apprenti était adoptée, les techniques de répétition ont toujours d'autres avantages qui confirment qu'elle peut être appliquée à tous les apprenants et pas seulement à ceux qui ont un faible niveau d'écoute. Pour prouver cette hypothèse, deux questionnaires ont été conçus et administrés respectivement aux élèves de première année du collège et aux enseignants à travers l'Algérie, pour collecter des données sur leurs opinions d'attitudes concernant les techniques de répétition comme guide d'enseignement pour les enseignants et pour les élèves, et bien sûr sans négliger l'utilisation d'histoires courtes. Les résultats finals ont prouvé que les élèves ont la capacité d'apprendre facilement le vocabulaire et les schémas de phrases tandis que les enseignants sont les guides qui suivent le processus d'apprentissage des élèves à chaque cours, ce qui donne aux apprenants un avantage à acquérir plus d'expressions grâce aux instructions académiques des enseignants.

ملخص

تتعلق الدراسة الحالية حول استخدام تقنيات التكرار كمنهج لتدريس متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية و تستخلص كذلك ردود فعل الأساتذة والتلاميذ تجاهها. مشكلة تلاميذ السنة الأولى في المرحلة الإعدادية عندما يتعلق الأمر باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية هي التعود بشكل أساسي، وإثراء المفردات في المرتبة الثانية. السبب وراء هذه المشكلة هو أن تلاميذ السنة الأولى في المدرسة الإعدادية يتعلمون اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بشكل أكاديمي لأول مرة في حياتهم المهنية التعليمية؛ هذا قد يكون أيضًا بسبب عدم وعي المعلمين أن التلاميذ بحاجة إلى تكوين بسيط لتعلم المفردات الأساسية في اللغة الإنجليزية في مسيرتهم نحو إتقان اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. في هذا البحث، يتطرق الباحث إلى اعتماد تقنيات التكرار بالإضافة إلى القصص القصيرة (كمواد) و هذا من أجل تطوير مهارات الاستماع لدى تلاميذ السنة أولى متوسط. يمكن الافتراض أنه إذا كان لدى المتعلم بالفعل مستوى عالٍ من مهارات الاستماع، فإن تقنيات التكرار ستعزز تخزين المفردات الخاصة به إذا تم اعتماد التقنية الصحيحة التي يمكن أن تناسب نوع المتعلم، فإن تقنيات التكرار لها دائمًا فوائد أخرى تؤكد أنها يمكن يتم تطبيقها على جميع المتعلمين وليس فقط أولئك الذين لديهم مستوى منخفض من مهارات الاستماع. لإثبات هذه الفرضية، تم تصميم استبيانين وإدارتهما لتلاميذ السنة الأولى من المرحلة الإعدادية والمعلمين في جميع أنحاء الجزائر على التوالي، لجمع بيانات حول آراء مواقفهم فيما يتعلق بتقنيات التكرار كطرق تدريس للمعلمين والتلاميذ، بالطبع دون إهمال استخدام القصص القصيرة. أثبتت النتائج أنه يمكن للتلاميذ تعلم المفردات وأنماط الجمل بسهولة بينما المعلمون هم الموجهون الذين يتبعون عملية تعلم التلاميذ خلال كل فصل، مما يعطي ميزة للمتعلمين لاكتساب المزيد من التعبيرات بسبب التعليمات الأكاديمية المتبعة من طرف المدرسين الذين يعتمدون تقنيات التكرار كمنهج تدريسي لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.