



USING LISTENING COMPREHENSION TO BOOST EFFICIENT COMMUNICATION IN EFL CLASSROOMS: STRATEGIES AND PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract:

Listening involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, his/her grammar as well as vocabulary, and grasping his/her meaning. Thus, the complex nature of listening skills and the difficulties that language learners face when listening to the language deserve special thought and investigation. To be clear, listening does not mean a simple word-for-word translation; it involves a deeper understanding of meaning. Teachers should guide students in understanding actual speech so they learn to handle genuine conversations and real listening situations. As such, teaching listening skills has attracted the attention of many teachers and researchers. This study aims to investigate the role of listening comprehension in promoting efficient communication in the Beninese EFL classroom, with a focus on exploring strategies and perspectives to enhance learners' listening skills and communicative competence. To reach this goal, quantitative and descriptive research methods have been used; questionnaires have been addressed to 171 EFL learners and 12 teachers. Then, class observations have been conducted in 4 secondary schools, especially with students in form two (5ème). The data collected reveal a positive aspect of using listening comprehension in fostering communication. The strategies and perspectives about listening comprehension were also revealed from these data. Findings show that listening comprehension is a cornerstone for effective communication. It helps EFL learners become fluent communicators. Therefore, this study recommends strategies and approaches that EFL teachers should adopt to improve listening comprehension in their classes.

Keywords: listening comprehension, communication, strategies, perspectives

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1. Introduction

Communication skills are of the utmost importance in EFL teaching and learning today. Among the core components of communicative competence, listening comprehension stands as a cornerstone, facilitating meaningful interaction and comprehension in various contexts. Despite the remarkable progress that has made over the last few decades, listening comprehension has been neglected for several years. (Çakır, 2018). As educators navigate the complexities of language pedagogy, a deeper understanding of the strategies and perspectives surrounding the development of listening comprehension becomes imperative. Thus, it is a requirement for educators and researchers to discover new ways in which this skill can be taught in foreign language classes.

This research paper delves into the pivotal role of listening comprehension in fostering efficient communication within the EFL classroom. Through the exploration of strategies and emerging perspectives, it aims to shed light on the multifaceted nature of this skill and its implications for language teaching and learning. The teaching of listening comprehension provides learners with opportunities to pay closer attention to what they hear rather than focusing on the language structure, such as grammar and its characteristics (Cope & Kalantzis, 2012, as cited in Diora & Rosa, 2020).

However, students have difficulty speaking just after leaving the setting where the target language has been heard. Some find it hard to decode language, as it seems they do not recognize the words they know and quickly forget what was heard. For example, students' lack of practice, and their unawareness of the interrelationship between language skills, especially listening and speaking, are the main factors. To teach listening in the English language classroom in Benin, English teachers deliver their lessons using their voices. These attitudes or strategies are not adequate anymore these days. From the foregoing, it can be inferred that the role of listening is to use effective strategies and perspectives to improve students' communication ability in order to teach this particular skill mentioned in this study.

More specifically, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

- How can listening comprehension be used to improve EFL students' communication proficiency level in the classroom?
- What are the innovative strategies and emerging trends in using listening comprehension to enhance communication in the EFL classroom?

2. Literature Review

Listening is considered an analytical and synthetic process for processing an acoustic signal, leading to the understanding of information. Furthermore, listening is studied as a subject of scientific and psychological analysis conducted at different levels. In real-life communication, people use a variety of language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In the process of EFL learning, people usually want to make use of that language to communicate with people who speak the same language. They can find themselves in need of understanding them and talking to them.

It is essential for students to understand the language they are exposed to and respond appropriately so that they can become competent users of that particular language. Following Seferolu and Uzakgöre (2004), listening is usually an interactive process (p.2). The listener does not always just listen to, but she or he also react to the speaker or ask questions for clarification. The most essential issue for students should be to understand what they are listening to and to be able to give appropriate responses orally. This aim brings to the integration of listening and speaking while teaching, as the main consideration should not only be learning the grammar of the target language, but also for communication in that language.

2.1 Definition of Listening

According to Anderson and Lynch (1988), listeners do not have the ability to comprehend the message delivered by the speaker by hearing. Listening is a cognitive activity in which an individual actively engages in comprehending and interpreting the underlying significance of the information being conveyed (p.6). For Underwood (1989), listening is the cognitive process of comprehending the meaning of the auditory information received by listeners (p.1). Mendelsohn (1994) defines hearing as the capacity to comprehend the spoken language used by individuals. Following O'Malley, Charmot, and Kupper (1989), listening is a cognitive process involving comprehending the contextual significance via the interpretation of signals and prior knowledge (p.19).

2.2 Theory of Listening Comprehension

Listening Comprehension is a complex process. There are two distinct processes involved in listening comprehension. Learners use 'top-down' processes when they use prior knowledge to understand the meaning of incoming messages. On the other hand, they use 'bottom-up' processes when they use linguistic knowledge to understand them.

Thus, in bottom-up processing, listeners focus on individual words and phrases and construct meaning from the smallest unit of spoken language to the whole content in a linear mode (Nunan, 1998). On the other hand, in top-down processing, listeners get the gist and main ideas of the listening passage. They interpret the intended meaning of the speakers using schemata or background knowledge (Nunan, 1998). This understanding emphasizes the prior knowledge already possessed by listeners that facilitates their ability to grasp incoming information. On the other hand, it is argued that the process of listening comprehension can be defined as interactions between the top-down and bottom-up processing (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). Reference Flowerdew & Miller (2005) introduces interactive models that encompass individual, cultural, social, contextualized, affective, strategic, and critical dimensions. Using these models, they noted that listeners process spoken language interactively and simultaneously by compensating for the lack of information on one level by checking it against another level.

Teaching listening has long played an important role in both EFL classrooms and in research involving teaching EFL. Although listening is a passive skill, learners need to take an active role in interpreting information from aural and visual cues. Improving second language listening skills is not easy because learners have to process both content knowledge and

linguistic knowledge simultaneously while listening. According to Underwood (1989), students experience considerable difficulty in listening comprehension because they cannot control the speed of delivery. Moreover, students tend to have difficulty concentrating on listening since it requires an enormous amount of effort to follow the meaning. L2 learners have cognitive constraints to processing information in the second language owing to their lack of familiarity with the new language. Thus, bearing in mind the theoretical aspects of listening, teaching listening is somewhat complicated in ESL and EFL courses.

2.3 Types of Listening

- **Casual Listening:** This kind of listening entails listening without any specific objective or intention. In this kind of listening, the listeners lack earnestness. Casual listening values activities such as listening to music and listening to tales.
- **Focused Listening:** This is the type of listening in which the listeners maintain seriousness in grasping the information. This is purposeful listening. It includes listening to lectures and listening to any serious information.
- **Appreciative Listening:** In this kind of communication, the listener actively engages in the process of receiving and valuing the information conveyed by the speaker. Appreciative listening is often engaged in while listening to music only for the purpose of enjoying the auditory experience.
- **Gist Listening:** This is a kind of attentive listening when the listener focuses on capturing the key points.

2.4 Listening Skill in Language Teaching and Learning

Listening is one of the essential key factors for success in daily communication. Morely (2001) points out that: "*listening is used for more than any other single language skill in normal daily life. On average, we can expect to listen twice as much as we speak, four times more than we read, and five times more than we write*" (p.70). As part of a child's language abilities in normal sequence, it is the listening that comes first, and then, after some time, the child begins speaking. Reading and writing come very late when the child goes to school, normally at the age of six. In language teaching and learning, listening skills should be given greater attention. Bress (2006) points out that of all the four skills, listening must surely be the most practiced one. We start listening as babies, and we do an awful lot of it before we even start speaking. The more they understand, the more powerful they feel and the more confident they are in their ability to communicate a language.

Harmer (2001) points out that: "*Listening is important since it provides the perfect opportunity to hear voices other than the teachers', enables students to acquire good speaking habits as a result of the spoken English they absorb, and helps to improve their own pronunciation*" (p228). According to Morely (2001), listening as a skill is neglected in the curriculum at many schools and universities. Teachers and students are concerned about the ultimate goal (i.e speaking). They do not pay enough attention to listening comprehension, which is the "easiest" way to develop speaking. Teachers and students are only looking for the outcomes.

2.5 The Purpose of Listening

Wolvin and Coakley (1988) propose five listening purposes, namely: *discriminative listening*, *comprehensive listening*, *critical listening*, *therapeutic listening*, and *appreciative listening*. The listener's different purposes demonstrate that listening is an active process, rather than a passive product. Steven (1987) points out that many second/foreign listening studies focus on listening comprehension. Generally, in the ESL/EFL Classroom, the purpose of listening is to make sense of aural/oral language. Thus, this study adopts the second purpose of listening, as mentioned by Steven (1987), namely the comprehension of verbal messages, as the current research assumption.

2.6 The Challenges Related to the Listening of a Second/Foreign Language

The complex nature of the process of listening tasks has made the teaching of such a skill very challenging. To understand the complexity related to such a demanding task, it is important to identify the different learning problems faced by EFL/ESL learners. The most important problem is the one related to the pronunciation of words which differ greatly from the way they appear in print material (Bloomfield *et al.*, 2010). Thus, the identification of the words in spoken discourse may prove problematic for learners. Likewise, listeners, unlike readers, do not have the luxury of regular spacing that indicates the beginning and ending of words as they do in print (Vandergrift, 2007).

In addition to pronunciation and the identification of sentence boundaries, prosodic characteristics of spoken discourse, such as where the stress falls, the strong and weak forms of words, the speaker's intonation and emotion also influence comprehension of the verbal messages. Furthermore, spoken discourse usually comes in short phrases or clusters loosely strung together (Osada, 2004), with mispronunciation, hesitations, rephrasing of utterances, and repetition. Eventually, listening may face the risk of losing track of what is being said (Field, 2008). Learners' home language backgrounds and their understanding of foreign culture also affect their comprehension of the spoken discourse. Similarly, vocabulary related to foreign culture may also impede comprehension. Vocabulary and grammar in spoken discourse also tend to be more colloquial and less formal (Osada, 2004). Sometimes, listeners need to utilise culturally pragmatic knowledge to make inferences and to determine the speaker's implied meaning (Vandergrift, 2007). In connection with native speakers, regional accents also affect listeners' comprehension of the spoken messages. These linguistic features should be taken into consideration when assessing the challenges of teaching foreign language listening.

2.7 The Listening Process

An issue to consider when assessing the listening process is that verbal messages require immediate attention. Floyed (1985) defines listening as a process which involves hearing, attending, comprehending, evaluating, and giving responses to verbal messages. When the listening process is over, only a faint mental impression remains in the learner's mind (Vandergrift, 2004). Unlike reading, listening requires instantaneous processing, with little or no chance to access the verbal language again, making listening more difficult to handle than reading. In most cases, language learners need to process the verbal message at a speed

determined by the native speakers, which is generally quite fast (Osada, 2004). The major differences between first and second language listening could be that native listeners face difficulties when they are distracted, disinterested, or respond to the verbal contents by thinking about something else.

While the problems of the second/foreign language listeners arise due to insufficient linguistic knowledge, a lack of knowledge of the second language socio-cultural contents, or a lack of pragmatic schemata that assist them in inferring meaning from the verbal messages. Therefore, the pressure of the second/foreign language learners to manage all the structural and grammatical obstacles when listening to verbal messages, combined with the fact that language learners need to accomplish all this in real time, makes listening comprehension complex, dynamic, and fragile (Walker, 2014).

2.8 Present Situation of Listening and Communication Skills

It has been noticed that learners continue to have difficulties in acquiring fundamental listening and communication skills. English, like other languages, is often not seen as a talent to be taught but rather as a teaching unit in schools and universities (Himangam, 2017). The emphasis is often placed on completing the curriculum rather than enhancing language skills. In Benin, a West African French-speaking country, English is taught as a foreign language. The objective of English education in Benin is to provide learners with the necessary skills to read, write, and comprehend the language. Besides, it strives to enable learners to communicate appropriately in the target language with fluency, clarity, accuracy, and precision. The instruction in the English language should emphasize the importance of listening skills in the development of communicative abilities.

Furthermore, it is often noticed that instructors prioritize the development of reading and writing abilities above listening and speaking abilities. Research has also shown a significant lack of necessary expertise on the part of the instructors to effectively handle listening skills tasks. Moreover, schools lack the necessary technological teaching facilities for efficient listening skills. Owing to the great emphasis on reading and writing skills during examination sessions, learners tend to neglect the development of listening and speaking abilities because of the place they are given during exams and the testing process.

2.7 Barriers to Listening

There is a noticeable lack of instruction on how to effectively practise listening activities or listening tasks with EFL students. While students learn to read, write and communicate, they are not trained in practising listening tasks. Despite the abundance of training programs aiming at improving learners' listening abilities, many still struggle to overcome the challenges they face. Some of the things that may get in the way of proper development of the listening abilities are:

- Failure to pause and listen to others,
- Multiple forms of noise and background noise,
- Inattention when listening,
- Difficulty in comprehending what others are saying,

- Interruption during conversations.

2.9 Tips to Develop Effective Listening Skills

In order to fully absorb and comprehend listening material, students in a listening comprehension situation should adhere to the following guidelines. When listening to a listening item, learners should fulfill the following requirements:

- Maintain eye contact with the speaker to ensure comprehension of their shared information.
- Keep an open mind and embrace new knowledge and ideas.
- Learning new terms and their definitions is essential.
- To get the speaker's point across, ask them for clarification.
- Make sure to jot down the key topics.
- Keep quiet and pay attention.

2.10 Some Established Strategies for Developing Listening Comprehension

Many scholars regard listening strategies as an important part of learning a target language, because a strategy-based approach teaches students to listen effectively by guiding their use of strategies (Mendelsohn, as cited in Lu, 2016). Ak (2012) was interested in strategies for listening comprehension. Listening skills are the skills that involve strategies and can be divided into two groups, which are bottom-up strategies and top-down strategies (Gilakjani, 2016). He also went further by saying that bottom-up strategies concentrate on linguistic features and urge learners to analyze individual words for their meaning or grammatical structures before gathering the meanings to form propositions, while top-down strategies concentrate on the overall meaning of phrases and sentences and motivate learners to use real-world schematic knowledge to develop expectations of text meaning. Moreover, Ak (2012) comments further by adding that listening strategies are metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, and socio-affective strategies.

2.11 Listening Comprehension for Effective Communication

Improving listening comprehension for effective communication involves active engagement and practice. The listener must try to understand the speaker's feelings and perspectives. This brought Rost (2011) to say that listening is an active and important mental ability. It helps listeners to understand the world around them and is one of the necessary elements in creating successful communication (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). Moreover, listening comprehension is the various processes of understanding and making sense of spoken language (Nadig, 2013).

According to Brown (2006) and Hamouda (2013), listening comprehension is an individual understanding of what he or she has heard. In addition, Rost (2011) identifies three listening comprehension practices. They are interactive listening which required students to interact and listen to a collaborative conversation; intensive listening through which students need to listen closely to precise sounds, words, phrases, grammatical journal of units, and pragmatic units to learn the foreign language; and then the extensive listening which refers to an extra period of listening to the foreign language outside the time allocated in the classroom.

Schwartz (2004) observed that students might receive as much as 90% of their information through listening to facilitators. This could be the reason why learners understand their instructors and partners better in and outside the classes.

3. Methodology of the Study

This study has focused on the use of listening comprehension for efficient communication in EFL classes. The investigation took place in four (04) selected state-owned secondary schools (A, B, C, D.) in the Littoral region in the Benin Republic. To collect reliable information, the study has employed a descriptive mixed method. A descriptive mixed method was chosen because the analysis was in both quantitative and qualitative forms. EFL teachers and students were the main participants of this research. Questionnaires and class observations were the major instruments used to carry out the investigation. A total of twelve (12) EFL teachers teaching in those state-owned secondary schools and one hundred and seventy-one (171) students were enrolled in the current study.

Two different questionnaires have been designed: the first is addressed to EFL teachers, while the second is addressed to EFL students. The teachers' questionnaire comprises eight (8) items and was distributed to twelve (12) teachers with suggested answers, and the students' questionnaire consists of ten (10) items distributed to one hundred and seventy-one (171) students, designed similarly to the teachers. The purpose of the questionnaire was explained to both teachers and learners. For the students' questionnaire, it is important to note that after the distribution of the questionnaire sheets, each of the questions was explained to the students before they ticked off the answers. In addition, class observation has been conducted.

To make this research topic reliable, four (4) classes were visited for the investigation. They are those of form two (5^{ème}). The observation was conducted with each EFL teacher during their regular classes for one (1) hour, as they have only two hours to spend with learners. From the back seat of the classroom, notes were taken on how teachers delivered listening comprehension lessons, how students managed to develop their listening skills, and how students related when the listening comprehension activities were on. The goal was to find out students' interest in listening comprehension to improve their communication, their teachers' strategies in helping them improve their communication skills, and to discover the new perspectives that will facilitate both teachers and students to achieve their communication goal. The quantitative data were tabulated, and the qualitative data were categorized by gathering the answers provided by the participants in various themes according to the goals of the research. Then, descriptive statistical techniques such as frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the quantitative data. The results of the class observation have also been presented below and analyzed. To sum up, data were presented in tables, graphs and pie charts.

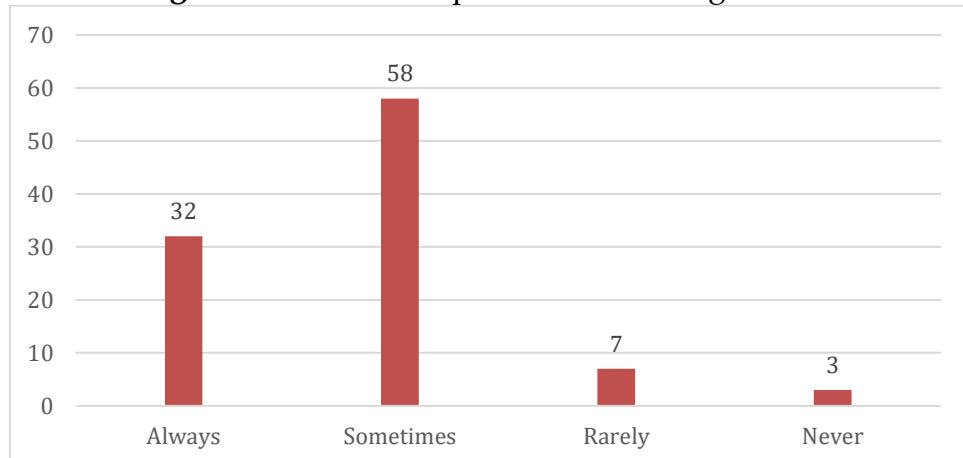
4. Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of the Results

4.1 Findings Obtained from Questionnaires

The results of each questionnaire, that is, the students' questionnaire and the teachers' questionnaire, are shown below.

4.1.1 Results Related to Learners' Questionnaire

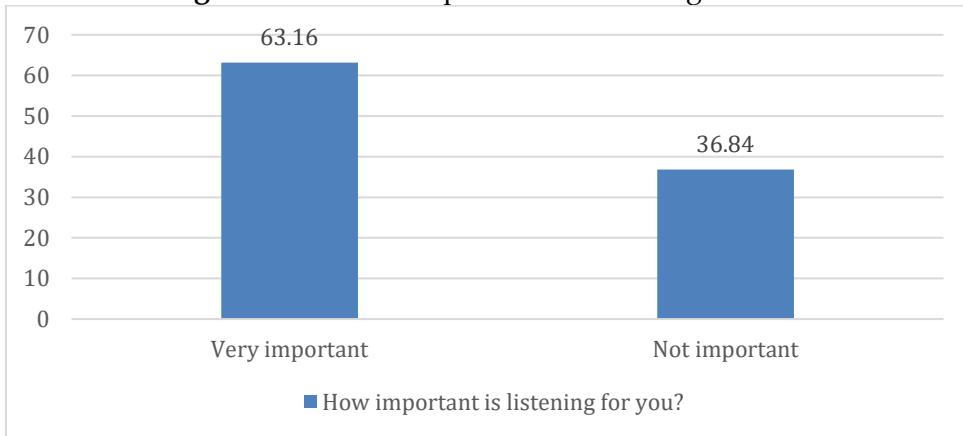
Figure 1: Learners' Exposure to Listening Session



Source: Field Investigation, March 2024.

Figure 1 shows that 32 % of participant students confirmed that their teachers always expose them to listening comprehension sessions. 58 % approved that they are sometimes exposed to listening sessions. 7 % of them stated that their teachers rarely do listening activities with them. 3 % of the respondents confirmed that their teachers never exposed them to listening activities.

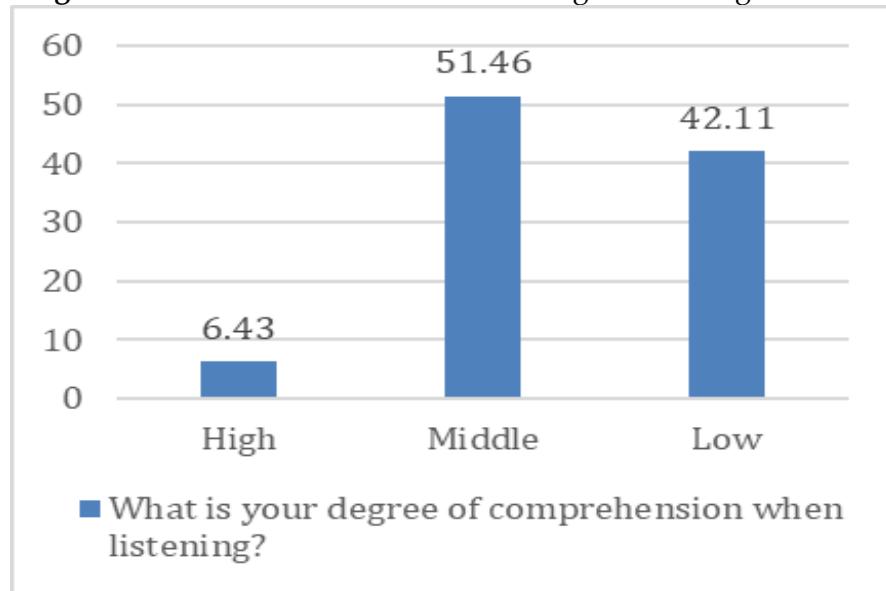
Figure 2: Students' Opinions of Listening Practice



Source: Field Investigation, April 2024.

Figure 2 reveals the importance of listening practice inside the classroom according to the students. Through these results, 63.16% of students reported that practicing listening inside the classroom is very important, whereas 36.84% responded that it is not important.

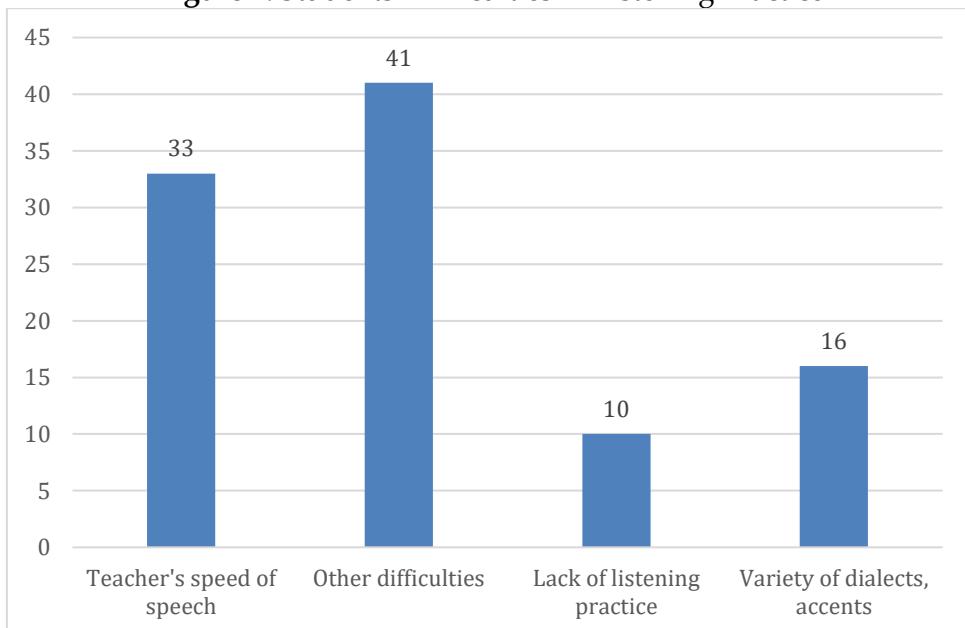
Figure 3: Students' Level of Understanding of Listening Activities



Source: Field Investigation, March 2024.

Figure 3 shows the students' degree of comprehension when listening. Through this figure, only 6.43 % of the students has high degree of understanding, while 51.46 % said that they are neither high nor low in listening comprehension. Then, an important rate (42,11 %) of the respondents said that they have a low degree of comprehension when listening.

Figure 4: Students' Difficulties in Listening Practice

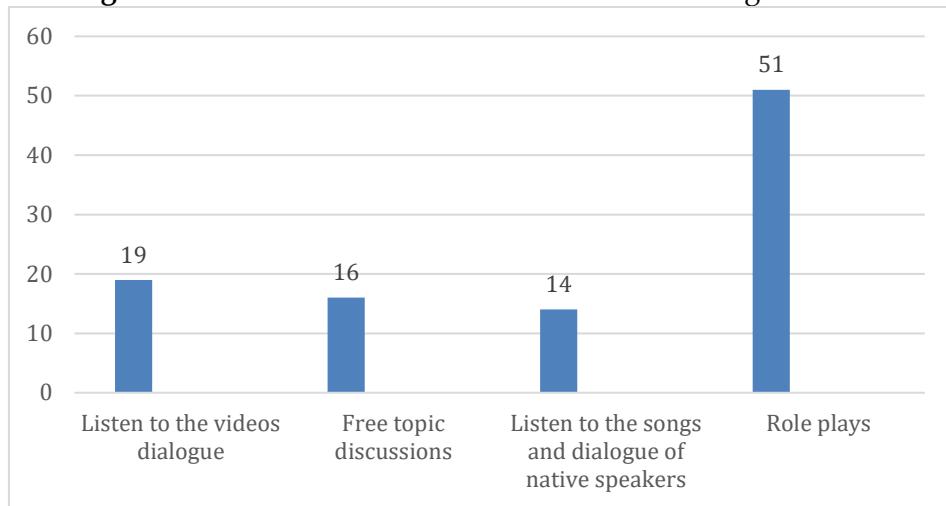


Source: Field Investigation, April 2024.

Figure 4 shows students' difficulties when they are dealing with listening activities. 33 % of the students complain that their teachers speed up their speech, while 41 % of them find difficulties in understanding some words and phrases due to their teacher's pronunciation and fluency. Only 10 % complain about the lack of listening practices, and 16 % about the unfamiliarity with the variety of English dialects.

4.1.2 Results Related to Teachers' Questionnaire

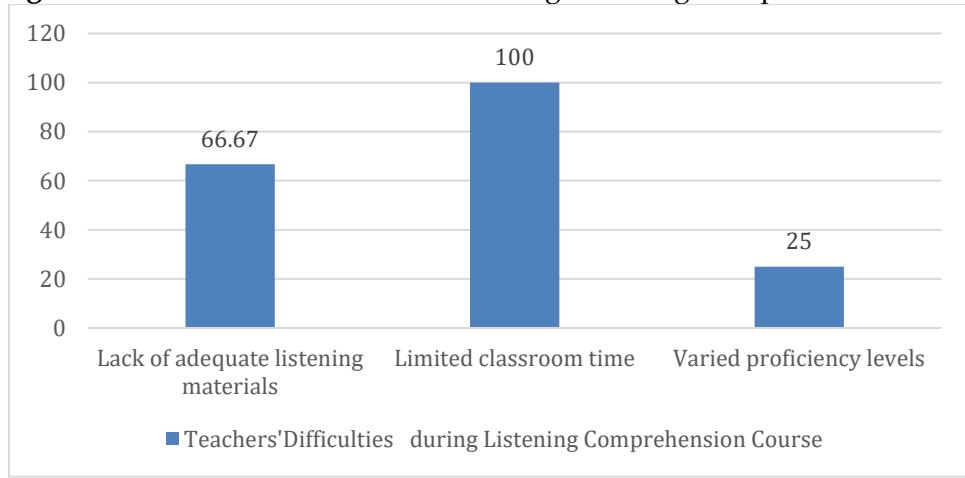
Figure 5: The Main Activities Teachers Use Listening Activities



Source: Field Investigation, March 2024.

Figure 5 shows the results of the main activities that teachers do to develop their students' listening skills. 19 % of the respondents said that they have their students listen to the videos' dialogue; 16 % of them said they use free topic discussions; and 14 % of them have their students listen to the songs and dialogue of native speakers, while the majority (51 %) usually practice role plays to develop their students' listening comprehension.

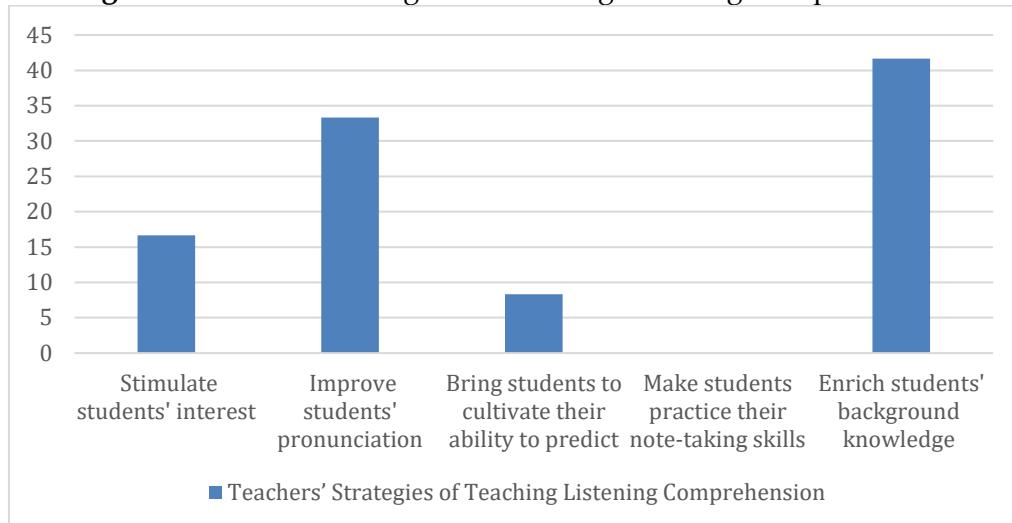
Figure 6: Teachers' Difficulties in Handling Listening Comprehension Class



Source: Field Investigation, March 2024.

Figure 6 presents the teachers' difficulties. The respondents tick the answers. The results show that 66.67 % of the respondents said that the lack of students' exposure to adequate listening materials is one of their concerns. 25% of them complained about the varied proficiency levels. Speed and accent, 25%, also somewhat constitute an issue. However, all of the respondents complain about limited classroom time, e.g., short allocated time.

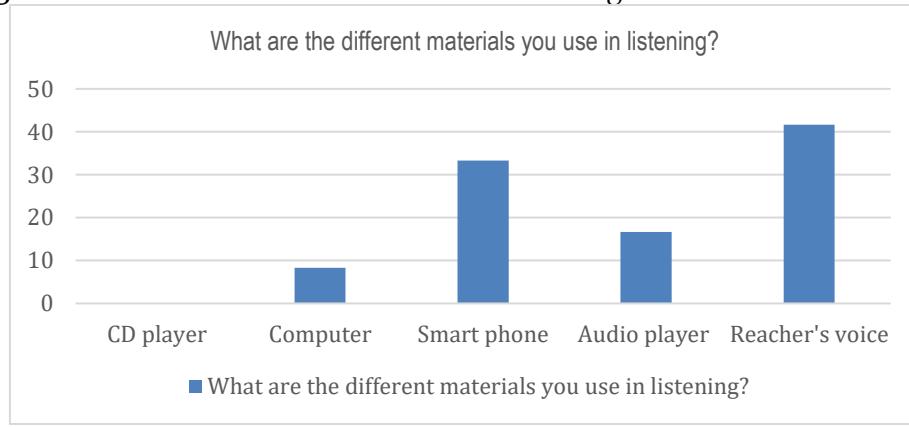
Figure 7: Teachers' Strategies of Teaching Listening Comprehension



Source: Field Investigation, March 2024.

Figure 7 presents the strategies that some EFL teachers use in teaching listening comprehension for communication proficiency. Through these results, 16.67 % of the respondents reported that they stimulate their students' interest; 33.33 % of them said that they help them improve their pronunciation. The majority (41.67 %) of them said that they help their learners enrich their background knowledge and culture. 8.33 % responded that they help their students foster their ability to predict, while there was no response about note-taking.

Figure 8: Materials that Teachers Use for Listening activities in the classroom



Source: Field Investigation, March 2024.

Figure 8 shows the results of the different materials used in the classrooms to reinforce listening comprehension. The results show that none of the EFL teachers use CDs as a teaching resource for listening comprehension in their classes. However, most of them, 41.67%, use their own voice to teach listening comprehension in their classes. The others (33.33 %) use smartphones. 16.67 % use an audio player. Few of them, 8.33%, use computers.

4.2 Results Related to Class Observation

Four EFL classes were visited in two weeks during the study. The aim of those observations was to determine whether listening comprehension can improve EFL students' communication styles. Before the lesson began, teachers explained the lesson's purpose to students to help them focus on what to do to grasp the material's meaning. During these activities, learners demonstrated their ability and interest in using the target language.

During observations, it was found that most teachers teach listening comprehension, but not in line with the existing realities. It is also found that teaching listening comprehension with technological materials can be particularly helpful for communication, as the more learners listen, the better they speak.

5. Discussion of the Results

Considering the collected data through questionnaire and class observation, results demonstrate, on the one hand, that students have a better understanding when they are taught with the realia materials, not just the teacher's voice all the time. These results are supported by Dhanapala (2019), who noted that the limited effectiveness of well-developed listening skills could result in smaller gains because listening can be acquired through exposure to the language rather than taught in a class. In other words, Students can understand audio or video content based on the amount of exposure they have to the English language.

Additionally, as shown by the previous figures, the majority of the participants, both teachers and students, acknowledge that using listening comprehension for efficient communication in the EFL classroom is very important for language learners. Students will learn new words, which will help them to practice outside the class. Moreover, Schwartz (2004) stated that students might receive as much as 90% of their information through listening to facilitators. This could be why learners understand their instructors and partners better in class. Hamouda (2013) noted that listening provides learners with the necessary input, and learners cannot acquire anything without comprehending the specific information.

Findings also showed that most students could understand single phrases at a time, and a few could understand complex or long audio to some extent at first. In most cases, learners construct words and phrases with individual sounds that use changes, intonations, and stresses to convey different meanings (Harmer, 2007). However, it is required of teachers to repeat the audio as many times as possible because students feel confused when they do not understand the material to which they have previously listened.

The data collected seem to fulfil the expectations of effective listening comprehension for EFL students' communication proficiency in the classroom. The participants showed the

effectiveness of listening comprehension and its benefits in communication. This comes to conclude that the more learners listen, the better they can speak and also the more fluent they can become. As Rost (2011) commented, listening is an active and important mental ability. It helps listeners to understand the world around them and is one of the necessary elements in creating successful communication (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016).

Hamouda (2013) also observed that listening comprehension is an interactive process in which listeners are involved in constructing meaning. Dai (2011) focused on the new perspectives and strategies by arguing that through multimedia and network technology, teachers can offer students not only rich sources of authentic learning materials, but also an attractive and friendly interface, vivid pictures and pleasant sounds with an authentic language environment and arouse students' interest in learning. Tabieh *et al.* (2021) also shared the same idea with others by arguing that listening is the first condition for developing language and enriching the learner's linguistic bank. However, its acquisition requires effort and commitment.

5.1 Perspectives

One of the purposes of this study is to find out some innovative strategies and emerging trends in using listening comprehension to boost communication in the EFL classroom. The findings of this research have revealed that the best strategies and adequate materials are not yet applicable in Beninese secondary schools. Some teachers endeavor to enrich their students' background knowledge and culture, but others are still using their own voice. The class observation also shows that students are not taught listening comprehension with useful materials, which can positively affect their communication performance. This confirms Lu's opinion that music, watching videos, listening to native speakers' songs or dialogue can develop and stimulate students' brains (Lu, 2006). Moreover, Richards (2006) commented that when learners work in real contexts, they can develop their listening abilities using practice more than just theories or simple ideas. Students should use different applications to listen to some audios and interpret meanings, dialogues and speeches. This helps to highlight the implementation of new strategies in order to improve students' performance in this skill. Some students improve when they listen to or watch movies, even though it is easy to have students feel engaged with the activities (Wulandari, 2011). This means that activities need to be meaningful for students. This will encourage learners to listen to the audio or watch the video again to correct their mistakes.

Technology plays an important role in the classroom, especially during class observation, when students are excited to listen to native speakers. That confirms Constantine's (2007) observations that, in modern technology, podcasts are among the best ways for students to enhance their learning because they help them develop understanding and critical thinking. As it provides students with listening experiences. Besides, it gives teachers many choices in media and teaching materials, in both audio and video formats and sources (Maulina *et al.*, 2022). It is possible to argue, then, that a language teacher needs to be aware of current computer-based technologies so that students can benefit from exposure to spoken language.

Nevertheless, many challenges prevent both teachers and students from facing challenges, such as teachers' delivery rate, limited classroom time, lack of exposure to authentic listening materials, etc. Obviously, many students are not motivated to learn English, but the

implementation of modern technology can increase their motivation and interest. To make it effective, teachers need to be trained on how to plan and integrate useful songs, dialogues, and videos that can motivate learners and, at the same time, increase their communication proficiency. Many strategies and innovative activities have provided an answer to this research question. Having students listen to and watch videos during the learning process helps them to improve their listening skills and enhance their language proficiency. Technology plays a significant role in students' communicative performance, but some challenges have prevented EFL teachers and students from achieving their goals.

To sum up, listening comprehension requires a combination of strategies and new perspectives. These should include a variety of appropriate listening materials and serve as scaffolding, with several listening activities to support comprehension. EFL teachers are expected to use explicit strategies to teach listening, promote learners' autonomy by using technology effectively, and provide regular feedback and assessment opportunities. Instructors should also undergo training in listening skills to properly educate pupils in this area. The learners must be able to comprehend both the language and the speaker's accent to effectively absorb the material. It is well acknowledged that by prioritizing the development of their skills, individuals may greatly enhance their overall communicative abilities, leading to increased success in the area. It is very important for the instructor to provide multiple opportunities for learners to develop their listening skills and actively participate in the process of effective listening. Moreover, fostering a supportive and positive learning environment where students feel comfortable is significant. Mistake-making should be encouraged to overcome anxiety and build confidence in listening comprehension.

6. Conclusion

Listening is an essential component of effective communication abilities. Engaging in active listening enhances one's communication abilities and improves the overall quality of communication. Active listening enhances learners' ability to make informed decisions in several domains. Listening is crucial for improving communication abilities; thus, learners should prioritize developing their listening skills and adhere to effective practice Methods. The study aims to find out how listening comprehension can be used for EFL students' communication proficiency in the classroom. It has been conducted with the participation of EFL teachers and beginner learners, especially those who are in form two (5^{ème}) of the selected secondary schools in Benin. Data were collected through a questionnaire from EFL teachers and a questionnaire from students. Class observation was also conducted. The data collection was examined and analyzed with both quantitative and qualitative methods. The results of the data were presented by means of graphs.

Throughout the exploration of strategies and perspectives surrounding the use of listening comprehension for efficient communication in the EFL classroom, many key insights have emerged. Findings show that exposing students to the language used by native speakers is essential for them to improve their own oral productions. By honing their listening skills, students not only enhance their ability to comprehend spoken language but also improve their

communicative skills, reading, and writing skills, thus fostering holistic language development. Nevertheless, teaching the English language in general, and teaching listening comprehension, in particular, has not been a complete success in the Beninese educational system because teachers lack adequate materials.

To solve these issues, which hinder listening comprehension skills in Beninese classes, some potential paths have been traced. Therefore, to improve learners' listening comprehension, EFL teachers are advised to start from the beginning, i.e., to stimulate students' interests. Next, they would improve students' pronunciation, cultivate students' ability to predict, and practice their note-taking skills.

Furthermore, exploring perspectives has revealed promising avenues for innovation and growth in the field of EFL instruction. Whether through the integration of technology, the incorporation of authentic materials, or the adoption of learner-centred methodologies, these emerging perspectives offer fresh insights into how listening comprehension can be effectively used in today's diverse and interconnected world. The development of listening comprehension skills must be prioritized and explored together with novel approaches to instruction regarding the future of EFL education. Then, other researchers' role would be to raise students' awareness about listening comprehension by providing more activities related to both aural and oral communication.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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