



ISSN: 2959-6386 (Online), Volume 3, Issue 1, March 2024

Journal of Knowledge Learning and Science Technology

Journal homepage: <https://jklst.org/index.php/home>



An Investigation on the Effectiveness of the Drama Method of English Major Students in Studying Listening Skills at Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade

Tong Thi Hue 

Faculty of Foreign Languages, Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

Abstract

This research investigates how incentives might be used to build pedagogical decision-making skills in EFL classroom environments. It examines how the effectiveness of drama methods can revolutionize teaching and learning English as a foreign language in EFL classrooms. The study's data, which involved using a creative theater technique to intervene in required and prescribed EFL curriculum and pedagogy with English major students who struggled with English listening abilities, is used in this report. The four main categories of thematic themes addressed are: enhancing learner-to-learner interaction, motivating students, and introducing new or altering methods. To compare motivation and the traditional methods, data from 60 English major freshman students in two classrooms was gathered through questionnaire surveys. The researcher used a qualitative and quantitative approach to analyze 60 survey subjects in this study. The results show the effectiveness of using the drama method to help students study English listening skills better. Based on the study's findings, the researcher suggests how lecturers and teachers might use drama to create efficient teaching and learning strategies for English listening skills.

Keywords: *EFL classroom, motivation, enhancement, effectiveness*

Article Information:

Article history: Received: 25/09/2023 Accepted: 31/12/2023 Online: 12/01/2023 Published: 29/03/2024

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.60087/jklst.vol3.n1.p105>

Correspondence author: Tong Thi Hue

Email: huetth@huit.edu.vn

1. Introduction

Teaching and learning a second or additional language have become problems that many language educators mentioned and English listening skills are essential for effective communication and language learning. However, many university students face challenges in developing their English listening skills. These challenges may include difficulties in understanding native speakers, different accents, and fast-paced speech. To address this problem, it is important to understand the challenges that university students face in developing their English listening skills from their perspective. As a language educator, the researcher always thinks about ways to help her students by providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of current teaching practices and informing the development of new strategies to enhance

language learning as well as listening skills. Through improvisation, students in drama-based education take on roles at specific times and work with others to create a credible reality particular moment in time and create with others a plausible world. This makes them better at studying especially listening, and is the reason to choose this topic.

2. Literature review

2.1. Definitions of listening

Rost (2002) defines listening as the act of receiving and processing spoken or nonverbal messages and then responding accordingly. In the context of English language learning, listening skills encompass the capacity to understand and give meaning to spoken words, phrases, and sentences in different situations or settings.

Many teachers believed that, of all the language abilities, listening was the most important (Aziez & Alwasilah, 1996). The research has shown that listening plays a very important role in daily life, listening takes up about 45 percent of an adult's communication time, much larger than speaking accounting for 30 percent), reading, and writing (16 percent and 9 percent, respectively). Misunderstandings, mistakes, and conflicts in communication often occur because of poor listening skills (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). Listening skill is an important skill in learning English, as it helps learners to understand and use English more effectively. Listening skills are described as "the ability to process spoken language in real-time and to use that information to construct meaning" by Vandergrift and Goh (2012). According to Buck (2001, p11), listening skills include "the ability to attend to, understand, and interpret spoken language, and to use that information for a variety of purposes."

Listening is a skill that involves many different processes, including recognizing, recalling, analyzing, and reacting to both verbal and nonverbal cues. Even before people start talking or using gestures as babies, people begin to listen for months. Listening is important in many different situations, like school, work, or personal relationships. The listening process includes different stages like receiving, understanding, recalling, assessing, and responding. During the receiving stage, listeners pick up on the speaker's tone of voice, body language, and facial expressions. Listeners then try to understand what the speaker is saying based on their own experiences and context. They remember what they've heard for later use and evaluate whether the information is accurate and relevant. Finally, they give feedback to the speaker.

There are different types of listening, like informational listening when people listen to learn something new, critical listening when people evaluate what they hear to make informed decisions, empathic listening when they try to understand the speaker's feelings or point of view, and appreciative listening when they listen for enjoyment or pleasure. Listening styles are also important. Active listening is when people pay close attention to the speaker and fully participate in the conversation. Passive listening is when we listen without actively participating. Selective listening is when people focus on some parts of the communication

and ignore others. To communicate effectively, it's important to have good listening skills. By learning about the different stages of the listening process, types of listening, and listening styles, people can improve their ability to listen and achieve their communication goals.

There are many uses for listening, and various circumstances call for particular listening styles. Our communication style and the way other people react to us are both influenced by the sort of listening we do. For instance, when we communicate openly and supportively to show empathy for others, the other person will feel "heard" and supported and will ideally have a favorable impression of the conversation (Bodie & Villaume, 2003). Discriminative, informative, critical, and sympathetic listening are the key categories of hearing we shall cover (Watson, Barker, & Weaver III, 1995). Comprehending the mechanisms of listening provides a foundation for exploring the rationale behind listening, as well as various types and modes of listening. Listening holds significant importance in academic, professional, and personal contexts.

2.2 Difficulties in Listening Skills

According to Alzamil (2021), research focused on exploring the difficulties that 87 female Saudi university students encountered when learning to listen and speak English. In this study, listening was identified as the most difficult skill, although most students are aware that listening and speaking are the two most important skills in learning a new language and in daily communication. This study acknowledges that listening is an important part not only in learning a new language but also in everyday communication, and its results may also apply to English learners in other countries.

Listening difficulty, according to Vandergrift and Goh (2012, p.20), is "the result of cognitive overload, where listeners cannot process all the information that comes to them." According to Rost (2013, p13), hearing problems are "the inability to extract information and meaning from the speaker's language, which is influenced by factors such as poor listening technique, lack of concentration when listening, etc., or the listener is in a state of anxiety and stress."

Ortiz (1984) has demonstrated the positive effects that using creative drama in EFL classes can have on improving students' proficiency in learning a second language. According to his proposal, students who participate in a dramatic mode of language acquisition will be better able to comprehend how language functions within particular discourses. The use of creative drama can help non-native speakers understand a language that is frequently meaningless and Vitz (1984) found that children with limited English proficiency who participated in creative drama activities had increased language proficiency.

2.3. Research gap

After examining the previous studies, many researchers highlighted that drama was useful in writing, speaking skills. These studies have been well organized with awesome results; however, listening skill is also an important skill to help students study English better and have wider views. For this reason, the

researcher plans to discover how to apply drama in listening classes via qualitative and quantitative methods.

2.4. Research Questions

1. What is the effectiveness of drama methods used to enhance students' listening abilities?
2. What do students perceive about using dramatic listening methods?

3. Methods

3.1. Pedagogical setting & participants

The vibrant center of Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City, is home to Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade (HUIT). Initially established in 1981 as a Vocational School, it changed its name to Food Industry College in 2002 during the phase of social and economic transformation to global integration. In 2008, it became HUIFI. Additionally, it became Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade in 2022. The goals of HUIT's progressive education and training program are to directly address societal issues. The manager of the Foreign Language Center constantly requests that teachers modify their methods to concentrate on delivering student-centered classes. The Foreign Language Center uses a student-centered educational methodology with the overarching idea of "Humanity – Unity– Forwardness– Innovation.". Realizing this, teachers have purposefully changed the way they teach to get their pupils interested in studying as long as they can complete the curriculum and help them become more proficient in the language. In the meantime, not many educators have used theater to foster students' interest in listening studies by meeting their actual expectations and desires through communicative and listening activities. Why don't educators capitalize on the enthusiasm that kids have for participating in theatrical activities?

The research's participants are 60 English major freshman students at the Faculty of Foreign Languages of HUIT. The paper was carried out during the first semester of the academic year. On the first day of the course, the researcher recognized some difficulties that some freshman students had faced as not following the lessons, being confident, and wrong pronunciation as well as intonation. From the above students' difficulties with listening, the researcher would like to help them overcome and feel more confident in listening.

In the second week, the researcher explained to the students that over the next few weeks, they would be creating a drama based on themes that they had listened to before. They are eager to join in because they have not heard about that. To do this, they have to listen and take note carefully of the lessons to remember the information. During the discussion, the students expressed an interest in developing their drama, the initial planning stage focused on the topics in their listening book then they mind-mapped and produced in visual form the key events that were to form the basis of the drama. To do that students have to remember the new words, the intonation, the main idea in the text, and language structures.

The students started to work in groups, preparing, discussing, and establishing the events they thought they would need to know to make the drama that week. Requiring them to think about the specific features and what ways they are used and asked by their partners or listeners was a key learning objective. The researcher wanted her students to start to think about the previous lessons and ask them to talk about these lessons without looking at the book with the hope of improving students' communication and listening methods.

This pretest and post-test study were carried out in the school year from the second week of the course to the end of the course (9 weeks) at HUIT. The sample to be analyzed in the current research consisted of 60 English major students from 2 classes in a listening course for freshmen. The research participants were selected through convenience sampling in order not to disrupt the university's training schedule. Further information on the participants is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Participants demographic information

		Gender_ClassA			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	7	23.3	23.3	23.3
	FEMALE	23	76.7	76.7	100.0
Total		30	100.0	100.0	

		Gender_ClassB			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	11	36.7	36.7	36.7
	FEMALE	19	63.3	63.3	100.0
Total		30	100.0	100.0	

For quantitative data collection, English listening pretest and posttest were delivered to students before and after the experience of doing drama to find out performance the difference.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Listening Test Results

4.1.1. Pretest

The mean scores of the pretest were calculated. As shown in Table 2, the Class A pretest Mean score is 11.13, and the Class B pretest Mean score is 11.27. Clearly, there is a minimal difference between the two values. The mean score of Class A ($M = 11.13$, $SD = 2.19$, $n = 30$) is slightly lower than the mean score of Class B ($M = 11.33$, $SD = 2.19$, $n = 30$).

Table 2. The pre-test mean scores of the two classes

➔ Descriptives

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Grade_A_Pre_Lis	30	7.00	15.00	11.1333	2.19299
Grade_B_Pre_Lis	30	7.00	15.00	11.3333	2.18669
Valid N (listwise)	30				

An independent samples T-test was used to determine whether the difference was statistically significant. Table 3's Independent Samples T-test results indicate that there is no statistical significance in the mean differences between Class A and Class B ($t=-0.354$, $df=58$). Thus, prior to the intervention, Class A and Class B's listening abilities were comparable.

Table 3. The mean differences between the two classes before the treatment

Group Statistics					
	Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Grade_Pre_Lis	Class A	30	11.1333	2.19299	.40038
	Class B	30	11.3333	2.18669	.39923

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Grade_Pre_Lis	Equal variances assumed	.051	.823	-.354	58	.725	-.20000	.56541	-1.33180	.93180
	Equal variances not assumed			-.354	58.000	.725	-.20000	.56541	-1.33180	.93180

Independent Samples Effect Sizes					
		Standardizer ^a	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
Grade_Pre_Lis	Cohen's d	2.18984	-.091	-.597	.415
	Hedges' correction	2.21868	-.090	-.590	.410
	Glass's delta	2.18669	-.091	-.597	.416

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.
 Cohen's d uses the pooled standard deviation.
 Hedges' correction uses the pooled standard deviation, plus a correction factor.
 Glass's delta uses the sample standard deviation of the control group.

Activate Windows
 Go to Settings to activate Windows.

4.1.2. Post- test

The correlation of post-test scores between the 2 classes has been examined. Table 4 revealed a correlation of the post-test scores of Class A and Class B.

Table 4. The correlation of post-test scores between the two classes

→ Correlations

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Lis_Post_ClassA	11.6000	3.04676	30
Lis_Post_ClassB	11.1000	2.39756	30

Correlations			
		Lis_Post_Cla ssA	Lis_Post_Cla ssB
Lis_Post_ClassA	Pearson Correlation	1	.379*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.039
	N	30	30
Lis_Post_ClassB	Pearson Correlation	.379*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.039	
	N	30	30

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As shown in Table 4, Sig (2-tailed = 0.039 < 0.05, r = 0.379), between Class A and Class B for post-test scores, there was a strong correlation. Consequently, the posttest’s high reliability was ensured with a strong correlation between the scores of two classes. The scores of Class A were chosen for the subsequent analysis.

The normality test was used, similar to the pretest, to analyze the distribution of Class A and Class B posttest scores. According to the results of the Q-Q Plot, the data from each class formed a straight line. Therefore, it was concluded that both classes’ post-test scores have a normal distribution and the Independent Sample T-test is the test that will be used.

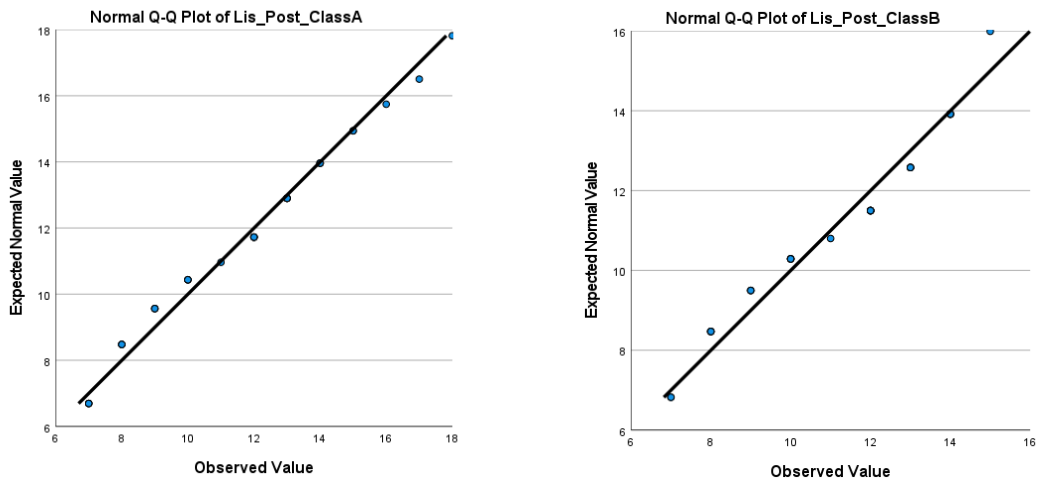


Figure 1. The distribution of post-test scores of the two classes

From Table 5, the general descriptive statistics of posttest scores of Class A and Class B show that the posttest mean score of Class B (M = 11.10, SD = 2.40, n =30) is lower than that of Class A (M = 11.60, SD = 3.05, n = 30). Subsequently, a test would be conducted to figure out whether the difference between the mean scores of Class A and Class B was statistically significant.

Table 5. The mean of post-test scores of the two classes

→ Descriptives

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lis_Post_ClassA	30	7.00	18.00	11.6000	3.04676
Lis_Post_ClassB	30	7.00	15.00	11.1000	2.39756
Valid N (listwise)	30				

As demonstrated in Table 6, the Independent Sample T-test proves that the difference between the post-test means of Class A and Class B was very small, and it was not statistically significant (t=0.71, df=58). Hence, the listening performance of Class A and Class B after the treatment changed. Specifically, the listening performance was equally higher for both classes.

Table 6. The listening performance of the two classes after the treatment

Group Statistics										
		Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean				
Lis_Post	Class A	Class A	30	11.6000	3.04676	.55626				
	Class B	Class B	30	11.1000	2.39756	.43773				

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Lis_Post	Equal variances assumed	1.390	.243	.706	58	.483	.50000	.70784	-.91689	1.91689
	Equal variances not assumed			.706	54.961	.483	.50000	.70784	-.91856	1.91856

Independent Samples Effect Sizes					
		Standardizer ^a	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
Lis_Post	Cohen's d	2.74144	.182	-.326	.689
	Hedges' correction	2.77754	.180	-.321	.680
	Glass's delta	2.39756	.209	-.302	.716

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.
 Cohen's d uses the pooled standard deviation.
 Hedges' correction uses the pooled standard deviation, plus a correction factor.
 Glass's delta uses the sample standard deviation of the control group.

The improvement can be visually seen in Table 7.

Table 7. The improvement in listening performance after the treatment

Paired Samples Statistics						
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
Pair 1	Lis_Pre	11.2333	60	2.17354	.28060	
	Lis_Post	11.3500	60	2.72978	.35241	

Paired Samples Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Lis_Pre & Lis_Post	60	.454	<.001

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Lis_Pre - Lis_Post	-.11667	2.60437	.33622	-.78945	.55611	-.347	59	.730

Paired Samples Effect Sizes						
			Standardizer ^a	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
Pair 1	Lis_Pre - Lis_Post	Cohen's d	2.60437	-.045	-.298	.209
		Hedges' correction	2.62108	-.045	-.296	.207

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.
Cohen's d uses the sample standard deviation of the mean difference.
Hedges' correction uses the sample standard deviation of the mean difference, plus a correction factor.

Acti
Go to

Following the use of drama in listening courses, the students demonstrated increased motivation to talk and listen in English as well as a greater sense of confidence in their ability to express themselves. These are some comments left by her students.

Table 8. Students' feedback after doing drama

N0	Students answer	Number	Percentage
1	This drama helped me learn a lot of words and voices from foreigners.	10	17
2	Doing drama gave me ideas on how to respond and feel about the real situation	10	17
3	I feel confident after doing drama	20	32
4	I remember the lesson more and it is easier to hear from the partners. I think it is a reality.	10	17
5	Drama helped me organize my thoughts and listening	10	17

Reflecting on the students' comments, it would seem that doing drama had helped students learn a lot of new words and voices from foreigners with 10 students answering. Another 10 students said that doing drama gave them ideas on how to respond and feel about the real situation. With 20 students felt more confident in doing drama. 10 students remember the lesson more and it is easier to hear from the partners. They think it is a reality. Drama helped students organize their thoughts and listening was answered by 10

students. From the above feedback, the researcher recognized that applying drama was necessary for her students to improve their listening to English. The researcher noted how the drama had provided meaningful pathways to using the English language, so she asked her students about using drama for 20 minutes every day.

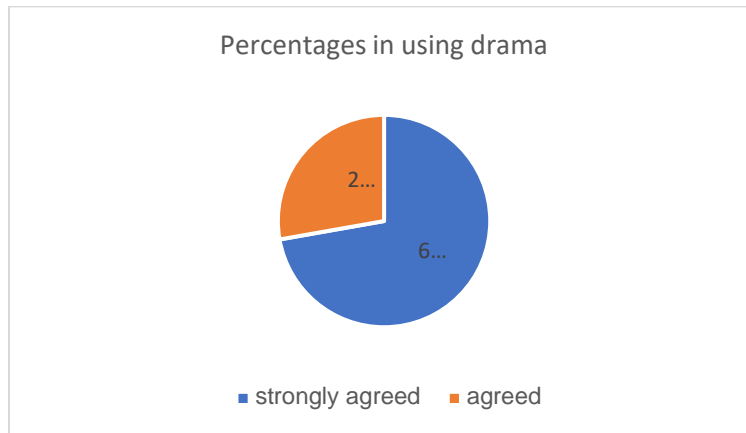


Figure 2. Percentages of using drama

Figure 2 shows the percentages of the participant's answers to the items regarding using drama. With 25% of the students agreeing to use drama in class, 65% of the students strongly agreed. That meant they were eager to use drama in studying listening skill.

To better illustrate the issue of using drama in teaching listening, the researcher interviewed 6 students in two classes.

The interview was conducted in the class. The interview will last about 2 minutes. The content of the interview includes 3 open-ended questions in the following order:

1. *What challenges have you encountered when using drama?*
2. *What motivates you to use drama?*
3. *What improvements did you get when using drama?*

Question	Numbers of students	Percentage
1	- Student 1: - It is difficult to remember new words and intonation. - difficult to listen to my friend.	16
2	-Student 3: funny Student 4: study from my friend	32
3	- Student 2,5: felt more confident - Student 6: remember the lesson easily	52

52% of respondents believe that employing drama to improve listening skills has been both worthwhile and successful. These numbers demonstrate how well drama motivates students to listen and retain the

material, as evidenced by the students' increased confidence and ease of memorization. On the other hand, just 16% of respondents said they had trouble listening to their partners and retaining the new words and tone. 32% said it was humorous to utilize drama and learn from their pals.

5. Conclusion

The primary aim of this study is to explore the use of drama by English major students at HUIT and to compare their attitudes with those towards motivation and traditional methods. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed to have data collection instruments.

The findings of the study indicate that English major students at HUIT generally have been eager regarding the use of motivation by using drama. Notable improvements after using drama were reported, and most activities were found to be beneficial and motivating. The majority of students strongly agreed when teachers applied this kind of motivation. They found this motivation to be more enjoyable, and efficient, contributing to quicker vocabulary acquisition and longer retention compared to conventional methods.

However, the study also revealed several challenges and limitations associated with the use of drama. These include difficulty level and distractions. Addressing these challenges is crucial to optimize the effectiveness and efficiency of using drama.

In conclusion, this study has demonstrated the positive impact of using drama in listening classes among English major students at HUIT. Therefore, applying motivation by using drama can become an effective tool for students who will study listening skills in the future to improve listening way.

5.1. Limitation

The sample size of this study is limited to a specific group of English major students who have used drama in the process of listening skills.

The data collection methods used in this study, including surveys and interviews, rely on self-reported data from students. This may introduce bias or inaccuracies in the data.

It may be beneficial to have a longer study period to observe the long-term impact of using drama on listening acquisition. However, due to practical considerations, the study has a limited time frame.

5.2. Recommendations

5.2.1. For future study

This study could be replicated with larger sample sizes and different populations to increase its generalizability and validity. This means research can be conducted with more participants from a variety of backgrounds and contexts to see whether the findings are consistent and applicable to the wider population.

The research could also be conducted over a long period to evaluate the long-term impact of drama on learners' listening development and retention. This suggests that research could follow the same participants over time to observe how their listening knowledge and abilities develop and improve through the use of drama.

5.2.2. For teachers

- Drama activities can be used as a warm-up activity at the end of a lesson to test the students on how much they got from studying and listening.
- Use this motivation by using drama to review and practice vocabulary that has already been learned. This can help to ensure that students retain the vocabulary that they have learned.

5.2.3. For learners

- Students should learn by heart the vocabularies that were studied in the previous lessons.
- Imitate the voice, and intonation in every listening part to apply later.

References

Alzamil, J. (2021). Listening Skills: Important but Difficult to Learn. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)* , 366.

Aziez, F., & Alwasilah, A. C. (1996). *Pengajaran Bahasa Komunikatif: Teori dan Praktek*. . PT Remaja Rosdakarya.

Bodie, G. D., & Villaume, D. W. (2003). Aspects of Receiving Information: The Relationship between Listening Preferences, Communication Apprehension, Receiver Apprehension, and Communicator Style. 47-67.

Buck, G. (2001). *Assessing Listening*. Cambridge University Press. 10-11

Gilakjani, A. P., & Sabouri, N. B. (2016). Learners' Listening Comprehension Difficulties in English Language Learning: A Literature Review. 123-133.

Ortiz. (1984). The Use of Creative Dramatics in the Teaching of Drama with Special Application to the Teaching of English as a Second Language. *University of Puerto Rico: Unpublished MA dissertation*.

Kittie W. Watson , Larry L. Barker & James B. Weaver III (1995) The Listening Styles Profile (LSP-16): Development and Validation of an Instrument to Assess Four Listening Styles, *International Journal of Listening*, 9:1, 1-13, DOI: [10.1080/10904018.1995.10499138](https://doi.org/10.1080/10904018.1995.10499138)

Rost, M. (2002). Listening in language learning. In J. C. Richards & W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. Cambridge University Press, 238-241.

Rost, M. (2013). *Teaching and researching: Listening*. Routledge.13-14

Vandergrif, L., & Goh, C. C. (2012). *Teaching and Learning Second Language Listening: Metacognition in Action*. New York: Routledge.19-20

Vitz, K. (1984). The Effects of Creative Drama in English as a Second Language. *Children's Theater Review*, 33(2), 23-26.