

A COMPARATIVE STUDY AMONG ELT AND ELL STUDENTS' RECEPTIVE SKILLS AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

This research paper throws the light on comparing students' receptive skills in two different departments. The researcher finds out the fourth-year students' receptive skills in English Language learning (ELL) and general education/ English language teaching (ELT) departments, both of study English as a second language. For testing the hypothesis, a group of 40 of fourth-year students was gathered. 20 students were chosen from ELL department and 20 from ELT department at Lebanese French University. All of the study's objectives were covered through tests in which four different types of questions—vocabulary, true/false, synonyms, and paragraph writing—were used to evaluate the reading test. Fill-in-the-blank questions and brief summaries of the audio were the two types of questions on the listening test. The listening and reading tests were both at the pre-intermediate level. The findings of the research show that ELL students have better reading and listening skills compared to ELT students. Besides, the students from both departments are more proficient in reading than in listening.

KEYWORDS: skills, language, teaching, listening and reading.

1. INTRODUCTION

Four main English skills are taught throughout English language teaching; reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The major purpose of focusing on these skills independently and addressing them is to emphasize their significance and to persuade teachers to prioritize their instruction and approach them in a balanced manner (Al-Jawi, 2010). Basically, teaching language skills is often the primary goal of language teaching. One of the main goals of many TESOL educational programs at universities is to provide future English language teachers with knowledge of the theory and practice of teaching English receptive and productive skills in order to help to create more successful pedagogical techniques. It is also what many preservice and in-service instructors frequently seek to learn more about. The techniques and procedures for teaching these language skills are dynamic, just as English is a language with a dynamic character. (Marlina, 2018)

1. The problem of the study

Reading and listening comprehension issues are common among students in ELT departments. Moreover, reading skills are valued

more highly in both departments than listening skills

2. Aims of the study

The purpose of this study is to compare the reading and listening skills of fourth-year students in the ELT and ELL departments in order to identify which departments' instructional tactics are more successful and which linguistic competence in each department is given greater priority.

3. Research Question

This study is intended to answer the following questions:

- 1- What is the level of the reading skill of the fourth-year students in both ELT and ELL departments?
- 2- What is the level of the listening skill of the fourth-year students in both ELT and ELL departments?
- 3- Which language skills are more prioritized in both departments?

4. Hypothesis of the study

The study hypothesizes the following:

1. ELT students are less proficient in reading and listening than other students.
2. students in both departments have significant listening skills issues.

Limitation of the Study

The study is restricted to the fourth-year students in both ELL and ELT departments at Lebanese French University for the academic year 2022-2023

7. Theoretical Background

7.1 Language

According to (Alchemy, 2021, p. 10) "language is the system of human communication which consists of the structured arrangement of sounds (or their written representation) into larger units, e.g. morphemes, words, sentences, utterances". Students listen, read, and watch the thoughts and experiences of others as they talk, write, and express themselves. When students ponder, hypothesize, synthesize, evaluate, and create, they are engaging in critical and creative thinking and learning via language. Students may explore ideas and concepts as well as analyze and organize their experiences and knowledge by listening and speaking. As the tales, values, beliefs, and customs of a group are passed down through generations through oral language. Furthermore, reading and writing are effective communication and learning tools. They allow students to expand their language knowledge and skills, gain a better understanding of themselves and others. On the other hand, reading allows pupils to have access to other people's ideas, perspectives, and experiences. Students can create meaning and develop meaningful and critical interpretations of a variety of texts, including short and book-length fiction and non-fiction, by employing effective reading skills and techniques. Students can use writing to explore, shape, and clarify their ideas, as well as transmit them to others. Besides, students can explore and improve ideas, create and revise with increasing confidence and proficiency when they use effective writing practices (Brooks, 1964, p. 10).

7.2 Skills to learn a language

Language is, at its core, a skill. It is not a content-based topic like Science, Social Studies, Commerce, Mathematics, and so on, where the goal is to convey knowledge and fill the human mind with information. Basically, language is under the psychomotor realm since it is a skill. (Husain, 2015, p. 7). Language is a multifaceted ability that consists of four main skills: listening, writing, speaking and reading. The four basic linguistic abilities may be divided into two categories: productive skills and receptive skills. Speaking and writing are referred to as

productive skills since the learner/user generates sounds and symbols while utilizing them. Listening and reading, on the other hand, are called receptive skills as the students are often passive and acquires information through listening or reading. (Sharma, 2021)

7.2.1 Reading Skill

Reading is a sophisticated, deliberate, participatory, perceptive, and adaptable activity that requires a lot of time and effort to master. Therefore; readers must sustain the flow of information and draw the connections and conclusions that are essential to understanding (Bojovic, 2010). An individual can engage with written language by using their reading skills, which are cognitive abilities. Identifying word meaning, making inferences, recognizing a writer's style, determining the passage's mood, and coming up with responses are all examples of reading abilities. (Davies, 1968). According to (Munby, 1978), understanding explicitly and implicitly stated information, conceptual meaning, communicative value of sentences, relations within the sentences and between parts of text through lexical cohesion devices, recognizing indicators and main point of information in discourse, distinguishing main idea from supporting detail, and recognizing the script of language are all examples of reading skills. Selecting pertinent passages from the book, learning how to use references, skimming, scanning, and converting data from charts and diagrams are also included. After all, reading is a skill that, according to (Al- Mutawa, 1989), can be most readily maintained at a high level by the students themselves without further instructor assistance since it incorporates language and cultural references, giving them exposure to real-world situation (Rivers, 1970).

7.2.1.1 The Importance of Reading Skill

Reading skill can serve as a foundation for individualized study of the nation and its people, the one that can be used to access the literature of the nation's past and contemporary civilization, the one that will stick with them the longest, and the one that many students will have the chance to utilize. Reading comprehension is the capacity to comprehend a written passage of material and serves as a transitional tool for active and passive readers. In order to succeed in your academic, professional, and personal endeavors, you need to have a reading regimen that works. Understanding the context of the book, visualizing what the words describe, and being able to respond to inquiries about the text

are just a few of the various processes that go into reading. Moreover, Reading causes the brain to use a variety of areas, which helps to develop cognitive and analytical capabilities. It energizes the imagination, activates the memory regions of the brain, aids in information retention, and balances emotions. Reading has several advantages, including improving mental health and being one of the best mental exercises available. Reading keeps the mind active and young, and frequent mental stimulation has been shown to slow down and maybe even prevent diseases like Alzheimer's and dementia. (Williams, 1984)

7.2.2 Listening Skill

Language modality includes listening. It is one of the language's four skills, along with speaking, reading, and writing. Listening is the psychological process of absorbing, paying attention to, deriving meaning from, and reacting to spoken and/or nonverbal messages. In the process of listening; recognizing differences in sounds, the ability to identify words and comprehend their meanings, recognizing grammatical groupings of words, recognizing expressions and sets of utterances that contribute to meaning, connecting linguistic cues to non-linguistic and paralinguistic cues, using background knowledge to predict and confirm meaning, and recalling key words and concepts are all considered as essential elements of listening skills (Tyagi, 2013). Since listening is one of the prerequisites for producing oral output during the language learning process, it has been a major issue for language education theorists and educators (Yavuz, 2017). Listening is essential to language learning since it is how learners construct their understandings of the target language and take in the input, according to those who believe that learning a second language is quite similar to learning a native tongue. As (Krashen, 1981) stated, language learning is primarily an input and output process. This supposition holds that listening abilities are a significant agent in gaining input during the learning process and cover a significant portion of the input. As a result of output being heavily dependent on input.

7.2.2.1 The Importance of Listening Skill

Poor listening skills are a significant contributor to miscommunication. It is a truth that if a person does not listen to the speaker effectively then the message may not be understood clearly. Similar rules apply while learning a second language. The most crucial

skill to learn among the four linguistic activities is listening and it is ironically the one that is most often neglected. According to records, speaking takes up 30% of the time spent in communication, reading and writing take up 16% and 9%, respectively, and listening takes up 45% of the time. (Latha, 2018). Listening as opposed to the intricate process of hearing involves recognizing, comprehending, and evaluating spoken languages. Additionally, it assists students in recognizing the accent of the speakers, which encourages them to learn the accent, improve their understanding, and increase their awareness of how language is used grammatically and in context. It helps pupils become more self-assured and optimistic about their ability to master a foreign language. The learner's creativity is sparked through listening activities, and they are encouraged to think and talk. Students who listen actively learn more quickly, make better judgements about what they hear, and make wiser decisions. Speaking abilities increase gradually as listening skills are strengthened. (Latha, 2018)

8. Literature Review

This study article analyzes students' receptive skills in two separate university departments, ELT and ELL. Eventually, several studies have been conducted to investigate students' receptive skills in different perspectives.

Among these studies, (Rwdnk Rajapakshe, 2022) addressed testing English language skills at the tertiary level in Sri Lanka, and the data was collected using various online platforms which included both quantitative and qualitative data provided by a systematic random sample of 45 first-year undergraduates from a government and private university who take a same English language course. The study's findings revealed that chosen undergraduates believe that testing their reading and listening skills has a good impact on their competency, the majority prefer assessing reading skills in person rather than online, in contrast to assessing listening skills. Thus, educational practitioners should devise novel techniques for properly assessing online reading, as institutions in Sri Lanka appear to be continuing their online delivery till further notice.

(Mohammad Awad, 2022) concentrated on the impact of dynamic assessment (DA) vs. nondynamic assessment (NDA) on Ethiopian intermediate EFL learners' receptive capacities, using Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory as a conceptual foundation (SCT). To that purpose,

96 intermediate students from a high school took part in this research. They were then separated into three equal groups: two experimental (EG1 and EG2) and one control (CG). Following the administration of a pretest, the EG1 and EG2 were taught listening and reading skills using group dynamic assessment, while the control group received traditional training. A posttest was given following the treatment. The one-way ANCOVA results demonstrated that dynamic evaluation had a substantial effect on receptive skills. The outcomes of this study have consequences for educators, students, and material designers.

Besides, (Sheth, 2015) concentrated on the current situation of engineering students in India in terms of receptive skills, and to emphasize the need of engineering students acquiring it for professional and pragmatic excellence. It can be inferred that today's engineer must compete with the rest of the globe. Virtuous employees must learn cutting-edge abilities such as comprehension, accurate and right language, and effective thinking expression. An engineer must be multitalented in order to succeed in today's competitive technical world and it is now unavoidable for engineers to have excellent receptive skills.

Furthermore, (Gabrielatos, 1998) focused on the advantages of developing receptive skills (reading and listening) with children aged seven to eleven who can recognize words in print. Courses for children at the beginner/elementary level often focus on vocabulary and grammatical instruction. Texts are typically employed as

vehicles for the teaching of new language, but systematic receptive skill development is reserved for intermediate levels. Although some 'comprehension' tasks (typically questions) may be included in teaching materials, this alone does not appear to constitute systematic skills.

9. Methodology

For testing the hypothesis, tests for each listening and reading skills were utilized for both ELT and ELL departments. The tests were designed to cover all of the objectives of the study. As the reading test was constructed using four formats of questions: vocabulary, true/false, synonyms, and a paragraph writing. While, the listening test had two sorts of questions: fill-in-the-blanks and a short summary of the audio. Due to the coverage of all subjects across the four years of college, the test was conducted with students at the fourth-year level. As 20 students were selected from the ELT department and 20 from the ELL department. The tests were scored out of 20 points, and the study received the following score: 0-5 = D, 6-10=C, 11-15=B, 16-20=A. Thus, D= 4, C=3, B=2 and A = 1. As the study deals with both numerical and theoretical data, the descriptive method is followed. Furthermore, the data's reliability and validity were examined. In terms of data analysis, data was collected and analyzed through the (SPSS) program.

Findings

Table (1): Reading and listening test scores of students in ELL and ELT departments.

Dep.	N.	Reading				Listening			
		A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
ELL	20	5	7	7	1	6	7	6	1
ELT	20	0	10	7	3	0	2	11	7
Total	40	5	17	14	4	6	9	17	8

Table (1) displays students' reading and listening grades in the ELT and ELL departments. Comparing the reading grades in both ELL and ELT departments; the data illustrates that, only five of the twenty students in the ELL department received an A, seven got a B, seven earned a C, and one received a D. As for in the ELT department, the bulk of the students, ten in

total, received a B, seven got a C, three earned a D, and none received an A.

On the other hand, comparing the listening marks in both ELL and ELT departments; the data demonstrates that, six of these pupils received A, seven got B, and six earned C. Only one student got a D. Regarding the ELT department, 11 of the 20 students received Cs,

while two received Bs. Seven of them got a D and none earned an A.

The final finding of the reading and the listening tests of both departments reveal that, 17 of 40 students in both the ELL and ELT departments received B on the reading test, representing the

majority of the pupils. 14 of them got a C, four earned a D, and only five received an A. In both departments, 17 students received C, 9 got B, 8 received D, and only 6 earned A on the listening test.

Table (2): The average of the reading and listening tests in both ELL and ELT departments.

Report		
Department	Reading	Listening
ELT	Mean	2.65
	Std. Deviation	0.74516
	N	20
ELL	Mean	2.2
	Std. Deviation	0.89443
	N	20
Total	Mean	2.425
	Std. Deviation	0.84391
	N	40

Table (2) demonstrates the average of the reading and listening tests in both the ELL and ELT departments. As indicated above, the mean of the ELT department's reading test is 2.65, indicating that students' reading competence levels are C. As for the ELL department, the mean of the reading exam is 2.2, indicating that students' reading competency level is B. Thus, the statistics show that the total mean of the reading exam for both the ELL and ELT departments is 2.4, suggesting that both departments have a level of reading competence of B.

As for the listening test, the data shows that the mean of the ELT department's listening test is 3.25, indicating that students' levels of listening stands in level C. As for the ELL department, the mean stands in 2.1, this illustrates that students' level of listening proficiency is level B. While the cumulative mean of the listening component of both the ELL and ELT departments is 2.675, this suggests that the overall students' level in both departments is level C.

10. Discussion

Referring to the data, students in the ELT department have achieved level C in reading. while students in the ELL department have reading levels of B. In terms of listening skills, students in ELT departments scored a C, whereas students in ELL departments scored a B. Thus, the statistics suggest that students in ELL departments are more adept in both listening and reading than students in ELT

departments, which can be attributed to two key factors:

The first factor is that ELL department accepts students with greater marks in grade 12 than ELT department. As for the second factor, the ELL's entire course throughout the years is language-oriented. While the course for ELT's four-year students is more educational-oriented. Besides, the ELL department's course is more comprehensive and covers extra subjects regarding the English language. Some of these subjects that are studied in ELL's department place more of an emphasis on the development of listening and reading skills such as studying; literature, pronunciation, comprehension, short story, phonetics, drama, novel, poetry, phonology, reading skills, criticism, pragmatics, and research projects; However, a number of subjects, including grammar, communicative English, writing, paragraph writing, morphology, linguistics, translation, syntax, semantics; assist students' language skills in listening and reading but in an indirect manner.

Additionally, the aggregate data shows that students in both departments are better readers than listeners, with reading is graded at the B level while listening is graded at the C level. This relates to the fact that reading skills are prioritized in both departments' curricula more due to the technical issues where listening is not taught in the labs.

11. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research paper discusses the receptive skills of the fourth- year-students in

the ELL and ELT departments, which both study English language. Basically, receptive skills include listening and reading as learning is frequently passive and occurs through reading or listening. For assessing students' receptive skills, tests were administered in both ELT and ELL departments. The findings demonstrate that ELL students are more proficient in reading and listening than ELT students as the ELL department accepts students with higher grades than the ELT department and its course is more language-oriented. While the ELT course is mostly education-oriented. Overall, the research illustrates that students in both departments are better readers than listeners as reading is credited with greater learning than listening skills due to the fact that listening requires labs and equipment, both of which are exceedingly difficult to consistently offer.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are additional areas where this study can be expanded:

- 1- A comparative study among ELT and ELL students' productive skills at university level.
- 2- A comparative study among ELT and ELL teachers in terms of innovative pedagogy.

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پوخته

ئەم تووژینه وهیه تیشک دهخاته سهر بهراوردکردنی سکیلی وهرگرتن (گویگرتن و خویندنه وه) ی قوتابیانی له دوو بهشی جیاوازا. تووژهره وه که له کارامهیی قوتابیانی ئاستی چواره می زانکۆ دهکوئیته وه له ههر دوو بهشی زمانی ئینگلیزی (ELL) وه بهشی پهروه ردهی گشتی/ فیکردنی زمانی ئینگلیزی (ELT) ، که ههر دوو بهشه که زمانی ئینگلیزی وه ک زمانی دووهم ده خوینن. بۆ تاقیکردنه وهی گریمانکه، گروپیک له ۴۰ قوتابیانی سالی چواره م کوکرانه وه که تیایدا 20 قوتابی له بهشی (ELL) و 20 قوتابی له بهشی (ELT) له زانکۆی لوبنانی فه ره نسی هه لېژێردران. هه موو ئامانجه کانی تووژینه وه که له رینگه ی تاقیکردنه وه کانه وه کان به ده ست هینران . تیایدا چوار پرسیری جیاوازی وه کو : بۆشای ، راست/هه له ، هاوواتا، و نووسینی په ره گراف- به کارهاتوون بۆ هه لسه نگانندی سکیلی خویندنه وه وه تیایدا پرکردنه وه ی بۆشایه به تاله کان و نووسینی کورته ییکی ئودیۆکه دوو جوړ پرسیری تر بوون بۆ هه لسه نگانندی سکیلی گویگرتن . تاقیکردنه وه کانی گویگرتن و خویندنه وه ههر دوو کیان له ئاستی پیش ناوه ندا ئاماده کرابوون . دهره نجامه کانی تووژینه وه که ئه وه نیشان ده دات که قوتابیانی به شی (ELL) به بهراورد له گه ل قوتابیانی به شی (ELT) له خویندنه وه و گویگرتن ئاستیان باشتره. وه ههروه ها قوتابیه کانی ههر دوو به شه که ئاستی خویندنه وه یان باشتره وه ک له ئاستی گویگرتن.

الخلاصة

تلقي هذه الورقة البحثية الضوء على مقارنة مهارات الطلاب الاستقبالية في قسمين مختلفين. يبحث الباحث في المهارات الاستقبالية لطلاب السنة الرابعة في أقسام اللغة الإنجليزية (ELL) والتعليم العام / تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية (ELT) ، وكلاهما يتعلما اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية. لاختبار الفرضية ، تم اختيار مجموعة تتكون من اربعون 40 طالبا من طلاب السنة الرابعة. تم اختيار عشرون طالبا من قسم ELL و عشرون من قسم ELT في الجامعة اللبنانية الفرنسية. تمت تغطية جميع أهداف الدراسة من خلال الاختبارات التي تم فيها استخدام أربعة أنواع مختلفة من الأسئلة - المفردات ، صواب / خطأ ، المرادفات ، وكتابة الفقرة - لتقييم اختبار القراءة. كانت أسئلة ملء الفراغ والملخصات الموجزة للصوت هما نوعان من الأسئلة في اختبار الاستماع. كانت اختبارات الاستماع والقراءة على حد سواء في المستوى قبل المتوسط. تظهر نتائج البحث أن طلاب ELL لديهم مهارات قراءة واستماع أفضل مقارنة بطلاب ELT. و الطلاب من كلا القسمين أكثر كفاءة في القراءة من الاستماع.