البحث (١٠)

The Impact of VoiceThread-based Instruction on Developing EFL Listening Skills among Languages Higher Institute's Students

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Abstract

The present study explored the impact of utilizing voice thread based instruction on developing the English listening skills among first year student at the Department of English, Sheraton Languages Higher Institute. Ninety students were divided into two groups as a control group and an experimental group. Each group comprised forty five students. The researcher used the quasi-research pre-post design. Both descriptive statistics (mean scores and standard deviation scores) and inferential statistics (paired samples t-test and independent samples t-test) were utilized for the purpose of data analysis. Findings verified the positive impact of using voice thread-based instruction on developing the experimental students' listening skills compared to the control group. The results revealed that is a large effect on developing the experimental group's listening skills. As for pedagogical implication, the study asserted the importance of utilizing voice thread-based instruction to develop English listening skills among Egyptian EFL students.

Keywords: listening skills, voice thread instruction, first year students, pedagogical implication

تأثير التدريس القائم على الفويس ثريد على تنمية مهارات الأستماع للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بين طلاب المعهد العالى للغات

أستاذ مشارك د. سحر عبد الحميد شيشان

رئيس قسم اللغة الإنجليزية معهد الشيراتون العالى للغات مصر

● المستخلص:

قامت الدراسة الحالية بإستكشاف تأثير إستخدام التدريس القائم على الفويس ثريد على تنمية مهارات الأستماع فى اللغة الإنجليزية بين طلاب الفرقة الأولى فى قسم اللغة الإنجليزية فى معهد الشيراتون العالى للغات، و تم تقسيم الطلاب التسعين إلى مجموعتين مجموعة

ضـابطة و مجموعـة تجريبيـة حيث تكونت كـل مجموعـة مـن خمسـة و أربعـين طالبـا حيث أعتمـدت الباحثـة علـى التصـميم البحثـى شـبه التجريبـى القبلـى و البعـدى ، و أعتمـد جمـع البيانـات البحثيـة علـى إسـتخدام التصـميم البحثـى للأختبـار القبلـى و الأختبـار البعـدى، و تم إستخدام كل من الإحصاء الوصفى (المتوسطات الحسابية و الإنحرافات المعيارية) و الإحصاء الأسـتدلى (أختبـار ت للعينـات المقترنـة و أختبـار ت للعينـات المسـتقلة) لأغـراض تحليل البيانـات البحثية، و تحققت النتائج من صحة التأثير الإيجابى لإستخدام التدريس القائم على الفويس ثريد على تنميـة مهـارات الأسـتماع لطـلاب المجموعـة التجريبيـة مقارنـة بالمجموعـة الضابطة، و أظهـرت النتـائج أثـرا كبيـرا لتطـوير مهـارات الأسـتماع للمجموعـة التجريبيـة، و فيمـا بتعلـق بالمضامين التربوية أكدت الدراسة على أهمية إستخدام التدريس القائم على الفويس ثريد فى تنمية مهارات الأستماع لدى الطلاب المصريين الدارسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مهارات الأستماع، التدريس القائم على الفويس ثريد، طلاب الفرقة الأولى، مضامين تربوية

Introduction

The importance of listening skills, among English as foreign language (EFL) learners, is unquestionable. It is the main foundation upon which other language skills are learned and developed. In spite of the claim that listening is a passive skill, it constitutes a large portion of EFL learners' communication skills and leads to successful learning of English. According to Sujatha and Rajasekaran (2024), little teaching attention is often paid to listening skills in FL classrooms. However, the increasingly growing focus on teaching language communication granted listening skills a prominent position in FL classrooms.

Nabiyev and Idiyev (2022) explained that listening instruction is an arduous task that requires the development of learners' cognitive and meta-cognitive ability. According to Diora and Rosa (2020), listening skills entail that information is received, stored, processed, and understood to

provide a reply to the received message. In addition, Yildirim and Yildirim (2016) clarified that students find it difficult to identify each word in the listening comprehension due to pronunciation problems. Gultom, Utari and Rahmawati (2023) indicated that inadequate FL vocabulary constitutes a great problem for EFL learners to understand the listened to text. Students' inability to figure out the meaning of the whole speech impedes the successful development of their listening skills.

Kent (2017a) pointed out that in the current century, the employment of using technology for pedagogical purposes has led to the creation of several digital learning applications including the VoiceThread. VoiceThread is a digital learning application that can be utilized for various learning purposes and settings. It is useful for language instructors to speed up their students' oral competency by understanding the delivered message and correctly responding to those messages. Kent (2017b) clarified that VoiceThread primarily works on improving the main skills of listening and speaking. Language instructors can upload various audio-visual learning videos, hold discussions with the students, allow student-student dialogues, link their students to various websites, and provide prompt feedback by utilizing *VoiceThread* application.

Huong and Hung (2021) stated that technology has influentially played a prominent role in language teaching in the digital learning age. Bodis (2020) explained that *VoiceThread* is one of the digital learning tools which FL instructors can exploit to create, discuss, and assess various FL-pertinent learning activities. Glick (2021) clarified that through the potential of uploading numerous audio-visual

authentic learning videos, *VoiceThread* can be employed for multiple FL learning objectives covering different language skills.

According to Pagkalinawan (2021), *VoiceThread* can mainly reinforce collaborative learning communication-based activities. For instance, FL instructors can use it for the purpose of developing listening skills by asking students to practice certain exercises after listening to parts of some audio-visual videos. These exercises can range from prediction, discussion, filling in the blanks to role plays. In addition, Maula (2022) highlighted that *VoiceThread*-based activities can be performed at the students' different convenient times. Thus, *VoiceThread*-based activities can be practiced not only during the class times but at home as well. All these activities can be monitored by FL instructors who are able to provide instant feedback in the form of a thread.

Brunvand and Byrd (2011) explained that although *VoiceThread* initially starts with listening, intensive FL studies focused on its utilization in developing learners' speaking skills with little room left for listening skills. Therefore, the scope of utilizing *VoiceThread* to develop listening skills has not been fully investigated and is still a virgin area that requires further research and investigation. Therefore, there is a need to trial the use of *VoiceThread* in the Egyptian setting of English learning and verify its effectiveness in developing the essential listening skills among Egyptian EFL students.

Context of the Problem

The carried out pilot study in the early weak of the first term, the academic year 2024-2025 showed trouble spots of the selected twenty participants' listening skills. Table 1

provides the pilot study test of listening skills whose total score was 50 marks. Only less than half of the participants (nine participants) could obtain the minimum scores of passing the test while eleven participants failed the test.

Table 1: Results of the pilot study listening skills test

Scores	No. of participants
26-50Marks	None
25 Marks	9
22-24 Marks	3
Below 20 Marks	8

Statement of the problem

It is imperative, therefore, to explore the effectiveness of a digital learning tool (i.e. *VoiceThread*) on developing the English Department freshmen's listening skills. Specifically, the study examined the *VoiceThread* effectiveness in developing the experimental students' listening skills in terms of four main aspects. These aspects include the ability to differentiate between the types of English sounds, determination of placement of primary stress, recognition of certain meanings of multiple meaning words, and correct comprehension and appropriate response to the messages that they listened to.

Questions

1. How do the listening skills of control and experimental participants differ in the pre-and-posttests?
2. How does the utilization of *VoiceThread* instruction develop the experimental participants' listening skills?

Hypotheses

1. Listening skills do not differ among all participants in the pretest and the posttest.
2. The utilization of *VoiceThread* based instruction does not affect the development of the experimental students' listening skills.

Aims

The current study aimed to:

1. Determine the listening skills of the two groups in the pretest.
2. State the difference between the listening skills of both groups in the posttest.
3. Assess the impact of using *VoiceThread* based instruction on developing the experimental students' listening skills.

Significance of the study

Most importantly, the present study heeds the policies of Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education to elevate the FL proficiency levels of higher education students. It also implements mission and vision devised at the Department of English, Sheraton Higher Languages Institute to improve the listening skills of its students. The current study contributes to the description of Egyptian students' listening skills at the tertiary level. The study can benefit the EFL curriculum planners and designers in the EFL context in Egypt. The study is also useful to EFL language instructors not only in Egypt but in other EFL settings as well.

Literature review

Fadeeva (2017) explored the effect of utilizing *VoiceThread* to develop the listening and speaking skills of EFL students, their ability to collaborate and communicate outside the FL classes. The participants were international students enrolled in the East Caroline University who have different first language backgrounds. They were trained over a four-week period to use the *VoiceThread* for the purpose of developing their listening and speaking skills in English.

The findings showed that *VoiceThread* had an effective contribution to develop the participants listening and

speaking skills in English. It helped them to acquire FL vocabulary pertinent to different topics listening comprehension. It also sustained their ability to fulfill communicative tasks by acquiring appropriate communication strategies. Owing to the *VoiceThread*, collaborative learning was sustained among the participants by holding discussions on various topics during and outside the classrooms and by sharing and exchanging correct language knowledge.

Mango (2017) investigated the effects resulted from using *VoiceThread* in developing the listening skills of FL learners. The participants were 35 English-speaking students who studied Arabic as a FL in California State University. Mango also examined the participants' attitudes towards the use of *Voice-Thread* as a medium of instruction. Data were collected through the instruments of a pre-listening test, a post-listening test, and an attitude questionnaire. The participants were divided into a control group and an experimental group where the latter studied listening comprehension by using *Voice-Thread*.

Mango reported that the use of *VoiceThread* was effective in developing the experimental group's listening comprehension skills is a statistically significant way compared to the control group. Mango also found that the experimental participants had positive attitudes towards the use of *VoiceThread* in earning listening comprehension since it created an enjoyable learning atmosphere which reinforces their concentration and attention while performing the listening activities and tasks.

Utami and Santosa (2023) reviewed various studies on the effectiveness of using *VoiceThread* on developing speaking

skills in conjunction with the listening skills. Utami and Santosa adopted the guidelines of *meta-analyses* to select the reviewed articles during the 2011-2022 period. Utami and Santosa found that the use of *VoiceThread* enabled EFL students to easily have access to the listening materials which language instructors have uploaded by using *VoiceThread*. By understanding those materials, EFL students were extremely able to develop their speaking skills. Utami and Santosa explained that the employment of *VoiceThread* based instruction was effective in easing the challenges which EFL learners often encounter when learning speaking skills.

These challenges are mostly cognitive including anxiety, hesitation, lack of interaction and practice. These cognitive challenges are common among EFL learners who are learning either listening and speaking skills, particularly the learning of these two skills is commonly entwined and occurs concurrently. Utami and Santosa clarified that *VoiceThread* encouraged EFL students to learn autonomously, adopt suitable learning strategies, develop learning skills of English particularly those of speaking, and meet their learning needs.

Uzun (2023) explored the impact of using technology on enhancing the efficiency of listening instruction in FL classrooms. Uzun explained that technology can be utilized in teaching FL listening skills through different stages. Instructors can use technology to prepare their students for the listening task by activating their knowledge about the listening topic. At this stage, technology can be used to familiarize FL students with vocabulary and grammar which they will encounter in the content of the listening task. To encourage students' engagement, Uzun advised FL instructors to divide the listening task into different parts where students

are required to interactive activities. After completing the listening task, instructors can ask their students to reflect on the listening content by discussing the topic, writing summaries about the topic or perform speaking activities.

Uzun emphasized the importance of technology integration into the teaching and learning of listening skills in the FL contexts. Technology can enable FL instructors to design different activities that meet the EFL students' need for learning listening skills. The classroom engagement of FL students can be enhanced by utilizing the various authentic listening materials offered by the use of technology. Students can also be highly motivated to take part in listening activities by utilizing the advantages offered through technology.

Sujatha and Rajasekaran (2024) examined the effectiveness of employing the blended method on improving pedagogical instruction meant for teaching listening skills to 60 ESP engineering students. The participants were equally divided into a control group and an experimental group. Sujatha and Rajasekaran utilized the top-down approach in terms of providing information knowledge about the audio which students are listening to. Data were elicited through the instruments of a 25-item questionnaire and a semi-structured interview.

The researchers asserted the prominence of listening skills among other FL skills in spite of the lack of pedagogical attention given to listening compared to other skills. They also emphasized the necessity of utilizing the blended model which facilitates the roles of EFL instructors by helping students to process the listening inputs. Findings showed the supremacy of experimental students in identifying information relevant to the listening task, inferring and

predicting information as well. In addition, the blended model sustained the experimental students; knowledge of English vocabulary and different patterns of pronunciation compared to the control group.

Definition of terms
VoiceThread

According to Nicholsan (2013), *VoiceThread* is a multiple digital collaborative learning website that can be utilized for developing various language skills of EFL learners. The present study employs *VoiceThread* as a platform used by the researcher to teach listening skills to the experimental students by uploading various audio-visual listening videos.

Listening skills

Paramole, Adeoye, Arowosaye, and Ibikunle (2024) defined listening skills as the most crucial skills in FL learning. Listening skills sustain the successful learning of other language skills. They are implicitly and passively learned skills in FL classrooms compared to other language skills. They encompass a wide range of skills from sounds, words, sentence structure, phonological features, to assessment and inference of information. In the present study listening skills refers to the participants' ability to differentiate between the types of English sounds (consonants, vowels, diphthongs, triphthongts), determine the placement of primary stress, recognize the exact meanings of multiple meaning words, and correctly understand and respond to the messages which they listened to.

Delimitations

The delimitations of the present study are as follows:
- Ninety first year students at the Department of English, Sheraton Higher Languages Institute.
- First term of the academic year 2024-2025

- *VoiceThread*-based instruction
- English listening sub-skills like phonological features, primary stress placement, inference of information, message comprehension and response.

Method
Research design

The mixed quantitative and qualitative method was the selected research design for the present study (Mango, 2017, Marghany, 2023, Uzun, 2023, Sujatha and Rajasekaran, 2024). The pre-and-post listening tests were analyzed quantitatively by using descriptive statistics like mean scores, minimum and maximum scores. Data quantification also relied on inferential statistics such as paired and independent samples t-tests. Furthermore, the participants performance in the pre-and-post listening tests was analyzed qualitatively.

Participants

Participants are first year enrolled students at the Department of English, Sheraton Higher Languages Institute. They comprise 62 females and 28 males. The age of participants falls between 19-21 years. Mostly, they studied English in Egyptian public secondary schools, with only 15 students studied in private language secondary schools.

Data collection instruments

Collection of data depends on the employment of two different versions of pre-and-posttests of listening skills as shown in appendices A and B (Ramos and Valderruten, 2017, Gokce, 2022, Suri et al., 2022, and Tai, 2022). Each test is divided into four parts in line with the definition of listening skills employed in the current study. Part I, which is entitled as differences between English sounds, includes five questions to measure the participants ability to differentiate between different English sounds such as diphthongs,

triphthongs, long and short vowels. For instance, part I tested the participants' ability to identify the diphthong sound as in 'fly', the affricate sound as in 'teach', the fricative sound as in 'smoke'. The second, third and fourth parts contain ten questions each covering successively placement of primary stress (college, shower, flour, flower receiving stress on the firs syllables), multiple meaning words (bank, spring, capital) and appropriate response to the listened to messages (such as What are the most famous wonders of the world?). Each pre and post listening test was marked of forty marks distributed as ten marks per each part.

Procedures

At the early beginning of the first term, 2024-2025, the listening skills pretest was conducted to all participants who are required to study a listening and conversation course as one of the core academic courses. The participants were taught listening skills by using two different methods. The first method was the traditional one which was meant for teaching listening skills to the control group. The second method was the *VoiceThread* based instruction which was assigned for providing listening skills instruction to the experimental students over a ten-week period.

The experimental students were given instruction to create *VoiceThread* accounts. In other words, the experimental students studied a content of authentic audio-visual listening materials through the *voiceThread* along with student-student discussions sustained by the instructor's prompt feedback. The content of *VoiceThread*-based instruction focused on the four aspects of identified listening skills described in the problem statement section. Towards the end of the first term, the listening skills posttest was administered.

A three-member panel of TEFL experts was consulted for the purpose of the instruments validity. The panels' feedback was adequately utilized to modify and add some questions of the pre-and-post listening skills tests. To further verify the instruments validity, both tests were also piloted by using 20 students. The coefficients of Cronbach's alpha were respectively .91 and .92 as an indication of both tests high reliability.

Data analysis

The quantification of data analysis aimed to compare between listening skills of both groups in the pre-and-posttests. It similarly aimed to identify the possible improvement occurred in the listening skills of both groups during the posttest. These aims were realized by using the paired samples t-test. The independent samples t-test was also employed to determine the potential statistical significant differences that may exist in the listening skills of both groups after the posttest.

As indicated in table 2, all students of control and experimental groups performed poorly in listening pre-posttests..

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of students' results in listening pre-posttests

Students	Mean	Standard deviation	minimum	maximum	N
Pretest control students	1.8763	2.012014	8.00	19.00	45
Posttest control students	11.7532	8.46732	21.00	30.00	45
Pretest experimental students	1.9531	1.14792	12.00	21.00	45
Posttest experimental students	24.8202	5.86821	26.00	48.00	45
Valid N (listwise)					45

Results of the posttest

Differences in the listening skills of control and experimental students' posttest performance are indicated in table 3. On the contrary to the control students, the experimental students largely developed their performance in the listening skills posttest. Differences between the two tested groups had statistical significance as the p value was less than .005. The control students showed no statistical significant differences in their listening skills in the pretest and posttest. Their p value was > .005. Meanwhile, the pretest and posttest results of experimental students showed statistical significant differences as their p value was< .005. The finding is also evident as the standard deviations of control students' pretest (2.01) and posttest (8.46) were higher than those of experiment students (1.14) and (5.86). The difference in the two groups' standard deviations shows higher variance in the control group' listening skills compared to those of the experimental students.

Table 3: Paired samples t-test

Students	N	M	SD	df	t-value	Sig.
Control pretest	45	1.8763	2.012014	44	6.482	.027
Control posttest	45	11.7532	8.46732	44		
Experimental pretest	45	1.9531	1.14792	44	21.647	.000
Experimental posttest	45	24.8202	5.86821	44		

As indicated in table 4, the *VocieThread* trained experimental students' gained mean score between the pretest and posttest (22.86) was extremely higher than that gained mean score of the control group (9.87). The huge difference between the gained mean scores of the control and experimental students is statistically significant as the p value was < .005. It provides a piece of evidence on the effective impact of using the *VocieThread*-based instruction to develop the experimental students' listening skills in contrast to the traditional method used to teach listening skills to the control students.

Table 4: Independent samples t-test

Students	N	GM	SD	df	t-value	Sig.
Control	45	9.87	6.45	44	15.165	.000
Experimental	45	22.86	4.72	44		

In terms of qualitative analysis, table 5 introduces examples of all participants' mistakes in the listening skills pretest. The listening skills pretest showed all students in ability to differentiate between English sounds such as diphthongs, triphthongs, nasal velar /ŋ/, voiced and voiceless plosives, long and short vowels. All students were not able to identify the placement of primary stress on words such as *college, committed, canal, fundamental, responsibility*, etc. They failed to identify the exact meaning of some multiple meaning words like the word *'bank'* in ' *soldiers walked by the <u>bank</u> of the river'*, the word *'springs'* in '*the little child <u>springs</u> of the bed'*, etc. They could not also respond appropriately to messages such as '*what do you know about Shakespeare'*, '*what are the benefits of learning English*?', etc. In the listening skills posttest, experimental students managed to overcome FL listening difficulties which they encountered in the pretest and overwhelmingly outperformed the control students.

Table 5: Examples of mistakes in the listening skills pretest

Pretest		
Questions	Mistakes	Correct Answers
Listen to the audio and identify the words which contain the following:		
1. The diphthong /aɪ/………. a. Way b. fly c. weak	Way	fly
2. An affricate sound a. Flat b. teach c. sun	Flat	Teach
3. A nasal velar /ŋ/ ……..	Man	Drink

a. Man b. van c. drink		
4. A voiced plosive ………. a. Pen b. bat c. plan	Plan	Bat
Listen to the audio and identify words that receive primary stress on The first syllable:		
1. …………. a. Preparation b. flour c. announcement	Preparation	Flour
2. …………….. a. Comprehend b. comprehension c. flower	Comprehend	Flower
Listen to the audio and identify words that receive primary stress on The second syllable:		
1. …………. a. Funny b. b. canal c. slim	Funny	Canal
2. ………….. a. Trained b. tracked c. believe	Tracked	Believe
Listen to the audio and select the exact meanings of underlined words:		
1. You have to pay the fine……… a. In a good manner b. A sum of money paid for an offence	In a good manner	A sum paid for an offence
2. The soldiers marched towards the barracks ………. a. Walked b. The third month of the year	The third month of the year	Walked
Listen to the audio and reply to the questions:		
1. Why it is healthy to eat fresh fruits?	Junk food	It is nutritious contains a lot of vitamins
2. What are the benefits of the internet?	To spend a lot of time.	To acquire different types of knowledge

In contrast to the control group, the experimental students had managed largely to reduce their posttest listening mistakes. For examples, they had obtained higher scores than their control group counterparts in answering questions related to the identification of diphthongs, triphthongs, fricatives, affricates. They had also outperformed the control group participants in determining the various meanings of multiple meaning words like 'springs', 'bank', 'college', etc. They had shown supremacy as well in recognizing the placement of primary stress as in 'father', 'again', 'preposition', etc. They had succeeded to correctly respond to different messages such as ' How does winter look like in Europe?', 'where is Beg Bin?', etc.

Supremacy of the experimental students' listening skill posttest compared to their control group counterparts was affirmed by the computation of the effect size as shown in table 6. It shows that the higher statistically significant effect size was in favour for the experimental students where Cohen's D=.7 and the p-value was less than 0.05.

Table 6: Computation of the Effect Size

Item	Cont. Group		Exp. Group		T(90)	P	Cohen's d
Maximum proportion	M	SD	M	SD			
	9.87	6.45	22.86	4.72	12.99	000	0.7

Discussion

Unsurprisingly, the pretest performance of all students showed poor listening skills. That was evident is all participants' inability to differentiate between English sounds, identify the primary stress placement, identify the exact meanings of multiple words meaning, and respond appropriately to the heard message. The finding leads to the acceptance of the first null hypothesis that the listening skills do not differ between control and experimental students in

the pretest. The finding matches those reported by Nicholsan (2013), Maula (2022), Nabiyev and Idiyev (2022), Utami and Santosa (2023), and Sujatha and Rajasekaran (2024).

The successful performance of experimental students in the listening skills posttest comparing to that of the control students leads to the rejection of the second null hypothesis that there is no difference between both examined groups in the posttest. The experimental students' posttest performance is attributed to the utilization of VoiceThread-based instruction compared to the conventional instruction used for teaching listening to the control group. The finding leads to the rejection of the third null hypothesis that VoiceThread and traditional method have the same impact on developing the participants' listening skills. The utility of using VoiceThread instruction largely developed the experimental students' knowledge of differences between various English sounds such as diphthongs, triphthongs, voiced and voiceless plosives, long and short vowels. It also helped them to identify the placed of primary stress of various English words. It successfully led them to identify the exact meanings of different English multiple meaning words. It trained them well to understand the listened to message and appropriately respond to those messages. These findings are in agreement with those reported by Fadeeva (2017), Mango (20217), Bodis (2020), Huong and Hung (2021) Marghany (2023), and Uzun (2023).

Pedagogical implications

The poor performance in the pretest listening skills is caused because of lack of attention paid to the teaching of listening skills in secondary schools in Egypt. The Egyptian EFL teachers used to focus on providing instruction related to

structure and vocabulary usage including synonyms and antonyms while neglecting listening instruction. Thus, the findings of current study highlight the necessity of providing adequate listening instruction to secondary school Egyptian EFL students to help them acquire necessary listening stage at an earlier educational level before joining the tertiary education.

The participants did not receive adequate instruction or training to develop their learning skills. The finding pays the attention of FL curriculum planners and designers for secondary school students in Egypt to restore the focus on listening skills in the EFL syllabi at that essential educational stage. Thus, the ministry of education is required to include listening skills as parts of secondary schools FL curricula. The insufficient listening instruction at the secondary school stage is evident as FL final examinations do not contain questions related to listening skills.

The effective impact of using *VoiceThread* to develop the experimental students' listening skills entails pedagogical implications on the part of FL instructors. First, preparation and training programs for pre-service EFL teachers should be designed in a way that equipped those trainees of the ability of using technology-based application in teaching various English language skills including the *VoiceThread*. As such, the Egyptian EFL pre-service teachers should be knowledgeable about using various advanced technological applications such as *VoiceThread* for the purposes of teaching English language skills.

Second, the in-service EFL teachers used utilize *VocieThread* for the purpose of developing their students' listening skills at earlier educational stage such as primary,

preparatory and secondary schools. As such those teachers are required to enhance their students' listening skills of identifying various English sounds like diphthongs, triphthongs, affricates, fricative, plosives, etc. They are also required to familiarize their students with the placement of primary stress of different English words and help them recognize different meanings of multiple meaning words. The present study also underpins the importance of training Egyptian EFL learners to comprehend and respond correctly to various messages at early educational levels. Third, English language instructors at the Department of English, Sheraton Higher Languages Institute should generalize the utilization of *VoiceThread* in teaching other various academic courses to improve the FL proficiency of their students including speaking, reading and writing skills.

Conclusion

The poor listening skills indicated by all students in the pretest necessitates the dire need for utilizing an innovative instruction method to develop the experimental students' listening skills. The listening skills development should not be neglected in the secondary school stage which immediately precedes the tertiary education. Such negligence diminishes the FL listening abilities of Egyptian students. Thus, they encounter difficulties of utilizing these skills at the tertiary level.

The control students showed limited development of their listening skills in the posttest, mainly because of the conventional instruction which they received. On the other hand, the use of *VocieThread*-based instruction was a significant contributor behind the high development of experimental students' listening skills. Therefore, it is

concluded that *VoiceThread* is a useful digital learning application that leads to fruitful results in developing listening skills and can be generalized to the other FL skills in the Egyptian EFL context.

Recommendations

Below are some recommendations for further research:

1. The *VoiceThread* instruction can be utilized to teach other FL skills such as reading and writing.

2. The impact of employing *VoiceThread*-based instruction on the EFL students' learning styles can also be investigated.

3. The *VoiceThread*-based instruction can also be explored as a mode of collaborative learning.

4. The utilization of *VoiceThread*-based instruction can be test at different academic settings and educational levels as well.

5. The use of *VoiceThread*-based instruction can also be examined from the perspective of enhancing the teaching competency of EFL pre-service and in-service teachers.

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Appendix A
The Listening Skills Pretest
Forty Marks

Part I (10 Marks)

Listen to the audio and identify the words which contain the following:

1. The diphthong /aI/……….
   b. Way b. <u>fly</u>   c. weak
2. An affricate sound …………
   b. Flat b. <u>teach</u> c. sun
3. A fricative sound ………
   a. <u>Smoke</u> b. black   c. talk
4. A nasal velar /ŋ/ ……..
   b. Man   b. van   c. <u>drink</u>
5. A voiceless plosive ………
   a. Bank   b. back   c. <u>pet</u>
6. A voiced plosive ……….
   b. Pen   b. <u>bat</u>   c. plan
7. The diphthong /ea/………
   a. We   b. <u>wear</u>   c. walk
8. The diphthong /ei/ ……..
   a. <u>wait</u>   b. sad   c. glad
9. The triphthong /aIə/ ……….
   a. Buy   b. why   c. <u>dial</u>
10. A long vowel ……..
    a. Bit   b. <u>beat</u>   c. bin

Part II (10Marks)

Listen to the audio and identify words that receive primary stress on The first syllable:

3. ………..
   a. Mission   b. transmit   c. <u>college</u>
4. …………
   a. <u>Shower</u>   b. agreement   c. engagement
5. ………….

b. Preparation   b. <u>flour</u>   c. announcement
6. ……………..
b. Comprehend   b. comprehension c. <u>flower</u>

The second syllable:
7. …. ……..
a. Committed   b. fix   c. <u>above</u>
8. …………
a. <u>ago</u>   b. flick   c. fled
9. …………
c. Funny   b. <u>canal</u>   c. slim
10.…………..
b. Trained   b. tracked   c. <u>believe</u>

The third syllable:
11.……………
a. <u>Fundamental</u>   b. mental   c. fund
12. …………..
a. Response   b. respond   c. <u>responsibility</u>

Part III
Listen to the audio and select the exact meanings of underlined words: (10 Marks)
3. The soldiers walked by the <u>bank</u> of the river……..
a. A financial institution
b. <u>Side</u>
4. The little child <u>springs</u> of the bed…….
a. <u>Moves suddenly</u>
b. A season
5. Flowers flourish in the <u>spring</u> …………
a. <u>A season</u>
b. Arise from
6. He <u>backs</u> your idea………….
a. Returns
b. <u>Supports</u>
7. Names are written in <u>capital</u> letters……….
a. The most important city of the country
b. <u>Large in size</u>
8. He <u>books</u> two seats………..

a. A published material
b. <u>Reserves</u>

9. They have a <u>date</u> tonight………..
   a. <u>An appointment</u>
   b. The day of the month

10. You have to pay the <u>fine</u>………
    c. In a good manner
    d. <u>A sum of money paid for an offence</u>

11. The soldiers <u>marched</u> towards the barracks ………
    c. <u>Walked</u>
    d. The third month of the year

12. First of <u>May</u> is a public holiday …………..
    a. A modal verb
    b. <u>The fifth month of the year</u>

Part IV (10 Marks)

Listen to the audio and reply to the questions:

3. What are the capitals of Spain and Portugal?

…………………………………………………………….

4. What is Aswan famous for?

…………………………………………………………….

5. What are the main features of the Mediterranean climate?

…………………………………………………………

6. What do you know about Shakespeare?

…………………………………………………………

7. What are the benefits of learning English?

…………………………………………………………

8. What are the most famous wonders of the world?

…………………………………………………………

9. Why is Ghandi considered as a philosopher?

…………………………………………………………

10. What are the harms of having junk food?

…………………………………………………………

11. Why it is healthy to eat fresh fruits?

…………………………………………………………

12. What are the benefits of the internet?

…………………………………………………………

Appendix B
The Listening Skills Posttest
Forty Marks

Part I (10 Marks)

Listen to the audio and identify the words which contain the following:

1. The diphthong /aɪ/ ………
   a. Far　　　　　　b. star　　　c. <u>buy</u>

2. An affricate sound …………
   a. <u>Catch</u>　　b. send　　　c. make

3. A nasal velar /ŋ/ ……..
   a. Sin　　　　　b. <u>think</u>　　c. sink

4. A fricative sound ………
   a. Trim　　　　b. fed c. <u>sleep</u>

5. A voiceless plosive ………
   a. <u>Pink</u>　　　b. bad　　　c. between

6. A voiced plosive ……..
   a. Plain　　　b. pinch　　c. <u>battle</u>

7. The diphthong /eə/ …….
   a. <u>Hair</u>　　　b. fly　　　c. click

8. The diphthong /eɪ/ ………
   a. Clay　　　b. <u>face</u>　　c. counter

9. The triphthong /aɪə/ ……….
   a. <u>Dialect</u>　　b. boy　　　c. joy

10. A long vowel ……..
   a. Sit　　　　　b. <u>seat</u>c. sitting

Part II (10 Marks)

Listen to the audio and identify words that receive primary stress on The first syllable:

1. ………...
   a. vision   b. commit   c. <u>class</u>
2. …………
   a. <u>Father</u>   b. abroad   c. imbalance
3. …………
   a. Display   b. fluctuate   c. <u>pattern</u>
4. ……………..
   a. <u>Middle</u>   b. ahead   c. aloud

The second syllable:

5. …. ……...
   b. Final   b. determine   c. <u>reply</u>
6. …………
   a. <u>again</u>   b. compare   c. climate
7. …………
   a. Rainy   b. <u>about</u>   c.
   knowledge
8. …………..
   a. Happy   b. purple   c. <u>relax</u>

The third syllable:

9. ……………
   a. Proposed   b. <u>preposition</u>   c. propose
10. …………..
    a. Exam   b. examined   c. <u>examination</u>

Part III
Listen to the audio and select the exact meanings of underlined words: (10 Marks)

1. The <u>band</u> played songs from the 1990s…….

    a. <u>A group of musicians</u>

    b. Bond

2. The girl tied her hair with a <u>band</u>.......

    a. Collection

    b. <u>Stripe</u>

3. The chairman <u>addresses</u> his staff.......

    a. Classifies

    b. <u>Talks to</u>

4. He used to <u>bat</u> in the boxing matches........

    a. <u>Hit</u>

    b. Type of birds

5. His footsteps <u>match</u> those in the crime scene......

    a. <u>Similar to</u>

    b. Equal

6. The twin is a good <u>match</u> for kidney donation.........

    a. dissimilar to

    b. <u>Lookalike</u>

7. The student is sure that his gave a <u>right</u> answer.....

    a. <u>Correct</u>

    b. Indication of agreement

8. Do not dig the <u>rocks</u>.......

    a. <u>solid parts of the surface of the earth</u>

    b. type of music

9. he is a fan of the <u>rock</u> band..........

    a. <u>a musical band</u>

    b. parts of the surface of the earth

10. They heard the <u>ring</u> of the bell

    a. <u>Tone</u>

b. Gold

Part IV (10 Marks)
Listen to the audio and reply to the questions:
   1. Who is your favorite footballer?

     …………………………………………………………………
     ………..
   2. What is Luxor famous for?

    …………………………………………………………………
    …………
   3. Where is Egypt located?

     …………………………………………………………………
     ………
   4. Who built the great pyramid?

     …………………………………………………………………
     ………
   5. How does winter look like in Europe?

     …………………………………………………………………
     ……….
   6. Where is Beg Bin?

     …………………………………………………………………
     ……….
   7. Where is the statue of liberty?

     …………………………………………………………………
     ………..
   8. What is the main landmark in China?

    …………………………………………………………………
    ……….
   9. What is the longest river in the world?

……………………………………………………………………
…………

10. What are the ancient Egyptians famous for?

……………………………………………………………………
……………

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