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THE IMPACT OF ROLE-PLAYING STRATEGY ON EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' CRITICAL LISTENING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to explore the impact of the role play strategy on enhancing some University Students' Critical listening skills. To achieve the objective of the study, the researchers adopted a performance listening test that consisted of 10 multiple choice questions. The participants of the study were 20 EFL University students from Ajloun National University. The participants were divided into two groups experimental (10 students) and control (10 students). The experimental group were taught using the role-playing strategy, whereas the control group were taught via the traditional method. The experiment lasted for five weeks. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data statistically in order to answer the study question. The hypothesis was tested by calculating means, standard deviations, adjusted means, One-Way ANCOVA, and One-Way MANCOVA, in addition to calculating effect size (Eta Square). The results showed statistically significant differences in the mean scores of the students' performance on all the listening skills of the test due to the teaching strategy used in favor of the experimental group who were taught using the role-playing strategy. Training EFL instructors on how to use the role-playing strategy in developing English language skills was recommended.

KEYWORDS: Role Playing Strategy, Listening Skills, EFL University Students.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language represents a fundamental necessity of life and a social manifestation of human existence. It provides learners with a linguistic system that enables them to express themselves clearly and effectively, thereby facilitating the communication process. The skills of sending and receiving messages are closely interconnected, as the speaker's language reflects the listener's competence, while the listener is, in turn, influenced by the speaker's performance and fluency, often attempting to imitate it.

Listening holds a prominent position among language skills in terms of both importance and natural sequence, as it constitutes the primary gateway to language acquisition. Its significance is evident in that it precedes other language skills and contributes to the development of learners' linguistic knowledge (Battah, 2012). Listening is defined as: "An art that encompasses complex processes; it is not merely the act of hearing". Because it is a process in which the listener gives special attention and focus to the sounds and linguistic symbols received by the ear, attempting to understand their meaning and grasp the message contained within these symbols through their interaction with the listener's experiences and cognitive values, and attempting to interpret, evaluate, and judge the message's content (Madkour, 2007). According to Hamouda (2013) listening involves an individual understanding the meaning of what one hears. The models of cognitive processes include listening for main ideas, details, inferring meaning, predicting and summarizing. Similarly, Hardiah (2019) describes listening as a process that includes four stages: listening, understanding, remembering, assessing and finally responding. The listening skills can be fully explored if the appropriate strategy is used due to the complexity of the process.

Several scholars have described listening as an active mental process. Al-Ali (1998) defined listening skill as a mental process requiring effort from the listener to follow the speaker, understand the meaning of what is said, store and retrieve ideas when necessary, and make connections between multiple ideas. Al-Wali (1998: 143) defined listening skill as: "The deliberate reception of any auditory material with the intention of understanding it, being able to analyze, comprehend and critique it, and expressing an opinion about it if requested." Hijab (1999) provides another definition of listening, taken from the American Society for Speech Communication, stating that listening skill is: "The process of receiving and comprehending ideas.

In contrast, hearing is viewed as a physiological

process that involves the reception of sound waves, while listening requires cognitive engagement. Al-Sulaiti (2008) defined hearing as: The ear's reception of sound vibrations from a specific source; a simple process dependent on the ear's physiology and its ability to process these sound vibrations. Tindall and Nisbat (2008) defined listening as an effective and complex mental process that requires learners to transform spoken words into mental meaning. Al-Hallaq (2010) defined listening as a linguistic skill that requires the listener to pay the highest level of attention and focus to understand, analyze, interpret, evaluate, and express an opinion on the message contained in his speech. Listening is the most frequently used language skill in learning, because the listener must focus his/ her mind on what he/she is hearing despite any distractions, quickly regain attention if their mind wanders, and maintain silence until the text is finished (Al-Hashemi & Al-Azzawi, 2004).

Moreover, since individuals spend a considerable portion of their lives listening, and given that the human capacity for receiving information exceeds that for producing it, the effectiveness of learning largely depends on how well listening skills are developed (Al-Lahidan, 2003). Harmer (2001) also emphasizes that employing effective teaching strategies, such as role-playing, enhances students' engagement and supports productive learning environments.

When learners listen to a topic, they need to concentrate in order to construct meaning from what they hear. This understanding may range from surface-level comprehension to deeper interpretation that involves grasping implicit meanings. The researcher believes that the skills of listening and speaking are closely interrelated. The speaker's speech reflects the language and listening skills of the listener, and similarly, the speaker's language and fluency affect the listener prompting them.

In light of the extensive developments that have taken place in the educational field and the shift of attention to the learner, as the focus of the educational process, it has become necessary for teaching methods, techniques and strategies to be based on the learner's positive role. Here, the role-playing strategy emerges, which revolves around the learner and the extent of his positivity in the educational process (Al-Farhoud, 2006). This essence of role-playing lies in the immersion of participants and observers in a semi-realistic situation Jaber (2005). This definition highlights the importance of role-playing in problem-solving by allowing learners to experience the problem realistically and providing

authentic situations to achieve educational goals.

Furthermore, role-playing facilitates what Rosberg (1994) describes that role-playing is a teaching strategy that provides opportunities for learners to actively participate in different educational situations. It facilitates impersonation, and the practice of various forms of mimicry and imitation within the framework of spoken language and purposeful physical expression. This strategy also allows learners to practice dramatic techniques, enabling them to experience language more effectively through practical application in situations involving dialogue, persuasion, and discussion.

The physical activities underlying the role-playing strategy are important tools in helping learners increase their self-confidence and develop their ability to produce meaning. When learners practice role-playing while speaking, they become more aware of and sensitive to the language they produce, both in terms of its lexical and semantic aspects (Nasr & Al-Abadi, 2005).

Theoretically, several approaches explain the effectiveness of this strategy. From a Freudian perspective, it creates a "safe psychological environment" free from threats, where learners can refine painful experiences and reduce tension through imaginative play (Al-Qatami, 2011). As for Piaget, he interpreted role-playing through the processes of assimilation and accommodation. Through assimilation, Piaget sees role-playing as occurring after the learner observes the elements around him and perceives them according to his existing cognitive frameworks. The learner then organizes these perceived elements, relying on his prior experiences, and this is subject to pressures and influences according to how he perceived them. He expresses these situations with words, symbols, or feelings accordingly. As for the concept of adaptation, the learner interacts with different situations and experiences according to his cognitive structure, and organizes these experiences according to his abilities and experiences, and formulates these situations in the form of a problem he faces, then he modifies his cognitive structures, and formulates his thoughts and feelings to understand his problem, and then the learner reaches a state of adaptation and balance (Qatami, 2011).

Shaftel, however, believes that role-playing takes place within social conditions that enable the learner to practice their role, which involves a personal problem. This practice occurs within social conditions that help them think within a group, express their thoughts and feelings, and ultimately reach a point where others modify their thoughts and

feelings. This allows them to then adapt to the group, refine their emotions, and organize them in an acceptable way.

Odell & Troiano (2002) stresses that role-playing strategy is of great importance to the learners. It helps stimulates their interests in the subject by connecting learning activities to the role-playing strategy, thus increasing the learner's understanding of the subject matter. This strategy also encourages the learner's participation in lesson activities and improves communication of the learners, as well as between learners and the educators (as cited in Jarvis).

The role-playing strategy may be based on activating the oral expression abilities of learners, and may develop their communication skills and the ability to manage discussions to express their opinions freely and respectfully to their other colleagues (Al-Shatrat, 2004). This strategy may encourage communication and interaction among them. They learned from one another regardless of their cultural and social differences (Al-Masa'id, 2003).

The role-playing strategy symbolizes the spontaneous representation of situations involving human relationships. It aims to add realism to educational situations and is distinguished by its ability to present a true picture of behavior and human relationships, moving beyond written words. Through role-playing, the learner experiences the events they are enacting. Therefore, role-playing not only provides the learner with methodological experience but also allows them to experience various human emotions and feelings. It also enables them to exercise their emotions and feelings through the behavioral performance associated with the strategy (Al-Qurashi, 2001). By using this strategy into the language curricula, for listening skills, the educational process shifts to active, emotional, and cognitive engagement.

From an artistic and educational perspective, role-playing involves the practical presentation of real or imagined events to highlight various ideas, drawing lessons and morals that become more accessible to the learner. Beyond mere performance, it serves as a sophisticated problem-solving tool, enabling participants to discover alternative solutions to complex issues, such as environmental or social challenges (Al-Farhoud 2006)

1.1. Statement Of the Problem

The researcher has observed, through his experience in the field of education in different universities, that learners suffer from significant weaknesses in listening comprehension. Numerous

studies also have shown weaknesses in listening and speaking skills among learners at various educational levels, and this affects negatively their achievement in other language skills (Nasr & Al-Abadi, 2005; Abu Mughli, 2001; Al-Bajja, 2005). The core of the problem lies on the traditional instructional methods instructors use, and the lack of implementing interactive strategies, such as role-playing, which could bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical strategies, such as the role-playing one. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the effect of role-playing strategy on EFL students' critical listening skills. Consequently, this study seeks to bridge this gap by investigating the impact of the role-playing strategy on improving specific listening skills among EFL university students at Ajloun National University.

1.2. Significance Of the Study

The importance of this strategy lies in the fact that it makes the educational situation closer to reality in order to investigate social or personal values, and according to it, learners play roles, and the role-playing method is used to investigate social problems of teaching inquiry into social problems and values is used through the representation of situations, and making learners live them. By using this strategy, teachers can deal with learners of varying intellectual abilities, taking into account the principle of individual differences among them.

2. RESEARCH QUESTION

This study attempted to answer the following question:

Is there statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level (α) between the mean scores of the EFL university students on the Critical listening skills, attributable to the teaching strategy used (role-playing strategy versus the traditional method)?

2.1. Limitations Of the Study

The generalizability of the findings of this study is subject to the following limitations:

1. Human and Spatial Limitations: The study was limited to a purposeful sample of (20) second-year EFL university students at Ajloun National University during the academic year 2025/2026. While the sample size is relatively small and might limit the generalization of the results, it was restricted to this number of participants to allow for high-quality monitoring and intensive implementation of the role-playing sessions. The high value of the Effect Size (Eta Square) obtained in the results

(0.587) further validates that the observed improvements are substantially attributed to the experimental treatment. Future research with larger and more diverse samples is recommended to further validate these results.

2. Objective Limitations: The scope of this study was confined to investigating the impact of the role-playing strategy on three specific Critical listening skills: Making judgments, distinguishing between opinion and fact, and analyzing spoken language.
3. Instrumental Limitations: The results are determined by the psychometric properties (validity and reliability) of the listening performance test developed by the researchers. The test was designed with 10 high-level analytical questions to focus on cognitive depth rather than breadth, ensuring students remained focused on complex tasks without the interference of cognitive fatigue.
4. The role-playing strategy was used exclusively, rather than other teaching methods, to investigate its effect on improving certain listening skills. Thus, the results are specific to this strategy and may not be generalizable to other learning strategies or different language skills not covered in this study.

2.2. Previous Studies

This section reviewed the previous studies that investigated the impact of the role-playing strategy on improving learners' listening and mastery skills. The researchers noted that most studies addressed the impact of this strategy on speaking skills, and few have addressed the impact of the role-playing strategy on listening skills, particularly among EFL university students.

Madkour (1991) examined the listening skills that should be taught to middle school students at King Abdulaziz School in Riyadh, specifically focusing on the written expression of first-grade students. The study sample consisted of 56 students: 28 in a control group and 28 in an experimental group. The study lasted three months. The main and sub-skills appropriate for the students were identified, and suitable listening topics were prepared. After training the experimental group on the pre-defined listening skills through listening to recorded topics, both groups were asked to write on the same topics. The results showed that the most important listening skills were: auditory discrimination, classification, extracting the main idea, deductive reasoning, judging the validity of the content, and evaluating the content. These skills positively impacted the

students' written expression. The results also demonstrated a significant positive relationship between targeted training in listening skills and the students' performance level in written expression.

Similarly, Nasr and Al-Smadi (1995) investigated the effect of learning listening and expressive writing skills in Arabic on learning the same skills in English. The study was applied to a sample of (74) seventy-four fifth-grade students from Al-Yarmouk Model School. The results of the study showed statistically significant differences at the (α 0.05) level between the mean scores of the learners on the pre-test in listening and writing in English and their scores on the post-test in both skills in English, in favor of the post-test.

In another context, Arnoutse, Van, and Brand-Gruwel (1998) explored the effect of text-based teaching on listening and reading comprehension, the sample consisted of 169 students from six private schools in the Netherlands, aged between nine and eleven years. These students were trained in reciprocal and direct instruction strategies. Pre- and post-tests were administered to the experimental and control groups, and a retention test was used. The results indicated that the program had an effect on listening comprehension. Three months after the program's completion, the same test was administered to the study sample, and no significant differences were found between the groups in listening and reading comprehension.

Furthermore, Al-Qur'an (2006) examined the impact of a self-regulated learning strategy based on metacognitive processes on developing listening skills among sixth-grade female students. The study sample consisted of 42 female students from a single public school in the Jerash Governorate. Among the most important findings were a weakness in the listening skills of sixth-grade female students in the Jerash Governorate, as well as a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups in terms of listening skills, attributable to the self-regulated learning strategy based on metacognitive processes.

With regard to the role-playing strategy, recent studies, such as Windyastuti, Setyowati and Wiyaka (2023) to improve students' listening skills in class VII F students of SMPN 6 Semarang in learning English with the material "asking for and giving directions". The role-playing strategy was used. This research was carried out in 2 stages. The time used for each stage was 2 meetings with 2 presentation meetings, and at the end of the second meeting, evaluation process was held. Each stage had 4 steps: planning, action, observation, and reflection. The

number of participants involved was 34. Observation and questionnaires were the instruments of the research. Data were collected and analyzed descriptively. The findings showed increased students' listening scores on the material "asking for and giving directions". The role-playing strategy improved student learning outcomes in listening activities.

Likewise, Yahya and Hashim (2023) investigated the impact of role-playing technique on EFL University students' listening comprehension. The participants of the study were 80 students divided into two groups, 40 were the control group and 40 were the experimental one. The control group were taught via the traditional method, whereas the experimental group was taught via the role-playing. Two top students acting a conversation taken from the TOEFL Listening comprehension test to answer multiple Choice questions. The results showed that the role-playing technique played a significant positive role in teaching listening comprehension for university Students.

The researchers believes that each of these areas has its own specific ideas, terms, and vocabulary, serving as a motivation and incentive for expression within the speaker's experiences. This necessitates training learners in these areas within the classroom, and the teacher must seize every opportunity to ignite learners' passion for expression. From this emerges the most important aspects of listening and speaking skills related to learners' school, social, and professional lives. The learner must be able to comprehend the areas they listen to speak about and to differentiate and balance the various levels of listening and speaking skills in order to gradually develop the ability to understand and speak logically.

Based on the review of these studies, it can be observed that most previous research has confirmed the effectiveness of interactive and student-centered strategies in improving listening skills. However, there is still a noticeable gap in the literature regarding the use of role-playing strategy specifically for developing listening skills among university-level EFL learners. Therefore, the present study attempts to address this gap by examining the impact of the role-playing strategy on improving selected listening skills among EFL university students, contributing to the existing body of knowledge in this field.

2.3. Procedures Of the Study

This section deals with the practical steps used in this study.

2.4. Participants Of the Study

The participants of the study were 20 second-year EFL students enrolled in the Department of English language and literature, Ajloun National University. They were divided into two groups: experimental (10 students) and control (10 students). These students studied previously a listening comprehension course.

To ensure equivalence between the two groups (experimental and control), the participants of the two groups were chosen from the same academic level and from the same Department of English Language and Literature. All the participants had completed the prerequisite listening comprehension course. Moreover, an independent samples t-test was calculated. It showed no significant differences between the two groups on the pre-test scores, indicating equivalence between them.

2.5. Instrument Of the Study

The researchers developed a performance test, based on specific behavioral indicators to measure students' achievement in listening skills using a role-playing strategy. The test consisted of 10 questions covering the listening skills addressed in the study: judgment, distinguishing between opinion and fact, and analyzing spoken language.

2.6. Procedures For Constructing the Listening Skills Performance Test

2.6.1. Content Validity

The researchers followed these procedures in constructing the test:

- Determine the objectives of teaching listening skills at this level and the topics covered.
- A list of the sub-skills of listening under investigation was compiled, and behavioral indicators for each skill were identified, based on a review of previous educational literature.
- The educational content upon which the test items were based on were listening texts selected from a set of texts suitable for second year EFL students.
- A test specifications table was prepared based on an analysis of the text content to ensure that the content and objectives were represented. Relative weights were assigned to the texts and questions.
- A two-group design (experimental and control) was adopted, and the instruments were applied to both groups pre- and post-tests.
- To verify the overall validity of the test, its

listening skills assessment, and the behavioral indicators it reflects, it was presented to a group of specialists in curricula, teaching methods and educational supervisors. These judges were asked to provide their opinions and observations on the test, its relevance to listening skills, its behavioral indicators, its linguistic accuracy, and its suitability for second year EFL students. The judges' feedback suggestions were taken into consideration, such as replacing some options with more suitable alternatives.

To verify the reliability of the test, it was administered in its final form to a pilot sample of (20) students outside the participants. The test was then re-administered to the same sample two weeks later, and the scores were calculated. Internal consistency reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) and test-retest reliability coefficients (Pearson's test) for each skill in the performance test. Cronbach's alpha was 0.87, and test-retest reliability was 0.82.

2.7. Implementation Of the Role-Playing Strategy

The researchers implemented the role-playing strategy according to the pre-established timetable for the experimental group. The listening skills component was implemented through eight sessions. The teaching process followed these steps:

Step one: Group Preparation

Preparation was achieved by identifying a problem within the group, showing a video, or familiarizing them with a problem in a story.

Step two: Participant Selection

In this step, the teacher and learners described the characters in the story, and then the teacher asked them to volunteer to play the different roles.

Step three: Observer Preparation

It is important here that the observers actively participate in the activity, ensuring the entire group experiences role-playing. The observers then participate by being assigned roles.

Step four: Setting up the stage

In this step, the actors plan their roles. The teacher can help prepare the stage by asking the students when and how they will perform their parts. It is essential that everyone has a clear plan of action so that the participants feel secure while performing their roles.

Step Five: Role-Playing

The actors perform their roles, experiencing the situations spontaneously and realistically, responding to each other and acting out the roles for the others. At the end, the teacher concludes the role-

playing with a summary of the ideas. The scene can be re-enacted if the discussion after the first performance reveals a lack of understanding of the events or roles. The purpose of the first role-play is simply to establish the events and roles, while the second re-enactment involves deeper analysis. Therefore, it is possible to change the actors in the main roles to highlight any differences in the roles and generate further information for discussion.

Step Six: Discussion and Evaluation

The teacher, with the help of the observing learners, discusses the roles with the participating learners to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to assess the extent to which the intended objectives were achieved.

Step Seven: Role-Playing Re-enactment

This step may occur several times. The teacher and learners can collaborate on a new interpretation of the roles and may decide to assign them to other learners. Thus, there should be an alternation between role-playing and discussion. When the role-playing is repeated, the new actors should explore other possible causes and effects.

Step eight: Participation and Design

- At the end of the role-playing, the learners, with the instructor's guidance, formulate generalizations about the listening skills situations they encountered. The instructor guided the discussion so that students could develop general ideas about the problem situations.
- The control group studied the topics of the assigned listening skills using the traditional method.
- The study instruments were administered to the participants, and a post-test was given to the students after completion.
- The pre- and post-test data were entered into the computer, and appropriate statistical analyses were used to analyze the study question and draw conclusions.

3. STUDY DESIGN

This study employed a quasi-experimental design consisting of two equivalent groups: an experimental group and a control group, with pre- and post-tests in listening skills.

3.1. Study Variables

The study included the following variables:

First: The independent variable: the teaching method, which has two levels:

- Role-playing strategy.
- The traditional method.

3.2. Statistical Processing

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data statistically in order to answer the study questions and test its hypotheses:

The hypothesis was tested by calculating means, standard deviations, adjusted means, One-Way ANCOVA, and One-Way MANCOVA, in addition to calculating effect size (Eta Square).

4. STUDY RESULTS

This section presents the study results, which will be presented in accordance with the sequence of its question, as follows:

The results of the question, which states: "Are there statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level of statistical significance between the mean scores on the listening skills performance test, and each of its sub-skills, among university students, attributable to the teaching method used (role-playing strategy and the traditional method)?"

To answer this question, two parts must be addressed:

a. Determining the significance of the differences between the mean scores on the listening skills performance test (judgment-making, distinguishing between opinion and fact, and analysis).

According to the teaching method used (role-playing strategy and the traditional method), as shown in Table 1.

This study tested two hypotheses to evaluate the effect of the impact of using the role-playing strategy on improving some university students' listening skills:

Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) between the mean scores of the EFL university students on the listening skills, attributable to the teaching strategy used (role-playing strategy versus the traditional method)?

As for initial analysis, the researchers calculated the arithmetic means, and standard deviations for the group variable. To find out the statistical difference among the arithmetic means, the t test was used as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Means And Standard Deviation of the Group Variable According to the Two Scales of Experimental.

Group	Pre		Post		Modified mean	Standard error	N
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D			
experimental	11.90	1.45	15.50	1.43	15.5	0.6	10

control	11.60	2.84	11.50	2.07	11.5	0.6	10
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Table 1 shows observational variance in means, the standard deviations, and modified means due to the difference in groups (experimental, control). To

test significance of the means, the researchers used the one-way ANCOVA as shown in table 2.

Table 2: Results Of The ANCOVA.

Source	Type II Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pre	2.303	1	2.303	0.716	0.409	
Group	77.722	1	77.722	24.156	0.000	0.587
Error	54.697	17	3.217			
Corrected Total	137.000	19				

Table (2) shows statistically significant difference ($\alpha = 0.05$) in groups effect, where F- value reached (24.156) with statistical significance 0.000. The difference is in favor of the experimental group.

To find out the effectiveness degree, the researchers calculated Eta square of (η^2) Which was (0.587); this means that 58.7% of the variance in the

dependent variable (listening skills are attributed to the teaching strategy: role-playing).

Means and standard deviations for the pre- and post-measurements of listening skills were also calculated according to the teaching method (role-playing strategy vs. traditional method), as shown in Table (3).

Table (3): Means and Standard Deviations for Pre- and Post-Measurements of Listening Skills Dimensions According to the Teaching Method.

Skill	Group	N	Pre-Mean	Pre SD	Post Mean	Post SD
Eval	Experimental	10	2.80	0.63	4.50	0.53
	Control	10	2.80	1.14	2.90	0.57
Dis	Experimental	10	4.00	0.67	5.20	0.79
	Control	10	4.20	1.14	4.30	1.06
Anal	Experimental	10	4.60	0.84	5.80	0.63
	Control	10	4.50	0.97	4.50	1.27

Table (3) shows apparent differences between the means in the pre- and post-measurements of listening skills due to differences in teaching

methods (experimental vs. control). To determine the statistical significance of these differences, One-Way MANCOVA was used as shown in table 4.

Table (4): Results of One-Way MANCOVA For the Effect of Teaching Method (Role-Playing Vs. Traditional) On Listening Skills.

Effect	Multivariate Test	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Eta Sq.
Teaching Method	Hotelling's Trace	3.891	16.86	3.000	13.000	0.000	0.796

Table 4 indicates a statistically significant effect of the teaching method at ($\alpha = 0.05$) on the post-measurement of listening skills dimensions combined. The Hotelling's Trace value was 3.891 with a significance of 0.000.

To determine which dimensions were affected, One-Way MANCOVA was conducted for each dimension separately while controlling for pre-test scores, as shown in Table (5).

Table 5: Results of One-Way MANCOVA For the Effect of Teaching Method on Each Listening Skill Dimension (Post-Test), Controlling for Pre-Test.

Source of Variation	Skill	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta Sq.
Pre-test (Covariate) Eval	Eval	0.925	1	0.925	3.222	0.093	
	Dis	1.384	1	1.384	1.544	0.233	
	Anal	1.652	1	1.652	2.008	0.177	
Pre-test (Covariate) Dis	Eval	0.117	1	0.117	0.406	0.533	
	Dis	0.060	1	0.060	0.066	0.800	
	Anal	0.975	1	0.975	1.185	0.294	
Pre-test (Covariate) Anal	Eval	0.010	1	0.010	0.036	0.852	
	Dis	0.598	1	0.598	0.668	0.427	
	Anal	0.315	1	0.315	0.383	0.545	

Teaching Method	Eval	12.133	1	12.133	42.278	0.000	0.738
	Dis	4.291	1	4.291	4.787	0.045	0.242
	Anal	7.202	1	7.202	8.755	0.010	0.369
Error	Eval	4.305	17	0.287			
	Dis	13.447	17	0.896			
	Anal	12.338	17	0.823			
Total	Eval	18.200	19				
	Dis	19.750	19				
	Anal	26.550	19				

Table 5 shows statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) due to the teaching method (role-playing vs. traditional) across all dimensions.

To determine in whose favor these differences were, adjusted means and standard errors were calculated as shown in table 6.

Table 6: Adjusted Means and Standard Errors for Post-Measurement of Listening Skills.

Skill	Teaching Method	Adjusted Mean	Std. Error
Eval Post	Experimental	4.49	0.17
	Control	2.91	0.17
Dis Post	Experimental	5.22	0.30
	Control	4.28	0.30
Anal Post	Experimental	5.76	0.29
	Control	4.54	0.29

Table 6 shows that the significant differences in adjusted post-test means for all listening skill dimensions (Eval, Dis, Anal) were in favor of the experimental group taught using the role-playing strategy compared to the control group taught using the traditional method.

As shown in Table (5), the effect sizes for the skills (Eval, Dis, Anal) were (73.8%, 24.2%, 36.9%), respectively. These are considered large effect sizes according to Cohen (1977). This indicates that the explained (predicted) variance in the dependent variable, namely the dimensions of the listening skills test (Eval, Dis, Anal), is attributed to the teaching method (role-playing strategy). The remaining variance, amounting to (26.2%, 75.8%, 63.1%), respectively, is due to other uncontrolled factors.

5. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section discusses the results of the current study, along with relevant recommendations and suggestions.

The results related to the research question are explained and their significance clarified, supported by the results of relevant previous studies, as follows:

The present study aimed to investigate the impact of using the role-playing strategy on improving some critical listening skills among EFL university students. The statistically significant effect at ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the means of performance were calculated as a whole, and for each of its sub-skills, among students. The findings revealed statistically significant differences between the experimental

group and the control group in favor of the experimental group, indicating the effectiveness of the role-playing strategy in enhancing students' listening performance.

The superiority of the experimental group can be attributed to the interactive nature of the role-playing strategy. This strategy actively engages students in meaningful communicative situations, which require them to listen attentively in order to understand, interpret, and respond appropriately. Such engagement enhances cognitive processing of auditory input, hence improving learners' ability to understand spoken language. When students listen to situations presented to them, they become motivated to make judgments about what they have heard. This is because the situations presented to them may be met with approval or rejection by some students. This helps improve the judgment-making skill. The role-playing strategy relies on acting out and re-acting in front of listeners, which increases the student's confidence in making judgments stems from knowing that their assessment of what they heard will be considered during the review stage.

The experimental group better improved in distinguishing between opinion and fact. This improvement may be attributed to the fact that when a student interacts with the other and begins role-playing, he supports his presentation with opinions and facts, making it convincing and acceptable to the listeners. Here, the teacher-assisted role-playing strategy helps the listening student differentiate between the opinions of those they are listening. The student listening to the speaker will discuss their opinions, not the facts presented. The teacher's

approach to monitoring students' listening to texts may focus on developing their listening skills, encouraging them to engage with the material.

Moreover, the role-playing strategy fosters the experimental group's critical listening skills which may be attributed to their ability to analyze spoken language. This involves focusing their attention on the speaker's words, understanding their objectives, and grasping their main points. While this isn't easily achieved, with the teacher guidance, students can master these skills.

Regarding the statistically significant effect (at the significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$) between the mean performance of the experimental and control groups on the overall listening skills test, employing the role-playing strategy in teaching listening skills may help language teachers and students communicate freely. This was facilitated through dialogue sessions between the teacher and students about the roles they would play and the specific roles assigned to each group. Furthermore, the dialogue between the teacher and the experimental group students regarding the effectiveness of the role-playing strategy and how it would contribute to improving their listening skills led to the students' eagerness to apply the study to them, thus increasing their motivation to learn.

Additionally, the training opportunities provided to the students during the application of the role-playing strategy in their listening skills increased their practice of learning. The role-playing strategy, with its complete steps, also helps them employ appropriate linking words to express and formulate their ideas. This allows them to present their thoughts in an organized and logical manner. From the researchers' perspective, this resulted in the experimental group outperforming the control group. These results are consistent with the study of Al-Qur'an (2006).

The findings of this study were aligned with Windy, Setyowati & Wiyaka (2023), Yahya & Hashem (2023) that the scores of the experimental group taught with the role-playing strategy surpassed the scores of the control one in listening, and role-playing strategy played a positive role in teaching listening skills.

The results also agree with Piaget's theory of assimilation. When experimental students encounter complex listening passages, they attempt to assimilate new information into existing cognitive structures.

Furthermore, the findings can also be explained in

light of constructivist learning theory, particularly the views of Piaget, which emphasize that learning occurs through active engagement and interaction with the environment. Through role-playing activities, learners construct their own understanding by connecting new auditory input with their prior knowledge and experiences. This process facilitates better comprehension and retention of information.

On the other hand, the lack of significant improvement in the control group can be attributed to the use of traditional teaching methods, which often rely on passive learning and limited student interaction. These methods may not provide sufficient opportunities for students to practice listening in meaningful contexts,

In general, the results of this study suggest integrating role-playing strategy into lecture room as it plays a significant role in improving students' listening skills. This strategy not only enhances learner's listening comprehension, but also promotes active learning, cooperation, and meaningful communication among learners.

5.1. Recommendations

In light of the findings of current educational research, the researchers recommend the following:

- 1- Directing the attention of those responsible for EFL language curricula to the importance of the role-playing strategy in teaching EFL skills in general, and listening skills in particular, by including more language activities and exercises in the curricula that are based in their structure and implementation on the role-playing strategy.
- 2- Developing Training of EFL instructors on how to use the role-playing strategy to develop English language listening skills, and providing them with guides on how to apply it in educational situations.
- 3- To build on the current study the researchers recommend conducting further studies in the field of using the role-playing strategy in teaching other EFL language skills, such as critical reading and creative writing.
- 4- Instructors should encourage supportive learning environment that may reduce student communication anxiety through adopting active learning strategies, such as role-playing strategies which stresses the students' active roles and engagement.

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