Original Article

The Role of Extensive Listening Tasks in the Use of Discourse Markers by Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners in their Oral Production of Stories

Mahboobeh Abedi[1], Abbas Bayat[1] *, Hossein Ahmadi[1]

[1]Department of English Language, Malayer Branch, Islamic Azad University, Malayer, Iran

Abstract

Speaking is challenging for EFL learners as it calls for grammatical competence and discourse knowledge, including Discourse Markers (DM), which help them speak naturally. This study sought to investigate the effect of extensive listening tasks on the use of DMs in speaking by Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Sixty intermediate EFL learners were randomly assigned into two experimental and control groups. The participants' oral production was checked in the two groups before the treatment, and the frequency and types of DMs were detected. For the treatment, the participants in the experimental group were required to listen to different short stories as part of out-of-class activities for three months. However, the control group did not receive extensive listening tasks. A posttest was administered only one day after the last treatment session to realize the impact of the treatment on the participants' use of DMs. After four weeks, a delayed posttest was administered to examine the participants' long-term DM use. The data collected from the posttest and delayed posttest were then analyzed using independent paired samples t-tests. The findings indicated that extensive listening tasks did not impact the use of DMs in speaking by Iranian EFL learners at the intermediate level. The results of the delayed posttest did not yield any significant difference either.

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* Corresponding Author's E- mail: abbasbayat31@yahoo.com

1. Introduction

Speaking is an essential form of human communication, and the ability to speak is often assumed to be equivalent to language proficiency. However, speaking skill development goes beyond linguistic production improvement because it is an interactive process that aims to construct meaning. Speaking involves the information processing of lexical, grammatical, and discourse patterns (Burns & Joyce, 1997). It is characterized by the abundant use of DMs, generally popular discourse items used frequently by native speakers. Discourse markers are words and phrases used in oral and written production that signpost turns, join opinions together, and manage general communication to sign discourse. They are significant features of both formal and informal uses of language. Proper utilization of DMs shows a high degree of fluency, comprehension, and ability to produce authentic language and affection as they smooth interaction (Quirk, 1955). According to Schiffrin (1987), "discourse markers are sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk" (p.31). Regarding functions, DMs identify the boundaries of conversation, indicate the beginning or closing of a topic, and signal attention seeking (Fung & Carter, 2007). Concerning cohesion and coherence, DMs lead to the coherence of discourse by indicating a relationship across utterances (Torres, 2006) and mediate the understanding of speech or a passage for interlocutors through the provision of cohesion (Rahayusimin et al., 2021).

Learners of English as a second language (L2) who wish to sound more native-like in their speech should be able to properly use DMs (Fuller, 2003); misapplication of DMs in speaking can lead to semantic or pragmatic miscomprehension. However, despite many learners' awareness of the importance of DMs in language learning, they cannot utilize them properly in their everyday speech.

Despite their crucial part in spoken discourse, DMs have not been integrated much into the EFL curricula (Shen Ying cited in Moghadasi et al., 2020). This common issue may be caused by the fact that DMs are taken for granted when learning a second language. However, every language has unique features for meaningful communication in oral discourse. The problem may arise since DMs carry no semantic significance or systematic role. Hence, they do not lend themselves to formal interpretation (De Klerk, 2005). In addition, Hellermann and Vergun (2007) suggested that non-native speakers' speech lacks the discourse indicators that native speakers' discourse has, which leads to misunderstanding in communication. Most research on DMs has focused on how reading and writing tactics

affect DM development, with speaking abilities receiving far less attention. Thus, this study was designed to study whether extensive listening tasks significantly affect the use of DMs by intermediate EFL learners in speaking.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Discourse Markers (DMs)

Discourse markers are considered linguistic devices seeking to perform a significant role in comprehending passages. Despite their critical pragmatic function in discourse, DMs are hard to describe concisely (Schiffrin, 1987). Semantically speaking, DMs are cohesive devices that play procedural roles. Pons Bordería and Portolés (2008) differentiated four significant semantic functions: DMs can function as reformulating or argumentative linking instruments, modalize discourse, and focalize a component of discourse to maintain contact and control in communication.

Every language has DMs to help the speaker draw the listener's attention as they collect their thoughts, while several DMs function as pauses in various sentences. DMs do not add anything to communication. Instead, they aid speakers in thinking before they speak and controlling their speech (Yazdizadeh et al., 2020). As pragmatic elements, however, they make the talk more communicative by providing signposts for the listener (Martín-Laguna & Alcon-Soler, 2018) and "facilitate listener comprehension and help smooth spontaneous interaction between speakers" (Liao, 2009, p. 1313).

To communicate effectively in English, EFL learners must improve their language skills. However, many EFL students place more emphasis on speaking ability because those who are fluent in a language are referred to as speakers. L2 learners must develop L2 communication skills inside and outside English-speaking contexts (Celce-Murcia, 2014). DMs are thus necessary for communicating information in L2 classrooms and outside the classroom context. L2 instructors are then required to make every effort to expedite the development of their student's ability to speak fluently, authentically, accurately, and appropriately.

Fung and Carter (2007) studied the use of DMs by native speakers and EFL learners in the educational setting. Their data came from a pedagogic sub-part of CANCODE corpus, a corpus of spoken British English, and a collection of classroom conversations made by secondary students in Hong Kong. Their findings indicated that DMs were employed as

useful interactional devices in organizing conversation interpersonally, referentially, structurally, and cognitively. Asim Rai et al. (2011) examined eight DM frequencies among British and Pakistani participants. They found that native speakers employ DMs more frequently than non-native speakers in their speech. Kizil (2017) detected the data in two corpora for using DMs in interaction. She realized that EFL learners use considerably fewer DMs compared to native speakers, which was attributed to the EFL learners' unawareness of the important role of DMs in oral communication. Concerning the impact of DM instruction on Iranian EFL learners' speaking fluency, Sadeghi and Ramezan-Yarandi (2014) found that the participants who received education on DMs began to use them more frequently than did not receive the treatment. Davatgari-Asl and Moradinejad (2016) researched the effect of explicit instruction on EFL learners' use of DMs in oral production. Their study suggested that experimental group participants, who experienced explicit treatment using DMs, outperformed the control group participants in the appropriate usage of DMs in speech. Nejadansari and Mohammadi (2015) did not find efficient use of DMs in the Iranian University EFL classroom discourse. They reported many cases of misuse of DMs, such as underusing and overusing them. Similarly, Zhang (2016) reported that the EFL learner's improper use of DMs in writing would lead to breaches in communication. In a study by Fatalaki et al. (2014), explicit instruction on DMs influenced English for Academic Purposes (EAP) learners' reading comprehension ability.

Concerning the possible effect of language proficiency on using DMs, Jafarinejad and Tavakoli (2011) found that more DMs in L2 reading texts resulted in better comprehension. However, proficiency did not make a significant difference. Shabani and Goljani (2015) measured the frequency of DMs in the Iranian EFL written texts. They realized that the frequency and appropriate use of DMs correlate with learners' proficiency level in that more proficient learners used DMS more properly and frequently than lower proficient learners. In another study, Khandaghi-Khameneh and Fakhraee-Faruji (2020) investigated the impact of DM instruction on improving speaking skills among intermediate EFL learners. Their research revealed that teaching DMs does not affect the development of students' speaking skills. In a corpus-based study, Farahani and Ghane (2022) studied four DMs' functions in academic spoken English. They found that "you know" and "you see," from among many DMs, had the most and the least frequency in the Corpus, respectively. Furthermore, they found that DMs indeed have multiple and different functions.

2.2. Extensive Listening (EL)

EL is one of the best methods to get a massive amount of comprehensive input, a vital feature in language learning (Krashen, 1985). Despite this fact, EL has been significantly disregarded in the past years. Therefore, a substantial amount of research on this topic seems necessary. Krashen (1985) believed that language learners acquire language competence through comprehensible input. Different scholars criticized his theory (e.g., McLaughlin, 1987; White, 1987; Zhang, 2009) for its overemphasis on input without recognizing other factors, such as output and interaction, as they have been confirmed to play significant roles in learning a new language (Long, 1996; Swain, 1995). Nevertheless, the provision of input for language learning is of no question and has been emphasized in many research projects on l2 learning (e.g., Ellis & Shintani, 2013; Gass & Selinker, 2008; Mackey & Gass, 2015; Maftoon, 2016; Webb & Roger, 2009).

Listening is one of the most practical ways to provide students with language input. EL is reported to be one of the significant sources of input that language learners could use to reinforce their listening comprehension skills (Ivone & Renandya, 2019). According to Renandya and Farrell (2011), EL includes listening tasks that can help language learners gain comprehensible input. It can also be defined as listening for enjoyment.

EL embraces all sorts of listening comprehension tasks that give learners considerable exposure to comprehensible and entertaining input. The salient point in EL is that the listening input must be meaningful for learners to benefit from it. Therefore, it can be realized that EL can be conducted both in and out of the class. Today, getting considerable amounts of listening materials on the internet is easier. Still, as stated above, these materials and sources must be meaningful, understandable, and appropriate to the learners' level.

As a primary language source, EL facilitates foreign language learning in numerous ways. Krashen (1985) emphasized this fact by declaring that humans learn a language in only one way by receiving comprehensible input. In EL, learners are exposed to meaningful messages or comprehensible input, which helps them promote their language skills.

EL can also be very exciting as learners choose the material they like, such as radio programs, audiobooks, movies, etc. All these materials, particularly the visual ones, motivate learners to keep on listening activities. When the learners do not comprehend the meaning of the language, they feel annoyed, and as a consequence, they lose motivation and stop listening. However, with EL, the learners can choose their material, improve their listening

skills abundantly outside the classroom, and convince themselves to take a more active role in making decisions regarding their education. Reviewing multiple studies on extensive listening, Holden (2008) found that EL could develop students' vocabulary incidentally when they were exposed to language input. Masrai (2020) also discovered that learners could improve their vocabulary knowledge by listening during their watching movies extensively. Their findings confirmed the previous research that extensive listening could promote learners' vocabulary knowledge once they are appropriately exposed to target language input. Krashen (1985) claimed that students receive constant contact with understandable language and that acquisition occurs in low-stress and anxiety contexts. Through listening extensively to the oral texts, the treatment group was repeatedly exposed to the structures, same words, and discourse features, and this could have facilitated their language acquisition

The significance of extensive listening was stated by Ellis (1994), who showed that more exposure to input is essential for language acquisition. Considering the vital role of extensive listening as an input, Krashen (1985) argued that humans acquire language by comprehending language that includes structures slightly beyond their current level of competence (i+1): comprehensible input. This kind of input can be easily seen in extensive listening. Krashen's suggestion about the positive impacts of extensive listening approaches refers to the fact that the students need to listen to their interests and consider their difficulty with the listening materials.

Therefore, the positive impact of extensive listening can also specifically refer to the pleasure of listening to a task in the target language. Supporting this view, Krashen (1985) claimed that students receive constant exposure to understandable language and that acquisition takes place in a relaxed atmosphere. Therefore, extensive listening looks to entail exposure to enormous amounts of materials, motivation, and self-selection of the materials.

In support of extensive listening, Wenden (2002) points to "learner-centered instruction" (p.32) through which the learners can choose any material they like. According to some studies, extensive listening tasks can help learners develop their language skills. However, they cautioned against overusing DMs like gap fillers. Students should use fillers carefully because there is no set guideline for how much time students should ponder their speech (Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2012). This study was intended to unravel the potential of extensive listening task types in creating a medium for DM production. It aimed to explore

how extensive listening tasks can help students acquire and use DMs in their speaking. The purpose of this study was to find an answer to the following research question.

RQ: To what extent does extensive listening impact intermediate EFL learners' use of DMs in speaking?

3. Methodology

3.1. Design and Context of the Study

In this study, a quasi-experimental method was employed. As a result, the study employed a pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest design to collect the necessary data from the experimental and control groups. The dependent variable in this study is the use of DMs while speaking, which is predicted to be impacted by the independent variable (i.e., extensive listening tasks). The data was then quantitatively examined using the independent t-test.

3.2. Participants

Of 110 learners, sixty intermediate EFL students were chosen from an Iranian private English language school. They took Oxford Quick Placement Test. It helped the researchers to determine the EFL proficiency level of the learners. The students who scored from 40 to 47 on the test, which had 30 multiple-choice questions, were deemed to be intermediate and were chosen as the target learners of the study. The participants, all of whom were female, ranged in age from 17 to 24. They had no experience in a second language environment and were exposed to the English language through formal education at school, language institutes, and university. Afterward, they were randomly divided into two groups of 30: a group that underwent extensive listening was the experimental group, and a group that did not was the control group. The learners participated in the English classes twice a week during the term. Each session took 90 minutes.

3.3. Instruments

3.3.1. Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT)

OQPT was the first instrument used in the present study to homogenize the learners. It assisted the researchers in figuring out the trainees' degree of EFL proficiency. The students chosen for this study's target group scored between 40 and 47 on the exam, including 30

multiple-choice questions. These students were deemed to be intermediate learners and were the intended participants.

3.3.2. Speaking Pretest

After the proficiency test was administered and the participants' proficiency level was determined, a pretest was administered to detect the EFL learners' knowledge of DMs before treatment. The learners were asked to narrate two short stories along with their views of the stories. Their narratives were audio-recorded and then transcribed.

3.3.3. Speaking Posttest

A speaking posttest, comparable to the pretest, was administered to measure the participants' possible achievement from the intervention, i.e., extensive listening tasks. The reliability of the posttest was calculated through inter-rater reliability using Pearson correlation analysis as (r=.821). Four experienced teachers approved the validity of the pretest and posttest of English.

3.3.4. Tasks and Materials

The materials used in the study included some extensive listening tasks. The library of extensive listening materials consisted of 124 recordings presenting a story. The learners could select their favorite stories from the library—each containing around 600 words. The textbook used for the regular English course was TOP NOTCH 2A Level. The book consists of six units, each containing sections of dialogue, grammar, pronunciation, and skills expansion. This book is designed for general English language courses in which learners can systematically develop the four language skills.

3.4. Procedure

 The researchers administered the pretest to check using DMs by the participants before performing the treatment. As the DMs pretest, the participants were asked to talk about a

general issue or tell a story for five minutes while answering some questions. The narratives were audio-recorded and then transcribed for further analysis and comparison. Then, the experimental group participants received an intervention, while the control group received no treatment regarding extensive listening tasks. To encourage the experimental group learners to listen to the short stories regularly, the researchers informed them of the usefulness of the materials they would practice throughout listening tasks.

The experimental groups listened to several short stories throughout the initial treatment stage, which lasted three months. In the last class session, the two groups completed a posttest on speaking. For the posttest, the participants were asked to listen to some stories and retell them as a part of their class speaking exercises. The students' narratives were audio-recorded and transcribed again. Finally, the results of the pretest and posttest were compared through the use of a t-test. After the immediate posttest, again, we had a delayed posttest four weeks after treatment to measure long-term retention of discourse markers to consider how much participants could keep them in their minds and use DMs in their speaking.

Fung and Carter's (2007) classification of DMs was selected as the taxonomy for analysis.

Table 1.

Functional Paradigm of DMs in Speech by Fung and Carter (2007)

Discourse Markers	function
absolutely, exactly, great, you know, you see I see, right/alright kind of, like, listen, obviously, oh, oh great, OK/okay, I think, just really, actually, basically, see, sort of, sure, to be frank, to be honest, well, yeah, yes,	Marking shared knowledge, indicating attitudes, or showing responses
and, anyway, because/cause, but, cos, however likewise, nevertheless, or, similarly, so, yet	Indicating the relationship between utterances:

and, finally, first, firstly, how about, let me conclude the discussion, let's discuss, let's start, next, now, OK/okay, right/alright, second, secondly, so, then, well, what about, yeah	Organizing or managing the direction of conversations
and, I mean, I see, I think, in other words, like, sort of, that is, to put it in another way, well, what I mean is, you know	Denoting thinking process, or reformulating utterance

Reliability: All the narration sessions were similarly conducted and recorded using the same equipment to guarantee reliability. The researchers also asked the participants similar questions on the stories with only a few elaborations on the questions when necessary. It was strived to keep the disruptions to conducting interviews to a minimum. In doing so, the meetings were held in private rooms, and the cell phone used to record the sessions was programmed such that no disruptions could happen. Because having a single rater, the face-to-face interview could greatly affect the reliability, and factors such as different cultural norms and the rater's subjective preferences could result in obtaining a low test reliability, the audio-recorded test sessions were double-marked by another examiner later. Compared with large-scale test operationalization, and considering the high costs of several double-marking in a real-life situation, this type of double-mark-record model seemingly seems more practical. Furthermore, accelerated technological advancements lead to an effortless collection and transmission of recorded performances.

The advantage of non-live double-marking models is that they allow examiners to analyze the negative and positive features in the candidates' recorded oral production, which might be unnoticed in the one-off interviews. Additionally, various markets from different raters will increase the test reliability. Therefore, double-marking methods make scores, to some extent, more reliable.

Validity: To confirm the validity, the prepared questions were designed to cover the subject matter as much as feasible. As mentioned, the participants received the questions ahead of time to familiarize them with this study's items and scope.

4. Results

To answer the research question and to examine the effect of extensive listening tasks on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' use of DMs in their speech, the researchers used descriptive statistics (standard deviations, standard deviation errors, and mean) and inferential statistics (independent-samples t-test). To compare the mean of the control group with that of the experimental group, the researchers ran independent samples *t*-test three times for the pretest, immediate posttest, and delayed posttest scores of the learners of experimental and control groups. The dependent variable was the use of DMs in speaking, while the independent variable was an extensive listening task. The results of the independent-samples t-test comparing the means of the control and experimental groups in the pretest appear in Table 2.

Table 2.

Independent-sample t-tests Comparing the Control Group and Extensive Listening Group in Pretest

| | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | P (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | | |
t	df				Lower	Upper
.673	28	.507	.40000	.59469	-.81816	1.61816

An Independent-samples t-test was administered to compare the scores of the control and extensive listening groups in the pretest. Table 2 shows no significant difference between the experimental and control groups' scores was found. Eta squared effect size was 0.015. The amount of the differences in the means was small for this group to interpret the effect size values (.01=small effect, .06=moderate effect, .14=large effect). In other words, the control and experimental groups were found to be homogeneous regarding using the DMs in the pretest. The following sections investigate the effects of extensive listening tasks on learners' performance in the immediate and delayed posttest.

An independent-sample t-test was run to compare the means of the experimental and control groups in the immediate posttest. In other words, the purpose was to see if the use of extensive listening tasks had a statistically significant effect on EFL learners' short-term use of discourse markers. The results of the independent-samples t-test are presented in Table 3.

Table 3.

Independent-samples t-test for Immediate Post-test

95% Confidence Interval of the Difference

t	df	P (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.Error Difference	Lower	Upper
1.473	28	.152	.86667	.58824	-.33830	2.07163

The findings demonstrated that the difference between the mean scores of the control and extensive listening groups was insignificant. In other words, the effect of extensive listening tasks on the intermediate EFL learners' short-term use of the DMs was not statistically significant. For interpreting effect size values (.01=small effect, .06=moderate effect, .14=large effect), the magnitude of the mean difference was moderate (eta squared = 0.071).

To compare the means of the experimental and the control group in the delayed posttest, an independent samples t-test was calculated. In other words, the aim was to check whether the extensive listening tasks played a statistically significant role in the intermediate-level EFL learners' long-term use of the DMs. Table 4 displays the outcomes of the independent samples t-test.

Table 4.

Independent-samples t-test for Delayed Post-test

95% Confidence Interval of the Difference

t	df	P (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.Error Difference	Lower	Upper
.232	28	.818	.13333	.57459	-1.04367	1.31034

The results revealed that the extensive listening group did not excel the control group significantly. In other words, the effect of extensive listening tasks on the intermediate EFL learners' long-term use of DMs was not statistically significant. For interpreting effect size values (.01=small effect, .06=moderate effect, .14=large effect), the magnitude of the difference in the means was very small (eta squared = 0.001).

5. Discussion

This study investigated the effects of extensive listening tasks on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' usage of DMs in speaking. The analysis of the data revealed that no statistically significant difference could be found between the performance of the control and the experimental groups in the posttest and delayed posttest. It can be concluded that extensive listening tasks did not significantly affect the use of DMs by intermediate EFL learners in speaking skill.

The findings of this study are not in line with some reported in previous studies (e.g., Chang et al., 2018; Waring, 2008). Some previous studies found that the extensive listening groups outperformed the control group, demonstrating how by employing DMs as fillers, students may use the extra time to think over and choose their next words while speaking to improve their speaking skill (Masrai, 2020). The results also contradict those obtained by Davatgari Asl and Moradinejad (2015), who found the explicit instruction of DMs effective in the learners' appropriate and frequent use of DMs. Some other research has also suggested that L2 speakers can learn DMs and use them once they are acculturated in the L2 culture through exposure to ample L2 input so that they can pick up how DMs are produced and choose the proper ones (De Klerk, 2005; Hellermann & Vergun, 2007).

The findings of the current study are in line with those of Rajabi and Salami (2016), showing that teaching DMs has no impact on the speaking skill of Iranian intermediate students. The current study showed that extensive listening tasks did not influence the use of DMs by intermediate learners in speaking. The learners may have avoided using DMs in speech because they believed it to be time-consuming in developing spoken language. Our results also confirm the findings by Khameneh and Fakhraee-Faruji (2020), who found no effect of the instruction of DMs on the development of speaking skill.

Due to their intermediate level, the study's participants possessed particular characteristics. First, they were teacher-centered; in these classrooms, the teacher merely transfers knowledge to the students. Learning is not viewed as a cognitive act in these classrooms. The absence of self-autonomy among these low-level learners is another characteristic. Learning independently is the idea of autonomy. Independent students rely on their learning. They pay attention to both the form and the content. Language awareness is another important aspect that must be considered for autonomous learners (Dickinson, 1987). The possibility of field dependence was the third characteristic of intermediate

learners. Field-dependent learners typically depend more on the instructor (Ellis, 2012). These students' inclination towards traditionally structured classrooms may be their fourth characteristic. Three phases comprise traditional language instruction: presentation, practice, and production (Celce-Murcia, 2014).

A final point to discuss is avoidance. Learners usually avoid structures that are hard to produce in L2 and use simple structures and expressions instead. They opt to produce structures and expressions that their L2 knowledge approves. If the structures and expressions are similar to those in their L1, they will apply their native language rules and regulations and transfer their strategies into the target language. However, they either avoid or use them cautiously if they are widely different. As a consequence, the avoidance factor is hard to determine. However, it may play a vital role in the results of this study.

The results of the current study revealed that extensive listening tasks had no significant effect on the use of DMs by intermediate EFL learners in speaking skill. As their immediate posttest and delayed posttest mean scores showed, the learners' use of DMs in speaking skill was not affected by extensive listening tasks. The learners could have thought that using DMs took too much time away from producing spoken language. In other words, rather than using various DMs to fill pauses, it's possible that the learners would have preferred to stay silent and consider the content and structure of their speech.

The fact that the learners avoided using DMs in their speech might have been due to their relatively low level of EFL proficiency. This also may mean that the learners were not self-confident enough to use DMs noticeably in their speech. In other words, if the students had a solid understanding of DMs, they could quickly and easily identify the best gambits and fillers.

6. Conclusion

Investigating the impact of extensive listening tasks on the use of DMs by intermediate EFL learners in speaking skill showed that extensive listening tasks had no significant effect on the use of DMs by the learners in speaking skill. As their posttest and delayed posttest mean scores showed, the learners' use of DMs in speaking skill was not affected by extensive listening tasks. Because intermediate students may not be independent enough to learn DMs via extensive listening tasks, they become dependent on the teachers, especially in speaking ability, which is why extended listening is ineffective in using DMs in speaking. As a result,

students may believe that they require their instructors' guidance and may assume that good learning cannot occur without their involvement. Learners may thus see the use of DMs as time-consuming in producing spoken language. In other words, rather than employing various DMs to fill their pauses, the learners may decide to be silent and ponder. Finding a DM takes some time for the students, which affects how quickly they speak.

Their intrinsic motivation to utilize DMs may have been impacted by their self-confidence and degree of language proficiency. In other words, if the students had a high level of DMs, they would be able to quickly and easily select acceptable gambits without taking too long or interfering with their speech's fluency, accuracy, or coherence.

Administrators might use the results of this research, curriculum developers, syllabus designers, and teachers who work at institutes and universities to lead learners to listen extensively for pleasure. The involvement of extensive listening tasks and DMs in the syllabuses of foreign language teaching is significant. Like all other research, this study faced some limitations and could not cover all the relevant issues. One limitation is that the participants in the current study were all females between the ages of 17 and 24. Therefore, the results may not be applied to males and other age groups. In addition, the participants were only intermediate language learners. As a result, caution must be used when extrapolating the conclusions from the data.

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