

## THE INFLUENCE OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS ON THE STUDENTS LISTENING ABILITY IN EFL CLASSES

### LA INFLUENCIA DE LOS MATERIALES AUTÉNTICOS EN LA CAPACIDAD DE ESCUCHA DE LOS ESTUDIANTES EN LAS CLASES DE INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA

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#### **Abstract:**

There is an assumption that all authentic materials are acquisition-rich input and listening plays a significant role in daily communication as well as education process. This study aims to examine the influence of authentic materials on the student's listening ability in EFL classes. Participants of the study consist of 8 Turkish and 22 Cypriot pre-advanced English students studying in college. A five-point Likert questionnaire was administered to collect data. The Independent Sample Test and One Way ANOVA was applied to analyse the data. The results indicated that, most of the participants benefitted from authentic listening materials. The students were able to understand and use the language, authentic materials were seen to be useful in the language classrooms, and also students were able to use the target language in real life situations. However, this study also shows that, some of the respondents thought that the artificial materials were better than authentic materials, and were frustrated in the classroom and also some respondents were still not able to communicate in real life situations.

**Keywords:** Authentic materials, EFL, listening skills.

#### **Resumen:**

Partiendo de la suposición de que todos los materiales auténticos son un input válido para adquisición y la escucha, juegan un papel importante en la comunicación diaria, así como en el proceso educativo. Este estudio tiene como objetivo examinar la influencia de materiales auténticos en la capacidad de escuchar del alumno en las clases de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera. Los participantes del estudio consisten en 8 estudiantes de inglés pre-avanzados turcos y 22 chipriotas que estudian en la universidad. Se administró un cuestionario Likert de cinco puntos para recopilar datos. Se aplicó la Prueba de muestra independiente y ANOVA de una vía para analizar los datos. Los resultados indicaron que la mayoría de los participantes se

beneficiaron de materiales de escucha auténticos. Los estudiantes pudieron entender y usar el idioma, se vio que los materiales auténticos eran útiles en las clases de idiomas, y también que los estudiantes pudieron usar el idioma de destino en situaciones de la vida real. Sin embargo, este estudio también muestra que, algunos de los encuestados pensaron que los materiales artificiales eran mejores que los materiales auténticos, y se sintieron frustrados en el aula y sin embargo que algunos alumnos encuestados no pudieron comunicarse en situaciones de la vida real.

**Palabras clave:** Materiales auténticos, EFL, habilidades de escucha

## 1. Introduction

Listening is probably the most important feature in daily and professional communication and usually the most neglected in foreign language learning and teaching (García Laborda, 2007). One of the ongoing questions in language classrooms is, whether aural authentic materials influence the listening ability of the learners. And also how relevant the used authentic materials are in terms of understanding and using the target language. Some English teachers and researchers argue that using authentic materials in the classroom play a big role in learning the target language unconsciously and also in an enjoyable way. Krashen and Terrel (1983. 1) argue that the purpose of language instruction is to allow learners "understand language outside the classroom" so that they can "utilize the real world as well as the classroom, for progress" (Krashen & Terrel, 1983. 1). Some EFL teachers and researchers put forward that, using authentic listening materials in the classroom whether in an authentic situation or not are significant for many reasons: students gain access to real discourse and audio-visual realia on the current news of their environment and context, thus they have a significant educational value. Besides, Sanderson, (1999) said that education and general development are part of our responsibilities (Sanderson, 1999)

There are some different opinions about authentic materials. For instance, Widdowson (1979) points out that, there is no such thing as authentic language data. Authenticity is realized by appropriate response and the language teacher is responsible for designing a methodology that will establish the conditions whereby this authenticity can ultimately be achieved. (Widdowson,1979). Taylor (1994) states that, there is an assumption that, what goes on in the language classroom is almost "artificial" and that we must therefore strive to make what happens in it as much like real life as possible (Taylor,1994). Another statement is that, the best language instructional materials are those that use authentic samples of speech. This is true even for very low-level students (Mejia & O'Connor, 1994). Authentic listening materials are a way of continues input as indicated in one of the Bologna education frameworks for lifelong learning (Yavaprabhas,2008) and a best method for enhancing autonomous learning, that is to upgrade learning not depending on teacher supervision (Harmer,2007).

Dealing with vocabulary in language teaching is always a concern for EFL teachers while teaching listening courses and there is a question on how large a vocabulary is necessary for learners to comprehend the target language. For example the vocabulary of used authentic aural material might not be relevant to the students' immediate needs and there may also be lack of vocabulary knowledge necessary to comprehend the target language. Schmitt (2000) points out that vocabulary research have tended to focus on reading; there are few empirical studies about the relationship between listening ability and vocabulary.

Moving from the point that vocabulary plays an important role for listening. Gazzaniga, Ivry & Mangun (2002) argue that a mental store of word meanings is crucial to normal language comprehension and production and the listener is confronted with enormous variability in input:

The rate of speech, the dialect of the speaker, and the sex of the speaker, are some of them. In spoken language, the perceptual analysis of auditory input must account for all these variables" (Gazzaniga, Ivry & Mangun, 2002).

Schmitt (2000) also suggests that listening is more difficult than reading because "learners have limited control over the rate of "input" and "spoken language does not have clear word boundaries". To have good listening ability, EFL learners should develop many listening skills. Richards (1983), states that there are 33 micro-skills for EFL learners to comprehend a conversational discourse and 18 micro-skills for academic listening. These are the ability to recognize: stress patterns, vocabulary used in core conversational topics and parts of speech. In EFL classes, some student's lack the knowledge of these sub-skills and are not able to understand the gist and get frustrated and de-motivated.

Therefore, authentic listening materials should be thoroughly investigated especially in order to generalize their use in new and mobile technologies and language tests (Garcia Laborda, Gimenez Lopez Y Magal Royo, 2011). Some members of the profession believe that the ear is a great door to communication in a world that is becoming a global village and aural authentic materials should be given importance with the assumption that all authentic materials are acquisition-rich input and listening plays a significant role in daily communication as well as education process. Therefore, it is important for language education programs to implement authentic listening materials in the language classes.

### **1.1. Aim of the study**

This study aims to examine the influence of the authentic materials on the student's listening ability in EFL classes. More specifically the study seeks to answer the following questions:

1-To what extent, if any, are the used authentic materials relevant to the students' needs on understanding and using the target language?

2-How useful are the aural authentic materials in the classroom?

3- Are the students able to use the target language for real life situations?

## **2. Method**

### **2.1 Research Design**

The research was designed as a survey aiming at investigating the influence of authentic listening materials. A quantitative questionnaire was designed for participants to rate Likert Scale items to collect and analyse data.

### **2.2 Participants**

The participants of the study were 30 pre-advanced English students consisting of 8 Turkish and 22 Cypriot college students. 19 students had been studying English between 1-3 years, 8 between 4-6 years and 3 between 7-9 years.

### **2.3 Data Collection**

Students were exposed to authentic listening materials (ALM), and then they took the test. After, the questionnaires were distributed to students at the college during break-time. After

the participants completed the questionnaires, the questionnaires were collected back and the data was entered into the computer on a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to be analysed.

## 2.4 Data Analysis

The data was analysed quantitatively. The quantitative analysis of data was conducted by using SPSS for Window Release 18.0. Descriptive analysis was used to find out percentages and frequencies of each variable among participants. The Independent Sample Test for nationality and One Way ANOVA for the years of study of English were conducted to find the significant differences and the answers for the influence of authentic material.

For this research, the questionnaire, used as a means of data collection, was carefully designed. The questionnaire consisted of five-point Likert scale by which participants were asked to indicate their responses about the influence of authentic listening materials. The scale was from 1 to 5 in which 1 meant Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Neutral, 4 Agree and 5 Strongly Agree. Therefore, the participants were asked to tick the appropriate column that they agreed on about the influence of authentic listening materials. The questionnaire Cronbach Alpha was calculated as 0,92.

## 3. Results

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1-Authentic listening materials are easier to understand.	15	50.0	11	36.7	3	10.0	1	3.3	-	-
2- Listening to authentic materials facilitates learning.	17	56.7	8	26.7	3	10.0	2	6.7	-	-
3- Authentic listening texts do not have any function on learning the language.	11	36.7	10	33.3	5	16.7	2	6.7	2	6.7
4- Authentic listening materials make the language more meaningful.	13	43.3	13	43.3	13	43.3	3	10.0	1	3.3
5- I became more reluctant to use the language after studying with authentic materials.	7	23.3	14	46.7	5	16.7	1	3.3	3	10.0
6- Artificial listening materials are better than authentic ones.	14	46.7	11	36.7	4	13.3	1	3.3	-	-
8- Authentic materials motivate me to use the language.	13	43.3	11	36.7	5	16.7	0	0	1	3.3
9- Studying with authentic listening materials gives confidence to use the target language.	13	43.3	10	33.3	6	20.0	0	0	1	3.3
10- Authentic listening materials are more important than the traditional listening materials.	14	46.7	9	30.00	6	20.00	1	3.3	-	-
26- My pronunciation has improved with the authentic listening materials.	8	26.7	16	53.3	4	23.3	2	6.7	-	-

Table 1. The relevance of the used authentic materials regarding students' needs on understanding and using the target language.

The questionnaires were administered to 30 pre-advanced students and the frequencies and the percentages of the findings responding the opinions of the students on, to what extent, if any, are the used authentic materials relevant to students' needs on understanding and using the target language is given in table 1.

According to table 1 the findings show that, 50 % (frequency 15) of the students stated that authentic listening materials were easier to understand, 36.7 % agreed and the rest as it can be seen on table 1 were either neutral or disagreed. 56.7 % (frequency 17) strongly agreed, 26.7 % agreed that listening to authentic materials facilitated learning, while the minority either stayed neutral or disagreed. On the other hand, there was contradiction to above findings as 36.7 % (frequency 11) where, students indicated that, authentic listening materials did not have any function on learning the language, Respondents both *strongly agreed* and *agreed* with same percentage of 13.3% (frequency 43.3) on the statement that authentic listening materials made the language more meaningful. However, 46.7 % (frequency 14) *agreed* that they become more reluctant to use the language after studying with the authentic materials, 23.3 % (frequency 7) *agreed*, while 16.7 % stayed neutral 3.3 % disagreed and 10 % strongly disagreed meaning they were not reluctant. The students indicated that artificial listening materials are better than authentic ones as 46.7 % (frequency 14) strongly agreed, 36.7 % (frequency 11) agreed, 13.3% stayed neutral and 3.3 % disagreed.

Even though the students stated that, authentic listening materials do not have any effect on using the language, they strongly agreed that authentic materials motivate them to use the language with 43.3 % (frequency 13) strongly agreeing and 36.7 % (frequency 11) agreeing while 16.7 % staying neutral and 3.3 % strongly disagreeing. The students response to studying with authentic listening materials giving confidence to use the target language was 43.3 % (frequency 13) as *strongly agree*, 33.3 % (frequency 10) as *agree* 20 % stayed *neutral* and 3.3 % *strongly disagreed*. Moreover, 46.7 % (frequency 14) indicated that authentic materials are more important than the traditional listening materials, 30 % (frequency 9) indicated as somehow important, 20 % did not have any opinion and 3.3 % disagreed. Most of the students 53.3 % (frequency 16) stated that their pronunciation somehow improved with the authentic materials, 26.7 % (frequency 8) stated that their pronunciation improved, 13.3 % stayed neutral while 6.7 % stated that it did not improve at all.

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
7- Authentic listening materials help my teacher to teach more efficiently.	11	36.7	14	46.7	1	3.3	3	10.0	1	3.3
11- Authentic listening materials help me and my classmates to learn better.	11	36.7	10	33.3	5	16.7	2	6.7	2	6.7
12- The class environment was suitable for the authentic listening materials.	7	23.3	12	40.0	3	10.0	4	13.3	4	13.3
13- The class atmosphere became more cheerful with the authentic listening materials.	11	36.7	9	30.0	7	23.3	2	6.7	1	3.3
14- I was eager to participate in the class discussions with the authentic listening material.	9	30.0	15	50.0	4	13.3	1	3.3	1	3.3

15- The authentic listening materials used in the class made me bored.	9	30.0	11	36.7	7	23.3	2	6.7	1	3.3
16- The authentic listening materials used in the classroom made me more enthusiastic.	12	40.0	13	43.3	1	3.3	1	3.3	3	10.0
17- The classroom became livelier with the authentic listening materials.	13	43.3	6	26.7	4	13.3	4	13.3	1	3.3
18- I became frustrated with the authentic listening materials used in the class.	14	46.7	13	43.3	0	0	1	3.3	2	6.7
30- Authentic materials made me learn unconsciously.	15	50.0	9	30	3	10	3	10	-	-

Table 2. The usefulness of the aural authentic materials in the classroom.

According to table 2, nearly most of the students as 46.7 % (frequency 14) claimed that authentic listening materials somehow helped their teachers to teach more efficiently, 36.7 % (frequency 11) strongly claimed, 3.3 % had no opinion while 10 % disagreed and 3.3% strongly disagreed. 36.7 % of the participants (frequency 11) indicated that authentic listening materials helped them as well as their classmates to learn better. 33.3 % (frequency 10) indicated as somehow and 16.7 % stayed neutral while disagree and strongly disagree were both rated as 2%. The 40 % (frequency 12) of the students believed that the class environment was somehow suitable for authentic listening materials, 23.3 % (frequency 7) believed it was suitable, while 10 % had no opinion, while disagree and strongly disagree were both 13.3%. The students, 36.7 % (frequency 11) pointed out that the class atmosphere became more cheerful with authentic materials. 30.0 % (frequency 9) pointed out that it was somehow cheerful, 23.3 % stayed neutral and 6.7 % disagreed while 3.3 strongly disagreed on being cheerful. 50 % of the respondents indicated that, they somehow were eager to participate in the class discussion, 30 % (frequency 9) were eager and 13.3 % were neutral while 3.3 % were not eager and 3.3% were not at all eager. The results indicating agreement with the statement of student boredom with the authentic materials are, somehow bored 36.7 % (frequency 11) completely bored 30 % (frequency 9) 23.3 % were neither bored or not bored, 6.7 % were not bored and 3.3 % were not all bored. Nearly most of the students 43.3 % (frequency 13) agreed that authentic listening materials used in the classroom made them more enthusiastic, 40 % (frequency 12) strongly agreed, both neutral and disagree were rated as 3.3 % while 10 % were not enthusiastic at all. 43.3 % of the students (frequency 13) indicated that the classroom became livelier with authentic listening materials. 26.7 % (frequency 8) somehow lively, 13.3 % stayed neutral and 13.3 % indicated that it was not lively and 3.3 % indicated that it was definitely not lively. 46.7 % (frequency 14) of the participants put forward that they became frustrated with the authentic listening materials. 43.3 % (frequency 13) were somehow frustrated, 6.7 % were not frustrated at all, but 3.3% were not frustrated. Most of the students, 30% and 50%, agree and strongly agree that they learnt unconsciously with authentic listening materials while 30 % (frequency 9) believed, 10 % did not indicate any preference, and 10 % did not learn unconsciously.

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
19- Authentic listening materials are relevant to real life.	10	33.3	10	33.3	6	20.0	2	6.7	2	6.7
20- I have learnt how to deal with real life situations with authentic listening materials.	14	46.7	8	26.7	6	20.0	1	3.3	1	3.3

21- My communication has improved with authentic listening materials.	12	40.0	10	33.3	4	13.3	4	13.3	-	-
22- Authentic listening materials bring real life into the classroom.	10	33.3	13	43.3	4	13.3	1	3.3	2	6.7
23- Informal language samples in the authentic listening materials improved my language use.	12	40.0	10	33.3	4	13.3	3	10.0	1	3.3
24- I get stuck when I have to communicate in real life situations.	11	36.7	12	40.0	3	10.0	3	10.0	1	3.3
25- I can easily find my way in the natural environment of the target language.	12	40.0	9	30.0	2	6.7	5	16.7	2	6.7
27- I can understand different dialects better after studying with authentic listening materials.	15	50.0	9	30.0	2	6.7	2	6.7	2	6.7
28- My vocabulary knowledge has improved with the authentic listening samples.	15	50.0	12	40.0	2	6.7	1	3.3	-	-
29- I am more aware of the stress patterns with the authentic listening materials.	11	36.7	12	40.0	5	16.7	2	16.7	-	-

Table 3. Use of the target language for real life situations.

The responses of the participants to the question of whether the students were able to use the target language for real life situations are given in table 3 with percentages and frequencies.

Table 3 shows that 33.3 % (frequency 13) of the students both strongly believed and also believed that authentic listening materials were relevant to real life. 20.0 % were neutral (frequency 6) and gave no opinion on the statement. Finally, 6.7% both disagreed and strongly disagreed on this statement. 46.7 % (frequency 14) of the respondents claimed that they learnt how to deal with real life situations. 26.7 % (frequency 8) claimed that they could not somehow deal, and 3.3 % of them claimed that they could not deal with real life situations. 40% (frequency 12) of the students pointed out that their communication improved with authentic materials 33.3 % (frequency 10) agreed, while 13.3 % stayed neutral and 13.3 % disagreed. 43.3% (frequency 13) of the students pointed out that the authentic listening materials somehow brought real life into the classroom, 33.3 % (frequency 10) pointed out that it certainly brought real life into the classroom, 13.3 % stayed neutral and 6.7 % pointed out that it did not certainly bring real life and 3.3 % disagreed on this statement. 40.0% of the respondents (frequency 12) strongly believed that informal language samples improved their language use, 33.3 % (frequency 10) believed, while 13.3% stayed neutral, 10.0 % believed it did not, and 3.3 % believed that it certainly did not improve. 40.0 % (frequency 12) of the students indicated that they sometimes got stuck while communicating in real life situations, 36.7 % (frequency 11) indicated they certainly got stuck, 10.0 % were neutral and 10.0% indicated that they did not get stuck while 3.3 % indicated they certainly did not get stuck.

Most of the students 40.0 % (frequency 12) claimed that they could easily find their way in the natural environment of the target language. 30.0 % claimed that they somehow managed, 16.7 % claimed they could not, 6.7 % stayed neutral and 6.7 % claimed they certainly could not. Most of the students 50.0 % (frequency 15) pointed out that they could understand different dialects better after studying with authentic materials. 30.0 % (frequency 9) pointed out that they were able, 6.7 % were neutral, 6.7 % could not and 6.7% certainly could not. Furthermore, again most of the respondents, 50.0 % (frequency 15) claimed that authentic materials improved their vocabulary knowledge, 40 % (frequency 12) claimed that it somehow improved, while 6.7 % had no opinion and 3.3 % claimed that it did not improve. The respondents 40.0 % (frequency

12) indicated that they were moderately more aware of the stress patterns with authentic listening materials, 36.7 % (frequency 11) were certainly more aware, 16.7 % had no opinion and 6.7 % were not aware.

Items	N	Nationality	$\bar{X}$	S	df	t	Sig.
Listening to authentic materials facilitates learning.	8	Turkish	1.25	.46	T-C -. 568	-2.105	.45*
	22	Cypriot	1.81	1.00			
Authentic materials motivate me to use the language.	8	Turkish	1.00	.00	T-C - 1.136	-5.665	.00*
	22	Cypriot	2.13	.94			
I have learnt how to deal with real life situations with authentic listening materials.	8	Turkish	1.12	.35	T-C - 1.056	-3.985	.00*
	22	Cypriot	2.18	1.09			

\*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 4. The relation between the nationality of the participants and the influence of the authentic materials.

Table 4 shows the Independent Sample used to analyse the relation between the nationality of the participants and the influence of the authentic listening materials. Table 4 shows that there was a difference between Turkish and Cypriot students with a significant level of .45 on the basis that listening to authentic materials facilitated learning; Turkish students accumulated at the mean score of 1.25 and the Cypriot students accumulated at the mean score of 1.81. There was also a significant level of .00 for the authentic materials motivating to use the language; Turkish students accumulated at the mean score of 1.00 and Cypriot students at the mean 2.13. There was also another significant level of .00 for learning how to deal with real life situations; Turkish students accumulated at the mean score 1.12 and Cypriot students at the 2.18.

Items	Years of study	N	$\bar{X}$	F	Sig.	S	¡Error! Mar cad or no defi nid o.
Authentic listening texts do not have any function on learning the language.	1-3	19	1.73	4.944	.007*	.80	(1-3) - (7-9)
	4-6	8	2.50				



	7-9	3	3.66			1.52	
<b>I became frustrated with authentic listening materials used in the class.</b>	1-3	19	1.52	2.478	.035*	.51	
	4-6	8	2.50			1.85	(1-3) – (4-6)
	7-9	3	1.66			.57	
<b>Informal language samples in the authentic listening materials improved my language.</b>	1-3	19	1.73	7.571	001*	.73	
	4-6	8	2.00			1.41	(1-3) – (7-9)
	7-9	3	4.00			.00	(4-6)

\*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 5. The relation between the participants' years of studying English and the influence of authentic materials.

Table 5 illustrates One-way ANOVA analysis regarding the relation between the years of the participants studying English and the influence of authentic materials. The mean difference was significant at the level of .007 between the 1-3 and 7-9 years, for authentic listening materials having function on learning the language. Students studying English between 1-3 years accumulated at the mean score of 1.73, while those who had studied for 4-6 accumulated at the mid-point with a mean score of 2.50, and participants studying English for 7-9 years got a mean score of 3.66. The significant level of .035 was seen between the 1-3 years and 4-6 years of study, for students becoming frustrated with authentic listening materials; the students studying English between 1-3 years accumulated at mean score 1.52, and 4-6 years at the mid-point 2.50 and the 7-9 years at 1.66. The significant level of .001 was seen for the informal language samples in the authentic listening materials improving language of the students studying English between the years of 1-3 and 7-9, 1-3 years accumulated at the mean score 1.73, 4-6 at 2.00 and 7-9 at 4.00.

#### 4. Discussion

The responses in terms of the relevance of the authentic listening materials to the students' needs on understanding and using the target language, 56.7 % of them believed that listening to authentic materials facilitated learning and also 50 % indicated that they believed authentic materials were easier to understand. This is supported by Meija and O'Connor's statement (1994) "the best language instructional materials are those that use authentic samples of speech" (Meija & O'Connor 1994). Although most of the students claimed that they benefited from the authentic materials, 46 % of the students also claimed that they found artificial materials better than the authentic materials. Reason for this might be that they were more familiar with the artificial materials and another reason also might be the lack of vocabulary knowledge that is necessary to comprehend the target language. Schmitt (2000) pointed out that vocabulary researches have tended to focus on reading and there are only a few empirical studies about the relationship between listening ability and vocabulary (Schmitt 2000). However, there was a significant difference at the level of 0.045 between the groups in terms of nationality; Cypriot students claimed more than Turkish students that listening to authentic materials facilitated learning. The significant level at 0.00 was seen between Turkish students and Cypriot students;

Turkish students were less motivated than Cypriot students. There was also a significant difference at the level of 0.007 between the groups in terms of the years studying English. The students that were in the 1-3 years group stated that authentic listening materials were not functional but 7-9 years stated they were functional. The reason might be due to different educational background.

The results of the findings in terms of usefulness of the aural authentic materials in the classroom show that most of the students believed they were useful because 50 % of the respondents stated that they were eager to participate in the class discussions, which means they were using the target language. To illustrate, Gazzaniga, Ivry and Mangun (1998) said, "everyone agrees that a mental store of word meanings is crucial to normal language comprehension and production and the listener is confronted with enormous variability in input: The rate of speech, the dialect of the speaker, and the sex of the speaker, are some of them. In spoken language, the perceptual analysis of auditory input must account for all these variables". (Gazzaniga, Ivry, Mangun 1988). Moreover, 50 % also stated that they learned the target language unconsciously which again supports that, authentic materials are useful. Furthermore, 46.7 % indicated that their teacher taught more efficiently with authentic listening materials. The results of the one way ANOVA showed that there was a significant difference at the level .035; indicating that the students that were studying English for 1-3 years became less frustrated with the used authentic materials than the ones studying for 4-6 years. The reason for frustration might be the lack of the knowledge of listening skills, which enables them not to understand the gist and make them frustrated. This is supported by Richards (1983) stated that "there are 33 micro skills for EFL learners to comprehend a conversational discourse and 18 micro skills for academic listening". (Richards 1983).

The results of the findings to, whether the students were able to use the target language for real life situations show that 50 % claimed authentic listening materials not only improved their vocabulary knowledge but they were also able to understand the different dialects better. Moreover, 46.7 % indicated that they learnt how to deal with real life situations with authentic listening materials. Krashen and Terrel (1983), argued that the purpose of language instruction is to allow learners "to understand language outside the classroom" so that they can "utilize the world as well as the classroom, for progress" (Krashen & Terrel 1983. 1). However, despite the positive effects of the authentic materials, 40 % of the students pointed out that they somehow got stuck when communicating in real life situations. Also a significant difference at the level 0.001 for informal language samples improving language, was seen between the years group 1-3 and 7-9; 1-3 claimed that it did not improve while 7-9 claimed it did improve, and also 0.004 significant level lie between the 4-6 and 7-9 years group for the same variable 4-6 claiming it did not improve and 7-9 claiming it did improve. Furthermore, there was a significant difference at the level of .00 for learning how to deal with real life situations, Cypriot students were better than the Turkish students on dealing with real life situations. Significant level of .001 was seen between the 1-3 years and 7-9 years for informal language samples improving language, there were improvement 7-9 years and no improvement for 1-3 years. Significant level of .004 was seen for the same statement between 4-6 and 7-9 years; again 7-9 improved while 4-6 neither improved nor not improved.

## 5. Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the influence of the authentic materials on the student's listening ability. After discussing the data collected from the pre-advanced college students, some conclusions will be drawn about the topic, addressed in the present study.

### **5.1. To what extent, if any, the used authentic materials are relevant to the students' needs on understanding and using the target language.**

The results of this study show that authentic materials are for the benefit of the students and they facilitate learning for most of them. More than half of the students believed that authentic materials facilitated learning and half of them found authentic listening materials easy to understand. According to Mejia and O'Connor (2002), "the best language instructional materials are those that use authentic samples of speech". However, this research study shows that even though the students found the authentic materials easy to understand and facilitating to use the target language, nearly half of them still found artificial materials better. This study indicates that there is a significant difference between the Turkish students group and the Cypriot students group. Authentic listening materials were more relevant to Cypriot students needs; they were more facilitated to learn and more motivated to use the language than the Turkish students. Moreover, there was a significant difference between the different years of English study groups. The authentic listening materials had no function on 7-9 years group, while they had function on 1-3 years group.

### **5.2. How useful are the aural authentic materials in the classroom.**

Present study results indicate that aural authentic listening materials were useful in the classroom. Half of the participants were able to learn unconsciously, nearly half of the students found the classroom to be lively and were more enthusiastic. Most of the students were eager to participate in the class discussions. Despite these positive effects there were negative effects too, like nearly half of the students became frustrated and some of them were bored. Schmitt (2000) suggests that "learners have limited control over the rate of "input" and "spoken language does not have clear word boundaries" (Schmitt 2000). There was no significant difference between the nationality groups studying with authentic listening materials, but the different study year groups had significant differences. The students studying longer like 7-9 years were frustrated while shorter studying group 1-3 were not frustrated. To have good listening ability, EFL learners should develop many listening skills. Richards (1983) states that there are 33 micro-skills for EFL learners to comprehend a conversational discourse and 18 micro-skills for academic listening (Richards 1983).

### **5.3. Whether the students are able to use the target language for real life situations.**

The results of the study show that majority of the students were able to understand different dialects better and their vocabulary knowledge improved with authentic listening samples. Gazzaniga, Ivry & Mangun, (1994), say "everyone agrees that a mental store of word meanings is crucial to normal language comprehension and production and the listener is confronted with enormous variability in input: the rate of speech, the dialect of the speaker, and the sex of the speaker, are some of them" (Gazzaniga et.al, 1994). Even though some students had problems when communicating, nearly most of the students' communication skills improved and were able to use the language in the natural environment in real life situations. The purpose of language instruction is to allow learners "understand language outside the classroom" so that they can utilize the real world as well as the classroom, for progress" (Krashen & Terrel 1983). Furthermore, there was a significant difference between Turkish students group and the Cypriot students group, Cypriot students were better in real life situations than Turkish students. In addition, there was also significant difference between the years of study groups; the results

show that 1-3 and 4-6 years were not able to improve their language with the informal language samples, while 7-9 years group showed improvement. According to some researchers, "the best language instructional materials are those that use authentic samples of speech. (Mejia & O'Connor, 1994; Wang, 2009).

## 6. Recommendations

This study examined the influence of the authentic materials on the student's listening ability in EFL classes with pre-advanced college students. The influence of the authentic listening materials may be examined more with;

- Investigating the language knowledge of the participants.
- Exploring the culture diversity of the participants.
- Measuring the listening skills before and after the application of the questionnaire and the familiarization to the ALM.

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