Regular Article

## The Effectiveness of a Program Based on Authentic Digital Dialogues in Developing Student Teachers' English Listening Skills

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**Abstract**
The current study aimed at developing English listening skills for third year English major students at faculty of education, Beni-Suef University through using authentic digital dialogues. The pre-post control group design was used in the current study. The study participants consisted of (60) third year English major students at faculty of education, Beni-Suef University. Then they were divided into the control (n=30) and the experimental group (n=30). The students of the experimental group received English listening instruction through a program based on authentic digital dialogues which was designed by the researcher for the purpose of the study, while the students of the control group received regular instruction. The instruments of the study include: a listening checklists and a pre/post listening test. The result showed that there was a statistically significant difference at the level of 0.01 between the mean scores of the control and the experimental group in overall listening skills as well as in each listening skills which means that using the program based on authentic digital dialogues in the current study is effective in developing third year English major students at faculty of education English listening skills. Recommendations of the study and suggestions for further studies were provided.
**Key words:** authentic digital dialogues, listening skills.

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**Introduction:-**
        Listening is one of the four skills of a language i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. It involves a sender, a message and a receiver. According to Tyagi (2013)

listening skill contains some essential elements such as: discriminating between sounds, recognizing words and understanding their meaning, identifying grammatical groupings of words, identifying expressions and sets of utterances that act to create meaning, connecting linguistic cues to non-linguistic and paralinguistic cues, using background knowledge to predict and to confirm meaning and recalling important words and ideas.

In EFL Classes listening is always considered as extremely vital and challenging skill to be taught. Al-Thiyabi (2014) puts forward some frequent problems of learners as well as reasons blocking their listening comprehension skill such as hasty speaking, unknown words, and weird pronunciation, adding that such problems are severe and ought to be overcome to enhance learner's listening competency level.

Teaching listening skill becomes more challenging. Students have to be motivated and worked upon and closely monitored by the teacher. Traditional methods and tools of teaching listening are becoming out dated very fast with the spread of computers and high speed internet. It has become the need of the hour to introduce a technology inspired change in teaching skills like listening. This will not only motivate the students to learn, but also make it possible for the teacher to monitor and track their progress effectively.

Djenic et al (2011) noted that in higher education, it is almost impossible to imagine learning without the use of modern information technologies. The present generation of students has followed the development of these technologies from an early age, and in their education they expect to use multimedia and the Internet. "Digital aids, especially digital dialogues, can attract the students' interest. If they are interested, they will give much attention to what is being taught or discussed. This can lead to an interesting and language learning process" (Hasanah, 2009).

According to Lundh and Thomasson (2013), technical development has accelerated a lot in schools, mostly toward digital tools and digital texts. Since the students are already highly connected to the new technology in their free time, efficient education providers should understand that the students are already exposed to the digital world. Thanks to this new technology – smartphones, computers, and tablets – digital writing and digital texts have become more of an everyday thing for students and teachers alike.

Moreover, there are several studies that refered to the importance of authentic digital dialogues and their effect on language learning, students' fluency and motivation. For example, Ya-Ting and Wan-Chi (2011) that explored the impact of digital dialogues on the academic achievement, critical thinking and learning motivation of senior high school students.Also, Mai (2017) demonstrated that using digital tools affects students' language learning.

Consequently, it is worth noting that us digital dialogues gives students the opportunity to participate inside classroom and avoid being passive learners. By so doing, they improve their listening skills. Besides, the previous studies shed light on the efficiency of authentic digital dialogues and their significance in enhancing students' listening skills. Hence, this study will try to shed light on the possible effectiveness of a program based on authentic digital dialogues in developing student teachers' listening skills.

**Review of literature and Related Studies**

This section is divided into two Sections: listening skills and authentic digital dialogues.

**The First Section: Listening:**

**Listening skills**

Azeez and AlBajalani (2018,PP.88-89) defined listening skills as follows:
- Listening for the gist (main idea).
- Recognizing speaker's attitude.
- Listening for the meaning of unknown words.
- Listening for specific details.
- Listening for specific information.

- Listening for purpose of the speaker.

Moreover, Salem et al. (2017,P.87) showed that there are seven main skills in listening as follows:

- Listening for specific information
- Extracting information from context
- Listening to get the main idea
- Listening for gist
- Making inferences
- Listening for important details
- Guessing meaning from context

**Importance of Listening**

Listening plays an essential role in communication process. As Amin& et al (2017,P.75-76) state, listening is an important part of interaction as it is essential in giving a considerable and meaningful response. Also, it plays a basic role in learning a language for communicative purpose because it supports the language learner to acquire pronunciation, vocabulary, word stress, and syntax and the comprehension of messages conveyed can be based solely on tone of voice, pitch and accent; and it is only possible when we listen. Without understanding input appropriately, learning simply cannot get any improvement. In addition, without listening skill, no communication can be achieved.

Mai (2019,P.5) added that listening is the first language mode that children acquire. It provides the foundation for all aspects of language and cognitive development, and it plays a life-long role in the process of communication.

**Difficulties in learning listening skill**

Many researchers indicate that there are various problems related to listening skills. Problems with listening skills are commonly noted as difficulty in the monitoring of understanding. Procel (2019,P.41) states that students struggled in listening skills because they had difficulties in identifying main ideas, catching and interpreting messages, relating word sounds with actions, differentiating phonics and comparing homophone words.

Also, Gaber(2015,P.81) added that "in spite of the great importance of listening skills, a little care is shown to it inside most of the classrooms. These problems have many reasons such as; students see that listening skills are neglected in the final exam so; there is no need to focus on listening. Also, teachers show little care of teaching extra listening activities inside the classrooms to improve listening skills for their students".

Moreover Chao (2013,P. 71) investigated factors affecting college EFL students' listening comprehension and listening problems. The results showed that the main listening problems identified by all college students were input factor and listener factors, such as easily forgetting the content while encountering new words, long listening texts, and not knowing which strategy to use to get the necessary information for completing the given task, unclear pronunciation, and unfamiliar intonation patterns.

**Teaching Listening**

Amin& et al (2017,P.77) stated that there are many formers of listening activities used in classroom. Activities which don't need students to respond in spoken language are easier than those that do. Students can respond physically to a command, choose a suitable story or object, circle the correct answer or words on a test, draw a direction on a map, or finish a diagram as they listen. The difficult activities such as repeating what they heard, translating a listening passage into their native language, taking notes, making a draft, or reply to comprehension questions may follow the easier activities. To add more challenge to the activities, students can be asked to continue a story text based on what they heard, solve a specific problem, and make a roe play or participate in real-time conversation.

In addition, Djabborova (2020,P.213) classified listening activities into three types as follows:

1.Pre-listening activities. They are called also introductory activities that is an introduction to the topic of the text and activities focusing on the language of the context. They aim to deal with all of these issues which are generating interest, building self-confidence and facilitating comprehension. They serve to motivate learners to begin the activity easily and teachers actually give some minutes to find out key words, unknown words, useful structures that in order to understand and predict what kind of tasks will be asked.

2. While –listening activities. In these activities learner receives a series of comprehension activities for developing listening skills and teachers purpose to practice listening subskills. In that time a learner has a chance to confirm his or her prediction about the text. Teachers should observe how pupils feel and what they are doing in while listening activity attentively. If there are some learners that are not able to do the task and feel pressure it is possible to turn on the audio again. Generally, this part is the most difficult stage for the teachers to control, make them do the task independently and process the information actively.

3.Post-listening activities. Last stage is post-listening one which requests learners to talk about how a topic in the text relates to their own lives or give their opinions on parts of the text. These activities have a goal to utilize the knowledge gained from listening and summarize the ideas. It also includes, working with mistakes which part is more difficult than other parts or just why learners made them.

**The Second Section: Authentic Digital Dialogues:**

**The advantages of authentic materials**

Authentic materials refer to the use of texts, photographs, video selections, and other teaching resources that were not specially prepared for pedagogical purposes in teaching ( Parmawati,2017,P.3). The advantages of authentic materials in language instruction are numerous. According to El Marsafy et al (2018,P.135) authentic materials are beneficial because they: expose learners to language that serves a useful purpose; provide a refreshing change from the textbook; focus more closely on learners' interests and needs; provide Information about a variety of topics; increase learners' motivation and connect the classroom with the outside world.

Additionally, Aina (2016,P.35) states that using authentic materials in a language class can give students the opportunity to be familiar with the various features of natural speech, process different speech styles (accents), and acquire new vocabulary. Moreover it allows learners to understand reduced speech and recognize patterns of stress, rhythm and intonation which will lead them to pay more attention to their pronunciation accuracy

To sum up, learners will have the possibility to feel part of the culture and reality of the language they are learning through using authentic materials.  So, teachers should be more concerned with using appropriate materials that will help their students learn the language effectively. Teachers should also offer updated authentic materials, which are attractive, interesting, motivating, and functional and which can adapt to the linguistic needs and students' interest

**Selecting Authentic Materials**

Zazulak (2017) suggested some criteria of selecting authentic materials as follows:

1- The best content to select depends on the learners, their level of English and the course content the teacher wishes to focus on. It's also a good idea to find out the learners' interests – after all, there's no point trying to get students fascinated by a text on the latest sci-fi movie if they're all fans of action films.

2-The materials should reflect a situation that learners may face in an English-speaking environment – this will help them transition into a world where English is the norm. In this world, people use abbreviations, body language is important and they'll use

"filler" sounds – such as "ummm" – when they are speaking English – and learners will encounter these in authentic material.

3-It is important not to overwhelm learners with the first piece of authentic material. So to begin with, choose articles, songs or sections of TV programmes or movies which aren't too difficult to understand or take too long to get through.

Moreover, Alamri (2000) mentioned other criteria of selecting authentic materials as follows:

1- Authenticity: The selected material should serve communicative goals.
2- Accessibility: The material should be Easy for the learner to understand and suitable for the teacher.
3- Appropriateness: It should suit the learner's age, level needs and interests.
4- Applicability: It should suit the teaching context and makes the objectives attainable.
5- Adaptability: It should be adapted to the learners' level, needs and interests.

To conclude, authentic materials bridge the gap between classroom language use and real life language use by bringing familiar linguistic situation and materials right into the classroom. When teachers use authentic materials, they are in fact helping students to make a comfortable learning to fulfill some social purpose in language community.

## Types of Authentic Materials

According to Aina (2016) there are different kinds that these materials can take to be used in the classroom, but the most common ones are listed below:

## 1-Songs

Using songs in language listening classes is very beneficial to learners in terms of language and skills . Allowing them, thus, to deal with different cultures, accents, vocabulary, and to focus on

## 2. Films

Watching a film in a class represents, actually, a rich source of language input with verbal and visual stimuli that can develop the listening abilities.

## 3. Conversations

Live conversations which call for a real-life interaction is of paramount importance. Teachers can record a listening text or take their students to authentic situations (cafeteria, party, bus…) where many groups of people are talking together, for building later discussions.

## 4. News Broadcasts

It is believed that live broadcast is an essential tool that can have a positive effect on acquiring the English language .Working with this sort of listening material can be hard for students; since they may feel shocked and claim that they do not understand anything. Therefore, teachers must be patient when dealing with such type.

## 5-Guest Speakers

Inviting a native English speaker into class, can be another efficient way to provide learners with a live and real-time listening that enables them to interact with natural speech in a totally different stimulating manner than any other type of a listening material .

## Context of the Problem:-

In spite of the importance of listening, there are many of the students who do not master its skills. Evidence of the problem was identified by results of previous studies which refer to the low levels of students in English listening skills in different stages such as the study, the study of Khalil ( 2015), the study of  El Gazar ( 2016), the study of Saqr ( 2016),the study of Youssif ( 2016).

Moreover, preliminary listening test conducted by the researcher to identify how far third primary Education EFL majors at faculty of Education acquire listening skills. The listening test was administrated to 25 third year primary Education EFL majors at faculty of Education. The results of the listening test indicated the low level of students in listening

skills.

### Problem of the Study:-

The problem of the present study is crystallized in the low level of the third year students at faculty of Education in listening. To face this problem the present study tries to answer the following main question:

1- What is the effectiveness of a program based on authentic digital dialogues in developing student teachers' listening skills?

The following sub- questions are derived from the main question:

1- What are the listening skills which are appropriate for the third year primary education EFL majors at faculty of Education?
2- What is the framework of a program based on authentic digital dialogues?
3- What is the effectiveness of a program based on authentic digital dialogues in developing overall listening skills?
4- What is the effectiveness of a program based on authentic digital dialogues in developing each listening skills?

## Purposes of the Study:-

The present study aims at:-

1. Developing listening skills which are appropriate for the third year primary education EFL majors at faculty of Education.
2. Investigating the effectiveness of a program based on authentic digital dialogues in developing student teachers' listening Skills.

## Significance of the Study:-

The following study might help to achieve the following:

⇒ Presenting a list of listening skills.
⇒ Helping English major students at third year to develop some of their listening skills.
⇒ Drawing the attention of educators to the importance of the suggested program in teaching listening and mastering a foreign language.

## Delimitations of the Study:-

The present study is delimited to the following:

1- A sample of third year English major students at Faculty of Education, Beni-Suef University.
2- Some listening skills which are appropriate for third year primary education EFL majors at Faculty of Education.

## Variables of the Study:-

⇒ Independent variable: The suggested program based on authentic digital dialogue.
⇒ Dependent variable: Some Listening skills which are appropriate for the third year primary education EFL majors at faculty of Education.

## Instruments of the Study:-

1. A listening skills checklist.
2. A pre-post listening skills test.

## Hypotheses of the Study:-

The present study tries to investigate the following hypotheses:

1- There is a statistically significant difference between the posttest mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the skill of listening for the gist in favor of the experimental group.
2- There is a statistically significant difference between the posttest mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the skill of listening for specific information in favor of the experimental group.

3- There is a statistically significant difference between the posttest mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the skill of guessing what's missing in a sentence through the context in favor of the experimental group.

4- There is a statistically significant difference between the posttest mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the skill of replacing a word with another one which has the same meaning it in favor of the experimental group.

5- There is a statistically significant difference between the posttest mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the skill of summarizing in one's own words what's spoken in favor of the experimental group.

6- There is a statistically significant difference between the posttest mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in overall Listening test scores in favor of the experimental group.

**Method of the Study:-**

The present study depends on using quasi experimental method for conducting the study empirically. The quasi -experimental method depends on using an experimental group and a control one.

**Definition of Terms:-**

**1-Digital dialogues:**

Hasanah (2009) defined Digital dialogues as "a technique for improving students' reading comprehension. It involves a four step group teaching and learning process in which students (1) summarize the content of a passage, (2) ask questions about the main idea of the passage, (3) clarify the difficult aspects of the
 material, and (4) predicting what will happen next.

Khatabia (2018) defined Digital dialogues as "dialogues among native speakers presented via data show at English language classes on various topics.

The researcher defined Authentic Digital Dialogues in the present study as dialogues among native Speakers Presented via computer or smart phones on various topics, themes and functions of language.

**2-Listening:**

Tayagi (2013) defined listening as "a psychological process of receiving, attending to constructing meaning from and responding to spoken and/or non verbal messages".

Solak (2016) defined listening as "an active and interactional process in which a listener receives speech sounds and tries to attach meaning to the spoken words. The listener tries to understand the intended message of the oral text to respond effectively to oral communication.

The researcher defined listening in the present study as the progress students achieved in their listening and is measured by the score which the students get on a listening test.

**Results and Discussion**

**Hypothesis one:**

To verify the validity of this hypothesis, t- test for independent samples was used to compare the mean scores of the two groups on the skill of listening for the gist post-test. The results of the t-test proved to be statistically consistent with the hypothesis. See table ( 1 )
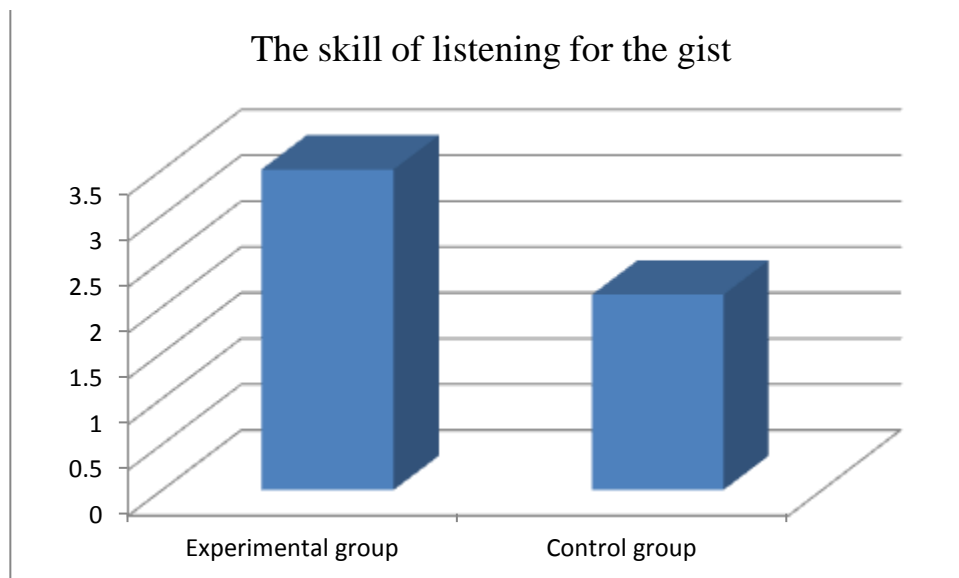
**Table (1): t-test results of the skill of listening for the gist post-test comparing the control and experimental group Overall Mean Scores**

| Group | N | Mean | S.D. | D.F. | t-value | Significance level | Effect size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experimental | 30 | 3.500 | .6297 | 58 | 7.763 | .000 | 0.71384 |
| Control | 30 | 2.133 | .7303 | | | | strong |

Table (1 ) shows that the calculated t-value (4.065) is statistically significant at 0.01 level of confidence. Thus, it can be said that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control group students on the skill of listening for the gist post-test in favor of the experimental group. So, the first hypothesis is confirmed. Also, effect size values were of great effect.  . The effect that is explained or measured opposite 0.15 or more of the total variance is great.

The following diagram represents the previous results:

**Figure (1): comparison of mean scores of the two groups in the post administration of the skill of listening for the gist.**



**Hypothesis two:**

To verify the validity of this hypothesis, t- test for independent samples was used to compare the mean scores of the two groups on the skill of listening for specific information post-test. The results of the t-test proved to be statistically consistent with the hypothesis. See table ( 2 )

**Table (2): t-test results of the skill of listening for specific information post-test comparing the control and experimental group overall mean scores**
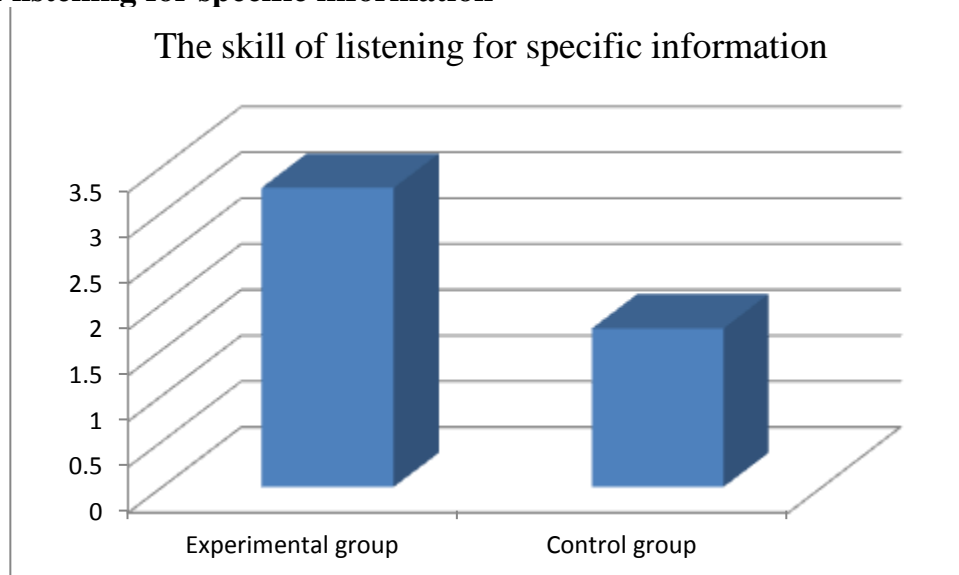
| Group | N | Mean | S.D. | D.F. | t-value | Significance level | Effect size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experimental | 30 | 3.267 | .7849 | 58 | 8.588 | | 0.74818 |
| Control | 30 | 1.733 | .5833 | | | .000 | strong |

Table (2 ) shows that the calculated t-value (8.588) is statistically significant at 0.01 level of confidence. Thus, it can be said that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control group students on the skill of

listening for specific information post-test in favor of the experimental group. So, the second hypothesis is confirmed. Also, effect size values were of great effect. . The effect that is explained or measured opposite 0.15 or more of the total variance is great.

The following diagram represents the previous results:

**Figure (2): comparison of mean scores of the two groups in the post administration of the skill of listening for specific information**



**Hypothesis three:**

To verify the validity of this hypothesis, t- test for independent samples was used to compare the mean scores of the two groups on the skill of guessing what's missing in a sentence through the context post-test. The results of the t-test proved to be statistically consistent with the hypothesis. See table ( 3 )
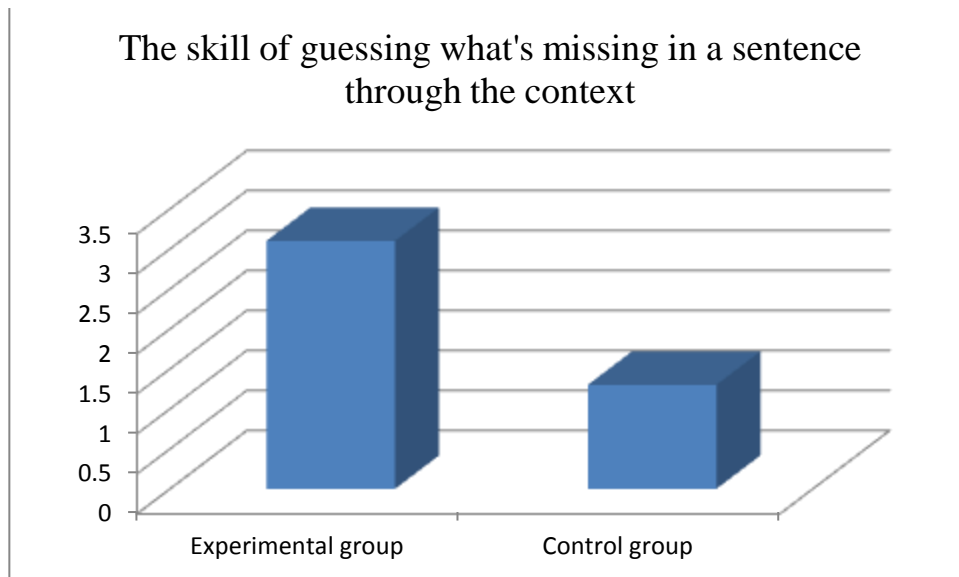
**Table (3): t-test results of the skill of guessing what's missing in a sentence through the context post-test comparing the control and experimental group overall mean scores**

| Group | N | Mean | S.D. | D.F. | t-value | Significance level | Effect size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experimental | 30 | 3.100 | .6618 | 58 | 10.218 | | 0.80179 |
| Control | 30 | 1.300 | .7022 | | | .000 | strong |

Table (3) shows that the calculated t-value (10.218) is statistically significant at 0.01 level of confidence. Thus, it can be said that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control group students on the skill of guessing what's missing in a sentence through the context post-test in favor of the experimental group. So, the third hypothesis is confirmed. Also, effect size values were of great effect. . The effect that is explained or measured opposite 0.15 or more of the total variance is great.

The following diagram represents the previous results:

**Figure (3): comparison of mean scores of the two groups in the post administration of the skill of guessing what's missing in a sentence through the context.**



The skill of guessing what's missing in a sentence through the context

**Hypothesis four**:

To verify the validity of this hypothesis, t- test for independent samples was used to compare the mean scores of the two groups on the skill of replacing a word with another one which has the same meaning post-test. The results of the t-test proved to be statistically consistent with the hypothesis. See table ( 4)
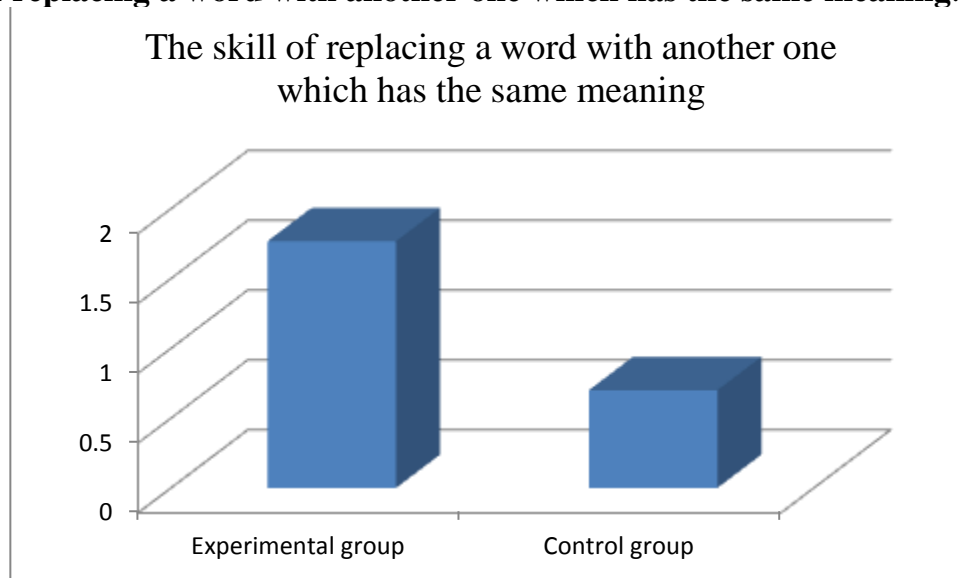
**Table (4): t-test results of the skill of replacing a word with another one which has the same meaning post-test comparing the control and experimental group overall mean scores**

| Group | N | Mean | S.D. | D.F. | t-value | Significance level | Effect size |
|-------|---|------|------|------|---------|--------------------|-------------|
| **Experimental** | **30** | **1.767** | **.7279** | **58** | **6.467** | **.000** | **0.64727** |
| **Control** | **30** | **.700** | **.5350** | | | | **strong** |

Table (4 ) shows that the calculated t-value (6.467) is statistically significant at 0.01 level of confidence. Thus, it can be said that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control group students on the skill of replacing a word with another one which has the same meaning post-test in favor of the experimental group. So, the fourth hypothesis is confirmed. Also, effect size values were of great effect.  . The effect that is explained or measured opposite 0.15 or more of the total variance is great.

The following diagram represents the previous results:

**Figure (4): comparison of mean scores of the two groups in the post administration of the skill of replacing a word with another one which has the same meaning**.



The skill of replacing a word with another one which has the same meaning

**Hypothesis five**:

To verify the validity of this hypothesis, t- test for independent samples was used to compare the mean scores of the two groups on the skill of summarizing in one's own words what's spoken post-test. The results of the t-test proved to be statistically consistent with the hypothesis. See table ( 5)

**Table (5): t-test results of the skill of summarizing in one's own words what's spoken post-test comparing the control and experimental group overall mean scores**

| Group | N | Mean | S.D. | D.F. | t-value | Significance level | Effect size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Experimental** | 30 | 2.933 | .6915 | 58 | 10.155 | | 0.80001 |
| **Control** | 30 | 1.133 | .6814 | | | .000 | strong |

Table (5) shows that the calculated t-value (10.155) is statistically significant at 0.01 level of confidence. Thus, it can be said that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control group students on the skill of summarizing in one's own words what's spoken post-test in favor of the experimental group. So, the fifth hypothesis is confirmed. Also, effect size values were of great effect.  . The effect that is explained or measured opposite 0.15 or more of the total variance is great.

The following diagram represents the previous results:

**Figure (5): comparison of mean scores of the two groups in the post administration of the skill of summarizing in one's own words what's spoken.**



The skill of summarizing in one's own words what's spoken
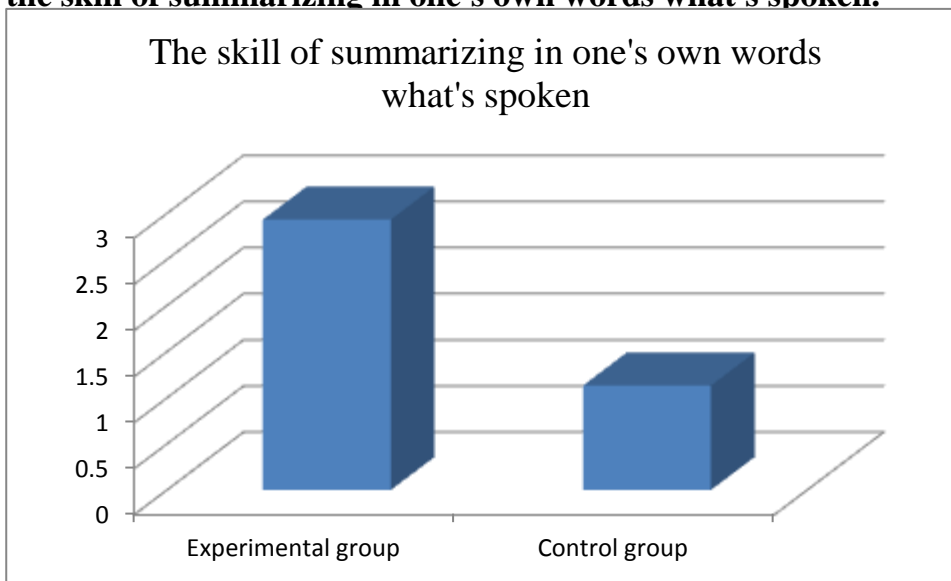
**Hypothesis six**:

To verify the validity of this hypothesis, t- test for independent samples was used to compare the mean scores of the two groups on overall listening post-test scores. The results of the t-test proved to be statistically consistent with the hypothesis. See table ( 6 )

**Table (6): comparison of mean scores of the two groups in the post administration of overall listening test scores**

| Group | N | Mean | S.D. | D.F. | t-value | Significance level | Effect size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Experimental** | 30 | 14.567 | 1.8880 | 58 | 15.650 | | 0.89918 |
| **Control** | 30 | 7.000 | 1.8570 | | | .000 | strong |

Table (6) shows that the calculated t-value (15.650) is statistically significant at 0.01 level of confidence. Thus, it can be said that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control group pupils on overall listening post-test scores in favor of the experimental group. So, the sixth hypothesis is confirmed. Also, effect size values were of great effect.  . The effect that is explained or measured opposite 0.15 or more of the total variance is great.

The following diagram represents the previous results:

**Figure (6): comparison of mean scores of the two groups in the post administration of overall listening test scores.**

## overall listening post-test scores
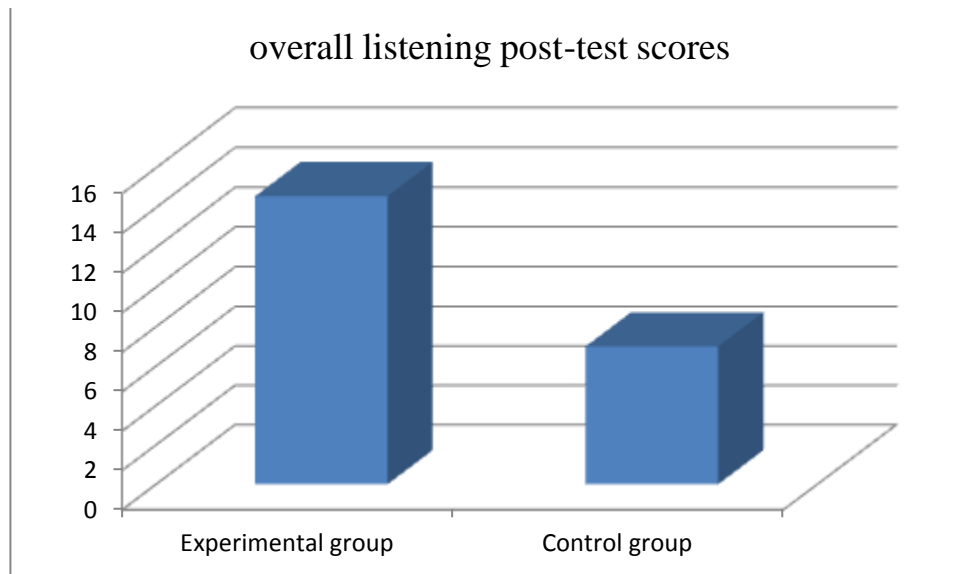


**Discussion of Results:**

The statistical analysis indicated that the suggested program to be effective as the experimental group achieved progress over the control group on the listening post-test and the results were significantly high at 0.01 level of confidence.

These significant results could be attributed to the following:

The design of the program helped students proceed effectively in their learning achieving their goals. Objectives were clear; activities were designed well and the evaluation questions at the end of every lesson were used to measure the proceed of students' performance.

1- The interaction and cooperation among students themselves throughout the program helped them to be more motivated and interested in doing their tasks and to gain more confidence.

2- The listening program provided students with sufficient scaffolding and support which can be an important issue for explaining the significant results of the improvement of listening skills.

**Conclusion:**

The present Study investigated the effectiveness of a program based on authentic digital dialogues in developing student teachers' listening Skills. Results are encouraging as far as the suggested program is concerned. They revealed that the use of the suggested program positively enhanced the participants' listening skills. The program also provides students with a safe learning environment where the teacher and peers provide scaffolding for all learners who were encouraged to cooperate and interact at the three stages of lesson. In this atmosphere, students played an active role in the listening process.

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