



## **A Study of the Effect of Extensive and Intensive Listening on the Tense Use among EFL Learners in Iran**

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### **Abstract**

The present study investigated the effect of extensive and intensive listening on the accuracy of tense use among EFL learners in Iran. It was based on pre-test, post-test with intact classes. According to the purpose of the study, a sample (n = 60) of homogeneous participants were selected. From among the 6 intact classes, one experimental group (n = 19, 9 male and 10 female participants) was identified to take intensive listening method as treatment, another experimental group (n = 20, 12 male and 8 female participants) was identified to take extensive listening as a treatment, and a control group (n = 21, 9 male and 12 female participants) was identified in order not to take intensive listening or extensive listening activities. All groups of the study were given pre-test of verb tense usage in order to measure their grammatical knowledge in verb tense prior to the treatments of the study. After finishing twenty five sessions of treatments for all groups, a post-test including verb tense was given to the participants. The data gathered from the study were compared through SPSS. It was found that extensive listening and intensive listening had positive effects on the accuracy of tense use among EFL learners in Iran. In addition, it was found that none of intensive listening group and extensive listening group outperformed each other and there was not any significant difference between these two groups' performances.

**Keywords:** Extensive Listening, Intensive Listening, Tense Use, EFL Learners, Accuracy

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## **Introduction**

Grammatical accuracy is essential to avoid communicative misunderstanding (Larsen-Freeman, 2003; Lush, 2002). In the EFL context, learners still have problems with verb tense accuracy. Learners frequently make tense errors in their writing and speaking through verb tense that is one of the most important aspects of grammatical knowledge that non-native English language learners should master (Lush, 2002; Pongsiriwet, 2001).

In English, a sentence cannot exist without a verb. The form of a verb represents “tense”, which shows past, present, or future time (Davis & Liss, 2006). When students write an essay, tense is very important (Davis & Liss, 2006). The use of grammar tenses differs based on types of discourse (van Dijk, 1988; Fowler, 1991, as cited in Posteguillo & Palmer, 2000). Byrd and Benson (2001) point out that in general, the individual tenses contain several functions in discourse. Larsen-Freeman (2003) points out that although form, meaning, and use are interrelated, each of them can appear diversely challenging for language learners. A challenge may be in the case that a learner knows how to form a grammatical structure but does not realize that the structure includes more than one meaning and can be used in different situations. Providing appropriate input can be helpful for giving the learners what sounds correct and acceptable in the language they are learning.

Listening as an input providing skill plays an important role in providing instructional or real life EFL materials. The process of listening can take two forms of Intensive Listening (IL) or Extensive Listening (EL). Overall, IL and EL are two distinct approaches; each serves different purposes in the learning process. Since IL seems to be a familiar approach whereas EL is a new term, a distinction between the two approaches is desirable.

IL is considered as listening for precise sounds, words, phrases, grammatical units, and specific information. While providing L2 learners with abundant input and focusing on comprehension may be an effective way to enhance listening competence, some scholars (e.g., Field, 2008) argue that less experienced L2 listeners do not benefit from abundant input because “much of what they elicit from the input is based upon *approximation*” (Field, 2008, p. 106). Therefore, intensive listening (IL) has also been widely used by L2 teachers in the language classroom. Most of classroom listening including the listening activities have been taking IL form such as dictation, fill in the gap, etc.

The importance of Extensive Listening is obvious in language learning. L2 literature (e.g., Ellis, 1994) indicates that a large amount of exposure to input, whether visual or aural, is vital for language acquisition. This suggestion seems to be supported by researchers stressing the importance of quality input in language acquisition. Krashen (1985), advocating the Input Hypothesis, argues that humans acquire listening skills and language by understanding language that contains structures slightly beyond their current level of competence (i+1): comprehensible input. He suggests that it is important for the learner to listen to a large amount of

spoken English that is relatively easy. Easiness, in his opinion, is another key factor that helps the learner to improve listening skills and language. Easiness and interest may be factors that determine whether the learner is actively involved in listening or not. "Affect" (learner's motives, interests, needs, attitudes, or emotional states) thus functions as a filter that subconsciously screens incoming language or input. Thus, teachers should try to lessen learner anxiety about listening to English, and select input that best suits student motives and attitudes about listening. Krashen's (1985) suggestion supports the idea of Extensive Listening approaches that are usually employed based on materials learners want to listen to according to their interests and the levels of difficulty of the listening materials.

### **Literature review**

In intensive listening instruction, students are required to listen to a text several times, or teachers can divide the text into paragraphs and sentences to focus on each one. Alternatively, in extensive listening instruction, students won't be asked to understand every sentence and every word. On the contrary, students are encouraged to grasp the general picture of the message. The main goal of extensive listening instruction is to help format the habits to understand the content as the priority. Intensive listening is for building basic learning skills, while extensive listening is to functionalize overall listening ability.

If instructors prefer using the listening course books designed by the publishers, here Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011) offer several suggestions concerning listening textbooks (pp. 985-986):

(1) Listening course books had better introduce some basic theories on listening training. Instructors can thus learn these theories and other essential information and improve their listening instruction.

(2) Listening course books must be student-centered and they have to be designed systematically, especially focusing on how to utilize listening strategies and offer sufficient practice opportunities for learners.

(3) Each discourse designed in listening course books has to be processed in a holistic way. And the designed exercises would get learners involved into more detailed comprehension. In other words, the appropriate listening textbooks would help instructors teach students first from the top-down process to the bottom-up process, and then return back by using the top-down process again; such complete training would provide learners with a chance for deep learning in listening.

(4) The activities in the listening course books should be integrated with the 3-phase strategy: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening. Each phase of listening activity has its own purpose, which would be respectively depicted specifically in the section of "listening activities."

Waring, one of the earliest proponents of extensive listening, has proposed that an extensive listening program would, at a minimum, involve listening to (or being

involved in) massive amounts of text: the use of listening texts which learners are able to comprehend reasonably smoothly: high levels of comprehension; the absence of pre-set questions or tasks: listening at or below one's level of "comfortable fluent listening ability" (p. 63).

If we wish to more explicitly describe the characteristics of an EL program, the extensive reading program characteristics presented by Day and Bamford (1998) are a convenient starting point. An extensive listening program could be described as one in which:

- ∄ Listening occurs primarily, but not exclusively, outside of the classroom, and, may be done when and where the student chooses.
- ∄ Learners are exposed to as much aural/visual foreign language input as they feel they can successfully manage.
- ∄ Both the level and content of the listening input are determined individually by the learners, who are free to stop using material which they feel is unsuitable.
- ∄ Listening materials from various genres are available to encourage listening for different purposes and in different ways.
- ∄ Materials should be well within a student's level of aural comprehension: the easier the better. Students should ideally be able to comprehend 70%+ of what they hear.
- ∄ The purposes of listening are determined by the nature of the material and the interests of the learner, and related to enjoyment, information gathering, and general understanding.
- ∄ There are no exercises explicitly based on the listening to be completed.
- ∄ Listening outside class should ideally be done individually, silently, and at the student's own pace.
- ∄ Teachers orient participants to the goals of the program, explain the methodology, and guide them in getting the most out of the program.

While there are few hard and fast "requirements" for engaging in EL, it is unlikely to be appropriate for students at the beginning stages of language study. At a minimum, students would need to have reached both a threshold level of lexicogrammatical knowledge, and be able to comprehend basic speech to begin. Further research needs to be undertaken in this area in order to more clearly determine where this threshold lies, and how we might enable learners to attain it. Additionally, learners will need to receive a thorough orientation to the EL program, so that they are clear on what EL is, what they are to do, and why they are engaging in EL. Teachers can lead learners in extensive listening practice by helping them establish a system of goal-setting, planning, conducting self-study, and reflection

and self-evaluation (Amini & Shamlou, 2014; Benson & Voller, 1997; Nowruzi & Vahedi, 2013).

Another obvious attraction of EL is that it combines the universally understood pleasure of listening to a good story or watching an interesting film with the satisfaction inherent in accomplishing a meaningful (as opposed to an “educational”) task in the target language, while still at a relatively low level or fluency. Krashen (1985) goes so far as to claim that students "can acquire language on their own" (p. 140), provided they receive adequate exposure to comprehensible language and that acquisition takes place in a relaxed, stress-free atmosphere. EL would seem to easily satisfy both these conditions, as it involves exposure to large amounts of relatively easy material, at home, with little or no follow-up work or testing. Krashen further maintains that the unconscious process of language acquisition, such as occurs when reading or listening for pleasure, is more successful and longer lasting than “conscious” learning.

Cutting (2002, p. 22) refers to the role of the instructor in EL as being primarily “supportive”, and proposes that instructors enable their students to begin listening independently by encouraging the following approach: self-analysis, in which learners think about “their needs, problems, and preferred learning styles”: goal-setting: in which learners “link their needs and problems with their learning objectives”: planning, including making a “study plan considering factors as materials, learning strategies, study time available, proficiency level, and learning style.”: and reflection on, and self-evaluation of, the learning. This sort of preparation could be carried out during classes as part of an intensive listening exercise.

Once a program is underway, finding adequate time, energy and sufficient amounts of material at the “right” level become important considerations. It is the initial stages some students may find EL too difficult or time consuming, and become tempted to give up. While it is entirely appropriate in EL that students select their own material and pace their own listening, they should not be given the choice of opting out. Learners will need to be constantly encouraged, as fatigue and frustration are bound to occur, and at points finding suitable material will become difficult. At the same time, as the learner’s listening ability develops, however, he or she will gain motivation and be able to access to a broader selection of more interesting and challenging material.

It is also important for learners to consider early on the differences in intensive and extensive listening. Beginners will likely tend to feel more comfortable and confident using prescribed materials and engaging in tasks characteristic of intensive listening, because it is both more familiar to them and more easily managed in terms of quantity and content. Learners may in the initial stages need help as well in simply understanding that a “style” is comprised of various strategies we rely on consistently, yet more or less unconsciously. Students may not understand what strategies are, much less why they should be learned, how they can be used, when and where they are most effectively employed, and how to evaluate their usefulness.

Even intermediate level language learners are frequently unclear about the range of strategies available, fail to consistently identify viable strategies, employ ineffective or inappropriate strategies, fail to consistently employ strategies identified as viable, fail to consciously employ strategies, and often depend instead on repeated exposure to the material or translation for comprehension. For these reasons, raising learners' awareness of effective listening strategies is a good starting point in introducing learners to EL, as their use can help learners understand more of the language input which they will encounter.

The first component should include activities that prepare learners for what they will hear. Initially, students need to make conscious any knowledge they have relevant to the content, background, setting, participants and goals or purposes of the text they will hear, and the vocabulary likely to be used in that setting or situation. Next, a purpose for listening must be established: what information is required, and in how much detail.

Wenden (2002) states that "the notion of learner-centered instruction in foreign and second languages grew out of the recognition that language learners are diverse, in their reasons for learning another language, their approach to learning, and their abilities" (p. 32). In learner-centered learning, there are no particular restraints on the time or place learning may take place. Learners may choose any material they find suitable and interesting, so long as it is in English and easy enough for them to comprehend. Because students select their own listening material, they are more involved and more highly motivated. This alone has an enormous potential to expand students' listening skills outside the classroom, and to encourage them to take a more active and conscious role in decisions regarding their own educations.

Extensive listening has an important role in the development of learners' aural comprehension ability, particularly in situations where students need exposure to large amounts of comprehensible input. For most learners, especially those EFL settings, this type of input is most readily available through extended listening. Since learners all have different learning styles, providing opportunities to engage in EL should benefit a wider range of learners than in the case, intensive, or classroom listening. With access to the internet now nearly universal in many areas, opportunities to find appropriate listening texts of a suitable level of difficulty and interest should become increasingly easy.

The importance of Extensive Listening is obvious in language learning L2 literature (e.g., Ellis, 1994) which indicates that a large amount of exposure to input, whether visual or aural, is vital for language acquisition (Khezrlou, 2012, 2018, Khezrlou, Ellis & Sadeghi, 2017). This suggestion seems to be supported by researchers stressing the importance of quality input in language acquisition. Krashen (1985), advocating the Input Hypothesis, argues that humans acquire listening skills and language by understanding language that contains structures slightly beyond their current level of competence (i+1): comprehensible input. He suggests that it is important for the learner to listen to a large amount of spoken

English that is relatively easy. Easiness, in his opinion, is another key factor that helps the learner to improve listening skills and language. Easiness and interest may be factors that determine whether the learner is actively involved in listening or not. “Affect” (learner’s motives, interests, needs, attitudes, or emotional states) thus functions as a filter that subconsciously screens incoming language or input. Thus teachers should try to lessen learner anxiety about listening to English, and select input that best suits student motives and attitudes about listening. Krashen’s suggestion supports the idea of Extensive Listening approaches that are usually employed based on materials learners want to listen to according to their interests and the levels of difficulty of the listening materials.

On the other hand, intensive listening requires students to understand the meaning of each discourse and, ultimately, to understand every sentence and word. Generally, intensive listening requires students to listen to a text several times, divide the text into paragraphs and sentences to understand each one, or do dictation word by word. The goal is for students to understand every sentence. Alternatively, extensive listening does not require students to understand every sentence and every word; instead, students are encouraged to grasp the general meaning of the passage. The key point of listening is to understand the content. The purpose of intensive listening is to build basic listening skills, while extensive listening is to strengthen and enlarge effectiveness of intensive listening in order to improve overall listening ability. In listening teaching, both intensive and extensive listening should be combined with cultivating students’ basic skills, the development of the productive listening habits of active thinking, and the ability to understand the text. Therefore, teachers must encourage students to engage in intensive listening in class, requiring students to understand the general meaning and also to become familiarized with English pronunciation, intonation, and the changes in language flow. In activities outside the class, students need to engage in extensive listening: listening to many different varieties of language phenomena and gaining more knowledge through TV programs, radio, the Internet, and as many other kinds of exposure to listening training they can find. Exposure to demands of listening should include aspects of everyday life, science and technology, and academic lectures. Teachers must create language-learning environments that stimulate students’ interests and raise students’ passion and enthusiasm for learning English.

The goals of the extensive listening (EL) course, like the extensive reading (ER) course, are to build fluency by engaging with large amounts of “texts” which can be understood easily with high levels of comprehension. Meeting these criteria is more difficult in EL than in ER for several reasons. First, natural listening is typically constrained by time and is fleeting, requiring immediate processing. This makes it harder to use compensatory strategies such as rereading or looking up words in a dictionary. In addition, listening typically involves more than one speaker, which adds speaker variation and reduces control over the speed of listening.

Finally, the impact of stress, intonation, pitch, and volume on meaning must be interpreted along with the meaning of words and phrases. In EL, learners are not listening for specific information or details, and they are certainly not listening to mimic the text or answer pre-determined questions. Rather, the learners should be able to listen without much awareness of learning at all. In other words, they should be listening for pleasure or information just as they do in the L1. For these reasons, in order to be able to participate in EL, learners must have a much higher level of proficiency than those who engage in ER. Conversely, the appropriate listening texts for EL must be much easier than the texts typically used for listening development and practice in the language classroom.

The distinction between classroom listening is adapted from Day and Bamford's (1998) explanation of the differences between intensive and extensive reading as follows:

**Table 1.1.:** The Differences between Intensive and Extensive Listening

	<b>Intensive Listening</b>	<b>Extensive Listening</b>
Class goal	listen for accuracy	listen fluently
Listening purpose	answer questions/study words/pronunciation	get information/enjoy meaning
Focus	teacher chooses/often	you choose/easy
Material	difficult	a lot
Amount	not much	comfortable
Speed	uncomfortable	stop if you don't like
Method	must finish use dictionary	it no dictionary

Two experiments carried out by Elley (1989) with New Zealand primary school pupils showed that oral story reading constituted a significant source of vocabulary acquisition. In his study, vocabulary gains by elementary students varied from 15 percent without any teacher explanation up to 40 percent with teacher explanation, with retention relatively stable in follow-up tests. Comparable results are obtained in Brett, Rothlein, and Hurley (1996), where 175 fourth graders, with teacher explanation, learned an average of three new words for each story and retention did not decay after six weeks. Another study by Senechal and Cornell (1993) even looked at 4- and 5-year-old pre-school children's acquisition of new vocabulary from listening to a story. The results corroborated those of Elley (1989) and Bret et al. (1996).

Similar findings were also reported in a more recent study conducted by Chang (2009) with Taiwanese college students. Chang compared L2 listeners engaged in reading while listening versus listening only in their comprehension of two short stories of equal level and length of approximately 1,500 words. Students were given



an immediate post-test on story sequence for overall listening comprehension and a gap-filling test to evaluate language gains. The overall results showed that the students learning in the reading-while-listening mode achieved somewhat higher scores than with those working in the listening-only mode. Similar to the report by the Japanese students, the majority of the students in Chang's study perceived that the reading while listening mode made listening tasks easier, the duration seem shorter, the stories more interesting, and they paid much better attention. The results of the above two studies imply the reading-while-listening mode could be an effective way for L2 learners to develop their listening competence and perhaps to acquire other linguistic elements as well.

Taken together, previous research into L2 listening shows that "pure listening" (listening only without any assistance) is difficult for L2 learners and to acquire linguistic knowledge through this means is even more difficult. The findings of the foregoing studies are not sufficient to determine whether L2 listeners' listening competence can be enhanced through EL with the support of spoken scripts, in particular over a longer term. It is possible that students rely on reading and ignore listening in a reading-while-listening mode. If so, learners' listening competence may not in fact be enhanced. To extend the scope of the studies by Brown et al. (2008) and Chang (2009), the current research intends to use well-established materials – audio books – to explore the possibility of enhancing L2 learners' listening competence and vocabulary learning with EL as well as to investigate learners' perceptions of it.

Hayati and Mohmedi (2011) also examined the efficacy of subtitled movies on the listening comprehension of 90 intermediate English learners. They used six episodes (approximately 5 minutes each) of a DVD entitled *Wild Weather*. All subjects were trained by one of these three procedures: English subtitles, Persian subtitles, no subtitles. The results of six sets of multiple choice tests revealed that the English subtitles group performed better than the Persian subtitles group, which in turn performed at a substantially higher level than the no subtitles group.

Latifi, Mobalegh, and Mohammadi (2011) tried to capture the effects of movie subtitles on the immediate and long term improvement of listening comprehension. They used 36 intermediate learners assigned into three groups: English Subtitles Group, Persian Subtitles Group, and No-Subtitles Group (NSG). All of the participants' immediate comprehension was measured by a MC teacher made test at the end of each session, and their long term listening improvement was assessed by means of an IELTS test as post test. The results revealed that regarding immediate comprehension, both subtitles groups outperformed the NSG; however, on the IELTS test which measured the long term improvement of the learners the No subtitles group performed significantly better. Despite the immense support for using captions and subtitles, some scathing criticisms have been leveled against their efficacy in improving actual listening comprehension ability. One of the major criticisms in this regard concerns the idea that improvement in comprehension by

the usage of captions and subtitles is somewhat attributed to reading comprehension rather than listening.

Some evidence suggests that IL practice does have positive effects upon overall listening competence, and one of the best and most common resources teachers use is “dictation” (Field, 2008), or more recently, “partial dictation” (Kuo, 2010). Dictation is usually small-scale and can be used as a remedial practice, focusing on specific listening problems such as linking or contraction forms, and so is a classic bottom-up approach. The findings concerning improving listening ability or other language skills through integrating IL with dictation tasks are mixed. Positive evidence can be found in Kiany and Shiramiry (2002), Kuo (2010), and Rahimi (2008); however, contradictory findings were shown in the study by Jafarpur and Yamini (1993). Overall, IL and EL are two distinct approaches; each serves different purposes in the learning process. Since IL seems to be a familiar approach whereas EL is a new term, a distinction between the two approaches is desirable. Therefore, both IL and EL have differential effects on different language topics and positive findings have been reported for both of them.

Extensive Listening can be corroborated by several studies to date that investigated the effects of Extensive Reading on language learning. Sheu (2003) showed that junior high school students in Taiwan improved their reading comprehension and speed. Lai (1993) provided evidence that high school students in Hong Kong improved reading comprehension and speed with Extensive Reading. Renandya, Rajan, and Jacobs (1999) showed that adult learners in Vietnam improved their general English proficiency. Davis (1995) commented that Extensive Reading made learners more positive about reading, and this implies enhanced motivation and confidence in L2 reading. More to the point, Harmer (2001) argued that Extensive Reading had a number of benefits for the development of language skills, and that the effects of Extensive Reading are echoed by the effects of Extensive Listening: “The more students listen, the more language they acquire, and the better they get at listening activities in general” (p. 204).

Antle (2011) investigated the effect of extensive listening on reading speed. The participants were divided into three groups: control, extensive listening (EL), and extensive reading (ER). All participants were given a pre-test to determine reading speeds, and then the treatment groups engaged in eight weeks of extensive reading or listening. The ER group results were not subjected to statistical analysis because too few participants read the required amount of books (six books over the eight week treatment period). A matched-pair *t*-test was used to compare the results of the EL group’s pre-test and post-test reading speeds. The EL group’s reading speed did improve, and the *t*-test showed statistical significance. The results also indicated the required amount of material for EL to be effective in regard to reading speed is about one 30-minute audio book per week.

Kavaliauskienė and Darginavičienė (2009) studied the learners’ attitudes toward intensive listening by dictation in ESP classes. They concluded that: first,

class dictations of authentic materials are beneficial to students at tertiary level, as they help perfect listening and writing skills and raise awareness of problematic language areas; second, class dictations are designed to create a friendly learning environment in which students collaborate in pairs or small groups; third, dictation activities provide opportunities for each learner to compare her/his written work with a peer's work; fourth, post-dictation comprehension exercises proved beneficial, but pre-teaching vocabulary might be optional depending on the students' general proficiency in language; and finally, self-checking of one's written work by comparing it with original transcripts of the dictated material allows students to assess their achievements individually.

Chung (2010) worked on developing Intensive listening skills. This study investigated the effects of dictation of rapid speech on developing listening skills and the impact dictation had on students' listening/speaking ability. Fifty undergraduate TESL program students participated in the research. They were given the opportunity to practice listening through dictation (listening cloze) for the AP news segments, twice a week, for a period of twelve weeks. They achieved significant gains in terms of the TOEFL and dictation scores through dictation practice. In addition, three questionnaires completed by the students shed light on how dictation helped them improve listening and speaking skills.

Rashtchi, NouroziKhiabani, and Roumiani (2012) studied the effect of listening to self audio-taped journals on Iranian EFL learners' grammar knowledge. They were inspired by a thorough review of the literature that revealed that the effect of audio-taped journals on the EFL learners' grammar knowledge, especially in the Iranian context, was poor. 40 intermediate level foreign language learners of English took part in the study forming the experimental and control groups. The experimental group received 10 sessions of audio taped journals while the control group received the conventional method of teaching grammar, which mostly relied on implicit grammar teaching. Pursuing the treatment, both groups sat for the post-test of grammar. The results of the study revealed that audio taped journals highly affected the learners' grammatical development.

### **Methodology**

The present section as a methodology of the study contains the information about the participants of the study, data gathering instruments, data gathering procedure, the design of the study, and data analysis method. Each one of these is explained in detail below.

### **Participants**

Population of the study included all EFL learners in Dehkade-e-Jahani institute in Tabriz. The population included about 400 female and male learners in different ranked levels from level 1 to level 15; levels 1 to 5 as pre-intermediate language proficiency, 6 to 10 as intermediate language proficiency, and 11 to 15 as advanced

language proficiency. The promotion in levels depends on successfully passing the prerequisite levels and also by placement test. It should be mentioned that male and female classes were separated from each other.

Since the corresponding author of this article was a teacher in the mentioned institute, the intact classes in the elementary levels were selected for the study. The participants had only 1 or 2 years of studying English at school (their age is the determiner of their school language learning course). Regarding the purpose of the study, 6 intact classes were needed for the study. From these 6 female and male intact classes, 60 homogeneous participants in the case of language proficiency were considered for this study. Therefore, the participants of the study included students of both genders speaking Turkish and Persian languages. The rest of the participants who were not selected for the study participated in the treatments and classes but their scores and performance were not used in data analysis.

### **Data Gathering Instruments**

The instrumentations of the study included 3 types: language proficiency test, test of verb tense, and teaching material. These instruments are explained as follows:

*Language proficiency test:* A Preliminary English Test (PET) was used to measure the language proficiency of the participants in the study. The PET test included listening, reading, writing, and speaking parts. However listening and reading parts were used in this study. The reading part of the PET included 35 questions and the listening part 25 listening questions.

*Test of verb tense:* Two sets of tests were designed for grammatical accuracy in verb tense. The verb tense tests were designed by the researcher according to the four tense studied in the treatment period; simple present, present continuous, simple past, and future. Both sets had been piloted prior to the implication on the participants of the study. Each set included 10 questions. One set of the verb tense test was used as pretest prior to the treatment and another verb tense test was used after the treatment period.

*Teaching Material:* The teaching material was *Interchange Intro*. The mentioned book included 16 units. These 16 units were taught in 2 terms for elementary levels at the institute. The book included a wide variety of activities like reading comprehension, listening, conversation, grammar snapshot, grammar practice, new vocabularies, and pronunciation. The grammatical points were implicitly used in the conversation parts and later explained explicitly in the grammar part following grammar practice in communicative tasks.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

First of all, a sample of 6 intact classes was selected in Dehkade-e-Jahani Institute in Tabriz. All classes were in elementary levels including both males and females.

After considering the intact classes for study, a PET test was given to the sample in order to measure their general language proficiency in listening and reading comprehension. After implementing the PET test, a number of 60 homogeneous participants were selected from these intact classes. The sample included 34 female and 26 males. Three groups were randomly selected as two experimental groups and one control group. The control group included 21 participants. The intensive listening included 19 participants and the extensive listening group included 20 participants.

A researcher made pretest of grammatical accuracy in verbal tense was piloted. The verbal tense test was given to 30 EFL learners in the institute to calculate its reliability in this context. The test included the verb tense usage in simple present, present continuous, simple past, and future tenses. These tenses were going to be covered in the course.

The verbal tense pre-test was given to the participants in order to measure their grammatical knowledge in verb tense prior to the treatment. The normal distribution of the data in the pre-test was also calculated.

After selecting the homogeneous sample and measuring their grammatical knowledge in verb tense, treatment phase started. One experimental group was given intensive listening activity and the other experimental group was identified to have extensive listening. The control group did not receive the intensive listening or extensive listening activities. However all three groups were taught the same material and same grammatical items including the verb tense according to the lesson plan of the book.

The intensive listening (IL) group listened to their conversational pieces from their course book to answer the researcher designed questions which needed focus on the listening in order to answer. Listening questions included filling the gap, matching, etc. However the questions did not target the verb tense usage in the items.

Another experimental group, the extensive listening group (EL), selected free listening material for themselves to listen out of class. They selected teacher prepared material (since all the participants were not able to find expensive listening material for themselves) or selected material themselves. For being sure it was just, the test administrator asked them how they liked the listening material and asking detailed questions from the listening material was avoided. The participants were given a card to write the type of listening material they selected to listen to and check if they managed to listen to them.

The control group like the other two groups studied the course book but without any intensive or extensive listening activities. All groups were taught by the guidelines and the lesson plan of the course book. The grammatical items in the book were taught explicitly from the grammar snapshots in the book, the grammatical practices in the student book and work book of *Interchange Intro* were done by the learners, and the correct answers were presented in the class either by

the participants or by the teacher. In order to cover the verb tenses, twenty five sessions were held as a regular course term in the institute.

### **The Design of the Study**

This study tried to investigate the effect of extensive and intensive listening on the accuracy of tense use among EFL learners in Iran. The design of this study was pre-test, post-test with intact classes. According to the purpose of the study, 3 groups of participants were needed, therefore, from the population of the study, 6 intact classes (3 male and 3 female classes) in the elementary institutional level were selected for the treatments. After selecting the sample (n = 90), homogeneity of the participants regarding language proficiency was tested through a PET test. The homogeneous participants (n = 60) were selected according to the standard deviation. After determining the groups, participants were given pre-test of verb tense use. From among the 6 intact classes one experimental group (n = 19, 9 male and 10 female participants) was identified to take intensive listening method as treatment, another experimental group (n = 20, 12 male and 8 female participants) was identified to take extensive listening as treatment and control group (n = 21, 9 male and 12 female participants) was identified in order to not take intensive listening or extensive listening activities. All groups of the study were given pre-test of verb tense usage in order to measure their grammatical knowledge in verb tense prior to the treatments of the study. In intensive group participants listened to the conversational pieces from their course book to answer the researchers designed questions which need focus on the listening in order to answer. Listening questions would include filling the gap, matching, etc. Another experimental group, the extensive group, selected free listening material for themselves to listen to out of class and report only whether they have managed to listen to it to be sure that they had listening. The control group studied the same course book with the same teacher without any intensive or extensive listening activity. After finishing twenty five sessions of treatments for all groups, a post-test including verb tense was given to the participants. Post-test scores were compared through SPSS to report the findings and results.

### **Data Analyses**

Since this was a comparison study, comparison was made according to the groups' means by the use of SPSS data analyzing software. The reliability of the pre-test and post-test was analyzed by SPSS through item analysis method. Three groups' pre-test scores and post-test scores were compared with each other. Pre-test scores were compared with each other to see that participants were not in different levels regarding using verb tense. Post-test scores were compared with each other to see the effect of different kinds of listening on using verb tense. One-way ANOVA was used to compare means of three groups to see whether there was a significant difference among the performance of three groups.

## Hypotheses Testing

The first research hypothesis addressed the effect of extensive listening on the accuracy of tense use, i.e.  $H_1$ : Extensive listening has a positive effect on the accuracy of tense use among EFL learners in Iran. To test this hypothesis, paired sample t-test was run with an alpha level of .05.

As Table 1.1. indicates, there was a statistically significant difference between extensive listening group's pre-test ( $M = 4.90$ ,  $SD = 1.29$ ) and post-test ( $M = 12.20$ ,  $SD = 2.24$ ),  $t(28) = -12$ ,  $p = .0$  since the p value is less than .05. The results suggest that the first research hypothesis is accepted, namely  $H_1$ : Extensive listening has a positive effect on the accuracy of tense use among EFL learners in Iran.

1.1. Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	IG pre test - IG post test	-8.684	2.212	.507	-9.750	-7.617	17.110	18	.000
Pair 2	EG pre test - EG post test	-7.300	2.515	.562	-8.477	-6.122	12.980	19	.000
Pair 3	CG pre test - CG post test	-6.761	2.718	.593	-7.999	-5.524	11.398	20	.000

The second research hypothesis addressed the effect of intensive listening on the accuracy of tense use, i.e.  $H_2$ : Intensive listening has a positive effect on the accuracy of tense use among EFL learners in Iran.

As Table 1.1. indicates, there was a statistically significant difference between extensive listening group's pre-test ( $M = 4.94$ ,  $SD = 1.74$ ) and post-test ( $M = 13.63$ ,  $SD = 1.46$ ),  $t(28) = -17$ ,  $p = .0$  since the p value is less than .05. The results suggest that the second research hypothesis is accepted, namely  $H_2$ : Intensive listening has a positive effect on the accuracy of tense use among EFL learners in Iran.

The third hypothesis addressed more positive effects of intensive listening in contrast to extensive listening, i.e.  $H_3$ : Intensive listening has more positive effects than Extensive listening on the accuracy of tense use among EFL learners in Iran. In order to test this hypothesis, a One-way ANOVA was run. The results from ANOVA showed  $p = .009$ , indicating that there was significant difference among the three groups of the study (Table 1.2.).

### 1.2. Results of One-Way ANOVA for Posttest scores

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	37.569	2	18.785	5.113	.009
Within Groups	209.431	57	3.674		
Total	247.000	59			

Since there were significant differences among the three treatments in post-test, a post hoc test of Tukey HSD was run to compare the three groups' performance with each other and test the third hypothesis. As table 1.3. shows, there was not any significant difference between extensive listening and intensive listening,  $p = 0.59$ . Therefore, based on the results from One-way ANOVA test and Tukey post hoc test, it can be said that the third hypothesis of the study was not met and intensive listening has not more positive effects than extensive listening on the accuracy of tense use among EFL learners in Iran.

### 1.3. Tukey Post Hoc Test for Multiple Comparisons of the Groups

Dependent Variable: Post test scores Tukey HSD

(I) Treatment	(J) Treatment	Mean		Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
		Difference (I-J)	Std. Error		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
	Extensive method	1.43158	.61408	.059	-.0461	2.9093
Intensive method	Conventional Method	1.86967*	.60691	.009	.4092	3.3302
	Intensive method	-1.43158	.61408	.059	-2.9093	.0461
Extensive method	Conventional Method	.43810	.59889	.746	-1.0031	1.8793
	Intensive method	-1.86967*	.60691	.009	-3.3302	-.4092
Conventional Method	Extensive method	-43810	.59889	.746	-1.8793	1.0031

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Based on the analysis of the data gathered from post-test, the findings of the present study are as follows: first, it was found that extensive listening had positive effect on the accuracy of tense use among EFL learners in Iran; second, it was found that intensive listening had positive effect on the accuracy of tense use among EFL learners in Iran; and third, it was found neither intensive listening group nor extensive listening group outperformed each other and there were not significant differences between these two groups' performances.

### Discussion and Conclusion

This study found that extensive listening had a positive effect on the accuracy of tense and this finding is in line with the findings of Onoda (2010) and White (2008). However, the dependent variable of Onoda and White's was listening comprehension and they reported the positive effects of extensive listening skill.



The importance of Extensive Listening was mentioned by Ellis (1994) who indicates that more exposure to input, whether visual or aural, is vital for language acquisition. Considering the importance of extensive listening as an input, Krashen (1985) argues that humans acquire language by understanding language that contains structures slightly beyond their current level of competence (i+1): comprehensible input. This provision of input can be easily seen in extensive listening. Krashen's suggestion about the positive effects of extensive listening approaches refers to the fact that the learners want to listen to their interests and consider their own levels of difficulty of the listening materials.

Therefore, the positive effect of extensive listening can also refer to the pleasure of listening task in the target language. Supporting this view, Krashen (1985) claims that students receive adequate exposure to comprehensible language and that acquisition takes place in a relaxed, stress-free atmosphere. Therefore, EL seems to involve both exposure to large amounts of material, motivation, and a self-selection of the material.

In support of extensive listening, Wenden (2002) points to "learner-centered instruction" (p. 32). In learner-centered learning, the learners can select any material they like. Learners are more involved and more highly motivated because students select their own listening material.

In this study, it was also found that intensive listening had positive effect on the accuracy of tense use. This finding was in line with the findings of Kiany and Shiramiry (2002), Kuo (2010), Rahimi (2008), Trofimovich, Lightbown, Halter, and Song (2009), Field (2008), and Kuo (2010) who did studies about the effect of intensive listening on dictation, pronunciation.

Intensive listening requires students to understand the meaning of each discourse and, ultimately, to understand every sentence and word. Generally, intensive listening requires students to listen to a text several times, divide the text into paragraphs and sentences to understand each one, or do dictation word by word. The goal is for students to understand every sentence.

Considering the third finding of this study, none of intensive listening group and extensive listening group outperformed each other and there was not any significant difference between these two groups' performances. It can be discussed that intensive listening and extensive listening have different aims in language learning contexts. That is the point that makes this study different from the previous ones (e.g. field, 2008; Onada, 2010) as far as methodology is concerned, and it considered both intensive and extensive listening. The previous studies tried to study the effects of these treatments separately. However, considering both of them in the present study, it was found that grammatical accuracy in the case of tense enjoyed the similar positive effect from both treatments. Considering the differences between these two types of listening, it seems that less experienced L2 listeners do not benefit from abundant input because "much of what they elicit from the input is based upon *approximation* or upon a principle of finding *the best match*" (Field,

2008, p. 106). Therefore, intensive listening has also been widely used by L2 teachers in the language classroom. Considering the differences of these two treatments (extensive listening and intensive listening), both of them found to have positive effect in this study.

By discussing the findings of the present study in comparison with the previous ones, it can be concluded that both intensive and extensive listening have positive effects on the tense accuracy use. The beneficial effects of both treatments can be because of their input providing nature which is not ignorable in language learning. By motivating for interested and suitable level of difficulty, the learners pick the advantages of extensive listening material. On the other hand, intensive listening is used for special elements of language which needs direct attention (e.g. dictation, pronunciation). However, even this difference did not lead to the outperforming feature of any in the correct use of tense by EFL learners in this study. Therefore, it can be concluded that both extensive listening and intensive listening techniques have positive effects on the accurate use of tense and none of them has more significant effects than the other.

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