

**The Impact of Working Memory Capacity on Listening
Comprehension**
**(Case Study: Second Year LMD Students, Department of English,
Guelma University)**

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Abstract

The present study aims at investigating the impact of EFL Working Memory Capacity on Listening Comprehension. Since listening comprehension is considered as a necessary skill for the overall mastery of English, students should have efficient working memory capacity in listening comprehension in order to master the foreign language the way natives do. Therefore, we hypothesize that raising second year students' as well as teachers' awareness of the impact of working memory capacity in listening comprehension enhances their performance in listening comprehension of the English language.

Introduction

Working memory capacity (WMC) is an essential requirement in the process of foreign language (FL) learning, especially in listening comprehension (LC) as this skill is based on the extent to which foreign language learners can understand what they hear and know how to receive knowledge about language. This ability to understand, store, and retain knowledge is highly related to the mental capacity of the learner, especially his memory WMC. If this latter is high, it yields better LC rate, whereas, if it is low, it will negatively impact learners' ability to understand received language, which as a consequence, will make them graduate with a very low working memory capacity WMC in LC of the English language.

1. Working Memory

Most Researchers consider working memory among the greatest influential constructs in many novel studies of human cognitive functions over the past 35 years. In several works, working memory has been conceptualized as an active system that can usually be responsible for the temporary maintenance and simultaneous

processing of information (Bayliss, Jarrold, Baddeley, Gunn, and Leigh, 2005).

Miyake and Shah (1999) define working memory as follows:

Working memory is those mechanisms or processes that are involved in the control, regulation, and active maintenance of task-relevant information in the service of complex cognition, including novel as well as familiar, skilled tasks (450)

It can be stated that this definition displays that there is a dual nature of working memory as being included in both simultaneous processing and storage.

Moreover, Lepine, Barrouiler and Camos (2005) qualify working memory as an important capacity that underlies complex as well as elementary cognitive processes. It is crucial in thinking and learning and makes people able to learn and string together thoughts and ideas through using the contents of various memory-storage systems.

2. Working Memory and FL Comprehension

An examination of the significant role of working memory in foreign LC has been done by Miyake and Friedman (1998). They have explored the causal relations between working memory and foreign LC. Their study has displayed a significant impact of working memory on syntactic processing: those participants with higher working memory capacity are capable of utilizing syntactic information when comprehending the FL, and have displayed a level of sensitivity to certain syntactic cues that is approximate to native listener levels. The researchers have come to a conclusion that working memory span contributes well to LC, both through affecting the ability to learn what cues are crucial in the FL and through influencing how well the learner is able of utilizing these cues while listening.

Furthermore, McDonald (2006) has utilized a measure of working memory that is presented in the FL of the participants. Several other researchers have employed FL

reading comprehension measures in order to study the relationship with measures of working memory. Harrington and Sawyer (1992) have assessed participants' FL working memory processing and storage capacity as well as FL storage capacity alone. Utilizing a TOEFL Grammar and Reading sections as well as a cloze test as measures of FL comprehension, they have stated that the performance on the FL working memory test of the storage and processing capacity obviously correlated with FL reading comprehension scores and they have proposed that the attentional control element of working memory is critical to FL reading comprehension.

It is worth noting that in both the McDonald (2006) studies, working memory's measures are conducted in the FL, which may confuse to some extent individual differences in working memory with FL proficiency. Though this point should be taken into account when choosing working memory measures, Osaka and other researchers (Osaka & Osaka, 1992; Osaka, Osaka, & Groner, 1993) have stated that L1, L2 and FL working memory measures in language learners are strongly correlated. L1 measures of working memory may give a clearer measure of working memory (particularly in the context of L2 research); nonetheless, the results of Harrington and Sawyer include important assurance of the significance of working memory in FL comprehension.

It is most clear that the effect of differences in working memory resources can be due to features of the input. Leiser's (2007) sample read texts about familiar and unfamiliar topics. He has reported that working memory is linked to performance, but this impact relies on the task and the familiarity of the topic. He has added that, greater working memory has a relation with better performance for familiar, but not unfamiliar, topics.

Furthermore, Walter (2004) has mentioned that working memory is correlated with the transfer of L1 reading comprehension skills to an L2 comprehension task only in the complex condition where a pronoun and its referent were separated by multiple clauses. These results propose that the difficulty or the complexity of the passage (determined by factors like topic familiarity) and the difficulty of the task presuppose the great role of working memory capacity in level of performance.

3. The Method

3.1 Hypotheses

In conducting this study that is related to the nature of the students' level of WMC and their LC performance, we hypothesize that WMC correlates with LC. In other words there is a positive relationship between the two variables. We also hypothesize that raising FL teachers' awareness as well as drawing second year students' attention towards the importance of WMC in LC would enhance their listening performance in the English language.

3.2 Participants

The present research is concerned with two types of population: students and teachers. Participants of the first target population are 40 second year LMD students of English at Guelma University. The second population targeted is composed of 20 teachers of English at Guelma University

3.3 Research Means

In order to test the hypotheses stated above, we used a mixed method. We carried out two tests. The listening span test was administered in order to measure students' WMC in listening and the LC test to test students' LC. Then, to verify the relationship between the two variables, the correlation coefficient (r) was calculated. Another

instrument designed and used to collect the data of this study was teachers' questionnaire.

3.4 Students' Listening Span Test

3.4.1 The sample

The sample which has been randomly chosen from the targeted population is second year LMD students of English in the University of Guelma, for the academic year 2013-2014. The forty (40) students chosen as a sample were to a great extent homogeneous. Most of them have been studying English as a foreign language for, at least, ten (10) years. We have divided them into two groups for the sake of organization: a first group of twenty (20) students had the listening span test, then, the other twenty (20) students had the same test.

3.4.2 Aim of the Test

The Listening Span Test aims to measure WMC in listening; more specifically it aims to measure both the storage and the processing.

3.4.3 Description of the Test

In order to identify students' WMC in listening, a listening span test has been administered. This test includes thirty four (34) sentences. The first two sentences have been considered as an example. So there are thirty two (32) sentences. the thirty two (32) sentences have been divided into three sections; from item two (02) to item five (05), there are two (02) sentences; from item six (06) to item nine (09), there are three (03) sentences; and section three starts from item ten (10) to item twelve (12) and in each item there are four sentences (04). Thus, in section one, there are three (03) items and each item contains two sentences, section two includes four (04) items and in each item there are three (03) sentences and section three involves three (03)

items and each item contains four (04) sentences (see appendix II). The sentences of this test are about common knowledge, general truth, universal knowledge and some of them are syntactically or semantically true or false.

3.4.4 Administration of the Test

The researcher herself administered the test. She informed the test takers that the test would be used only for educational purpose. The researcher reads the items, when she finishes each items, she gives students fifteen seconds (15) to write down on their papers whether each statement is true or false and to write the final words of each sentence. In order to guarantee that the test would be organized, a teacher researcher attended the test.

3.4.5 Analysis and Results

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of the subjects' answers to the Listening Span Test. Their answers were counted as correct and incorrect and were transformed into percentage.

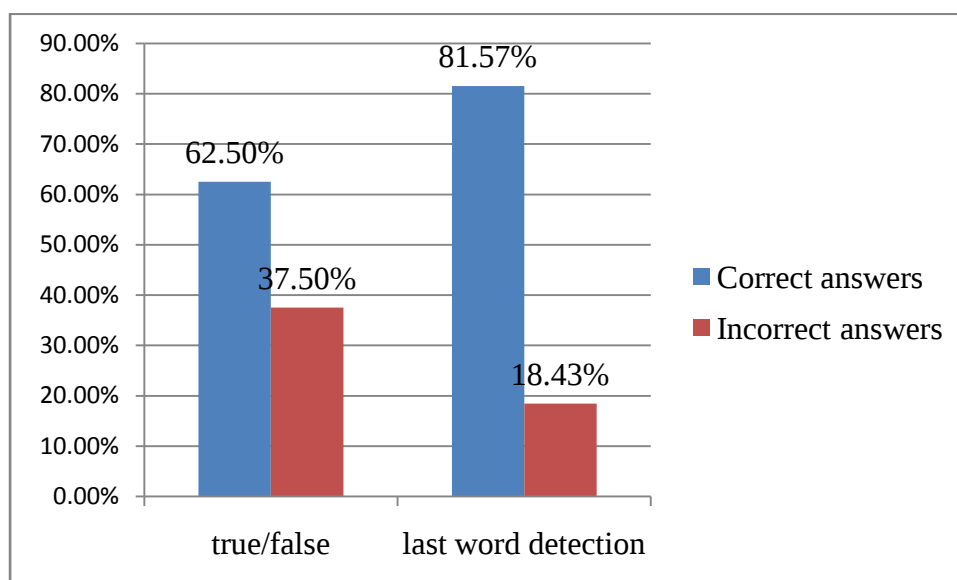
In what follows we will present the results of each section of the test in tables and graphs.

Section One: from item two (02) to item five (05)

Answers	True/false	Percentage	Detection of the last word	Percentage
Correct	200	62,5%	261	81,57%
Incorrect	120	37,50%	59	18,43%

Total	320	100%	320	100%
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Table (01): students' Correct and Incorrect answers in true or false and detection of the last word (section one)



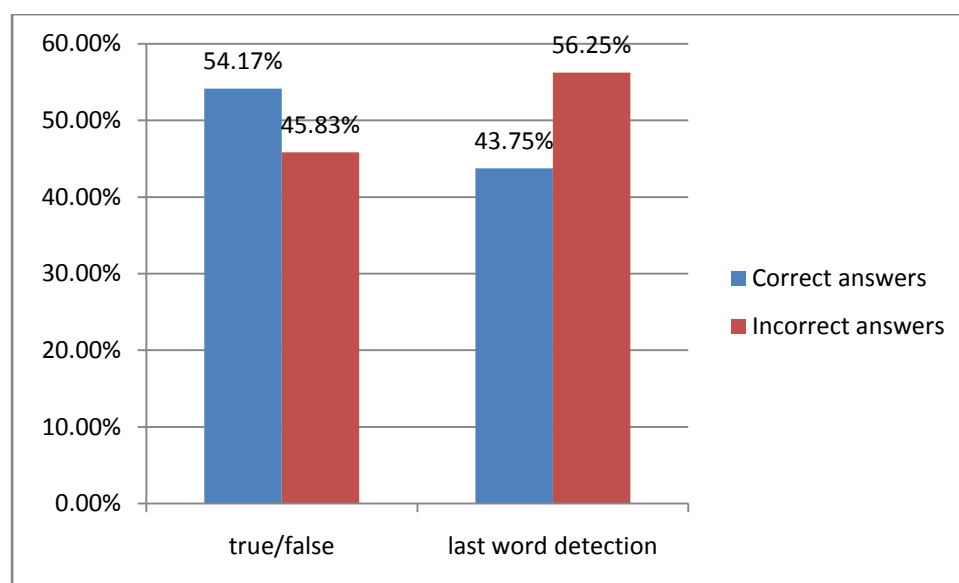
Graph 01: Students' Correct and Incorrect answers in true or false and detection of the last word (section one)

The table and the graph present section one in the Listening Span Test. As mentioned before, this section contains four items (from item 02 to item 05). Each item includes two sentences. Students are asked to decide whether each statement is true/false as well as detect the last words of each sentence. When looking at true/ false answers, subjects had 62, 50% correct answers and 37,50% incorrect ones. In the detection of the last words, students have 81, 50% correct answers and 18,43% incorrect ones. We can notice that the number of correct answers exceeds the number of incorrect ones in both true/ false answers and the detection of the last words. The table also shows that the number of correct answers in the detection of the last words exceeds the number of correct answers in true/ false answers. This means that students concentrated and paid well attention in detecting the last words of sentences.

Section Two: from item six (06) to item nine (09)

Answers	True/false	Percentage	Detection of the last word	Percentage
Correct	262	54,58%	180	37,50%
Incorrect	218	45,42%	300	62,50%
Total	480	100%	480	100%

Table (02): Students' Correct/Incorrect answers in deciding true/false answers and detecting the last words (section two)



Graph 02: Students' Correct/Incorrect answers in deciding true/false answers and detecting the last words (section two).

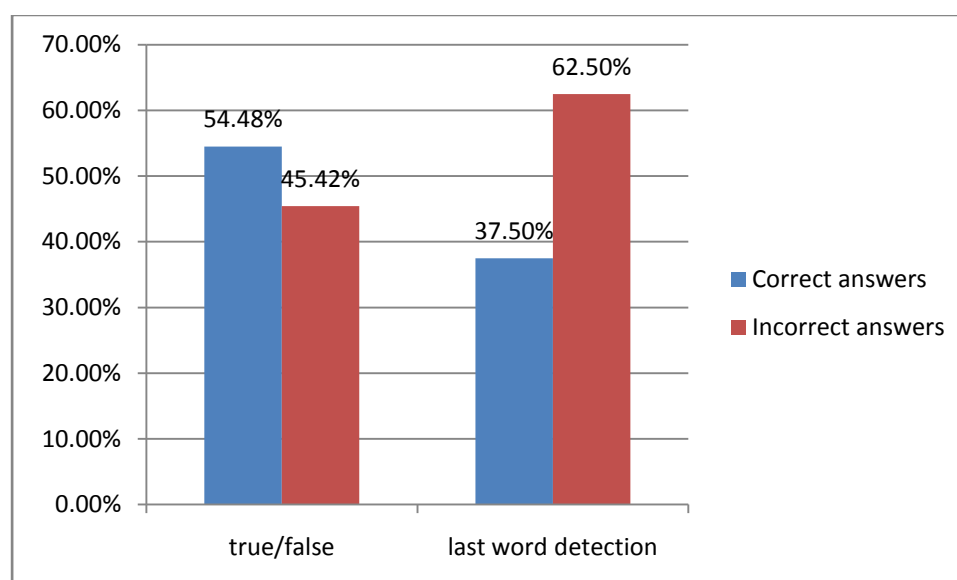
This graph shows the results of section two in the Listening Span Test. This section includes four items and each item involves three sentences. Table (02) shows that the percentages of correct and incorrect answers in true/false answers are similar. Students have 54,17% correct answers and 45,83% incorrect answers. With the

detection of the last words, however, more than half of the students have incorrect answers with a percentage of 56,25%. It can be that when the number of statements increased, students became anxious and confused and, as a consequence, provided incorrect answers.

Section Three: from item ten (10) to item twelve

Answers	True/false	Percentage	Detection of the last word	Percentage
Correct	262	54,58%	180	37,50%
Incorrect	218	45,42%	300	62,50%
Total	480	100%	480	100%

Table (03): Students' Correct/Incorrect answers in deciding true/false answers and detecting the last words (section three)



Graph 03: Students' Correct/Incorrect answers in deciding true/false answers and detecting the last words (section three)

Table three (03) represents the findings of section three in the listening span test. This section includes three items and each item involves four (04) statements. As it is clearly shown, 54,58% have correct answers and 45,2% have incorrect answers in true/false answers. With the detection of the last words, a highest percentage that of 62,50% represents the incorrect answers. It could be said that the majority of subjects focused only on answering true/false answers. We could state that when students knew that each item in this section involves four (04) statements and that they had only fifteen seconds to answer, though it is a sufficient time, they preferred to concentrate only on one thing, that of answering true/false answers. Thus, students are not confident of their processing abilities.

3.5 Listening Comprehension Test

3.5.1 Aim of the Test

This Listening Comprehension Test aims to measure students' LC in the English language. More specifically, it aims to identify their strengths and weaknesses in listening comprehension. This feedback is of great interest to the student's themselves and to their teachers.

3.5.2 Description of the Test

This test is composed of four sections. Section one includes four (04) short conversations, section two contains two (02) short talks, section three involves one long conversation and the last section includes one long talk. The test was selected to suit the proper level of students. Therefore, it is neither difficult nor simple (see appendix III).

3.5.3 Administration of the Test

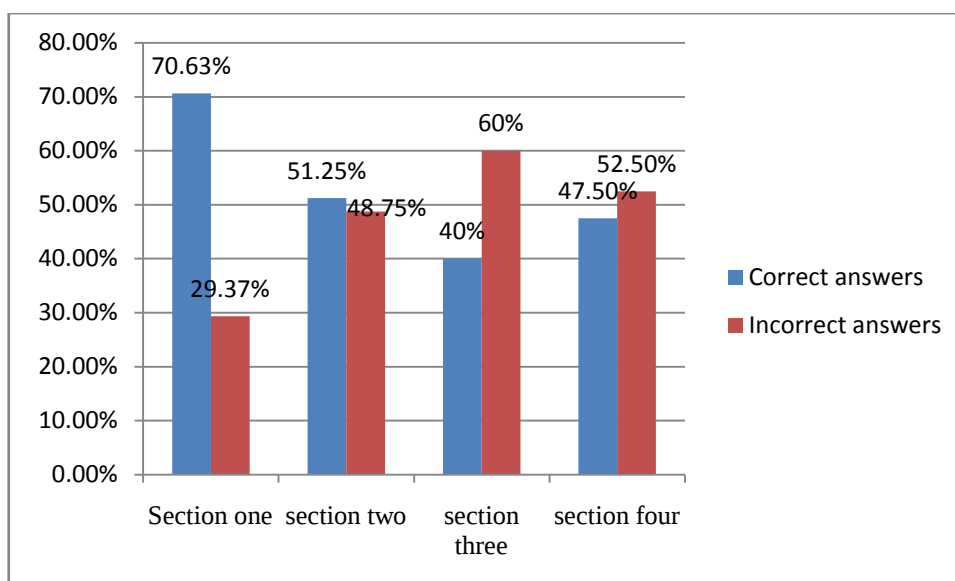
The researcher herself administered the test a week after the administration of students' Listening Span Test. Students were informed that the test would check their LC in the English language and the data collected is confidential and will only be used in the research.

3.5.4 Results and Discussion

In this section the analysis and interpretations of students' answers to the Listening Comprehension Test will be presented. Their answers were counted as correct and incorrect and were transformed into percentage.

Answers	Section one	Percentage	Section two	Percentage	Section three	Percentage	Section four	percentage
Correct	113	70,63%	41	51,25%	16	40%	19	47,50%
Incorrect	47	29,37%	39	48,75%	24	60%	21	52,50%
Total	160	100%	80	100%	40	100%	40	100%

Table (04): Students' Correct/ Incorrect answers in the Listening Comprehension Test



Graph 04: Students' Correct/ Incorrect answers in the Listening Comprehension Test

As it is mentioned before, students are asked to listen to four short conversations, two short talks, one long conversation and one long talk.

Table (04) shows that the number of students' correct answers exceeds the number of incorrect ones in section one. 70,63% have correct answers and 29,73% have incorrect answers. Section one includes a detail question, conversation number two requires an understanding of the function and the last two conversations require an understanding of speaker's attitude. We can notice that 29, 73% which is considered as an identical percentage, have incorrect answers. This means that these students may have a lack of auditory experience. They do not know, for example, that when facing a question about speakers' attitude, they should listen to the sounds of speakers' voices for hints about their attitudes and opinions about the topic.

In section two, students listened to two short talks, 51,25% of students have correct answers and 48;75% have incorrect answers. The two short talks require listening for gist. It can be stated that approximately half of the respondents tried to focus on every word of the talk and forgot to pay attention to the general meaning of the talk.

In section three and four, the number of incorrect answers exceeds the number of correct ones. Subjects were asked to listen to a long conversation (section three) and a long talk (section four). 60% and 52,50% of the students have incorrect answers when listening to the long conversation and the long talk . Maybe these students tried to focus on every word of the conversation or the talk and forgot about the general meaning and the main ideas and, as a consequence, they were confused and lost control over what they were listening to.

It might be understood that students have difficulties to figure out the purpose for listening. Most of them do not activate their prior knowledge to predict the content of the text they listen to. Moreover, students are always trying to understand every word of the text. They do not attempt to attend the parts of the listening input which are relevant to the identified purpose.

3.6 Pearson Correlation Coefficient

To verify whether the relationship or the impact of students' working memory capacity and their listening comprehension, a correlation coefficient "r" is calculated. The degree to which two sets of scores covary or vary together is estimated by calculating a correlation coefficient (r). It can range from a perfect positive relationship of +1.0 to no systematic relationship at 0.0 to a perfect negative relationship of -1.0. If "r" is approximate to "+1" or "-1" the correlation is high. If it is "+1" or "-1" the correlation is strong/perfect. But, if "r" is near 0 the correlation is weak and if "r" is 0 there is no correlation. If "r" is positive (marked by +) this means that if the values for "x" increase the values for "y" also increase. But if "r" is negative this shows that if the values for "x" increase the values for "y" decrease.

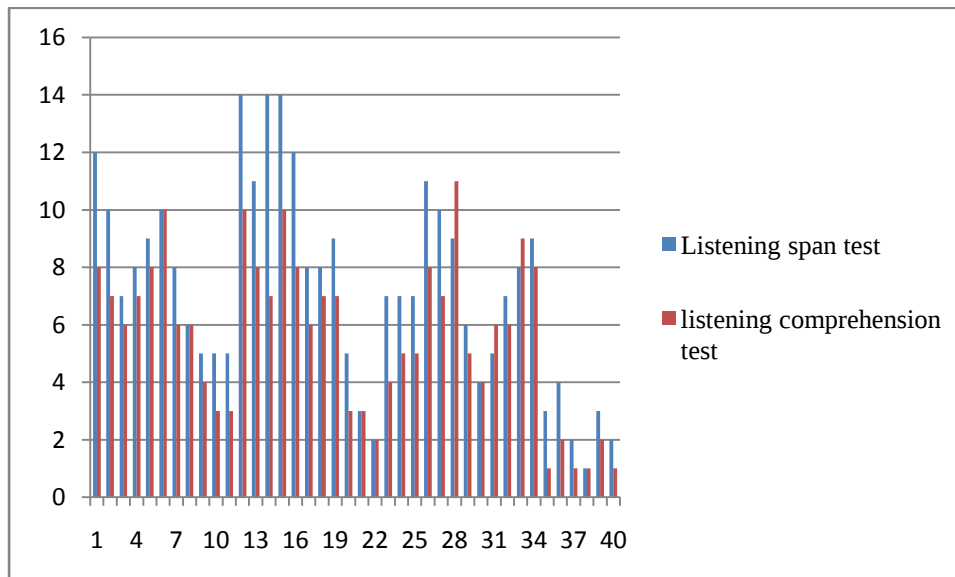
However, there is always the possibility that the results might show no relationship between them. This leads to the need for mentioning a special type of hypothesis that is called the null hypothesis. It is a hypothesis of no association in a correlational study (Brown, 1988: 110). It is either confirmed or disconfirmed.

On this basis, the null hypothesis in the present study is:

H_0 : There is no systematic relationship between the working memory capacity of second-year LMD students and their listening comprehension. That is to say, $H_0: r = 0$.

H_1 : There is a positive relationship between the working memory capacity of second-year LMD students and their listening comprehension. In other words, $H_0: r > 0$.

In what follows we will present the results of the correlation in a graph:



Graph 06: Correlation of Working Memory Capacity and Listening Comprehension

Since the value of the r obtained is 0.88 which is well above zero. $0.88 > 0$, so the null hypothesis that assumes no relationship between students' WMC and their LC ($H_0: r = 0$) is rejected.

3.7 Teachers' Questionnaire

3.7.1 Description of the Questionnaire

Teachers' questionnaire was handed to twenty teachers of English in the department of English at Guelma University, for the academic year 2013-2014. It is headed by a small introduction explaining to the teachers that it is a part of a research work which investigates the importance of the impact of working memory capacity on listening comprehension (see appendix IV). It includes twenty questions that are organized into three sections.

3.7.2 Summary of the Results

This questionnaire was given to teachers working in the department of English at Guelma University. The majority of teachers are experienced in teaching English at the University level and most of them work as permanent teachers.

It could be stated that most teachers agreed to some extent that listening is the basic skill that FL students need to develop since the four skills are equally important and related to each other. Moreover, some teachers affirmed that students have to master a number of listening sub-skills in order to be considered as good language listeners. In addition, when asked about the strategies that could improve students' LC, the majority of the respondents chose cognitive strategies as the crucial ones. In fact, cognitive strategies like note taking and summarizing are very essential in learning any new language and students may utilize them to enhance their listening. Some other teachers chose metacognitive strategies as the most important ones. It is important to mention that metacognitive strategies help students to improve their listening. For example: with self-evaluation listeners can assess whether they are at a stage of LC they expected or wanted to be at time. Some teachers believe that all the

mentioned strategies (memory, metacognitive and socio-affective) are equally important and can help students' LC. All the strategies are steps that students must take to achieve better performance in listening. Furthermore, most teachers stated that the important LC problems include insufficient vocabulary, speed of speech and pronunciation. Some other teachers stressed the importance of psychological factors as anxiety and lack of concentration. We attempted to make respondents aware that the semantic comprehension is demonstrated via the syntactic relationships among different parts of the listened material. Teachers also agreed on organizing a well structured listening syllabus.

When analyzing section three of the questionnaire, we could affirm that all teachers consider the vital role that WMC plays in FL learning and agreed that WMC helps students to store important information in the course of their mental comprehension. Moreover, the majority of teachers believe that those students who have a high WMC perform better than those with poor WMC in LC. Teachers affirmed that students' should be made aware to use some strategies in order to have efficient WMC in LC and that rehearsal, chunking and imagery are among the important strategies that may enhance students' WMC in listening. Finally, the majority of teachers agreed that there is a need to raise students' awareness of the important role of WMC in foreign LC.

Conclusion:

We devised and administered two tests for students and a questionnaire to teachers. Through the analysis of the Listening Span Test and the Listening Comprehension Test as well as the analysis of the questionnaire, we made the following interpretations.

WMC correlates with LC. In other words, students' WMC has a great impact on their LC. Moreover, the majority of second year EFL students have a limited WMC. Therefore, they need to be trained as well as made aware of the importance of WMC in English language learning in general and in LC in particular. These students also suffer from different LC problems and need to use some strategies to help their LC improve.

It could be noticed that teachers understood their students' needs. They also showed a deep interest towards their students' problems in relation to LC. Teachers were also made aware to draw their students' attention on the importance of WMC in LC. We have attempted to analyze each question in relation to that issue.

General conclusion

It was deduced from the data obtained that there are several factors contributing to students' low WMC and their performance in LC. Moreover, the majority of teachers approve the significant role of WMC in LC.

To sum up: some points would be made:

- WMC is an essential element in students' LC because this skill is based on one's ability to store, retain and also on the understanding of chunks of language. If WMC is high, it can lead to better LC ability, whereas if it is low, it will negatively impact that ability.
- The role of the teacher is important in the classroom. S/he can greatly encourage and raise students' awareness to many important strategies and listening sub-skills.
- WMC is not the only means to enhance LC.

- Authentic materials should be the first objective in the classroom in order to improve learners' LC.
- Leaving students' to express themselves and talk about what they prefer to listen to may decrease their worries from failing in listening.

Therefore, focusing on the importance of WMC among EFL students, all members of teaching should collaborate in order to design a more appropriate syllabus of LC.

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Appendix I

Listening Span Test

Name:

Code:

Dear students,

Listening span test is used to measure working memory capacity in listening. More specifically, it measures both the storage and the processing. In this test, you are going to do two different things. First, the researcher would like you to decide whether each statement you hear is true or false (**be attentive these sentences are about common knowledge, general truth, universal knowledge and may be syntactically or semantically true or false**), then she asks you to detect or remember the last word of each statement. For example; you will hear:

Item number one:

- 1- You eat a mountain
- 2- The snow is cold

So it is very clear, the first sentence in item one is false because we do not eat a mountain; this is a common knowledge and this sentence is semantically incorrect and the second sentence is true (common knowledge). Concerning the last words, they are mountain and cold. In what follows, there will be eleven items, you are asked to write true or false and the last words of sentences.

Item number two:

- 3-

4-

The last words
are:.....

Item number three:

5-

6-

The last words are:.....

Item number four:

7-

8-

The last words
are:.....

Item number five:

9-

10-

The last words
are:.....

Item number six:

11-

12-

13-

The last words
are:.....

Item number seven:

14-

15-

16-

The last words
are:.....

Item number eight:

17-

18-

19-

The last words
are:.....

Item number nine:

20-

21-

22-

The last words
are:.....

Item number ten:

23-

24-

25-

26-

The last words

are:.....

Item number eleven:

27-

28-

29-

30-

The last words

are:.....

Item number twelve:

31-

32-

33-

34-

The researcher could clearly understand that your time is very limited and valuable.

For that reason, she appreciates your participation.

Appendix II

The Answers of Listening Span Test

Students are going to listen to twelve items. For each item from one to five there are two sentences. Items six to nine contain three sentences each, and items ten to twelve involve four sentences. The first item is an example. Students are asked to decide whether each statement is true or false as well as detecting the last word of each sentence. Students are given twelve seconds to answer each item.

Item number one:

- 1- You eat a mountain
- 2- The snow is cold

Item number two:

- 3- Queen Elizabeth II lives at Buckingham Palace in London, England
- 4- March is the first month in the year that has thirty one days

Item number three:

- 5- Tuesday is not a day.
- 6- His younger brother played guitar in a rock and roll band

Item number four:

- 7- The sun does not rise in the morning
- 8- Money grows on trees

Item number five:

- 9- The plural of the word sheep is sheep
- 10- The earth does not go around the sun

Item number six:

- 11- Water boils at 100 degrees celcius
- 12- There are fifty seven states in the United States of America
- 13- the wind is red

Item number seven:

- 14- A fact is a specific detail that is true based on objective proof
- 15- Nine plus one equals eleven
- 16- The Great Gatsby is written by Scott Fitzgerald

Item number eight:

- 17- drinking alcohol does not diminish driving ability
- 18- Pinocchio is a fairy tale story boy whose nose grows longer with each lie he tells
- 19- Horses cannot talk

Item number nine

- 20- There are twelve months in a year
- 21- Spring does start in December
- 22- Cats bark at dogs

Item number ten

- 23- The earth is not turning now as we speak
- 24- Berlin is the capital city of Germany
- 25- Plagiarism is using someone's ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information

26- The truth is always true.

Item number eleven:

27- The wolf is a domestic animal

28- If you heat ice, it melts

29- Apples are red, yellow or green

30- All human beings have six fingers in one hand

Item twelve:

31- The sky is blue

32- November 1st, 1954 is celebrated in Algeria as Independence Day

33- Arabic language is an Indo-European language

34- Water is purple

Appendix III

Name:

Listening Comprehension Test

This listening test tests your listening comprehension in English language. The researcher highly appreciates your support by completing this test. Your answer is of great value to the research. The data collected is confidential and is used in the research only. Please fill it and give it back to the researcher.

1. What will the woman probably do?

1. Lock the computer lab later.
2. Leave with man
3. Buy a new lock for the computer lab.
4. Show the man where the lab is

2. What does the woman imply?

1. The man should watch the program too
2. The man should leave the television on
3. The program will be over soon
4. She'll watch television later

3. What does the man mean?

1. He doesn't like the painting either.
2. He doesn't know how to paint.
3. He doesn't have any paintings.
4. He doesn't know what to do.

4. What does the man want to say?

1. He isn't sure what course to take
2. The math course is too short
3. He may not meet the graduation requirements
4. The graduation date has been changed

5. What is the subject of the announcement?

1. The school will be adding new classes
2. Three new teachers will be working at the school.
3. Some students have received an award.
4. The school is getting its own newspaper.

6. What does the teacher want the students to do?

1. Take everything out of their desks
2. Put the painting supplies in plastic bags
3. Bring paints with them to school on Monday
4. Put covers on their desks to keep the paint off

7. What are the speakers mainly discussing?

1. A new art project in the city
2. An assignment for their art class
3. An art display inside the public library
4. A painting that the girl saw downtown

8. Why is the boy excited?

1. A famous artist is going to visit his class.
2. His artwork might be seen by many people.
3. His class might visit an art museum.
4. He is getting a good grade in his art class.

9. Where does the boy say he may go this weekend?

1. To the zoo
2. To an art store
3. To Main Street
4. To the public library

10. Why does the girl suggest that the boy go to the art room?

1. So that he can hand in his homework
2. So that he can sign up for a class trip
3. So that he can see a new painting
4. So that he can talk to the teacher

11. What is the main topic of the talk?

1. A newly discovered type of ant
2. A type of ant with unusual skills
3. An increase in the population of one type of ant
4. A type of ant that could be dangerous to humans

12. According to the teacher, what is one activity that both leafcutter ants and people do?

1. Clean their food
2. Grow their own food
3. Eat several times a day
4. Feed their young special food

13. What does the teacher say many people think must be true about leafcutter ants?

1. They eat leaves.
2. They live in plants.
3. They have sharp teeth.
4. They are especially large.

14. What did the experiments show about leafcutter ants?

1. How fast they grow
2. Which plants they eat
3. Where they look for leaves
4. How much weight they can carry

Appendix IV

Teachers' questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire is a part of a research work carried out in the department of English

at the university of Guelma. Your answers will be used in order to explore the impact of working memory capacity on listening comprehension and will be treated anonymously. Please put a tick in front of the option of your choice and write down your comments when required. You can choose more than one option when necessary.

Working Memory Capacity: has been defined as the use of stored information in the performance of more complex cognitive tasks (Hulme & Mackenzie, 1992). Moreover, it enables us to learn and to string together thoughts and ideas.

Section One: Background Information:

1. Specify your qualification, please?

a) Licence / B.A

☐

b) Magister / M.A

☐

c) Doctorat / Ph.D

☐

2. You work at the English Department as:

a) Part-time teacher

☐

b) Full time teacher

☐

3. How long have you been teaching English at the university? (Please specify the number of years).....

.....

.....

Section Two: Listening Comprehension

4. In your opinion, which language skill is the most difficult for students to master?

- c) Listening ☐
- d) Reading ☐
- e) Speaking ☐
- f) Writing ☐

5. listening comprehension is the basic skill that FL students need to develop:

- a) Yes ☐
- b) No ☐

5. A good listener needs to be able to draw on a range of skills, including:

- a) Listening for general meaning ☐
- b) Listening for specifics, including recall of important details ☐
- c) The ability to retain chunks of language of different lengths for short periods ☐
- d) Using prior knowledge to aid understanding ☐
- e) Predicting what is going to be said ☐
- f) Coping with unknown vocabulary ☐
- g) Coping with different accents ☐

6. In your opinion, listeners could improve their listening comprehension through a number of strategies, including:

- a) Memory strategies ☐
- b) Metacognitive strategies ☐
- c) Cognitive strategies ☐
- d) Socio-affective strategies ☐
- e) All of them ☐

7. In your opinion, what is the major listening comprehension problem?

☐

- a) lack of concentration
- b) Anxiety
- c) Insufficient vocabulary
- d) Speed of speech
- e) Pronunciation
- f) different accents of speakers

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

8. Do you think that FL Listeners with high working memory capacity are necessarily able to make use of syntactic information when comprehending the FL?

☐

- a) Yes
- b) No

☐

9. Do you think that there is a need to design a well organized listening comprehension syllabus?

- a) Yes
- b) No

☐
☐

If no, would you say why please.....

.....

If yes, would you please explain how this could be achieved?

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.....

.....

Section Three: The role of Working Memory Capacity in Listening Comprehension

10. Do you think that working memory capacity plays a crucial role in FL learning? (a brief explanation would be appreciated)

a) Yes

☐

b) No

☐

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.....

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11. Working memory capacity is the most important mental workspace that can be used to help students store important information in the course of their mental comprehension activities:

a) Yes

☐

b) No

☐

12. Does working memory capacity vary among students?

a) Yes

☐

b) No

☐

13. If yes, do you think that students with high working memory capacity outperform their peers (those with poor working memory capacity) in listening comprehension?

a) Yes

☐

b) No

☐

Would you please say

why.....

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.....

14. According to your teaching experience do you think students who are considered as having a greater working memory capacity in listening comprehension are more supposed to use many strategies?

a) Yes

☐

b) No

☐

15. In order to have efficient working memory capacity in listening comprehension, do you make your students aware to use some strategies?

a) Yes

☐

b) No

☐

16. In your opinion, what may develop your students working memory capacity in listening comprehension?

a) Rehearsal

☐

b) Chunking

☐

c) Imagery

☐

d) All of them

☐

17. Do you think that teachers should raise student's awareness of the important role of working memory capacity in FL listening comprehension?

a) Yes

☐

b) No

☐

18. Justify

your

answer.....

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19. Could you please add your comments about the impact of working memory capacity on listening comprehension?

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Thank you for your time and collaboration.