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College of Humanities and Social Sciences

The Impact of Animated Stories on EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension Skills

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Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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## **Dedication**

**This theses is dedicated to my parents who were by my side throughout my study.**

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the impact of animated stories on EFL learners of different proficiency levels listening comprehension skills and the EFL learners' perception of the use of animated stories during classes.

The instruments used for data collection were pre- and post – tests “ The Flyer Cambridge Young Learners English Test” and the attitudinal questionnaire was used at the end of each animated story watching process. In the research the pre- and post- tests data collection were analyzed with the help of the non- parametric Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Tests, which were used within group comparisons of the three sets of scores for the three groups , and Kruskal - Wallis Test and Mann- Whitney Test were used for between group comparisons.

Data collection for attitudinal questionnaire was analyzed with the help of descriptive statistics. The results of the analyzes showed that there was a significant difference in the performance in students listening comprehension skills after watching animated story telling. The data collected from the attitudinal questionnaire showed that students mostly liked the stories about animals ( The Rainbow Fish, Harry the Dirty Dog) more than on general topics. To the question whether they would like to watch those stories during their class time their response was positive.



## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

This chapter states the need for the investigation of the impact of animated stories on EFL learners' listening comprehension skills and their perception of animated stories. It also describes the purpose and significance of the study, as well as introduces two research questions.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The literature provides some findings comparing television and text comprehension stories according to which televised stories help kids to form beneficial mental support for particular story. Also audio narrations for children adds an element of interest and engagement, so televised stories lead to language acquisition (Diana, Sharp, Bransford, Goldman, Risko, Kinzer & Vye, 1995; Valiathan & Anand, 2008).

However, there appears to be a scarcity of research on the effectiveness of animated stories on language learners whose native language is not English.

Thus, the aim of this study was to find out the effectiveness of audio narrated stories on EFL listening comprehension. This may help to draw better conclusions about the role of audio narrative stories in EFL teaching. For this purpose, the data of the pre and post test results were collected and analyzed in order to compare audio or audio-visual comprehension on EFL learners listening.

### **1.2 Significance of the Study**

Since there seems to be a lack of research on the investigation of the impact of animated stories on language learning whose native language is not English, the study provides

additional findings for research and theory of EFL. The research helps to draw better conclusions about the role of animated stories in EFL teaching, specifically in EEC context as the study was conducted there. The study may be helpful for the Experimental English classes (EEC) at the American University of Armenia (AUA) as teachers will be able to draw better conclusions about the use of animated stories.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The following two research questions were investigated during the study.

Research question 1

Is there an impact of animated stories on EFL learners of different proficiency levels listening comprehension skills?

Research question 2

What are the EFL learners' perception of the use of animated stories during English classes?

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of animated stories of EFL learner's listening comprehension skills. In this literature review I will first introduce animated storytelling, then storytelling through picture books, the benefits of storytelling and research done. After that I will explain the basic concepts of audio narrated storytelling and about its effectiveness in the classroom setting. I will report the advantages of televised stories on children's memory as well as about the storytelling in different cultures. Finally, I will report why it is necessary to use the animated stories in the classroom, especially in the Armenian setting where learning English language has become a priority for the majority of the students.

#### **2.1 Animated storytelling**

Animated stories are based on text, some graphics, characters in motion or animations also audio narration. Animated stories add an element of interest and engagement. The current study shows that the learners learn more from the words and visuals than solely from words. Here there are two basic elements the overlap between visuals and the audio narration. When the story is presented both with visuals and audio the learners remember more. (Valiathan & Anand, 2008).

##### **2.1.1 Storytelling through picture books**

We all tell stories; every day in fact. It is strange then that there is still some reluctance amongst teachers to use stories in the classroom. Stories have always been important in classrooms and are likely to become even more so. Recently, there has been increased focus on the importance of stories in education, particularly in early childhood education. (Apceiu, 2011). As

Peck (1989), suggests that in many cases storytelling is the oral clarification or personal experience story. As a matter of fact storytelling is not considered as memorized script, it is a story told by someone with his/her own language use.

The researchers in the current study aimed to investigate how the bilingual and monolingual kids reflect on storytelling through pictures book. So, the bilingual children 24 page wordless book “Frog, Where Are You”? was used. During various studies this particular book was used by the researchers in order to study L1 and L2. The book solely is based on 24 pictures, so no text is provided here. The book is based on the three characters, which are a boy, the dog of that boy, also his frog. During one night the boy's frog ran from him and boy started to search for his frog. At that time boy met adventures and met different other animals.

Eventually, the boy and the dog find their frog with a mate and some baby frogs, and return home with one of the baby frogs in the boy's hand. The pictured events afford numerous opportunities for the narrator to infer or attribute emotions and mental states to characters (e.g., fear, joy, surprise, desire, thoughts), also relationships between characters (e.g., friendship, animosity). The pictured events provide valuable context for the experiment of evaluative devices in bilingual narrative development. The research was carried out between monolingual and bilingual groups of children and adults. Among the children participants age ranges from 4 – 10 years old. The participants had an opportunity to get ready for the storytelling process at home. When the participants were ready to reflect on the story the researchers asked the participant to go back and retell the story from the first page till the end meanwhile both children and adults were audio recorded during that time. The analyses were carried out with the help of ANOVAs, which showed that in both the monolingual and bilingual groups, the length of the story produced by the children were shorter comparing with the elder learners. There is

one difference between the bilingual and monolingual groups in terms of story length: whereas the eight- and ten year- olds produced longer stories than the five-year-olds for the monolingual groups, the bilingual five-year-olds actually produced longer stories than the older bilingual children (Chen & Yan; 2010 Trabasso & Nickel, 1992). German researcher Levenstien (1909, as cited in Hoff, 1982) mentioned that stories with visuals or pictures are immensely essential type of art for children between the ages ten or eleven.

According to Hoff (1982), young people become very fascinated by the visual narratives, as they help children to use English language more. In the current research comic picture books were used in order to develop the quality of information that is shared, by all means visuals are very helpful for kids for acquiring language. In this case they not only listened to the fun stories but see the visuals as well. Many teachers continue to use comic books in the classrooms as the students like to reflect on that stories, which help them to develop creativity and vocabulary skills (Hoff, 1982).

### **2.1.2 The benefits of storytelling**

Storytelling with the teacher as the storyteller, develop the students effective and critical listening skills. It seems that the teller, that is to say the teacher speaks directly to each listener in this case to each child. Storytelling offers two distinct learning situations for students. In this case with the educator as the story teller the learners enhance their listening skills effectively.

The storytelling helps many learners to discriminate and evaluate storytelling styles, story genres, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of it. Comparing with reading storytelling it is also very useful for developing not only listening comprehension but also building up vocabulary knowledge for the learners and stimulating an interest towards books ( Peck,1989; Nessel,1985).

### 2.1.3 Storytelling in different cultures

This study discusses the investigation of the necessity of story usage within classrooms, also the differences of traditions of storytelling across diverse cultures.

One thing is obvious stories help children to become personally interested in the past as well as the present. The emotional attachment creates strong reasons for children to tell family stories. Stories and storytelling offer that familiar narrative context that supports learning and should be a mainstay of the school curriculum. Children learn many things from others and through the experiences of others. When family members share stories of personal experiences, children claim these stories as their own because of their attachment to the family. In various cultures the storytelling differences is obvious. Many linguistic issues like pronunciation, vocabulary, and syntax can effect on students storytelling. By all means the storytelling differs not only from culture to culture but also from the families social class.

Before considering the variety of stories found cross-culturally, the attention was on how much variation in storytelling exists within one culture. For example, European and European North American taste for detailed description in novels has declined dramatically from Victorian to modern times. On the other hand Contemporary European North American parents (and their children) differ in the extent to which they foreground description (setting) versus plot in conversational narratives, as well as in the lengths of narrative they tell on a regular basis. European North American girls tend to foreground conversation when they tell about past personal experiences more than do boys. Thus, in research with almost 100 European North American children from southern and mid-western backgrounds, it was found that these children tell stories that contain complete problem-solving backgrounds 40% of the time at age 6

and over 60% of the time thereafter. Children from European backgrounds living in Canada tell narratives identical to mid- western and southern American narratives in form. In other words, although there are regional influences on phonology, no such influences have been found on storytelling form. By age 6, European North American children tell stories that meet almost all European North American conventional expectations of what a good story is: they begin by telling their listener who and what was involved and when things took place. African-American children have been recorded telling lengthy stories. In the traditional Latino family, the rules follow rural traditions. The Latino children's stories are rich in descriptions of locations and ongoing activities (McCabe,1997; Combs & Beach ,1994).

## **2.2 Audio Narrated storytelling**

There is an extensive literature on storytelling ,which discusses basic concepts of audio narrated stories. The audio-visual versions of the same stories contains matched visual character actions instead of the narrated actions; the utterances were identical in both versions.

The audio stories contained narrated statements of character actions that were carefully matched in complexity to the character utterances. As a matter of fact the audio narrated stories are based on text, some graphics, characters in motion or animations also audio narration, which is called “ voice-over” (Valiathan & Anand,2008).

Audio Narrated storytelling can:

- *enhance literacy skills, both oral and written, in the English language*
- *hone speaking skills and thus improve communication skills*
- *easily describe or explain something more complex like a moral dilemma without explicitly stating so and thus through example*

*becomes not just more meaningful but also more memorable*

- *awaken the students' creativity and the telling of tales provide a forum that is truly interactive; and last but not least -*
- *and be fun!!* (Apceiu, 2011).

### **2.3 Effectiveness of Audio Narrated Stories**

Nowadays people use the Internet more and more, in many cases English language educators use the internet in order to assist the learners' access to the Internet. The usage of which help learners to feel them as part of the global classroom. (Levy & Stockwell, 2006).

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century children are considered as innovators of knowledge. With the help of computers variety of activities are offered which make learners feel more comfortable and more independent. It is apparent that we all entered to a modern information age where technological innovations and TEFL are closely linked together. (Kuang-wu Lee, 2000).

Several studies were done in order to compare complete visuals, partial visuals, audio only, story comprehension for young learners. In this study participated preschoolers and early elementary children whose age ranges from 5 – 12 year old. A small body of literature provided more detailed analyses of young children's listening comprehension of stories across audio and audiovisual media. They participated in the studies in order to analyze the effectiveness of audio and audio visual narratives in E-Learning courseware. During the study it was found out that those children who watched and listened to the stories simultaneously were able to recall on stories better, as visualization dominates young learners cognitive processing. Those learners who watched and listened to the stories were able to remember details better comparing with the group who only listened to the audio. It was also revealed that school-age children (seven and eight years old) were also found to recall target information in response to partial visuals paired



with audio tracks. Thus, the audio narrated stories were more effective when the visual information overlapped with the audio narration. message. Those children who only listened to the audio had some challenges to cope with limitations in back-ground knowledge. ( Gibbons, Anderson, Smith, Field & Fischer,1986; Macklin,1994).

### **2.3.1 The Effects of Televised Stories on Children`s Memory**

The major purpose of the present experiments was to test whether preschool and young elementary school children show differential retention of discrete units of information varying in importance to the plots of four typical "Sesame Street" stories. Each story was analyzed into idea units such that a unit represented the expression of a single idea or action. Young children's memory was tested for units rated high, medium, and low in importance by college students. Testing for each story included: (1) free recall; (2) cued recall questions; and (3) recognition questions testing the same information as any missed cued recall questions. In this study kids were brought to the research places by their relatives or parents and they and participated in individual sessions which lasted 35-40 min. The sessions were conducted in a well-lighted room that contained a table, a couch, several chairs of different sizes, a 25-inch color television monitor, a videocassette recorder, and an audio tape recorder. The child and the researcher sat in two child-size chairs in front of the television monitor. During that time the parent either left the room once testing began or sat on the. Each child separately was told the sequence of story watching process. First they watched one story from the "Sesame Street," after they were asked questions. Then after some time they watched another story from "Sesame Street " and experimenter again asked questions. After each story was viewed, the experimenter requested that children tell everything they could remember about what happened in the story. The experimenter provided encouragement during this phase of the testing (e.g., "Can you remember

some more?") but did not provide direction. Free recalls were not only taped with the recorder but also were written by the researchers. After free recall, the experimenter began the cued recall questions. Responses were scored on a prepared sheet. Whenever kids gave an insufficient or ambiguous response, the experimenter recorded it but asked for more detail. If the learner was not able to produce an unambiguously right responses to a cued re-call question, the child was given the recognition type of an item. Whenever the participant answered incorrectly, the correct answer was given before proceeding to the next cued recall question. The research shows that preschool and kindergarten children both of them remember more visual than auditory information. (Lorch, Bellack & Augsbach,1987).Children with disability like Down syndrome and Autism participated in the research where they had to recall on audiotaped stories and passed personal experience events by retelling. In the experiment not only children with disabilities participated but also children as control group. The experiment shows that there is no significant difference in story - recall performance between control group and children with Down syndrome but there is difference compared with the recall performance between children with Autism and developing children. As children with Autism were marked with errors of omission of some events (Chapman, 2003; Hopkins, 2007).

## **2.4 Summary of Literature Review**

In the Armenian universities, colleges and schools education was mainly based on written assignments. The Internet brought a change worldwide. Studies show that Internet really assists effective learning. Diverse teaching tools and approaches offered through the Internet are successfully used by teachers during classes.

In Armenian educational institutions animated stories are a new concept. For many years Armenian EFL teachers have underlined solely grammar as the main skill to teach English

language. Because of this students were able neither experience nor learn authentic English. Learners were not exposed to the listening activities thus missed their chance of learning language authentically. EFL learners will benefit from the use of animated story usage in the classroom as based on recent research many learners do.

Based on the findings of previous studies conducted on animated storytelling, there is an urgent need for this type of research. To my knowledge, research on the animated storytelling in Armenia has yet to be done, at least no such research has been reported officially. Consequently research on audio narrated storytelling is important for the Armenian situation. Such research will help to implement animated storytelling in the classroom. Thus, it was the aim of the this study to find out whether the animated stories impact on EFL learners listening comprehension skills as well as and reveal the EFL learners' perception of the use of animated stories during classes.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

The major objective of this research was to investigate the impact of animated stories for the development of the Armenian young learners listening comprehension. This chapter introduces the context of the study and provides details of how the study was conducted and how the results were analyzed.

### **3.1 Restatement of the Research Questions**

Two research questions were raised to address the main goal of the study. They are listed as follows.

Research question 1

Is there an impact of animated stories on EFL learners of different proficiency levels listening comprehension skills?

Research question 2

What are the EFL learners' perception of the use of animated stories during English classes?

### **3.2 Research Design**

The research was conducted in the Experimental English classes (EEC) at the American University of Armenia (AUA). The EEC is a ten-week English course, which was established in 2005 offering services to the young learners wishing to improve their English language skills. Here students have the opportunity to learn English through communicative methods of teaching. All the participants of this study were EEC students. The study concentrated on students' listening comprehension based on animated stories which was assessed through pre and post listening tests.

### **3.3 Participants**

The participants were 37 EEC students at AUA. There were 12 students from the Construction 4, 12 students from Construction 6 and 13 students from Construction 7. In the study male and female learners participated. The students' first language is Armenian. The students' ages range from 7 to 11. They are all pupils from the Armenian secondary schools. EEC students are highly motivated as studying and completing from EEC because of the communicative approach which exposes students to good English skills. According to Macklin, (1994) animated story watching enhances children listening comprehension. In this research audio narrated stories helped the young learners to the listening comprehension. Study in the psychology of teaching claims that age differences effects the recall on audio visual stories. All these findings particularly studies of and "watching" experience (Macklin, 1994). The follow-up activity used in this study was an instrument to evaluate the learners' listening comprehension after they watch the animated stories. Nine questions out of twelve were used for the discussion purposes in order to enhance students' listening comprehension. The follow-up activity questions were not used for data collection. The tenth, eleventh and twelfth questions were designed for asking the students' perception of animated storytelling with six and four criteria. Students answered those questions in written form. Those questions were translated into simple Armenian in order to ease the learners' task.

### **3.4 Materials**

The following materials were used:

- Animated stories with follow-up discussion activities (see Appendix 1)

## **Instruments**

- Questionnaire (see Appendix 2)
- Pre-test and Post- test : The Cambridge Young Learners English Tests (see Appendix 3)

### **3.5 Instrumentation**

To process the data the respondents' answers were converted to numbers by means of coding procedures. Each item was coded and the answers were converted into numerical scores. The survey answers were analyzed through descriptive statistics.

#### **3.5.1 Description of Pre and Post tests**

Pre and post tests used in this study assessed the impact of animated storytelling on students' listening comprehension. The Flyer Cambridge Young Learners English Test was piloted to some students before using it for data collection purposes.

Cambridge Young Learners English Test.

Retrieved from: <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org>

The Cambridge Young Learners English Tests consist of three key levels of assessment: Starter, Movers and Flyers (Expert in Language Assessment, 2007).

The aims of the tests are to:

- sample relevant and meaningful language use
- measure accurately and fairly
- present a positive first impression of international tests
- promote effective learning and teaching
- encourage future learning and teaching

The three tests together form a bridge to take children learning English as a second language from beginner to Waystage level (A2)

## Cambridge *Flyers*

Listening	Approx 25 mins	5	25
Reading and Writing	40 mins	7	50
Speaking	7-9 mins	4	-
	total approx 75 mins		

### *Flyers* Listening

Approximately 25 minutes/25 items

There are five parts. Each part begins with one example. All texts are heard twice.

#### **Part 1**

In this task, candidates look at a picture which shows people doing different things.

Above and below are people's names. Candidates listen to a dialogue between an adult and a child and draw lines from the names to the correct person in the picture.

#### **Part 2**

This is a note-taking exercise in which candidates listen to a conversation between two speakers and write a word or a number next to five short prompts on a form or page of a notepad. Some misspellings will be allowed for words which are not spelled out on the recording.

#### **Part 3**

Candidates listen to a conversation which is mainly led by one speaker. They match a list of illustrated words or names with a set of pictures by writing the letter of the correct picture in a box.

#### **Part 4**

This task consists of five questions, each a three-option multiple-choice with pictures. Candidates listen to five dialogues in which the speakers are clearly differentiated by age or gender. Candidates listen and tick the correct picture.

### **Part 5**

This task consists of a dialogue in which an adult asks a child to colour different things in a picture, write a simple word and draw and colour an object. Candidates listen to the dialogue and follow the instructions.

**Table 1** *Summary of Flyers Listening Test*

<b>Parts</b>	<b>Main skill focus</b>	<b>Input</b>	<b>Expected response</b>	<b>Number of items</b>
1	Listening for names and descriptions	Picture, names and dialogue	Draw lines to match names to people in a picture	5
2	Listening for names, spellings and other information	Form or page of a notepad with missing words and dialogue	Write words or numbers in gaps	5
3	Listening for words, names and detailed information	Pictures sets and list of illustrated words or names and dialogue	Match pictures with illustrated word or name by writing letter in box	5
4	Listening for specific information of various kinds	3-option multiple-choice pictures and dialogues	Tick box under correct picture	5



5	Listening for words, colours and specific information	Picture and dialogue	Carry out instructions to colour, draw or write (Range of colours is: black, blue, brown, green, grey, orange, pink, red, yellow)	5
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### 3.6 Procedures

Eight animated stories, follow-up activities, opinion survey, pre-test and post-test results were used as data collection instruments in this research. They regarded as separate observations conducted at different points in time. All participants watched each animated story only once.

#### 3.6.1 Procedure used with students

##### a) animated stories

The animated stories that served as the focus of this study were presented to the 37 EEC student-participants at the end of January, which was the beginning of instruction.

The animated stories were presented to participants at the end of a class once a week in order to check the pupils listening comprehension through animated stories. Before watching each animated story the teacher introduced new story in several words for introduction. The teacher herself choose which words should be introduced before story watching. All the equipment for animated story watching like laptop with downloaded stories and speakers were ready before hand. In three different proficiency level groups the same animated stories were presented. The level of proficiency was different as like as the age and gender. After animated story watching all the participants had the same follow-up discussion activities. Those activities were used for enhancing the learners' listening comprehension. The follow-up activities were

not used for the data collection. After discussion learners had an opinion survey with several answer choices in order to check the learners' perception of animated stories. The opinion survey answers were used for data collection. The first set of data for the current study was collected with the help of pre - and post - test results, which were administered to three groups before and after the treatment. Three groups took the pre- test at the beginning of the study and then at the end they took the post- test. As the number of students was small ( 37 students) , the research was quasi- focus, the non- parametric Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Tests were used within group comparisons of the three sets of scores for the three groups , and Kruskal - Wallis Test and Mann- Whitney Test were used for between group comparisons. It was done with the scope to find out if there was any significant difference in the post test after watching animated story telling. Mann – Whitney U Test is used to test the differences between to independent groups on a continues measure. This test is the non- parametric alternative to the T –test for independent samples ( Pallant, 2007). Instead of comparing means of the two groups, as in the case of the T- test, the Mann-Whitney U Test actually compares medians. It converts the scores on the continuous variable to ranks, across the two groups. It then evaluates whether the ranks for the two groups differ significantly. As scores are converted to ranks, the actual distribution of the scores does not matter. The second set of data for the opinion survey was analyzed through descriptive statistics.

*Table 2 The names of stories with procedures.*

Pre-Test and Post-Test before and after the course

<p><b>Group 1</b> <b>Low Elementary</b> <b>(12 participants)</b></p>	<p><b>Group 2</b> <b>Elementary</b> <b>(12 participants)</b></p>	<p><b>Group 3</b> <b>Intermediate</b> <b>(13 participants)</b></p>
<p><b>Week 1</b> Ss are given listening Flyer pre- test</p> <p><b>Week 2</b> Ss watch “The Rainbow Fish” story (6min). Then follow up activities. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week3</b> Ss watch “Harry the dirty dog” story(4min). Then follow up activities. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week4</b> Ss watch ”Me and my cat” story(5min). Then follow up activities. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week5</b> Ss watch “Guji Guji” story (6min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week6</b> Ss watch “No Mirrors in my Nana`s house”(6min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week7</b> Ss watch ”Sophie`s masterpiece”(7min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week8</b> Ss watch “The night I followed the dog”(5min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week 9</b> Ss watch “The Tooth”(4min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey.</p> <p><b>Week10</b> Ss are given listening <i>Flyer post test</i></p>	<p><b>Week 1</b> Ss are given listening Flyer pre- test</p> <p><b>Week 2</b> Ss watch “The Rainbow Fish” story (6min). Then follow up activities. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week3</b> Ss watch “Harry the dirty dog” story(4min). Then follow up activities. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week4</b> Ss watch ”Me and my cat” story(5min). Then follow up activities. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week5</b> Ss watch “Guji Guji” story (6min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week6</b> Ss watch “No Mirrors in my Nana`s house”(6min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week7</b> Ss watch ”Sophie`s masterpiece”(7min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week8</b> Ss watch “The night I followed the dog”(5min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week 9</b> Ss watch “The Tooth”(4min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week10</b> Ss are given listening <i>Flyer post test.</i></p>	<p><b>Week 1</b> Ss are given listening Flyer pre- test</p> <p><b>Week 2</b> Ss watch “The Rainbow Fish” story (6min). Then follow up activities. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week3</b> Ss watch “Harry the dirty dog” story(4min). Then follow up activities. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week4</b> Ss watch ”Me and my cat” story(5min). Then follow up activities. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week5</b> Ss watch “Guji Guji” story (6min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week6</b> Ss watch “No Mirrors in my Nana`s house”(6min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week7</b> Ss watch ”Sophie`s masterpiece”(7min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week8</b> Ss watch “The night I followed the dog”(5min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week 9</b> Ss watch “The Tooth”(4min). Follow up activity. Opinion survey</p> <p><b>Week10</b> Ss are given listening <i>Flyer post test.</i></p>

## CHAPTER FOUR: Results and Analyzes of the Collected Data

This chapter reports on the findings of the research on the impact of animated stories on EFL learners of different proficiency levels listening comprehension skills. It also aims at determining the students' perception of the use of animated stories during classes. For the current study quantitative data was employed. The quantitative data was collected through the pre- test and post- test results and the attitudinal study. The results obtained through quantitative data intended to answer the following research questions guiding the study:

- 1) Is there an impact of animated stories on EFL learners of different proficiency levels listening comprehension skills?
- 2) What are the EFL learners' perception of the use of animated stories during English classes?

### 4.1 Analysis of the Quantitative data

The quantitative data included pre - and post- achievement listening tests and attitudinal questionnaire. For the pre – and post- tests Wilcoxon test was used, but for the pre- test Mann Whitney and Kruskal – Wallis tests were used to compare the scores obtained from the tests of three groups. The quantitative part of the attitudinal questionnaire was analyzed through descriptive statistics where the numbers were converted into mean scores.

To answer research question one, which aims to find out whether there is any significant improvement of post - test results after watching animated story telling , the following three comparisons were made. After doing the Mann- Whitney U Tests and Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Tests,  $r$  was calculated manually to find the effect size. This calculation was done through all the comparisons to determine that the expected and observed differences between the groups are in the direction of the research questions.

**Table 3** shows the results obtained from the descriptive statistics. Here we can see that only group C7 improved their listening comprehension skills after watching animated storytelling.

**Table 3** Descriptive Statistics of Pre- Post Test Scores of the Three groups.

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
C4 pre - test	12	14.75	2.563
C4 post- test	12	15.42	2.906
C6 pre - test	12	17.08	3.147
C6 post- test	12	16.25	4.202
C7 pre - test	13	13.23	3.370
C7 post- test	13	16.92	2.753

*Comparison 1* Is there a difference in pre- and post-test scores across three different proficiency level groups ?

The following comparison was carried out to see if the outcomes of the three groups are similar at the beginning of the study in terms of listening skills.

**Table 4** Kruskal –Wallis of pre - and post- test scores of the three groups

	Pre-test	Post-test
Chi-Square	7.810	1.951
df	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.020	.377

A Kruskal- Wallis test revealed that there is statistically significant difference in pre-test scores across the three different groups. However, there was no significant difference during the post- test scores for the three different groups.

*Comparison 2. Were the different proficiency groups similar at the beginning of the study?*

To answer this question, Mann-Whitney U Test was performed between the mean ranks of scores of three groups on pre-test. **Table 5** shows the results

**Table 5** Mann –Whitney U Test of Pre- Test Scores of the Three groups

	<i>Z</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Sum of ranks</i>
C4-C6 pre- test	-1.917	.055	117.00 183.00
C4-C7 pre- test	-1.117	.239	177.50 147.50
C6-C7 pre- test	-2.569	.010	203.00 122.00

As it can be seen from the **Table 5**, the probability values in C4 and C6, and C6 and C7 are not significantly different before the treatment. That is they had an equal level of listening skill. But the level of significance for comparison of groups C6 and C7 is statistically significant in listening skills. Investigation of sum of ranks for the three groups presented in **Table 5** tells which of the groups had the highest overall ranking that corresponds to the highest score on pre-test. An inspection of the sum of ranks for the groups suggests that the highest level had the highest pre-test score, with the less proficient group reporting the lowest.

As it was mentioned above we were going to calculate *r* manually. It is calculated according to the following formula:  $r = z / \text{square root of } N$ , where *N* is the total number of cases. The effect size (*r*) for Mann – Whitney tests for comparison of pre-test for group C4 and C6 is 0.39, for C4 and C7 is 0.22, and for C6 and C7 is 0.51. These numbers, according to Cohen(.1= small effect, .3= medium effect .5=large effect) (1988), indicate there was medium

and large effect size between the groups, which once again confirms that there was significant difference between the groups.

For within groups comparison of ( pre- test and results and post- test results ) a Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Tests was applied. This test is the non- parametric alternative to the repeated measures T- Test, but instead of comparing means the Wilcoxon converts scores into ranks and compares them.

*Comparison 3. Did the proficiency groups significantly improve their listening skills due to watching animated story telling?*

This comparison was carried out to reveal whether C4, C6 and C7 groups has significantly improved their listening skills due to watching animated story telling. To perform this comparison a Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was implemented.

**Table 6** Wilcoxon test statistics for Pre - Post- tests of the three groups

	<i>Z</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Effect Size</i>
Group Level			
Construction 4	1.552	.121	0.31
Construction 6	1.605	.108	0.32
Construction 7	3.205	.001	0.62

The results of the analyzes of pre-test and post- test of the three groups revealed that there is no significant difference between the pre- test and post- test of the group level C4 with *r*, which equals 0.31. (see **Table 6**). This means that there was medium size effect in group C4

showing that the students improved their listening skill after watching story telling. The same is for the group C6 ; there is no significant difference between the pre- test and post- tests. While calculating size effect in group C6 it is revealed that there is medium effect size in this group ( $r = 0.32$ ). There is statistically significant difference between the pre- test and post- scores for the group level C7 in favor of post- test where  $r$  (0.62) is calculated manually. It shows that there is a large size effect, which means that group C7 level improved their listening skill largely due to watching animated story telling.

The results of the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test displayed the outcomes of the three different proficiency groups separately. Thus, the last comparison aimed to answer the first research question. For the C7 group level there was a positive significant difference. Therefore, it can be assumed that watching animated story telling had beneficial impact on the learners and they improve their listening skills significantly. However, in order to see whether animated storytelling , the main variable in this study, had any effect on the listening skill of the three different proficiency level groups and whether there is a significant difference between these groups during pre-test Mann Whitney U Test and Kruskal – Wallis Test were used.

#### **4.2 Results of the student questionnaire**

The students questionnaire consisted of eight stories with three closed ended items ( see Appendix 3). The three closed ended questions with the Likert six point scale was translated into simple Armenian in order to ease the kids task. The survey was anonymous students had to mention only their age and gender. Thirty – seven students participating in the research filled out the questionnaire after the treatment. The attitudinal questionnaire was distributed to the students after watching each animated story. They were given explicit instructions and enough time to read all items thoroughly ask questions in advance (if they had any).



**Table 7** Question 1 Did you like today`s story?

( the Tables are based on Likert six point scale)

Questionnaire Items	Group1(C4)	Group2 (C6)	Group3 (C7)
Story1	5.33 (.651)	5 (.739)	5.15 (1.214)
Story2	5.33 (.778)	4.83 (1.030)	4.46 (1.506)
Story3	5.67 (.651)	4.50 (1.168)	5.15 (.801)
Story4	4.58 (1.881)	4.92 (.793)	5.23 (.927)
Story5	4 ( 1.414)	3.58 (1.564)	4 (1.225)
Story6	4.75 ( 1.658)	4.42 (1.379)	4.77 (1.092)
Story7	5.33 (.778)	5.33 (.985)	4.69 (1.377)
Story8	4.25 (2.050)	4.33 (1.231)	4.62 (1.446)
Total	4.9 (1.2)	4.6 (1.1)	4.7 (1.2)

**Table 7** shows the students perception of the first question about animated story watching process. Here the students were asked to give answers about the story that they had watched. The mean scores are based on the Likert six point scale (Very bad , Bad, Didn't like it, Okay, Good , Great). From the mean scores it can be seen that the students mostly had positive attitude towards stories which they watched. In many cases the positive responses towards animated stories overlapped across the three groups. The most interesting part of the research was that the mean scores showed that the students mostly preferred the stories connected with animals. From the **Table 7** it can be seen the stories number 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 are the most preferable stories across the three groups, so those stories are about animals. The story number 5 is less preferable story across three groups which was based on general topic.

**Table 8 Question 2 Would you like to watch this story telling once again ?**

*( the Tables are based on Likert six point scale)*

Questionnaire Items	Group1 (C4)	Group2(C6)	Group3(C7)
Story1	4.38 (1.86)	4.87(1.81)	4.27(1.6)
Story2	4.62 (1.626)	3.87(2.25)	4.15(1.51)
Story3	4.62 (1.626)	4 (1.47)	4.84 (1.24)
Story4	4.245 (2.1045)	4.5 (1.56)	4.27(1.4)
Story5	3.5 (1.332)	4 (1.72)	3.81 (0.99)
Story6	4.125 (1.3)	4.24(1.66)	4.72 (1.34)
Story7	4.75 (1.405)	5.50(0.97)	4.62(1.29)
Story8	3.63 (2.0685)	4 (1.47)	4.27(1.48)
Total	4.23(1.66)	4.37(1.61)	4.36(1.35)

The second research question in the attitudinal survey was based on the four point Likert scale (No, Maybe no ,Maybe yes , Yes) As this question was based on Likert four point scale in order to compare it with the mean scores of the first and third questions of the attitudinal questionnaire the original mean score and Std. was divided to four and multiplied by six. The results obtained from the second question of attitudinal questionnaire showed that most of the students would like to watch stories number 1, 3, 6 and 7. Those stories again overlapped across three groups. The story that students would not like to watch are stories number 2 and 5. Here story number 5 overlapped in groups C 4 and C7.

**Table 9 Question 3 How much of the story did you understand?**

*( the Tables are based on Likert six point scale)*

Questionnaire Items	Group1 (C4)	Group2(C6)	Group3(C7)
Story1	4.75(1.485)	4.58 (1.084)	4.92(1.115)
Story2	4.92 (1.311)	4.92 (1.379)	4.85 (1.463)

Story3	5.25 (1.215)	4.17 (.718)	5.15 (.689)
Story4	4.42 (1.505)	4.58 (1.165)	4.69 (.947)
Story5	4.08 (.900)	4.25 (.965)	4.31 (.855)
Story6	4.33 (1.073)	4.33 (1.155)	4.77 (.832)
Story7	4.83 (1.403)	4.25 (2.050)	3.92 (1.320)
Story8	4.42 (1.505)	4.58 (1.165)	4.69 (.947)
Total	4.6 (1.2)	4.4 (1.2)	4.6 (1.02)

The third question in the attitudinal survey was based on the Likert six point scale (Nothing , Very little , Little , Some of it, Most of it , All of it) . Here the data analysis showed that most of the students understood stories number 1, 2 and 3. The responses for the stories number 3, 5 and 7 scored the lowest mean scores, so their responses were closer to Little or Very little.

Based on data collected through questionnaire ( see Appendix 3 ) it can be seen from **Table 7, 8 and 9** that majority of the participants had positive attitude towards watching animated stories during English classes. The data obtained from descriptive statistics showed that students across the three groups liked the story which they watched on that day. On the question would they like to watch the stories most of them again answered positively. From the collected data it could be revealed that the participants understood most of the stories.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, also pointed out some limitations which were faced during the study. This chapter provides some implications and suggestions for further study.

The research aimed to answer the following two research questions guiding the study:

- 1) *Is there an impact of animated stories on EFL learners of different proficiency levels listening comprehension skills?*
- 2) *What are the EFL learners' perception of the use of animated stories during English classes?*

### 5.1 Findings

One of the main purposes of the current study was to determine whether animated story watching impact EFL learners listening comprehension skills. The study was carried out in the Experimental English classes (EEC) at the American University of Armenia (AUA). Three different proficiency level groups were involved in the study ( Construction 4 , Construction 6 and Construction 7) according to EEC levels. The first set of data for the current study was collected with the help of pre - and post - test results, which were administered to three groups before and after the treatment. In order to answer the first research question “ *Is there an impact of animated stories on EFL learners of different proficiency levels listening comprehension skills* ” a Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was implemented. The results obtained from the test showed that one of the groups improved their listening skills due to watching animated storytelling.

The second research question of the study was “*What are the EFL learners` perception of the use of animated stories during classes*” descriptive statistics was carried out in order to answer this question. The analysis of the results of the attitudinal questionnaire indicates that most of the students liked animated storytelling and had positive attitude towards them. The most interesting part of this data was that the students` preferences for the eight animated stores mostly overlapped across the three groups. The data analysis through descriptive statistics showed that students liked stories connected with animals more than on general topics. The most popular story among eight stories across the three groups was the story number one, which was connected with animals. The less popular story among eight stories was the story number 5 and 8 which were based on general topics.

## **5.2 Implications**

The study shows that in general students have positive attitude towards animated storytelling process. The analysis of the results of the pre- and post- tests as well as attitudinal questionnaire revealed possible ways in which many aspects of this research may be further investigated. Since this is the first research related to the animated stories in the Armenian setting it can be regarded as an exploratory study on which further research can be based.

In concluding this study, I wish to highlight some main issues, which have emerged. These issues carry implications for teaching and learning.

Firstly, it is apparent that the animated stories can be used as the part of curriculum both in the EEC or in the Armenian schools.

Secondly, as it was revealed from the attitudinal questionnaire the students really liked to watch animated stories. The most essential part here was that the students mostly liked those stories which were connected with animals. As the study was carried out in the different

proficiency level groups the attitudinal questionnaire results showed that in many cases the students preference for the stories overlapped.

Third, many teachers should be trained to use animated storytelling in English language courses as many of them might not be aware of such stories.

This research was carried out in three different proficiency level groups in order to see in which group it is more appropriate to use animated stories during English classes or courses. The aim of using different stories was to find out which one of them was more interesting and preferable among the students.

### **5.3 Limitations**

There are several problems which came up while conducting the study. By all means each study may cause certain problems. Firstly, the numbers of participants was small (37 students ) that is why no generalization can be made. The time for the research was restricted only one term ( 9 weeks). Another limitation was that the students were not assigned to groups randomly also the number of stories were 8.

### **5.4 Further Research**

Taking into consideration the above mentioned limitations the further study may be based on a large number of participants in EEC or in the Armenian schools, also it would be better to have more time to conduct the study.

Another interesting direction of further research might be to organize courses, seminars designed by professionals for teachers so focus is on animated storytelling. Familiarization of the English language teaching community with this findings by means of workshops.

In the future it would be interesting to use animated storytelling not only for enhancing listening comprehension skills but also for developing the students' vocabulary. In spite of this, I consider that my study helped us to better understand the impact of animated stories on the EFL learners' of different proficiency levels listening comprehension skills and their perception of the use of those stories.

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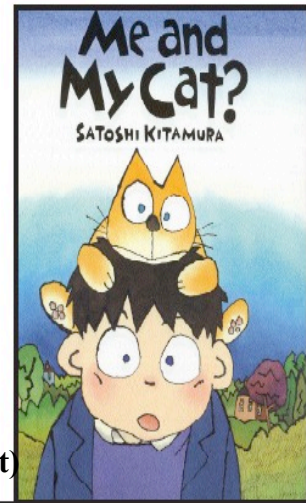
*Knowledge Platform White Paper.*

## Appendix 1

*Sample of animated stories with follow- up discussion activities.*

### Me and My cat

Late one night Nicholas sees a witch enter his bedroom and hears her say some magic words. Then the witch leaves without even saying goodbye. When he wakes up the next morning, it doesn't take him long to realize something very strange is going on –especially when he pulls at his whiskers and watches himself go off to school. Whiskers? How confusing! That nasty witch cast the old switcheroo spell on him, and Nicholas has swapped bodies.



*Questions of the follow –up activity for the students (Me and My cat)*

### RELATED ACTIVITIES

- Question 1 What was the story about?
- Question 2 What Nicholas saw in his room?
- Question 3 Was he afraid of that witch?
- Question 4 What happened with Nicolas the next day?
- Question 5 What his mother told him in the morning?
- Question 6 Why did Nicolas transform into cat?
- Question 7 Do you think the witch curse him?
- Question 8 Why did she do that ?
- Question 9 What happened in the end of the story?

## Appendix 2: Student Questionnaire

*Questions about students perception on animated stories in Armenian (Likert scale).*

**Circle the answer which is close to you.**

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*Questions about students perception on animated stories in English (Likert scale).*

**Circle the answer which is close to you.**

**10) Did you like today`s storytelling?**

1) Very bad    2) Bad    3) Didn`t like it    4) Okay    5) Good    6) Great

**11) Would you like to watch this story again?**

1) No    2) Maybe no    3) Maybe yes    4) Yes

**12) How much of the story did you understand?**

1) Nothing    2) Very little    3) Little    4) Some of it    5) Most of it    6) All of it

**Write, please your age** \_\_\_\_\_

**Circle your gender**                      boy              girl

**Appendix 3: The Cambridge Young Learners English Tests**

Centre Number

Candidate Number

Cambridge Young Learners English

# Flyers Listening

Sample Paper



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE

ESOL Examinations

English for Speakers of Other Languages

There are 25 questions.






You will need coloured pens or pencils.

My name is: .....



**Part 2**  
- 5 questions -

Listen and write. There is one example.

**SPORTS CLUB**

Expensive? Free for \_\_\_\_\_ school children \_\_\_\_\_

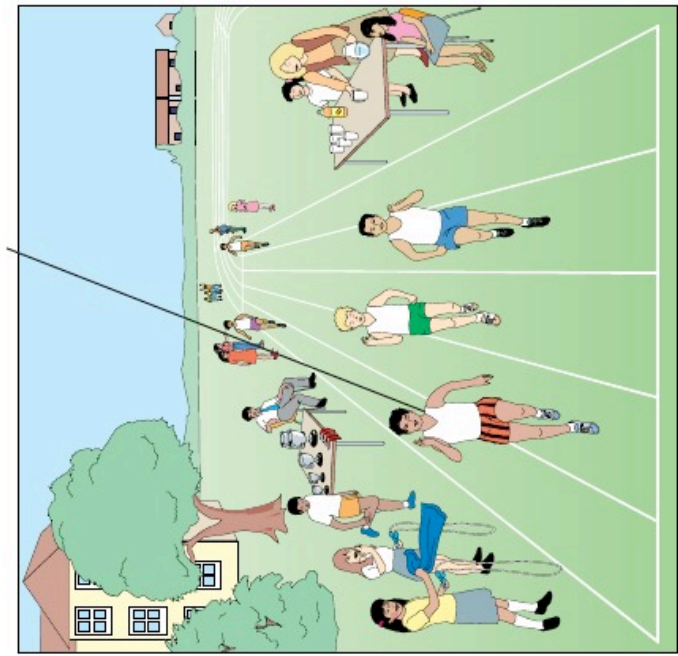
1 Where is it? next to the \_\_\_\_\_ factory \_\_\_\_\_

2 Open which days? From \_\_\_\_\_ to Tuesday \_\_\_\_\_

3 Times: Opens \_\_\_\_\_ Closes 10.30 \_\_\_\_\_

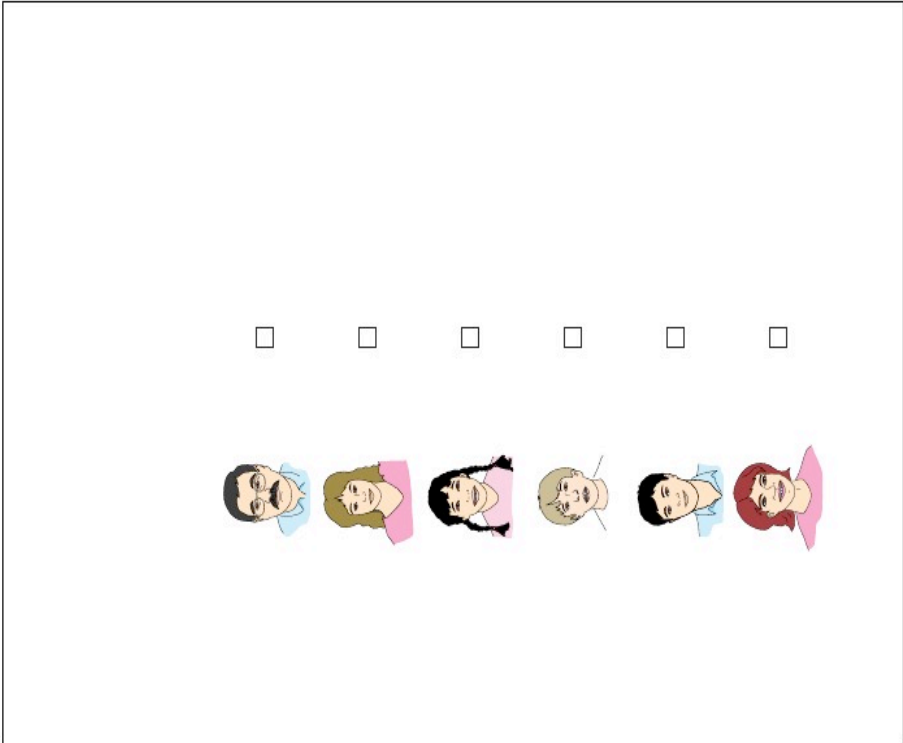
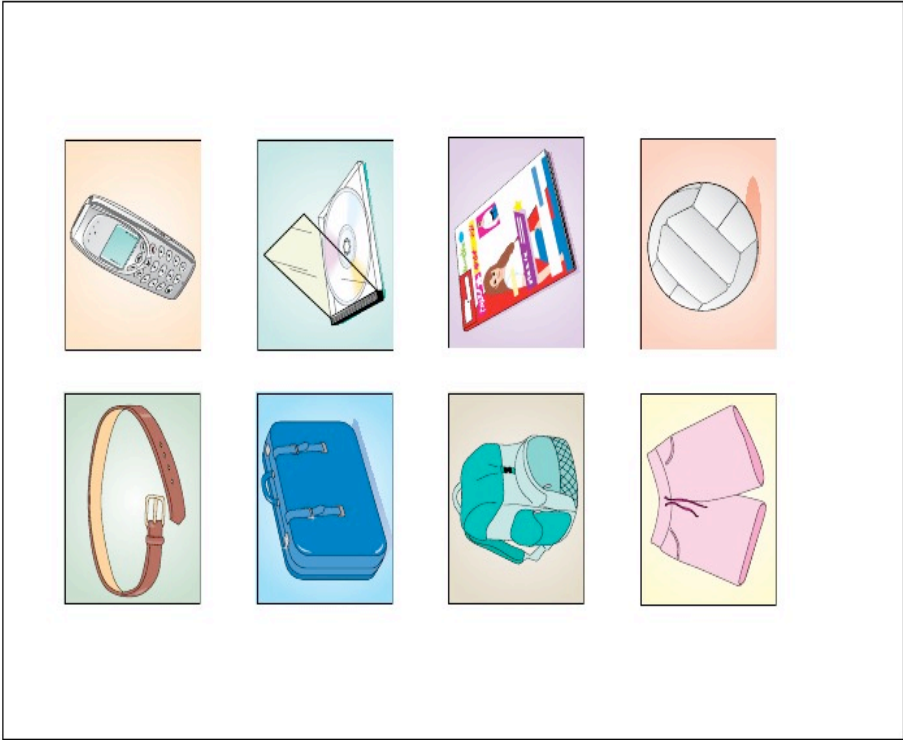
4 Club name: The \_\_\_\_\_ Sports Club \_\_\_\_\_

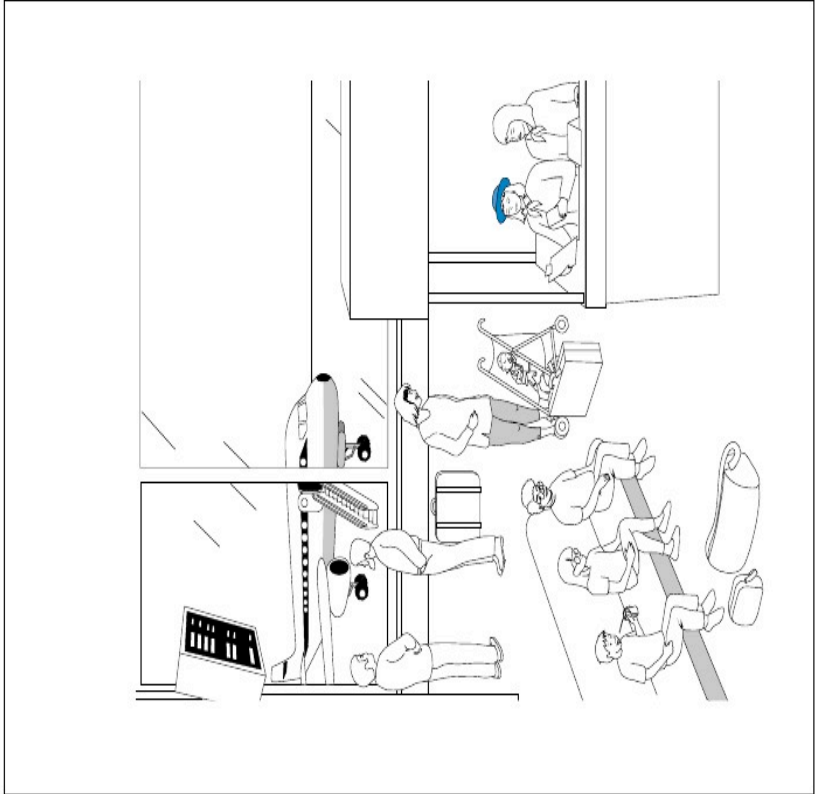
5 Club phone number: \_\_\_\_\_











## Flyers

## Listening

## Marking Key

**() = Acceptable extra words are placed in brackets**

**/ = A single slash is placed between acceptable alternative**

**words within an answer**

**// = A double slash is placed between acceptable alternative complete answers**

### Part 1 5 marks

Lines should be drawn between:

1 Harry and boy running with dark hair, in second place

2 Michael and older boy sitting next to cups

3 Katy and girl standing behind drinks table

4 Helen and girl with skipping rope

5 Richard and boy who has hurt his leg, near cups

### Part 2 5 marks

1 chocolate

2 Friday

3 9.15 (am)//quarter past nine//nine fifteen

4 H-U-R-L-E-Y

5 400319

Part 3 5 marks

1 G Betty and shorts

2 D Anna and CD

3 H David and volleyball

4 B John and phone

5 F Mrs Salt and magazine

Part 4 5 marks

1 A

2 B

3 C

4 B

5 A

Part 5 5 marks

1 Color hair of boy with glasses – brown

2 Write 'GOLF' on big bag, near boy with drink

3 Draw plane in sky and color it – yellow

4 Color suitcase next to baby – green

5 Color sweater of man with beard – red

