

## Authentic BBC Cartoon in Primary School EFL Classroom: An Action Research Study

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### Abstract

Authentic BBC cartoon "Bing" was watched in 3rd and 4th grade EFL classroom for 14 weeks, and its effect on the students' listening and speaking proficiency was examined through a quasi-experimental mixed methods research study. The study was planned as action research by the three EFL teachers, who met at a Teacher-as-Researcher course. The study used a pre-test and pos-test design to compare the authentic videos' effect on the 3rd and 4th grade students' listening and speaking proficiency. While no statistically significant difference was found between the experimental and control groups at both grade level in both skills before the treatment, Ancova test suggested the effectiveness of integrating authentic videos in the teaching/learning process of 3rd grade EFL students after the treatment. The ANCOVA TEST's result was statistically significant with a large effect size. The qualitative findings of the study showed that the students had positive perceptions of watching authentic videos in EFL classes, and an opportunity to develop the habit of using authentic videos as a language acquisition tool.

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**Keywords:** Authentic videos; Teaching listening; Primary school

### Introduction

Listening is considered as the most essential one among the four major language skills- listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and it is evident that children listen and respond to language before they talk (Azizah, 2016; Thanajaro, 2000). According to Nunan (1997),

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listening is the most frequently used language skill in both the classroom and daily communication compared with speaking, reading, and writing. Therefore, gaining maturity in comprehending aural input must be prioritized in the early phases of second language instruction. It is also posited that listening comprehension which indicates the student's maturity in listening skill is directly related with other language skills (Cayer et al., 1971; Curtain & Pesola, 1988; Dunkel, 1986). Moreover, Rost (2001) argues that "a key difference between more successful and less successful acquirers relates in large part to their ability to use listening as a means of acquisition" (p. 94). The current English curriculum for grades 2-8, conforming to the afore-mentioned theoretical assertions, aims to help the learner develop positive attitudes toward English from the earliest stages of language learning; and for this purpose, it promotes a learning environment where young learners feel comfortable and supported through authentic materials and hands-on activities which emphasize the communicative nature of English, and demonstrate its use in real life (MoNE, 2018). Furthermore, instruction of listening and speaking skills as learning outcomes at primary school level are stressed by the current curriculum. Because of the emphasis the current curriculum puts on authentic materials and instruction of listening and speaking skills at the 2nd-4th grade levels, the present action research was conducted to integrate authentic BBC cartoon videos into English language instruction practice at the 3rd and 4th grade levels, and intends to examine the authentic BBC cartoon videos' comparative effect on the 3rd and 4th graders' listening and speaking ability, and the students' perceptions of watching them as a language learning material.

## **Literature Review**

Authentic materials could be defined as the ones which are not written or recorded specifically for teaching a foreign language, and targeted audience of which are the individuals who speak the language as their mother tongue (Wilkins, 1976). According to Morrow (1977, p. 13): "An authentic text is a stretch of real language, produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real message of some sort." (as cited in Gilmore, 2007). Based on the relevant literature, authentic materials can be classified into four categories in correspondence to the senses they address; written, visual, auditory and audiovisual (Gebhard, 2006; Wottipong, 2014).

Many researchers suggest utilizing authentic language and context (Brown, 2001; Ellis, 2003; Mishan, 2005; Morrison, 1989; Nunan, 2004), and argue that authentic materials can be utilized at all levels (McNeil, 1994; Miller, 2003):

By designing tasks which preview key vocabulary and discourse structures in the input, by chunking the input into manageable segments and providing selective focus on its particular elements, teachers can make use of authentic material in ways that are motivating and useful to learners at all levels.

(Rost, 2011, p. 166)

It is also asserted that the use of authentic materials from the beginning proficiency level will assist students in becoming familiar with the target language, develop strategies to deal with the task, and learn the language learning (Bacon, 1989; Field, 2008; Miller, 2005; Woottipong, 2014). A number of studies suggested effectiveness of authentic audio materials (radio broadcast series, radio-tapes) in improving EFL/ESL learners' listening comprehension ability (Herron & Seay, 1991; Mousavi & Irvani, 2012; Otte, 2006; Thanajora, 2000). More specifically, it has been recommended to use authentic videos at every stage encompassing the beginning proficiency level (Oxford et al., 1989; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992; Vandergrift, 1999). Yet, there is no doubt that the authentic language in such audiovisual materials is very challenging for the learner to comprehend as it was stated by Chamba and Gavilanes (2018). However, they assert that "the sounds, non-verbal language, and pictures in such videos help learners make sense" (Chamba and Gavilanes, p. 203). García (2006) additionally posits that audiovisual authentic materials, such as videos, films, and TV programs are effective in addressing the pragmatic knowledge system and the knowledge of its appropriate use (as cited in Chamba & Gavilanes, 2018). Besides, authentic videos can enhance learners' motivation (Christopher & Ho, 1996; Mirvan, 2013, as cited in Wottipong, 2014;).

Hassan and Hassan, based on the action research study they generated on military personnel with upper-intermediate level of English using TED Talks videos, state that "there is some evidence that authentic videos increase listening comprehension, stimulate student interaction and communication with each other, encourage cross cultural awareness, and are adjustable for use with learners at any English language proficiency level" (2018, p.134). The relevant studies below suggest the effectiveness of authentic audiovisual materials in developing listening and speaking skills of EFL/ESL learners at lower secondary and tertiary education.

Wottipong (2014) researched the effect of authentic videos (10 short English language documentaries about culture, environment and adventure activities lasting 3-5 minutes) on developing the listening skills of English major students by a one-group pretest-posttest study with a treatment of 20 hours over 7 weeks. Paired samples t-test result indicated that students' English listening comprehension ability increased significantly after learning by means of authentic videos. And the analysis of the attitude questionnaire showed that the students had positive attitudes towards the use of videos in teaching listening skills.

The true experimental study conducted by Polat and Erişti (2019) to investigate the comparative effect of authentic and non-authentic videos on the listening skills and listening anxiety of 100 university preparatory class students with A1 (n=50) and B1 (n=50) levels according to KET test indicated that authentic videos were highly effective in developing listening skills in comparison to the non-authentic ones. The independent samples t-test results proved that the difference between the groups' means were statistically significant with a medium and large effect size at A1 and B1 level, respectively.

A similar study carried out by Kim (2015) on Korean university students at three different levels of English proficiency- low (n=29), intermediate (29) and advanced (n=28) revealed that in the intermediate and advanced proficiency groups, the students' listening skills increased significantly after learning with authentic videos, whereas in the low proficiency group did not according to the paired sample t-tests, ANOVAs, and an ANCOVA's result. The questionnaire's result demonstrated that the students positively perceived the use of video resources as an instructional material to improve their English listening skills.

Likewise, in the experimental study which examined the impact of authentic listening materials on elementary EFL learners' listening skills, Sabet & Mahsefat (2012) showed that university students in the experimental group exposed to authentic materials- a series of videos and audio tracks- outperformed the control group in the posttest. The researchers also cite Weyers's quasi-experimental study (1999) carried out to explore the effect of authentic soap opera videos on the language acquisition process of university students who learn Spanish. In the study, the experimental group showed a statistically significant increase in comparison to the control group not only in listening comprehension but also in the number of words they used.

Similarly, the study by Azizah (2016) investigated the effects of authentic materials in teaching listening to the English Department students of UIN Ar-Raniry, Banda Aceh. The t-test result of the study, where authentic materials taken from TV, internet and films were used, displayed that the students taught using authentic materials get a significantly better result in listening ability than those taught using the usual course book materials. In addition, the students preferred authentic materials for learning listening over contrived ones as these materials were more interesting and more related to their real life context.

The quasi-experimental study by Gilmore (2011) in tertiary education with sixty-two 2nd year English major students for 10 months suggested the superiority of authentic materials in developing communicative competencies of learners over the textbook materials. In the study, audiovisual and written materials taken from films, documentaries, reality shows, TV comedies, web-based sources, home-produced video of native speakers, songs, novels and newspaper articles, and associated tasks were used, and the participants' communicative competence was assessed with a group of tests including a listening test, a pronunciation test, a C-test, a grammar test, a vocabulary test, a discourse completion task (DCT), an oral interview and a student-student role-play.

Another quasi-experimental study carried out by Lhamo and Chalermnirundorn (2021) investigated the effect of TED Talk videos (TTV) on the speaking skills of 30 Bhutanese sixth grade ESL learners, and their perceptions towards the use of TTV. The study was generated for four weeks, during which the researcher taught twice using TTV to listen and respond through various speaking activities. The paired samples t-test exposed the statistically significant effect of TTV on the development of speaking skills, and the participants' perceptions towards the use of TTVs in English-speaking lessons were considered positive by the survey questionnaire and focus group interview.

In the literature, the studies which investigate students and teachers' perceptions of using authentic materials in the foreign language classroom also assert that both groups have positive attitudes towards the use of them at elementary, secondary and tertiary education (Akbari & Razavi, 2016; Firmansyah, 2015; Sujono, 2017; Varmış Kılıç & Genç İltter, 2015).

As it was stated by Polat and Erişti, the studies which were generated to explore the relationship between the development of foreign language listening skill and using of authentic materials, especially audiovisual ones are scarce "although a large body of research on the effects of different kinds of authentic materials on the development of language skills can be

found in the international literature” (2019, p.138). Likewise, studies which emphasize authenticity and explore the comparative effectiveness of authentic audiovisual materials in developing young EFL learners’ listening comprehension and speaking ability are scarce even though there is a growing body of literature that investigates the effects of technological tools such as YouTube Videos, YouTube Educational Channel, and Video Podcasts on ESL young learners’ language skills and emphasizes that these tools can provide authentic materials (Astarina, 2014; Kathirvel & Hashim, 2020; Yaacob et al., 2021).

With regard to the Turkish EFL context, studies investigating the effect of authentic videos on the listening and speaking ability are not abundant, and the present ones are either limited to secondary and higher education or focused on authentic materials’ effect on student attitude, motivation, not their comparative effect on developing listening and speaking ability (Polat& Erişti, 2019; Varmış Kılıç & Genç İlter, 2015). To the knowledge of the teacher-researchers, there exists no study that inquires the effect of authentic BBC cartoon videos on the Turkish 3rd and 4th graders’ listening and speaking ability. Therefore, the present action research study addresses the following questions:

1. What is the comparative effect of Authentic BBC cartoon videos on the Turkish 3rd and 4th graders’ listening and speaking ability in English?
2. What are the students’ perceptions of watching authentic BBC cartoon videos in classes?

## **Methodology**

### **Study Design**

The present study was designed as action research by three teachers who met at a “Teacher-as-Researcher” Course. As it was articulated by Creswell (2012), action research designs are systematic procedures performed by teachers to collect data in terms of a learning outcome or a classroom issue, and consequently improve their instructional practices and student learning relevant to the specific outcome. For this purpose, the present study adopts multiple data collection methods including a quasi-experimental two-group pretest–posttest design to examine the comparative effect of the authentic cartoon videos on the listening and speaking ability of the 3rd and 4th graders, and unstructured participant observation and focus group interview to understand the pupils’ perceptions of the treatment. Besides, the study

exemplifies “the blurred distinction between research aimed at the production of knowledge and research aimed at the improvement of practice” as it was stated by Pring (2015, p.156).

### **Participants and Setting of the Study**

The study was executed at a state primary school in Istanbul, Turkey. In the Turkish EFL context, English teaching starts in the 2nd grade with 2 class hours of 40 minutes a week at state schools, which was put into effect as of 2013-2014 education year (MoNE, 2013), and continues as 2 class hours a week in the 3rd and 4th grades. In the 5th and 6th grades it continues as 3 class hours a week and 4 class hours in grade 7 and 8. From the 5th to 8th grade, 2 more class hours can be optionally added according to the school’s sufficiency of physical facilities and teaching staff.

The two intact 3rd and 4th grade classes, which were taught by the two researchers of the study, participated in the study. The socio-economic status of the students was low; majority of the students had limited exposure to English; only in class hours at the school. The participating classes were randomly selected by the two teacher-researchers from among the classes which were assigned to them at the beginning of the education year. In the 4th grade level, there were 30 and 27 students enrolled in each participating class 4I (control) and 4G (experimental), respectively, whereas there were 26 (3A- control) and 28 (3E- experimental) students in the 3rd grade classes. However, only 23 and 18 Ss from the classes 4I and 4G, respectively were able to take both pre and post-tests, while 21 and 25 Ss from 3A and 3E did due to the student absence resulting from the COVID pandemic. Consequently, the groups were not matched in terms of the number of the participants.

The control and experimental groups were determined by the three researchers according to the analysis of the participants’ listening and speaking pre-test scores by means of SPSS. The class 3A was chosen as the control group [Grade 3 Control (G3Contr.), hereafter] and 3E as the experimental one [Grade 3 Experimental (G3Exp.), hereafter] because 3A’s listening pre-test Mean (M= 9.48) was higher than 3E’s (M= 8.12) even though there were less students in the class 3A than 3E. Similarly, the class 4I was chosen as the control group [Grade 4 Control (G4Contr.), hereafter] and 4G as the experimental group [Grade 4 Experimental (G4Exp.), hereafter] because 4I’s listening pre-test Mean (M= 8.78) was higher than 4G’s (M= 7.06). The teacher- researchers thought that applying the treatment to the comparatively weaker classes would make the result more significant in terms of the student learning outcome.

## **Data Collecting Instruments**

The Cambridge Pre A1 Starters Test's Listening and Speaking parts, which were developed to assess young learners' English proficiency, and is accepted reliable thanks to its rigorous test development phase and ongoing research (McKay, 2006; Cambridge, n.d.), were used to assess the participants' listening and speaking ability; thus, to answer the first question of the study.

Two different versions of the Cambridge Starter test were utilized as pre and post-tests. The listening part of the test, which consisted of 4 parts; 5 questions in each, was graded out of 20 points; 1 point for each correct answer. The speaking part, which comprised 4 parts, was adapted and graded out of 10 points considering the students' limited exposure to English and its instruction (see Appendix A). Therefore, some questions of the test such as "Tell me about this man" (in the part II), "Which is your favourite animal?" (in the part III), "What is in your classroom?" (in the part IV) could not be used to measure the participants' speaking ability since the participating pupils' knowledge of English did not suffice to describe the scene, object or actions in the picture and associate them with their own lives. The participating pupils' ability to understand and respond to the questions correctly such as "What is it?", "Where is the sun?", "What colour is it?", "Put the apple on the chair." by pointing to the objects on the scene page and flashcards of the test, and the personal question "How old are you?" were graded. The answers given to the questions in which Turkish was used to explain the question to the participant were graded as zero; e.g., the student tells memorized words of colour in English without comprehending the question "What colour is it?" when the examiner asks the question by pointing to an object on the scene picture since the test aims to assess the test taker's ability to use English interactively.

The qualitative data to inquire about the participating pupils' perceptions of watching BBC videos as a learning material and to answer the second question of the study was collected through unstructured participant observation and focus group interviews, which were conducted by the two course teachers of the participating classes.

## **Data Collection Procedure**

Prior to the beginning of the study, the teacher-researchers consulted with the school principal and the permission to conduct the study was taken. Parents of the experimental classes 3E and 4G were also informed of the study and their signed consent was taken. The



two course teachers had the students watch the episodes of BBC Cartoon “Bing” in one class hour for 14 weeks (see Appendix B). The cartoon series “Bing” had been developed for British pre-school kids, which means that they were authentic, not contrived for teaching English as a foreign language. In the control classes, the lessons were continued using the coursebook materials provided by MoNE.

The treatment was initialized as of October 11th, 2021 and ended in the week of 17th January, 2022. One week before the treatment started, the two course teachers administered the listening test in the control and experimental classes they taught, and on the same day, the third teacher-researcher administered the speaking test to the pupils with the help of the other two teacher-researchers. The tests were completed on the same day in order not to disturb the routine educational operations of the school. The two course teachers had to explain the instructions to the pupils in Turkish so that they could understand the task and complete the listening test. The same testing procedure was repeated 15 weeks later when the treatment ended in the week of 17th January, 2022.

During the treatment, each video episode, which lasts 7 minutes, were watched three times in one class hour without subtitles. Partial understanding of the video content was aimed as suggested by Mishan (2005); no comprehension questions were asked. After the students watched the episode for the second time, the words they heard were elicited, and “What is it?”, “Where is Bing?”, “What colour is it?” structures were consolidated by the two course teachers in accordance with the learning objectives of the curriculum (see Appendix C). Mishan, citing Grellet (1981), and Clarke (1989), argues that “the comprehension question is a convention which is unique to language pedagogy and has little application in real life” (2005, p. 80). She also states that comprehension questions are excessively over-emphasized in teaching listening; yet, they limit both the teacher and learner’s attention on linguistic comprehension alone. And she claims that it is not the situation for native speakers in real life; they often understand discourse types such as songs or film dialogues without hearing all the words of them. She adds that partial comprehension which may result from the communication between the native speaker and discourse types is authentic and apply to many discourse types. Similarly, Guariento and Morley (2001) assert that authentic texts close the gap between the classroom and the real world; and consequently, “partial comprehension of text is no longer considered to be necessarily problematic, since this is something which occurs in real life” (p. 348).

## Data Analysis

Quantitative data, which were collected through pre and post-tests, were analysed through SPSS 11, and content analysis was utilised to analyse the qualitative data, which were collected through unstructured participant observation during the treatment, and focus group interviews conducted after the treatment. Descriptive and inferential SPSS analysis was conducted by one of the researchers while the qualitative analysis was performed by the two course teachers of the participants. The three researchers stayed in contact and conducted the study in coordination throughout the process and reached an agreement about the findings.

## Quantitative Findings

### Analyses of the Groups' Pre-test Listening and Speaking Mean Scores

As the groups were intact classes, assumptions with regard to parametric and non-parametric tests were checked before conducting the inferential analysis of the data. As there were less than 30 participants in the groups, the Shapiro-Wilk test was computed, and indicated that G3Exp. group's listening pre-test mean scores were not normally distributed,  $W(25) = 0.846$ ,  $p = .001$ , while G3Contr. group's were,  $W(21) = 0.947$ ,  $p = .297$ . Thus, non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was computed, and showed no difference between the groups,  $U = 198.000$ ,  $p = .150$  for G3Exp. ( $N = 25$ ,  $Mdn = 8$ ) and G3Contr. ( $N = 21$ ,  $Mdn = 9$ ).

As for the speaking ability, neither G3Contr.'s nor G3Exp.'s mean scores were normally distributed,  $W(21) = 0.516$ ,  $p = .000$ , and  $W(25) = 0.702$ ,  $p = .000$ , respectively. Therefore, non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was computed, and no difference was found between the groups,  $U = 207.000$ ,  $p = 0.19$  for G3Contr. ( $N = 21$ ,  $Mdn = 1$ ) and G3Exp. ( $N = 25$ ,  $Mdn = 1$ ) before the treatment. The table 1. shows the groups' pre-test descriptive statistics with regard to the listening and speaking ability.

Table 1. *Groups' Pre-test Listening and Speaking Descriptive Statistics*

Groups	N	Listening					Speaking				
		Mean	SD	Min.	Max.	SE	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.	SE
G3Contr.	21	9.48	2.91	5	17	.635	1.14	2.75	0	10	.475
G3Exp.	25	8.12	2.32	0	11	.463	1.16	.943	0	2	.189
G4Contr.	23	8.78	3.94	2	16	.822	2.57	3.62	0	10	.754
G4Exp.	18	7.06	4.18	0	18	.985	1.72	2.80	0	10	.661

The grade 4 groups' pre-test listening and speaking mean scores were similarly analyzed; the Shapiro-Wilk test indicated that both G4Exp.'s and G4Contr.'s listening pre-test scores were normally distributed,  $W(18)= 0.936$ ,  $p= .25$ , and  $W(23)= 0.971$ ,  $p= .716$ , respectively. Therefore, parametric independent samples t-test was computed, and no difference was found between the groups before the treatment,  $t(39)= 1.36$ ,  $p= .183$  for G3Exp. ( $M= 8.12$ ,  $SD= 2.32$ ), and G3Contr. ( $M= 9.48$ ,  $SD= 2.91$ ) in regard to the listening ability.

As for the speaking ability, the Shapiro-Wilk test showed that neither the experimental group's nor the control group's speaking pre-test scores were normally distributed;  $W(18)= 0.631$ ,  $p= .000$ , and  $W(23)= 0.663$ ,  $p= .000$  respectively. Thus, non-parametric Mann-Whitney U Test was computed and no difference was found between the groups;  $U= 179.000$ ,  $p= .443$  for G4Exp ( $N=18$ ,  $Mdn= 1$ ) and G4Contr. ( $N=23$ ,  $Mdn=1$ ) before the treatment.

### Analyses of the Groups' Post-test Listening and Speaking Mean Scores

After the treatment, the Shapiro-Wilk test indicated that both G3Contr.'s and G3Exp.'s listening post-test scores were normally distributed;  $W(21)= 0.949$ ,  $p= .33$ , and  $W(25)= 0.956$ ,  $p= .342$ , respectively. As Levene's test for equality of variance ( $F= 4.228$ ,  $p= .046$ ) was found smaller than .05, and homogeneity of variances was violated, "equal variances not assumed" line of independent samples t-test was interpreted ( $t(28.872)= -2.135$ ,  $p= .041$ ), which was very slightly smaller than .05. So, it suggested that no statistically significant difference was found between the groups in terms of listening ability, G3Exp. ( $M= 14.16$ ,  $SD= 2.51$ ), and G3Contr. ( $M= 11.67$ ,  $SD= 4.83$ ). The table 2. shows the groups' post-test listening and speaking descriptive statistics.

Table 2. *Groups' Post-test Listening and Speaking Descriptive Statistics*

Groups	N	Listening					Speaking				
		Mean	SD	Min.	Max.	SE	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.	SE
G3Contr.	21	11.67	4.83	1	20	1.054	3.00	2.97	0	10	.647
G3Exp.	25	14.16	2.51	9	18	.502	3.48	1.96	0	6	.392
G4Contr.	23	12.43	4.87	1	20	1.015	5.57	2.69	1	10	.562
G4Exp.	18	11.50	5.58	0	19	1.314	5.39	3.17	0	10	.746

However, as G3Contr. group's listening pre-test mean ( $M=9.48$ ) was higher than G3Exp.'s mean ( $M=8.12$ ), listening pre-test was taken as a covariate, and one-way between-subjects analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was computed to compare the groups' adjusted mean post-test scores by benefitting from "the control role of ANCOVA" as stated by Huck (2012, p. 348). Before running the test, assumptions were checked; any deviations from linearity was not seen, and data seemed to meet the homogeneity of regression slopes. The table 3. summarizes the ANCOVA Test's result.

Table 3. ANCOVA Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Listening Scores by BBC Video Treatment

	<u>Pre-test Listening Scores</u>		<u>Post-test Listening Scores</u>		<u>Adjusted</u>
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	<u>Mean Scores</u>
3A Cont. Grp	9.48	2.91	11.67	4.83	11.152a
3E Exp. Grp	8.12	2.32	14.16	2.51	14.592a

As the table 3 demonstrated that the experimental class 3E scored significantly higher on posttest than the control class 3A at adjusted  $p < .01$ , and partial eta squared  $.211$ , which meant that authentic BBC cartoon video treatment seemed to be more effective in developing the 3rd grade students' listening ability in comparison to the coursebook material with a large effect size;  $F(1, 43) = 11.47$ ,  $p = .002$ ,  $(\eta_p^2) = .211$ . According to Huck, "partial eta squared ( $\eta_p^2$ )  $.14$ " is considered large (2012, p.306).

As for the speaking ability of the grade 3 groups, none of them showed normal distribution according to the Shapiro-Wilk test;  $W(21) = 0.847$ ,  $p = .004$  for the G3Contr., and  $W(25) = 0.883$ ,  $p = .008$  for the G3Exp. Therefore, non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was computed and no difference was found between the groups;  $U = 223.500$ ,  $p = .375$  for G3Exp ( $N=25$ ,  $Mdn=4$ ) and G3Contr. ( $N=21$ ,  $Mdn=4$ ) after the treatment.

When grade 4 groups' listening post-test scores were analyzed by the Shapiro-Wilk test, it was found that both G4Exp.'s and G4Contr. group's listening post-test scores were normally distributed;  $W(18) = 0.943$ ,  $p = .33$ , and  $W(23) = 0.945$ ,  $p = .23$ , respectively. Levene's test for equality of variance ( $F = 0.686$ ,  $p = .413$ ) was found bigger than  $.05$ . Thus, "equal variances assumed" line of independent samples t-test was interpreted, and  $t(39) = -.572$ ,  $p = .57$  demonstrated that there was no difference between the groups after the treatment in terms of listening ability, G4Epx. ( $M = 11.50$ ,  $SD = 5.58$ ), and G4Contr. ( $M = 12.43$ ,  $SD = 4.87$ ).

With respect to the groups' speaking ability, the Shapiro-Wilk test showed that both groups' speaking posttest scores were normally distributed;  $W(18) = 0.933$ ,  $p = .223$ , and

$W(23) = 0.945$ ,  $p = .231$  for the experimental (4G) and control group (4I), respectively. Thus, parametric independent samples t-test was conducted, and as Levene's test for equality of variance ( $F = 0.713$ ,  $p = .404$ ) was found bigger than .05. Thus, "equal variances assumed" line of independent samples t-test was interpreted, and ( $t(39) = -.193$ ,  $p = .848$ ) demonstrated that there was no difference between the groups after the treatment in terms of speaking ability, G4Epx. ( $M = 5.39$ ,  $SD = 3.17$ ), and G4Contr. ( $M = 5.57$ ,  $SD = 2.69$ ).

## Qualitative Findings

### Experimental Groups' Perceptions of Watching Authentic Videos

Although the participating pupils were familiar with the concocted listening activities in the course book, they were not used to watching authentic cartoon videos in class hours as a part of foreign language instruction. Thus, the ones in the experimental groups (the classes 3E and 4G) felt very excited about the Bing cartoon video series, which were integrated into the lesson for just having fun, and only partial comprehension was aimed. This approach created an unstressful learning environment where the pupils were exposed to authentic, highly meaningful English in its real-life use. Each week they looked forward to having the class hour when they could watch the Bing.

While watching the first episode, one student in 4G developed a negative attitude towards the cartoon stating that it was for pre-school kids; yet, in the next episodes he was observed enjoying it, and even taking notes to remember the words he heard in the video. The episode "Bye Bye" was the most understood and unforgettable one for the 3E students as they internalized it by making a bye bye box as a hands-on activity with their teacher in the class. And the next week, one of the students brought the "Bye Bye Box" he made at home at the weekend to the school. For the students in 4G, the episode "Smoothie" was the one they enjoyed and remembered the most as they often make milkshake at their homes. This suggested that authentic materials may help students transfer some foreign language words, phrases or scenes into their own lives, so learn them more easily, and the learning becomes permanent. It was observed that the students watched the episodes where they could find something parallel to their own lives more attentively and remembered better.

While the episode "Car Park", in which Charlie was always disorganizing Bing's cars, was being watched, a student in 3E, who had a younger brother, shouted loudly "don't do" to

show his anger towards Charlie, and expressed that Charlie was acting like his younger brother when the watching ended.

Another student from 4G expressed that he had been afraid of darkness before watching the episode “Shadow”, but the episode helped him realise that shadow plays can be fun, and from the episode onward, instead of being afraid of darkness, he turned darkness into fun by playing “Shadow Monster” which he learned from the Bing.

The teachers also observed that the students’ selective attention and personal interests affected their comprehension; e.g., in the episode 14 “Tree”, the boys heard the words such as “shovel digger, excavator” while the girls caught the words like “tree, playing and flowers”.

The fact that some students from 3E searched the internet and found some other episodes of Bing and had their siblings watch them also suggests that the students enjoyed the authentic cartoon Bing, and wanted to share the fun with others. Likewise, some students from 4G wanted their course teacher to save the episodes in their personal USBs so that they could watch the same episodes at home again, and they got the promise that the teacher would do this after the study ended.

Even though we, the course teachers, were concerned about whether the students were learning or not from time to time, the study procedure was followed with the awareness that language learning is a process, and the most substantial point was to help the learner to develop the habit of watching authentic materials. As the episodes progressed, our observations and the responses we got from the students displayed that some of the students were in search of other cartoons in English on the internet, and some of them asked their teacher for further suggestions about cartoons in English. These findings suggested that the participants developed positive attitudes towards authentic cartoon videos, and adopted it as a fun way of learning English.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The fact that the participants were not randomly selected and assigned to the groups does not allow the researchers to interpret the findings firmly and generalize them to the population. Likewise, that the number of the participants was not matched across the groups is another limitation of the study. On the other hand, these limitations reflect the complex realities of the school context, in which the quasi-experimental action research study was conducted, and make the findings much more meaningful for practising teachers suggesting that authentic

cartoon videos can be effectively integrated into the language instruction practice in primary grades.

### **Validity and Reliability**

In the process of qualitative analysis, two course teachers of the participating classes attempted to bring meaning to their students' watching process, and gain insights about their perceptions of authentic BBC cartoons as a language learning material by writing down the pupils' reactions and responses to each episode. That the teachers share the participants' both positive and negative reactions and responses in anecdotes, and the concern they felt from time to time about whether the students were learning or not may ensure the genuinity of the qualitative findings. Besides, two course teachers' fourteen-week engagement with the study, their persistent observation of the participants and interaction with them while the episodes were being watched are among the strategies used to ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the qualitative findings as it was cited by Lincoln and Guba (1985). The fact that the qualitative data were collected through two different tools- unstructured participant observation and focus group interview- and analysed by the two course teachers ensures triangulation. In addition, that the study was conducted at two different grade levels- the 3rd and 4th grades- taught by two different teachers simultaneously, and similar reactions and responses were observed may suggest the applicability of the findings to other settings, which is defined as transferability by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Moreover, the episodes which were enjoyed and remembered most- Bye Bye Box for the class 3E, and Smothie for the class 4G, which focus group interviews revealed, can be considered as member-checking (Creswell, 2012), which one of the strategies used to ensure the trustworthiness of a qualitative study. Furthermore, the quantitative findings discussed in detail may indicate that how systematically and rigorously the study was conducted by the three teacher-researchers.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

The study was carried out under the Covid 19 Pandemic conditions. Consequently, the number of pupils taking both pre and post-tests could not be matched, which can be deemed as a limitation. However, despite the unfavourable condition, this quasi-experimental study suggests that authentic cartoons as an instructional material can be more effective in developing the listening ability of primary school pupils in comparison to the course book material. The fact that the quasi-experimental study was conducted on intact classes as a part of the routine instruction practice made the result much more significant for the practising teachers. Under

the light of these encouraging findings, one of the teacher-researchers began to have the students watch similar authentic cartoon videos in English club hours at the school. The participating pupils' reactions and responses reflected that their perceptions of watching the authentic BBC cartoon "Bing" as an instructional material were positive as it was shown by the other similar studies in the literature (Azizah, 2016; Firmansyah, 2015; Hassan & Hassan, 2018; Kim, 2015; Lhamo & Chalermnirundorn, 2021; Sabet & Mahsefat, 2012; Sujono, 2017; Varmış Kılıç & Genç İlter, 2015; Wottipong, 2014; Yaacob et al., 2021).

Under the light of the quantitative and qualitative findings, the action research study suggests that authentic BBC cartoon videos can be effectively integrated into teaching/learning process in primary school EFL classroom as it was recommended by many researchers and theoreticians that authentic materials can be employed at all levels including beginning proficiency level (Chamba & Gavilenas, 2019; Curtain & Pesola, 1988; Dunkel, 1986; McNeil, 1994; Miller, 2003; Morrison, 1989; Oxford, et al., 1989; Rost, 2011; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992; Vandergrift, 1999).

Although the study was not able to provide robust quantitative evidence in terms of comparative effects of authentic BBC cartoon videos and course book materials on the 3rd and 4th grade EFL students' listening and speaking ability, ANCOVA Test's result, which shows the G3Exp. group's significantly higher score on listening post-test than the control groups' at the level of adjusted  $p < .01$ , partial eta square .211, suggests the superiority of authentic BBC cartoon videos over the contrived course book materials in terms of listening ability, which is in line with the previous studies' results in the literature (Azizah, 2016; Gilmore, 2011; Hassan & Hassan, 2018; Miller, 2005; Polat & Erişti, 2019; Sabet & Mahsefat, 2012; Weyers, 1999).

Moreover, the fact that the study was executed on intact 3rd and 4th grade classes whose proficiency of English was Pre A1 underscores the study's contribution to the literature. The quantitative findings, which vary by grade and the type of language skill in the present study, are also in line with the theoretical assertions of the Complexity Theory, which argues that learners are complex, dynamic, adaptive and self-organising individuals, so their second language development is not linear (Ortega & Han (Eds.), 2017).

Qualitative findings of the study also proffer that students can learn while having fun, and develop the habit of getting exposed to the target language, and its use in real life inside and outside the classroom, and so learn how to learn a second language in the long run and self-regulate their learning (Bacon, 1989; Field, 2008; Miller, 2005; Woottipong, 2014).



The study also specifies that authentic audiovisual materials can be effective in developing the listening ability of EFL learners who have beginning level of proficiency through partial comprehension without excessive focusing on comprehension questions as it was asserted by (Clarke, 1989; Grellet, 1981; Mishan, 2005; Guariento & Morley, 2001).

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## Appendix A

### Speaking Test Procedure

The procedure below was adapted from the Cambridge Pre A1 Starters Speaking Summary of procedures, which can be found at <https://www.cambridgeenglish.org>.

**Part I.** The examiner asks the child to point to objects on the scene picture, e.g. 'Where's the sun?' The examiner asks the candidate to point to **two object cards and** gives instructions to place them in different locations on the scene picture, e.g. 'Put the apple in front of the birds.'

Q1. Where is the apple?

Q2. Where is the ball?

Q3. Put the apple on the chair.

Q4. Put the ball on the tree.

**Part II.** The examiner asks the candidate some questions about **the scene picture**, e.g. 'What's this?' (Answer: a fish) 'What colour is it?' (Answer: pink). The examiner also asks the child to describe an object from the scene, e.g. '**Tell me about this man.**'

Q5. What is this?

Q6. What colour is it?

**Part III.** The examiner asks the candidate questions about **four of the object cards**, e.g. 'What's this?' (Answer: a spider) and '**What's your favourite animal?**'

Q7-9. What is this?

**Part IV.** The examiner asks the candidate some personal questions on topics such as age, family, school and friends, e.g. '**What's in your classroom?**'

Q10. How old are you?

**Marking: 10x1=10**

## **Appendix B**

### **The Video Episodes and Schedule**

Week 1. 11th October, 2021 Episode 1. Fireworks

Week 2. 18th October, 2021 Episode 2. Bye bye

Week 3. 25th October, 2021 Episode 3. Swing

Week 4. 1st November, 2021 Episode 4. Blocks

Week 5. 8th November, 2021 Episode 5. Ducks

Week 6. 15th November, 2021 One Week Mid-Term Break

Week 7. 22nd November, 2021 Episode 6. Smoothie

Week 8. 29th November, 2021 Episode 7. Frog

Week 9. 6th December, 2021 Episode 8. Car Park

Week 10. 13th December, 2021 Episode 9. Shadow

Week 11. 20th December, 2021 Episode 10. Musical Statues

Week 12. 27th December, 2021 Episode 11. Voo Voo

Week 13. 03rd January, 2021 Episode 12. Here I go

Week 14. 10th January, 2021 Episode 13. Growing

Week 15. 17th January, 2021 Episode 14. Tree

## Appendix C

### Authentic Video Lesson Procedure

1. Ss watch the Video Episode of 7 minutes in each class;
  - 1st watching is just for pleasure
  - After the 2nd watching, Ts can ask questions about the characters showing their pictures using the language structures Ss already know, and will learn as learning outcomes:
    - a. Characters: Who is this, What is her/his name?
    - b. Colours: What colour is it?
    - c. Feelings: Are they happy, sad?
    - d. Place: Where are they? In the garden, at home
    - e. Other Vocabulary in the video Ts will determine.

At first, Ss can speak Turkish to show their partial comprehension, but Ts will provide the necessary vocabulary in English and help them to speak using the English words.

- After watching the video for the 3rd time;
  - a. Events (Actions, Verbs) in the video: e.g. They are buying a gift for Bing's birthday. Ss can talk about the events in Turkish for the first time, but Ts can provide the sentences in English (5-10 sentences) and have them speak using the sentences.
  - b. Making the video meaningful for the Ss (Connection with Ss' own lives):
    - Do you like it?
    - Do you buy your friends gifts for their birthday?
    - Do you play in the garden together with your friends?

P.S. Bing summarises what happens in the episode at the end of the each video. This summary can be used to help Ss talk about the video.