

BACHELORPROEF

INCREASING L₂ EXPOSURE WITH ADULT EFL LEARNERS VIA AUDIOBOOKS

WETENSCHAPPELIJK PROJECT

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1. Preface

I believe that you need to experience things yourself to know what something is worth, and that is what I did with audiobooks. For many years now, I have been a loyal user of English audiobooks and to me they're not a substitute for their written versions, they just allow me to devour more stories. Especially when I'm busy or tired, audiobooks are my portal to a world of amazing adventures. I had felt the benefits first-hand and was therefore convinced that audiobooks are a great tool to integrate in English education. Because I am truly passionate about the English language, I decided to execute my study with EFL learners (*English as a Foreign Language*). I am convinced though that this study could be applied on any L2 learners, whether it be French, German or even Dutch as a second language.

Even though the teacher training focusses on secondary education, I have chosen to carry out my study in an adult evening class. The main reason for this is that I have a love for adult education, because to me, it embodies life-long learning as no other education does. Adult education offers learners of all ages the opportunity to expand and enhance their knowledge, thus showing one is never too old to learn something new.

Throughout the entire process of my dissertation I have received a great deal of support. First and foremost, I want to thank my promoter Mrs Ada Peters. This thesis would not have been possible without her guidance and feedback.

I would also like to acknowledge Janitor, and in particular Mr Patrick Nys, for giving me the opportunity to carry out this project.

Furthermore, I want to thank the learners that have participated in this study. Your honesty and commitment were well appreciated.

Finally, I want to say thanks to my friends and family for their sympathetic ear and encouragement. You are always there for me.

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2. Summary

We learn a language by hearing, reading and speaking it. A sufficient amount of exposure to a language will therefore contribute to the learning process. Starting from this intelligence, I researched the possibility to use audiobooks in an adult EFL class, with the objective to offer the learners an extra aid to increase their exposure to the English language.

Studies have shown that the use of audiobooks offers an array of benefits and could therefore be implemented in a listening programme. To implement a successful listening programme, Nation (2007) states that several conditions must be met. Programmes should offer a learner the ability to expand their vocabulary range, should pique their interest and have recognizable content. They should also enable a learner to process large quantities of input.

For my research it was therefore important to try and meet most of these conditions. Due to the limited time and capacity of my study I chiefly focused on introducing audiobooks to the adult learners and offering tools which they could include in their learning process. From my first survey it became clear that none of the learners listened to English audiobooks and hardly anyone read English books. It was apparent that there was room for improvement.

After the first survey to measure the initial situation, learners were given access to a variety of audiobooks, at least one of which they had to listen to. After a period of three weeks, they were asked to complete a final survey and a group discussion was held in which the learners shared their findings about the book itself and their general experience using audiobooks.

The results of this study met the expectations. There was a positive shift in the learners' view upon audiobooks and the vast majority was motivated to use them again in the future. They felt that audiobooks could help them enhance their speaking and listening skills and most learners even rated their skills higher after the project.

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3. Key words

Audiobooks, listening skills, speaking skills, adult education, EFL, English, exposure, language acquisition

4. Introduction

For adult EFL learners, it isn't always easy to combine work and family with an English course, let alone find the time to read books to come into contact with English literature. Because I'm an adult learner myself and am truly passionate about the English language and its literature as well as the use of audiobooks, I was curious to find out if and how audiobooks can enrich an EFL learner's life.

Oral language is a foundational skill for reading and writing. (Shanahan & August, 2006)

Everyday communication is mainly focused on spoken language, yet EFL learners have been shown to have stronger reading skills than listening skills (Hirai, 1999). Why is it that we focus so strongly on reading and writing skills, while the human brain is naturally wired to speak and listen instead of to write and read (Moats & Tolman, 2009)?

When it comes to language learning, sufficient and suitable language input is a vital component. Whether it is written or spoken language, the input should be authentic (Nunan, 2002) and comprehensible (Krashen, 1985; Neuman & Koskinen, 1992). In an EFL class it could be quite a challenge to provide sufficient and substantial input that is both authentic and comprehensible, but I believe that audiobooks may offer a solution as they can meet these two requirements. On top of these crucial elements, audiobooks can be a stepping stone to improved listening and speaking skills and they can also provide an easy access to English literature.

After nourishment, shelter and companionship, stories are the things we need most in the world. (Pullman).

What defines literature: The books or the stories? I really love a good book, because its story can change your reality. To me some stories are therefore almost magical and thus very precious. But even though I enjoy reading books, just as with most adult EFL learners, I don't always find the time to sit down and read. When I do find the time, it's often when I'm very tired, and the action itself requires more energy than I have left, leading to two pages of reading. Three if I'm lucky. Needless to say, that reading a book this way takes forever.

About two years ago, I came across audiobooks and decided to give it a go. I quickly discovered the array of benefits audiobooks have to offer and it wasn't long before I started listening regularly. I listened while cooking dinner, on the train, during a walk, in bed, etc. Where before I could read one or two books a month, I was now listening to one or two books a week. Because I use an app that functions as a sort of personal, digital carry-on library, giving me access to thousands of books, it has also helped me to explore books I normally wouldn't have read or wouldn't have come across.

I believe that audiobooks may be a great tool for most EFL learners, as they are easily accessible, very affordable and perfect for anyone who wants to improve their English or just wants to devour English literature. But most of all, audiobooks will increase L2 exposure, an important factor in language learning. This increased exposure may lead to improved listening skills and listening fluency, the acquisition of new vocabulary, deepened knowledge of previously known vocabulary as well as an increased motivation towards language learning.

5. Literature review

5.1. Second language learning

When learning a language, Wilkins (1972) stated that two types of factors influence the learning process: internal and external. Internal factors imply cognitive and affective elements such as age, personality, intelligence, intrinsic motivation and experience. The combination of these elements is unique to each learner. External factors on the other hand characterize the language learning situation. These factors include: the L2 curriculum, teachers, culture and status of the learner, extrinsic motivation and exposure to the new language (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Wilkins (1972) further stated that if learners are exposed to the L2 in the same way as they are exposed to the L1, greater success will be achieved.

Unfortunately, many learners only come in contact with the new language during classroom hours and at these moments, learners are generally and mostly exposed to carefully graded language items instead of primary linguistic data (Ravem, 1974). Fortunately, the Internet can balance this, as it has made it easy for learners to come across real English at communicative level through songs, movies, podcasts etc. (Nurul Islam, 2011)

It is apparent that exposure to L2 will co-determine the general learning process (Wilkins, 1972), so it is important to increase exposure as often as possible and in various ways. One of these ways can be the use of audiobooks.

5.2. What are audiobooks?

The origin of audiobooks can be traced back to ancient times when stories were told instead of read. Storytellers brought the narrative to life, and their tales were passed on from generation to generation.

Audiobooks are sometimes called *talking books* and that's just what they are. An audiobook is actually a digital and modern storyteller, a voice recording of the text of a book that you can listen to instead of reading it.

Audio recordings date back as far as the 1930s, when they were chiefly used in schools and libraries for educational purposes. In the early stage, it was a recording on cassette tape or vinyl record and later on CD, but nowadays audiobooks can be accessed digitally on almost any mobile device. They can be bought from a website, streamed via one of the many apps, or downloaded free from public domain sites. As audiobooks are so easily accessible nowadays, they offer listeners an easy way to come into contact with literature.

5.3. What is literature?

The first literature was heard, not read (Baskin & Harris, 1995).

When we think of literature, we often think of reading high-brow content. Nowadays the definition of the word literature tends to be more circular. Cambridge dictionary refers to literature as *Written artistic works, especially those with a high and lasting artistic value*. Merriam-Webster defines it as *Writings in prose or verse, especially writings having excellence of form or expression and expressing ideas of permanent or universal interest*. The term literature chiefly applies to works that excel due to their aesthetic or artistic character, yet it doesn't exclude other written artistic works. When reducing literature to its core elements we can conclude that it's a body of writing, whether or not

one that excels in form, expression or idea. Another prejudice one might have is that to indulge in literature and to truly understand the story, one must be able to read the work. But are these two elements inseparably connected? Is it the deciphering and decoding of a book what makes a great reader or is it understanding the content of the story?

The decoding is actually a means to an end. Readers decode in order to understand the book, but the apprehension of the content itself is the key element. According to Johnson (2003), understanding the message, thinking critically about the content, using imagination and making connections is at the heart of what it means to be a reader. Seeing that this is what literature is truly about, audiobooks certainly meet these requirements.

5.4. Listening proficiency with EFL learners

According to Chang and Read (2006) some of the most frequent complaints from L2 learners during listening are about fast speech rates, the inability to think fast enough to understand the input, and not being able to match the spoken form with the written form. These problems reflect a lack of listening fluency, a key element in listening proficiency. Listening fluency is the ability of a listener to understand, with reasonable accuracy and minimal effort, input delivered at a normal speed (Chang & Millet, 2014).

When it comes to comprehending aural input, whether it be a song, a tv show or an audiobook, learners must construct meaning from the knowledge available to them. This can be done by applying the processes associated with general listening comprehension. This will be linguistic (lexical, syntactic, semantic ...) as well as non-linguistic (topical, contextual and world knowledge) (Buck, 2001). By using bottom-up (linguistic) and top-down (non-linguistic) processing, learners will create a mental representation of the aural input (Park, 2004; Rubin, 1994; Vandergrift, 2004).

In bottom-up processing, listeners decode aural input into meaningful units. The accent of the speaker, clarity of the pronunciation, presence of hesitations, tune, rhythm and speech rate are factors that will affect the listeners' bottom-up processing.

In top-down processing listeners will use their background knowledge to contextualize and understand what they hear. Key elements in this process type are knowledge of the topic of the book, familiarity with the genre and knowledge of the culture (Lynch, 2006).

In order for listening comprehension to be successful, both processes will be used simultaneously.

Listening proficiency also affects a learner's ability to converse. Asher (1969) stated that "in order to handle a simple conversation, an individual must have a much broader competency in listening comprehension than in speaking; this is especially the case when conversing in a foreign language with a native speaker of that language." Multiple studies have shown that fluency is improved by the combination of listening, reading and speaking. Ley and Locascio (1972) even uttered that "attempting to speak before listening comprehension is acquired may bring about the detrimental effect of task overload on language learning." Listening is therefore a determinant in language learning and will undoubtedly help a learner to master the other skills such as speaking and conversing.

5.5. Audiobooks as a tool for extensive listening

As audiobooks are a source of L2 aural input through their utilisation in extensive listening, they can help the learner to pick up or improve a language more easily and rapidly. Implementing new input should be done meticulously and premeditated because in order for it to be suitable for a language course, some ground rules are required.

To successfully implement an extensive listening programme, Nation (2007) explains that five conditions must be met.

The first condition is that input needs to be processed in large quantities. With the easy access to audiobooks and the increase in mobile devices, the consumption of audiobooks has already increased over these last years (Furness, 2015). This accessibility and availability allow the input to be processed in large quantities whenever and wherever the learner wants. Even learners who are not familiar with audiobooks in L2 or even L1 could still see them as a valuable and easily accessible source for L2 aural input.

The second condition refers to the familiarity with the language. The content should be recognizable to the learners, so that they can achieve a reasonable level of comprehension. Books that are too difficult or too easy will not suffice. Therefore, graded readers of (partially) known stories may offer a solution, as they provide the learners with the necessary background knowledge to shift towards bottom-up processing, thus enabling them to focus on the details of the story.

A third condition is that learners should be able to expand their vocabulary knowledge by means of incidental vocabulary learning. The input should be rich in context clues, allowing the learners to build background knowledge. Again, graded readers might be a useful tool for this. Even though the simplification of the book may decrease the richness of the text, graded readers still offer adequate support for incidental vocabulary learning at the level of the learners. With aural input, such as audiobooks, one may expect the same results when using graded input in both listening-only as listening-while-reading (van Zeeland & Schmitt, 2013a).

The fourth condition can be associated with the third one. Enabling learners to gain knowledge of vocabulary must be done in a regulated way. Only a small percentage of the vocabulary can be unknown to the learners as too much unknown vocabulary would obstruct the general comprehension and vocabulary learning. The lexical coverage for comprehension ranges from 90% to 99% (Bonk, 2000; Hu & Nation, 2000; Nation I. S., 2006) and for vocabulary acquisition from 95% to 98% (Liu & Nation, 1985; Nation, 2001; Webb & Rodgers, 2009a, 2009b). We can link this theory to Krashen's (1981) input hypothesis. He utters that learners acquire language by being exposed to comprehensible input +1. By hearing and understanding messages slightly above their current English level, learners are thought to improve and expand their language. It is thus important that the aural input is at a level suited to the vocabulary knowledge of the learner. As graded readers are designed to suit a specific level, they are an excellent choice to alleviate this issue.

Nation's (2007) fifth and last condition is that the input should pique the learners' interest. Overall, learners have been shown to be interested in learning through listening to audiobooks (Renandya & Farrell, 2010), but it should be noted that motivation is something very personal. Providing sufficient materials and offering a variety of books will enable the learners to choose something they are attracted to, hence empowering their interest and motivation.

Rodgers (2016) agrees that guidelines are necessary to implement an extensive listening programme. He proclaims that the specific needs for designing that programme can differ from location to location, and that it's therefore impossible to make recommendations that apply to everyone. He states that four main principles can function as a guide to create such a project: quantity, level, attitude and support.

Most of these guiding principles are similar to Nation's (2007) conditions.

Just as Nation (2007), Rodgers (2016) affirms that large quantities of input should be provided for the learners, but he states that learners should have access to a breadth of resources as well as a depth of resources. "Learners should not only have access to a large number of graded reader

audiobook titles from which to choose from (breadth of resources), but also to a wide range of genres and authors (depth of resources) (Rodgers M., 2016).” Giving learners the opportunity to choose titles similar to those they enjoyed in the past, enables learners to narrow their listening. This can increase vocabulary gain and can lead to better comprehension as the learner’s background knowledge is augmented (Rodgers & Webb, 2011).

Nation’s (2007) familiarity of the language, can be linked to Rodgers’ (2016) second principle: Level. Learners should have access to appropriate materials, meaning, that graded reader audiobooks should be fit for the learners’ language proficiency.

The third guiding principle is attitude, which applies to both the learner and the teacher. In intensive listening, comprehension is often checked in advance. Sometimes, unknown vocabulary is presented and explained before the listening activity or looked up immediately after listening. Learners should be aware that with extensive listening, perfect comprehension isn’t the objective as “sufficient comprehension to enjoy the input is the goal” (Webb, 2015). Teachers also play another part in extensive listening than they do in intensive listening. With the former they must accept that the learning is more in the hands of the learner (Webb, 2015), and that their role as a teacher is of a supporting kind.

Rodgers’ (2016) last guideline principle is support. Throughout the entire programme, the learner should be given the necessary support by the teacher. To help learners pick the right book, teachers can provide short background summaries which include introductions to main characters and perhaps even unknown but frequently occurring vocabulary (Rodgers & Webb, 2011). During the programme, learners should be stimulated to reflect on what they have been listening to. This can be achieved by having group conversations to discuss the audiobooks, or by letting them complete reports.

5.6. Different ways of implementing audiobooks in your classroom

5.6.1. Listening while reading (LWR)

Listening while reading or LWR, involves simultaneous reading and listening, but reading is the goal. This method is often used for developing literacy and reading fluency in L1 (Beers, 1998; Rasinski, 1990). The reading is assisted through listening to an audiobook at a faster speed than in RWL as reading speed is normally faster than speech. As the main focus is on reading rather than listening, this method is not adequate for the study of my dissertation.

5.6.2. Reading while listening (RWL)

Just as with LWR, reading while listening or RWL, involves simultaneous reading and listening, but here the main focus lies on listening. Aural input is used to assist reading comprehension, for it helps language learners to match the written form with the spoken form. This process aids the development of auditory discrimination and word recognition (Osada, 2001; Vandergrift, 2007) and helps the learners to get used to the natural speech rate, rhythm and flow of a language. Furthermore, RWL enables learners to understand how to chunk texts. Simultaneous reading and listening can also be helpful in enhancing reading speed, as it encourages learners to look at the whole instead of reading it word-by-word.

Especially listening while reading and reading while listening have proven to be very fruitful as learners make connections between the words they hear and the written words (Wide & Larson, 2007) and the RWL-method has been found especially beneficial to lower proficiency (L2) learners (Mareschal, 2007).

5.6.3. Listening-only (LO)

Another way of implementing audiobooks is by using them as a sole medium. With listening-only or LO, there is no written input. The learner is solely exposed to the spoken form of the language by which they get familiar with the natural speech rate and other spoken language elements.

5.7. Types of audiobooks

5.7.1. Abridged versus unabridged

The difference between these two types is the length of the book. An abridged audiobook is a shortened version of the book, while the unabridged version is the full, untouched story, containing the original content of the written book. Even though the abridged version is shortened, it is done without affecting the major themes or plot of the book.

In the late 90s and early 2000s most published audiobooks were abridged. This type of audiobook originated because producers were unsure about their listeners' attention span. Because of the arrival of television, people were thought to have unlearned to listen to long-form audio entertainment, but nowadays, the majority of people prefer unabridged versions over abridged. Despite the fact that most published audiobooks are unabridged now, abridged versions still exist and do offer some benefits. Abridging can reduce the book size by 30% to 75%, therefore reducing listening time dramatically. Because of this decrease, abridged audiobooks could be a good way to engage unwilling listeners or listeners who have had a bad experience with reading (Harris, 1995: 375). Some suggest it might even be good to use in college or university where the students have to know the essentials but haven't got time for the details.

5.7.2. Graded readers versus ungraded

Graded readers are books that are especially created for EFL learners, as they are adjusted to a specific level of proficiency. These types of books are a simplified version of the original books and are therefore shorter and offer graded syntax and lexis. Because these graded readers are based on that level's vocabulary knowledge and reading ability, they reduce cognitive load when listening to it or reading it.

Most graded readers have target words that are appropriate for a specific level, and which are used frequently throughout the story to expose the readers to these words (Saka, 2015). When listening to the audio version of a graded reader, learners come across these same words, just as they would if they were reading it. Therefore "graded reader audiobooks provide an effective gateway to more authentic texts (Rodgers M. , 2016)."

The ERF (Extensive Reading Foundation) has developed the *Graded Reader Scale* to help publishers divide the readers into four levels.



The Extensive Reading Foundation Graded Reader Scale

Headword count	Beginner				Elementary			Intermediate			Upper Intermediate			Advanced		
	Alphabet	Early	Mid	High	Early	Mid	High	Early	Mid	High	Early	Mid	High	Early	Mid	High
	1-50	51-100	101-200	201-300	301-400	401-600	601-800	801-1000	1001-1250	1251-1500	1501-1800	1801-2100	2101-2400	2401-3000	3001-3600	3601-4500

This scale is only for approximate leveling of Language Learner Literature by headword¹ counts by series. Some individual titles may need to move up or down as necessary. A list of where each publisher's Graded Reader series fits this scale is available at the website.

Extensive Reading Foundation
www.erfoundation.org

Ungraded texts on the other hand, grant learners the opportunity to be exposed to language they'll encounter in real life. This ungraded language might be a challenge, but it allows learners to become familiar with situations where they don't recognize everything that is being said (Field, 2000).

5.8. Benefits of audiobooks

5.8.1. General benefits of listening to literature

Even in L1 learning, children are often read to during their preschool years. This has proven to be fruitful for studies have shown that children who are frequently read to, make exceptional progress in literacy and language development (Chomsky, 1981; Durkin, 1966; Teale, 1982; Wells, 1986). Other benefits of being read to are: vocabulary gain and improved social and emotional development.

5.8.2. Improving listening skills

Exposure to large amounts of written input has already proven to be very successful, leading to, among other things, improved reading skills, improved reading fluency and increased motivation towards language learning (Day & Robb, 2015).

Audiobooks are a way to expose learners to the target language and as exposure is one of the external factors in language learning, audiobooks may aid in language learning. The potential benefits of exposure to large quantities of aural input are similar to those of written input. When learners process large amounts of aural input through extensive listening, it will contribute to their language proficiency in many ways. This increased exposure may lead to, among other things, improved listening skills.

5.8.3. Improving listening fluency

Extensive listening will result especially in an improvement in listening fluency. Listening fluency is the ability of a listener to understand, with reasonable accuracy and minimal effort, input delivered at a normal speed (Chang & Millet, 2014). A normal speech rate in English is approximately three words per second or 150 to 180 words per minute (Buck, 2001; Griffiths, 1990; Tauroza & Allison, 1990). Listeners must process quickly as there is no room to stop and think, thus the listening process must be automatic.

In order to develop listening fluency, learners must become familiar with the natural speech rate and other natural language features, such as connected speech. As EFL learners are often only or predominantly exposed to slow speed aural input, they are unlikely to encounter authentic, natural speech and its normal speed rate.

As bottom-up processing is mainly responsible for a learner's listening fluency, learners need to be able to come across authentic spoken phenomena such as assimilation, contractions and resyllabification¹ to become familiar with them. Familiarity with these features allows learners to deduce known vocabulary from the speech stream, hence resulting in better comprehension. It also helps learners to identify unknown or partially known words, leading to acquisition of meaning for these lexical terms. This ability to identify vocabulary in context is essential for proficient listening

¹ A feature of connected speech, more specifically, the phonological process in which consonants are attached to syllables other than those from which they originally came.

fluency (Lin & Siyanova-Chanturia, 2015; Renandya, 2012). As audiobooks expose learners to these authentic spoken phenomena and a more natural speech rate, they will cause an improvement in listening fluency.

A recent study (Chang & Millet, 2014) shows that listening fluency can be improved by reading-while-listening and listening-only. The study compared EFL learners' vocabulary gain and comprehension in three conditions: reading-only, reading-while-listening and listening-only. The students read and/or listened to ten graded readers over a period of thirteen weeks and answered the comprehension questions of each of the graded readers. The outcome of this study showed that the RWL-group and the LO-group made significant gains in comprehension scores, whereas the reading-only group did not. The comprehension level in the RWL-group was highest of all, followed by the LO-only group; but as the difference with the RWL result was negligible, listening-only has the potential to improve listening fluency as much as reading-while-listening.

TABLE 4
Descriptive statistics of listening test scores (%)

	Reading only (RO; n = 38)	Reading while listening (RL; n = 37)	Listening only (LO; n = 38)
Pre-test	44.87 (16.90)	46.31 (19.36)	54.17 (22.20)
Post-test 1	47.94 (21.38)	74.73 (13.84)	73.90 (17.42)
Post-test 2	46.07 (19.50)	74.48 (15.00)	72.73 (16.31)
Post-test 3	41.23 (19.88)	74.00 (18.83)	67.61 (19.43)

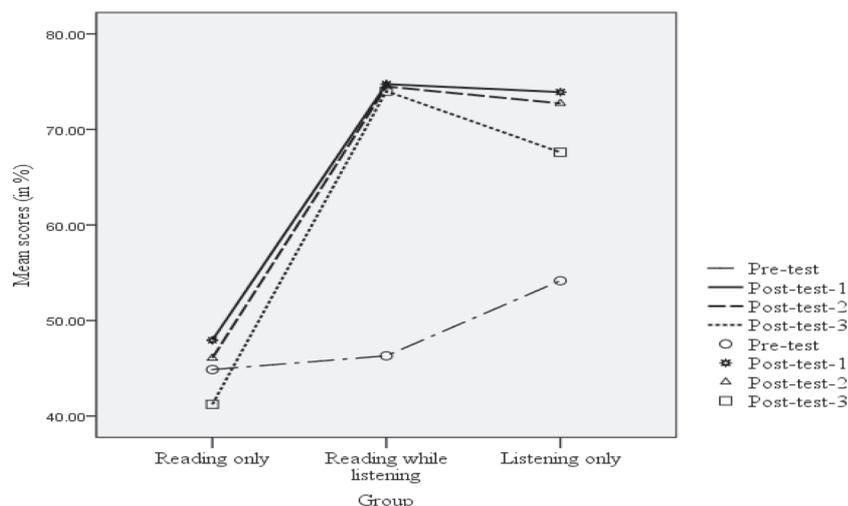


FIGURE 1
Mean scores of pre-test, post-test 1, post-test 2, and post-test 3

5.8.4. Vocabulary gain

Not only does the use of audiobooks lead to deepened knowledge of known vocabulary, it also introduces the listener to new words. The vocabulary gain depends on the level of the audiobook used and the method used (RWL or LO). As mentioned above, Nation (2007) stated that only a small percentage of the vocabulary can be unknown to the learners as too much unknown vocabulary would obstruct the general comprehension and vocabulary learning. It is therefore necessary to meticulously choose the right audiobook. As far as the method is concerned, the amount of acquired vocabulary differs a lot and different studies show different results.

Brown, Waring and Donkaewbua (2008) compared RWL, reading only and LO while using graded readers. The outcome of this study showed that most words were learned in the RWL mode, followed by reading only and then listening only.

In Chang's 2012 study the researcher focused on the effects of RWL versus reading-only. For this study two groups were formed: a reading-while-listening group and a control group (reading-only). The Vocabulary Levels Test² was used to determine the students' vocabulary gain in both groups. By the end of the study, the RWL group had improved their vocabulary gain by 17 marks whereas the control group only gained 4 marks (Table 2).

It should be noted that the vocabulary gain differed per student in the RWL-group. Students who studied more books didn't necessarily gain more vocabulary than those who studied fewer books (Table 4). This outcome could be explained by the possibility that some students put more effort into developing listening fluency rather than learning vocabulary. Another explanation could be that the students' original unknown words were different. A student who scored high Time 1, has limited room for improvement. Studies have indicated that lower level learners are likely to make more advancement than higher level ones (Elly, 1991). A third reason could be that the student learned other words that did not appear in the Vocabulary Levels Test (Chang C. , 2012).

Table 2. Sum of Vocabulary Levels Tests at Times 1 and 2 for the RWL Group and the Control Group

		Time 1	Time 2
RWL (n = 7)	<i>M</i>	85	102
	<i>SD</i>	15	11
	<i>Min-Max</i>	69-113	84-121
Control (n = 12)	<i>M</i>	84	88
	<i>SD</i>	7	8
	<i>Min-Max</i>	67-92	73-96

Note. the maximum score = 150

Table 4. Sum and Gain of Vocabulary measured at Times 1 and 2 for the Students of RWL Group

Student #	Total books studied	Time 1	Time 2	Gain	Percentage*
1	39	88	102	+14	23%
2	28	83	105	+22	33%
3	29	88	105	+17	27%
4	32	79	96	+17	24%
5	38	69	84	+15	19%
6	39	91	100	+9	15%
7	37	113	121	+8	22%

Note: the maximum score = 150

*The gain of the percentage was calculated by $[(\text{Time 2} - \text{Time 1}) / (150 - \text{Time 1})] \times 100$ (see Horst et al., 1998)

5.8.5. Listening is part of the curriculum (CEFR)

The Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR) describes five skills that have to be developed during language learning: writing, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production and listening. Audiobooks have a direct effect on the latter, but they can also improve a learner's speaking competence since the trained narrators serve as a model in terms of inflection, tone, different dialects, rhythm, pauses, silences and different voices (Baskin & Harris, 1995). As it has been proven that audiobooks not only improve learners' overall language competence but also their literary skills, audiobooks are therefore an endorsed medium.

² A diagnostic test (Schmitt, Schmitt, & Clapham, 2001) that indicates the frequency profile of a learner's vocabulary.

5.8.6. Levelling the playing field

Listening to stories is generally easier than decoding print, as the comprehension is aided by verbal techniques. Therefore, the use of audiobooks with L2 learners is effective since they act as a scaffold (Beers, 1998; Chen, 2004). EFL learners who are reading below grade level can often listen at levels higher than their measured reading comprehension, thus enabling those learners to access books above their reading level. This way, learners might find an extra motivation to use audiobooks as they can still access books at the appropriate grade level (Lesesne, 2013).

5.8.7. Easily accessible

Audiobooks can foster one's *reading* habit as they are always available, anytime, anywhere. Because audiobooks are easy-to-reach, they are an excellent source of L2 exposure. Especially when using audiobooks with the listening-only method (LO), listening options are almost infinite. One can listen in the car, during a workout or even while doing chores.

When using the RWL method, this multitasking option is no longer applicable. The books are still easily accessible, but the learner must be able to read along, thus limiting options of when and where to listen and read and therefore possibly limiting exposure time.

5.8.8. Exposure to literature

Because audiobooks are so easily accessible, more and more people are taking an interest in literary texts. Audiobooks are a way to promote literature and to complement and encourage regular reading. With EFL learners, the use of audiobooks may lead to an increase of literary competence and cultural knowledge. They may even provoke life-long learning as they can become part of the learner's self-study process.

Using literature has many benefits. Readers/listeners gain knowledge of story grammar and of the typical structures of narratives (Stein & Glenn, 1979). It has also been proven to help learners recognize the underlying construction of written language, which can be considerably different from spoken language.

In addition to this, audiobooks can lead to an expansion of one's literary horizon. Adults may listen to works they would not normally read. Because an audiobook has the power to capture the interest of a listener, listeners get to know new books and writers, new genres, Audiobooks can also aid in keeping the richness of the story as professional narrators can read novels with the appropriate accent and cadence. Books as *Oliver Twist* (Dickens) or *The Secret Garden* (Burnett) contain challenging sentences and are written in a specific accent. When a reader is unable to decode the words correctly or to reproduce that specific accent, they will inevitably lose some of the richness of the story.

5.8.9. Improving oral fluency

According to Chen Shu-Hsien (2004) audiobooks stimulate the process of imitation, thus it is a good method to achieve correct pronunciation, intonation and inflection. The verbal techniques professional narrators use help EFL learners with the pronunciation, emphasis, tone and other attributes which characterize standard English speed patterns. They also offer great examples of speaking fluency, as the professional narrators serve as a perfect model.

5.9. Pitfalls

5.9.1. Incomprehensible input

When using audiobooks, one must carefully pick the right book. In order for learners to reap the benefits of audiobooks, they must be able to comprehend the book. As Nation (2007) explained in his fourth condition to implementing suitable input for a language course, learners should be able to understand most of the vocabulary. Books that are too high a level, will be incomprehensible and will therefore presumptively demotivate the learner to listen to them.

Even though Lesesne (2013) states that audiobooks may enable an EFL learner to listen at a higher level than their measured reading level, Brown (2007) argues that, for listening, learners should pick titles a level or two below their reading level. If learners overestimate their listening level, they are likely to become discouraged by the difficulty and might therefore lose interest in the listening assignment and in audiobooks in general (Chang A. , 2010).

If we follow Brown's (2007) theory, we can conclude that EFL learners would be best to choose lower level graded reader audiobooks to ensure comprehension. Only EFL learners that stranded at a lower reading level than their general learning level, can benefit from listening to audiobooks above their reading level. This could nullify the possible benefit of vocabulary gain, as learners listening below their level might already know the vocabulary.

5.9.2. Loss of richness with graded (audio)books

Even though the use of audiobooks can aid in keeping the richness of a story due to the correct pronunciation and use of accents and cadence by the professional narrator, graded audiobooks may lead to a decrease in richness of the text because of the simplification process. As this is the case with any graded reader, whether it's written or spoken, this is not a problem specific to audiobooks, but more to graded versions of books in general.

5.9.3. Loss of motivation

With ungraded books, it can be difficult to choose a book at the right level. Graded books often offer a solution, but they also cut down a learner's choice as not every book is available as a graded reader. This could result in a decrease in the motivation of the learner.

5.9.4. Loss of concentration

When using the LO method, a learner has the advantage of multitasking. The other side of the coin is that listeners may listen less attentively. This loss in concentration may well complicate the development of listening proficiency.

5.9.5. Quantity

For the effects of audiobooks on the learner's listening skills to fully develop, a learner must be exposed to large quantities of aural input (Nation I. , 2007). Comparisons between different studies have shown that the effect on a learner's listening performance is determined by the quantity of aural input. "Unless learners expose themselves to abundant aural input [...] they are not likely to improve their listening skills much" (Chang & Millet, 2014).

It is therefore necessary that the designed listening programme offers a variety of books as to stimulate the learners to start listening on a regular basis. Listening to one or two books will hardly have an effect on the learner's listening skill.

6. The research

6.1. Research questions

For my study I took a closer look at the following questions:

- What are the preferred ways to implement audiobooks to motivate learners?
- Can audiobooks help to introduce English stories to adult EFL learners?
- Can audiobooks stimulate life-long learning?
- Can audiobooks motivate adult EFL learners to listen to English speakers?
- Can adult EFL learners be motivated to listen to audiobooks to increase their exposure to the English language?

6.2. Hypothesis

My hypothesis targets two main objectives. The first objective being the predominant intent, bringing about the latter.

If the learners become familiar with the use of audiobooks and experience its benefits, they will use audiobooks again in the future.

If, after this introductory project, the learners are motivated to use audiobooks more frequently to increase their exposure to the English language, the learners are likely to reap the long-term benefits of the use of audiobooks, such as improved listening skills and listening fluency, improved oral fluency and vocabulary gain.

6.3. Method: listening-only

As the target of this study is to use audiobooks as a means to increase L2 exposure with adult EFL learners, I've decided to work with the listening-only method. This method appears to be more compatible with the typical adult learner's life. LO offers more possibilities for the adult learner, as it enables them to multitask and to access it anywhere, anytime. Multiple studies have shown that both LO and RWL enable learners to develop their listening fluency and in the long run the difference in results are negligible. Even though RWL offers some benefits that LO does not, RWL would limit exposure, as the learner must be able to find a moment to sit down and read along.

The benefits of extensive listening by means of audiobooks are numerous, but to really reap these benefits, a learner must be exposed to large quantities of aural input. Due to limited time and resources, I'm only able to carry out a short project in which I will introduce the use of audiobooks to the learners. I'm hopeful that after my project, which can be viewed upon as an introduction to the use of audiobooks, the learners will be stimulated and intrinsically motivated to use audiobooks more frequently. Therefore, stimulating life-long learning and improving their listening fluency and, in time, their overall listening skills.

As far as vocabulary gain is concerned, the impact of listening-only is very limited. LO enables vocabulary gain, but the difference with RWL is significant. As the main focus of my own study is L2 exposure and not vocabulary gain, this factor is of little importance.

6.4. Used materials

For the study, MP3 recordings of eleven different graded readers were provided. As the level in this class was not entirely homogeneous, a variety of level 2, 3 and 4 books were provided to differentiate. Despite the fact that Lesesne (2013) states that audiobooks may enable EFL learners to listen at a higher level than their reading level, I opted for offering lower and higher levels, thus making sure that the learners wouldn't become discouraged and lose their interest if only offered a higher level.

As my main goal was to encourage learners to become more familiar with audiobooks - after which they are likely to become a tool for the learners to increase their exposure to English - I needed to make certain most learners were motivated and encouraged to keep listening.

To offer every listener something that inspired or excited them, a variety of genres was offered: action and adventure, horror, romance, thriller, ...

6.5. Approach

The study was conducted in an evening class English with eleven adult learners over a period of three weeks. The subjects were 30 to 70 years old, male and female. The level of this class was 2.1, meaning that the learners were in their third year of English. Despite the learners' general study level, their proficiency level was heterogeneous, with both stronger and weaker students in this class.

At the start of the project all learners were asked to complete a survey. This survey consisted of three parts: *Personal data*, *Self-evaluation* and *Audiobooks evaluation (pre listening)*. The second and third part of the survey enabled me to gauge the subjects' view on audiobooks and how they estimated their own English skills. The learners were asked to complete the survey truthfully and thoroughly, as it was anonymous.

A week after the survey, the subjects were given all the necessary information to start the project. After an information session in class, they received a written step-by-step guide by email. This guide enabled and aided the subjects to take part in the audiobook project. They were granted access to a platform where they could consult a list of the audiobooks, complete with the title, author, a short summary and the level of the book. This way the learners were encouraged to select a book that piqued their interest. They were asked to listen to one book but were free to listen to more.

After a short period of three weeks, I tested the learners' overall experience and general findings via a second survey. This survey was divided into four parts: *Personal data*, *Self-evaluation*, *Audiobook project*, *Audiobooks evaluation (post listening)*. This self-evaluation and audiobooks evaluation made it possible for me to compare the subjects' view on audiobooks and their skills before and after the project.

After completing the survey, the learners participated in a class conversation about their experiences. For this class conversation I chose a *book club setting* where the learners, taking turns, answered a question. Both questions about the book itself and their general audiobook experience were included in this conversation. For a better results processing, this class discussion was recorded with the permission of the learners.

6.6. Results

6.6.1. Pre-test: survey 1

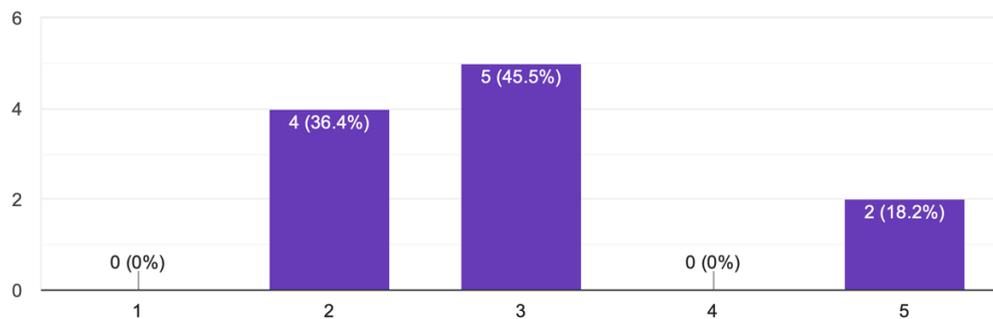
Firstly, this initial survey enabled me to gain insight in the learners' exposure to the English language, both in quality and quantity. It also showed the learners' viewpoint on their proficiency level before the project as well as their presumptions of and ideas about audiobooks. In this section of my paper I will discuss the highlights of the first survey. The complete summary of this survey can be consulted in the appendixes.

1. Exposure to the English language

Learners were asked to rate their exposure to the English language on a scale from 1 (only during the lessons) to 5 (every day). Only 18,2% is exposed to the English language on a daily base. We can conclude that most of the learners not often come in contact with the English language outside the classroom.

How often are you exposed to the English language?

11 responses

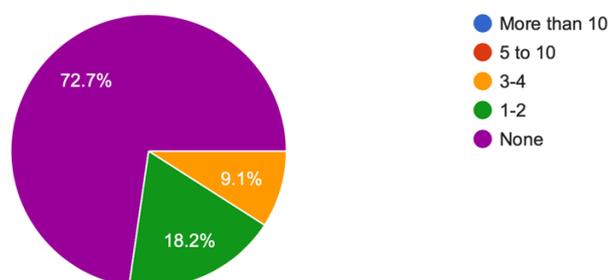


2. Exposure to English books

When asked how many English books the learners read, 72,7% admits to not reading English books at all.

How many English books do you read per year?

11 responses



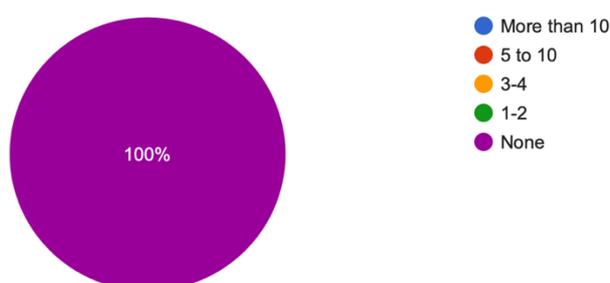
3. Exposure to English audiobooks

When it comes to English audiobooks, 100% admits to not listening to books at all. Most of the learners (36.4%) indicate they don't have enough time to do this. Other important reasons are that

they *don't know where to find them* (18.2%), that *it's too difficult* (18.2%), that they simply are *not interested in books* (18.2%) or that they *prefer reading itself over listening* (18.2%). The latter is a personal preference and therefore not easy susceptible to change. The other reasons may be tackled by informing the learners, challenging them with an interesting audiobook and providing the right level.

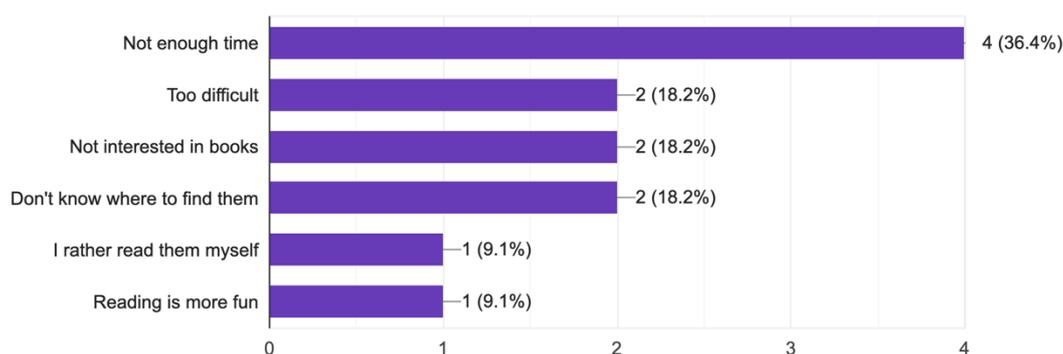
How many English audiobooks do you listen to per year?

11 responses



What's the reason you don't or hardly ever listen to English audiobooks?

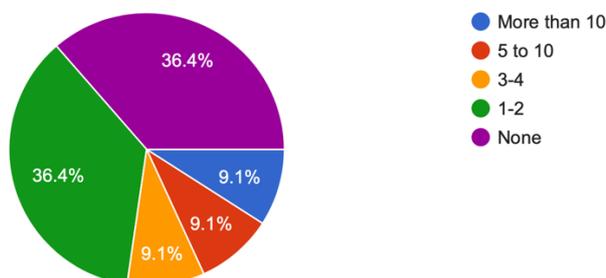
11 responses



What is striking is that 63.6% does read books in their L1 and even 18.2% listen to L1 audiobooks. We can conclude that the vast majority of the learners is interested in stories and books, but that their preferred language is L1 due to lack of time, level of difficulty and lack of knowledge on where to find English (audio)books. It is clear that when it comes to English (audio)books there is room for improvement.

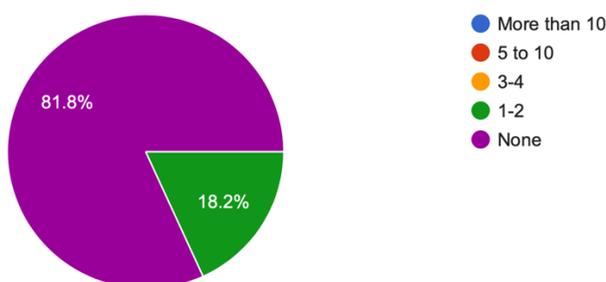
How many books in your L1 do you read per year?

11 responses



How many audiobooks in your L1 do you listen to per year?

11 responses



6.6.2. Post-test: survey 2

This second survey showed the learners' view on their proficiency level after the project. It also included a part in which the learners shared their experiences and findings on audiobooks. In this section of my paper I will discuss the highlights of this second survey. The complete summary of this survey can be consulted in the appendixes.

A comparison between survey 1 and 2 on the topics *Self-evaluation* and *Audiobook evaluation* can be found in the next section.

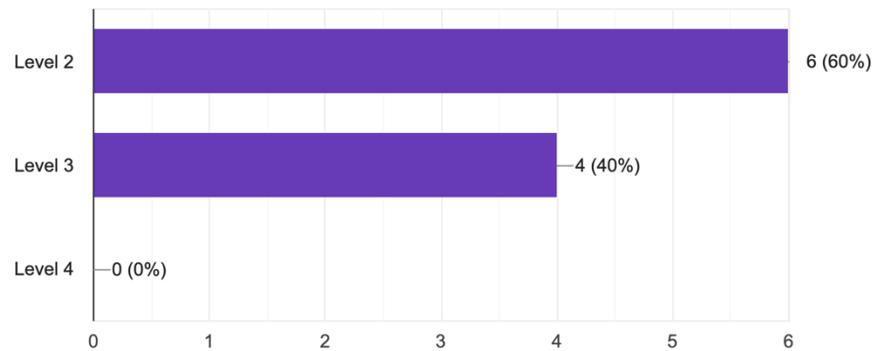
Side note: Only 10 learners carried out the project. One of the subjects withdrew from the study and therefore didn't complete the second survey. The results of survey 2 are thus based on ten subjects instead of eleven.

1. Level of the audiobooks

Giving the subjects the chance to select a level of difficulty resulted in 60% choosing a level 2 book. None of the subjects chose level 4. When looking at the learners' opinion on the level of their chosen audiobook, only 20% implied that the level was too easy. Although our first reaction might be to presume that the 20% relates to subjects who had chosen a level 2 book, the individual surveys show otherwise. From the two subjects who argued that the level was too easy, only one had chosen level 2. Reasons for it being too easy were: too easy sentence structure, too easy vocabulary and narrator spoke too slow.

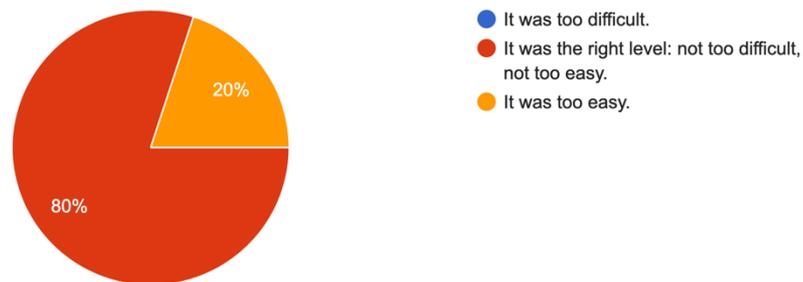
What's the level of the book(s) you've listened to?

10 responses



What did you think about the level of the book(s) you've listened to?

10 responses



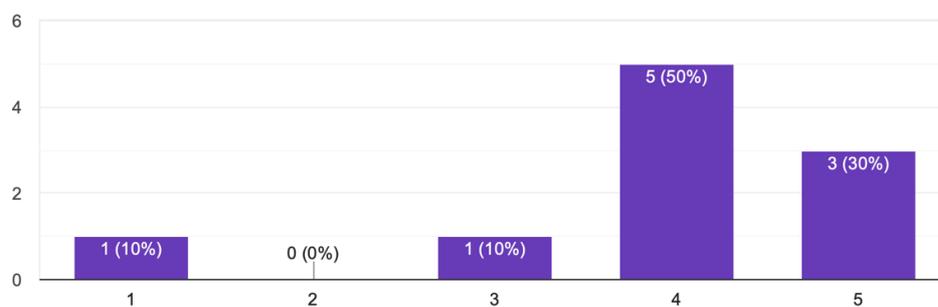
2. Overall opinion on the audiobooks project

The vast majority of the learners enjoyed listening to the audiobooks. Some of the reasons they enjoyed it were: *It is very good to learn English*, *It was an interesting story*, *The story was spoken at the right level* and *You can listen to it whilst doing something else*.

Only one indicated that it was *too boring* and that he prefers to read a book instead of listening to it.

Did you like listening to the audiobook(s)?

10 responses

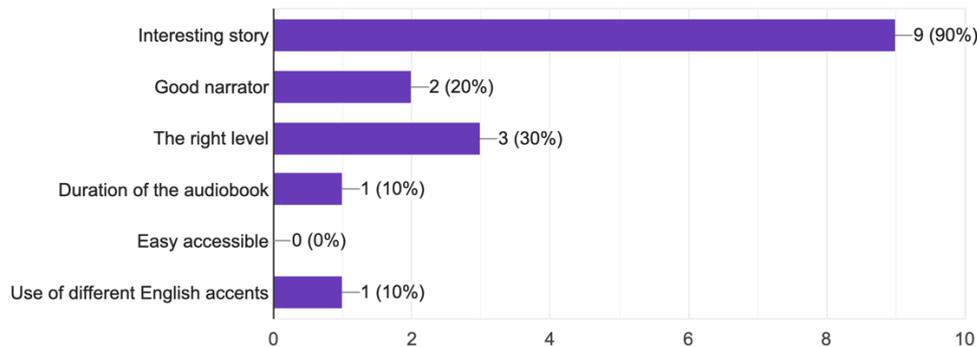


3. Important factors when choosing an audiobook

When asked what the most important items are when choosing an audiobook, the majority indicated that an interesting story is of great importance. A good narrator and the right level are essential factors as well.

Which of the following items are the most important to you when choosing an audiobook? (choose max. 2)

10 responses



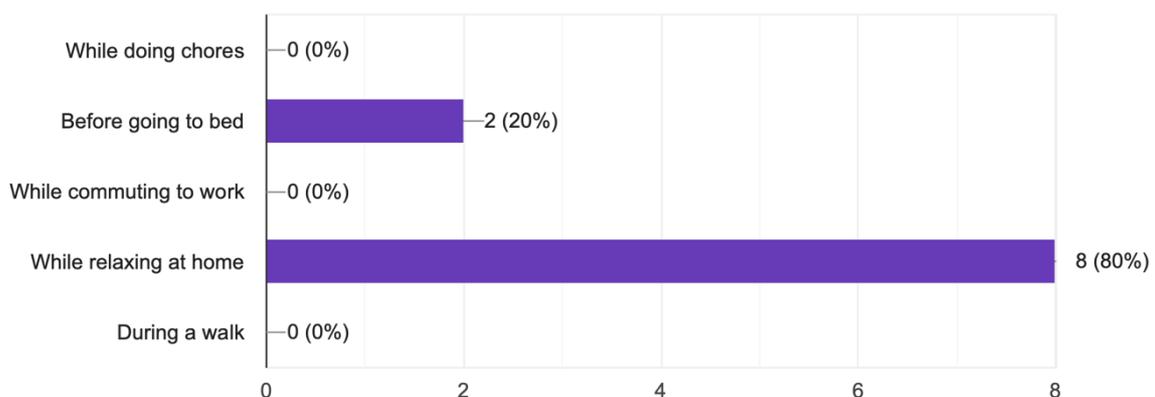
4. Listening habits

80% of the learners stated that they listened to the audiobook while relaxing at home. The other 20% before going to bed. None of the learners used the audiobook whilst doing something else, but preferred to focus solely on the listening activity.

Despite the fact that the audiobooks were rather short in time – one hour and a half on average – half of the learners listened to the book in parts.

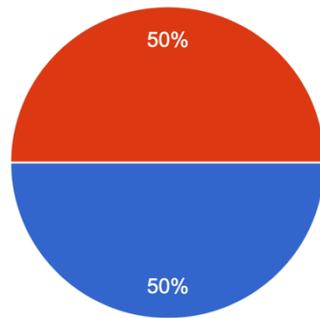
When/where did you listen to the audiobook(s)?

10 responses



How did you listen to the audiobook?

10 responses



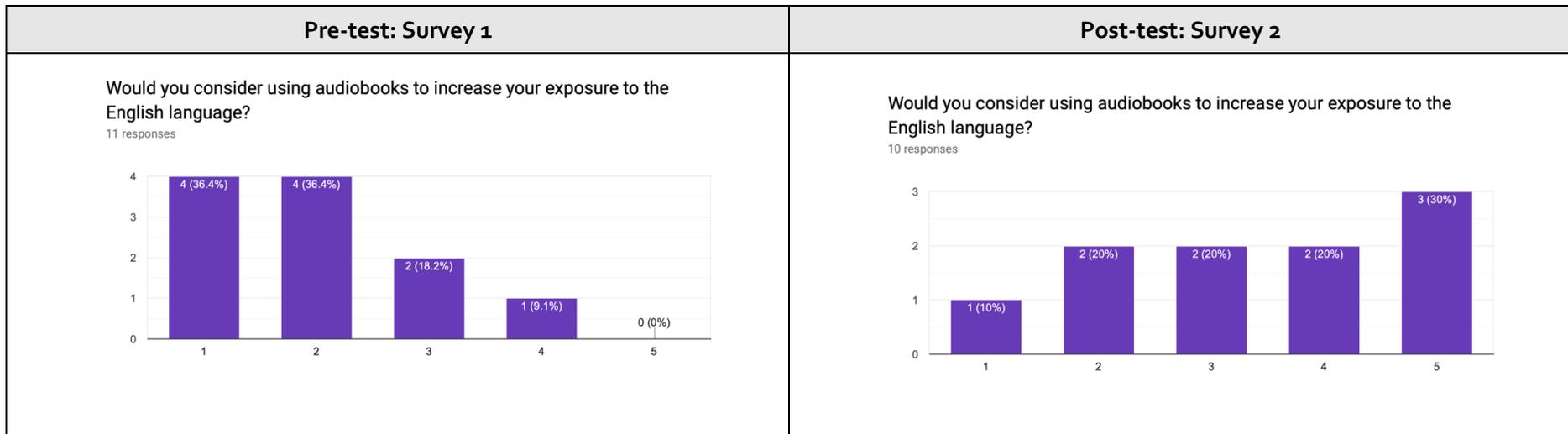
- I listened to the entire book at once.
- I listened to it in parts (e.g. two chapters every day).

6.6.3. Before and after: audiobook evaluation

When comparing the audiobook evaluation in Survey 1 and 2, we see a pronounced and positive shift in the perception of audiobooks. Where the learners first appeared to be more wary towards the use of audiobooks and its positive influence on one's speaking and listening skills, they now showed more interest in using audiobooks as a means to increase their exposure, as well as more confidence in this tool to enhance their listening and speaking skill. The following contrasting graphics clearly show that the project succeeded in positively changing the learners' view on audiobooks.

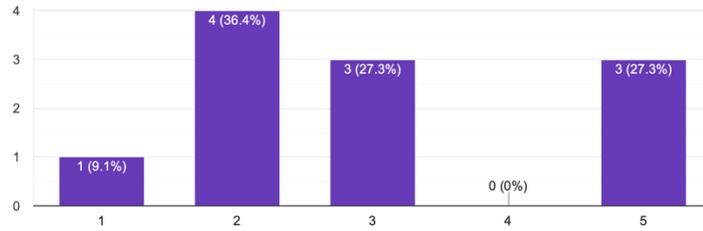
When learners were asked in Survey 1 to indicate on a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (absolutely) if they would consider using audiobooks to increase their exposure to the English language, 72,8% answered negatively, whereas in Survey 2 only 30% answered negatively. We can therefore state that adult EFL learners can be motivated to listen to audiobooks to increase their exposure to the English language.

It is apparent that after the project the learners' belief in the advantages of audiobooks increased significantly. Where the subjects first answered more adverse in terms of enhancing their listening and speaking skills via audiobooks, learners showed a positive evolution in survey 2.



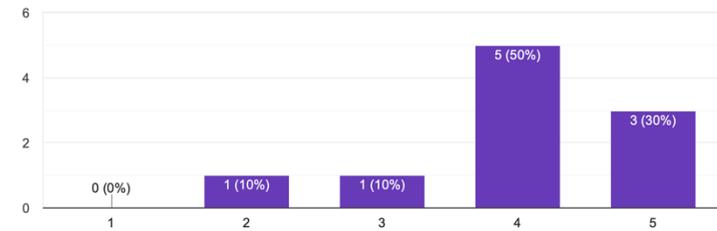
Do you think that audiobooks can help you to enhance your listening skills?

11 responses



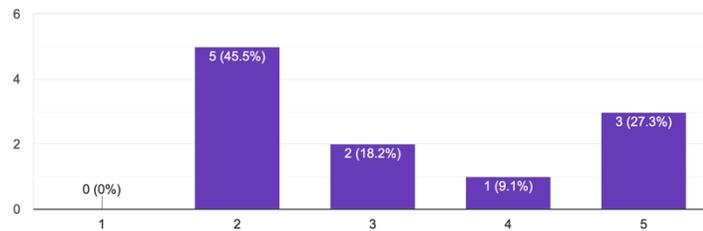
Do you think that audiobooks can help you to enhance your listening skills?

10 responses



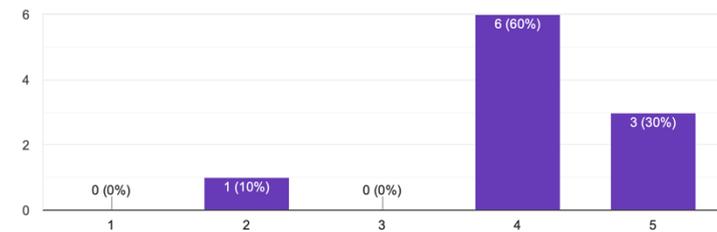
Do you think that audiobooks can help you to enhance your speaking skills?

11 responses



Do you think that audiobooks can help you to enhance your speaking skills?

10 responses

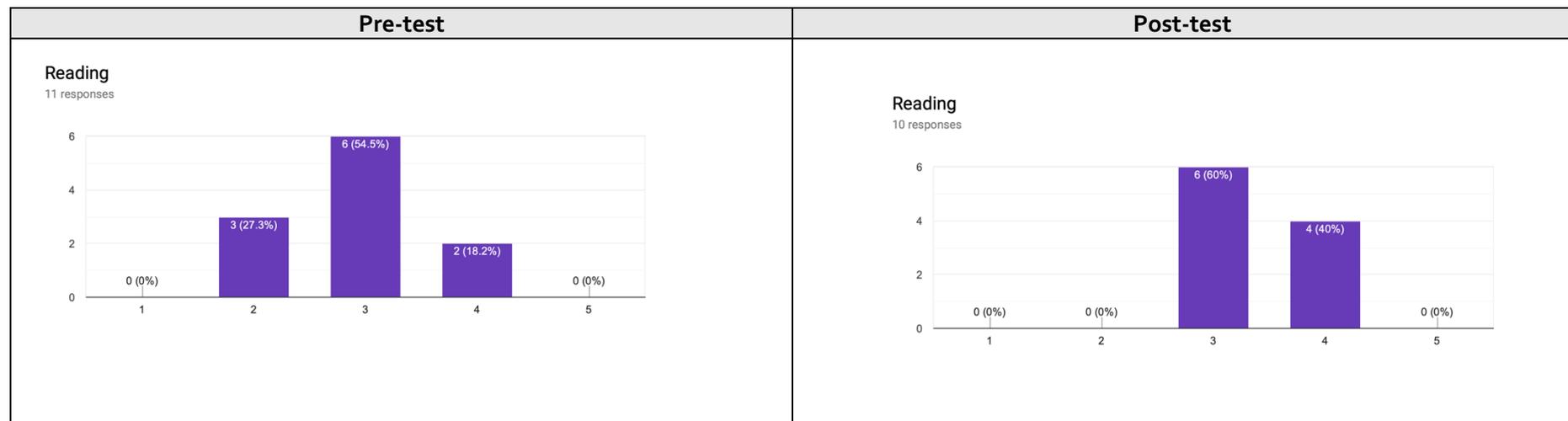


6.6.4. Before and after: Self-evaluation

The learners were asked to complete a self-evaluation before and after the audiobook project. Each subject was asked how confident they were about their English skills and had to choose a number between 1 (*not confident*) to 5 (*highly confident*). Because of the limited duration of the project, I had expected it to stagnate. Yet we can see that, regardless of the short length of the project, a slight shift to the right is noticeable with most of the skills.

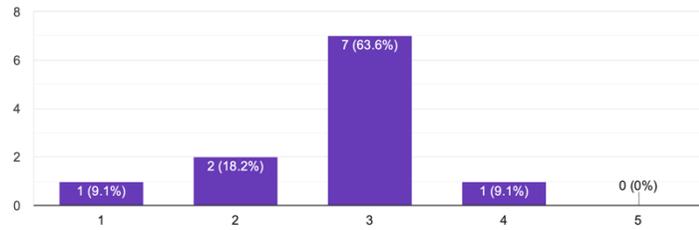
The skills targeted during this project were listening and speaking. As far as listening is concerned the change is negligible. Speaking on the other hand, shows a clear change from a negative score towards a more moderate and mediocre score. A possible explanation for this can be derived from the reasons why the learners enjoyed listening to the audiobook. As two learners stated: *You hear the correct pronunciation* and *It is very good to learn English*.

Although this study didn't aim at an increase in reading and writing confidence, we can see that both these skills have positively changed as well. Two reasons may explain this outcome. One is that self-evaluations are always a snapshot and that they're dependent upon many different factors. It could be that the learners simply had a more positive feel about their competence that day. Another possible reason is that the general image of their skills was boosted after the positive experience with the audiobooks. None of the subjects experienced any discouragement due to a too difficult level. This may have resulted in an increase in their overall confidence.



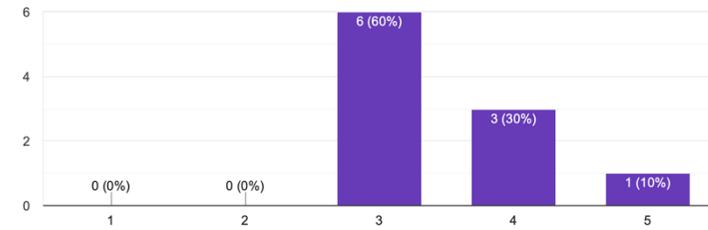
Writing

11 responses



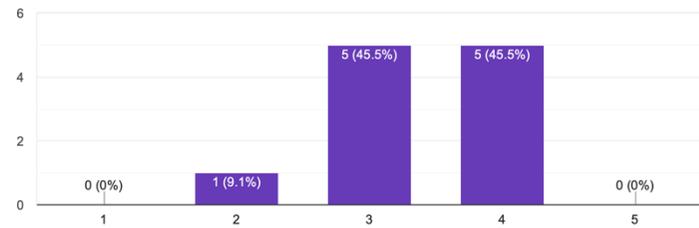
Writing

10 responses



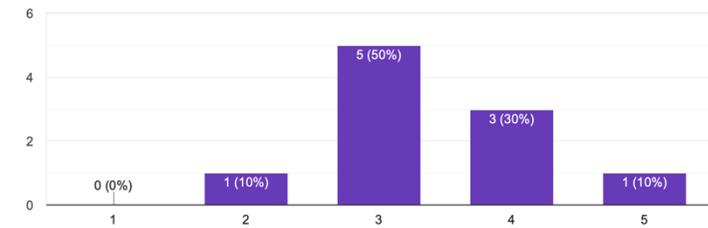
Listening

11 responses



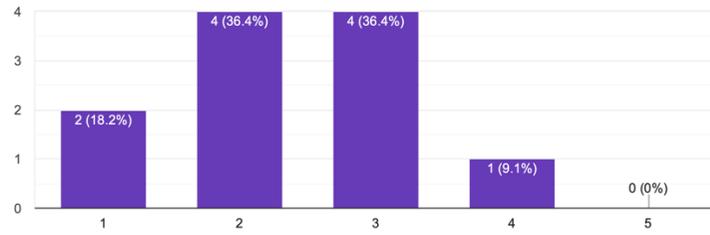
Listening

10 responses



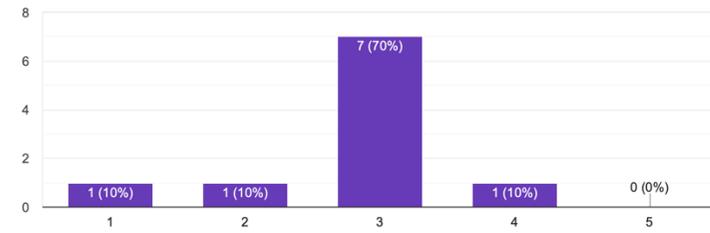
Speaking with others

11 responses



Speaking with others

10 responses



6.6.5. Post-test: class discussion

After completing the final survey, the learners participated in a class conversation about their experiences. For this discussion, question cards about the book itself and the listening experience were used. These cards can be found in appendix 7.

It should be noted, that the use of discussion cards is not obligatory when using audiobooks, but it's highly recommended. These cards enable the learners to share their opinion and findings with each other. This can result in learners recommending their audiobooks to fellow classmates, thereby increasing the exposure to the English language even more.

In addition, reflecting on the book and the listening experience can contribute to the general understanding of the story and the use of audiobooks. Learners develop skills for critical thinking as they debate about the storylines, characters and narrators. This will not only aid in their listening process but can positively influence their reading experience as well.

Finally, this method facilitates the practice of two skills rather than one, as you link a speaking exercise to the listening activity.

In this section I will discuss the most important findings of this discussion. The complete recording of this class discussion is available upon request.

1. Vocabulary gain

Although it was not one of the ambitions of this study to expand the vocabulary range of the learners, due to the limited duration of the project, when asked, one subject mentioned that she had learned a new word. The subject indicated that she had learned the word *the moors* because of the audiobook *The Secret Garden*. As no vocabulary test was given to prove the fact of vocabulary gain, we can only base this finding on the oral feedback of this one subject.

2. LO, RO or RWL

In this lower level class, the learners felt they would benefit even more when given the opportunity to do RWL. When asked *If you had to choose between reading this book and listening to it, what would you choose? Why?* they felt that audiobooks could make a big contribution to the listening and reading process but noticed some imperfections as a stand-alone tool. A visualisation of the sentences and words alongside the narrated story would aid them even more. 80% indicated that when given the choice between RWL, LO and RO, they would prefer RWL. 10% preferred listening only, the other 10% reading only.

3. Advantages of audiobooks

Not only did the subjects enjoy listening to the narrator, the vast majority of the learners said the sound effects that the graded readers provided, enhanced the whole listening experience as well. The correct pronunciation of dialects and exposure to different native accents were another benefit. Most learners would therefore recommend using audiobooks to other language learners.

4. Teacher support

All the subjects agreed that they had the right amount of teacher support during the project. They were given all the necessary information at the start of the project and received a written guide that aided them during the process. Throughout the entire project I was available via email and telephone for extra support if necessary.

5. Offered books

Most learners enjoyed the variety of books that were offered, and almost everyone was happy with the book they chose. If they could change anything, it would be to include more recent books. This is an area for improvement, as most easy-to-find graded reader audiobooks are the classic stories.

7. Conclusion

From the above results we can answer our research questions and encapsulate our findings as:

- What are the preferred ways to implement audiobooks to motivate learners?
 - *When given a choice, learners prefer to implement audiobooks via the RWL method.*
- Can audiobooks help to introduce English stories to adult EFL learners?
 - *Audiobooks may be a good tool to help to introduce English stories to adult EFL learners, as the adult EFL learner is inadequately exposed to English books.*
- Can audiobooks stimulate life-long learning?
 - *Due to the limitations of this study, it is unclear whether or not audiobooks can stimulate life-long learning.*
- Can audiobooks motivate adult EFL learners to listen to English speakers?
 - *The right audiobooks and good narrators can motivate adult EFL learners to listen to English speakers.*
- Can adult EFL learners be motivated to listen to audiobooks to increase their exposure to the English language?
 - *Adult EFL learners can be motivated to listen to audiobooks to increase their exposure to the English language, if given the right level of audiobooks and a title that piques their interest.*

This research has indicated that adult learners are exposed to the English language outside the classroom, but only to a limited extent. Sources of this exposure are mainly television, songs, YouTube and the Internet. Hardly any learner reads English books, and none listen to English audiobooks. It is clear that there is room for improvement, and audiobooks could therefore serve as an extra means to expose the learners to the English language as well as to English books.

In spite of my original presumption, none of the subjects combined listening to audiobooks with other activities or chores. It may be that the listening itself requires some skill development and that multitasking can only be done in the long run. However, as more than half of the subjects are above 50 years old, it is highly likely that the average age of this study group was an important factor as well. Chances are that younger EFL learners would engage in multitasking during their listening activities.

Overall, this study has offered promising results. Although the length and capacity of the project was very limited, the project succeeded in motivating the learners to use audiobooks as a means to increase exposure to the English language. Further studies are needed to research the long-term benefits mentioned in the literature review. From this study it is unclear whether or not audiobooks can truly enhance listening and speaking skills, improve listening fluency and expand one's vocabulary range. The self-evaluations show promising results, but the second self-evaluation might have been influenced by other factors than the audiobooks, thus being unreliable.

The outcome may lead us to conclude that this study allowed the learners to become familiar with the use of audiobooks. The majority has stated they are likely to use audiobooks again in the future and the learners have obtained a more positive feel toward the possible benefits.

As it is clear that audiobooks are a qualitatively and useful tool for exposure, we must ask ourselves if it isn't time to finally give them their rightful place in (adult) language education.

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9. Appendixes

Appendix 1: Survey 1

Exposure to L2

31/05/19 19:42

Exposure to L2

L1: language one, your mother tongue
L2: language two, the English language

How often are you, as an adult EFL learner, exposed to the English language outside the classroom and by which means?

*Required

1. How old are you? *

Mark only one oval.

- < 20
 20-30
 30-40
 40-50
 50-60
 > 60

2. What's your gender? *

Mark only one oval.

- Male
 Female

3. Why are you taking this English course? *

Tick all that apply.

- Work
 Travel
 Personal interest
 Other: _____

4. How often are you exposed to the English language? *

This involves one or all of these skills: reading, writing, listening, viewing and speaking
Mark only one oval.

- 1 2 3 4 5
-
- Only during the lessons Every day
-

5. By which media are you exposed to the English language outside of this classroom? **Tick all that apply.*

- Television
- Songs
- Books
- Audiobooks
- Podcasts
- YouTube
- Internet
- None of the above
- Other: _____

6. How often do you read English texts outside the classroom? **Mark only one oval.*

- Every day
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

7. What kind of English texts do you read outside the classroom? **Tick all that apply.*

- Blogs
- Articles (on the Internet)
- Books
- I don't read English texts outside the classroom
- Other: _____

8. How many books in your L1 do you read per year? *

fiction and/or non-fiction

Mark only one oval.

- More than 10
- 5 to 10
- 3-4
- 1-2
- None

9. How many English books do you read per year? *

fiction and/or non-fiction + including graded readers
Mark only one oval.

- More than 10 Skip to question 11.
- 5 to 10 Skip to question 11.
- 3-4 Skip to question 11.
- 1-2 Skip to question 10.
- None Skip to question 10.

Reasons of limited exposure to English books**10. What's the reason you don't or hardly ever read English books? ***

Tick all that apply.

- Not enough time
- Too difficult
- Not interested in books
- Don't know where to find them
- Other: _____

Listening**11. How often do you listen to English speakers? Songs not included. ***

E.g.: Ted Talks, tutorials in English, audiobooks, English radio broadcasting, podcasts, ...
Mark only one oval.

- Every day
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

12. How many audiobooks in your L1 do you listen to per year? *

Mark only one oval.

- More than 10
- 5 to 10
- 3-4
- 1-2
- None

13. **How many English audiobooks do you listen to per year? ***

Mark only one oval.

- More than 10 *Skip to question 15.*
- 5 to 10 *Skip to question 15.*
- 3-4 *Skip to question 15.*
- 1-2 *Skip to question 14.*
- None *Skip to question 14.*

Reasons of limited exposure to English audiobooks

14. **What's the reason you don't or hardly ever listen to English audiobooks? ***

Tick all that apply.

- Not enough time
- Too difficult
- Not interested in books
- Don't know where to find them
- Other: _____

Self-evaluation

How confident are you about the following skills in L2?

15. **Reading ***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not confident	<input type="radio"/>	Highly confident				

16. **Writing ***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not confident	<input type="radio"/>	Highly confident				

17. **Listening ***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not confident	<input type="radio"/>	Highly confident				

18. Speaking with others **Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not confident	<input type="radio"/>	Highly confident				

Audiobooks evaluation**19. Would you consider using audiobooks to increase your exposure to the English language? ****Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Never	<input type="radio"/>	Absolutely				

20. Do you think that audiobooks can help you to enhance your listening skills? **Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
No	<input type="radio"/>	Yes				

21. Do you think that audiobooks can help you to enhance your speaking skills? **Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
No	<input type="radio"/>	Yes				

Appendix 2: Survey 2

Exposure to L2: Survey 2

31/05/19 19:53

Exposure to L2: Survey 2

L1: language one, your mother tongue
L2: language two, the English language

*Required

1. **How old are you? ***

Mark only one oval.

- < 20
 20-30
 30-40
 40-50
 50-60
 > 60

2. **What's your gender? ***

Mark only one oval.

- Male
 Female

3. **Why are you taking this course? ***

Mark only one oval.

- Work
 Travel
 Personal interest
 Other: _____

Self-evaluation (after listening to audiobooks)

How confident are you about the following skills in L2?

4. **Reading ***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not confident	<input type="radio"/>	Highly confident				

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Pagina 1 van 5

5. Writing **Mark only one oval.*

1	2	3	4	5		
Not confident	<input type="radio"/>	Highly confident				

6. Listening **Mark only one oval.*

1	2	3	4	5		
Not confident	<input type="radio"/>	Highly confident				

7. Speaking with others **Mark only one oval.*

1	2	3	4	5		
Not confident	<input type="radio"/>	Highly confident				

Audiobook project**8. How many audiobooks did you listen to during this project? ****Mark only one oval.*

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4-5
- > 5

9. What's the level of the book(s) you've listened to? **Tick all that apply.*

- Level 2
- Level 3
- Level 4

10. What did you think about the level of the book(s) you've listened to? **Mark only one oval.*

- It was too difficult. *After the last question in this section, skip to question 16.*
- It was the right level: not too difficult, not too easy. *After the last question in this section, skip to question 18.*
- It was too easy. *After the last question in this section, skip to question 17.*

11. When/where did you listen to the audiobook(s)? **Tick all that apply.*

- While doing chores
- Before going to bed
- While commuting to work
- While relaxing at home
- During a walk
- Other: _____

12. How did you listen to the audiobook? **Mark only one oval.*

- I listened to the entire book at once.
- I listened to it in parts (e.g. two chapters every day).

13. Did you like listening to the audiobook(s)? **Mark only one oval.*

- | | | | | | | |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Not at all | <input type="radio"/> | Very much |

14. Why (not)? *

15. Which of the following items are the most important to you when choosing an audiobook? (choose max. 2) **Tick all that apply.*

- Interesting story
- Good narrator
- The right level
- Duration of the audiobook
- Easy accessible
- Use of different English accents
- Other: _____

Level too high

16. **Why was it too difficult for you? ****Tick all that apply.*

- Difficult vocabulary
- Difficult sentence structure
- Narrator spoke too fast
- Other: _____

*Skip to question 18.***Level too low**17. **Why was it too easy for you? ****Tick all that apply.*

- Too easy vocabulary
- Too easy sentence structure
- Narrator spoke too slow
- Other: _____

*Skip to question 18.***Audiobooks evaluation (after listening to audiobooks)**18. **Would you consider using audiobooks to increase your exposure to the English language? ****Mark only one oval.*

1	2	3	4	5		
Never	<input type="radio"/>	Absolutely				

19. **Do you think that audiobooks can help you to enhance your listening skills? ****Mark only one oval.*

1	2	3	4	5		
No	<input type="radio"/>	Yes				

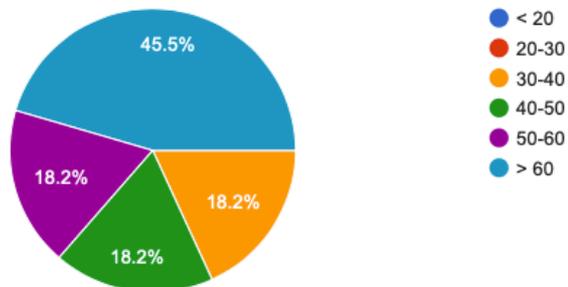
20. **Do you think that audiobooks can help you to enhance your speaking skills? ****Mark only one oval.*

1	2	3	4	5		
No	<input type="radio"/>	Yes				

Appendix 3: results Survey 1

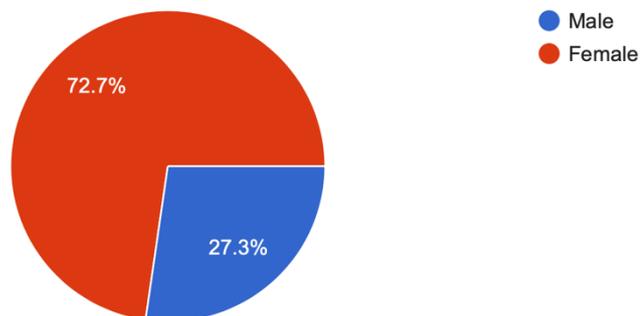
How old are you?

11 responses



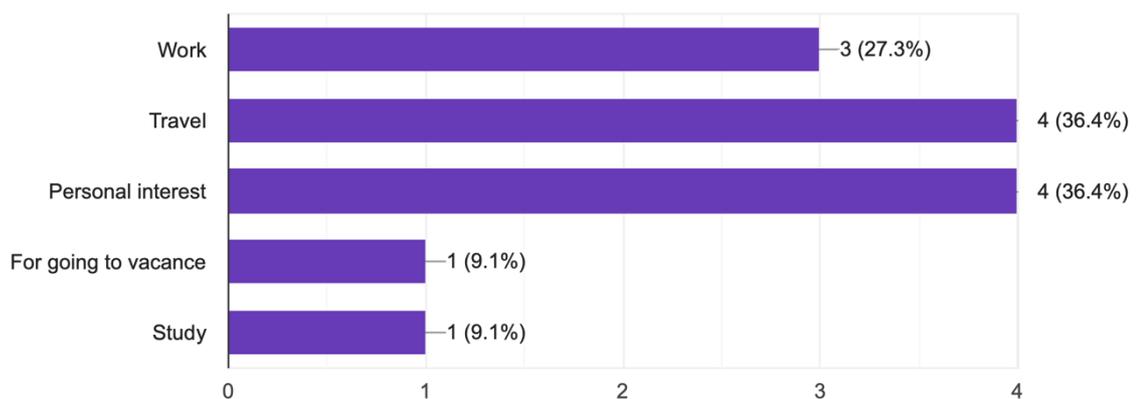
What's your gender?

11 responses



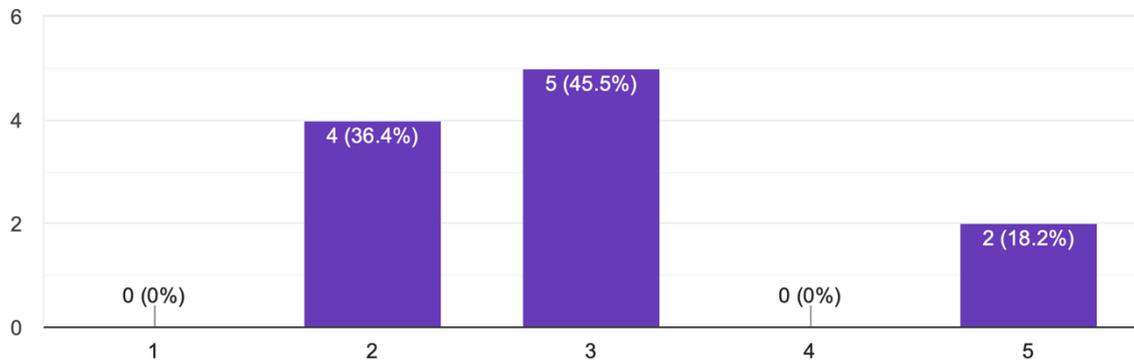
Why are you taking this English course?

11 responses



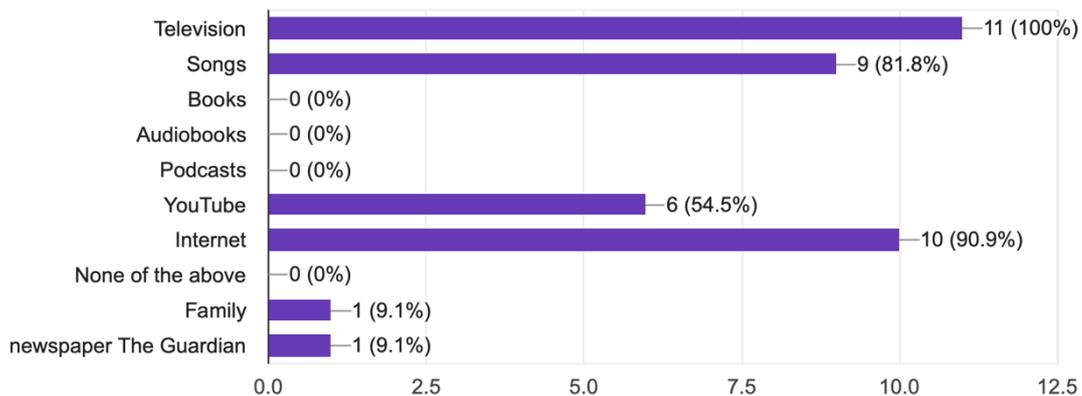
How often are you exposed to the English language?

11 responses



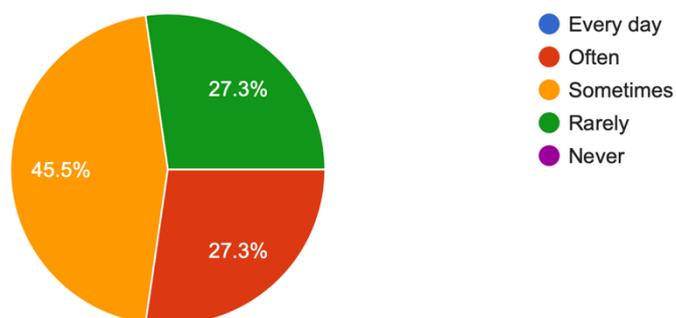
By which media are you exposed to the English language outside of this classroom?

11 responses



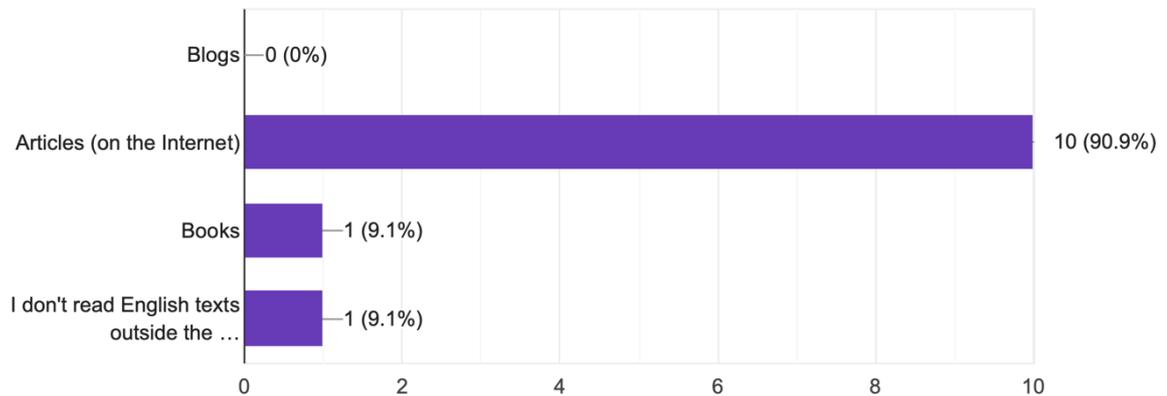
How often do you read English texts outside the classroom?

11 responses



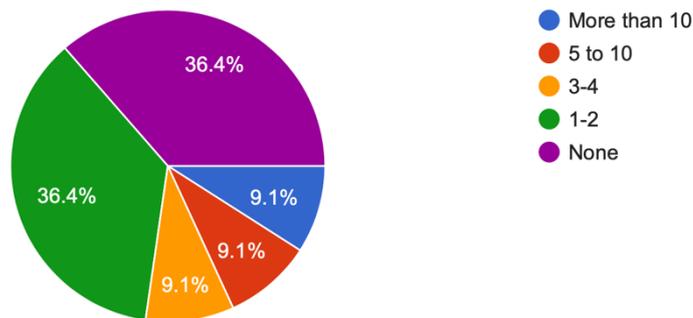
What kind of English texts do you read outside the classroom?

11 responses



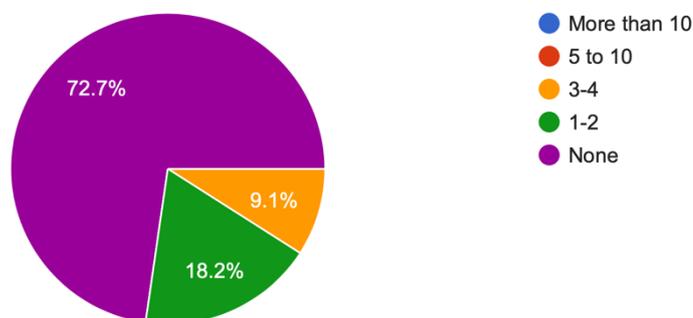
How many books in your L1 do you read per year?

11 responses



How many English books do you read per year?

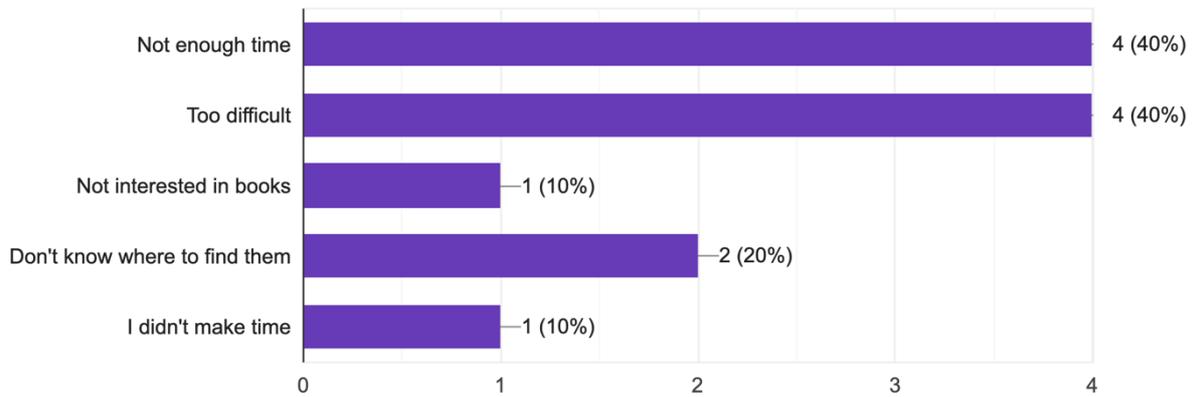
11 responses



Reasons of limited exposure to English books

What's the reason you don't or hardly ever read English books?

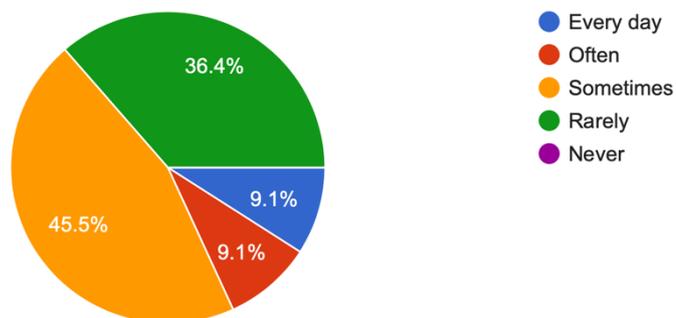
10 responses



Listening

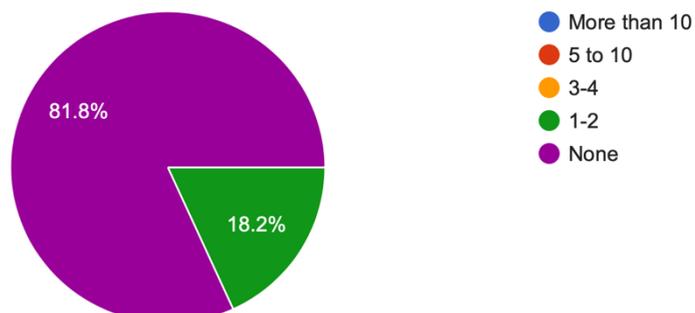
How often do you listen to English speakers? Songs not included.

11 responses



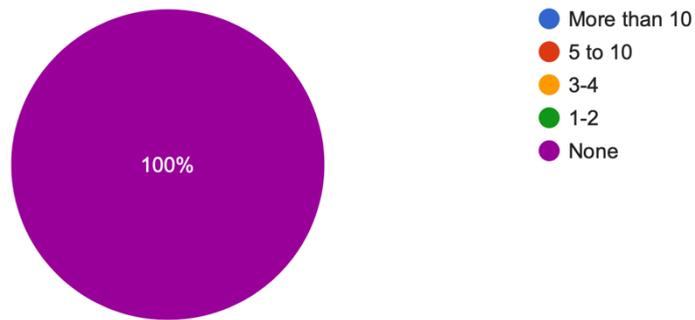
How many audiobooks in your L1 do you listen to per year?

11 responses



How many English audiobooks do you listen to per year?

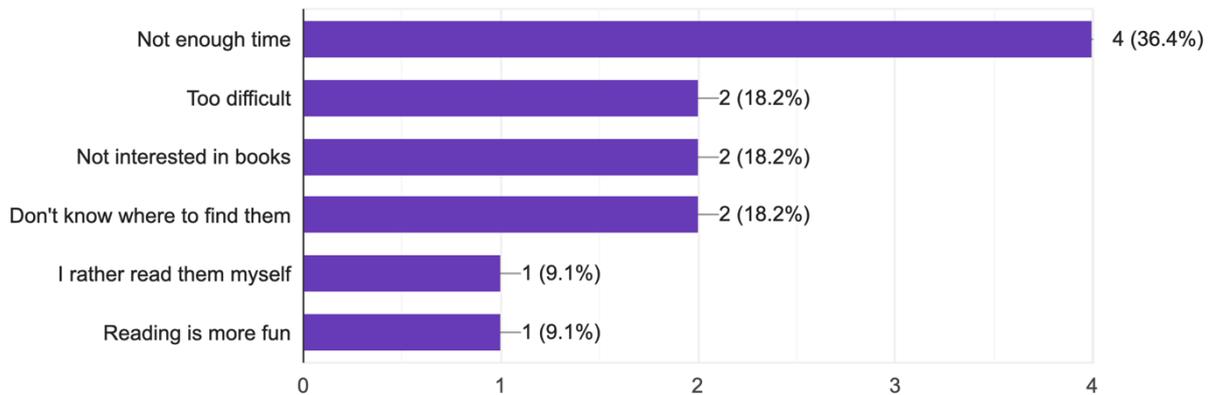
11 responses



Reasons of limited exposure to English audiobooks

What's the reason you don't or hardly ever listen to English audiobooks?

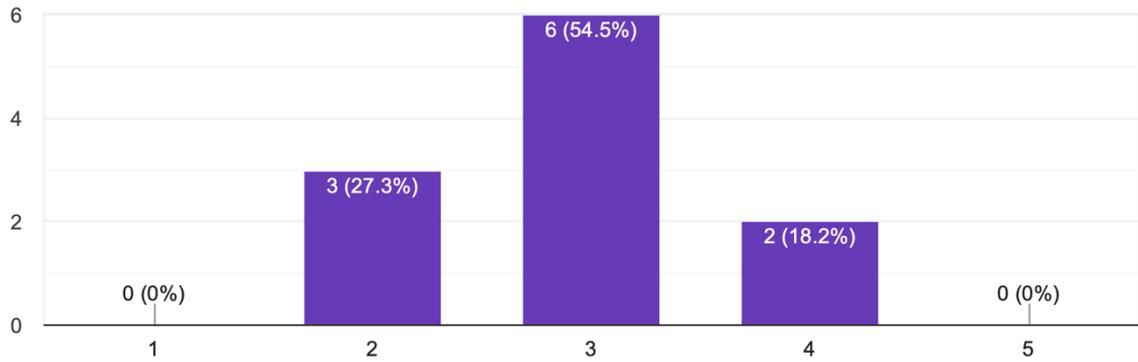
11 responses



Self-evaluation

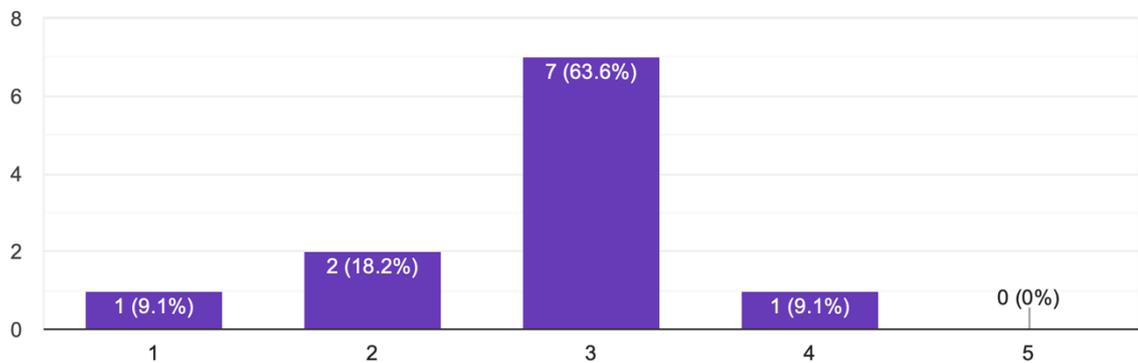
Reading

11 responses



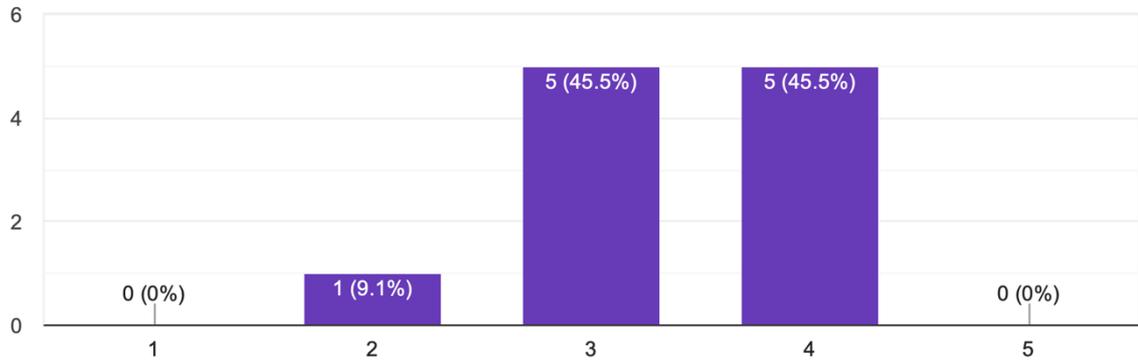
Writing

11 responses



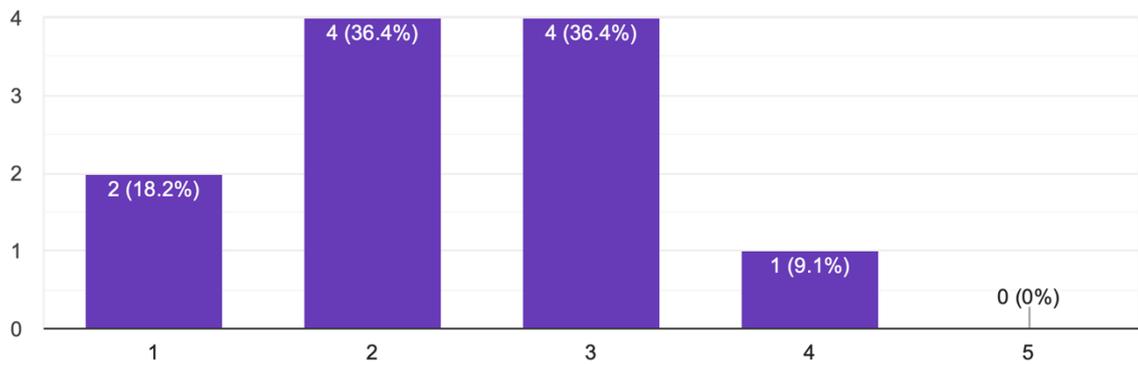
Listening

11 responses



Speaking with others

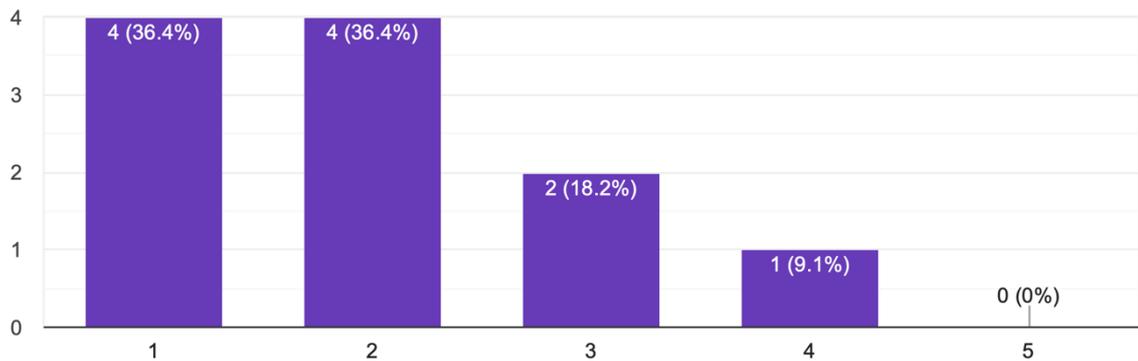
11 responses



Audiobooks evaluation

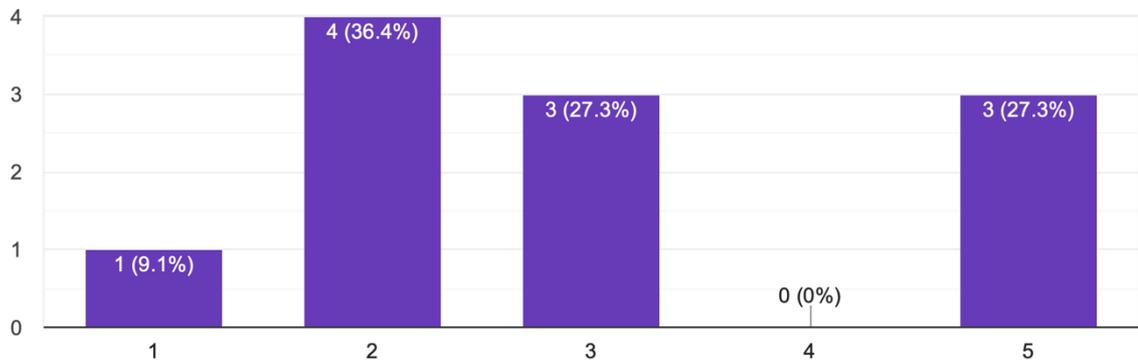
Would you consider using audiobooks to increase your exposure to the English language?

11 responses



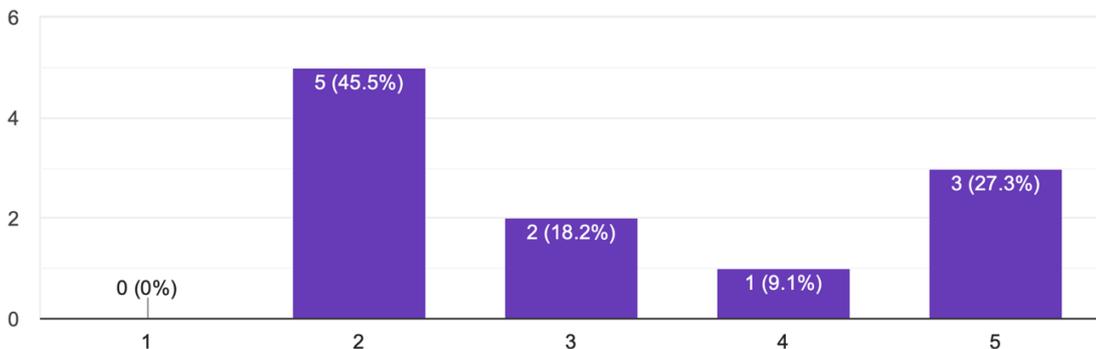
Do you think that audiobooks can help you to enhance your listening skills?

11 responses



Do you think that audiobooks can help you to enhance your speaking skills?

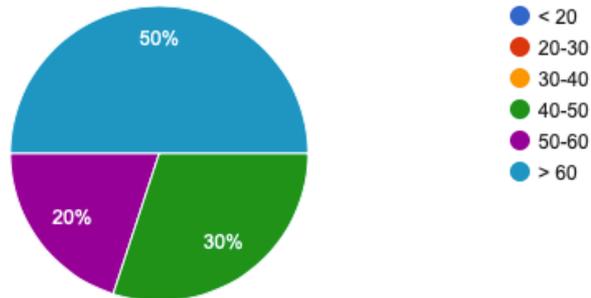
11 responses



Appendix 4: results Survey 2

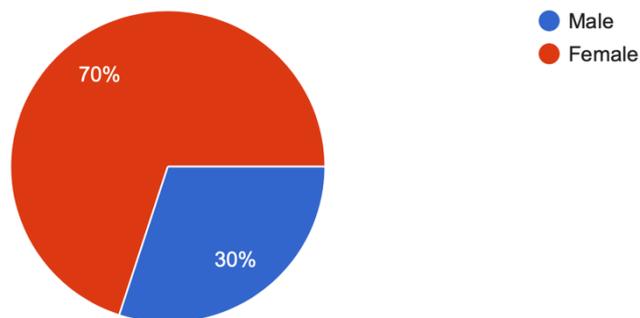
How old are you?

10 responses



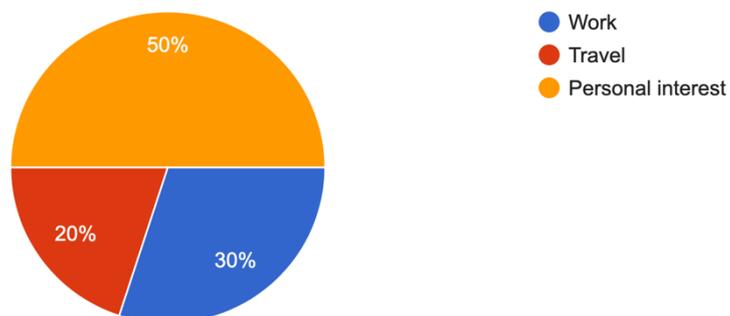
What's your gender?

10 responses



Why are you taking this course?

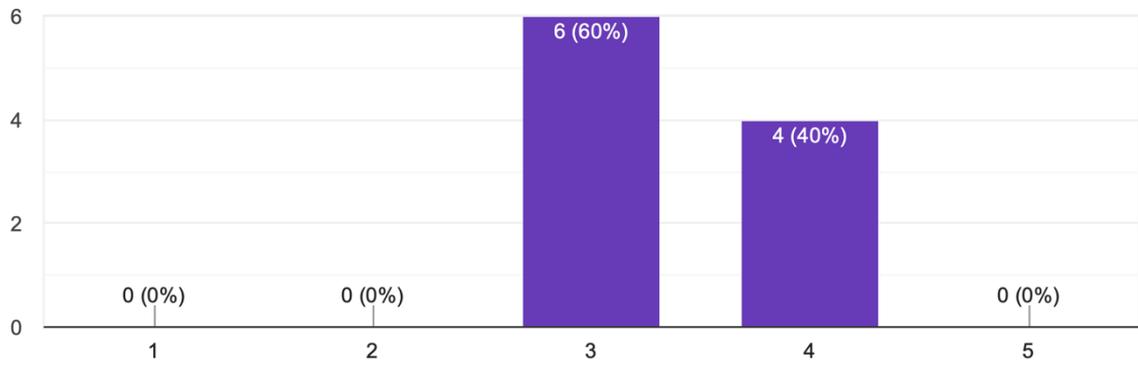
10 responses



Self-evaluation (after listening to audiobooks)

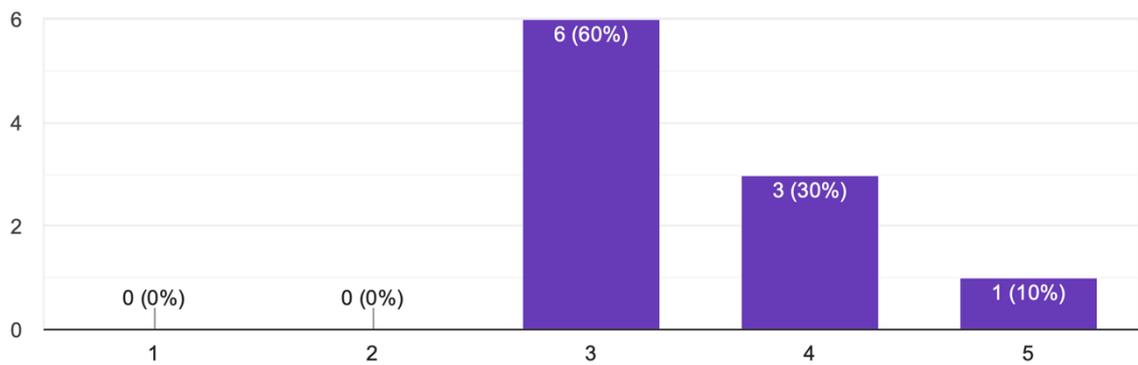
Reading

10 responses



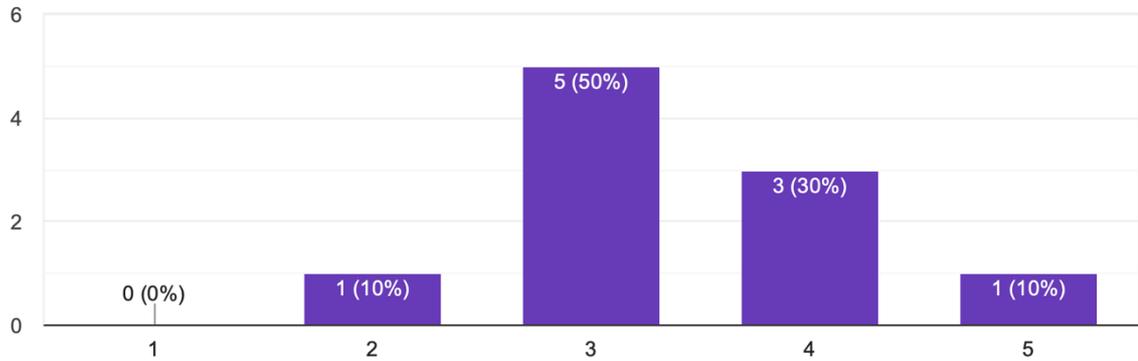
Writing

10 responses



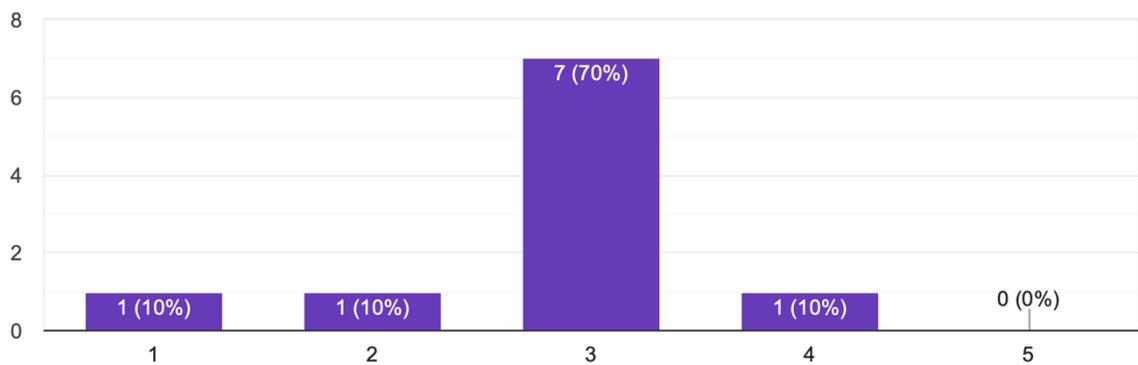
Listening

10 responses



Speaking with others

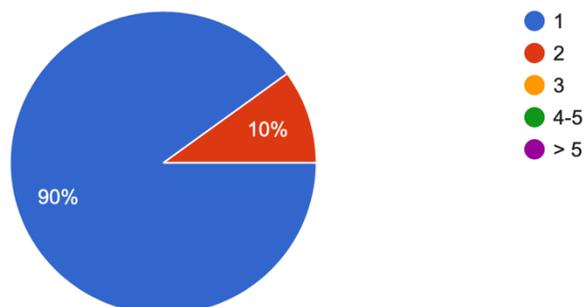
10 responses



Audiobook project

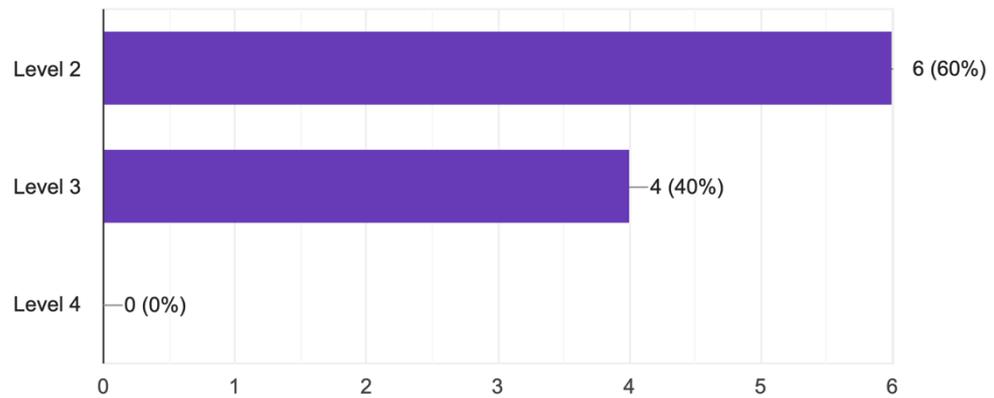
How many audiobooks did you listen to during this project?

10 responses



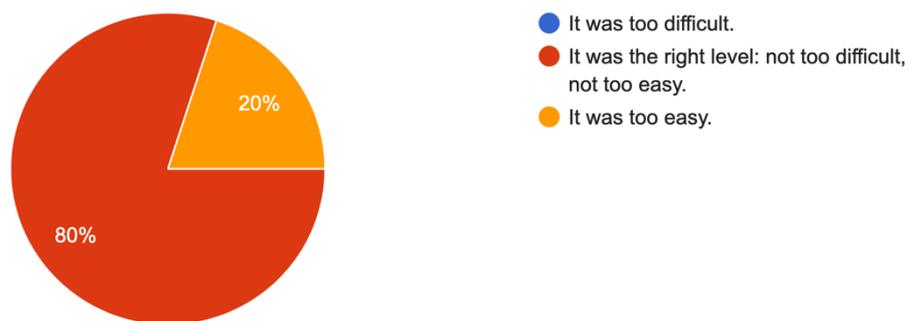
What's the level of the book(s) you've listened to?

10 responses



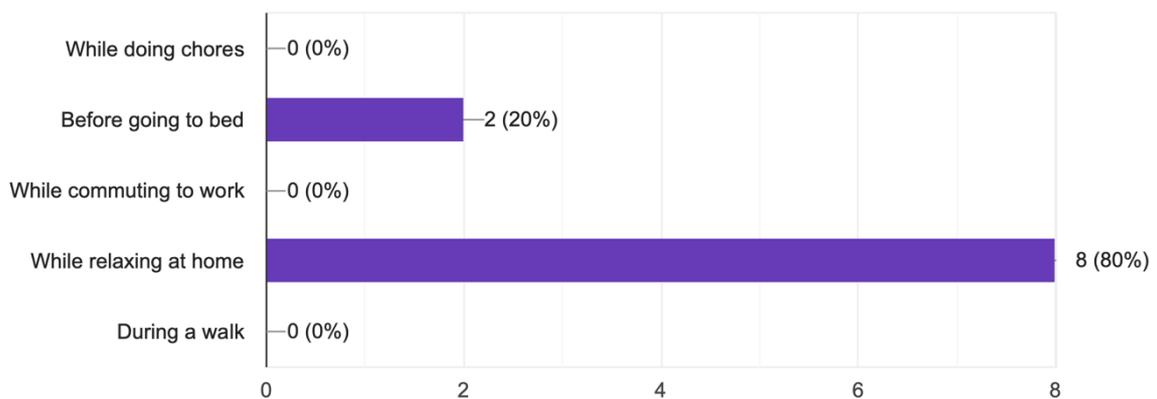
What did you think about the level of the book(s) you've listened to?

10 responses



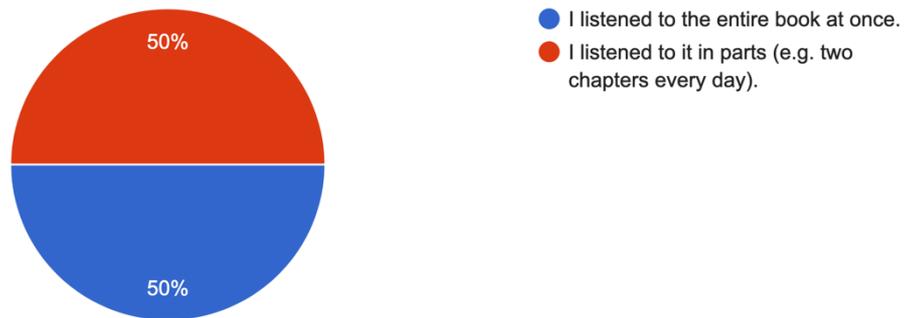
When/where did you listen to the audiobook(s)?

10 responses



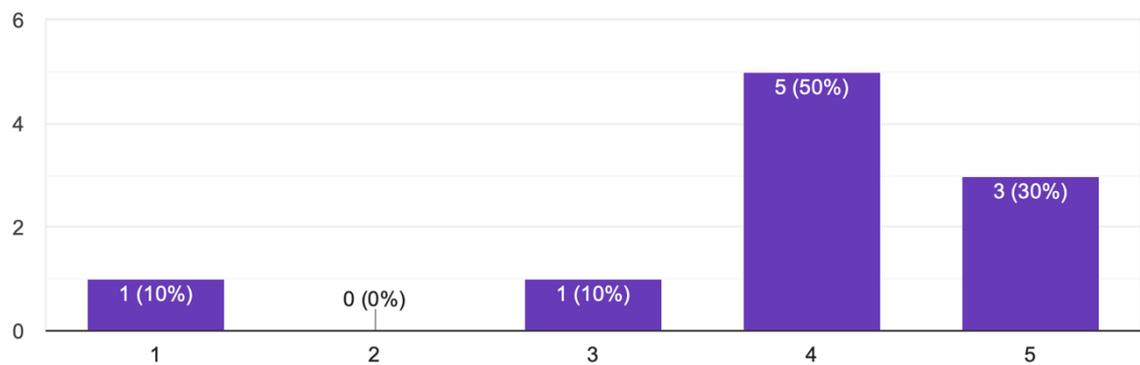
How did you listen to the audiobook?

10 responses



Did you like listening to the audiobook(s)?

10 responses



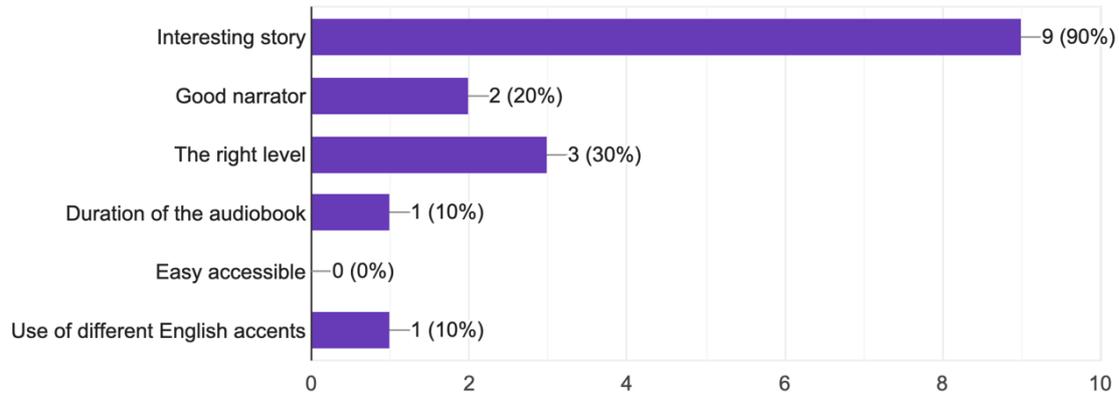
Why (not)?

10 responses

IT is very good to learning English
Level2
It was very Nice!
Interessting
Very interesting story
The story was interesting and written a spoken at the right level
Yves, you can listening when you do something else.
You hear the correct pronunciation and therefore you can understand it better.
too boring

Which of the following items are the most important to you when choosing an audiobook? (choose max. 2)

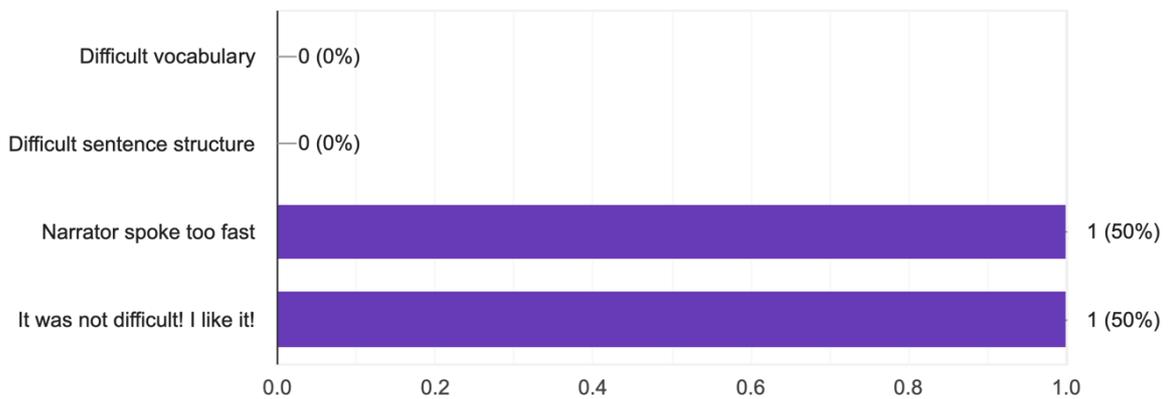
10 responses



Level too high

Why was it too difficult for you?

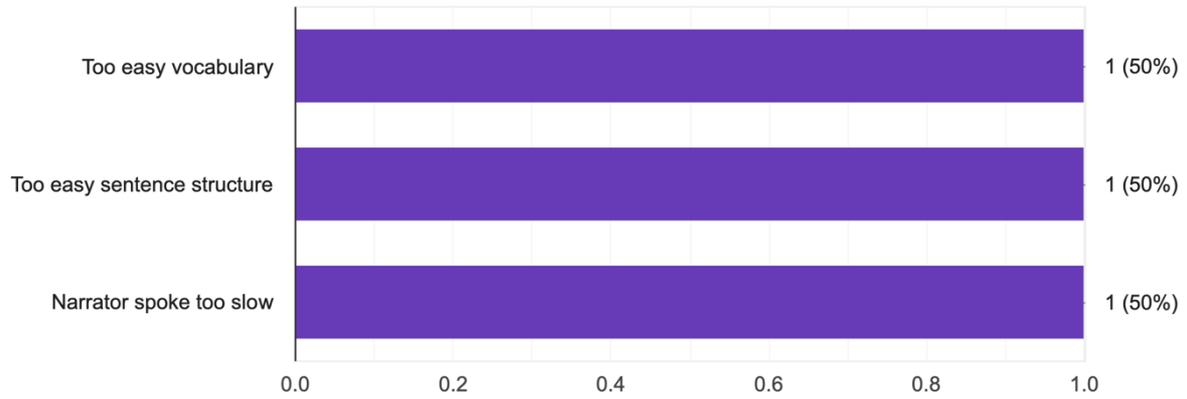
2 responses



Level too low

Why was it too easy for you?

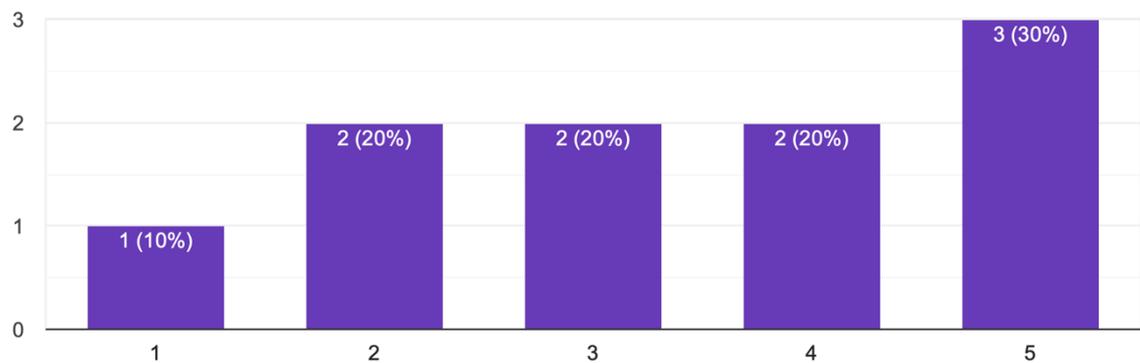
2 responses



Audiobooks evaluation (after listening to audiobooks)

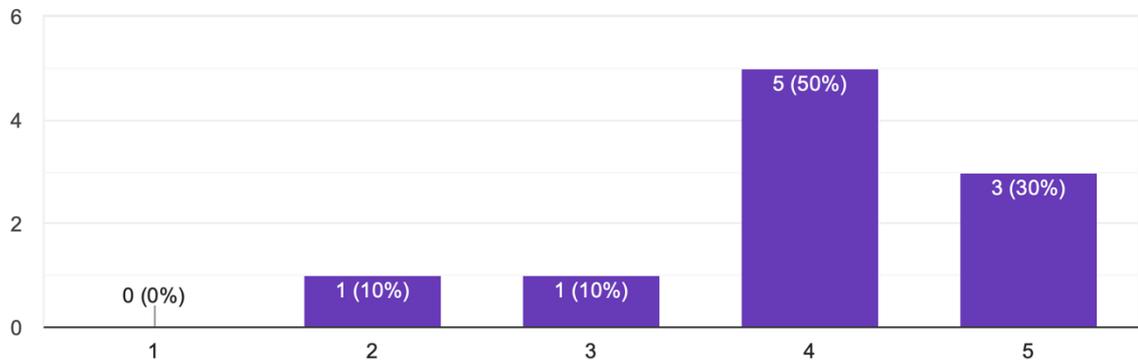
Would you consider using audiobooks to increase your exposure to the English language?

10 responses



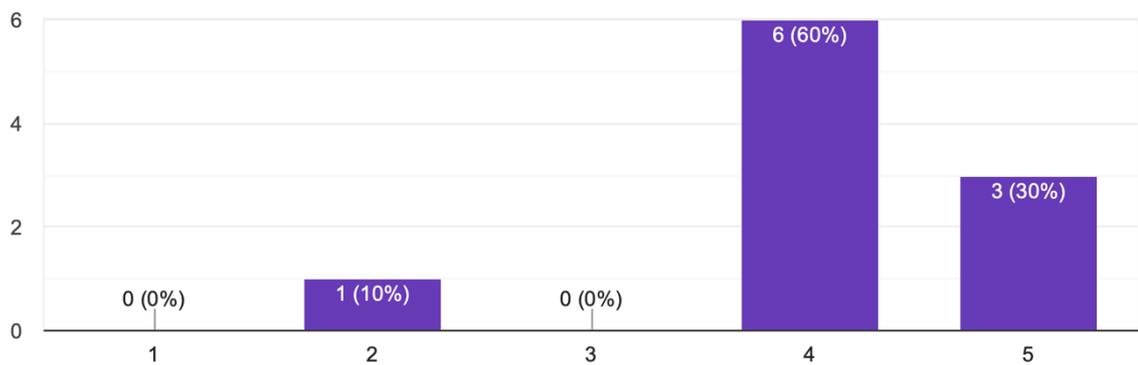
Do you think that audiobooks can help you to enhance your listening skills?

10 responses



Do you think that audiobooks can help you to enhance your speaking skills?

10 responses



Appendix 5: Step-by-step guide

Step-by-step guide (Dutch below)

You will receive an email that will give you access to a **Google Drive folder**. Follow this guide to start your *Audiobook adventure*. Enjoy!

Tip: You can either use your computer, your tablet or mobile phone. If you want to use your phone to listen to the audiobook, I recommend you download your book directly to your phone by following these steps.

1. Go to the **Google Drive** via the link you've received.
2. Open the file **List of Audiobooks**. This is a summary of the books you can choose from. You'll find the title, the synopsis and the level. Read this document first, then pick a book and remember the title and level of this book.

Folders

📁 Audiobook downloads

Files

AUDIobook	SYNOPSIS	LEVEL
	It is hard to stay away from the past when you are still living in it. In the company of the author, we will explore the past through the book 'Mary Christman' (see 'Level 1').	Level 1
	Don't forget to read the book 'De boeien' (see 'Level 1') in the company of the author, we will explore the past through the book 'Mary Christman' (see 'Level 1').	Level 1
	Don't forget to read the book 'De boeien' (see 'Level 1') in the company of the author, we will explore the past through the book 'Mary Christman' (see 'Level 1').	Level 1

 List of audiobooks.pdf

3. Open the folder **Audiobook downloads**. Here you can find your book in the right folder.

Folders

📁 Audiobook downloads

Files

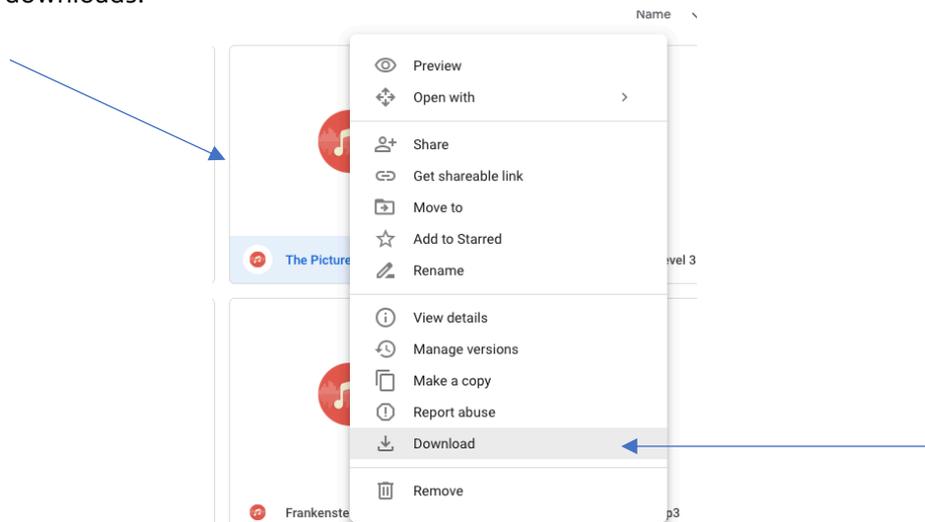
AUDIobook	SYNOPSIS	LEVEL
	It is hard to stay away from the past when you are still living in it. In the company of the author, we will explore the past through the book 'Mary Christman' (see 'Level 1').	Level 1
	Don't forget to read the book 'De boeien' (see 'Level 1') in the company of the author, we will explore the past through the book 'Mary Christman' (see 'Level 1').	Level 1
	Don't forget to read the book 'De boeien' (see 'Level 1') in the company of the author, we will explore the past through the book 'Mary Christman' (see 'Level 1').	Level 1

 List of audiobooks.pdf

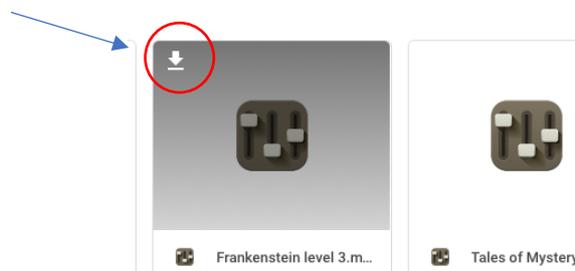
4. Open the folder that corresponds with **the level** of the audiobook you've chosen.



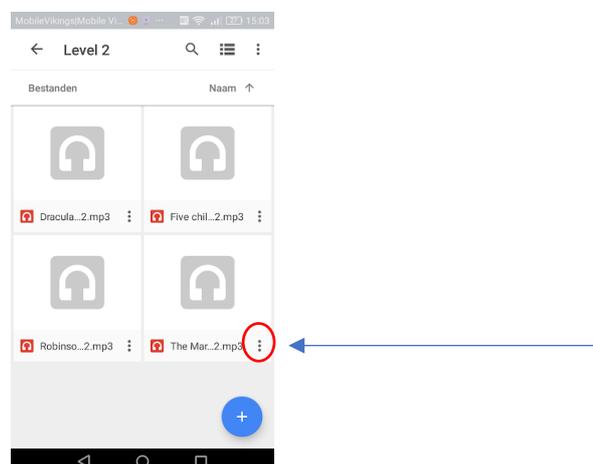
5. Find your book in this folder and **select it**. Then click your right mouse button. A list will appear. Choose **download**. Your book will start downloading and you'll afterwards find it in your downloads.



If you can't click your right mouse button, you go to the file with your mouse and click on the top left icon.



When downloading directly to your phone, click on the three dots of the correct file and then select **download**.



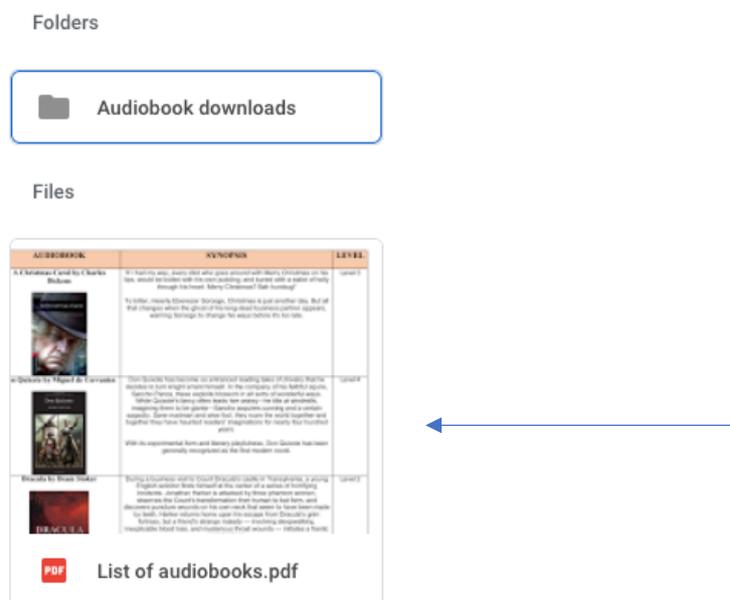
- After downloading, you can still transfer your audiobook to your preferred device. If you've downloaded the file to your computer, you can transfer it to your phone. The transfer method depends on your type of phone and computer.

Stappenplan

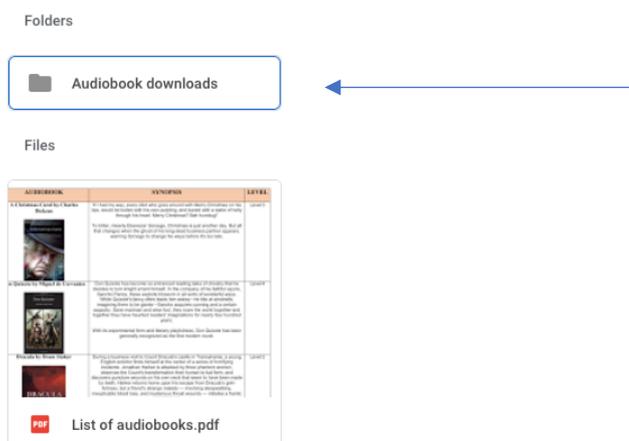
Je zal een e-mail ontvangen waarmee je toegang krijgt tot een Google Drive map. Volg dit stappenplan om je *audioboekavontuur* te starten. Veel plezier!

Tip: je kan zowel een computer als tablet of telefoon gebruiken. Als je via je telefoon naar het audioboek wil luisteren, raad ik je aan om het boek onmiddellijk op je telefoon te downloaden.

- Ga naar de **Google Drive** via de link die je ontvangen hebt.
- Open het bestand **List of Audiobooks**. Dit is een lijst met de boeken waaruit je kan kiezen. Je vindt hier de titel, de korte inhoud en het niveau. Lees eerst het document, kies daarna een boek en onthoud de titel en het niveau van het boek.



- Open de map **Audiobook downloads**. Hier vind je jouw boek in de juiste map.

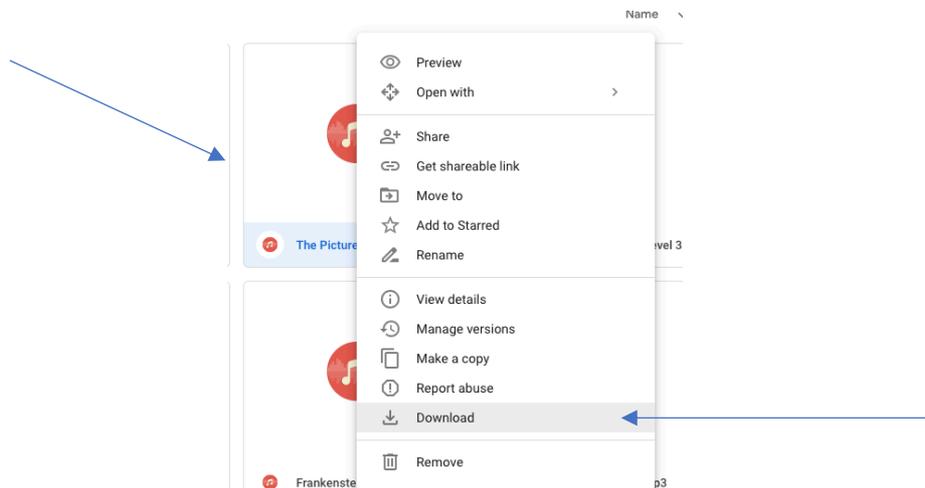


- Open de map die overeenkomt met het niveau van jouw gekozen audioboek.

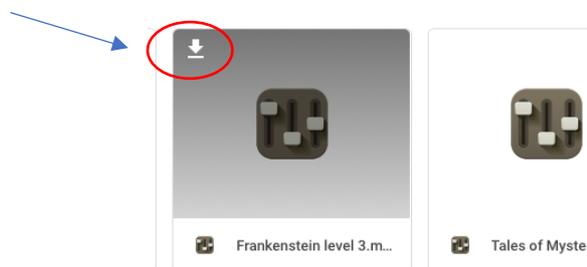
Folders



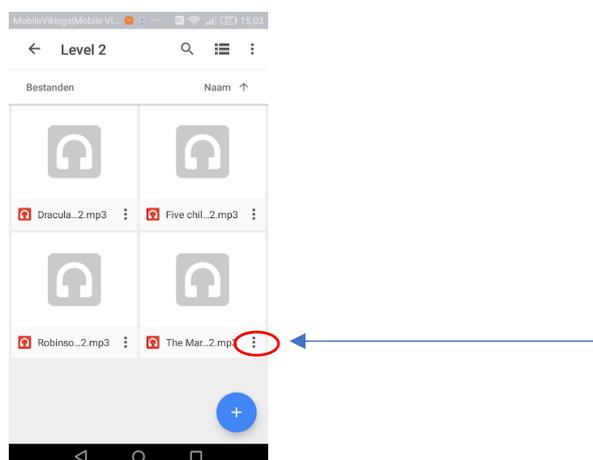
5. Zoek jouw boek in deze map en selecteer het. Klik daarna met je rechtermuisknop op het bestand. Er verschijnt een lijst. Kies **download**. Jouw boek zal starten met downloaden en hierna kan je het terugvinden in jouw downloads.



Als je niet kan klikken met je rechtermuisknop, ga je gewoon op het bestand staan en klik je op het icoontje links bovenaan.

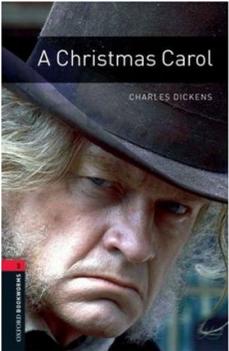
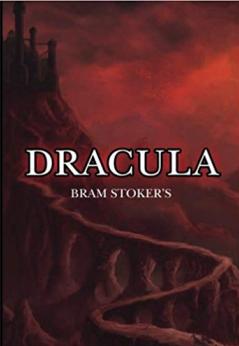


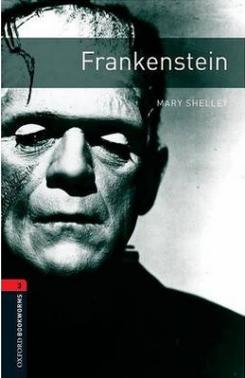
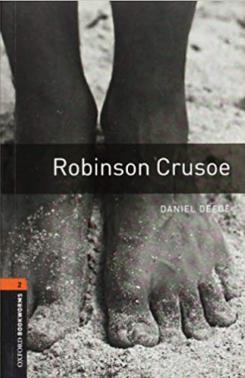
Wanneer je het bestand onmiddellijk op je telefoon downloadt, klik je op de drie bolletjes van het juiste bestand. Selecteer daarna **download**.

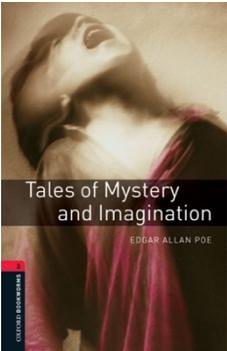
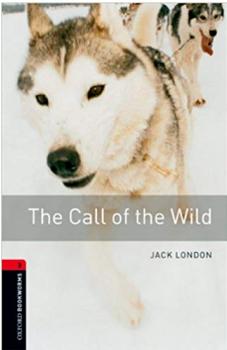


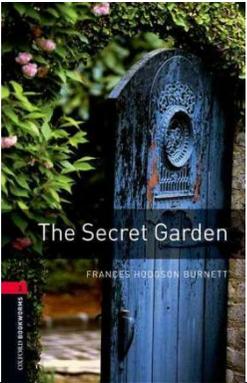
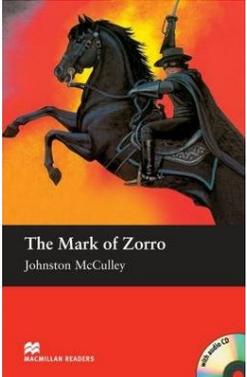
6. Na het downloaden kan je jouw audioboek verplaatsen naar een toestel naar keuze. Als je het gedownload hebt op je computer, kan je het nog steeds kopiëren naar je telefoon. Hoe je dit moet doen, verschilt van telefoon tot telefoon

Appendix 6: list of audiobooks (following pages)

AUDIOBOOK	SYNOPSIS	LEVEL	CEFR
<p data-bbox="203 156 674 183">A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens</p> 	<p data-bbox="734 156 1796 247">'If I had my way, every idiot who goes around with Merry Christmas on his lips, would be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. Merry Christmas? Bah humbug!'</p> <p data-bbox="734 284 1796 375">To bitter, miserly Ebenezer Scrooge, Christmas is just another day. But all that changes when the ghost of his long-dead business partner appears, warning Scrooge to change his ways before it's too late.</p>	Level 3	B1
<p data-bbox="203 579 674 606">Don Quixote by Miguel de Cervantes</p> 	<p data-bbox="734 579 1796 766">Don Quixote has become so entranced reading tales of chivalry that he decides to turn knight errant himself. In the company of his faithful squire, Sancho Panza, these exploits blossom in all sorts of wonderful ways. While Quixote's fancy often leads him astray—he tilts at windmills, imagining them to be giants—Sancho acquires cunning and a certain sagacity. Sane madman and wise fool, they roam the world together-and together they have haunted readers' imaginations for nearly four hundred years.</p> <p data-bbox="734 802 1796 861">With its experimental form and literary playfulness, Don Quixote has been generally recognized as the first modern novel.</p>	Level 4	B1
<p data-bbox="286 1018 593 1045">Dracula by Bram Stoker</p> 	<p data-bbox="734 1018 1796 1236">During a business visit to Count Dracula's castle in Transylvania, a young English solicitor finds himself at the center of a series of horrifying incidents. Jonathan Harker is attacked by three phantom women, observes the Count's transformation from human to bat form, and discovers puncture wounds on his own neck that seem to have been made by teeth. Harker returns home upon his escape from Dracula's grim fortress, but a friend's strange malady — involving sleepwalking, inexplicable blood loss, and mysterious throat wounds — initiates a frantic vampire hunt.</p>	Level 2	A2/B

<p>Five Children and It by E. Nesbit</p> 	<p>When Cyril, Anthea, Robert, Jane and their baby brother go digging in the gravel pit, the last thing they expect to find is a Psammead – an ancient Sand-fairy! Having a Sand-fairy for a pet means having one wish granted each day. But the children don't realize all the trouble wishes can cause ...</p>	<p>Level 2</p>	<p>A2/B1</p>
<p>Frankenstein by Mary Shelley</p> 	<p><i>Frankenstein</i> follows Victor Frankenstein's triumph as he reanimates a dead body, and then his guilt for creating such a thing. When the "Frankenstein monster" realizes how he came to be and is rejected by mankind, he seeks revenge on his creator's family to avenge his own sorrow. Mary Shelley first wrote <i>Frankenstein</i> as a short story after the poet Lord Byron suggested his friends each write a ghost story. The story so frightened Byron that he ran shrieking from the room.</p>	<p>Level 3</p>	<p>B1</p>
<p>Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe</p> 	<p>The sole survivor of a shipwreck, Robinson Crusoe is washed up on a desert island. In his journal he chronicles his daily battle to stay alive, as he conquers isolation, fashions shelter and clothes, enlists the help of a native islander who he names 'Friday', and fights off cannibals and mutineers.</p> <p>Written in an age of exploration and enterprise, it has been variously interpreted as an embodiment of British imperialist values, as a portrayal of 'natural man', or as a moral fable. But above all is a brilliant narrative, depicting Crusoe's transformation from terrified survivor to self-sufficient master of an island.</p>	<p>Level 2</p>	<p>A2/B1</p>

<p>Tales of Mystery and Imagination by Edgar Allan Poe</p> 	<p>'Yet I am not more sure that my soul lives, than I am that perverseness is one of the primitive impulses of the human heart – one of the indivisible primary faculties, or sentiments, which gives direction to the character of Man.'</p> <p>Including Poe's most terrifying, grotesque and haunting short stories, Tales of Mystery and Imagination is the ultimate collection of the infamous author's macabre works.</p> <p>Considered to be one of the earliest American writers to encapsulate the genre of detective-fiction, the collection features some of his most popular tales. 'The Gold-Bug' is the only tale that was popular in his lifetime, whereas 'The Black Cat', 'The Pit and the Pendulum' and 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue' became more widely read after his death</p>	<p>Level 3</p>	<p>B1</p>
<p>The Call of The Wild by Jack London</p> 	<p>The story is set in the Yukon during the 1890s Klondike Gold Rush—a period in which strong sled dogs were in high demand. The novel's central character is a dog named Buck, a domesticated dog living at a ranch in the Santa Clara Valley of California as the story opens. Stolen from his home and sold into service as sled dog in Alaska, he reverts to a wild state. Buck is forced to fight in order to dominate other dogs in a harsh climate. Eventually he sheds the veneer of civilization, relying on primordial instincts and learned experience to emerge as a leader in the wild.</p>	<p>Level 3</p>	<p>B1</p>
<p>The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde</p> 	<p>Lord Henry Wotton makes Dorian Gray believe that the only thing important in life is beauty. However, Dorian realizes that he will become less beautiful as he grows older. He wishes the portrait Basil painted would become old in his place. Dorian then sells his soul so he can be beautiful forever, but not on purpose.</p>	<p>Level 3</p>	<p>B1</p>

<p>The Secret Garden by Francis Hodgson Burnett</p> 	<p>When orphaned Mary Lennox comes to live at her uncle's great house on the Yorkshire Moors, she finds it full of secrets. The mansion has nearly one hundred rooms, and her uncle keeps himself locked up. And at night, she hears the sound of crying down one of the long corridors.</p> <p>The gardens surrounding the large property are Mary's only escape. Then, Mary discovers a secret garden, surrounded by walls and locked with a missing key. With the help of two unexpected companions, Mary discovers a way in—and becomes determined to bring the garden back to life</p>	<p>Level 3</p>	<p>B1</p>
<p>The Mark of Zorro by Johnston McCulley</p> 	<p>Set in Mexican California during the 1820s, the story follows the career of Don Diego Vega, by all appearances an effete and foppish aristocrat. But Vega's timorous reputation is nothing more than a mask to conceal his alter ego: a California Robin Hood known as Zorro, whose swift blade strikes down those who exploit the poor and oppressed. The inspiration for dozens of film and television adaptations, The Mark of Zorro remains a paradigm of swashbuckling adventure.</p>	<p>Level 2</p>	<p>A2</p>

Appendix 7: book club cards

What made you laugh/what was funny?	What did you really enjoy?	Who was your favourite character? Tell us something about that character.
Were there parts you found tedious? Which parts?	Were there parts you found really exciting? Which parts?	Would you recommend this book to your classmates? Why (not)?
Ask your neighbour a question about the book or his/her listening experience.	Did you see it happen as if it was a movie? Which part(s) specifically?	What was your favourite part of the book? Why?
What was your least favourite part of the book? Why?	Looking back, would you choose a different book or are you happy with the choice you made? Why?	Was it a story you wanted to keep listening to? Why (not)?
Describe the book in four words.	Did it remind you of another book/movie/TV show you know?	What do you think of the title of the book? Is it a good title that matches the story? Could you come up with a different title?
What was the reason you chose your book in the first place?	Did the book meet your expectations? Why (not)?	Which character(s) didn't you like at all? Tell us something about those characters/that character.
What did/didn't you like about the ending?	Give the book a rating (on 10). Explain why.	If you were the writer, would you change something about the story?

Did you like the narrator? Why (not)?	If you had to choose between reading this book and listening to it, what would you choose? Why?	What was your favourite place to listen to the audiobook?
Did you come across any obstacles during the listening process?	What did you think of the speaking rate of the narrator? Was it too fast/slow or just right?	If you could give the narrator a rating, what would it be (on 10). Why?
In the future, would you consider listening to audiobooks again? Why (not)?	Was it easy for you to concentrate on the story as it was being told or did your mind wander?	Would you recommend the use of audiobooks to other language learners? Why (not)?
What did you really like about listening to the audiobook?	What didn't you like about listening to the audiobook?	What did you think about the sentence structure of the graded audiobook? Was it too easy/difficult or just right?
Do you think that audiobooks should be integrated in English courses?	Ask your neighbour a question about the book or his/her listening experience.	Ask your neighbour a question about the book or his/her listening experience.
In the future, would you want to listen to similar or different types of books?	Has your vocabulary range expanded?	Do you need more or less teacher support during the audiobook process? If so, what kind of support?

Appendix 8: feedback mentor

9.7 Bijlage 7 Verslag door de mentor van de stageschool

Wetenschappelijk project

Naam van de student: Sara Van Keer

Naam van de promotor: Ada Peters

Naam van de stageschool en de begeleidende mentor(en): Janitor, Patrick Nys

De criteria waarmee de stageschool rekening houdt, zijn:

- Het ontwikkelingsproces en de communicatie hierbij: verantwoordelijkheid, flexibiliteit, samenwerking, duidelijkheid.

alles allemaal prima.

- De kwaliteit van het product: vernieuwend, relevant, implementatie in de stageschool. Voldoet dit project aan het criterium dat ook volgend jaar de mentor of de school of de organisatie dit product zal gebruiken?

*Interessant. In missie wel naar
herhaling noden. Ook de formule om
na te bespreken.*