

## Teaching Listening Skills in an EFL Classroom – Building Activities

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**Abstract:** Listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying – according to Howatt & Dakin (1974). It is the process of understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary used by the speaker and grasping the intended meaning of the speaker. It is an active and a receptive skill and not an isolated activity. It is always followed by speaking or reading or writing. Listening comprehension is a complex process which requires a lot of time and can be developed gradually. A lot of active processing of information is done in the mind while receiving the information, which is the input. Sensing, decoding and evaluating the information are done in the process of listening and response is its output. It is an important communicative process and is crucial for effective communication. The purpose of the current study has been to identify the problems, factors that have an impact on listening comprehension and suggest some activities to develop both listening for perception of sounds and comprehension among Saudi EFL students of Jazan University. A questionnaire has been administered on the sample of the study. The participants comprised of 100 undergraduate students of Department of English, Girls' Samtah campus, Jazan University. The data was analyzed in percentages. Based on the perceptions of the students, it has been found that a majority of the students do not understand anything when the teachers play the CDs in the listening classes. The classes are overcrowded and seating arrangement does not suit a listening class. The students just memorize the answer key of the listening texts and reproduce in their listening exam. The findings of this study indicated that the participants do not have the desired listening skills of English language to perform well in all the tasks. A questionnaire has been administered for 10 English teachers to know the reasons behind students' problems and factors for not having interest in learning English in students' perspective and to find out solutions to overcome their problems in listening skills of English. The responses of English language teachers have shown that the school scenario should be improved so that students will at least have minimum proficiency level in English to meet the requirement of the university. In Saudi context, English is taught from grade 4 in Saudi schools and students have exposure towards English language for 7 years. In spite of their exposure they are nowhere near the expectations. The students are hampered by inadequate range of words and phrases, inability to understand pronunciation and maintain interest. This paper has explored some of the factors that have an impact on students' listening skill in English. It has been found that 75% of respondents do not want to learn English, as it is of not much use in their future life. They also feel that it is difficult to learn English language. The students should come out of that phobia and cultivate a positive attitude towards learning English. However, the paper has highlighted the fact, that teachers always use a tape recorder in teaching listening skills to their students. Some of the obstacles for students in developing listening skills were lack of vocabulary, limited knowledge in sentence structures and topics in English language. Fast speech by the teacher has also been expressed as a problem by the respondents. English Digital laboratories should be established by the university in all the campuses to enhance teaching and learning of listening skills in English. Seating arrangement plays a vital role in a listening class which improves the listening ability among the students. English teachers at the university level should take the responsibility to motivate the students, in a way to create interest towards learning English under stress free environment. They are requested to use technology to teach and explore how listening can be improved and what activities would be useful to promote listening skills in the classrooms. They can also try out some of the suggested activities, adapt some from other sources and create few on the availability of inputs so as to develop the proficiency and improve the performance of the students in English listening comprehension.

[ Sobhana Nandyal Panduranga. **Teaching Listening Skills in an EFL Classroom – Building Activities**. *Rep Opinion* 2016;8(11):59-70]. ISSN 1553-9873 (print); ISSN 2375-7205 (online). <http://www.sciencepub.net/report>. 3. doi:[10.7537/marsroj081116.03](https://doi.org/10.7537/marsroj081116.03).

**Key words:** listening ability, listening comprehension, EFL.

### 1. Introduction

Familiarity with the English sound system and ability to articulate English sounds prepares the students for listening to English utterances with understanding. It precedes speaking and paves a way

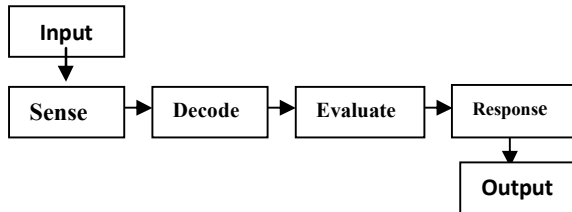
to develop oral fluency and accuracy. Listening ability involves auditory comprehension and it can be cultivated through listening practice.

#### 1.1 Definition of Listening

Listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying – according to Howatt & Dakin (1974). It is a process of understanding a speaker’s accent or pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary used by the speaker and grasping the intended meaning of the speaker. It is an important communicative process and is crucial for effective communication.

Listening is a three dimensional process. It is a co-ordinate function involving listening, thinking and seeing (ears, mind and eyes). It is an active process and not an isolated activity. It is always followed by speaking or reading or writing. It is a pre-requisite for further communication. The ability to speak depends on the ability to listen. It is an active and a receptive skill. A lot of active processing of information is done in the mind while receiving the information, which is the input. Sensing, decoding and evaluating the information are done in the process of listening and response is its output.

**1.2 Listening Process**



**1.3 Differences between Listening & Hearing**

The differences between Listening and Hearing are:

Listening	Hearing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voluntary</li> <li>• Requires conscious efforts</li> <li>• Active process</li> <li>• The listener plays a very active part</li> <li>• A two-way interactive process engaging the speaker and the listener.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involuntary</li> <li>• Happens automatically</li> <li>• Passive process</li> <li>• The listener plays a passive part</li> <li>• A one-way process</li> </ul>

**1.4 Importance of Listening**

Listening could be for overall gist of what is being said. It could be for specific information. It could also be to infer the speaker’s opinion / attitude, regarding different people or subjects.

**1.5 Listening with a purpose**

Listening with a purpose is to:

- Get an introductory idea of an oral message;
- Understand the main points of a lecture;
- Discover the speaker’s ideas during a conversation;

- Understand differing viewpoints in order to contribute to a discussion;
- Aim a broad understanding of the subject matter of a seminar;
- Obtain specific information;
- Understand new changes and developments in a particular field;
- Broaden one’s outlook and understanding; and
- Seek evidence for one’s own points of view.

**1.6 Sub-skills of listening**

The sub-skills of listening are to:

- Recognize the distinctive sounds of English;
- Understand meanings of words, phrases and sentences in contexts;
  - Understand statements, questions, commands;
  - Recognize the function of word-stress and intonation;
  - Locate the key words and key phrases;
  - Understand grammatical relation of sentences;
  - Follow the sequences of ideas/directions/instructions/narrations and descriptions given orally;
  - Grasp the substance, theme/central idea and references of what is spoken;
  - Listen attentively so as to predict information, summarize and to ask relevant questions; and
  - Maintain listening attention for a reasonable length of time.

**2. Rationale of the Study**

An English teacher arouses learners’ interest, curiosity, create information gaps in their minds and give them listening activities to develop sound perception and listening comprehension in an English classroom. Most of the listening in a class is focused or intensive listening. They expect learners to listen attentively and recall what they have listened. In teaching listening teachers must be careful, flexible and select theories which could be applicable to the target group. Teachers should not adhere to the conventional methods like opening the textbook and explaining new words, playing the tape recorder, and asking for answering questions. They should blend the positive aspects of different methods. It should rather be a multi skill approach or an integrated approach. It is essential for a teacher to have an overall understanding of what listening is, why it is difficult for foreign language learners, and what could be the probable solutions to overcome problems. Hence, an English teacher should think of how to bridge the gap between listening and actual classroom teaching.

Task Sheet: 1-Instructions Please listen carefully to the pairs of words. If the words are of same sound put a (✓) mark and if the words are of different sound put a cross mark (×) in the space provided.		
S.No	Listening text	Task
1.	see / sea	
2.	bee / fee	
3.	sheep/ seep	
4.	rice / rise	
5.	dear / near	
6.	eyes / ice	
7.	hour / our	
8.	there / their	
9.	day / way	
10.	noise / voice	

**3. Teaching Listening in an EFL Classroom**

A variety of exercises, tasks, and activities appropriate to different stages of a listening lesson (pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening) can be suggested. Good classroom activities can themselves be effective solutions to listening problems. The list covers a wide range of listening activities from simple to difficult. It would be a pleasure and a positive experience to try various exercises, tasks, and classroom activities in an English classroom. Teachers should have a set of exercises, tasks and activities at their fingertips so as to use in their classes whenever they are needed.

**3.1 Activities to develop listening for sound perception**

The activities to develop listening for sound perception, train learners to perceive correctly the different sounds and sound combinations, stress and intonation patterns of the target language. Hence, the focus is on aural perception rather than comprehension.

**Activity 1. Repetition**

The teacher can play the recorded sounds, words, phrases or utterances on a tape recorder and ask the students to repeat them and correct where ever necessary. The students will be able to acquire correct pronunciation of words, phrases or utterances.

**Activity 2. Identification of sound**

The teacher has to focus listeners' attention towards what is being said. Task sheets can be given to the students.

The teacher could even give a few fill in the blanks. She could speak a word and ask the learners to identify from the list. In this activity the teacher expects the learners to listen attentively to the sound, know the meaning and correct spelling related to the context and identify it.

Fill in the blanks

- a) We eat ----- every day.
- b) Did you ----- the answer?
- c) Do you -----the answer?
- d) The ----- rises in the east.
- e) Is your answer -----?

Task Sheet: 2-Instructions Please listen carefully to the pairs of words. If the words are of same sound put a (✓) mark and if the words are of different sound put a cross mark (×) in the space provided.		
S.No	Listening text	Task
1.	son / sun	
2.	ship / sip	
3.	peace / piece	
4.	right / write	
5.	know / no	
6.	quite/ quiet	
7.	night/ knight	
8.	pray/ prey	
9.	hair/ hare	
10.	fair/ fare	
11.	niece/ knees	
12.	meet/ meat	

**Activity 3. Stress and Intonation**

**Stress**

In English there are a number of two-syllable words in which the stress depends on whether the word is used as a noun or a verb. The stress is on the first syllable when the words are used as nouns and on second syllable when the words are used as verbs.

Column 1	Column 2
Noun	Verb
‘object	ob’ject
‘present	pre’sent
‘record	re’cord

For example,

‘Look at that ‘distant ‘object.

I ‘must ob’ject to this proposal.

I sent him a ‘birthday ‘present.

‘Please pre’sent your ‘case.

‘Who is the ‘present di’rector? In this sentence the word ‘present’ is used as an adjective and is stressed on the first syllable.

There’s a ‘record of it in the ‘library.

We would ‘like to re’cord this ‘program.

**Intonation**

The sentences could be uttered by the teacher with rising and falling intonation. The students have to listen attentively and mark intonation pattern whether it is a rising tone or a falling tone.

For example,

How are you?  
 What are you doing?  
 Are you tired?  
 Why are you so late?  
 Riyadh is the capital of Saudi Arabia.

**Activity 4. Categorization**

The teacher could read the listening text.

Listening text  
 Good Morning. I like to have a cup of coffee and dosa. My husband likes to have a cup of tea and puri. And can you get a glass of horlicks for my daughter? And if you think I am not troubling you at all a few biscuits for my puppy.

Work sheet: Listen to the Listening text carefully and tick (✓) the items that match in the work sheet.	
biscuits	horlicks
puri	tea
idli	pepsi
bread	milk
dosa	coffee
butter	cheese
soda	water

**4. Listening comprehension**

Listening comprehension is a conscious attempt on one's part to be attentive and comprehend what is spoken by the speaker. This process of listening to a speech or a conversation for the purpose of comprehension is called listening comprehension.

**4.1 Listening comprehension process**

Listening comprehension process proposed by Krashen, S (1985) involves bottom-up processing and top-down processing. **i) Bottom-up processing:** 1. one uses the incoming data and analyses that data at successive levels of organization- sounds, words, phrases, clauses and sentences until the meaning is arrived at. 2. One needs to have lexical and grammatical competence which provides a basis for bottom-up processing.

**ii) Top-down processing:** refers to the use of background knowledge / previous knowledge / situational knowledge / contextual knowledge in understanding the meaning of a message.

**4.2 Listening Comprehension Skills**

Listening comprehension skills involve literal skills, critical skills and analytical skills. Literal skills are those which help in sound recognition, word recognition, scanning, prediction and comprehending the information. Critical skills are those which help to distinguish between facts and ideas, relevant and irrelevant information, explicit and implicit information, examples and ideas. Analytical skills comprise attitude analysis skills and inferential skills.

Attitude analysis skills are those which help to understand the speaker's intention, identify and evaluate a speaker's attitude. Inferential skills are those which help to draw inferences and conclusions.

**4.3 Activities to develop listening for comprehension**

The activities to develop listening for comprehension train learners in both reception and construction of meaning.

**Activity 1. Making objects**

The teacher could give the instructions orally as how to make a kite. The listeners should follow the instructions and make a kite and similarly can also make a paper boat.

**Activity 2. Flow charts.**

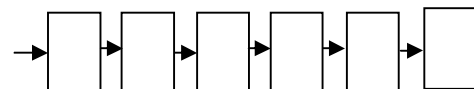
The teacher could tell the different steps involved in the preparation of tea.

For example,

**Preparation of Tea**  
 Firstly take a container, put it on the stove and light the stove.  
 Secondly pour 2 cups of water in the container and add tea leaves, ginger, cinnamon and cardamom. Let it boil.  
 Thereafter pour 2 cups of milk.  
 Then, add sugar.  
 Finally filter it with a strainer in 4 cups and serve your friends, the eye appealing, tasty, refreshing tea with rich aroma.

Flow charts could be used as a task sheet for the listening activity.

Start



**Activity 3. Using a tape recorder**

The teacher could play the listening text.

Ms. Khadeeja, who is twenty five, lives with her family in a flat in Hyalroda, Jizan. She is a university teacher in the field of chemistry.  
 Mr. Mohammed is a soft ware engineer and works for a company in Abha. He is twenty seven and lives with his family in a flat.

The students should listen to the above listening text. As they listen, they have to fill in the information about Ms. Khadeeja and Mr. Mohammed in the table given below:

Name		Name	
Age		Age	
Occupation		Occupation	
Place of work		Place of work	

The teacher could even give grids to fill the information based on the level of the students.

**Activity 4. Using dialogues**

S.No	Work sheet		
	Column A	Column B	
1	Dialogue between teacher and	late to class	( )
2	Student is	bad habit	( )
3	Not offering prayer regularly is a	good habits	( )
4	Offering prayers and a morning walk are	help conquer the mountains.	( )
5	Regularity and punctuality	student	( )

The teacher could read the dialogue once or twice and ask the students to match both the columns in their work sheet. For ex: **A dialogue between a teacher and a student who comes late**

**Student:** May I come in, sir?  
**Teacher:** Yes. Why do you always come late?  
**S:** Sir, it is the bus which makes me late.  
**T:** What time do you leave home?  
**S:** I always leave home at quarter to eight.  
**T:** How far is your home from here?  
**S:** It is about three kilometers from here.  
**T:** That is why, you get late. You leave your home very late.  
**S:** Sir, I take my breakfast at 7:30 a.m.  
**T:** What time do you get up?  
**S:** I get up at about 7:00 a.m.  
**T:** Do you offer your prayer?  
**S:** Yes, but not regularly.  
**T:** My dear. It is a bad habit. Change your routine. Always get up early in the morning, offer your prayers and go for a morning walk.  
**S:** Sir, there is no park near our home.  
**T:** No problem. You can walk along the street in the morning time. Take breakfast at right time and then leave for school.  
**S:** Yes sir. From tomorrow, I shall never be late.  
**T:** Good. Keep one more thing in mind. Regularity and punctuality help you conquer

the mountains.  
**S:** Thank you very much for your good advice.  
 Can I sit now, sir?

**T:** Oh! Yes of course.

**Activity 5. Using maps**

The teacher could use maps as task sheets in the listening activities to mark any route that is in their text book.

**Activity 6. Story telling**

The teacher could tell the learners a story, real or imaginary or even an anecdote. She could pause frequently while narrating and ask them to guess what is going to happen next. When one listens to a story, one wants to know what is going to happen next. However, the teacher should see that all learners take part in the discussion. She should try to get as many answers as possible. An important sub skill of listening which is to develop the ability to predict can be developed with the help of this technique among the learners.

A few nights ago, I was asleep at home as usual. At about 3 o'clock in the morning..... (what happened?)..... I was suddenly awakened by a noise.....(what noise?).....of rushing water..... (where was it ?) It came from the washroom, so I got up and went to see.....(what was it?) I found that the cold water pipe had burst and water was flowing all over the floor.....(what did I do?) So, I took a bucket and put it under the pipe and it was full in no time. Then, I realized, what I should have done?..... (can you guess what it was?).....

**5. Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were:  
 ➤ To identify the factors that determine students' interest in acquiring listening skills among Saudi EFL learners;  
 ➤ To find out the problems in acquiring listening skills among Saudi EFL learners;  
 ➤ To suggest strategies to improve listening skills among Saudi EFL learners.

**6. Research Questions**

1. What are the factors that determine students' interest in acquiring listening skills among Saudi EFL learners?
2. What are the problems in acquiring listening skills among Saudi EFL learners?
3. What kind of technology is used in acquiring listening skills among Saudi EFL learners?
4. What strategies can be used to improve listening skills among Saudi EFL learners?

**7. Review of Literature**



**Abeer H. Malkawi (2010)** in the article “Listening Comprehension for Tenth Grade Students in Tabaria High Schools for Girls” analyzed listening comprehension of English language skills for tenth grade students at Tabaria high school in the city of Irbid in Jordan. The paper aimed to find the factors that influence English listening comprehension and the strategies that might be used to improve students’ listening comprehension. The paper indicated that the current problems were speed speech, limited knowledge of vocabulary, and limited knowledge of the subject in developing listening comprehension skills that are being experienced by the students. This study suggested that further studies could be conducted to gauge the issue of listening comprehension at the university level among university students and the use of listening educational instruments.

**Shameem Ahmad Banani (2012)** has conducted a study on “The need for Listening Comprehension in the teacher training program in the faculty of education, Hodeidah University, Yemen”. The study has explored the need of listening comprehension courses in the teacher training program in the faculty of education in Hodeidah University. The researcher used an IELTS test as an authentic speech to test the level of second year students in the faculty of education after one semester training in listening. The statistical analysis of the results provided some evidence in support of the need of listening comprehension in the training courses of teachers in the English department of the faculty of education in Hodeidah University.

**Fan Yagang (1996)** has conducted a study on “Listening: Problems and Solutions”. It has been indicated that in teaching listening comprehension one must be careful not to go to extremes, either by being concerned too exclusively with theories without thinking about their application to teaching, or by obstinately following frozen routines-opening the textbook and explaining new words, playing the tape recorder, and asking/answering questions. It has been suggested that a teacher should have an overall understanding of what listening is, why it is difficult for foreign language learners and how to bridge the gap between analysis of listening and actual classroom teaching.

**Fatih Yavuz (2015)** has done a research study on “Problems Young learners encounter in Listening”. Listening is still a handicap for EFL learners though it seems a skill not hard to handle. The students in Turkey complained and gave reasons for not understanding during comprehending stage of the listening texts. This study aimed to examine the frequency of the problems seen in three listening categories - the problems based on teachers, the

problems based on students’ own strategies and the problems based on learner’s psychology. The three listening categories were separately examined. The outcome of the study conducted in a Turkish public primary school and the solutions to overcome the problems in listening in EFL classes were also discussed.

**Fatih Yavuz (2015)** has listed all problems and activities in his article entitled “Problems and Activities in Listening skills in EFL Classrooms: from Tradition to a more Comprehensible Input. Listening comes from the emergence of the human being. It has always been a crucial part of interaction. It is not just hearing the other side but through the message having an agreement or giving the right response with the help of grammatical knowledge. An able listener is capable of doing all the things simultaneously like understanding the speaker’s accent or pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary and grasp meaning while listening (Howatt and Dakin, 1993 p.16). Learners in our context have many problems in getting the intended meaning of their interlocutors. The problems and literature related to listening skills have been discussed. Sample listening programs have been suggested to help learners to overcome their listening problems.

**Yi-Jinn Jon (2014)** conducted a study on “English Listening Strategies applied by Technological University Students”. Listening ability is one of the important skills in foreign language learning. Among four language skills, researches show that listening skill is employed most frequently. Therefore, strategies for listening and the ability to use them effectively are particularly significant in language learning. This study was intended to investigate the listening strategies employed by university students in Taiwan. There were 239 technological university students who attended this study. The questionnaire consists of 30 questions including the meta cognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, social and affective strategies. The findings indicated that most students were still unable to apply the strategies properly in EFL listening and needed guidance from instructors. The results of this study provide references for both educators and learners to evaluate their teaching and learning listening experiences in the classroom as well as the application in daily communication.

## 8. Method and Participants of the Study

The investigator has analyzed the factors and problems that influence listening skills from the perspective of students in an English listening classroom. A questionnaire has been administered on the sample of the study. The participants comprised of 100 undergraduate students of Department of English (level 6), Girls’ Samtah campus, Jazan University.

Like all other Saudi students, participants of this study have started learning English as a foreign language from their fifth grade. However, nowadays, students have started learning English from the first grade. Participants of the study were homogenous in terms of linguistic skills, educational system and field of study.

### 8.1 Instruments for Data Collection

#### i) Questionnaire for Students:

A questionnaire has been administered on the sample of the study.

**Validity of the tool:** The tool satisfied the 3 criteria – Content validity (the tool items measured the concept), face validity (the tool measured the listening aspects, as the name suggests) and construct validity (the tool tapped the concept as theorized). Please refer to the “Questionnaire for Students” in Appendix A1.

Questionnaires for students and English teachers consisted of items related to different parameters like motivation, problems in teaching and learning, facilities and self evaluation.

#### ii) Questionnaire for English Teachers:

The best judge to tell about the reasons for poor performance of the students and problems of students is none other than their English teacher. A questionnaire was administered to 10 English teachers who have minimum 5 years of teaching experience in Saudi Arabia. Please refer to the “Questionnaire for English Teachers” in Appendix A2.

## 9. Results and Discussion

**9.1. Questionnaire for Students:** A questionnaire has been administered on the sample of the study. The data has been analyzed to identify the factors and problems of students in English listening skills, facilities available and self evaluation of students. Please refer to the “Table 1: Responses of the Participants in Percentages” in Appendix A3. Please refer to the “Graph 1: Responses of the Participants in Percentages” in Appendix A4.

It is quite evident from Table 1 that under the parameters-

I. **General Information:** The respondents were asked to fill in the information like name of the respondent, the level of their study and to which campus she belongs.

#### II. Motivation:

Item 1-75% of the sample expressed their dislike towards the foreign language and it could be due to phobia towards a foreign language like English. 25% expressed their love for a foreign language.

Item 2- 75% of the sample was not interested in learning English and only 25% showed interest in learning English. It has been observed that majority of the sample found English to be difficult to learn and no time to learn a foreign language. Item 3- only 25% of the sample expressed that they may have to use English in their workplace in real life but the other

75% did not agree.

Item 4- only 25% of the sample expressed that English will gain importance in Saudi Arabia in the near future and the other 75% did not agree.

#### Problems in Teaching and Learning:

Item 5- Entire sample felt that the classes are overcrowded.

Item 6- i) Fast speech by the speaker affects 50% of students in their ability to master listening skills in English language while the other 50% of students do not consider fast speech an obstacle in the phase of learning.

-ii) 75% of the sample has expressed limited knowledge of vocabulary, sentence structures and topics in English language as one of the problems in learning English. It was not a major problem to 25% of the sample. This finding is consistent with Aber (2010) and Fatih (2015).

Item 7- 50% of the sample expressed that they were not satisfied with the methodology in learning English listening skills but the other 50% were satisfied.

**Facilities:** Item 8- 100% of the sample expressed that they do not use any technology to learn listening skills in English.

Item 9- i) Sample expressed that their teachers do not use radio and television in teaching listening skills in English.

-ii) 100% of the sample has expressed that their teachers use tape recorder in teaching listening skills in English.

-iii) 100% of the sample has expressed that their teachers use laptop sometimes in teaching listening skills in English. It is obvious that the sample can improve their listening skills with the help of technology.

#### V. Self Evaluation:

Item 10-i) 50% of the sample expressed that they were not satisfied with their listening abilities but the other 50% were satisfied. -ii) 55% of the sample expressed that they were not satisfied with the teaching aids that are being used in the classroom but the other 45% were satisfied.

#### 9.2 Questionnaire for English Teachers:

A questionnaire has been administered to English teachers. The data has been analyzed to identify the factors and problems of students in English listening skills, facilities available and evaluation of students. Please refer to the “Table 2: Responses of English Teachers in Percentages” in Appendix A5. Please refer to the “Graph 2: Responses of English Teachers in Percentages” in Appendix A6.

It is quite obvious from Table 2 that under the parameters-

**General Information:** The respondents were asked to fill in the information like name of the teacher, the

level being taught by the teacher and to which campus she belongs.

**Motivation:** Item 1- All English teachers have expressed that students' dislike foreign language and it could be due to phobia towards a foreign language like English.

Item 2- All English teachers have expressed that students' are not interested in learning English.

Item3- All English teachers expressed that students' may have to use English in their workplace in real life.

Item4-All English teachers expressed that English will gain importance in Saudi Arabia in the coming future

**Problems in Teaching and Learning:** Item 5- All English teachers felt that the classes are overcrowded.

Item 6- i) All English teachers do not consider fast speech an obstacle in the phase of learning.

-ii) All English teachers have expressed that students' have limited knowledge of vocabulary, sentence structures and topics in English language and it is a major problem in learning English.

Item 7- All English teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the methodology in teaching of listening skills.

**IV. Facilities:** Item 8- All English teachers expressed that their students do not use any technology to learn listening skills in English.

Item 9- i) All English teachers expressed that they do not use radio and television in teaching listening skills in English.

-ii) All English teachers expressed that they use tape recorders in teaching listening skills in English.

-iii) All English teachers expressed that they also use laptops sometimes in teaching listening skills in English.

#### V. Evaluation:

Item10- i)All English teachers expressed dissatisfaction with their students' listening abilities.

-ii) All English teachers expressed their dissatisfaction with the teaching aids (tape recorders and laptops) that are being used in the listening class.

### 10. Findings based on the responses of participants of the study and English Teachers in their Questionnaires

All the English teachers felt that the students should possess basic foundation skills in English language by the time they join the university courses. So English should be taught by well trained English teachers at the school level. Based on the responses of students and English teachers in questionnaires, the factors behind students' interest and problems in listening skills have been listed:

#### 10.1 Problems of the Students

1. Students have phobia towards English language and are not interested to learn a foreign

language like English as they lack intrinsic motivation. They are under the impression that it is difficult to learn English and would not be of much use in their future; and

2. Some of the obstacles for students were lack of vocabulary, limited knowledge of sentence structures and topics in English language. Fast speech by the teacher has also been expressed as a problem by the respondents in developing listening skills.

#### 10.2 Recommendations by the English Teachers

1. English teachers observed that lack of vocabulary and no proper understanding of English morphological and syntactic rules at the school level is a major problem in promoting English learning at the college level;

2. English language classrooms should not be overcrowded;

3. English teachers should pay attention to individual student problems;

4. They should give home assignments and find time for script checking and feedback;

3. They should give enough practice in receptive and productive skills so that there will be improvement in their performance;

5. Rote memory should not be entertained at the college level;

6. While teaching listening skills in English to the students, English teachers should focus on listening for sound perception and listening comprehension;

7. Activities should be taken up in the classrooms to make students participate and interact in a listening class;

8. Feedback should be given to the students constantly;

9. Technology should be used to teach and promote English listening skills in the classes;

10. Teaching listening should include listening skill activities to develop sound perception, comprehension and analytical skills; and

11. Testing system in listening should be reformed to test sound perception, comprehension and analytical skills among the students at the college level.

#### 10.3 Suggestions by the Investigator

The investigator suggests that:

➤ Students should come out of that phobia and cultivate a positive attitude towards learning English;

➤ Feedback would be helpful to rectify sound perception and improve listening comprehension skills among the students at the college level;

➤ English teachers should develop intrinsic motivation among Saudi students through extrinsic motivation and should expose the students to listening texts;

➤ English teachers need to make the students



identify sound system in English language, encourage the learners to identify the sounds for themselves and make them participate and interact in the listening class;

➤ English Digital laboratories should be established by the university in all the campuses to enhance teaching and learning of listening skills in English. Seating arrangement plays a vital role in a listening class which improves the listening ability among the students.

➤ English teachers at the university level should take the responsibility to motivate the students, in a way to create interest towards learning English under stress free environment. They are requested to use technology to teach and explore how listening can be improved and what activities would be useful to promote listening skills in the classrooms. They can also try out some of the suggested activities, adapt some from other sources and create few on the availability of inputs so as to develop the proficiency and improve the performance of the students in English listening comprehension.

### Conclusion

This paper has explored some of the factors that have an impact on students' listening skill in English. It has been found that 75% of respondents do not want to learn English, as it is of not much use in their future life. They also feel that it is difficult to learn English language. However, the paper has highlighted the fact, that teachers always use a tape recorder in teaching listening skills to their students. Some of the obstacles for students in developing listening skills were lack of vocabulary, limited knowledge in sentence structures and topics in English language. Fast speech by the teacher has also been expressed as a problem by the respondents.

### Acknowledgment

This study has been carried out by Dr. Sobhana Nandyal Panduranga. She is thankful to Dr. Hanna Madian, Head, Department of English, Samtah campus, Jazan University, Jizan, KSA for all the support to conduct the research study.

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### Appendix A1

#### Questionnaire for Students

Dear Participant

The investigator would like to conduct a research study on "Teaching Listening skills in an EFL Classroom-Building Activities". You are requested to go through and respond to the items in this questionnaire carefully and precisely. The data collected will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of academic research.

I. General Information Name:.

Level:, Campus:

II. Parameters - Motivation.

1. Do you like English language?

Yes No.

If yes, why?

A.

B.

If no, why?

A.

B.

2. Are you interested to learn English?

Yes No.

If yes, why?

A.

B.

If no, why?

A.

B.

3. Do you feel that you should use English language in your work place?

Yes No.

4. Do you feel that English language will gain importance in communication and business development in Saudi Arabia in future?

Yes No.

### III. Problems - Teaching and Learning

5. Are your classes overcrowded?

Yes No.

6. What are the difficulties you face in learning English listening skills?

A) Fast speech.

Yes No.

B) Limited knowledge of vocabulary, sentence structures and topics in English language.

Yes No.

7. Are you satisfied with the methodology in learning English listening skills?

Yes No.

### IV. Facilities

8. Do you use the following aids for learning listening skills?

A. Radio/TV.

Yes No.

B. Tape recorder.

Yes No.

C. Laptop.

Yes No.

9. Does your teacher use the following aids for teaching listening skills?

A. Radio/TV.

Yes No.

B. Tape recorder.

Yes No.

C. Laptop.

Yes No.

### V. Self Evaluation

10. Are you satisfied with your listening abilities from your point of view?

A) From the teacher.

Yes No.

B) Using Teaching Aids (radio, T.V, tape recorder, laptop).

Yes No.

## Appendix A2

### Questionnaire for English Teachers

Dear Colleague

The investigator would like to conduct a research study on "Teaching Listening skills in an EFL Classroom-Building Activities". You are requested to respond to the items in this questionnaire carefully and precisely. The data collected will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of academic research.

#### I. General Information

Name:

Levels you teach:

Campus:

#### II. Parameters - Motivation.

1. Do your students like English language?

Yes No.

If yes, why?

A.

B.

If no, why?

A.

B.

2. Are your students interested to learn English?

Yes No.

If yes, why?

A.

B.

If no, why?

A.

B.

3. Do you feel that your students should use English language in their work place?

Yes No.

4. Do you feel that English language will gain importance in communication and business development in Saudi Arabia in future?

Yes No.

#### III. Problems - Teaching and Learning

5. Are your classes overcrowded?

Yes No.

6. What are the difficulties that your students face in learning listening skills?

A) Fast speech.

Yes No.

B) Limited knowledge of vocabulary, sentence structures and topics in English language.

Yes No.

7. Are you satisfied with the methodology in teaching English listening skills?

Yes No.

#### IV. Facilities

8. Do your students use the following aids for learning listening skills?

A. Radio/TV

Yes No.

B. Tape recorder.

Yes No.

C. Laptop.

Yes No.

9. Do you use the following aids for teaching listening skills?

A. Radio/TV.

Yes No.

B. Tape recorder.

Yes No.

C. Laptop.

Yes No.

V. Evaluation

10. Are you satisfied with your students' listening abilities from your point of view?

A) As a teacher.

Yes No.

B) Using Teaching Aids (radio, T.V, tape recorder, laptop).

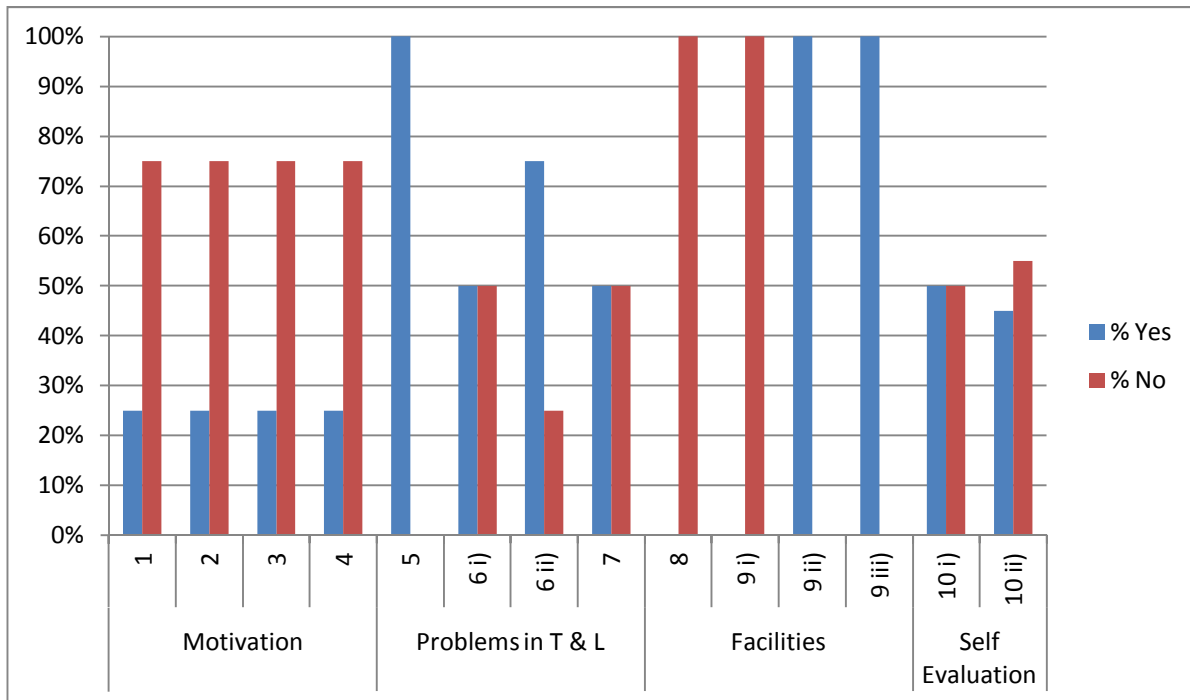
Yes No.

**Appendix A3**

**Table 1: Responses of the Participants in Percentages**

Parameters	Item	%	
		Yes	No
Motivation	1	50%	50%
	2	50%	50%
	3	25%	75%
	4	25%	75%
Problems in T & L	5	100%	0%
	6 i)	50%	50%
	6 ii)	75%	25%
	7	50%	50%
Facilities	8	0%	100%
	9 i)	0%	100%
	9 ii)	100%	0%
	9 iii)	100%	0%
Self Evaluation	10 i)	50%	50%
	10 ii)	55%	45%

**Appendix A4**



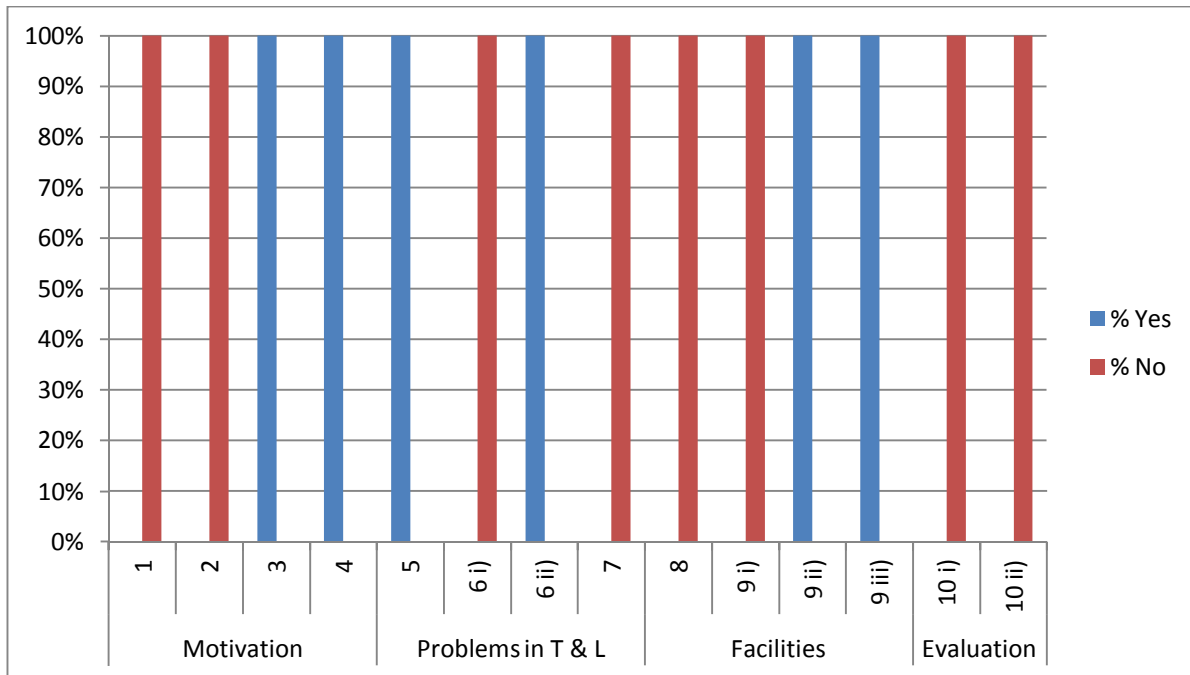
**Graph 1: Responses of the Participants in Percentages**

**Appendix A5**

**Table 2: Responses of English Teachers in Percentages**

Parameters	Item	%	
		Yes	No
Motivation	1	0%	100%
	2	0%	100%
	3	0%	100%
	4	100%	0%
Problems in T & L	5	100%	0%
	6 i)	0%	100%
	6 ii)	100%	0%
	7	0%	100%
Facilities	8	0%	100%
	9 i)	0%	100%
	9 ii)	100%	0%
	9 iii)	100%	0%
Evaluation	10 i)	0%	100%
	10 ii)	0%	100%

**Appendix A6**



**Graph 2: Responses of English Teachers in Percentages**

11/25/2016