

# Integrating Listening Skills at University Level: An Action Research at University of Sindh Campus Thatta

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## Abstract

This thesis is based on action research that was done in the classroom at the University of Sindh Campus Thatta. The study aims to find out the listening comprehension challenges in order to find out accessible solution by designing a treatment plan to improve listening skill of the students of English Department UOSCT. In the researcher's own class, the treatment plan was put into practise using a cyclical process of planning, doing, observing, and reflecting. An initial literature review led to the fact that teaching listening through IELTS listening podcasts can be an effective way to improve student's listening skills. 10 classes were conducted to teach listening skills with the use of IELTS listening series episode 1 to 10. The data were collected in both quantitative (Questionnaire) and qualitative (Interviews) methods. A set pre and post test was also conducted to check the improvement in students listening skills. According to the findings, the treatment therapy improved the students' engagement, motivation, self-assurance, listening abilities, and independent learning. Although there were some challenges at start related to students low confidence, unresponsiveness and shyness which were largely brought under control by designing exciting tasks and activities. The study shows that students listening barriers can be resolved and their listening skills can be improved by taking some useful steps to teach listening in a variety of methods and by designing materials according to the level and need of students. Therefore, it is recommended that a more widespread adoption of this type of communicative learning throughout the institution and in other contexts is possible and might be advantageous for university instructors as well as students.

**Keywords:** action research, listening challenges, IELTS listening, teaching, learning, improving listening skills.

**DOI:** 10.7176/JLLL/98-03

**Publication date:** August 31<sup>st</sup> 2023

## I. Introduction

The language abilities of reading, speaking, writing, and other skills may be sufficient to develop language competency, but listening has a bigger impact on the maturation process, according to Coskun and Kopru (2021). In order to acquire English as a second language, listening is a crucial skill. As noted by Talebinejad and Akhgar (2015), listening is used more often than the other three skills in second language learning (SLA). Being able to communicate with others necessitates the ability to listen. Listening serves as a bridge between speaking and writing because it is an activity for gathering knowledge that is necessary for understanding a foreign language and as input for learning to write. According to research, listening is done twice as often as speaking, four times as often as reading, and five times as often as writing (see Rivers & Morley in Fang, 2008: 21). Research suggests that listening is highly connected with other functions, and it is critical for language acquisition (e.g., Rost, Feyten, Mendelsohn, and Rubin in Fang, 2008).

In the past, listening has not received due attention as compared to other functions such as speaking, reading, and writing in SLA. Nunan (1997) has labeled listening a "Cinderella Skill," named after the popular character "Cinderella" of classic fairytales which reflects to be passive Listening and don't express any voice. So listening skills is also a voiceless skill. Second language learning research has booted listening by emphasizing the importance of comprehensible feedback. Listening is, in reality, the most commonly used language skill. Many students today lack communication skills and respond to listening in a passive manner (Nunan, 1997, as cited in Talebinejad & Akhgar, 2015). However, research has discovered that students' listening abilities are increasingly influencing their learning of the other three language skills (Talebinejad & Akhgar, 2015).

Lissimo (2019) asserts that listening is now regarded as an active skill including numerous processes. Although listening comprehension is now frequently recognised as a crucial component of language learning, there is still much to be done in terms of theory and application. The methods of learning and teaching have improved as a result of recent advancements in the field of language instruction. Teaching Listening skills at the university level is no longer a challenging phenomenon. Instead of this, teachers can easily introduce updated learning tasks and activities in order to reduce listening comprehension barriers faced by students of the university level. This research study will explore the barriers that language learners encounter during listening comprehension tasks. Moreover, to develop learners' listening capacity, the researcher will design and implement a treatment plan for the learners who face obstacles in comprehending listening tasks. In the end, By contrasting the students' performances, the researcher will examine the improvement in the students' listening comprehension before and after the treatment plan.

## II. Background to the Study:

Good listening reflects the capacity to comprehend information accurately during listening practice and disseminate this information orally or in written form to others. More specifically, it refers to understanding, sharing, and responding to what has been heard. It has to do with the capacity to understand, express, and react to what is heard. According to Nation and Jonathan (2009:38), listening can serve as a springboard for language development. Listening is an important element of the communication process, and it is directly linked with understanding and feedback. Therefore, having good listening skills is important for language learners. But unfortunately, due to various factors, students in higher education institutes lack language skills which hinder their further learning and delivery. These factors include but limited to lack of competence over grammar, lower vocabulary, discrepancy in pronunciation, poor intonation, and stress to name the few.

Considering the importance of listening proficiency, scholars, and academicians stress on the need of teaching listening skills in HEIs. Teachers in HEIs should put more of an emphasis on students' listening and understanding abilities. For this purpose, this research study is going to identify the obstacles in listening comprehension faced by students of English Department University of Sindh Campus Thatta. In order to increase students' language competency, it tries to create and implement a treatment plan for the learners having trouble understanding what is being spoken to them. With the inclusion of modern technologies in the field of teaching, developing and integrating listening skills at university level is no longer a problem for the teachers. And for this purpose this action research is going to transform the ways of teaching listening at university level.

### Research Objectives

1. To find out the obstacles faced by learners in listening comprehension in English language at English Department University of Sindh Campus Thatta.
2. To implement the integration of listening comprehension in English language classes at English Department USCT.
3. To understand the differences (if any) in the pre and post English listening test scores of the learners at English Department USCT.

### Research Questions

1. What are the obstacles faced by learners in listening comprehension in English language at English Department University of Sindh Campus Thatta?
2. What are the experiences of learners about the integration of listening comprehension in English language classes at English Department USCT?
3. What are the differences (if any) in the pre and post English listening test scores of the learners at English Department USCT?

## III. Literature Review

### Listening and its nature

The act of listening involves selecting and classifying the sounds we hear. A person prioritises what they hear during the listening process based on their past knowledge and what they wish to hear. To put it another way, we select the information while listening based on its importance and then try to comprehend the message being conveyed before responding to the message (Brewster, Ellis & Girard, 2002). Language learning is heavily reliant on listening because it is the capacity that gives first, second, and foreign language learning its initial impetus and sustains it (Morris & Leavey, 2006).

Pathan and Memon (2021) state that the ability to comprehend linguistic information (bottom-up), linguistic experience (top-down), cultural values, social norms, gestures, emotional expressions, religious beliefs, festivals, and mythological backdrop of the target language are all necessary for the complicated task of listening. Meanwhile, listening is not a one-way path, according to Brown (2001: 249). It isn't just the process of getting audible symbols in one direction. Listening unlike hearing is very active skill that requires listeners to use numerous functions while receiving signals (Holtzer (2003: 373). When someone is listening, they are using their syntactic, phonetic, and semantic language knowledge to decode phonetic language information and create a message out of a stream of sound. Listeners can pick up signals transmitted to their ears as sound waves travel across the medium of auditory organs. Comparatively speaking, listening is a much more active habit than "hearing," which is merely the process of receiving sound waves.

Even though listening and hearing are similar, according to Holtzer, Saha (2008: 1), listening is an active process that requires sound processing, whereas hearing is a passive process that merely receives noises. It's a pretty active process because it's selecting & assessing data from various sources recordings and voices provide audio and visual clues. Therefore, listening can be viewed as a passive and receptive skill in which it is the listener's responsibility to comprehend the ideas being sent by recordings or voices as opposed to only experiencing noises, like hearing does. This turns listening into a proactive activity.

In light of the aforementioned criteria, it can be concluded that listening is both a receptive talent and a very engaging activity. Oral communication involves the employment of the brain to understand and decode. Processing different elements is necessary for hearing comprehension. Because they must combine the elements of the listening talent, listeners become extremely active as they deal with the hearing process.

### **Listening Comprehension Obstacles**

Studies on the challenges students experience with listening comprehension have been conducted in the past that are pertinent to this topic. Woongjin., (2022), Astika & Kurniawan, (2020), Ha & Ngo (2021), as quoted in Ariyan, Noni, and Handyani (2023). It is crucial to acknowledge that listening can be difficult, particularly for language learners. Learners attempt to comprehend a foreign language when presented with it by drawing on cues from their still-evolving native tongue (Cameron, 2001). In addition to the challenges EFL students have with listening comprehension, Underwood (1989) identified a number of other factors. According to Underwood, a lack of previous knowledge and contextual awareness hinders listening comprehension. Students were able to understand the gist of what they were hearing, but they were clueless as to the deeper significance. Graham (2006) endorsed Underwood's assessment. He acknowledged that difficulty understanding the listening text's subject was due to ignorance of it.

There are many challenges that English major students still encounter when studying listening (Uyen, Hang, and Huyen, 2023) making it difficult to acquire listening skills. According to Rost (2002), listening issues are caused by L2 learners' inability to differentiate L2 phonemes. They were therefore not familiar with the common phonemes of L2. Because of this, they were unable to comprehend and process everything that was stated to them. According to Yen's (1987) research, sound discrimination, sound stream division, stress and intonation, vocabulary, expression, and grammar were the biggest obstacles to listening comprehension for English majors. Yen found that pronunciation problems accounted for the majority of the problems.

Hedge (2006) asserts that what made listening challenging was that students didn't realise that understanding every word in the listening clip wasn't necessary to understand the context in its whole. According to Vandergrift (2011:455), it is crucial for students to recognise their lack of clarity and imperfect understanding. Teng (2002) also investigated the difficulties 95 students at a technological institute had with listening comprehension. He found that student proficiency was the component that occurred most frequently. Then there was the focus of the listener and the clarity of the speaker.

### **Teaching Listening Skill**

Recently, the focus on the listening has risen considerably. Universities and teaching institutes are focusing more on listening skills besides their focus on reading and writing Richards (2008: 1). The model provided by Richards and Renandya (2002: 242) for creating a listening lesson comprises exercises including pre-listening, listening, and post-listening. As part of the pre-teaching practise, the teacher conducts pre-teaching on all crucial new language in the passage. Pre-listening exercises frequently involve brainstorming words, reviewing grammar rules, or talking about the theme of the listening text. Often, this portion of class takes far longer than it should. If the subject is thoroughly covered, much of the listening passage's content can be guessed.

Students can and should actively participate in listening exercises, according to Linse (2005). Effective language teachers assist students in adjusting and adapting their listening actions to a variety of conditions, including various forms of feedback and listening objectives, by assisting them in developing a collection of listening techniques and matching suitable strategies to each listening circumstance. The teacher should establish the task or the questions in advance for the listening stage before engaging in focused listening and checking the answers. The post-listening exercise is the last step in teaching listening, and it requires the instructor to look at functional language and infer vocabulary meaning. In addition to arguing in favour of teaching students how to listen, Leon (2009) also supports the use of pre-, during-, and post-listening activities.

According to the processes of listening instruction there are numerous actions that the instructor must take to develop students who can listen effectively and strategically. The teacher must pay close attention to the pre-listening exercise, which must be prepared before the listening process. The teacher should next carefully monitor the pupils' development and pay close attention to the steps taken during the listening activity. The last activity should allow the teacher to gauge the students' comprehension of the lecture subject by giving them tasks and possibly requiring them to hold group discussions about the recently taught listening material.

### **IV. Research Methodology**

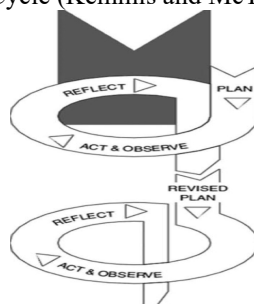
This study was an instance of classroom action research which had followed quantitative and qualitative both research designs. The researcher's involvement in this study was focused on enhancing students' listening skills. Research that focuses on taking action to ameliorate a problem is called "action research." To develop contextualised knowledge, the proposed activity is methodically done and critically reviewed (Somekh, 2006). My research was based on the theories of McNiff, Lomax, and Whitehead as well as Kemmis and McTaggart

(1988, 2000). I first worked on the obstacles faced by listeners in the English language classrooms. After finding out the hindrances I planned a treatment plan for my students to overcome those obstacles. The treatment plan was implemented and analysed with the support of pre and post tests, interviews and questionnaires.

### The Action Cycle

The action-research cycle (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988; 2000) was employed as the action research model for this investigation. So it will act as a theoretical framework. Planning, doing, observing, and reflecting make up the action-reflection cycle of this approach. The research approach known as "action research," created by Kemmis and McTaggart, involves the researcher intervening before, during, and after the study. This achieves two objectives: first, it will result in good change, and second, knowledge will advance in the manner intended by the model's inventor.

Action Research Cycle (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988; 2000)



The four major stages of a research cycle were included in the research process as suggested by Kemmis and McTaggart in Burns (2010: 7), which featured action research. The initial cycle might have been a procedure with ongoing stages and phases that moved in a spiral or loop. As a result, the researcher must repeat the procedure until happy with the outcome.

### Data Collection Technique

Both quantitative and qualitative data were accessible. Before the listening therapy session began, quantitative data was gathered through a questionnaire. By observing the teaching process and interviewing the students, qualitative data on the teaching and learning processes before and during the execution of the action research as well as the expectations of the students for the listening class were acquired. The findings of the students' listening assessments were also used to compile the quantitative data. In this study, the researcher administered listening tests to the students. She then evaluated the students listening test results.

### Data Analysis Procedure

In this work, the mixed research methodology has been applied. Both quantitative and qualitative data were studied in order to pinpoint the root causes of students' listening comprehension problems as well as to discover solutions, major listening hindrances, and learning experiences. Using SPSS, the questionnaire data was evaluated to determine the challenges that students with listening comprehension faced. Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) software were used to statistically examine the disparity between the pre and post tests.

### V. Research Findings:

Two sections comprise the study's conclusions. The study's actions are presented in the first section, including their planning, implementation, observation, and reflection over the course of two cycles. The study's findings are reported in the second section using the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews with students, and the outcomes of pre- and post-tests.

#### Cycle I

The first cycle of this study was started with a questionnaire (to investigate the challenges that learners faced in the listening comprehension process) and pre listening test (to check the current level of listening comprehension ability of students). After analysing the scores the teacher researcher have realised that a lot of efforts and time needed to improve the listening skills of the class. The researcher planned to act after choosing and identifying the problems that were most important and practical to fix. The researcher then planned to conduct 10 listening classes to improve students listening skills. The reflection on Cycle I, its conclusion, and the suggestion for Cycle II that came out of the conversation between the teacher researcher and the observer are shown in the table below.

Table 1: Findings of Cycle I

| Action in Cycle 1   | Reflection in Cycle 1  | Conclusion in Cycle 1   | Recommendation for Cycle II   |
|---|--|---|---|
| Teaching listening through IELTS listening series.  | Every class that used the IELTS listening series found it to be effective. The students showed their interest and excitement towards the topic.  | The action would be continued in cycle II with minor improvement. | The researcher would like to continue using the listening series for Cycle II with certain improvements because the action was successful. She wants to employ more interesting content.                            |
| Podcasts has the potential to better focus and hold students' attention.                                    | It has been demonstrated that the teacher's use of podcasts, makes the class more quiet. It occurred whenever the students were instructed to listen to the listening content.                       | The action would be maintained in Cycle II with few improvement.  | The researcher wants to continue using the podcasts for Cycle II with some improvements because the action was successful.  |
| loudspeakers are used so that students can hear and understand the material.                                | The load speaker was successful in helping the students comprehend the dialogues and sentences in the listening material.  | With certain improvements, the action would be kept in Cycle II.  | The researcher would like to continue using the podcasts for Cycle II with few modifications because the action was successful.   |
| The use of worksheets was successful.   | All the pre, while post listening tasks mentioned on the worksheets helped students to build their knowledge, interest and understanding towards the topic.  | The action would be maintained in Cycle II with some improvement  | The researcher would like to continue using the podcasts for Cycle II with few modifications because the action was successful.   |
| The attempt to get students to explain what they understood about the subject in front of the class failed. | When the researcher motivated students to express their views and share their knowledge of the topic, in their own words, only a few students agreed and shared while most of them refused to do it. | With certain improvements, the action would be kept in Cycle II.  | As a result of the students' unwillingness to express their opinions in front of the class, the researcher decided to reward good performance at the end of cycle II in order to inspire the students to work hard. |

## Cycle 2

The second and last cycle of this study was started with some improvements in previous plans in order to increase students participation and improve their listening skills. The researcher attempted to design certain actions to be taken in Cycle II based on the reflection in Cycle I. The podcasts were still used as a teaching tool in such endeavours. As a result, the activities are still the same as those used in Cycle I. However, Cycle II would incorporate some improvements after considering the Cycle I reports. The following table represents the results of both cycles in general:

Table 2: General Findings of Cycle I and II

| S.N | Before the Actions were conducted  | After the Actions were conducted  |  |
|-----|--|---|--|
|     |  | Cycle I   | Cycle II   |
| 1.  | The learners struggled to understand the native speakers' pronunciation.   | When the podcasts were played in class, the student had a lot of difficulty understanding the native speakers' speech and pronunciation. Yet they persisted in finding the films to be so entertaining.                                     | The students found it easier to view and listen to the podcasts at the end of Cycle II. They thoroughly loved to the podcasts, and they worked quickly and well on tasks that were relevant to the videos.   |
| 2.  | The listening content was not presented in an engaging manner.   | The students were more motivated to participate in the teaching and learning activity when the podcasts were playing in class. However, some students found it a little difficult to follow the conversations amongst the native speakers.. | When they continued to listen podcasts as part of Cycle II's listening instruction and learning, the students' interest and amusement remained high. The students acquired experience listening to the pronunciation and dialogue of real native speakers by the time Cycle II was held. |
| 3.  | The listening procedure was not conducted using high-quality speakers that would have supported the precision of the vocabulary and pronunciation in the text. | The researcher began using high-quality loudspeakers in Cycle I, something that English teachers had never done before.   | To ensure that every student in the class could listen the audio properly during Cycle II, the researcher decided to turn up the loudspeaker volume. During this round, the students listened to the audio without speaking.   |
| 4.  | The students were unfamiliar with the audio material's cultural content.   | In Cycle I Researcher introduced students with native English culture through the use of native podcasts.   | Researchers continued this method in Cycle II, and students learned about the local culture by listening to podcasts about their daily lives.  |
| 5.  | Students feel difficulty to comprehend complex grammatical structures in the listening content.  | In Cycle 1, the researcher provided engaging and simple listening material to help students comprehend grammatical structures.  | Cycle II saw the researcher opt to the grammatical structures more challenging so that students could quickly understand the concepts and improve their grammatical skills too.  |
| 6.  | Exercises involving listening took up very little of the teacher's time.   | In Cycle I the researcher provided students interesting and informative tasks and activities.   | In Cycle II the researcher followed the same practice with some additional fun related tasks to catch students attention.  |
| 7.  | Due to a lack of motivation, several students talked with their friends while participating in a listening skill teaching and learning activity.               | The researcher boosts the students' motivation in Cycle I by demonstrating interesting podcasts for listening.  | With the assistance of interesting and interactive podcasts, the researcher proceeded to inspire students in Cycle II as well.   |
| 8.  | Students believe that most of the words of the listening materials are unknown to them.  | The topics in Cycle I were drawn from a background of actual life. so that students can deduce the meaning from the context with ease.  | The researcher followed the same practice in Cycle II with enhanced and engaging listening material.   |
| 9.  | The students who were expected to react to the exercise lacked confidence and preparation for the questions that were asked.                                   | In Cycle I only a few students were agree to share their views and knowledge in front of the class while others remain reluctant.   | In Cycle II, a majority of students were willingly performing in front of the class, sharing their knowledge and experiences and improving their listening skills well as speaking skills.   |

| S.N | Before the Actions were conducted                 | After the Actions were conducted   |   |
|-----|---|--|---|
|     |   | Cycle I  | Cycle II  |
| 10. | Students are distracted by noise while listening. | The researcher tried to solve noise issues in the class by proper seating arrangements and organising the whole class. | In Cycle II, the researcher used the same procedure but made some changes.. |

### Results related to the Questionnaire

The Questionnaire data was analyzed using SPSS v25. To respond to the study's initial query (What are the obstacles faced by learners in listening comprehension) descriptive analysis (mean, standard deviation, and percentage) was utilised by the researcher. To explain the results, the Likert scale is used. The questionnaire was divided into 9 different domains containing statements related to listening comprehension problems. The following table includes the results:

Table 3: Mean values for constructs / domains

| Construct code | Construct name  | Mean   | Std Deviation |
|----------------|---|--------|---------------|
| IoLS           | Importance of Listening Skills                                | 3.1850 | 0.60492       |
| PLCLF          | Problems related to Listening content and linguistic features | 3.8536 | 0.33851       |
| PrP            | Problems related to pronunciation                             | 2.6000 | 0.59743       |
| PrPF           | Problems related to psychological Factors                     | 3.0208 | 0.94220       |
| PrC            | Problems related to Concentration                             | 3.3200 | 1.18434       |
| PrL            | Problems related to listener                                  | 2.7722 | 0.79207       |
| PrS            | Problems related to speaker                                   | 3.3964 | 0.45807       |
| CuP            | Cultural Problems   | 2.5750 | 0.99568       |
| EnP            | Environmental Problems  | 3.3167 | 0.61764       |

Table 4.21 presents the information of means and standard deviation for constructs or domains identified in this study. It shows that for the first domain importance of listening skills, mean value is greater than 3, the midpoint. It shows the respondents knew that listening skills are very important for their careers. Second domain was about Problems related to Listening content and linguistic features. Mean values are again greater than 3 and nearer to 4 ( $M=3.8536$ ;  $SD=0.33851$ ). It shows that participants were facing many problems related to listening content and linguistic features. Third domain was Problems related to pronunciation. Its mean value was less than 3 ( $M=2.6000$ ;  $SD=0.59743$ ). It shows that respondent did not agree with the statements and were facing lesser problems with pronunciation. Fourth domain was Problems related to psychological factors. Its mean value is equal to 3 which represents agreement of the respondents. It in turn means that students have listening issues related to psychological factors. Moreover the fifth domain was Problems related to Concentration and its mean value is greater than 3 which means that students also agreed that they have listening problems related to Concentration. However for the sixth domain titled as Problems related to Listener the mean value is less than 3 which represents neutral response from the learners it means students were not able to decide between certain problems related to the Listener. The seventh domain was Problems related to the speaker on which results got the mean value greater to 3 which represents the agreement from the respondents that they have issues regarding speaker while listening a text. When it comes to eighth domain named as Problems related to Culture the total mean value is less than 3 which shows the fact that students gave a neutral response on cultural problems. The ninth domain was Environmental Problems on which the results showed agreement of students. Its mean value is greater than 3.

### Results related to Pre and Post Tests:

To determine if the students' listening skills had improved after the treatment plan was put into place, a pre- and post-test was administered. The test scores were analysed in the spss software.

Table 4: Paired Samples t test for pre-test; post test scores

|        |                     | Mean  | N  | SD     | SD   | Correlation | Mean (a-b) | Std. Deviation | LCI    | UCI    | t       | df | Sig. |
|--------|---------------------|-------|----|--------|------|-------------|------------|----------------|--------|--------|---------|----|------|
| Pair 1 | Pre-test Score (a)  | 34.85 | 40 | 14.703 | .984 | .984        | -16.65     | 7.798          | -19.15 | -14.16 | -13.505 | 39 | .000 |
|        | Post-test Score (b) | 51.50 | 40 | 21.805 | 3.44 |             |            |                |        |        |         |    |      |

Additionally, an experimental design was used, where students took a listening assessment. Scores from the pre- and post-tests were acquired, and their significant differences were compared. To calculate the difference between pre-test and post-test scores, a paired sample t test was used. Results presented in table 23 is mean for post test scores is greater (M=51.50; D= 21.81) than pre-test scores (M=34.85; SD=14.70). Results of mean difference indicate that difference of the mean was (16.650; SD=7.79). This difference was highly significant as t value is 13.505 >1.86 and there is no zero between confidence intervals (LCI=-19.14369; UCI=-14.15631; p<0.01). Results of correlation coefficient indicate that both the scores were highly significantly correlated (r=.984; p<0.01). These results indicate that listening exercise contributed a lot in the learning of the students.

### Results related to the Interviews

The qualitative part of this research study was the focused group interviews that were carried out to obtain the knowledge of ongoing learning experiences and challenges faced by the students. The results from interviews performed in focused groups with five students in each group were analysed using the thematic analysis method. To establish a sense of familiarity, the researcher has reviewed every transcript. Then, codes were created using the key elements of the interview transcripts. Different themes arose as a result of grouping codes into groups based on similarities. A wide range of analytical methods are used in the diverse discipline of qualitative research to produce an understanding of large datasets. There are 3 main themes that were generated from the interview transcripts. These themes are further subdivided into 4 categories.

Table 5: Themes of the Interview data

|                    |                     |                            |                                  |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Experiences</b> | Real life learning  | Skills Enhancement         | Increase in Background knowledge | Social Awareness    |
| <b>Challenges</b>  | Grammar issues      | Lack of Phonemic knowledge | Accent unfamiliarity             | Physical issues     |
| <b>Activities</b>  | Motivation boosters | Learning by doing          | Active Participation             | Autonomous learning |

The very first theme was students experiences during the learning listening process. Researcher have asked different questions to analyse students experiences. Most of the students replied positively on their learning journey. They believed that connecting the topic with real life experiences is the best way of learning. They enjoy being part of their own learning and development of listening skill. As one student said:

*"I learn more effectively when things are more clear and linked with my local life".*

Another one commented: *I like learning when it has more real life experiences".*

As the treatment plan proceeds a number of challenges were also faced by the teacher and learners. Most of the students have very low knowledge of correct use of grammar. They were just stuck on tenses and get confused easily. As one student said:

*"My grammar is not good therefore I sometimes couldn't understand whether it is past tense or present perfect tense".*

Another student told: *My knowledge of tenses is not enough to understand listening texts effectively".*

The soul of the treatment plan was the tasks and activities performed by the students. These activities have boosted their confidence and keep them motivated through out the listening classes. Most of the students explored that they were not enough motivated for the improvement in listening skills before the start of the programme but their views changed afterwards. As one student said:

*"I was not interested earlier but your activities excites me to perform effectively and boost my confidence level".*

Another student told that: *"The tasks energizes me to perform more effectively".*

Hence it has been proved that treatment plan boost students confidence and motivation by teaching them Autonomous learning and promoting active participation of the students.

### VI. Discussion and conclusion

The following findings from the study are reviewed in light of the findings in connection to the difficulties students have with listening comprehension. The majority of students blame the following factors for their listening comprehension issues. For instance, background noise might be a major hindrance to understanding what is being said. Hearing passages with uncommon topic matter, unfamiliar vocabulary, and challenging



grammatical structures are additional influences. Additionally, students think that listening comprehension may be substantially hampered by recordings of poor quality. Students naturally believe that having fun during the listening exercise would help them understand, but the converse is also true. The following table lists the challenges that students encountered when listening as well as the barriers that prevent them from developing their listening abilities. Seven main factors were found in listening skill obstacles which are again sub divided into 5 further categories.

Table 6: Listening Comprehension Obstacles

|               |                    |                       |                                |                           |                        |
|---------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Linguistic    | Lengthy text       | Complex Grammar       | Unfamiliar Vocabulary          | Background knowledge      | Meaning of words       |
| Phonological  | Pronunciation      | L2 phonemes knowledge | Stress and intonation patterns | Assimilation              | Multiple Accents       |
| Cultural      | Cultural knowledge | Real life Context     | Cultural context               | Words linked with culture | Cultural unfamiliarity |
| Psychological | Anxiety            | Tiredness             | Concentration                  | Nervousness               | Motivation             |
| Listener      | Learner's issues   | WH questions          | Learner's level                | Memory                    | Background knowledge   |
| Speaker       | Hesitation         | Pauses                | Words not pronounce correctly  | Unfamiliar accents        | Mixed sounds           |
| Environmental | Physical issues    | Noise                 | Seating arrangements           | Unconditioned rooms       | Poor quality players   |

Moreover the interviews were conducted to let students speak more freely about listening learning process. A majority of students have improved their listening skills which has been illustrated from their responses. When asked about their listening class experiences they all were quite happy and excited to practice listening in classes. The aim was to know whether the students are able to understand and improve their listening skills or not. The question was are they really improving, is there any barrier or what should be the way forward? All these doubts were being cleared by students responses. They actively participated in the listening classes. They also shared the challenges they faced during the classes which were also solved with the passage of time. The listening tasks and activities of each listening lesson have boosted students towards enhanced listening skills. Based on the findings, it can be said that the students typically had better listening skills.

According to the data, both pre- and post-test scores dramatically increased. The performance of the students also improved. There has been a considerable shift between the pre-test and post-test results. Some pupils shown improvement in both the pre- and post-tests. Nonetheless, some students performance was remained below average; nonetheless, this does not imply that they did not improve. It will take a lot of time and effort to improve these students' listening abilities so they can use them more successfully. The results provided above provide unequivocal evidence of the students enhanced listening abilities. Thus, it can be said that during treatment and therapy, students listening abilities increased. The findings of the study indicate that using podcasts to teach students to listen is thought to be effective.

### Future recommendations

After conducting this study, the researcher offers a number of recommendations to English teachers, students, and other researchers. These are the recommendations:

- It is advised that English teachers use and investigate more fully how the English listening podcasts might be used to improve students' listening skills.
- It is suggested that through watching listening-related films and listening to podcasts, students should exercise their listening skills.
- It is anticipated that further researchers will come up with new ideas and initiatives to help students become better listeners.

### VII. References

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