



Perspectives of EFL Students in Listening

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Modality: Descriptive Study

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Proyecto de Investigación

Certifico que Patricia Maribel Carrera Freire ha cumplido satisfactoriamente su investigación descriptiva como pre-requisito de graduación de Magíster en Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros con Mención en la Enseñanza de Inglés.

Su investigación es parte del proyecto Perspectives of EFL Students in Listening cuyo objetivo general es conocer desde la perspectiva de los estudiantes sus dificultades al momento de escuchar en inglés. Esta información nos servirá para realizar mejoras en el proceso enseñanza-aprendizaje del idioma inglés en nuestro context.

El proyecto se implementa en catorce contextos y niveles de eficiencia en inglés diferentes. En este proyecto, cada participante desarrolla la recolección de datos en un contexto educativo diferente. Las secciones de literatura y metodología (instrumentos y análisis de datos) son las mismas.

Particular que comunico para los fines consiguientes.

María Rossana Ramírez Avila

Coordinadora de Titulación

Abstract

This descriptive study aimed to find out the perspectives of EFL students in listening at a private school in Ambato, Ecuador. This is a descriptive qualitative research method. Participants were 53 students, 29 females and 24 males from first-year BGU, ages ranging from 15 to 16 years old. The instrument applied was an online survey. The results of this study shows that the difficulties that the students faced in listening comprehension were related to multi-accent records and the pace of the audio from academic material. Besides, the resources they like the most are authentic material with subtitles in English; and the activities they prefer are developing extensive listening tasks, working in groups, kinesthetic activities, and own recordings to better picture their improvement. It is recommended that teachers avoid using the same techniques in listening and start applying the levels of listening which are Listening Only (LO), Reading Only (RO), and Reading while Listening plus listening Only (RLL) to enhance understanding, as well as multi-accent input to stimulate perception, and interpretation, and strengthen the natural speech. This study could help future researchers to find out aspects related to students' perspectives on listening skills, as well as activities, strategies, and material for that ability.

Keywords: listening comprehension, listening difficulties, resources, activities, EFL.

Resumen

Este estudio descriptivo tiene como objetivo conocer perspectivas sobre la comprensión auditiva de estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera; los mismos que pertenecen a un colegio privado de la ciudad de Ambato, Ecuador. Este estudio empleó un método de investigación cualitativo descriptivo. Participaron 53 estudiantes, 29 mujeres y 24 hombres de primer año de BGU con edades comprendidas entre los 15 a 16 años. El instrumento aplicado para recopilar datos fue una encuesta en línea. Los resultados de este estudio muestran que las dificultades que tienen los estudiantes cuando escuchan un audio en inglés están relacionadas con los multi acentos y el ritmo del audio de un material académico. Asimismo, los recursos de su preferencia son materiales auténticos subtítulos en inglés con actividades grupales, kinestésicas y grabaciones propias de su voz para visualizar mejor su aprendizaje. De esta manera realizan un trabajo placentero enfocado en la técnica de escucha activa. Se recomienda evitar usar técnicas tradicionales u obsoletas en la práctica de comprensión auditiva. Por otra parte, se sugiere aplicar los niveles de escucha tales como escuchar solamente (LO), leer solamente (RO), y leer mientras se escucha más escuchar solamente (RLL) para mejorar la comprensión, así como también los acentos múltiples para estimular la percepción, interpretación y fortalecer el habla natural del estudiante. Este estudio podría ayudar a futuros investigadores a encontrar aspectos relacionados con perspectivas de estudiantes sobre la habilidad auditiva, así como también actividades, estrategias y material para dicha habilidad.

Palabras clave: Comprensión auditiva, dificultades de escucha, material, actividades, Inglés como lengua extranjera.

Perspectives of EFL Students in Listening

Hogan et al. (2014) said that English has become the world's lingua franca due to its usage as a mode of communication among people, regardless of their nationality and ethnic backgrounds. Mastering a second language in the current society went from being a complement to a necessity among people of different cultures. Barnawi (2011) affirmed that English is dominant in science, technology, and business. In Ecuador, learning English has always been part of the curriculum, and since 2016, it was also mandatory for elementary school (Ministerio de Educación de Ecuador, 2016).

Understanding a language becomes quite complicated since this implies linguistic learning elements such as phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics (Halliday, 1975). The process of learning the four skills of a language at the same time on occasions is overwhelming. According to Schreuder et al. (2011) and Liubinienė (2009), listening is one of the crucial components of spoken language because there is no spoken language without listening. Schreuder et al. (2011) stated that listening skills are a key factor in correctly communicating with more people because it provides the basis for positive communication.

However, there are some difficulties and challenges EFL students face when listening to L2. Some examples are the pace, unknown words, and absence of prior knowledge, among others. Douglas (1988) considered that listeners could not recognize the language in a long speech since they are used to hearing English just in chunks (a few words). Douglas (1988) mentioned that clustering is one way that listening becomes difficult; it means that sometimes people hear language in chunks and the learners group

their listening chunks into too large chunks. They try to comprehend the entire paragraph at once, but it is too much of an overload. The analysis of the author was that students try to cluster things too narrowly and try to understand each word rather than getting meaning out of the whole phrase or sentence. Hence, no matter how simple a sentence could be, that could sound like garble sounds becoming a real problem for learners.

There have been many research works that were conducted as descriptive studies about listening. For instance, Dora and Rosa (2020) analyzed students' difficulties in listening comprehension and the factors that provoke those troubles in the English language and literature department at FBS UNP. This study employed a descriptive qualitative research method. The results after applying a questionnaire showed the difficulties that students face in listening are divided into three categories: material, listener, and physical setting. In addition, other factors that cause difficulties include shame to ask the lecturer, emotional disturbances, and lack of reinforcement.

Other descriptive studies on listening comprehension are conducted in listening skills, cognitive skills, learning strategies, and some learning strategies and methods by Liubinienė (2009). The purpose of the study was to analyze how CLIL methodology could be useful in developing listening comprehension in both content and language classes. The results showed the importance of teaching students how to listen to make them gain control over the listening process by teaching other subjects to teach (Liubinienė, 2009).

Some difficulties were evidenced at the high school where the research took place. Students found it difficult and unclear to understand what teachers, classmates, or recordings say because they were not familiar with the correct sounds of different

words. Another problem was the diverse accents and the different pace speakers have. Students were not aware enough to get specific information or an overall idea of the speech. Malyshkevych (2017) claimed that those problems are essential in listening comprehension because of the reconstruction of unclear speech sounds that are found in real-life listening contexts. In addition, Dollmann et al. (2020) stated that after a critical period, students should be shown up to different accents to obtain effective cognitive results.

The private high school where this research was carried out is located in Ambato-Ecuador near the Technical University of Ambato. There are 53 students (29 females and 24 males) who belong in the first year of high school. The teens' ages range from 15 to 16 years old. Their level of proficiency in the English language is B1.

Literature Review

Listening Components

Hogan et al. (2014) referred to the importance of two primary components in listening skills: word recognition (decoding) and listening comprehension. The authors Hogan et al. (2014) and Johnson et al. (2022) showed that auditory ability is the dominating influence on receptive skills. They also highlighted the failures of some participants due to deficient listening comprehension skills, determining them as poor understanders.

Rost (2014) cited some components of listening skills including discriminating between sounds, recognizing words, identifying stressed words, grouping words, and identifying functions in conversations. Moreover, Rivas (as cited in Hidrovo, 2021) claimed that intonation and stress are determined by connecting linguistic cues as

morphological, and semantic cues to paralinguistic cues. The latter expresses real thoughts and emotions in a verbal message, as well as facial expressions, gestures, proximity, posture, and echoing. All those listening components and previous knowledge enhance people to predict and create meaning. The components listed above enhance learners internalizing new lexicon and arranging some ideas through semantic cues, paraphrasing the message through facial expressions, and practicing interlocution through verbal messages.

Listening Skills

Language learning requires the use of cognitive skills as when learning mathematics or physics; the improvement of language involves the practice of the four skills. The acquisition of the four skills occurs in L1 as well as in L2 but the differences between the two circumstances are obvious. According to López (as cited in Carrera, 2017), when children acquire their mother tongue, they are taught above all to speak and listen; in learning an L2, children are taught above all to read and write. In L1, people understand much more than they are able to express. It is normal and essential to practice productive and receptive skills at the same time. In teaching a second language, the most practiced skills should be listening, and what has been learned orally is reinforced through reading and writing activities (López as cited in Carrera, 2017).

Rivas (as cited in Hidrovo, 2021) claimed that some listening skills are: perception skill which includes intonation, pronunciation, pace, dialect, and some nonverbal cues; analysis skill which is based on how people get the main ideas or messages that the speaker convey; and synthesis skill in which people make relations between what they perceive and the concepts they can understand. According to Syafii et al. (2020), within the perception skill, there are two competencies: linguistic and non-

linguistic. The former refers to vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, the latter includes the situational context and intentions of the speaker, for example, the signs, features, environment, language attitude, and kinesics, which refers to the actions and positions of the body; and proxemics, which is the study of people's perception, and interpersonal space

According to Spratt et al. (2011), listening skills have some sub-skills which are used depending on the reasons why people listen. The sub-skills include listening for gist and specific information, inferring attitude, and listening intensively or extensively. All of those sub-skills should be included in the three steps in listening which are pre, while, and after listening. This process entails the required time, practice, different sources of input for listening, and a great predisposition of students to learn.

Different Sources of Input for Listening

Sources of listening involve understanding spoken language and making sense of the meaningful sound of the language. Spratt et al. (2011) affirmed that listening skills could be the most difficult for some students, even more, if their learning style is not auditory. The authors (Spratt et al.) diagnosed that when students are listening to a conversation, it is mandatory to pay attention to the audio since it disappears as soon as it is spoken. For this reason and with the desire to improve listening techniques, Chang et al. (2019) suggested using three strategies including listening only (LO) in a first stage, then reading only (RO), and finally reading while listening plus listening only (RLL) to complete the listening cycle. Consequently, students must infer the emotions of the people involved in the audio from the tone of voice and also internalize their understanding while reading the script.

Graham and Santos (2015) indicated that in order to become effective listeners, students must do a lot of listening, especially extensive listening, recommended by Gavenila et al. (2021) and Pamuji et al. (2019). According to Chu (2018), teachers should provide self-access learning materials, e.g., listening to films and dramas, TV programs, podcasts, radio news, and online interviews, among other materials. Listeners make use of all those sources in real-time as they perceive the aural input (e.g., verbal symbols of audio, video, and spoken language of a speaker during communication/interaction). Furthermore, teachers may discuss with students the speech acts which is something expressed by a person that not only presents information but also performs actions such as locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. The first one is a functional action that allows having an interpretable meaning when it is heard, and its intention is to ask or order. The objective of the second type is to joke, beg, or request an action that has to do with the speaker. Finally, the perlocutionary action focuses on the receiver's reaction when hearing a message (Chu, 2018).

Some disadvantages of sources of input for listening, as mentioned by Spratt et al. (2011), are for instance that listening skills do not have visual support for a better understanding, it is not well-organized as in a written way, ambient sounds interrupt and distract the listener's attention. For these reasons, practicing listening can be difficult for students, especially if they do not have a multiple intelligence that goes with the ability to listen (p.43).

Teaching Listening

To start with, learning must be meaningful and constructive. Meaningful learning occurs when students understand the content and transfer their knowledge to the next levels; constructive because the student must integrate his new appreciation to

the prior knowledge (Manrique & Puente, 1999). Language skills (writing, speaking, listening, reading) cannot be taught in isolation from one another, but rather using a comprehensive methodology that incorporates all of them into one curriculum. Writing skills improve with the help of reading skills. Oral skills can be enhanced with listening skills. All this entails the required time, practices, specific didactic material, and good use of the sub-skills of each skill in the student (Carrera, 2017).

Rost (2011) highlighted all six types of listening. One of them is selective listening which gathers specific information to perform a task. It refers to ‘attending to only what you want to hear’ and ‘tuning out everything else’ (p. 184). Another is interactive listening in which the listener takes a leading role in understanding, by providing feedback, asking questions, and supporting the speaker. Intensive listening whose intention is clearly academic with an educational purpose of teaching languages; and, extensive listening allows listeners to enjoy some types of audios with pleasure. In addition, responsive listening in which the listener’s response is the goal of the activity. Finally, autonomous listening refers to independent listening, without the direct guidance of an instructor (Rost, 2014). The key to fostering audio skills is to make learners overcome different accents, dialects, and phonemes, as well as practice intensive and extensive listening.

Research Methodology

This research work is a descriptive study that reports a situation, population, or phenomenon that occurs in a specific place through Wh-questions. It is crucial to have a proper understanding of what a research problem is about before investigating why it exists in the first place (McCombes, 2015). A survey was applied to collect qualitative data and analyze techniques that produce reports concerning central tendency, variation, and correlation.

Quantitative data is counted or expressed numerically by answering questions involving quantity, frequency, value, or size (Davidson, 2019). This type of research often involves a rich collection of data from various sources to gain a deeper understanding of individual participants, including their opinions, perspectives, and attitudes (Gall et al., as cited in Nassaji, 2015).

Research questions:

1. What is the most difficult part when listening to a recording?
2. What resources do students use when listening for comprehension?
3. What type of activities have students used to improve listening comprehension?

Participants

The participants of this research work were students from first-year BGU, ages ranging from 15 to 16 years old. There are 53 students; 29 females which represent 54,7% and 24 males which represent 45,3%. This group of students was chosen due to the fact that the researcher shared many hours with them in two subjects, English and Literature. In that way, they were in touch for about 9 hours every week and they know each other very well. The researcher knows their weakness and strengths in L2.

Instruments

To answer the research questions, the following instruments were applied:

- **Demographic survey:**

A demographic survey (Appendix A) was used to describe the participants' general characteristics, including their complete name, age, genre, nationality, language, religion, ethnicity, socio-economic class, type of institution, English learning background, access, and technology knowledge.

- **Listening Survey**

To answer the research questions, the fifty-three participants fulfilled the listening survey (Appendix B). The survey was written in English and Spanish due to the proficiency level of the students. The survey consisted of three parts: The first one asked about students' attitudes and perspectives toward the listening skill with 16 questions. The second part measured the resources students use to enhance their listening comprehension with 7 questions. The third part measured the activities students use to improve listening comprehension with 5 questions. The survey about listening was taken in Google Forms and the students answered it online.

Data Analysis

The data was collected in a google forms sheet, analyzed in an excel datasheet, and processed through the SPSS statistic tool through a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis of the variables through indicators of a survey of 36 questions that are divided into two sections; the first one with 8 demographic questions, and the second one with 28 questions about difficulties, resources, and activities towards listening skills. The results of the survey are shown in a table with the means.

Ethical Considerations

To start with the survey, the researcher got a consent letter from the headmaster of the institution to work with the students in the descriptive study. As students were minors, their parents were notified through a written document to get their approval. The personal information of the participants was protected. Their answers were analyzed through codes. Barrow et al. (2021) stated that participants have the right to participate voluntarily or decline their collaboration at the time without penalty.

Results

This section shows the results of the survey data to answer these three research questions: What is the most difficult part when listening to a recording? What resources do students use when listening for comprehension? and What type of activities have students used to improve listening comprehension?

Research question number one: What is the most difficult part when listening to a recording? Results revealed three main problems, the first one is that students do not comprehend audio for the first time with a mean of 2.08. Another identified issue is that it is a little difficult for them to understand when a foreigner speaks in their native language with a calculated average of 2.23. Finally, the third failure is that students are not familiar with the British accent with a mean of 2.34. The three of them are below the standard mean which is 2.5. Therefore, the three answers are related to each other and the weaknesses are evident; when students have to deal with audio for the first time, they cannot get specific details or ideas even worse if it is audio from a native, either with English or American accent.

On the other way round, with a mean of 3.92, they just understand some single phrases or words in a listening activity, better if the audio has some interesting topics for them with a mean of 3.75, or if the audio contains some familiar topics with prior information with a mean of 3.72. In addition, learners claimed that they understand better when the speaker speaks slowly with a mean of 4.02. This reflects that even though students could be interested in topics, their listening skills are poor. However, they can get an overall idea of the audio even more if it contains a slow pace, known vocabulary or topic, and a familiar accent.

Finally, Table 1 demonstrates the results of this section. Thus, some specific codes were used to understand the survey's answers, i.e. 1. Nothing, 2. Partially, 3. A little bit, 4. A lot, and 5. Completely.

Table 1.

Difficult Part When Listening

Items	Mean
When I listen to my teacher, I understand	3.43
When I listen to a classmate, I understand	2.89
When I listen to a foreigner, I understand	2.23
I can understand long, complex audio	2.81
I understand a recording completely at first listening.	2.08
I have to repeat a recording more than twice to understand it.	3.25
I understand some single phrases or words when I listen to something.	3.92
I understand better when I listen to some topics that I am interested in.	3.75
I understand better when I listen to some topics that I have some prior information about.	3.72
I understand better when I listen to speakers who use an American accent.	2.98
I understand better when I listen to speakers who use a British accent.	2.34

Items	Mean
I can use my own words to summarize what the speaker said in an audio recording.	2.81
I understand if a speaker speaks slowly.	4.02
I think I understand speakers of English a certain percentage because my vocabulary knowledge is not enough.	3.30
I think I understand speakers of English in a certain percentage because my knowledge of the topics is not enough.	3.09
I can understand what a speaker means if he/she is using almost similar words (e.g. SHIP / SHEEP; CAT / CUT).	3.45

Research question number two: What resources do students use when listening for comprehension? Results showed that students enjoy listening to English through songs with a focus on their lyric meaning with a mean of 3.98. Also, they listen to authentic recordings of native speakers (from YouTube) with a mean of 3.45; and recordings from podcasts, series, and movies with a mean of 3.40. The results demonstrate that the participants practice extensive listening by using authentic material. On the other hand, students do not use recordings from supplementary books to improve their listening because the data analysis depicts a mean of 2.34. It is important to mention that when participants have to deal with academic material (textbooks) intensively, their minds are blocked, and their understanding fades.

Finally, Table 2 shows the results of this section. Some specific codes were used to understand the survey's answers, i.e. 1. Never, 2. Hardly ever, 3. Sometimes, 4. Often, and 5. Always.

Table 2.*Resources for Listening Comprehension*

Items	Mean
I listen to some recordings from the course textbook.	2.49
I listen to some recordings on a computer from supplementary books.	2.34
I listen to songs with a focus on their lyrics' meaning.	3.98
I listen to authentic recordings of native speakers (from YouTube).	3.45
I listen to authentic recordings (podcasts) of native speakers (from Spotify).	3.28
I listen to authentic recordings of native speakers (from podcasts, series, and movies).	3.40
I listen to a recording while I read the transcript of the audio from the DVD/video.	3.04

Research question number three: What type of activities have students used to improve listening comprehension? Results indicated that the activity students used to improve listening comprehension was to talk to each other and compare answers with a mean of 3.36. It is evident that students prefer to work in groups rather than alone. Unfortunately, there were three more statements about activities that barely exceed the standard mean which is about filling gaps, listening activities using transcripts, and oral summary activities. In addition, there is one statement with the lowest mean of 1.98 about the activity of recording students' voices in class. It is evident that students are not comfortable enough with the activities teachers provide to them. Teachers are not using the transcript of the audio which might help students to have a better overview of

what they are listening to as well as giving them the opportunity to express their ideas in summary activities. Moreover, recording their voices might help students to realize the way they pronounce, their fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and the organization of ideas.

Finally, Table 3 indicates the results of this section. Some specific codes were used to understand the survey's answers, i.e. 1. Never, 2. Hardly ever, 3. Sometimes, 4. Often, and 5. Always.

Table 3.

Activities to Improve Listening Comprehension

Items	Mean
I fill in blanks with information after listening to audio.	2.89
I talk to my classmate and compare answers to check the listening comprehension activity.	3.36
I record my voice with different activities during classes.	1.98
My teacher provides us with the transcripts of the listening activities we listen to in classes.	2.75
My teacher requests us to orally summarize information whenever we have any listening activity.	2.77

To reinforce the three research questions on students' perspectives on listening, table 4 presents the results of the open-ended questions. Some learners (15) manifested that the best way they learn is to develop their listening skills by watching TV, videos, movies, and series with English subtitles. Similarly, 9 participants stated that they improve listening to songs while reading the lyrics and practicing listening many times

every day (9 students). On the other hand, 13 interviewees expressed that the resources they use to develop their listening skills are apps for listening on cell phones and computers, along with 11 participants who use songs in English. Finally, 21 students reported repeating a recording a certain number of times to get either general or specific ideas about the audio. Another 11 students claimed that they practice their listening with the help of songs. Nevertheless, there is a great number of students (9 participants) who affirmed that they translate the information into L2 to understand the message.

Table 4.

Perspectives Survey: Open-Ended Questions

Question 1	Answers	Total
What ways do you think you learn to develop your listening skill the best?	Listen to music while reading the lyrics.	8
	Watching TV, videos, movies, and series with subtitles in English	15
	Listen to the same record many times at different paces.	4
	Using the script of the audio (audiobook) to get correct pronunciation	3
	Practicing listening many times every single day	9
	Using the script of the audio to get correct spelling	2
	Practicing my listening skills with music, podcasts, or movies	5
	While listening to or having conversations with teachers or native speakers, I get information and learn new things, vocabulary, and acquire pronunciation.	7
	Total	53

Question 2	Answers	Total
What sort of resources (e.g. technological, native speakers, recordings, radio programs, etc.) do you use to learn to develop your listening skill?	Songs in English	11
	Different technological sources on the cellphone or computer (apps for listening)	13
	Series and Movies in English	6
	Native speakers	3
	Academic audios (audiobooks, platforms)	7
	Internet, and applications (Youtube, Spotify, Podcasts, Ted talks, Video games)	10
	Interviews, talk among friends, teachers, or native speakers	2
	Entertainment (radio programs)	1
	Total	53
Question 3	Answers	Total
What sort of strategies (e.g. listening for gist, do not translate things into L1, repeat a recording a certain number of times, etc.) do you use to learn to develop your listening skill or any other you use?	Repeating a recording a certain number of times	21
	Listening to music	11
	Translate into L1	9
	Listening while reading the transcript	3
	Listening carefully and paying attention to details	1
	Watching videos in original audio many times	1
	Dictation	1

Distinguish homophone words	1
Practice vocabulary	2
Doing filling-gap activities	1
Listening podcasts	2
Total	53

Discussion

This study is an attempt to know EFL students' perspectives on listening. The findings are described in the questions below:

Question 1: *What are the most difficult sources when listening?* According to Anwar (2018) and Rost (2014), listening and reading skills are consistently interrelated. There are hypotheses that reading and listening should be given the same treatment and that similar texts can be used to teach both skills. However, that idea is controversial in terms of finding better facilitation for effective listening work. Jeremy Harmer (as cited in Anwar, 2018) argued that 'listening as a skill may be highly similar to reading, but the text the listener has to deal with is considerably different from the written one. Most obviously, a listener cannot look at what he is trying to hear; he can only listen to it whereas the written word stays on the page and can be looked at more than once, the spoken word, unless recorded on tape or record cannot be repeated (1983, p. 175-176).

Another problem to consider is the different foreign accents students must deal with in recordings. The study of the phonological aspect of language acquisition and the strength of the foreign accent in L2 by Dollmann et al. (2020) and Malyshkevych (2017) stated that there is a critical period (CP) up to the age of around 10, after which

obtaining oral language skills without a foreign accent becomes less likely. However, native-like language skills can be achieved after the CP if certain preconditions are related to learning efficiency and language exposure. That study concluded with the analysis that higher cognitive abilities and exposure to a language environment with intensive and multi-accent native speakers could compensate for disadvantages caused by a late start in L2 acquisition.

According to Hogan et al. (2014) and Johnson et al. (2022) the ability of children and adults to process other-accented speech is fast, depending on lexical access and the ability to cope with multi-accent input in the natural world. The transition children make from infancy to later childhood, the growth of infants' accents, and the meaningful interpretation of accent variation are fundamental to the development of human cognition. The same authors predicted that the strength of foreign-accent increases with a greater amount of input in L2. These findings show that not only other language input but also multi-accent input matters when assessing perceived accent. All in all, students are used to hearing non-native accents from teachers and audios from books that contain a standard accent. For them, it is difficult to deal with the different accents that authentic material contains; however, experts recommend such input to foster students' natural speech.

Question 2: *What resources do students use when listening for comprehension?*

Results demonstrated that the resources students use the most are authentic material on YouTube, Netflix, and Spotify including songs, series, movies, TED Talks, and podcasts, among others with the help of the lyrics or transcripts. In that way, they unconsciously practice extensive listening and reading. Thus, Chu (2018) and Gavenila et al. (2021) affirmed Extensive Listening (EL) helps students foster this receptive skill in an enjoyable way. Among several online sites, the popularity of TED Talks has

increased among students because of speakers' accents, speech rates, vocabulary complexity, and length of the talks.

Pamuji et al. (2019) experienced the development of some students by applying extensive listening. After a questionnaire, the results revealed that students practice EL with their own degree of intensity. They enjoyed listening to various audios and videos from authentic material with different choices of topics and resources. They enhanced their vocabulary acquisition. In the same way, another study developed by Gönülal (2020), investigated the potential of podcasting and vodcasting technology in promoting extensive listening and improving overall L2 listening skills. Results show that students spent approximately one hour per week on extensive listening to podcasts or vodcasts outside the classroom, demonstrating significant progress in their overall listening skills by the end of the year. Moreover, they found EL practice with podcasts and vodcasts highly effective not only in helping them improve as L2 listeners but also in enhancing their pronunciation abilities and knowledge of words and phrases. Yet, students reported being occasionally frustrated with the pace of speech in podcasts and vodcasts.

In comparing those investigations with the results of this study, it can be concluded that technology has been facilitating the development of extensive listening in students who enjoy listening while reading in L2 and without worries about grades. However, they claimed that they feel a little overwhelmed with non-recognizable accent recordings from textbooks and topics that are not of their interest, even more, if grades or reports are involved. That is why they argue that teachers should improve their strategies in fostering students' listening abilities by using the audio scripts also.

Question 3. *What type of activities have students used to improve listening comprehension?* Results evidenced that the activities students use the most are working

in pairs or groups to compare answers. However, the results also demonstrated low means in two activities that students affirmed that they do not practice in class. The activities are the non-use of audio transcripts and records of their own voice in class. In this respect, Chang et al. (2019) and Spratt et al. (2011) examined the levels of listening support that might be needed to facilitate L2 learners' listening fluency development. Participants had to deal with one of three modes: (1) listening only (LO), (2) reading only (RO), and (3) reading while listening plus listening only (RLL). Audios from different levels were used. The results show that the LO and RLL groups could comprehend the more complicated texts at faster speech rates and also maintain higher levels of comprehension. As predicted, the RO group performed poorly on the tests.

Consequently, it is evident that listening while reading and only listening is a great strategy to fulfill the student's demands of this study at least in the first term of the school year. Finally, Graham and Santos (2015) and Spratt et al. (2011) stated that making students work in groups, pair assessments, or self-assessments are good techniques to enhance self-confidence and practice the language in a proper and active environment without nervousness. For this reason, teachers should include the material, strategies, and activities needed to support students in learning an L2.

Conclusions

After comparing the literature and the result of this study, it can be concluded that in order to understand recordings, students need the transcript or subtitles to read and listen. They recommend using audios with familiar accents, interesting topics, and proper pace. Therefore, in table 4, the results of the open-ended questions about the first question: *What ways do you think you learn to develop your listening skill the best?* The students' answers were that they listen to songs while reading the lyrics, watch a series

with subtitles, and repeat the audio at different paces as many times as they could get the idea. Yet, experts recommend that learners should be exposed to multi-accent audios to foster their natural speech and be involved intensively in a language environment with whatever topic.

It can be deduced that learners' preferences are authentic audios in an extensive environment without any disturbance about grades, assessment, or academic issues. They spend much time listening to songs in English, playing video games, watching movies, and other entertainment that involves being in contact with L2. Fortunately, academic platforms nowadays have games, real-life videos, and CLIL approaches that can be used on students as academic-authentic tools. EL helps students to enrich a foreign language nicely. Experts (Chu (2018), Gavenila et al. (2021), Gönülal (2020, &) Pamuji et al. (2019)) have also experienced that strategy obtaining good results by demonstrating that students had significant progress in pronunciation and they used to spend a long time practicing and enjoying videos or music. As a result, listening skills can be practiced not only inside a classroom but also anytime anywhere with the help of a gadget, internet, and willingness to create an extensive listening culture.

It may be assumed that students are exposed to different activities in class but they have their preferences. They do not like passive activities such as filling gaps, ordering, and multiple-choice, among others. They prefer active tasks like working in groups to share ideas or compare answers, doing pair assessments, and productive and colorful activities (kinesthetic). As teachers, we should bring up to class different and not monotonous activities to call students' attention, use different methods or strategies in the process, and facilitate extra appealing material to maintain curiosity and attentiveness. In the same way, since all students bring cellphones to class, teachers should take advantage of that by exercising recording in class. This technique might

help students properly organize ideas, improve tenses, pronunciation, and fluency; and have a better picture of their speaking by listening to their own recordings.

Limitations

One limitation of this research work was that the online survey took place in the classroom and some students did not have either an internet connection or a cellphone to respond; so, they had to wait for someone who shared wifi or lent a cellphone.

Another limitation was that some students did not get some ideas to respond to the open-ended questions in the three sections, so instead of asking the teacher, they started working in pairs to share some ideas; that is why at the moment to tabulate the responses, there were some same answers or simple ones. By the way, tabulating and reporting the data took a long time.

Recommendations

For future researchers, it is suggested considering this descriptive study about students' perspectives on listening skills and above all, the references that it contains about that ability. The investigator should also consider the level and the age of students at the moment to review the reporting data and means. Another recommendation to promote good results in listening skills is to use the levels of listening (LO, RLL) that Chang et al. (2019) suggested facilitating fluency and understanding, as well as multi-accent input to stimulate perception, interpretation, and strengthen the natural speech recommended by Johnson et al. (2022).

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Appendix No. 1

Survey

Available upon request.