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**Teaching the Listening Skills within English as a Foreign Language
Contexts: Second-Year Students at Saida University as a Case Study**

Dissertation submitted as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of *Master* in
Didactics.

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Declaration of Originality

I hereby declare that this submission is my work and that, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution.

Date:

Name:

Signature:.....

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to all my family.

To my lovely father and mother.

To all my dear brothers and sister.

To all my lovely friends

Acknowledgements

This work would never be accomplished without the forte and ability that the Allah enormous had given me.

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To all my classmates for the nice time we spent together helping one another.

Abstract

The current master dissertation was concerned with the investigation of teaching listening skills within English as a Foreign Language contexts (EFL). The reason behind the interest in this study, is the belief that our recommendations can improve second-year learners' listening skills, and teachers normally should be able to use them effectively in order to develop their students' listening abilities. Saida university students encounter different problems while listening to English, these problems could be related to listening material, linguistic aspects and the lack of concentration during the class. Therefore, the aim was to figure out the difficulties that students and EFL teachers encounter during listening sessions and to create innovative strategies that can improve the teaching-learning process. To this end, second-year license students at the department of English at Saida University have been taken as case study. Hence, to achieve the aforesaid objectives, the researcher applied both qualitative and quantitative methods. A questionnaire was addressed to six (6) EFL teachers of the listening module through their e-mails; in addition to another one, which was administered to twenty-three (23) second-year license students at the same department. The results revealed that English language teachers face many challenges during the teaching process. On the other hand, EFL students also have many obstacles and their performance was weak during the listening classes. And that skill may be affected negatively by the classroom environment. Therefore, the researcher suggested effective strategies and recommendations that can have an influential role in the teaching-learning process and foster learners' listening abilities.

Keywords: Difficulties, EFL teachers, Foster, Listening Skills, Second-year LMD students, Strategies.

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List of Abbreviations

BUP : Bottom-up Processing

COVID-19 : Corona Virus Disease 2019

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

MCQ: Multiple-Choice Questions

NNSs: Non-Native Speakers

Q: Question

TDP: Top-down Processing

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General Introduction

1 General Introduction

The human listening feature is one of the most important receptive skills for the social communication process. At first glance, it may seem that the communication feature is easy and inexpensive, but in fact, it is a very complex and difficult process, and it may require a great effort of adaptation without listening. There are different types of listening that play a prominent role in various areas of daily life. Furthermore, the process of listening is not a matter of quietly listening to the speaker, but rather a conscious state of hearing with the mind and all other senses to improve verbal and nonverbal exchange.

Learning a foreign or a second language demands several skills of language (speaking, listening, writing and reading). Among them the listening skills. Academic Listening has a one-way advantage in transactional language, and this aims to convey information and news, the latter is closely related to certain topics related to the topics of discussion or lectures that deal with the practical foundations of the listeners. In academic contexts, it is best for the listener to build an intellectual and linguistic foundation for a mixed and integrated mix of information and to combine it with other recent information in the cognitive systems for the purpose of successful learning. Academic listening is characterized by some contradiction due to the difference in information and skills between the speaker and the listener.

The present dissertation aims to find out two aspects: first, if the listening skills affect second-year license students at the department of English language at Saida University educational achievements. Secondly, the paper attempts to create innovative strategies and new techniques that help EFL teachers cope with this academic issue.

Taking into consideration the aims of the research and the problems encountered within listening skills. This dissertation addresses the following questions:

- 1/ What are the difficulties that EFL students face to have listening competency?
- 2/ How can the teacher help his/her students to increase their listening ability?

To answer the above research questions, we will suggest the following hypotheses:

H1: We hypothesize that the listening skill may be affected negatively by the classroom environment.

H2: We hypothesize that there are some strategies that EFL teachers can implement in the classroom to promote their students' listening abilities.

To accomplish the aim of this study, only one research tool was used. It consisted of an online questionnaire. To test the aforementioned hypotheses, teachers' questionnaires were addressed to listening module teachers in order to collect detailed information about their perceptions about EFL listening. Students' questionnaires were administered to EFL students to attain a deeper understanding of the issue under investigation. Therefore, this research aims to define listening skills struggles and their effects on students' achievements besides providing strategies that may facilitate the teaching-learning process.

The target population of this study investigation is a randomly selected group twenty-three (23) students of both genders belong to second-year promotion in the Department of English at Saida University, in addition to six (6) teachers of listening module purposely chosen to express their views and difficulties towards the listening skills in the classroom as well as to analyze it.

The current study consisted of three chapters. The first chapter is related to the theoretical side of the work. That is to say, Review of Literature, starting with different definitions of listening skills including their importance in foreign language learning, the main steps of listening, and the difficulties that EFL students face when listening to English in the classroom. Then, dealing with the two different processes of listening skills. The second chapter centers on the practical part, entitled Methodology, and Data Collection, it starts with the research methodology used in this dissertation, it includes a questionnaire that is addressed to both EFL teachers and students, their managements. In addition, a detailed description of the aforementioned data collection tools. Then, there is a shift to the sample population of this investigation, its significance, and the main limitations. The third chapter includes Data Analysis and Interpretations. It deals with both students' and teachers' questionnaires, and also contains the discussion of results of data analysis. Moreover, the researcher has provided some recommendations and some pedagogical strategies for EFL teachers about how to teach listening skills in the EFL classroom. At the end, a general conclusion, in which the whole dissertation is summarized.

Chapter one : Review of Literature

1.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the literature review, the researcher tackles the theoretical framework to be used in the study at hand. First, the researcher starts to review the listening skills definitions, their importance in EFL teaching and learning, then moving to its essential steps applied among university classrooms. In addition to that, the obstacles that face license students while listening and dealing with the bottom-up and top-down processes. Finally, a brief conclusion for this theoretical section of the research.

1.2 Definition of Listening

Listening is regarded as a necessary skill in relevance to acquiring any language including our mother tongue language. Nunan (1998) states that listening is the basic skill in learning any language. Many definitions were proposed by numerous scholars about listening.

According to Steinberg (2007, p.75) “listening, like all acts of perception, is a dynamic, active process involving the communicator and the recipient”. In other words, the major concentration of the listener is to understand what the speaker is saying to provide appropriate feedback to achieve an effective discussion. Additionally,

“Listening is an active process requiring the same skills of prediction, hypothesizing, checking, revising, and generalizing that writing and reading demand; and these authors present specific exercises to make students active listeners who are aware of the "inner voice" one hears when writing” (Rascally, 1985).

It is required that we should have a strong and active listening process because writing and reading depend heavily on listening skill, so students especially in their educational career need it in order to enable them to be able to write.

(Rubin,1995, p.7)

“listening is conceived of as an active process in which listeners select and interpret information which comes auditory and visual clues in order to define what is going on and what the speakers are trying to express”.

The listener should select and interpret what he hears (conceived) as aural input to be able to define it later. Furthermore, Underwood (1989) who simplified the definition of listening to the process of paying particular attention to the speaker and trying to understand the meaning of his speech. According to Vandergrift (1999):

” Listening comprehension is anything but a passive activity. It is a complex, active process in which the listeners must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation, retain what was gathered in all of the above, and interpret it within the immediate as well as the larger sociocultural context of the utterance. Co-ordinating all of this involves a great deal of mental activity on the part of the listener.” (p, 168)

To conclude, from this quotation, we can say that listening is not only hearing or perceiving speech sounds but is the capacity to both grasping the uttered language and attempting to get meaning within its context.

1.3 Importance of Listening in Language Learning

Listening is considered as the most important language skill because it is the overwork art in foreign language learning, people spend about (50%) of their time using listening for communication (Nunan,1992). The importance of listening is also admitted by Brown (2001) who proclaimed that it is the major ingredient in the foreign teaching-learning process because in the classroom learners do more listening than speaking. It means that listening outnumbers speaking in terms of daily activities use; through listening we can grasp and interpret the meaning of the speaker’s speech.

Additionally, Mandy and Kotzman, like many writers and researchers (2008) have asserted that listening has an essential function in second language learning since it cannot be possible producing any language without listening to it before. Besides, Newton and Nation (2009) claimed the listening skill gives the required input for learners to reinforce the necessary knowledge for the speaking process. Also, receptive learning increases faster than productive knowledge, thus it is possible to try and acquire the language earlier by focusing on productive skills. According to Hedge (2000), listening has an important role in everyday activities and when people are involved in communication nine (9%) is spent on writing, sixteen (16%) to reading, thirty (30%) to speak, and (45%) to listening which indicates the importance of listening in the communication process.

1.4 Steps of Listening

The speaker differs from the listener in terms of choice of words. That is to say, the speaker is free to adopt the language they speak, and they achieve a successful communication by using suitable strategies as paraphrasing or by simplifying the message. According to (Stephen ,1998) who claimed that, “Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they

listen with the intent to reply.” In other words, the listener is paying attention to listening in order to provide a reply for the speaker rather than constructing meaning from the message. And here he has applied the three major listening steps which are: Hearing, Understanding and Judging.

1.4.1 Hearing

Hearing means listening enough and understanding the speaker’s speech, it can be used interchangeably. According to (Stephen, Lucas, 1998, p. 56) “It involves the vibration of sound waves on our eardrums and the firing of electro-chemical impulses from the inner ear to the central auditory system of the brain”. This means the reception of sound vibrations that are sent by the speaker.

Hearing is not necessarily attention, but you must hear for hearing, but the perception of listening requires attention. (Brownell, 2006, p. 77) She says that hearing is a physiological process that depends on three intertwined elements: the reception of sound waves, the perception of sound in the brain, and the auditory connection. Hearing mechanisms are a prerequisite for all listening purposes. It is important to keep in mind that regardless of hearing levels, individuals can tune out any noise that causes them to become bored or uncomfortable.

1.4.2 Understanding

The next step of listening is to understand the audible speech in your way ; It is not easy to know the meaning of the message. Our understanding is affected and it can be difficult to know the meaning of the speech if the speaker is not clear in his speech. So in the listening comprehension stage, we must be aware of the whereabouts of others. According to Noonan, (2001, p.23) Comprehension is the process of analyzing the meaning and understanding of audible and visual symbols. That is why it is better to analyze our motivators tangible and intangible as well. Symbolic stimuli can also be sounds, not just words. We must stay in context and understand the meaning of the speaker. For successful personal communication ; the intent, meaning, and context the speaker assumes must be understood.

1.4.3 Judging

For (Nunan, 2001, p. 23) the listener assesses the dispatch that has been heard. This means after you have control over what you have listened to, then decide whether it makes sense or not. Do you believe what the speaker has said ? We need to be rational enough to understand what the speaker intends to say. Instead of prejudging it. It means believing in your ability to understand what is being offered to new ideas. Besides ; we should avoid

emotional reactions based on emotional words or topics. Also ; being non-judgment provokes, judging the content of the session rather than distracting you. So focus on the topic, not the speaker with an active listener involved in this stage, the active listener can give evidence easily and sort opinions. Judgment is related to the evaluation of individuals.

1.5 English as a Foreign Language Listening Difficulties

The ability of listening is regarded as an essential receptive skill for the teaching-learning process. According to Morley (2001, 70), “listening is used far than any other single language skill in normal daily life”. In other words, students may encounter some problems - during the listening session- in the classroom environment or their ordinary life situation. These problems will affect negatively the learning process. Underwood (1989a) classifies the listening difficulties as follows:

1.5.1 Lack of Control over the Speed of the Speaker’s Speech

One difficulty that obstructs EFL students from comprehending the whole message is the inability to control the speed of the speaker’s language. Underwood (1989a. p,16) claims Many English language learners believe that the greatest difficulty with listening comprehension, as opposed to reading comprehension, is that the listener cannot control how quickly a speaker speaks.

In addition, Buck (2001) affirms that grasping the meaning of the message is too difficult when talking to a fast speaker. That is to say, the inability to control how quickly the interlocutor talks makes the understanding difficult for the student.

1.5.2 Inability to Get Things Repeated

Students cannot understand all the teachers’ explanations during the listening session. Because of the limited time, students have no chance to get words repeated. Indeed, the teacher is the only one who has the decision to repeat a paragraph or a recorded passage many times. This hardens the learning process because it is “hard for the teacher to judge whether or not the students have understood any particular section of what they have heard” (Underwood, 1989a: 17). That is, teachers may not detect their students' difficulties concerning the listening comprehension class.

1.5.3 The Listener’s Limited Vocabulary

Because of the rich English vocabulary, it can express meaning through different terminologies. In many cases, listeners may encounter new words for the first time. Therefore, they spend time trying to decode its meaning. Cause to miss the next message. So, instead of

focusing on each one word, students have to listen to all the lectures trying to recognize the whole meaning according to the context (Underwood, 1989b).

1.5.4 Failure to Recognize Signals

Learners of the English language are exposed to different challenges when listening to recordings of conversations of native speakers or daily life situations. Likewise, students do not always select the different signals they are utilized to designate the transition of speakers from one idea to another by giving examples or expressing the same idea or think differently. In formal situations, signals such as the first, second, and last can be recognized by students easily, but in natural conversations, these signals are expressed by pauses, gestures, increased volume, and intonation (Benmadani, 2013).

1.5.5 Problems of Interpretation

Having considerable knowledge of vocabulary and mastering the structures of grammar is not sufficient to interpret audio messages in an appropriate way. Learners' poor familiarity with both culture and context of the target language will result in misunderstanding the message. Anderson and Lynch (1988, p. 35) argue that "Gaps in our knowledge of L2 culture, of the association and reference available to native users, can present obstacles to comprehension".

1.5.6 Inability to Concentrate

While listening to a recording passage, EFL students may not focus because of its poor quality or other external reasons that disconcert them from comprehension (Underwood, 1989b). A listening task may be complicated, thence students are required to be actively involved and making more efforts to have an interest rather than feeling bored in the topic.

1.5.7 Establishing Learning Habits

As learners of English as foreign language, students strive to understand and assimilate everything that is said during the lesson. On the other hand, teachers work hard to facilitate and convey information adequately and understandably through appropriate pronunciation, slowing down their speech pace, and even restating some elements. This is what makes some students worried about not being able to fully and correctly grasp the lesson. That is why they must admit that the latter is almost impossible and unfinished (Underwood, 1989a). In addition, pronunciation is a significant barrier for students and it has a negative impact on the process of listening. EFL students are exposed to many obstacles while listening to the language of native speakers. These barriers have to do with how vocabulary is pronounced in connected speech or even in isolation.

1.5.8 Pronunciation Problems

As previously mentioned, pronunciation is regarded as the most common difficulty among listeners of English as a foreign language, “as pronunciation of English can cause students problems in recognition, and therefore in comprehension” (Rixon, 1986, p. 38). EFL students may want to hear the pronunciation of words via a native speaker but there is a difference in this that confuses them, for example /t/ in the word "Tudor". Also, knowing how to write words is not necessarily knowing how to pronounce them. Another important thing to mention is that the pronunciation of words in a continuum is different from their pronunciation in isolation. Stressed and unstressed vowels are also pronounced differently, which usually makes the task difficult for non-native speakers (NNSs). For example, "to" is pronounced /tu:/ in isolation while in connected speech, it is pronounced /tə/. Besides, the sound may change due to the sounds before and after it. This is called assimilation (Rixon, 1986).

1.6 Listening Processes

According to Buck (2001), the listener does not listen only in the matter of hearing, but there are several techniques through which he can receive the speaker's message and understand it more clearly. That is to say, the process of listening requires different strategies to understand the intention of the speaker and is considered an objective. EFL teachers are advisable to help their students learn how to listen correctly and focus on listening to someone because the speaker's goal is to deliver a specific message. Bottom-up processing (BUP) and Top-down processing (TDP) are two distinct processes involved in listening.

1.6.1 Bottom-up Processing

According to Vandergrift (2002, p. 2) who claims that listeners utilize BUP “when they use linguistic knowledge to understand the meaning of a message. They build meaning from lower-level sounds to words to grammatical relationships to lexical meaning in order to arrive at the final message.” This means that to understand the oral message, listeners have to integrate all aspects of language such as phonetics, pragmatics, phonology, grammar, vocabulary, and semantics (Osada, 2004). This means, foreign languages knowledge based on the language itself to understand the meaning of speech. Thus, to find out the content of the linguistic input message, listeners need to decipher all aspects of the language.

1.6.2 Top-Down Processing

TDP is defined by Lynch and Mendelsohn (2002: 197) as: “going from whole to part, and focused on interpretation of meaning rather than recognition of sounds, words and sentences. Listeners actively formulate hypotheses as to speaker's meaning, and confirm or modify them where

necessary.” In the same line with this, the schemata theory claims that: “the process of comprehension is guided by the idea that input is overlaid by the preexisting knowledge in an attempt to find a match” (Lingzhu, 2003, p. 1). This indicates a difference between TDP and BUP. The first is the technique by which listeners apply background knowledge to conclude and understand speech. The latter is the method that students utilize to elicit the meaning of a message from sounds, words, grammar, stress, and intonation. Yet, according to Vandergrift (1997), TDP and BUP are complementary to each other because learners are grounded in them to understand the message clearly.

However, according to Vandergrift (1997) both TDP and BUP are considered complementary because the learners need both of them to better understand a message.

1.7 Conclusion

All in all, language is a tool of interaction and communication between individuals. Listening, the receptive skill, has always been considered as a very basic skill in language learning; however, it is a complex, active and difficult skill. That is why teachers and researchers focus in order to develop this skill.

This chapter is related, in fact, to the literature review, it investigated the theoretical aspects of listening skills in relation to academic contexts. The researcher has defined the listening skills and clarified their importance in the teaching-learning process. Then he moved to the main steps of listening in learning. In addition to the difficulties, in which EFL students encounter during the listening sessions, ending with the bottom-up and top-down processing of listening.

2 Chapter Two:
Methodology and Data Collection
Chapter

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to reveal the methodology design used in our investigation. The researcher explains the methods of collecting data in order to answer the research questions mentioned in the previous chapter that is to say the literature review chapter. We have applied only one research instrument which consist of a questionnaire administered to second-year students in the Department of English at Dr Moulay Taher University of Saida as well as for teachers of listening of the same department. Furthermore, this chapter presents the research methodology, a brief explanation of the questionnaires used, their descriptions and management, the significance, and the study limitations. In addition to that, it describes the sample population of our work. Finally, a trustworthy conclusion to the chapter.

2.2 Research Methodology

For the sake of collecting data, various methods are used by social investigators. In this study, students' and teachers' questionnaires were employed. The first is used for collecting quantitative inputs while the second is opted for gathering qualitative findings.

2.2.1 Questionnaire for Students

The researcher has utilized the questionnaire to gather pertinent data for our academic investigation, it is a research tool for gathering quantitative data with a huge group of participants during a short period. The questionnaire displays a certain target population with a list of different types of questions or statements. According to Richards (2001, p. 61) "questionnaires are relatively easy to prepare. They can be used for a large number of subjects and they obtain information that is relatively easy to tabulate and analyze ". Our major objective behind adopting such research instrument is to collect information from second-year students' attitudes about the listening skills issue.

2.2.1.1 Students' Questionnaire Management

In this research work, the researcher adopts the online questionnaire form, since it is considered the most useful tool to collect data, also it offers worthy information for the study. The questionnaire was very clear, written in simple and easy English language. It was shared on Facebook groups of second-year English language learners, the researcher worked with second-year students at the department of English language at Saida University as the main case study to gather the required data about " Teaching the Listening Skill Within EFL

Contexts ". For about two weeks, twenty-three (23) respondents belong to different levels have taken part in filling it.

2.2.1.2 Description of the Questionnaire

In the light of this investigation. The inception of the questionnaire was based on enlightening the participants about the researcher's purpose of study, asking them politely to take part in this academic investigation and to tick the appropriate choice by justifying it. The students' questionnaire was composed of nine (9) questions divided into two main sections; the first one is entitled "Background information" which contains questions related to both student's age and gender. Whereas, the second section is related to "listening skills within learning " which consists of different types of questions such as open-ended, multiple-choice (MCQ), and 'yes' or 'no' questions, so that the majority of students can participate and each type of these questions has a certain function of gathering information to support those hypotheses; in terms of identifying which type of receptive skill is the most difficult, the amount of student's comprehension concerning listening, kind of difficulties that face them during the learning process and suggesting some methods that may improve the listening abilities

2.2.2 Questionnaire for Teachers

As previously mentioned, the questionnaire is considered as the most helpful instrument to gather quantitative data about a certain issue. The efficient one is the questionnaire that exhibits the researcher with a worthy information. In this former, we worked with the listening module teachers as prime participants to investigate their feedback about the impact of academic listening abilities in promoting EFL students' accomplishments.

“ Questionnaires allow researchers to gather the information that learners are able to report about themselves, such as their beliefs and motivations about learning or their reactions to learning and classroom instruction and activities-information that is typically not available from production data alone ”. Mackey and Gass (2005, p. 93)

2.2.2.1 Teachers' Questionnaire Management

To gather as much as possible outcomes from the professional experience of university teachers in teaching English. The questionnaires were sent to a sample of six (6) listening module teachers -of both genders- at the department of English language at Saida University. Within a whole week, we received through e-mails their feedbacks concerning the issue under investigation.

2.2.2.2 Description of the Questionnaire

This questionnaire is an online document, containing a mixture of questions like Yes or No, multiple-choice questions (MCQ), open-ended and follow-up ones so they provide more clarifications. Each question has investigated their points of view in order to consolidate the general introduction hypothesis.

Firstly, we prefaced this research instrument by notifying the target informants about its aim and asking them to be a collaborative part, that is to say, answering some questions by ticking the appropriate choice or providing responses. Teachers' questionnaire was divided into two main sections; in the first section, an attempt to organize teachers' "Background Information", that is to say, questions that identify their gender, their academic qualifications, and their professional experience in teaching English in university. In the second section, the researcher targets the teachers' perceptions of "Teaching the Listening Skills" in other words, asking some questions about teachers' attitudes concerning teaching the listening module, how do they react towards problems encountered by their EFL students and what do they suggest as materials to promote their students' listening abilities in such a setting. Lastly, teachers are free to mention any recommendations.

2.3 The Sample Population

In order to attain the researcher's aims and to check the general introduction hypotheses, this investigation was carried out with the second-year EFL students in the Department of English at Dr.Moulay Taher University (Saida). The whole population was approximately 173 students consisting of 6 groups, but the questionnaire was intended only to a sample of twenty-three (23) students selected randomly of mixed gender (16 females and 7 males). The major purpose behind dealing with this sample is to figure out the difficulties that obstacle their understanding of the listening materials.

Additionally, we have dealt with six (6) listening module teachers', who have been purposely chosen to invest their feedback about the research issue at hands and the main

strategies that may help their students during the listening sessions. Therefore, the use of those research instruments will offer enough and valuable information.

2.4 Significance of the Study

During the learning process, so many EFL students encounter numerous difficulties, mainly when it comes to listening comprehension activities due to several factors. So, those difficulties were considered as our starting point. Also, this indicates that our purpose behind conducting this research investigation was both to solve them or at least minimizing their impact and boosting the students' listening abilities in the classroom.

Generally speaking, it can be predicted that our research feedback may contribute to improving the learning-teaching process. Principally, those findings are expected to be fruitful to the listening comprehension teachers' via giving a set of effective strategies, listening materials, and modern teaching ways in order to apply them among the EFL classes. Moreover, this study can enhance the researcher's motivation through the fact of solving problems in such field of interest.

2.5 Limitations of the Study

When carrying out this research and before submitting the completed dissertation, the researcher faced some limitations, especially during the data collection stage.

The first limitation was the Corona-19, it was the hardest obstacle, because of the preventive procedures and measures that were imposed by Algeria, the researcher was not able to conduct an interview with the listening module teachers'. On the other hand, due to the social distancing policy, it was not possible to schedule a classroom observation to attend neither a listening nor an oral comprehension lecture. The investigator was obliged to only conduct two online questionnaires for both teachers and students to facilitate the data collection procedure.

Another limitation, was that some students were not sufficiently collaborative, although there was enough time to express attitudes freely and respond to the questions. But some of the participants did not fill in the questionnaire, because during data analysis, we have found some essential missing parts.

Moreover, the lack of listening module teachers, who refused to be interviewed because they were busy. Additionally, the factor of time was not sufficient to collect much information, their organization, and the selection of appropriate responses.

Finally, despite all the struggles which we faced, this investigation experience is considered an amazing one for us. We encountered many challenges but at the same time, they were very supportive.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the main steps of the current study research design. It is all about data collection instruments, presenting the research methodology, which includes the research tools used to collect qualitative and quantitative data. That is to say, teachers' and students' questionnaires, their management and description in order to gather reliable, credible, and enough information about the listening skills issue. Besides, the researcher describes the target population, the significance of this study, and the most limitations that face him while conducting this academic investigation.

3 Chapter Three : Data Analyses and Interpretations

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the study results' discussion gained from the practical part of the previous theoretical chapter. To recognize thoughts about the listening issue and to test the research hypotheses cited in chapter one, the researcher arranged two research instruments for the participants. Two questionnaires were conducted to license students as well as the listening module teachers' at Saida University. The study intended to analyze and interpret the outcomes collected from the aforementioned research instruments. At the end, we will provide also some innovative strategies and recommendations that may improve the teaching-learning abilities

3.2 Students' Questionnaire

Within this data collection tool, the researcher organized a series of questions for his participants. First, to elicit the students' attitudes towards the academic listening skills, and to what extent it obstructs their academic accomplishment, also what things they can recommend promoting their academic listening skills in such a setting.

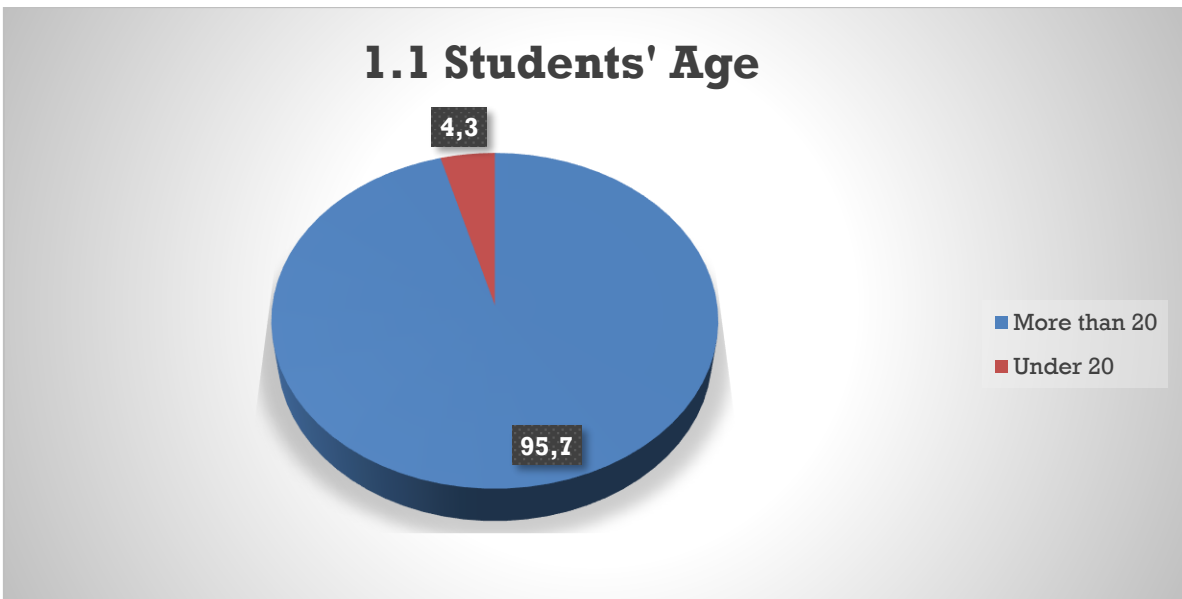
3.2.1 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

This questionnaire was administered to twenty-three (23) second-year students at the department of English language at the Wilaya of Saida. The respondents' answers were essential to collect data for this research paper, which attempt to elicit some thoughts about listening skills. This sample is considered the best source to have reliable results, as it belongs to the population of Saida University.

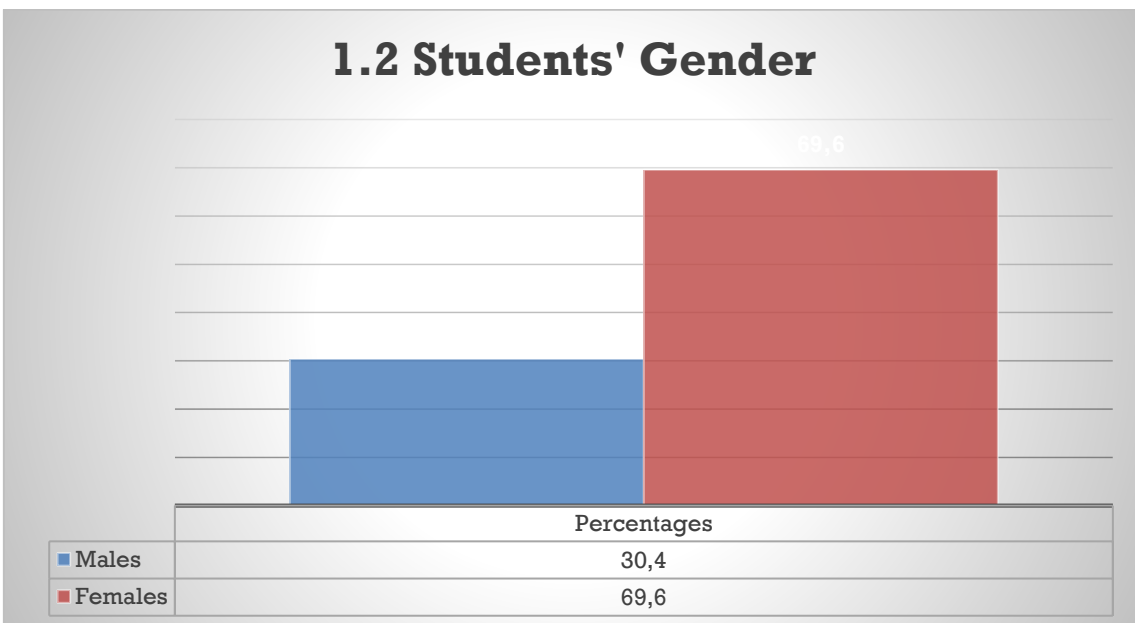
As answers to the mentioned research questions, analysis of students' questionnaire started describing their profiles :

Students' Background Information

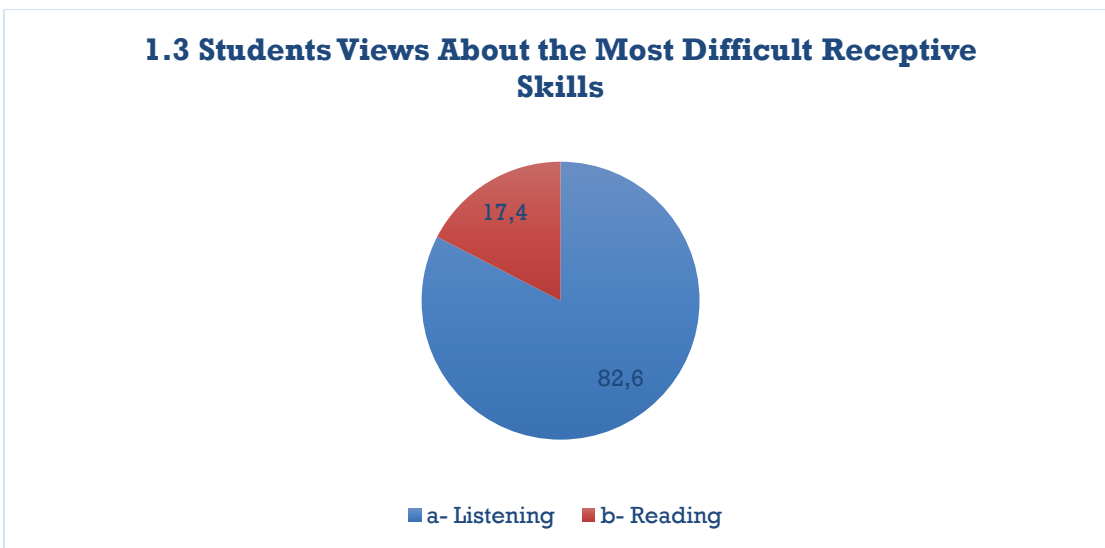
Q1 is related to students' age. Twenty-two (22) of the participants declared that they are more than twenty (20) years old, and only one (1) student states that his age is less than twenty (20) years old.



Q2 is related to students' gender. The responses indicate that female students outnumber males and this reveals that male students are less interested in learning the English language.

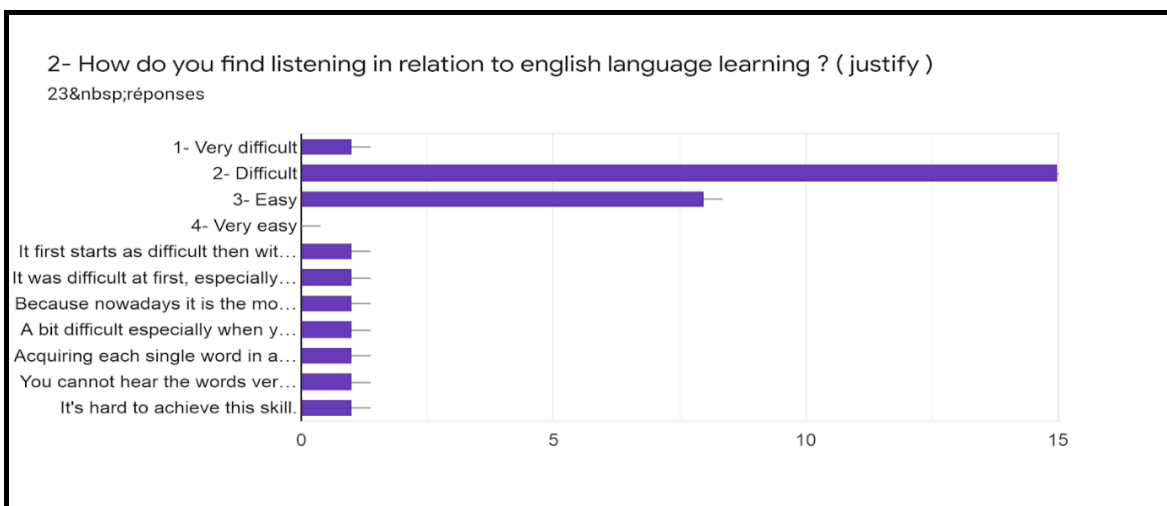


Q3 : Which of the following receptive language skills you found the most difficult to be acquired ?



The third question is devoted to identifying which of the skills is difficult. From the graph above, we deduced that the reading skills are less difficult to be acquired within the learning process, the highest percentage goes with the listening skills by (82,6) which is nineteen (19) students, while the lowest one of participation is by the reading skills by (17,4) which is four (4) students.

Q4 : How do you find listening in relation to english language learning ?



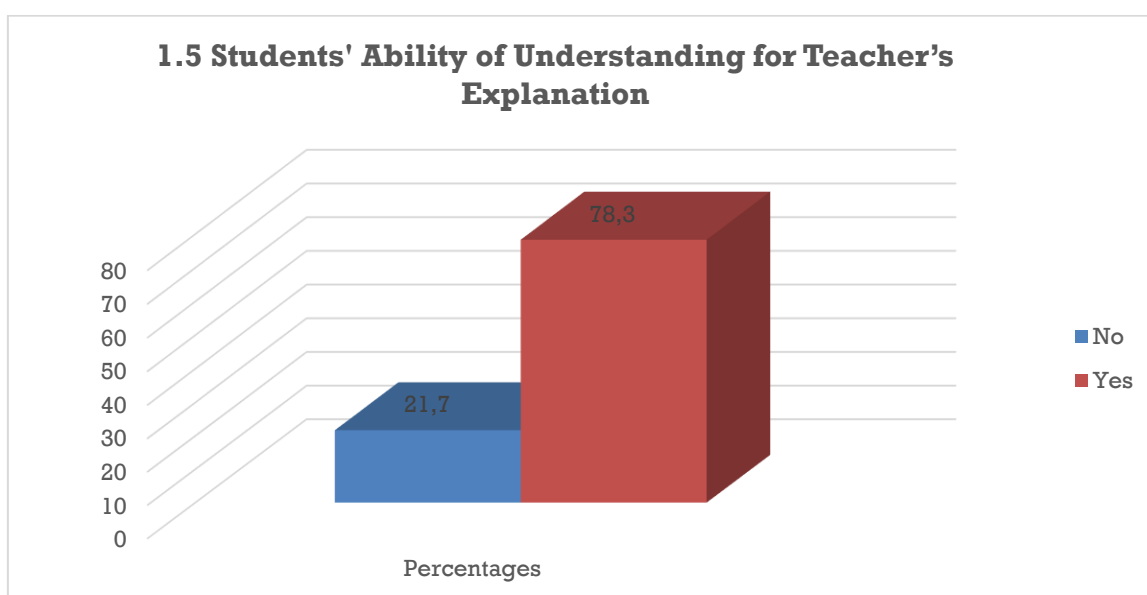
1.4 Students' Attitudes on Listening in Relation to Learning

As the participants are asked about how do they find listening concerning English language learning, the clustered bar above displayed that the majority of students (65.2%) declared that they find listening difficult within the learning atmosphere, and (34.8%) of the

respondents claimed that listening is an easy task concerning English language learning. Whereas no one of the participants argued that it is neither very difficult nor very easy.

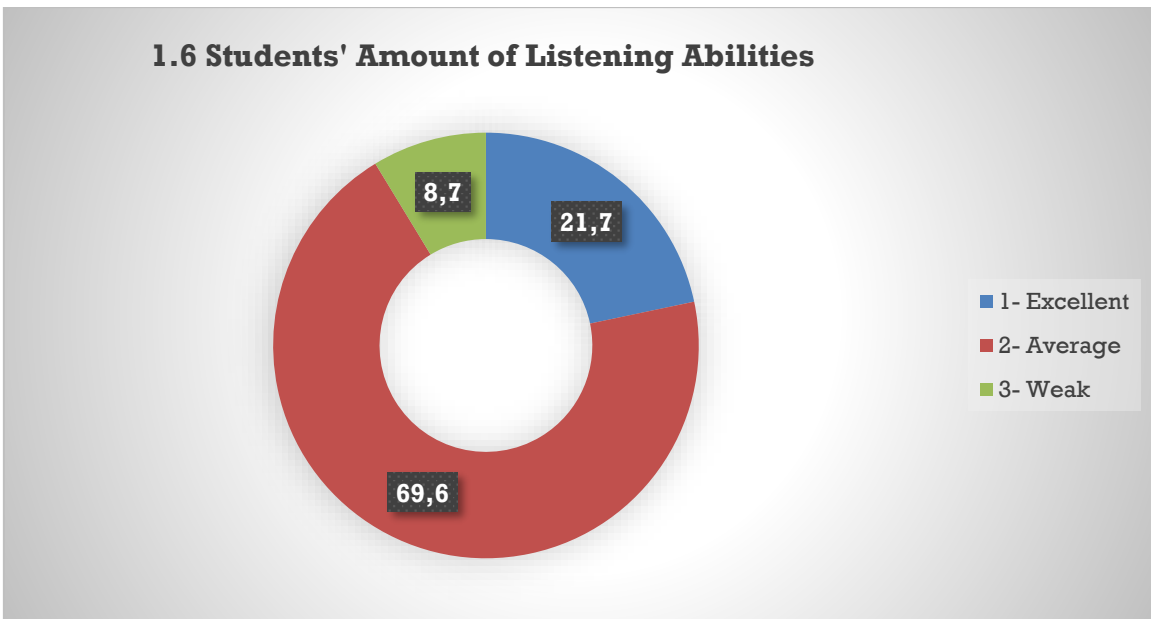
In the end, participants were requested to justify their choice behind listening concerning English language learning. Seven (7) of the participants have commonly mentioned that it was hard to be achieved when it comes to dictation, speed of delivery, and native speakers' pronunciation but it may be easy to achieve through time and practice.

Q5 : During the class , do you understand all what the teacher says ?



When asking participants whether they understand all the teacher's talk, most students (78.3%) stated that they understand their teacher in the class as shown in the column above, that is to say, they do not face any problem when listening in the classroom. The rest of the students (21.7%) claimed that they do not understand all that has been presented during the session.

Q6 : How do you rate your listening skills within EFL learning ?



The seventh doughnut displays the information collected for the capacity of student’s listening within the EFL atmosphere. The results revealed that (69.6%) of the students claim that their listening capacity is not excellent nor weak but average. The second group assumed that they are excellent when EFL atmosphere takes place with (21.7%). And a few percentages with (8.7%) goes to students who have a weak capacity of listening during an EFL learning context.

Q7 : While listening to your teacher's talk , what kind of difficulties you encounter the most ?

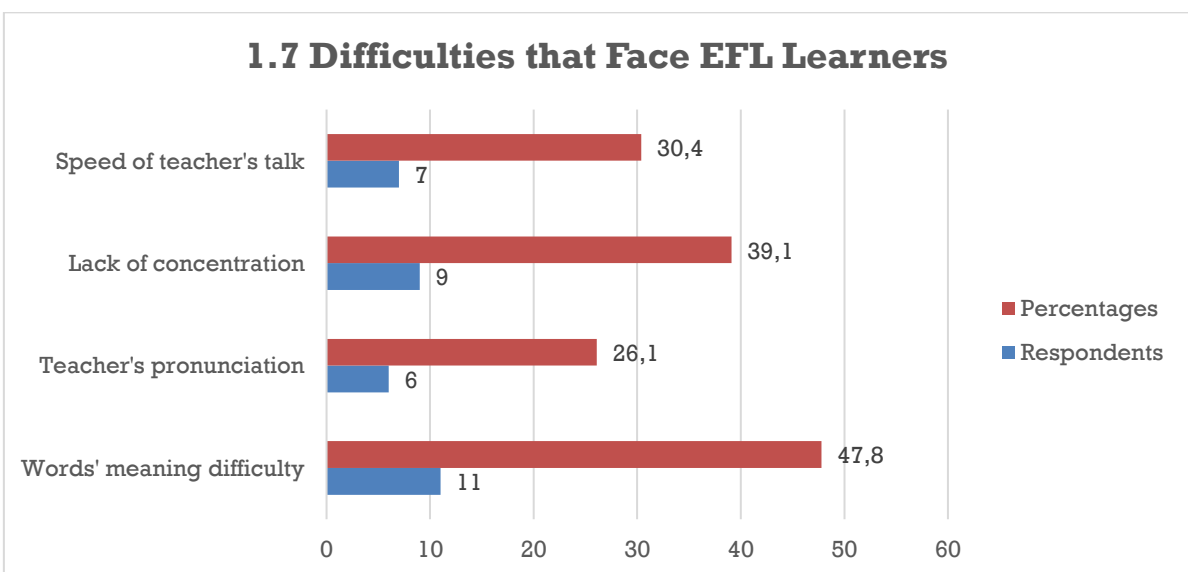
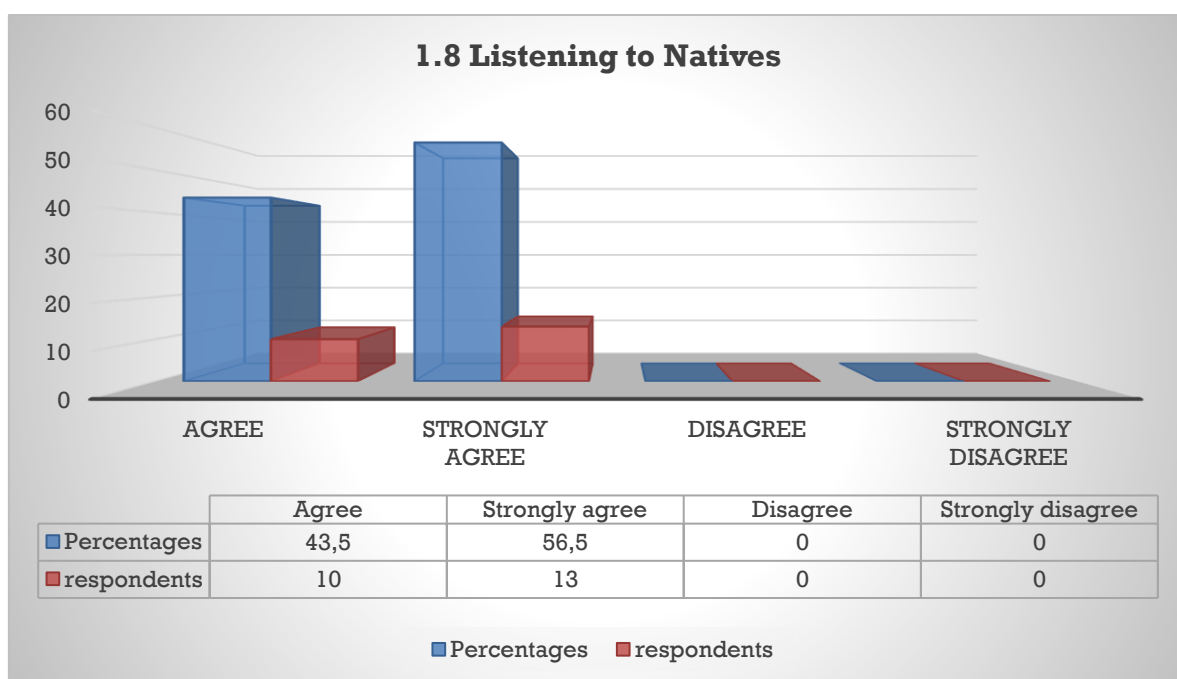


Diagram (8) corresponds to the difficulties that students face when listening to their teacher. The clustered bar results indicated that a percentage of (47.8%), the most factor is the meaning of the word with (11) votes, and then there are (9) ticks for the students' lack of concentration in the EFL classroom with (39.1%). In the third level, (7) votes for the issue of teachers' speed talk with (30.4%), and (26.1) for the teachers' pronunciation in the last position with (6) ticks.

Q8 : Do you think that listening to natives will enhance your listening skills ?



Participants are also asked if listening to natives will enhance their listening skills as the sixth (6) diagram demonstrates the findings. Most of the students (56.5%) answered that they strongly agree that listening to natives will enhance their listening abilities to natives will enhance their listening. However, the rest stated that they agree to improve their listening skills through natives' imitation with (43.5%).

Q9 : In order to improve your academic listening abilities, what things do you recommend for ?

At the end of the questionnaire, respondents are requested to suggest some strategies or recommendations that may improve their academic listening skills, the majority of them have commonly mentioned listening to everything that involves listening activities like; native

speakers' academic audio records, English youtube podcasts, songs, radio and trying as much as possible to imitate them to acquire native pronunciation. Also, they have cited listening to teachers while dictating.

3.3 Teachers' Questionnaire

In order to broaden our investigation scope, and to accomplish a reliable picture of the study at hand, we have employed an online questionnaire for teachers. The researcher searched for the appropriate participants who employ the listening skills the most during their process of teaching. After the supervisor's consent, we decided to administer a questionnaire to the listening module teachers' at the department of English language at Saida University.

3.3.1 Analysis of Questionnaire

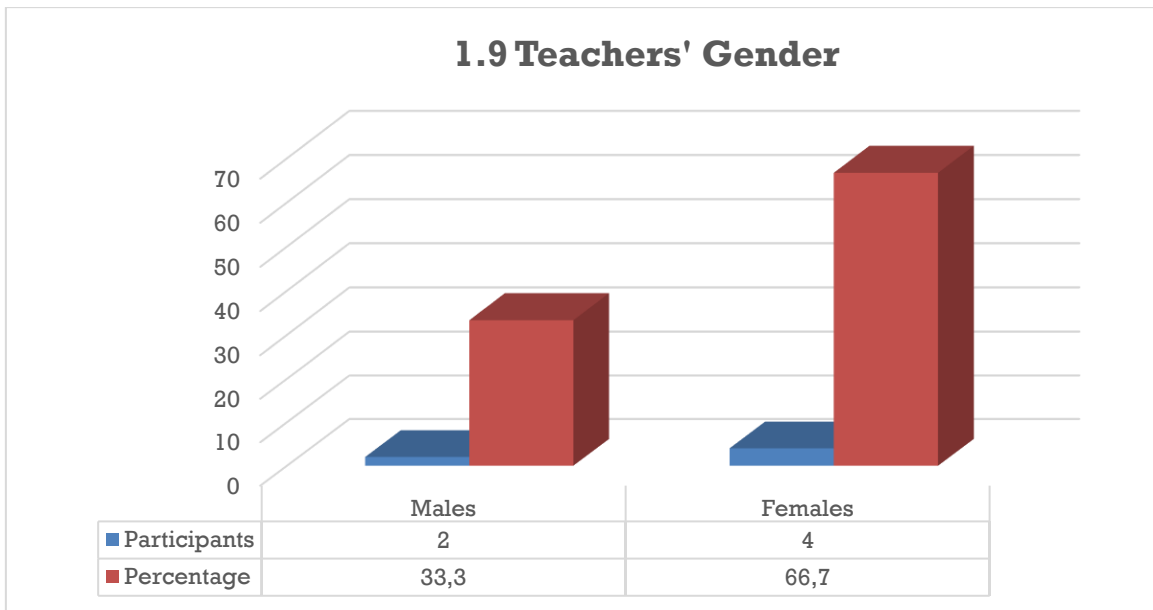
Since our research paper aims at teaching the listening skills within EFL contexts, to figure out more about the obstacles that face both students and teachers in the teaching-learning process, and seeking to foster learners' listening skills abilities in the class. Then, a teachers' questionnaire was also a requisite tool to carry on the investigation, along with students' questionnaires.

As previously mentioned, these research instruments were answered by six (6) respondents. In other words, they are listening module teachers at the department of English language at Saida University. The teachers have a noteworthy experience in the teaching process; which allows them to apply different strategies particularly listening comprehensions.

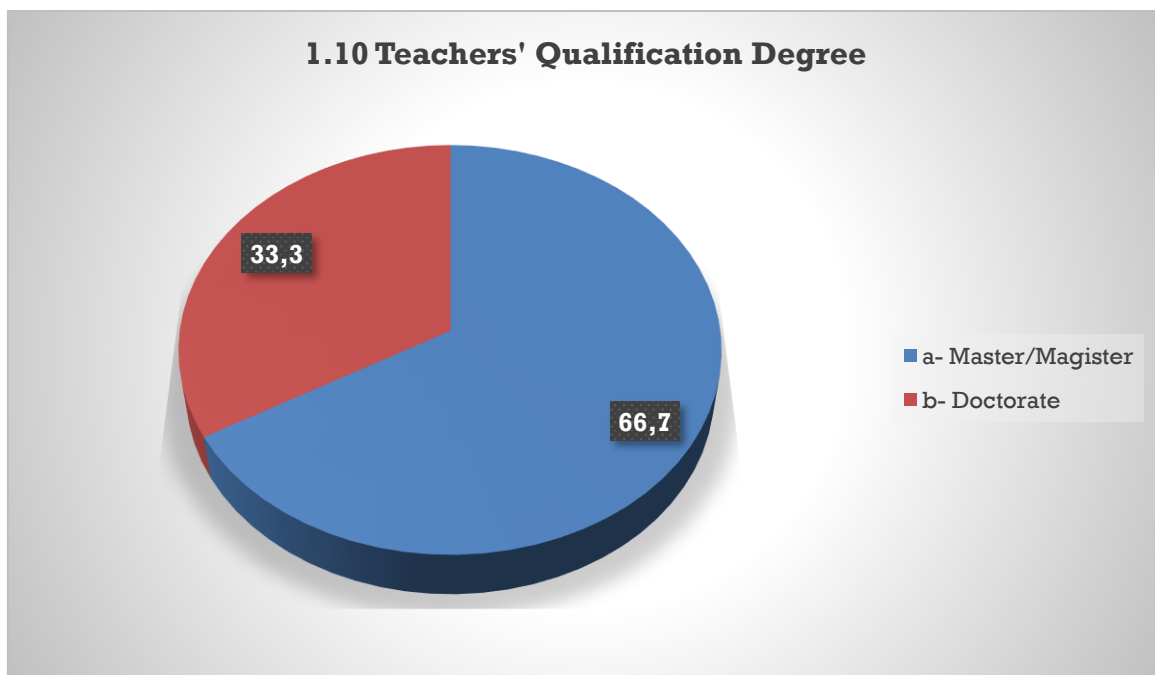
In order to find out answers to the research questions, data analysis begins with describing the teachers.

Profile of teachers

To organize this questionnaire, the first question is to determine the gender of the participants.



Similar to the distribution of the questionnaire, which was directed to both genders equally, the graph above indicates that women teachers outnumber males. In principle, this may express that the female category is more likely to teach the listening module at the University of Saida.



The second question aims to know the educational certificate held by each one of the six (06) listening module teachers at the department of English, this graph summarizes the

answers to this question. The majority (66.7%) of our respondents declared that they hold a magister/master's degree. That is to say, four (4) teachers. As for the two (2), remaining teachers stated that they got a Doctorate certificate by (33.3%).

Q3 : How many years have you been teaching in university ?

The aim behind this question is to know the professional experience that a listening comprehension teachers have at the University, and the table below summarizes the results in details.

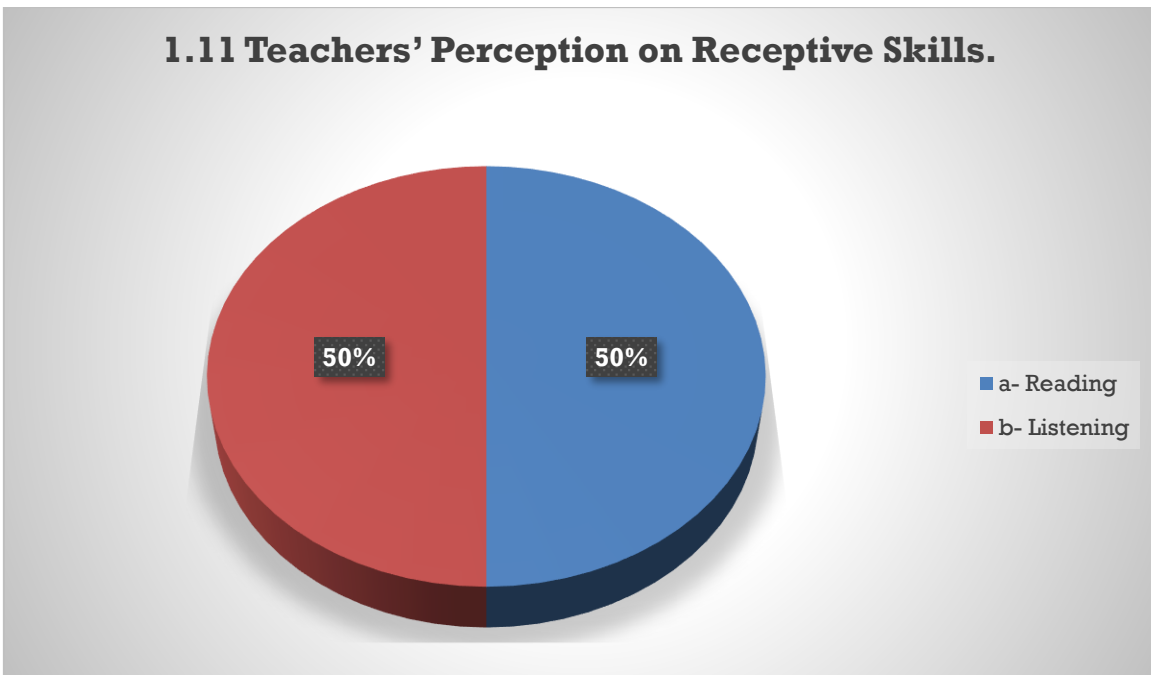
Participants	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Teacher 4	Teacher 5	Teacher 6
Experience	4 years	8 years	9 years	5 years	9 years	1 year

Table 1 : Teachers' Experience in Teaching English in the University of Saida

From the table above, we noticed that the years of teaching English differ from one teacher to another. However, the majority of them have experienced it for more than five (5) years. The first participant to respond stated that he spent four (4) years. Meanwhile, the second teacher said to this day he reached eight (8) years, As for the third and the fifth teacher are the most experienced by nearly nine (9) years of teaching at university, the fourth participant has an experience of five (5) years in teaching this skill. And the last teacher is the least experienced one by only one (1) year. This proves that all the teachers have experience in teaching, so here we conclude that their answers in the rest of the questionnaire will be of great worth.

Q4- Depending on your professional experience, which of the following receptive skills do you find difficult in teaching ?

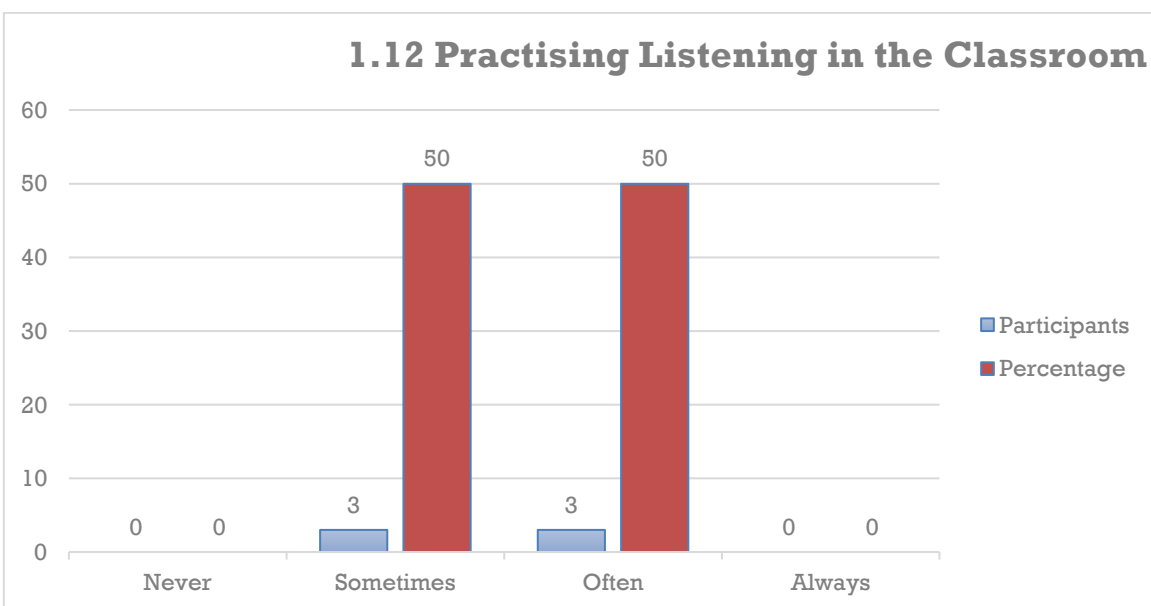
This question tries to determine which of the two receptive skills is considered the most difficult for teachers in the teaching process.



As shown in the previous 3-D pie, participants were divided into two categories. In fact, (50%) confirmed that the listening skill is difficult in terms of teaching, and the three (3) other teachers said that speaking skill is the difficult productive skills.

Q5- Do your students practise listening in the classroom?

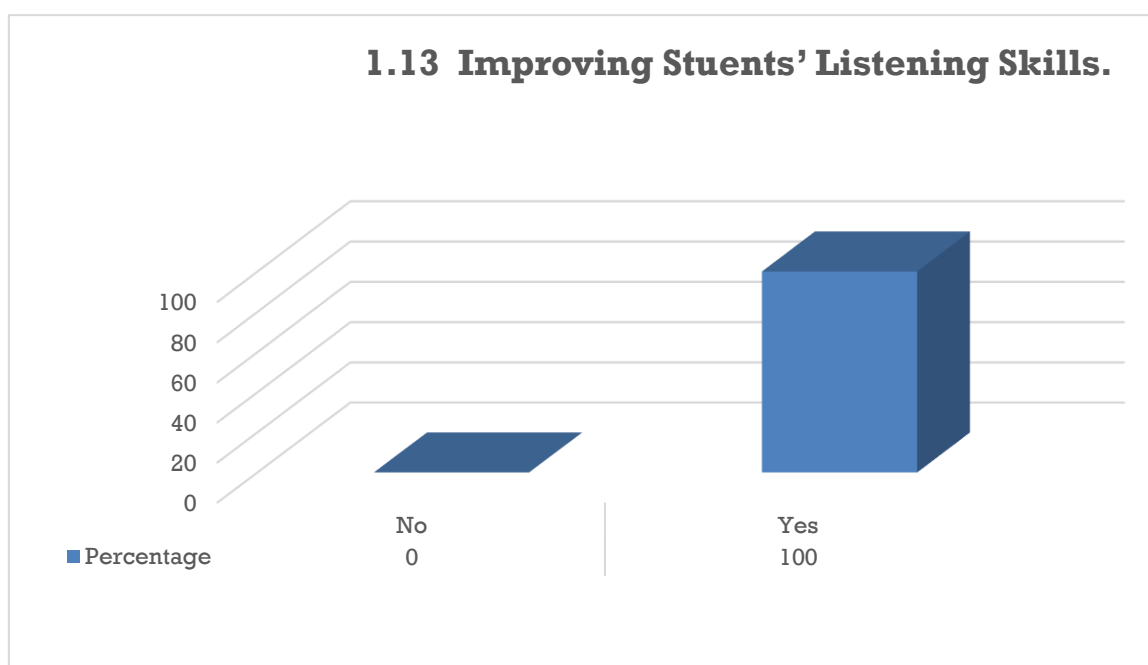
The researcher asked this question to find out whether the students give importance to the listening skills use or not.



The diagram above shows that all six (06) participants asserted that students practise the listening skills during a comprehension session. Regardless of professional experience and gender factors, half of the teachers (50%) reported that their students often practice listening skills during the lesson. And the remaining half of them (50%) said that practicing this skill is sometimes noticed during a comprehension course.

Q6- Do you encourage your students to enhance their listening proficiency while learning ?

This question aims to see whether the teachers support their students to maintain their listening abilities during the course or not.



The 3-D column results indicate the teachers' interest in raising the educational level, especially the listening skills. As the stacked column above affirms that all of the respondents (100%) support their students to listen in the classroom to be a good listener.

Q7- List three hindrances that your students face the most during a listening session:

According to participants responses, they reply that their students hinder two main categories of difficulties during a listening course, linguistic problems such as; the majority EFL students do not master the English language itself, especially vocabulary, some of them lack mastery of figurative language skills, their limited and prior knowledge about the daily

topics, and they do not take notes regularly during the lesson, mainly when it comes to long texts. Finally, they face difficulty when recognizing new words. And psychological problems like; students lack basic strategies concerning relying on the context, they can not concentrate on listening and getting the meaning of the messages in the text, they easily forget what they heard, the low ability to listening in the classroom, the problem of distraction during the listening session, they have a problem with keeping the same degree of motivation from the start to the end of the session, and they do not practice all the time. Other technical problems such; bad quality of the audio script and the lack of well-equipped rooms to facilitate the teaching-learning process.

Q8- How do you help them to overcome these difficulties within EFL learning ?

This question aims at eliciting some solutions on how EFL teachers can deal with such difficulties.

Participants have tackled several points like; generally speaking, practice makes perfect, and thus the more listening opportunities they get across various contexts the better their listening gets, these listening opportunities must be accompanied by tasks that would help them demonstrate their understanding of the listening material one way or the other. Well, EFL students have to detect their weaknesses in oral production. It does not take time to recognize that students need attention, it would be better to attract their attention by presenting them materials with pictures videos, and a lot of colors to raise their interest and motivation. Also encouraging students to try different educational websites and youtube to foster their listening competence, they should be aware of the necessity to work outside the class, to be attentive when listening and at the same time relaxed not anxious, to have certain skills, and to focus each time on an aspect to not be confused, besides they should create an image for what is said to be sustained in their minds.

Q9- What kind of strategies do you adopt in order to develop your students' academic listening abilities ? (Explain, please)

This question was dedicated to know what kind of strategies can be utilized by teachers to boost students' listening competencies

All teachers have mentioned some strategies to be used during a learning session, for example; implementing collaborative learning and good listening samples activities like

classroom talks, interviews where learners can both listen and focus on a particular piece of information and relying on the same time on the context to make sense of unknown words and phrases, they are of paramount importance since they should respect students' style and preferences, watching documentaries and including students in real-life situations; phone conversations make them understand and dare cope with what's surrounding them. to develop their listening skills abilities.

Q10- According to you, what type of materials will help students to boost up their listening skills ?

In this part of the questionnaire, teachers are asked to tell us about the types of materials needed to improve the students' achievements concerning listening comprehension abilities.

Teachers have suggested a set of materials that may benefit the student and improve his listening skills, such as ; Integrating social media and authentic materials into the learning process, such as newspaper articles, radio, and television programs. In addition, ICT tools including videos depicting real-life situations because this type of material provides learners with natural language to assimilate and contains enough contextual cues to help them better understand the message. Also, reading is a tool to develop students' linguistic baggage, then the listening ability will be developed no matter how difficult the path maybe.

Further suggestions and comments !

Only two teachers provided comments, they urge the university's curriculum to focus more on receptive skills instead of presenting them. Turning classes to be more practical rather than theoretical, by giving EFL students some real-life situations as training in class, in order to develop their linguistic abilities, to be convincible and rationale so that they get ready for professional life.

3.4 Discussion of Results

Based on the findings obtained from students' questionnaires along with the teachers' one, our research work aims at improving EFL students' listening skills. We have deduced after having to finish the analysis process of the students' questionnaires that (65.2%) of our sample declared that they consider the listening process difficult. Also, the majority of

participants commonly mentioned that they hinder numerous obstacles, (47.8%) of the respondents encounter problems with the meaning of English words, these difficulties impede them from interpretation, pronunciation, concentration in the class, and communication in oral expression sessions.

The questionnaire outcomes revealed their consciousness towards enhancing listening skills in EFL learning. Some brilliant ideas tried to overcome these difficulties by recommending a list of points like; implementing English songs in the classroom. Besides, (56.5%) of them , strongly agreed to the use of native speakers' academic audio records to improve their listening skills. According to students' views, dictation activities seem so effective in that listening comprehension percentage augmented; however, they are so motivated towards the English youtube podcasts as useful tips in enhancing their listening skills abilities.

On the other hand, the results obtained from the teachers' questionnaires showed that despite the difference in gender and years of teaching experience, the listening skill is considered difficult in terms of teaching. Although it is not always practised by students during the sessions. As for the main difficulties that students face during a listening class, teachers stated that it is divided into 3 sections, including the linguistic aspect such as; the English language itself, especially vocabulary, the limited prior knowledge, the lack of note-taking during the lesson, recognizing new words. Psychological obstacles like; lack of concentration on listening, a low ability to listening in the classroom, distraction during the listening session, motivation, and a lack of practice. For the technical hindrances; bad quality of the audio script and the lack of well-equipped rooms. Nevertheless, the respondent teachers are always keen to overcome these difficulties and problems through a list of solutions and suggestions, including the use of ICT tools mainly videos that depicting real-life situations, classroom talks, interviews, and watching documentaries, practice makes perfect as has been mentioned and the use of ICT tools are required in such a setting to promote the teaching-learning process.

In brief, all the findings tackled previously strengthened the ideas of the subject under investigation. They seem to confirm the two mentioned hypotheses that assume boosting students' listening skills.

3.5 Suggestions and Recommendations

Nowadays, ameliorating EFL students' listening skills is seen as a challenging task for both teachers and students, as it is an essential mode to exchange verbal messages understandably and accomplish the pronunciation proficiency stage. Accordingly, EFL teachers have to pay attention to their students' listening difficulties and they need to search for appropriate and useful strategies or techniques that can support them to promote their listening skills abilities. Based on the results indicated in the conclusion, we recommend the following:

For students

- Students should listen and practise English outside the school.
- Students ought not to be shy of committing mistakes when during a listening session.
- Students are advised to boost their listening skills over time in different learning contexts.
- Students must concentrate and be attentive in the classroom.
- Students must be well motivated and conscious.

For teachers

- EFL teachers have to motivate their students to listen to English as much as possible.
- Teachers should slow down their English speech delivery.
- Teachers are required to support students to cope with their obstacles in listening comprehension.
- Teachers should pay attention to their students' interests.
- It is advisable for teachers to build a strong relationship with their students.
- Teachers must be supportive and encouraging their students in and outside the school.
- Teachers have to use the most common English words during the listening sessions.
- Teachers ought to include all students in every listening activity.
- Teachers ought to minimize their talk time to increase the listening abilities of their students.

- It is recommended for teachers to pronounce English terms accurately.

3.6 Strategies to Improve Learners' Listening Skills

Promoting EFL students listening skills demands some strategies that can help them establishing a successful communication process. Strategies are skills or methods that facilitate to understanding the listening passages. There are two main advantageous strategies to consider when listening: listening gist, listening and listening for specific information.

3.6.1 Listening for Gist

It is a technique of listening for overall grasping which Richards and Schmidt (2003) define as "listening to understand the general meaning of a text without paying attention to specific details" (cited in Medoukali, 2015, p. 16). Listening for gist is a strategy that facilitates understanding the global notion of a certain text and it has to be adopted during the teaching process by the EFL teacher to enable students to get the required meaning as well as boosting their language skills. Moreover, Teachers can ask their students a series of questions, including the topic, the appropriate title of the text, and its purpose (Mewald et al., 2007). These broad questions are asked to test students' realization of the entire message or to check whether they grasp the text completely or not.

3.6.2 Listening for Specific Information

When listening to specific information, the listener has to bear in mind each detail within the given text. On the other hand, the teacher has to act like an instructor to enable his students grasping the maximum either through relying on the most essential input or via repeating the text many times. Richard and Schmidt (2010: 344) argue that it refers to "listening in order to understand the specific information contained in a text". Therefore, students are required to choose the desired datum of the context.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the analyses and discussion of the data gathered from both qualitative and quantitative research tools, that is to say, students' questionnaires along with the teachers' feedbacks concerning our study investigation. Firstly, the researcher presented the items' results either linguistically or numerically through tables and figures. Then, he has attempted to suggest a list of academic recommendations. Within this chapter, also he displayed some desirable suggestions to simplify the teaching-learning process and to cope with the students' obstacles during the listening sessions.

General Conclusion

Academic listening skills is regarded as the most essential skills in the teaching-learning process concerning foreign languages. In fact, the more students ameliorate these skills the more they master the English language itself. There are various manners and techniques that may enhance learners' listening abilities. Through their studies, scholars have found that an appropriate and motivating atmosphere can exceedingly give a share in promoting the learning and teaching operation. These strategies have been considered as a pattern of supporting students to improve foreign language skills; this mainly was the motive behind conducting such research, this study took place in the department of English language at the University of Saida. Its main objective is to figure out the difficulties that face second-year students' progress with the purpose of improving their listening abilities.

In terms of structure, the work at hand was composed of three main chapters. The first chapter deals with the review of literature about academic listening skills, the researcher started defining the listening skills relying on different scholars' perspectives and discussing its importance in studying a foreign language, moving through the essential stages of the listening process. In the end, the researcher attempted to shed light on the main difficulties that face students of English language at Saida University.

The second chapter was designed for the theoretical part of this survey. In other words, the methodology and data collection chapter. For this reason, we have adopted the mixed methods approach to systematically gain credible feedback, in which qualitative and quantitative research tools have been used for gathering as well as analyzing data. In fact, online questionnaires have been published at the Facebook group of second-year learners in the Department of English at Dr Moulay Taher University of Saida, we have received twenty-three (23) answers. Besides, teachers' questionnaires have been administered with six (6) teachers of mixed genders who have been selected purposefully to gather reliable answers to the research questions and check the suggested hypotheses in the general introduction. Concerning these work limitations obviously, it is impossible to generalize those outcomes on all second-year students of the Department of English at Saida University as the sample population was only twenty-three (23) students. Aside from this, it was requisite to know about all listening teachers' attitudes at the same department about the listening skills in foreign language learning. However, they could not be generalized even to all the teachers of listening as well.

The third chapter was directed to the practical section, data analyses, and interpretations, in this chapter, the researcher analyzed and discussed the findings of the two questionnaires, it also took an important role in the current paper, they were presented in figures and linguistically discussed separately. When it comes to students' questionnaires, the outcomes revealed that (65.2%) of the sample declared that they consider the listening process difficult, (69.6%) of the students asserted that their listening capacity is average. In addition, (56.5%) of students' answers to the questionnaire found that listening to natives is helpful and this may support them to ameliorate their listening abilities.

Teachers, on the other hand, have commonly mentioned that the use of ICT tools including mainly; videos that depicting real-life situations, classroom talks, interviews, and watching documentaries are efficient ways and use authentic materials to teaching-learning English language and ameliorating students' listening abilities in an appropriate atmosphere. The researcher has provided a list of desirable academic suggestions that can be useful for both of them, such as; since it is just a waste of time and energy, students should rely on the context for attaining new information rather than focusing to understand every term. However. Listening for gist has to be applied among students and teachers as it is an occasion to figure out about students' comprehension of what they have already listened to. Moreover, listening for the main ideas motivates students to be more aware of what is being included in the listening message while trying to elicit its important points.

While proceeding to this research, different limitations were faced, such as the epidemic (COVID-19) conditions Algeria was living in. Also, lack of available data; there were significant books and article but most of them are not free which limited the full description and analysis of the issues. In addition, the sample population was not really collaborative. Moreover, the lack of listening module teachers, who refused to be interviewed because they were busy. Additionally, the factor of time was not sufficient to collect much information, their organization, and the selection of appropriate responses.

We hope that our research will serve researchers who are interested in conducting investigations in the same area. Given that our thesis was concerned with teaching the listening skills within english as a foreign language, other studies or investigations could be done in the same field. For instance, teaching the listening skills: strategies and difficulties .

To conclude, after having analyzing and discussing all the outcomes collected from teachers' and students' questionnaires, we can say that the suggested hypotheses can be

confirmed in the sense that the implementation of all strategies and the use of ICT tools among the EFL classroom can enhance the learners' listening abilities.

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Appendices

Appendix A:

The Students' Questionnaire

Dear informants:

The following questions are a part of an academic research work related to didactics. It aims to gather data about " Teaching the Listening Skill Within EFL Contexts ". You are kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire. Please use a tick (✓) or write the answer that really expresses your opinions since no answer is right or wrong. We promise that your answers will be used only for educational purposes.

Thank you for your collaboration.

Background information

Age:

a- Under 20

b- More than 20

Gender :

a- Male

b- Female

1-Which of the following receptive language skills you found the most difficult to be acquired ?

a- Listening

b- Reading

2- How do you find listening in relation to english language learning ? (justify)

1- Very difficult

2- Difficult

3- Easy

4- Very easy

.....
.....
.....

3- During the class, do you understand all what the teacher says ?

1- Yes

2- No

.....
.....
.....

4- How do you rate your listening skills within EFL learning ?

1- Excellent

2- Average

3- Weak

.....
.....
.....

5- While listening to your teacher's talk, what kind of difficulties you encounter the most ?

a- Words' meaning difficulty

b- Teacher's pronunciation

c- Lack of concentration

d- Speed of teacher's talk

.....
.....
.....

6- Do you think that listening to natives will enhance your listening skills ?

1- Agree

2- Strongly agree

3- Disagree

4- Strongly disagree

.....
.....
.....

7- In order to improve your academic listening abilities, what things do you recommend for ? (explain, please)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Further suggestions and comments !

.....
.....
.....

Appendix B:

The Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teacher,

This is a part of my master research; I would be very grateful if you could take time to share your teaching experience with us by answering the following questionnaire which aims at gathering data about " Teaching the Listening Skill Within EFL Contexts ". Please put a tick (✓) for the appropriate choice and make statements whenever it is necessary.

Background information

1- Teacher's gender:

a- Male

b- Female

2- Qualification degree

a- Magister / master

b- Doctorate

3- How many years have you been teaching in university ?

..... years

4- Depending on your professional experience, which of the following receptive skills do you find difficult in teaching ?

a- Listening

b- Reading

5- During the teaching process, do your students practise listening in the classroom ?

a- Sometimes

b- Often

c- Always

d- Never

6- Do you encourage them to enhance their listening proficiency while learning ?

1- Yes

2- No

7- Mention briefly at least three hindrances that your students face the most during a listening

a/

b/

c/

8- How do you help them to overcome these difficulties within EFL learning ?

(explain please)

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9- What kind of strategies do you adopt in order to develop your students' academic listening ?

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10- According to you, what type of materials will help students to boost up their listening skills ?

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Further suggestions and comments !

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Thank you so much for being cooperative.