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Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Foreign Languages

MASTER THESIS

Letters and Foreign Languages
English Language
Sciences of the Language

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Title

**The Importance of Listening Activities in the Development EFL
Learners' Speaking Skill:
The case of first year LMD students of English at Biskra University.**

A dissertation submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages as partial fulfillment for the Master's Degree in Sciences of Languages.

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Academic Year : 2020-2021

Abstract

This current work is one of the studies that its main concern is to spotlight the relationship between listening and speaking in the field of English language learning. Since, listening has been neglected whether in teaching as being a technique to develop other skills specially speaking or in learning as being a skill that must be mastered. The lack of awareness about the importance of listening skill in the teaching and learning process, especially its vital role in developing speaking was the main reason behind conducting this research. Thus, this study aims at clarifying the importance of listening activities in developing EFL learners' speaking skill and helping to find remedies to their deficiencies in speaking by creating more exposure with the target language. This work is divided into two chapters; one is theoretical which tackles key related aspects to both speaking and listening skill and aims at highlighting the importance of the listening activities in English language teaching and learning process. The second chapter is the field work which emphasizes mainly on the analysis of the feedback of both teachers' and students' questionnaires. This practical part aims at checking teachers' and students' opinions about the topic of the study. The case that we have chosen to work with is first year LMD teachers and students. Concerning the data collection tools used in this research is a questionnaire devoted for students and another one for teachers. The result found have showed that all of the questioned teachers and the majority of the students believed that the exposure to the target language is one of the most important techniques that help EFL learners to develop their oral production. Therefore, the listening activities play a crucial role in developing the speaking skill. From what is stated above, the hypothesis of the study was confirmed.

Dedication

I dedicate this humble work to my shining stars, the ones who were there for me and were a source of love, hope and positive energy .

I gift it to my parents Sebti and Kheira who always filled me up with care and support and encouraged me to run after my dreams and never give up.

To my beloved brothers : Zaid , Khaled and Saber

To my lovely sister : Bouchra

To my bigfamily

To all my dear friends : Ahlem , Khadidja , Fadha , Wahiba , Latifa , Noura , Aziza , Ikram , Rahma and Amina.

Acknowledgements

First of all I thank Allah for giving me the strength and patience through my entire journey.

Very special thanks to my mother and my father who were my first supporter

Special thanks to my supervisor NasriChahira for accepting working with me and being a great guide and a source of motivation.

I thank all students and teachers who have helped me very sincerely in answering the questionnaires.

Thanks to all of the English department teachers and workers.

Very special thanks to AmeerMadouifor his helpandsupport.

I am really grateful to everyone has helped me and supported me in one way or another.

Table of contents

Abstract.....	I
Dedication	II
Acknowledgments.....	III
Table of contents	IV
List of tables.....	VII
List of figures.....	VIII
List of abbreviations	IX
List of appendices	X

General Introduction

Introduction	2
1. Background of the study	2
2. Statement of the problem	3
3. Research objectives	3
4. Research questions and hypotheses	3
5. Introductory notes to methodology	4
6. Structure of dissertation	4

Chapter One: Key concepts of speaking and listening skills

Introduction	6
1. Speaking skill.....	6
1.1. Definition of speaking.....	6
1.2. Speaking as a language skill	6
1.3. Importance of speaking skill	7
1.4. Types of Speaking	8
1.4.1. Imitative speaking.....	8
1.4.2. Intensive speaking.....	8
1.4.3. Responsive speaking	8
1.4.4. Interactive speaking	8
1.4.5. Extensive speaking	8
1.5. Difference between speaking and talking	9
1.6. Functions of speaking	9
1.6.1. Talk as interaction.....	9
1.6.2. Talk as transaction	9
1.6.3. Talk as performance.....	10
1.7. Fluency and accuracy in speaking.....	10
1.7.1. Fluency.....	10
1.7.2. Accuracy	10
1.7.2.1. Grammar	10
1.7.2.2. Vocabulary.....	11
1.7.2.3. Pronunciation	11
1.8. Difficulties face EFL learners in speaking	11
1.8.1. Inhibition	11
1.8.2. Nothing to say	12
1.8.3. Low and even participation	12

1.8.4. Mother tongue use	12
2. Listening skill	13
2.1. Definition of listening	13
2.2. Listening as a language skill.....	13
2.3. Importance of listening	14
2.4. Stages of Listening	15
2.4.1. Pre-listening	15
2.4.2. Whilst listening	15
2.4.3. Post-listening	15
2.5. Models of the listening process	16
2.5.1. The bottom-up model.....	16
2.5.2. The top-down model	16
2.5.3. The interactive model	17
2.6. Factors affecting listening.....	17
2.6.1. Listener factors	17
2.6.2. Speaker factors.....	18
2.6.3. Situational factors	18
2.7. Difficulties face EFL learners in listening	18
2.7.1. Clustering	18
2.7.2. Redundancy.....	19
2.7.3. Reduced form	19
2.7.4. Performance variables	19
2.7.5. Colloquial language.....	19
2.7.6. Rate of delivery.....	19
2.7.7. Stress, rhythm, and intonation	19
2.7.8. Interaction.....	19
2.8. Effects of listening on speaking skill	19
2.9. Characteristics of effective listening activities	20
2.10. Effective listening activities for EFL learners	21
2.10.1. Minimal pairs.....	21
2.10.2. Dictation	21
2.10.2.1. Cloze (gapped) Dictation.....	21
2.10.2.2. Dialogue Dictation	22
2.10.2.3. Poetry Dictation.....	22
2.10.3. Altered texts and broadcasts.....	22
2.10.4. News quips and questions.....	23
2.10.5. What's in the bag?	23
Conclusion	23

Chapter Two: Field Work

Introduction	25
1. General methodology	25

2. Data collection methods.....	25
2.1.Questionnaire.....	25
2.2.Population.....	25
2.3.Sampling.....	25
2.4.Questionnaire description	26
3. The analysis of both students’ feedback questionnaire and teachers’ feedback questionnaire	26
3.1.The Analysis of the Students’ Questionnaire.....	26
3.2.Analysis of Teachers’ Questionnaire.....	41
Conclusion	53
General conclusion	54
Recommendations for Further Research	55
References.....	56

List of tables

Table 1: Students' gender.....	26
Table 2: Students' age.....	27
Table 3: Students' level in English language.....	28
Table 4: The students' reasons behind choosing English rather than other languages....	29
Table 5: The degree of importance of each of the language learning skills.....	30
Table 6: Students' attitudes towards speaking in English.....	31
Table 7: Students' responses about whether their teacher encourages them to speak in English or not.....	32
Table 8: Types of difficulties that students face when speaking in English.....	33
Table 9: Students' responses about whether their teacher give importance to developing listening skill or not.....	34
Table 10: Frequency of teacher's listening activities.....	34
Table 11: The usefulness of listening activities in improving speaking skills from students' point' of view.....	35
Table 12: Students' agreement about whether they can improve speaking through listening or not.....	36
Table 13: Students' responses about whether they face listening difficulties or not.....	37
Table 14: Types of listening activities that teachers use.....	38
Table 15: Frequency of students' listening practice outside the classroom.....	39
Table 16: Students' responses about whether the time devoted to the listening skill is sufficient or not.....	40
Table 17: Teachers' gender.....	42
Table 18: Teachers' qualification.....	42
Table 19: The existence of any difficulties while teaching speaking activities.....	43
Table 20: Teachers' evaluation of their students' level in speaking.....	44
Table 21: The major difficulties EFL learners face when speaking from teachers' point of view.....	45
Table 22: The main reason behind students speaking difficulties from teachers' point of view.....	46
Table 23: Teachers' attitudes towards teaching listening activities.....	47
Table 24: Teachers' frequency of encountering difficulties when teaching listening activities.....	47
Table 25: Teachers' evaluation of their students level in listening.....	49
Table 26: The main factors that affect students' listening skills from teachers' point of view.....	49
Table 27: Teachers' responses about whether the time devoted to teach oral expression is enough to develop both speaking and listening skills or not.....	51
Table 28: The degree of teachers' agreement about whether a good listener is a good speaker or not.....	51

List of figures

Figure 1: A transmission view of communication.....	16
Figure 2: Students' gender.....	27
Figure 3: Students' age.....	27
Figure 4: Students' level in English language.....	28
Figure 5: The students' reasons behind choosing English rather than other languages.....	29
Figure 6: The degree of importance of each of the language learning skills.....	30
Figure 7: Students' attitudes towards speaking in English.....	31
Figure 8: Students' responses about whether their teacher encourages them to speak in English or not.....	32
Figure 9: Types of difficulties that students face when speaking in English.....	33
Figure 10: Students' responses about whether their teacher give importance to developing listening skill or not.....	34
Figure 11: Frequency of teacher's listening activities.....	35
Figure 12: The usefulness of listening activities in improving speaking skills from students' point' of view.....	36
Figure 13: Students' agreement about whether they can improve speaking through listening or not.....	37
Figure 14: Students' responses about whether they face listening difficulties or not.....	38
Figure 15: Types of listening activities that teachers use.....	39
Figure 16: Frequency of students' listening practice outside the classroom.....	40
Figure 17: Students' responses about whether the time devoted to the listening skill is sufficient or not.....	41
Figure 18: Teachers' gender.....	42
Figure 19: Teachers' qualification.....	42
Figure 20: The existence of any difficulties while teaching speaking activities.....	43
Figure 21: Teachers' evaluation of their students' level in speaking.....	44
Figure 22: The major difficulties EFL learners face when speaking from teachers' point of view.....	45
Figure 23: The main reason behind students speaking difficulties from teachers' point of view.....	46
Figure 24: Teachers' attitudes towards teaching listening activities.....	47
Figure 25: Teachers' frequency of encountering difficulties when teaching listening activities.....	48
Figure 26: Teachers' evaluation of their students level in listening.....	49
Figure 27: The main factors that affect students' listening skills from teachers' point of view.....	50
Figure 28: Teachers' responses about whether the time devoted to teach oral expression is enough to develop both speaking and listening skills or not.....	51
Figure 29: The degree of teachers' agreement about whether a good listener is a good speaker or not.....	52

List of abbreviations and acronyms

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

FL: Foreign Language

TL: Target Language

SL: Second Language

MT: Mother Tongue

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

M.K.U: Mohammed Kheider University

LMD: License Master Doctorate

H: Hypothesis

S/he: She or He

p: page

&: And

% : Percentage

List of appendices

Appendix 1. students' questionnaire	58
Appendix2. teachers' questionnaire	62

General Introduction

Introduction

Learning a new language is a good addition for any human being especially those who aim at traveling or studying overseas or working in multinational companies or only for getting a good job; English is one of those languages that people tend to learn because of its large use and spread all around the world. Mastering English as being the target language means mastering the four skills which are speaking, writing, listening and reading.

From daily experience, EFL learners give much importance to the productive skills (speaking and writing) rather than the perceptive ones (listening and reading). This interest in productive skills could be due to the fact that language in their perspective is about putting what have been learnt into usage. In addition, they are unaware about the relationship between those skills and how one affects another in many different ways.

1. Background of the study

Language is a medium that facilitates communication among people and helps them to convey messages from to another person or group of people in an easy manner. According to Ramelan (1992), using language in a social group helps the members to cooperate and benefit from each other, (p 10).

Speaking is a complex process that starts as a thought in the brain and ends up by producing utterances through speech organs and that classified it as a productive skill; However, it can also be considered as a receptive skill when it is a part of the communication process. In this context, Widdowson (1978), reports that speaking is productive if one thinks of speaking as a way language is produced through using of speech organs; however, it is both productive and receptive when someone thinks of it in terms of use rather than usage, (p59).

Speaking skill is a key element in language learning and teaching because the real success for a foreign language learner is to have the ability to speak fluently and without facing any difficulties in carrying out any kind of conversations. According to Nunan (1991 p. 39), "mastering the art of speaking is the single most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language and success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language."

Speaking skill is highly connected to other skills especially listening because they are together the composition of the communication process, in that sense Nunan (1989, p. 23) states that: "We do not simply take a language in like a tape recorder, but interpret what we hear according to our purpose in listening and our background knowledge". The two skills

go in parallel, a good listener is a good speaker and that means that listening is crucial element in improving speaking skill.

2. Statement of the problem

EFL learners face many obstacles when speaking the target language due to many reasons which can be related to psychological issues or lack of practice and many other causes. Listening activities inside or out of classroom can be an effective technique that improves learners speaking abilities and help learners to be fluent speakers of the target language .Probably, the problem goes back to the teaching strategies used by tutors or educators .

This study attempts to clarify the importance of listening activities in the development of speaking skill for EFL learners.

3. Research objectives

As stated above listening is a crucial skill that plays a significant role in Improving EFL speaking skill .These facts are the starting point of this study which is on: The Importance of Listening in the Development of Speaking Skill for EFL Learners .Hence,the general objectives are:

- 1- To clarify the positive impact of listening on the development of speaking skill.
- 2- To make students aware of the importance of listening skill.
- 3- To help students find solutions for their speaking skill.
- 4- To attract teachers' attention toward listening skill and encourage them to use it.

4. Research questions and hypotheses

As a first step to investigate the effects of listening skill on the development of speaking of EFL learners, the following questions must be answering:

- 1- To what extent does listening help EFL learners developing their speaking skill?
- 2- What could be the major effect of listening on EFL learners speaking skill?
- 3- What is the attitude of EFL teachers towards the use of listening tasks as a technique in order to enhance the learner speaking abilities?
- 4- How do EFL learners improve speaking skill through listening activities?

This dissertation is concerned with the importance of listening activities in the development of speaking skill of EFL learners .Hence,it is based on two hypotheses which are:

H0: If teachers use listening activities in their sessions that would affect learners' speaking skill negatively.

H1:If teachers use listening tasks in their sessions that would be helpful in improving learners speaking skill.

5. Introductory notes to methodology

In the present research, we have chosen the descriptive method because it is the suitable one to investigate the current studied subject which is The Importance of Listening Activities on The development of Speaking Skill. In addition ,it is the appropriate way to confirm the hypotheses of the study . Concerning the participants, this study includes a sample of 40 students among first year LMD students who will be chosen randomly to respond a questionnaire .The current research also involves selecting 4 teachers from Mohamed Kheider university to respond a questionnaire .

6. Structure of dissertation

This work will be divided into two main chapters:

The first chapter entitled “Key concepts of listening and speaking skills” ;which will be divided into two parts :

- The first part presents a general overview about speaking skill and related elements such as definition ,types, ,importance ,functions , modals of processes as well as the stages and the difficulties of speaking.
- The second part covers a general overview about listening skill and related elements such as definition,types, importance,factors affecting listening, difficulties and effective listening activities .

The second chapter represents the field work and it is divided into three parts:

- The first part is the analyses of student questionnaire findings.
- The second part is the analyses of teachers questionnaire findings.
- The third part includes a conclusion about the obtained results and some recommendations.

Chapter One:
Key Concepts of Speaking
and
Listening Skills

Introduction

Language is a tool that people use to communicate and interact with each other. What makes this process successful is mastering both speaking and listening; mastering speaking skill in order to produce a correct utterances whereas mastering listening skill to interpret the message and respond to it appropriately. These two skills are highly important in any language since they are connected to each other. However, EFL learners may not be aware enough about how much these two skills are important and how could listening improves their speaking skill. For this reason, this chapter is a trial to cover the most important aspects of both skills and to highlight the effect of listening activities in improving speaking abilities.

1. Speaking skill

1.1. Definition of speaking

The word “speaking “ is directly attached to language learning, if we heard that someone knows how to speak in any language we automatically believe that s/he knows the language well so speaking skill is one of the basics in language learning. Safont (2002) believed that in our thinking the speaking skill is directly connected to language learning in a way that we refer to speaking a language but we mean knowing a language, (p. 51). Hedge (2000, p.261) defined speaking as: “a skill by which people are judged while first impressions are being formed.” That is to say, speaking is a vital skill which demands much attention in language learning because it is the reflection of people’s personalities. Therefore speaking is considered as a productive skill.

In other hand, Gumperz (1999, p.101) defined speaking skill from a pragmatist’s perspective as a skill that is based on constructing from the cooperative utterances of the speaker. He said: “Speaking is cooperatively constructed which is based on contributions, assumptions, expectations, and interpretations of the participant’s utterances”. That is, speaking is a complex process not only a matter of producing a group of words.

1.2. Speaking as a language skill

Communicating successfully and effectively in any given situation is the main aim of any EFL learner and that explains why speaking is considered as an art that not everyone can master. According to Nunan (1991, p.39), “To most people, mastering the art of speaking is the single most important factors of learning a second or foreign language and success is a measure item of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language.”

Developing speaking in foreign languages is not easy and learners need long time

to be competent .This was confirmed byLuoma (2004) who stated that “speaking in a foreign language is very difficult and competence in speaking takes a long time to develop.”(p. 1)

This skill is mainly about knowing how to express ideas and thoughts and transform them to verbal production that is correct and appropriate to the situation.According toMacCarthy (1972),to learn how to speak a language a person needs two things .First, to know the words and sentences s/he will say, and second being able to say it with the performing the required actions and movements,(p. 9).

Speaking is a complex skill that goes beyond pronouncing words or arranging them to form sentences. In the same context , Thornbury (2005) stated that the involveof paralinguistic features(eye contact, facial expressions, body language, tempo, pauses, voice quality changes, pitch variation...)in speaking makes it a multi-sensory activity,(p. 9). So, speaking is not related only to produce verbal utterances but involves other features which means that it is an multi-sensory activity .

1.3.Importance of speaking skill

The major concern of any language learner is to use the language learnt to communicate.In otherwords, speaking fluently and correctly and mastering the speaking skill is a prime goal for every learner.In this contextRichards (2008, p.19) mentioned that “the mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second-language or foreign-language learners”.In the same context Ur (2000)emphasizes that speaking is the most important skill in the language and he stated that of all the four skills speaking is the most important in which we refer to those who know a language as speakers as if speaking includes all the knowledge related to that language, (p. 120).

Similarly,Stein (2007,p. 2), pointed out thatlearning the language by knowing the grammar and vocabulary is not enough ,learnerneed to speak in a correctly and fluently or they will lose the fun of using the language. Therefore ,mastering speaking is crucial with other aspects of language since learners will not only be evaluating in grammar rules or vocabularies but they have to put this knowledge into usage

As stated above, speaking is a skillthat is fundamental in language learning and that what makes it very difficult to be developed and mastered .In this sense Bygate (1987)declared that speaking deserves attention as much as the literary skills in native and foreign language,(p.2).That shows the importance of that skill and its high value for both native speakers or the learners as a second language.

1.4. Types of Speaking

Brown (2004, p.271) distinguished five various types of spoken language which are as follows: imitative, intensive, responsive, interactive, and extensive

1.4.1. Imitative speaking

This kind of oral production is basically a training relies on imitating and repeating a word, phrase or a sentence after someone. The repetition and imitation process's main purpose is to focus on how certain language form is produced orally rather than its meaning. For that Brown (2004) states that imitative speaking is simply parroting back or imitating words, phrases or even sentences, (p.141).

1.4.2. Intensive speaking

According to Brown (2001, p.273), "Intensive speaking goes one step beyond imitative to include any speaking performance that is designed to practice some phonological or grammatical aspect of language". That is to say, intensive speaking is similar to imitative speaking but it is broader in which learners practice phonological and grammatical aspects of language. Unlike imitative speaking working in pairs and groups is required in this type.

1.4.3. Responsive speaking

According to Brown, (2001, p.273) in this type of speaking, "A good deal of student initiated questions or comments. These replies are usually sufficient and do not extend into dialogues". In other words, responsive speaking may be considered as kind of interaction which is limited to small talks such as (greeting, commenting or answering questions) and must not exceed to be a conversation.

1.4.4. Interactive speaking

Interactive speaking has two different forms. The first one may involve using transactional language that is mainly based on providing or transmitting certain information to one or group of people. However, the second form mainly includes interpersonal exchanges that aim at maintaining social relationships between members of society, (Brown, 2004, p.142).

1.4.5. Extensive speaking

According to Brown (2004) tasks in extensive speaking include speeches, oral presentations, and story-telling, in which the oral interaction from listeners is either absent (nonverbal responses) or highly limited and the language style is more deliberative and formal most of the times, however certain informal monologues such as casually

delivered speech cannot be ruled out,(p.142).

1.5.Difference between speaking and talking

In daily life, the two verbs “to speak “and “to talk” are seems to be synonyms. Therefore they are used interchangeably in many cases. According to Cambridge Dictionaries (2015),“the verbs speak and talk both generally mean ‘say words’, but there are some small differences in how they are used. Speak is more formal than talk”. That is to say, both verbs refer to the action of engaging into conversation however the difference is about the level of formality required. If a person is asking a friend to meet later to discuss a misunderstanding s/he would say: we need to talk later. In the other hand, if the same person wants to ask her/his manager in work .So, the difference does exist but it is a slight one.

1.6. Functions of speaking

Speaking is a means of communication and a tool of exchanging ideas and expressing thoughts between people .It may appear in different contexts within multiple circumstances, and that what gives the spoken language different functions . Richard(2008) classified functions of speaking into: “talk as an interaction, talk as transaction and talk as performance” .

1.6.1.Talk as interaction

Talk as interaction deals with what we refer to as “conversation” and all that interaction that is intended to serve social function .Greetings, engaging in small talks and recounting recent experiences are actions that occurs when people meet to show that they are friendly and create a comfortable zone of interaction .In this case speakers give more attention to the they wish to present themselves rather than the message,(Richards, 2008,p.22).

1.6.2.Talk as transaction

Richard (2008,p.24) asserted that talk as transaction “ refers to situations where the focus is on what is said or done. The message and making oneself understood clearly and accurately is the central focus, rather than the participants and how they interact socially with each other” .That is to say, the main objective of the speaker behind engaging in this talk is to transmit a message and make sure that it is received and understood as clear and accurate as possible.

1.6.3.Talk as performance

Talks as performance refers to what we normally mean by a public talk in which

the speaker tend to transmit a message that hold an information to group of people such as classroom presentations, public announcements and speeches, Richards (2008, p. 22) .

1.7. Fluency and accuracy in speaking

Fluency and accuracy are two notions that are always present whenever effective speaking is mentioned .Being a fluent speaker and producing an accurate speech are two of the objectives of EFL teachers and learners. However, fluency takes more attention since it is clearer in oral performance unlike accuracy which is more related to language structure. In this context, Richards & Rodgers (2001) mentioned that the first goal is fluency and acceptable language but accuracy is judged in context, (p. 157) . In this context, Hedge (2000) also asserted that the communicative approach plays a role in the low consideration of teachers and learners of developing accuracy in the use of grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary, (p.61).

1.7.1. Fluency

One of the main goals of any EFL teacher and learners is to achieve a high level of fluency since it is the first thing that learner evaluated according to and also because of the importance of the oral production in communication. According to Hedge (2000) fluency related and reserved for speech and it can be defined as the ability to link units of speech together with facility and without strain or inappropriate showiness, or undue hesitation, (p. 54). That is to say, fluency is a basic feature and fundamental skill in oral performance

1.7.2. Accuracy

EFL learners seek always to be fluent speakers and they neglect the correctness and accurateness of their oral production .Accuracy is producing utterances that are correct and easy to be understood by the listeners. In this sense, Baker & Westrup (2003, p.7) asserted that: “accurate speakers do not make mistakes in grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation”. Therefore, we may say that speakers should pay attention to some elements in order to achieve high level of accuracy in speaking which are grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

1.7.2.1. Grammar

For learners the grammar system is an important aspect of language that should not be neglected while developing speaking skill .In this sense, Luoma (2004, p. 12) stated that “Learner grammar is handy for judging proficiency because it is easy to detect in speech and writing”. For this, grammar is crucial element in achieving accuracy .

1.7.2.2.Vocabulary

According to Cambridge Dictionaries (2015) ,“the words that are known or used by a particular person, or that are used in a language or subject”. For this,vocabulary is considered as the main unit from which language is built. Having a sufficient range of vocabulary enables the speaker to express him/herself in a clear and accurate way. Hence, memorizing words of the target language is the first step in any language learning process

1.7.2.3.Pronunciation

According to Redmond & Vrchota(2007) pronunciation refers to producing words in ways in which they are accepted and understood(p.104). That is to say, pronouncing words in a correct manner with the correct sound features is the key to transmit a message successfully and guarantee that the message is understood. For that,Luoma (2004, p. 11) asserts that “Pronunciation or, more broadly, the sound of speech, can refer to many features of the speech stream, such as individual sounds, pitch, volume, speed, pausing, stress and intonation”.Any mistake in pronouncing words may lead to not understanding the message and eventually the accuracy will not be achieved.

1.8.Difficulties face EFL learners in speaking

Teachers give much importance to develop learners’ abilities in speaking skill since it is a basic element in communication .Speaking new language is not an easy task ,Learners may face many difficulties when they want to speak English or they are asked to say something in the classroom .In that sense,Ur (2000, p.121) mentioned four main problems that may learners face which are: inhibition, nothing to say, low and even participation, and mother tongue use.

1.8.1.Inhibition

Speaking a language that is totally different in terms of many aspects is not an easy task to do in front of a teacher and classmates .Ur (2000,) statedthat learners are sometimes inhibit speaking the foreign language in the classroom because they are afraid of making mistakes, criticism or losing face, or simply shy of being the centre of attention,(p.111).Similarly, Littlewood (1999, p. 93) supported the same idea and he asserts “It is too easy for a foreign language classroom to create inhibition and anxiety.”

Inhibition usually infects learners who struggle with psychological issues such as shyness and lack of self-confidence. This kind of learners fears speaking even if they know the appropriate and the correct information. Stein (2007,p. 2)described shy learners and by saying:“Sometimes they are too shy to speak in front of others because they think they

have a defective pronunciation or lack the appropriate vocabulary to be able to keep up a conversation''. Inhibition can also be as a result of lack of self-confidence where the learner does not trust his abilities and always feels that s/ he is less than his mates. This negative feelings prevents learners to do any kind of interaction in classroom and that eventually will lead to insufficient results not only in speaking but in the whole learning process.

1.8.2. Nothing to say

Teaching speaking demands providing learners with different tasks in which they are supposed to speak in order to improve their abilities as well as to be evaluated. Learners find themselves in front of a topic that may not be interest for him or have no information about and eventually s/he find nothing to say. In this context, Rivers (1968) asserted that the teacher may choose a topic which is uncongenial to the learner or have no information about and as a result he has nothing to express, (p.192).

1.8.3. Low and even participation

Rivers (1968, p.98) asserted that there is some personality factors that may affect participation in a FL classroom and teachers should recognize them and try to find solutions. Some students may prefer not to participate because they are afraid of being wrong, whereas; others have no interest to participate. In the same context, Bowman (1989, p.40) added that "traditional classroom seating arrangements often work against you in your interactive teaching". That is to say, teachers' responsibilities goes beyond only transmitting information to learners but it is about making the class a comfortable setting and motivating circumstances in which learning process is more effective and successful.

1.8.4. Mother tongue use

For many reasons EFL and ESL learners may use their L1 in classroom. According to Polio (1994), the use of L1 may make learners over rely on it, (p.153). This means that the over use of the MT will eventually result a low exposure to English and that may result problems in learning the TL. In this sense, Atkinson (1987) explained that using first language in the classroom will lead to creating a failure to maximize using English, (p.247).

2. Listening skill

2.1. Definition of listening

According to Hornby (1995, p. 687), “listening comes from a verb to listen which means to make an effort to hear somebody or something.” For that we can consider hearing as the first step of listening but not the real definition of listening.

From researchers and scholars perspective listening is a complicated process that requires a set of action to be done via certain organs in a certain order. In this sense, Rost (2002) pointed out that in both first and second language may be explicit or implicit and it arises from habit formation, as a function of innate cognitive language abilities, as akin to computation, as a quality related to psychology or self-awareness, as cultural awareness, or information processing, (p. 01).

In simpler words and according to Rubin (1994), listening is a process that aims at understanding the oral production of the speaker in the native or second language, (p. 32). Similarly, Nunan (2001, p. 63) defined listening as “a matter of decoding the individual sound to derive the meaning of word and change utterance.” From that we may define listening as an active process through which listener decodes the utterances of the speaker in order to understand the meaning s/he want to address to the listener .

2.2. Listening as a language skill

Listening is one the four skills of the language and it is an essential element in the communication process which is based on speaking and listening. Jack Richard (1987) classified listening and speaking as oral skills and emphasized that they are the most important comparing to reading and writing, (p.20). For that reason listening is an important skill not only as a communication element but in language in general .

Listening is not merely a passive skill as it always has been classified but it is a whole process that requires several actions to be done successfully. In this context, Rost (1994, p. 2) asserts that “listening is a process triggered by our attention. In psychological terms, attention is an excitation of nerve pathways, the brain, to organize incoming stimuli in an efficient way.

Basher (2014) also supports the idea of recognizing listening as a process and distinguishes three basic steps in the process of listening which are :hearing ,understanding and judging, (p. 4). The steps are briefly explained as follows:

- ✓ **Hearing:** the first step is simply about catching the words and the utterances that the speaker is producing.
- ✓ **Understanding:** the second step is understanding what you have received and interpreted in your own thinking.

- ✓ **Judging:** The final step is taking what you have heard and understood then assesses it. the assessment and evaluation phase happens through asking a set of questions .

In short , listening is an essential language skill that belongs to receptive skills but in real it is an active process.

2.3.Importance of listening

Human being are gifted with the ability to hear and listen to every sound and voice around them .This gift is important for them in many different ways . According to Ramelan (1992, p. 10) :“the use of language enables the members of a social group to cooperate with one another for their own benefit.”And that means that language is found for the sake of communication and interaction .Since communication cannot be achieved without effective listening that confirms the importance of that later in the communication in particular and language in general . Despite this fact and according to Brown listening did not take the deserved attention in language learning and teaching, (2001).

In the same sense , Othman &Vanathas (2004,p. 19) support Brown’s idea and pointed out that listening has been given little attention in English language classroom and may this be due to the lack of research interest into listening in that time . in addition to considering listening as a passive skill which learners just “pick up”.In other words , listening was considered as a passive skill that learners acquire unconsciously. This skill according to teachers in the past did not deserve much attention in learning process because in their perspective it was not an effective element .

Nevertheless in the resent years ,the look at listening skill as a passive and unimportant skill has changed. Mendelsohn and Rubin asserted that listeninghasbecome recognizing as an active process and started to be acknowledged in language acquisition with the emergence of video and multimedia as a teaching tools .This increasing attention from ESL/EFL professionals is due to the digital revolution ,(1995).This shows the impact of the digital revolution and its crucial role in increasing the attention toward listening in learning process .

As a result , listening skill is an active process and important skill in people’s life that deserves more attention .

2.4.Stages of Listening

Since any active process requires several stages to be done successfully ,then

listening as a process has stages to achieve effectiveness. Therefore, Rost (2002, p. 142), distinguishes three stages namely: pre-listening, whilst listening and post-listening.

2.4.1.Pre-listening

In this stage an overview is given to learners about the coming listening material before starting. In pre-listening stage, teachers aim at activating the schemata of students which plays a significant role in preparing students to allow their minds to expect the content of passage. Activating students' schemata can be done through six ways which are: brainstorming, using visuals, using realia (real-life objects); introducing the topic, real world situations and presenting ideas and facts (Wilson, 2008).

2.4.2.Whilst listening

In this stage, learners have to listen to the input only one time. For instance, they listen for gist, but when they want to listen again for specific information or for details they may have another opportunity. They may listen another time to the input to check or to answer a detailed question. Two views about how many times learners should listen to the message are distinguished. The first view says only one time is sufficient relying their view on communication in real life. The second view is that number of times depends on states that many opportunities may reduce student's anxiety. The input difficulty, considering it long and boring are among the causes why listening several times is needed. Listening several times may also be done when the premium interest is to study the language (Wilson, 2008).

In addition, if the passage has not been understood even after repeating it three times or more, then the exposure to the same passage again may not be the solution of this problem. In case of long messages, for example, teachers may divide texts into several pieces to help student to understand and avoid overloading them (Wilson, 2008).

2.4.3.Post-listening

Post listening is the stage that allows learners to make connection between their own ideas and experiences with what they have heard. From this stage learners can move smoothly from listening to another skill. As an example, students may perform plays that is similar to the ones they have heard in order to practice their speaking skill. In this case speaking is intended for the sake of impeding play's knowledge, so learners can improve listening scopes (Davis & Pearse, 2000).

2.5.Models of the listening process

According to Flowerdew & Miller (2005, p.24) the most widely known model that

have been developed to explain how information is processed in listening are as follows

2.5.1. The bottom-up model

According to Flowerdew & Miller (2005), the bottom-up model is the first model of listening to be developed. It was developed by in the 1940s and 1950s. According to this model, listeners build understanding starting by smallest units of the oral message: individual sounds, or phonemes then combine them into words, which, in turn form up phrases, clauses, and sentences. As a final step, the later are combined to form ideas and concepts and relate them. Therefore, knowledge in the listening process is applied in a serial, hierarchical fashion. The bottom-up model follows a traditional view of communication as the transmission of information, (p24).

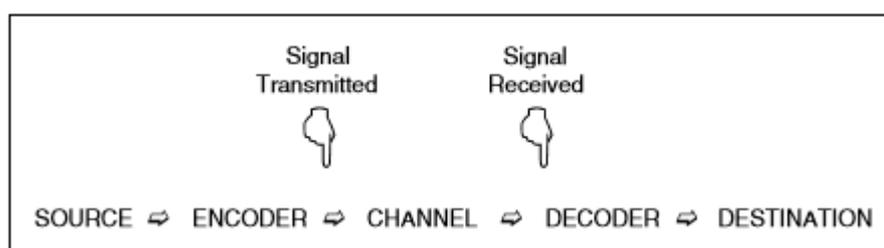


Figure 1: A transmission view of communication (adapted from Shannon and Weaver 1949) as cited in Flowerdew & Miller (2005, p.25)

2.5.2. The top-down model

According to Flowerdew & Miller (2005), in this model, the use of previous knowledge is emphasized in processing information unlike the bottom-up model that relies upon individual sounds and words. The reason behind developing top-down model is the fact that experimental subjects are incapable to identify truncated sounds in isolation, whereas subjects are quite able to identify truncated words as long as they are presented with the surrounding context. For example, when presented the sound alone /m—————/ it is impossible to predict the following sound. But, if presented it in a context such as “The cat sat on the /m—————/,” then predicting the following sound is quite easy which is likely to be /t/. This suggests that listeners do not only rely on acoustic signal to decode a verbal message but also on the prior contextual knowledge. Listeners use pre-established patterns of knowledge and discourse structure stored in memory when applying contextual knowledge to interpret utterance, (p.25).

In the same context, Flowerdew & Miller (2005, p.26) continue explaining how the top-down model processes by saying: “The basic idea is that human knowledge is organized and stored in memory according to reoccurring events”. In other words the events

in human's daily life that happens repeatedly are responsible of how knowledge is organized and stored in human's mind.

2.5.3. The interactive model

Since listening may involve bottom-up and top-down processing then some sort of model that synthesizes the two is required. This what is called interactive model. This model was developed by Rumelhart (1975). His theory was developed within the context of reading, however; applies equally well to listening. Language is processed simultaneously at different levels. In this parallel processing, phonological, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic information interact, although it is not clear exactly how. An important advantage of the model over other hierarchical models, whether bottom-up or top-down, is that it allows for the possibility of individual variation in linguistic processing (Flower & Miller, 2005, p.26).

2.6. Factors affecting listening

Bromley distinguishes three factors that may affect listening as quoted by Seswati (2006, p. 16) which are briefly explained as follows

2.6.1. Listener factors

These factors are related to the one who is receiving the acoustic message and they include:

- **Purpose:** motivating learners before start listening and providing them with a purpose to listen is crucial in order to increase their productivity not only in listening activities but also to the ones will come after.
- **Conceptual level:** possessing knowledge based on both firsthand and various language learning information means that the learner owns the required concepts and meanings that enable him/her to associate with the spoken language.
- **Experience:** Learners, who have no experience and have not been exposed to listening and understanding activities, may find listening harder process than those who have undergone similar experiences before.
- **Comprehension of monitoring strategies:** Learners can engage in controlling meaning only if they are effective listeners. There are several ways used by effective listeners to check and monitor their understandings such as: associating their knowledge with what they have already known, asking for the accuracy or meaning of the received message, they paraphrase the speaker and ask for repetition or more explanation when they do not understand the message.

2.6.2. Speaker factors

These factors are related to the one who is producing the acoustic message and they include:

- **Diversification:**The use of gestures, body movements and postures, contours of the face, expression of the mouth may help learners in mastering listening materials . Repeating the message or paraphrasing it may be useful in such cases.
- **Pronunciation:**The correct pronunciation of the verbal message contributes in the learner's level of understanding.
- **Eye contact:**Eye contact reveals the interest of the speaker , therefore maintaining direct eye contact will make the listener more apt to listen carefully and understand the message delivered appropriately.

2.6.3. Situational factors

These factors are related to the situation in which the acoustic message is received and they include :

- **Environment:**The environment in which listening process is taking place should be free from any kind of distraction, in addition to the appropriate arrangement that would reinforce listening so the focus of the listener will be only on the verbal message.
- **Visuals:**Providing learners with concrete visual stimuli in listening situations may help in enhancing their comprehension. The use of visual aids such as : (chalkboard, overhead projector, pictures, etc.) , may help in increasing their concentration and then enhancing listening .

2.7. Difficulties face EFL learners in listening

According to (Dunkel, 1991; Richards, 1983; & Ur, 1984 cited in Saya, 2012), eight aspects that make listening difficult are distinguished and they are explained as follows :

2.7.1. Clustering

The basic unit of organisation in the written form of language is the sentence. Whereas in the spoken form speech is broken down into smaller unit, because of the limited memory people have and their predisposition for chunking or clustering.

2.7.2. Redundancy

When people engage in a conversation their oral production contain a good deal of Redundancy in which they rephrase, repeat, elaborate and say phrases as I mean and you

know, here and there. This redundancy gives the hearer the opportunity to process meaning by offering extra time and information.

2.7.3.Reduced form

The spoken language does contains several reduced forms besides the redundancy. This reduction can be phonological, morphological, syntactic, or pragmatic. Therefore many significant difficulties may be posed to learners in classroom listening activities.

2.7.4.Performance variables

The spoken language in all cases, excepting when it is planned, is full of performance variables such as hesitations, false starts, pauses, and corrections. These variables can be distracting and make listening more difficult for learners.

2.7.5.Colloquial language

Being exposed to standard English whether written and/or spoken form may find colloquial language, such as idioms, slang, reduced forms, and shared cultural knowledge surprising and difficult to deal with.

2.7.6.Rate of delivery

As EFL learners we always struggle with understanding what native speakers are saying because of the delivery speed.

2.7.7.Stress, rhythm, and intonation

In English, language patterns like stress, rhythm, and intonation are highly important and necessary for effective comprehension. However, these features make the spoken English language for some learners difficult.

2.7.8.Interaction

Interaction plays a crucial role in listening comprehension, excepting when learner's first objective is mastering special skills such as monitoring radio broadcast or attending lectures.

2.8.Effects of listening on speaking skill

According to Anderson & Lynch (1988, p. 15), "For the L2 learner to be a proficient partner in conversation, he needs to be skilled as both speaker and listener". For that, listeners as well as speakers have to be skilled in both skills in order to hold a successful conversation. Since listening and speaking are both important skills in communicating, then an effective communication requires a good proficiency in both parts of conversation i.e. speaking and listening. In this sense, Redmond and Vrchota

(2007,p.120) asserted that : “speakers are at the mercy of listeners.”In other words good listener is a good speaker , which means that there is a strong relationship between listening and speaking and both are affected by one another .

Similarly, Brown (2001)affirmed that any teacher of language knows that learners’ speaking skill is only as good as his listening ability,(p.341).That is to say, speaking abilities is affected by the listening skill, in other words when the learner is a good listener his speaking proficiency is a way better than learners with poor level in listening . In the same context,Bahns(1995, p.110)as cited in (lynch 2009)believed that developing listening is seen in combination with developing speaking.That supports the idea of Brown and confirms that listening effectslearners’ speaking abilities.

To conclude, listening and speaking are two related skills, and listening plays a crucial and vital role in the development of speaking skill .

2.9. Characteristics of effective listeningactivities

According to Miller (2010),there are several features that shows the effectiveness of listening activities which are

- The listening text should be brief (1-3 mins).
- Identifying the purpose of the activity and sharing it with learners.
- The teacher should support the text or the material used withclues .
- Repetition is needed several times to ;get the gist, first pass on completing the task then second pass for the same purpose ,another repetition to check learners work ,then repeating to debrief with teacher and classmates ,and the last repetition in order to warm up for what is coming next .
- Providing an immediate feedback.
- The activity should has elements that contribute to motivating learners which are : relevancy, highly interest ,challenge and success-oriented .(p.5)

2.10. Effectivelisting activities for EFL learners

Miller (2010)suggested a list of listening activities that may be effective for ESL/EFL learners here are some of them :

2.10.1.Minimalpairs

This activity helps learners in distinguishingbetween similar sounds at the

beginning of words (pat, bat), in the middle (lift, list), and/or at the end (have, has). Write lists of minimal pair sets.

-Same or different words?

Each learner has two cards, one labelled SAME, one labelled DIFFERENT. Read aloud the list of word pairs, some pairs are two different words (minimal pairs) whereas others are the same word read twice. While reading, every learner holds up their SAME or DIFFERENT card.

-Same or different numbers?

Follow the same way used with words but use number pairs (14/40; 90/19, 15/15)

-Odd word out

Each learner should have three cards, labelled 1, 2, and 3. Read aloud a list of three words, in which two words are the same and one is different (pat, bat, pat; lift, lift, list; has, have, have). While reading, every learner holds up the number card that represents the number of the different word, (Miller, 2010, p.9).

2.10.2.Dictation

The teacher dictates words, phrases, or sentences to his learners. He also prepares answer sheets to enable learners checking their work. Dictation can be used to convey announcements about upcoming class activities, program schedules, community activities...etc,(Miller,2010,P.10).

2.10.2.1.Cloze (gapped) dictation

The teacher locates a text either by writing it or selecting a paragraph from a textbook, or a brief article in the newspaper. Then white out words, either randomly or 10th or intentionally-chosen such as key words or words often misheard, to create "gaps". Before submitting the gapped worksheet, the teacher reads aloud the complete text so learners can get the gist. Then, hands out the copies. The next step is reading the text aloud a second time so learners can fill in the gaps and then a third time for checking their work. The final step is discussing the answers, (Miller,2010,p.10).

2.10.2.2.Dialogue dictation

The teacher prepares a short text, separates the lines of the dialogue into two parts, one for student A and one for student B. On separate sheets of paper; the teacher puts the lines, and leaves blank lines between. Learners should seat in pairs, and across the table, then they dictate their lines alternately until both of them have the entire dialogue. The use of clarification strategies during the activity such as (Could you please

repeat that? Please speak slowly. How do you spell that? Is this right?) is required to practice the dialogue together, (Miller,2010,p.10).

2.10.1.3.Poetry dictation

The teacher selects a poem whose topic is interesting to learners,then separates the lines into two parts , putting even numbered lines on one paper and odd numbered lines on another, leaving blank lines in between for writing. Learners should seat in pairs across the table, and give each learner the odd or the even numbered lines.They dictate their lines alternately until both members have the entire poem. The use of clarification strategies during the activity such as (Could you please repeat that? Please speak slowly. How do you spell that? Is this right?)is required .The final step is reading the poem aloud to the class, with the correct pronunciation and intonation, then practicing it in pairs, (Miller,2010,p.16).

In all the above activities , the content should be level-appropriate and pertinent to the life skill topic or subject matter currently being studied . In addition it can be recorded on cassette tape to allow learners practice in understanding non-face-to-face speech

2.11.3.Altered texts and broadcasts

The teacher Locates a short and interested text that is related to what learners are studying and makes copies of the original text. On his/her copy, chooses words or phrases and replace them with synonyms (explained/said, over/above) or similar words(Sunday/Monday, hiking/camping, , don't/you shouldn't).The next step is reading alerted the text aloud so learners get the gist. Then, give them the original copy and read the altered text for the second time , in the same time learners read the original text and circle the locations of altered words or phrases. The teacher reads the altered text aloud a third time so learners can write the alterations and a final reading to check their work,(Miller,2010,p.12).

2.11.4.News quips and questions

The teacher locates a short,interesting and appropriate newspaper story that is related to what learners are studying and prepares a list of comprehension questions based on the article. Then s/he reads the story aloud so learners get the gist. Next step is giving learners the list of comprehension questions. After that ,the teacher reads the text for a third time so learners can write their answers and a final time to check their answers,(Miller,2010,p.14).

2.11.5.What's in the bag?

The teacher locates 4-6 objects and places each one in a separate brown paper bag, then displays a bag of them and give a series of clues about each object; for example, its colour, what it is made of, for what it is used, used by whom, how much it costs, what it weighs, etc., saving the “dead giveaway” clue for last. After hearing all the clues learners guess what the object is .Another idea to extend the activity is asking each learner to bring an object in a bag. Seat the learners in pairs and each one describes the object in their bag,(Miller,2010,p.15).

Conclusion

As a conclusion, both listening and speaking are equally essential and crucial skills for communication among people ,despite the fact that people give much importance to developing speaking rather than listening . After discussing the different areas of speaking and listening and the key concepts related to them ,it is clear that listening activities play a vital role in the teaching and learning process in general and in developing speaking abilities of EFL learners in particular .Therefore , teachers as well as learners should consider listening activities more and give it much more interest whether in class or out of it .

Chapter Two: Field Work

Introduction

The present conducted research aims mainly at finding out the relationship between listening skill and speaking skill among EFL students and how much listening activities are important in developing EFL speaking abilities. The method best suits this kind of investigation is the descriptive one because it helps us in identifying problems concerning the current study with an aim to solve them .The data collection tools used to proof the hypotheses stated earlier are questionnaires addressed to university teachers as well as first year English students.. The participant's opinions and views are very significant and helpful in the current study.

1. General methodology

In this study, we have chosen the descriptive method to obtain the required data because it seems to be the suitable way that could enhance the validity of our research. The required data was gathered through the use of questionnaires submitted to both university students and teachers of first year of English department. These two questionnaires will be described in details in this chapter.

2. Data collection methods

2.1. Questionnaire

Using the questionnaire as the data collection tool in this research aims at investigating the students as well as teachers attitudes towards the use of listening activities in EFL classes. In addition, it seems as a suitable way to discover the effects of using listening activities on the learner's speaking skill through investigating why listening skill is being ignored by both teachers and students in the teaching and learning process that, and the major difficulties learners encounter in developing listening and speaking.

2.2. Population

The target population of our research is. We have chosen this population on purpose, since they still novice in language and they need to develop the two skills under studies in the current work. For these reasons, this population seems to be most suitable one that fits with the questions and aims of the study.

2.3. Sampling

The sample of this study consists of forty(40) students of first year LMD at the department of foreign language in the M.K.U of Biskra and five(5) oral expression teachers that teach the population of the study. They were selected randomly and addressed with an online questionnaires.

2.4. Questionnaire description

In the current study, the questionnaire is chosen to be the essential data gathering tool. Both questionnaires whether the one submitted to teachers or to students are divided into sections where each one includes a set of questions that have been answered by participants objectively. In one hand students' questionnaire includes seventeen questions ; organized in three sections, general information (age ; gender, level in English and reasons behind choosing English) ,speaking skill (questions related to speaking skill in general and speaking activities in class in particular) and the last section is listening activities and

listening skill(questions about listening in general and about the relationship between the two skills). In the other hand, teachers' questionnaire contains also seventeen questions organized to three sections: general information (gender ,qualification and experience),teachers and speaking skill (questions about student level and difficulties in teaching speaking) and the last section is teachers and listening activities (questions to discover students level in listening ,possible difficulties and affecting factors and the relationship between speaking and listening).

3.The analysis of both students' feedback questionnaire and teachers' feedback questionnaire

3.1.The Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

Section One: General Information

Item 1. Would you specify your gender, please?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Female	22	55%
b. Male	18	45%
Total	40	100%

Table 1: Students' gender

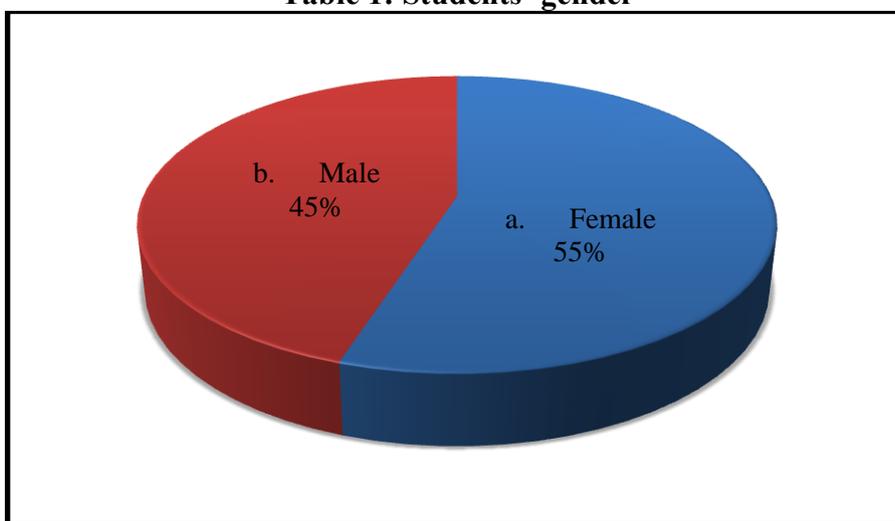


Figure2: Students' gender

This table above shows that 55% of participants are females, and 45% are males. This presentation reflects that girls are more interesting in studying languages in general as a major at the university, rather than boys who may be more motivated toward choosing other majors especially scientific ones as a field of study at university.

Item 2. Would you specify your age, please?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Less than 20 years old	15	37%%
b. 20-25 years old	20	50%
c. More than 25 years old	5	13%
Total	40	100%

Table 2: Students' age

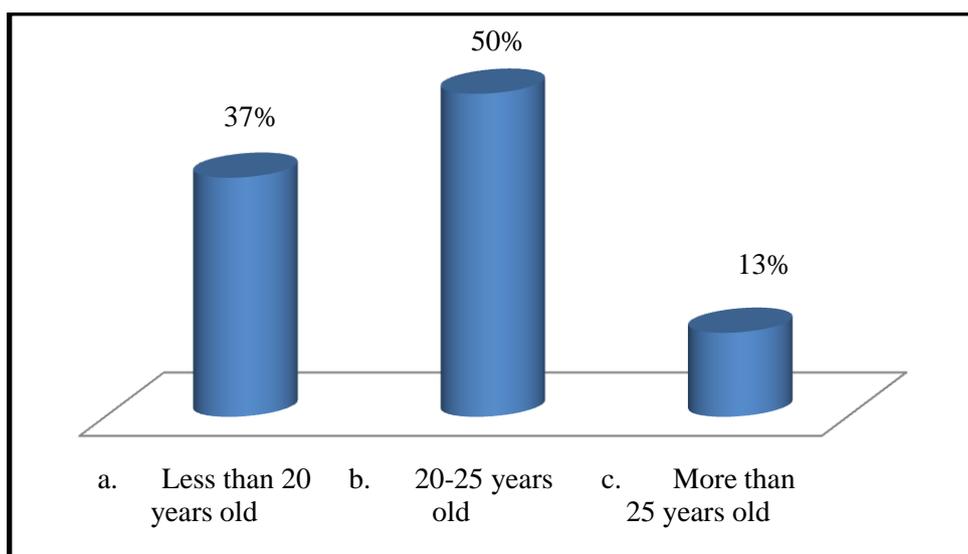


Figure 3: Students' age

The above table shows that our sample is relatively young. The age of the half of the sample ranges between 20-25 years. That is 37% are less than 20 years, and only the remained 13% are more than 25 years. Since they are young they may be more motivated to express their opinions about the topic this study investigates.

Item 3. How do you consider your level in English?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Very good	5	13%
b. Good	21	52%
c. Average	13	32%
d. Poor	1	3%
Total	40	100%

Table 3: Students' level in English language

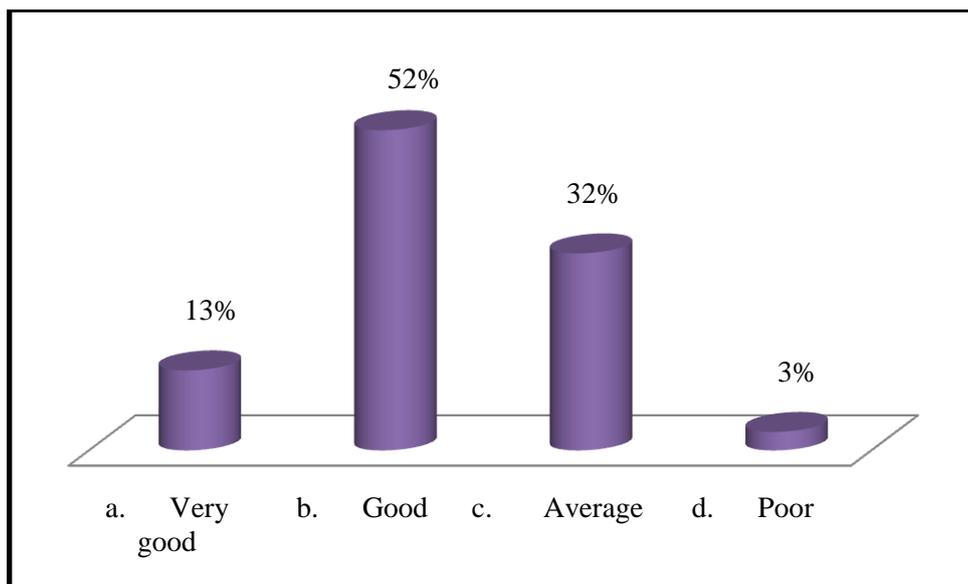


Figure 4: Students' level in English language

The table above demonstrates that more than the half of the sample consider their level in English as good 52%, while 13% of them said their English is very good, 32% of participants think they have an average level and only 3% who chose the poor level's answer. This results shows that the majority of the participants believe that they have an acceptable level in English language.

Item 4. What are the reasons that led you to choose English rather than other languages?
(You may tick more than one option)

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. You need English for communication	7	17%
b. You need English for future job requirements	8	20%
c. You need English for scientific meetings abroad	0	0%
d. You need English for leisure	0	0%
e. More than one reason	23	58%
f. All of them	2	5%
Total	40	100%

Table 4: The students' reasons behind choosing English rather than other languages

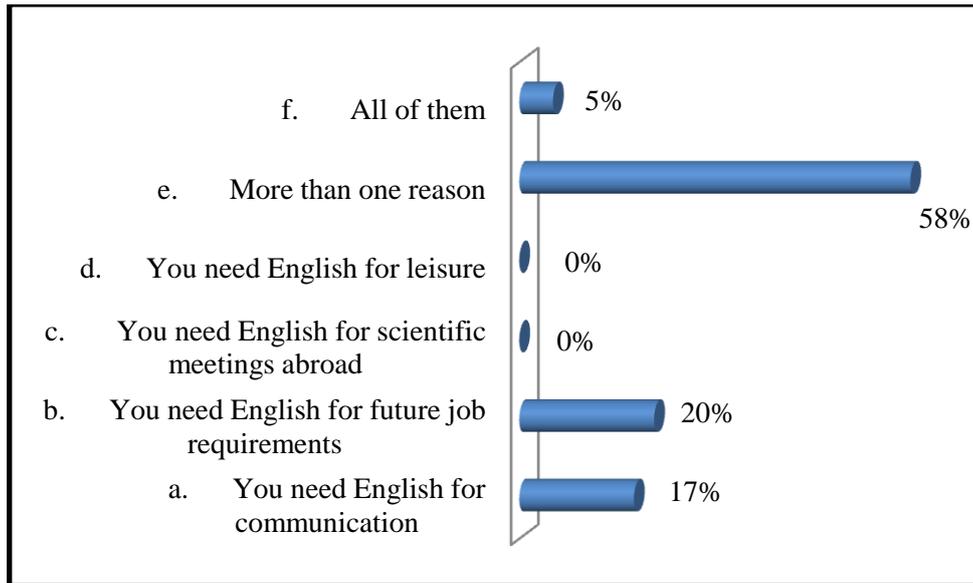


Figure 5: The students’ reasons behind choosing English rather than other languages

As the above statistics have shown, 17% of participants have chosen to study English because they need it for communication, 20% they need it for future requirements, 5% choose all of reasons as an answer and the rest 58% said that there are more than one reason.

-if others, please specify?

The answers provided by respondents have demonstrated that people choose to study English because of several reasons. Being considered as the most spread language in the world is a strong reason for some to choose English as a major, Whereas ;others choose simply because they love it. Others said that they enjoy learning English, that is why they have chosen it. That is, there are different reasons that encourages people to choose English as a major.

Section Two: Speaking Skill

Item 1. To what extent each of the following skills is important for you:

Option	Very important	Important	Somehow important	Not important at all
a. Listening	60%	27%	10%	3%
b. Speaking	72%	20%	5%	3%
c. Reading	42%	42%	16%	0%

d. Writing	55%	27%	8%	10%
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Table 5: The degree of importance of each of the language learning skills

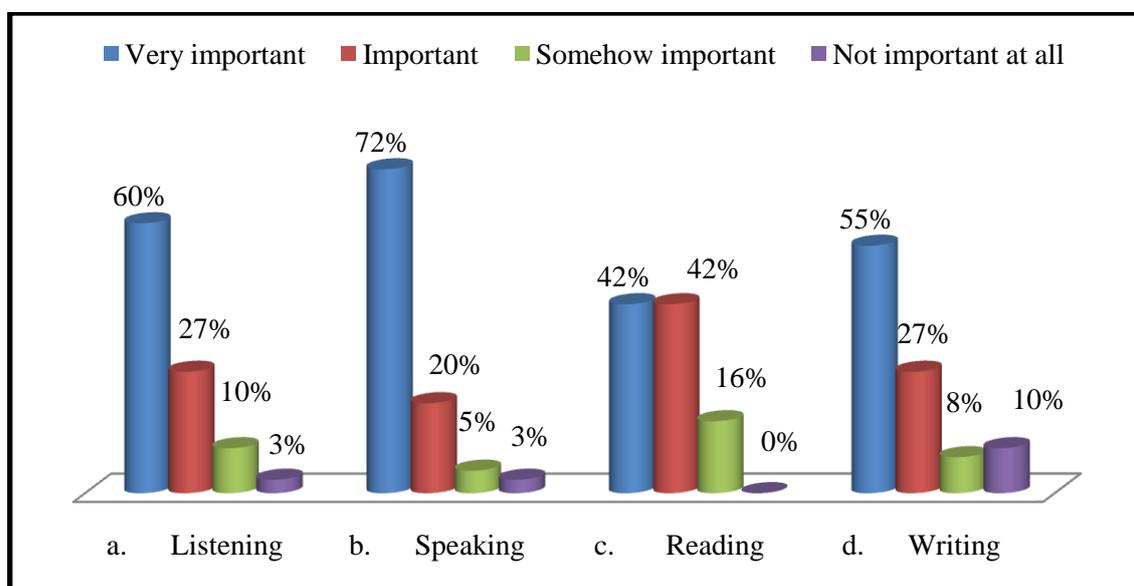


Figure 6: The degree of importance of each of the language learning skills

The above table reveals the students' classification of the four skills in terms of importance. First ,concerning listening skill 60% of the participants thought that is very important ,27% answered that it is important ,10% mentioned it as somehow important and the remained 3 %said it is not important at all .Second ,72% of the sample answered that speaking is very important ,20% said that it is important ,5% declare that it is somehow important and the rest 3% believe that speaking is not important at all . Third, 42% of the participants answered that reading is a very important skill , another 42% of them said that it is important and the remained 16% considered it somehow important . Finally,55% of the participants think that writing is very important skill ,27% of them say that it is an important ,8 %see it somehow important and 10% guess it is not important at all .From this results we may conclude that the majority of participants believe that speaking and listening are the most important skills among the four ones.

Item2.How do you find speaking in English?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Very easy	5	13%
b. Easy	19	47%

c. Difficult	16	40%
d. Very difficult	0	0%
Total	40	100%

Table 6: Students' attitudes towards speaking in English

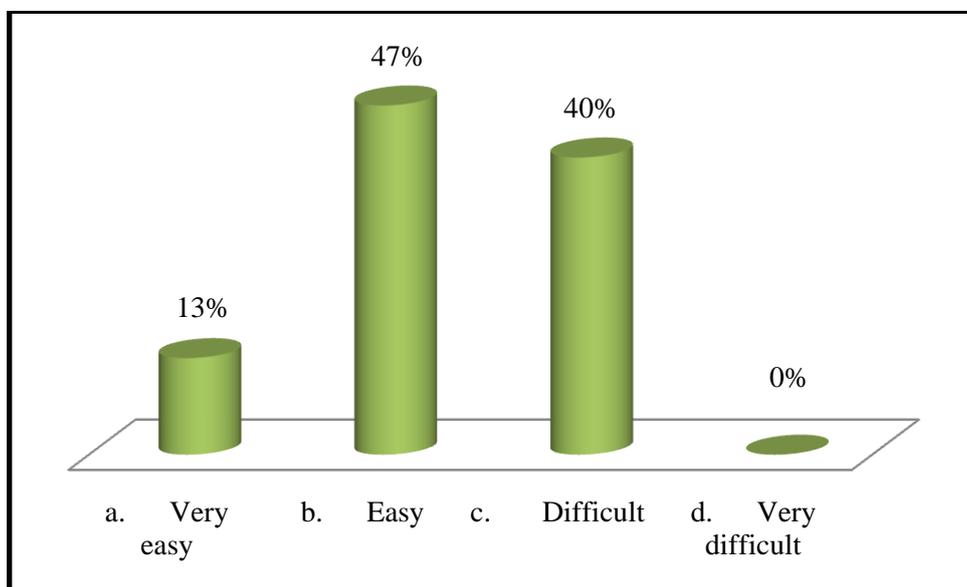


Figure 7: Students' attitudes towards speaking in English

The results have shown that 40% of participants find speaking in English difficult, 47% of them find it easy and only 13% who answered very easy. That reveals that many learners face difficulties in speaking English.

Item 3. Does your teacher encourage you to speak English?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	34	85%
b. No	6	15%
Total	40	100%

Table 7: Students' responses about whether their teacher encourages them to speak in English or not

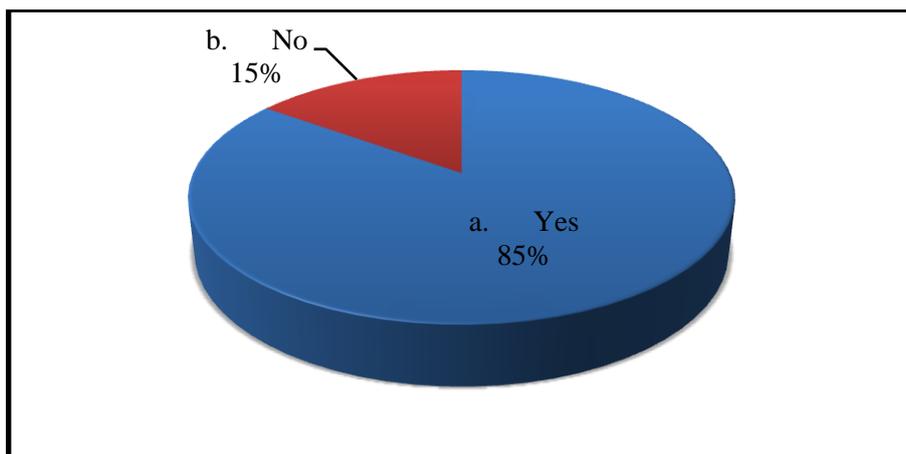


Figure 8: Students' responses about whether their teacher encourages them to speak in English or not

According to the table above, nearly the majority of our respondents 85% declared that their teachers encourages them to speak in English and only 15% of the participants said the opposite. The results reveals that the majority of teachers try to make sure that their learners are practicing speaking.

Item 4. What kind of difficulties do you face the most when speaking? (You may choose one option).

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Grammar	3	7%
b. Vocabulary	7	17%
c. Pronunciation	1	3%
d. Lack of confidence	3	8%
e. Lack of motivation	2	5%

f. More than one difficulty	23	57%
g. All of them	1	3%
Total	40	100%

Table 8: Types of difficulties that students face when speaking in English

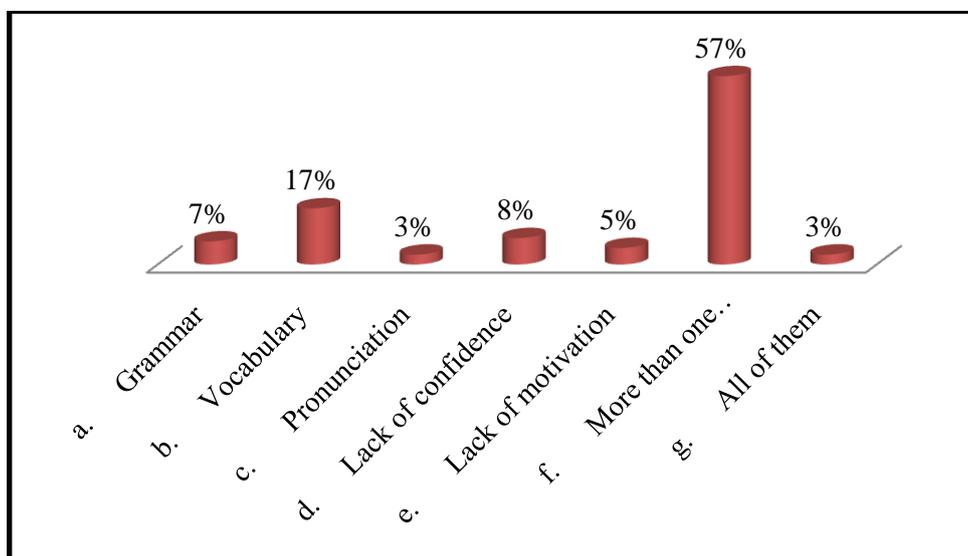


Figure 9: Types of difficulties that students face when speaking in English

The results in the table represent that 7% of the respondents find difficulties in grammar when they speak ,17%of them said that vocabulary is the main difficulty is vocabulary ,3% of them declare that pronunciation is their problem ,8% of the sample claimed that lack of confidence is the main obstacle in speaking ,5% choose lack of motivation and the rest (3 %) said all of the mentioned options .Whereas the majority of majority of our respondents 57%declared that there is more than more difficulty in speaking . This explains why many respondents said that speaking is difficult in Item 6.

Section Three: Listening Activities and the Speaking Skill

Item 1. Does your teacher give importance to developing listening skill?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	26	65%
b. No	14	35%
Total	40	100%

Table 9: Students' responses about whether their teacher give importance to developing listening skill or not

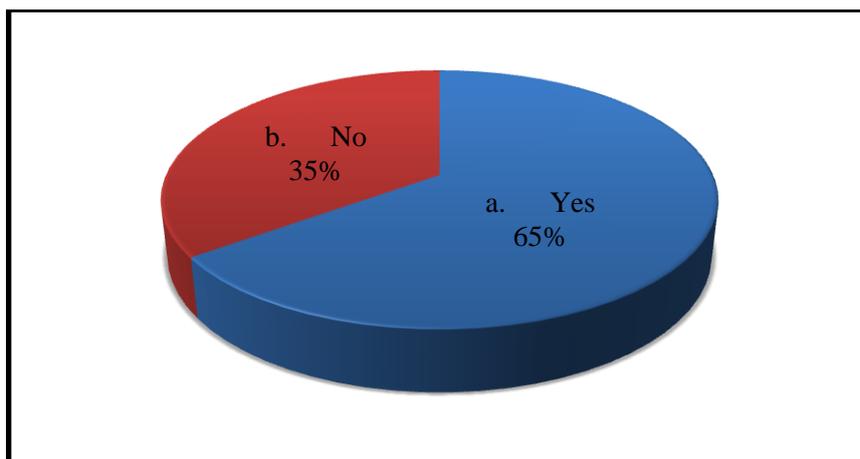


Figure 10: Students' responses about whether their teacher give importance to developing listening skill or not

The results in the above table show that 65% of the respondents declared that their teachers give importance to develop listening skill, whereas the remained 35% said that their teacher give no importance to improve this skill. This reflects that many teachers still give no importance to listening skill, and confirms this skill is being ignored in the teaching and learning process.

Item 2. How often does your teacher provide you with listening activities?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Always	2	5%
b. Sometimes	17	42%
c. Often	10	25%
d. Rarely	9	23%
e. Never	2	5%
Total	40	100%

Table 10: Frequency of teacher's listening activities

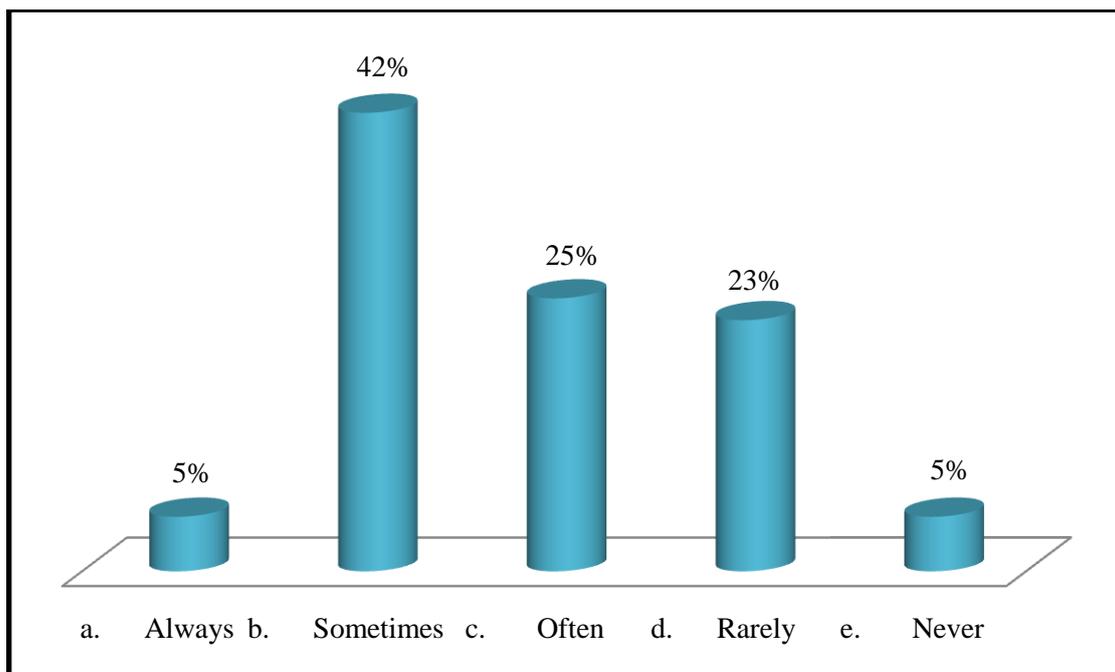


Figure 11: Frequency of teacher's listening activities

The above table shows that only 5% of our respondents declare that they are always provided with listening activities, 42% of them said sometimes, 25% said often, 23% answered rarely and the remaining 5% declared that they are not provided with listening activities in class at all. This supports the results of the previous item and confirms that listening skill is still being ignored by some teachers in the learning and teaching process.

Item 3. Do you think listening activities are useful in improving speaking?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	36	90%
b. No	4	10%
Total	40	100%

Table 11: The usefulness of listening activities in improving speaking skills from students' point of view

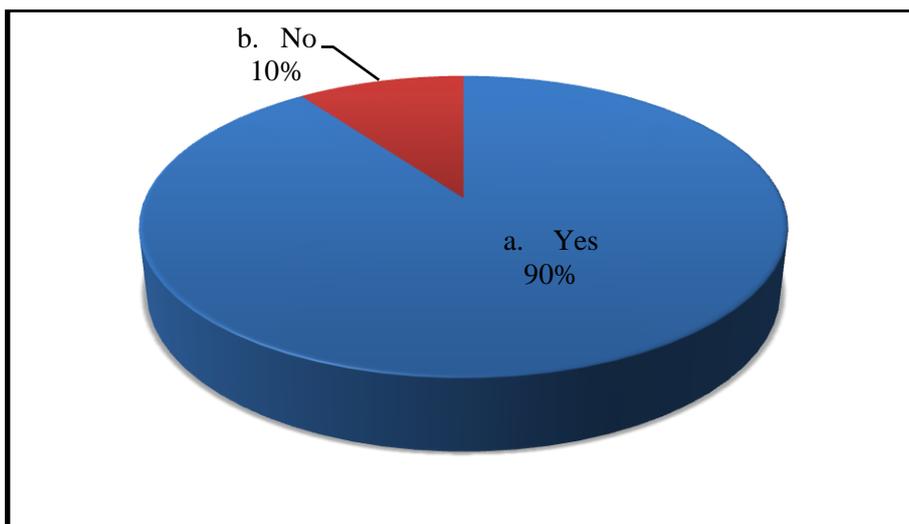


Figure 12: The usefulness of listening activities in improving speaking skills from students' point' of view

As the above statistic have shown, the majority of our respondents who represent 90% of the whole sample say yes, whereas the remained 10% declare the opposite. This reveals that most students are aware about the importance of listening activities in improving speaking skill.

Item 4. Learners can improve speaking through listening

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Strongly agree	16	40%
b. Agree	22	55%
c. Neither agree or disagree	2	5%
d. Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	40	100%

Table 12: Students' agreement about whether they can improve speaking through listening or not

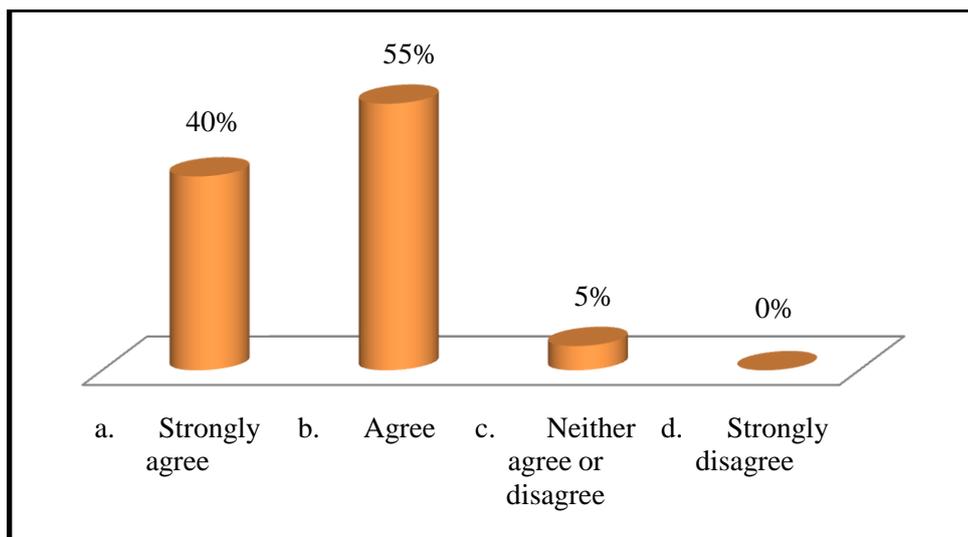


Figure 13: Students' agreement about whether they can improve speaking through listening or not

The table above demonstrates that 40% of the whole sample said that they strongly agree with the idea that says that it is possible to improve speaking through listening, and 55% of them said they agree, however; the remaining 5% choose to be neutral and said neither agree nor disagree. This result supports the results of the previous item and confirms that most students are aware about the importance of listening especially in improving speaking.

Item 5. Do you face difficulties in listening?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	15	38%
b. No	25	62%
Total	40	100%

Table 13: Students' responses about whether they face listening difficulties or not

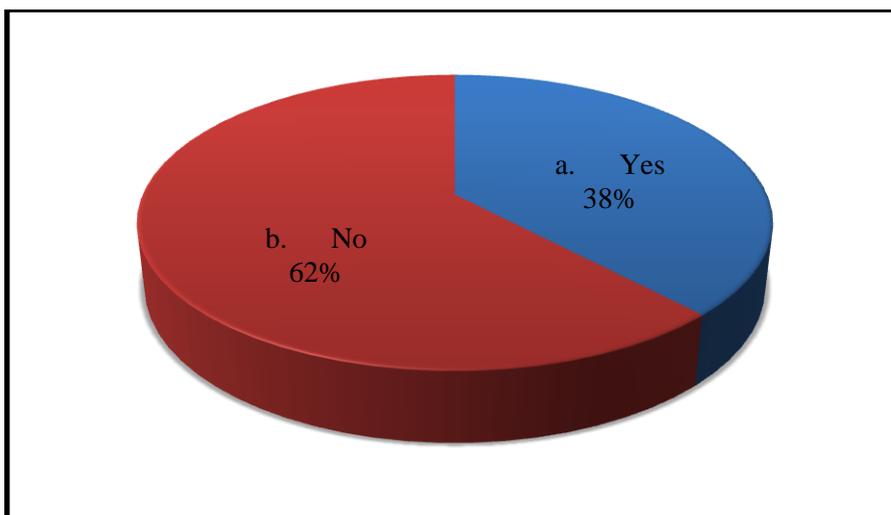


Figure 14: Students' responses about whether they face listening difficulties or not

According to the above table, 62% of the respondents declared that they do not face any difficulties while listening. 38% said they do have difficulties. For those who answered by saying yes, we asked them to mention these difficulties. Most responses were related to speed of pronunciation, bad quality of sound and the use of different accents and dialects.

Item 6. What type of listening activities your teacher provides you with? (You may tick more than one option).

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Listen and complete	3	8%
b. Listen and discuss	14	35%
c. Tongue twisters	0	0%
d. Dictate and write	3	7%
e. More than one activity	18	45%
f. All of them	2	5%
Total	40	100%

Table 14: Types of listening activities that teachers use

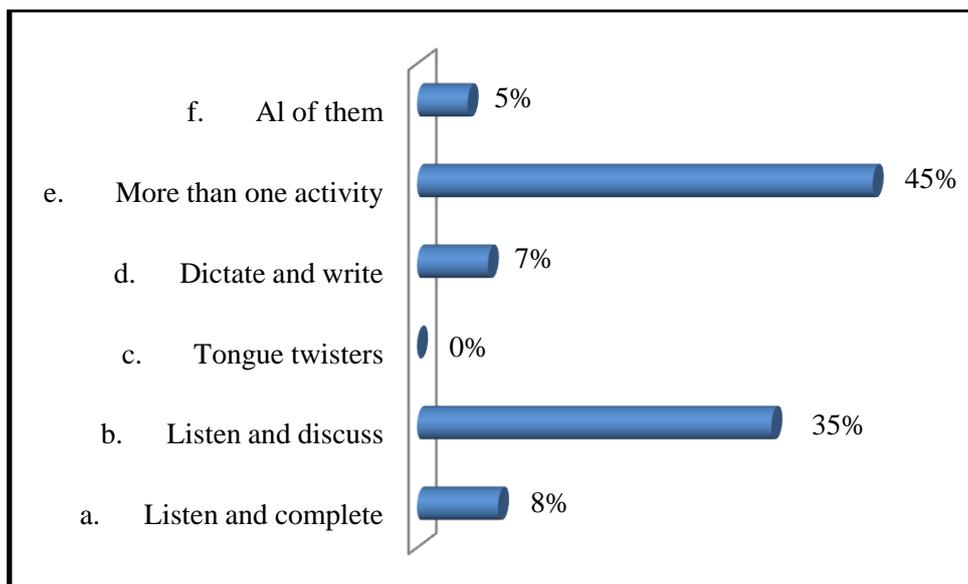


Figure 15: Types of listening activities that teachers use

The results have shown that 45% of respondents are provided with different types of listening activities. Only 5% of them was exposed to all the activities mentioned as suggestions. 7% of them selected dictate and write as the listening activity used by their teachers the most. 35% of the participants said listen and discuss and the rest 8% said listen and complete is the regular listening activity they are provided with in sessions. To get deeper we ask if there are other activities teachers use. The answers were mainly related to listening and repeating and dictation. That reveals that teachers try to provide their students with different types of listening activities but they still depend on the traditional ones.

Item 7. How often you practice listening outside the classroom?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Always	3	8%
b. Often	11	27%
c. Sometimes	19	47%
d. Rarely	6	15%
e. Never	1	3%
Total	40	100%

Table 15: Frequency of students' listening practice outside the classroom

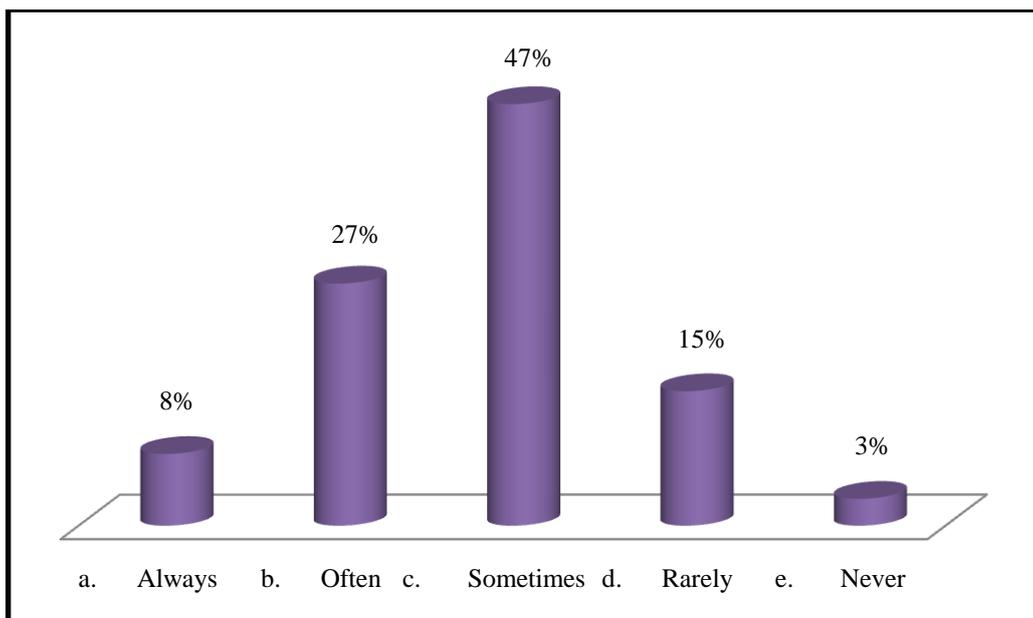


Figure16: Frequency of students' listening practice outside the classroom

Based on students' answers , 8% of the respondents do always practice listening outside classroom ,27% often do that ,47%of them said sometimes and 15%said rarely whereas the remained3% declare that they never practice listening outside classroom .This also confirms the previous results about the high awareness that students have toward the importance of listening in or out of the classroom. This means that the majority of student do not give much importance to developing listening skill outside of the classroom.

Item 8. Do you think the time devoted to the listening skill is sufficient?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	21	52%
b. No	18	45%
c. No answer	1	3%
Total	40	100%

Table 16: Students' responses about whether the time devoted to the listening skill is sufficient or not

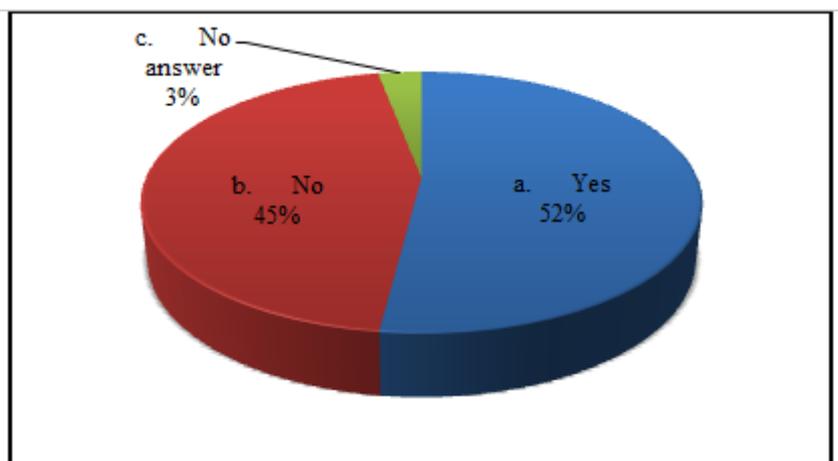


Figure 17: Students' responses about whether the time devoted to the listening skill is sufficient or not

More than half of the respondents 52% declare that the time devoted to listening activities is sufficient and 45% of them said that it is not sufficient ,whereas the remained 3% gave no answer .For those who said no we asked them to suggest. Most suggestions were about dedicating more time to listening activities ,others said that it is better if there are whole sessions devoted only to listening . In the other hand , several respondents who think that students themselves should practice listening outside classroom and should not only count on what the teacher provides.

Item 9. Would you please suggest some listening activities to develop speaking skill?

This question was mainly added to show students' point of view about the main listening activities that should be used by teachers .Their answers reveals that students prefer the use of different kind of materials such as : songs , podcasts , audio books , conversations of natives ,broadcasts, poems ,TV shows ,captioned movie, repetition drills... Etc. Others suggest activities such as : Dubbing , dialogues , interview , what is the different word ,follow the directions ,listen and fill the gaps, guess the word, complete the missing letters, and spot the change .Many respondents stressed the importance of the use of authentic material and group work in such activities . From the respondents' suggestions ,we notice that they are looking for new ways and materials and creative activities to be motivated and learn effectively .

3.2. Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

Section One: General Information

Item 1. Would you specify your gender, please?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
c. Female	2	50%
d. Male	2	50%
Total	4	100%

Table 17: Teachers' gender

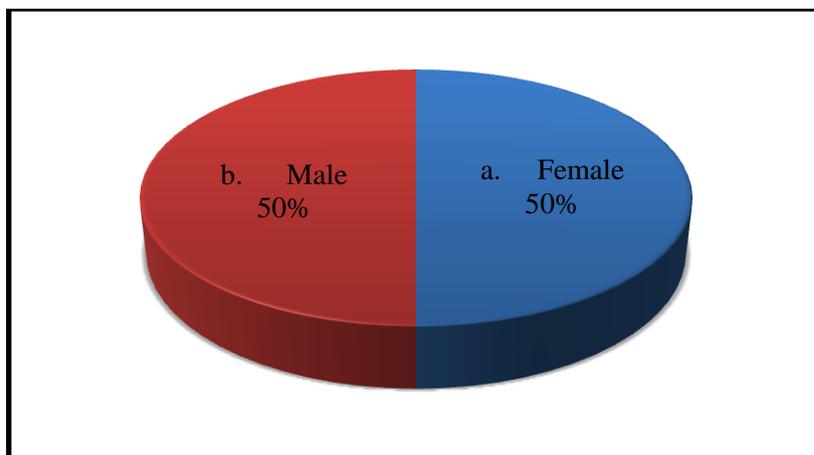


Figure 18: Teachers' gender

As the above table has shown, half of the respondents are males whereas the other half are females. This means that teaching at university attracts both genders ,and both males and females have equal opportunities in teaching oral expression sessions .

Item2.Would you specify your qualification, please?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Ma	3	75%
b. Doctorate	1	25%
Total	4	100%

Table 18: Teachers' qualification

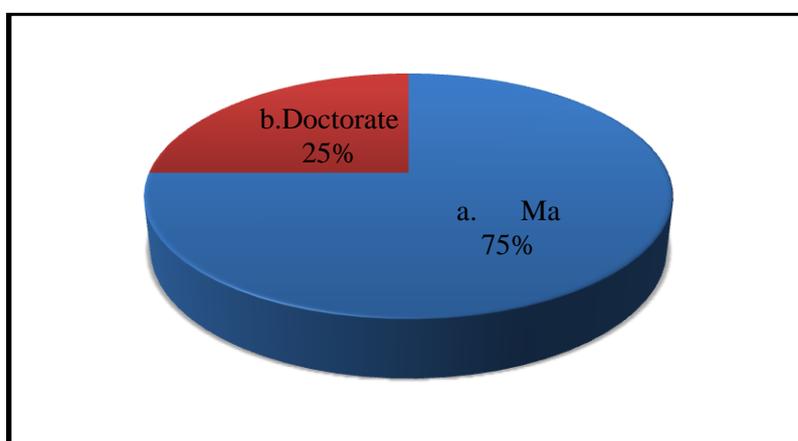


Figure 19: Teachers' qualification

According to the table above ,25%of the respondents have doctorate degree ,whereas the remained 75% have master degree and working on their PhD. That show how qualified our teachers are and also reveals that the majority of them are young.

Item 3. How long have you been teaching oral expression?

- 1 year
- 4 years
- 6 years
- 7 years

According to the answers provided by our respondents, we may say that most of the teachers who teach L1 level have experience in teaching oral expression and that mean that students benefit from their experience. At the same time, new teachers are also giving opportunities to work with new students.

Section Two: Teachers and Speaking Activities

Item 1. Do you encounter any difficulties while teaching speaking activities?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	4	100%
b. No	0	0%
Total	4	100%

Table 19: The existence of any difficulties while teaching speaking activities

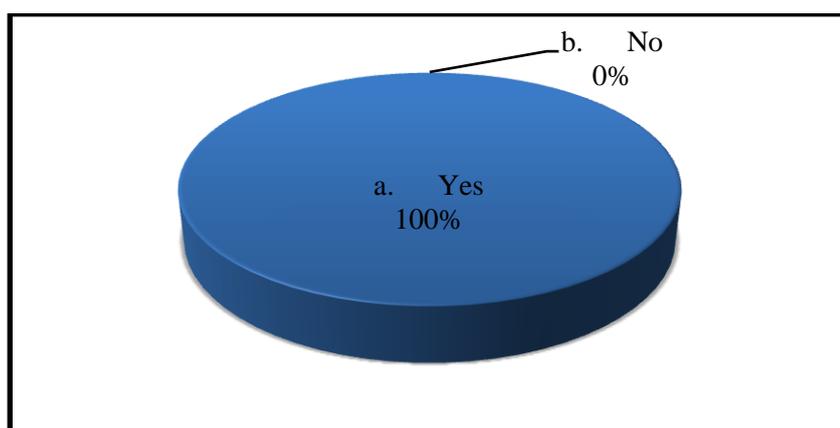


Figure 20: The existence of any difficulties while teaching speaking activities

The table demonstrates that all the respondents100% agree that they face difficulties while teach speaking .For the sake of getting deeper in this item we ask them about the difficulties they used to face .The answers that provided by teachers show that

most common difficulties that teachers face while teaching speaking are :the absence of labs and needed equipments ,the limited willingness of students to communicate in the target language and their low level in accuracy and fluency, in addition to; students hesitation and the hardship of providing instant feedback and lack of interest toward this activities .This shows that teachers are struggling with students as well as the absence of the necessary setting and materials .

Item 5. How would you evaluate your students’ level in speaking?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Poor	0	0%
b. Average	4	100%
c. Good	0	0%
d. Excellent	0	0%
Total	4	100%

Table 20: Teachers’ evaluation of their students’ level in speaking

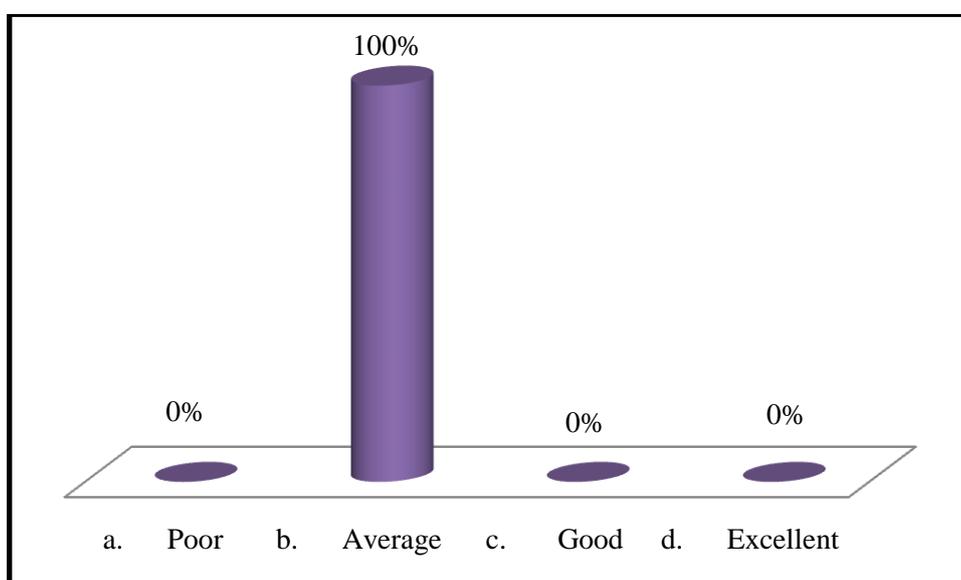


Figure 21: Teachers’ evaluation of their students’ level in speaking

The results in the table revealed that all teachers 100% answered to the questionnaire believe that students’ level of speaking is average, unlike what most students think about their level. The teachers’ evaluation explains why 40%of the students’ sample declared that speaking in English is difficult .

Item 6. What are the major difficulties EFL learners face when speaking? You may choose more than one option.

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Inhibition	0	0%
b. Nothing to say	0	0%
c. Low uneven participation	0	0%
d. Mother tongue use	0	0%
e. More than one difficulty	4	100%
Total	4	100%

Table 21: The major difficulties EFL learners face when speaking from teachers' point of view

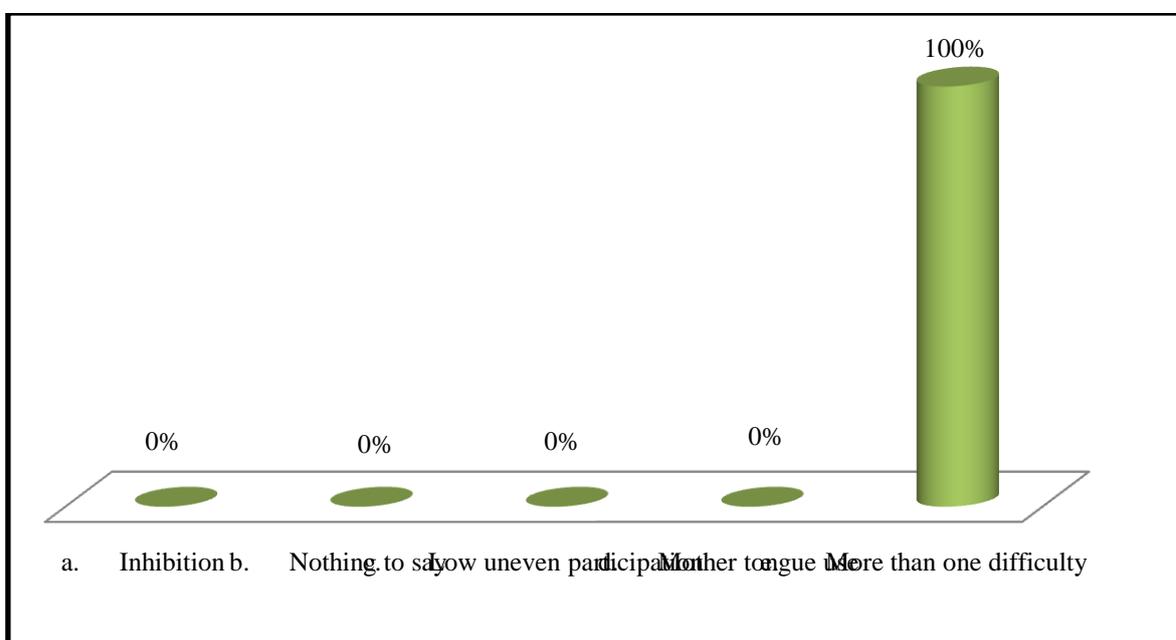


Figure 22: The major difficulties EFL learners face when speaking from teachers' point of view

In this item ,also; we noticed that all respondents 100% believed that their students struggle with more than one difficulty and that what makes developing this skill a difficult task for both teachers and students .

Item 7. According to you, what is the main reason behind students speaking difficulties?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
e. Poor linguistic competence	1	25%
f. Lack of practice	0	0%
g. Lack of guidance	0	0%
h. Fear of making mistakes	1	25%
i. Lack of exposure to the English language	2	50%
Total	4	100%

Table 22: The main reason behind students speaking difficulties from teachers' point of view

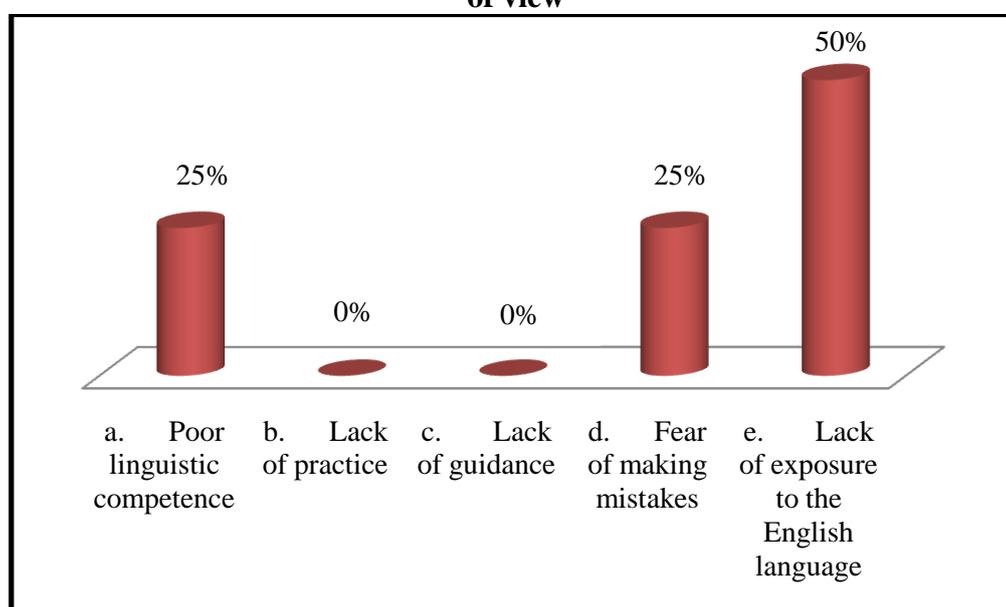


Figure 23: The main reason behind students speaking difficulties from teachers' point of view

The results demonstrated that 25% of the respondents think that poor linguistic competence is the reason behind students' speaking difficulties. Another 25% of them think that the fear of making mistakes is the main reason, and the lack of exposure to the English language was the main reason according to the remaining 50%. That means that the majority of teachers stress the importance of being exposed to the target language in order to develop students' speaking abilities.

Section Three: Teachers and Listening Activities

Item 1. How do you find teaching listening activities?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Easy	2	50%
b. Difficult	2	50%
Total	4	100%

Table 23: Teachers' attitudes towards teaching listening activities

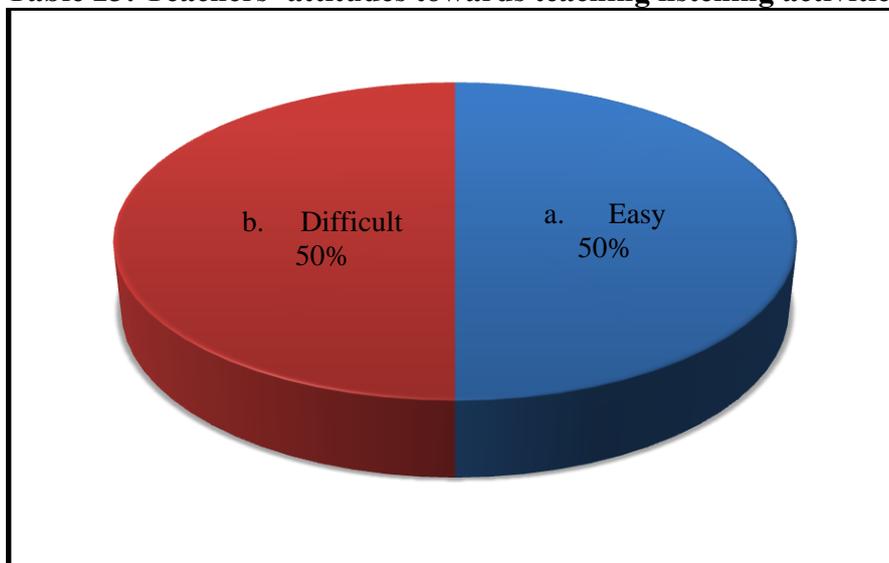


Figure24: Teachers' attitudes towards teaching listening activities

Depending on the results above, half of the respondents 50% found teaching listening is easy, justifying their answers by saying that they use the appropriate teaching. Others said that the receptive skills are easy to teach compared to productive skills. In the other hand, the remained half 50% declare that teaching listening is difficult due to the absence of equipped labs and that teacher cannot grasp students' interest void, others said that teaching listening is difficult because of the different learning styles that students have in one class.

Item 2. How often do you encounter difficulties when teaching listening activities?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Always	2	50%
b. Sometimes	2	50%
c. Rarely	0	0%
d. Never	0	0%
Total	4	100%

Table 24: Teachers' frequency of encountering difficulties when teaching listening activities

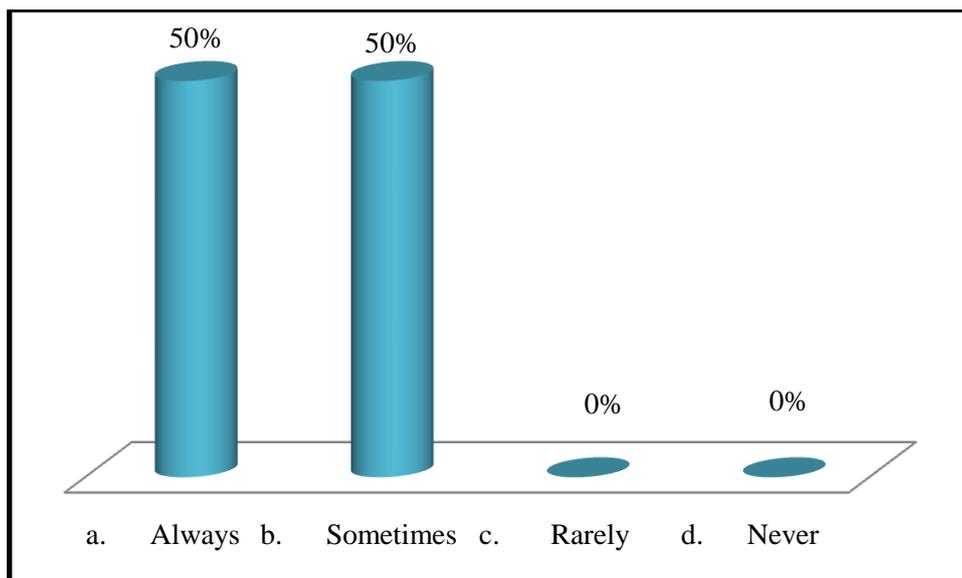


Figure 25: Teachers' frequency of encountering difficulties when teaching listening activities

The table above represents that half of the respondents 50% declared that they always have difficulties when teaching listening activities .The other half of the sample 50% said not always but sometimes.This explains why this skill is also hard to be learnt as students have declared previously.

Item3. What are the main difficulties that you face when teaching listening activities?

According to teachers' answers, we noticed that the difficulties in listening are various .Almost60% of this difficulties are related to the setting such as the absence of laps, the inappropriate rooms , crowded classes .The remained 40%difficulties are related to the students themselves such as :the poor level in the target language ,low exposer to the target language and also the low level of interest and motivation toward listening activities .The last type of difficulties related to teachers such as the difficulty of selecting the appropriate material that works with all kind of learners ,in addition to the preparation which needs more time and effort and the hard evaluation comparing to other activities .All these difficulties makes teaching listening a hard mission for all teachers.

Item 4. How would you evaluate your students' level in listening?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Poor	0	0%
b. Average	4	100%
c. Good	0	0%
d. Excellent	0	0%
Total	4	100%

Table25: Teachers' evaluation of their students level in listening

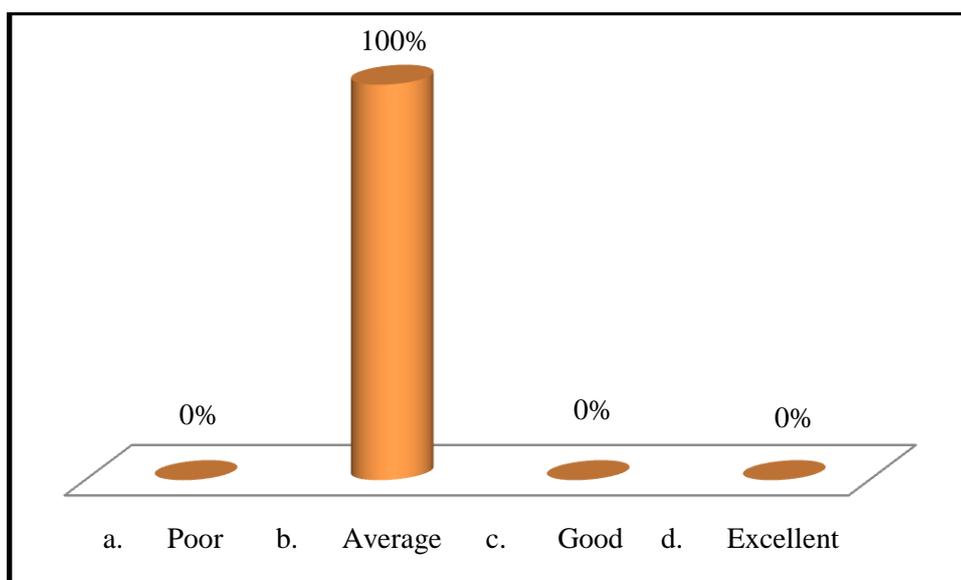


Figure26: Teachers' evaluation of their students' level in listening

According to the results shown in the table, all respondents 100% have agreed that the level of their students in listening is average .Probably because of the difficulties teachers as well as learners encounter during teaching and learning process .

Item 5. What affects students' listening skill the most?

Option	Respondents	Percentage
f. Listener factors	1	25%
g. Speaker factors	1	25%
h. Situational factors	2	50%
Total	4	100%

Table 26: The main factors that affect students' listening skills from teachers' point of view

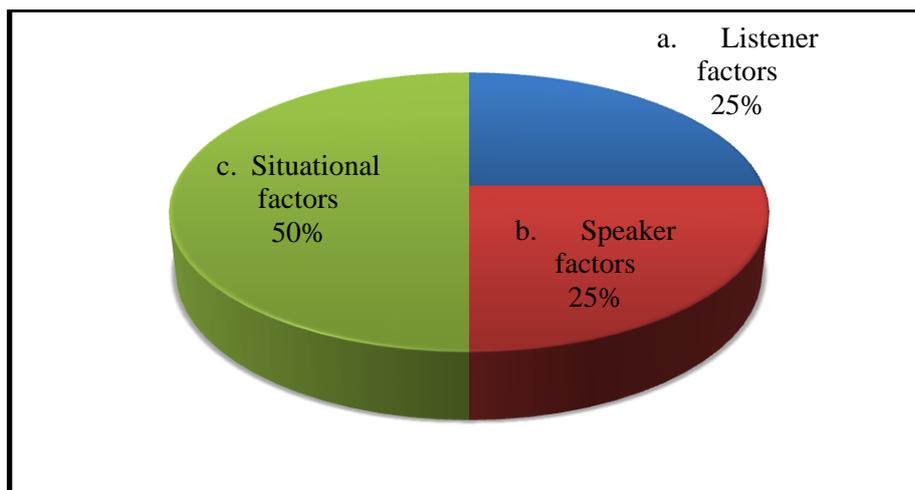


Figure 27: The main factors that affect students' listening skills from teachers' point of view

The results above represented that 25% of the respondents believed that listener factors are the main factors that affect students' listening skill .They explained that students should not count on what is provided in classes and must be exposed to the target language outside in order to develop this skill .Another 25%of them declared that situational factors has more effect on listening skill and they have justified their answer saying that Comprehending the situation makes listening easier .Others said that the setting and the context in which the listening takes place affect this process .The remained 50% have chosen listener factors as the most affecting factors on listening ,justifying their answer saying that aspects such as : pronunciation and accent and rate of delivery which cannot be controlled only by the speaker determine the success of listening.

Item 13. What are the major difficulties EFL learners face while listening activities?

Depending on the teachers' answers, it is clear that the listening difficulties that students struggle with are numerous. These difficulties can be related to many aspects.For example, stress is a psychological issue, lack of motivation (lack of interest and distraction), low level of linguistic competence (difficulties in understanding the spoken language and the new words and expression and not being able to link between them). Difficulties related to speaker (pronunciation ,speed of delivery ,accent ..) and the lack of equipments and the necessary materials .All of the mentioned difficulties plays a vital role in making listening difficult .

Section Three: Listening Activities and Students' Speaking Skill

Item 1. Do you think that the time devoted to teach oral expression is enough to develop both speaking and listening skills?

Option	Percentage	Percentage
a. Yes	1	25%
b. No	3	75%
Total	4	100%

Table 27: Teachers' responses about whether the time devoted to teach oral expression is enough to develop both speaking and listening skills or not

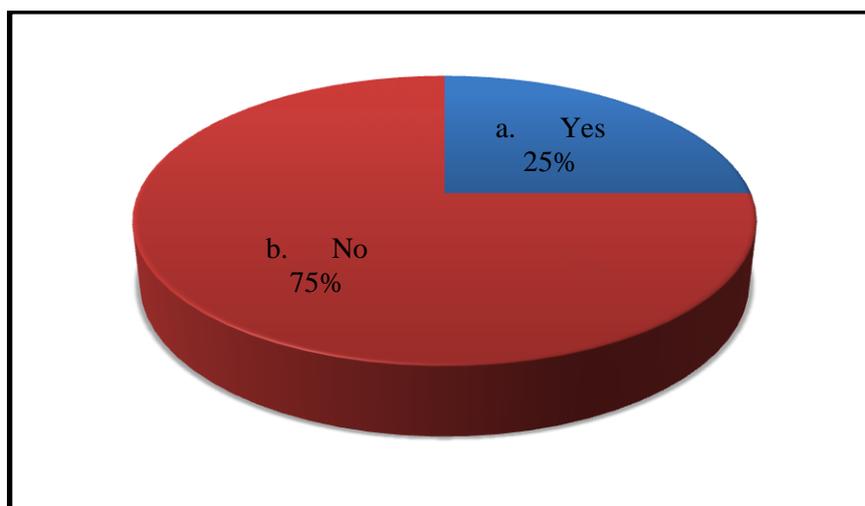


Figure 28: Teachers' responses about whether the time devoted to teach oral expression is enough to develop both speaking and listening skills or not

The statistics in the table demonstrated that nearly the majority of respondents 75% believed that the time devoted to oral sessions is not sufficient to develop speaking and listening and the remained 25% of them claimed that the time is sufficient .This means that the majority of teachers are aware about the importance of listening skill and believe that it deserves much more time and interest.

Item2. A good listener is a good speaker

Option	Percentage	Percentage
a. Strongly agree	4	100%
b. Agree	0	0%
c. Neither agree or disagree	0	0%
d. Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	4	100%

Table 28: The degree of teachers' agreement about whether a good listener is a good speaker or not

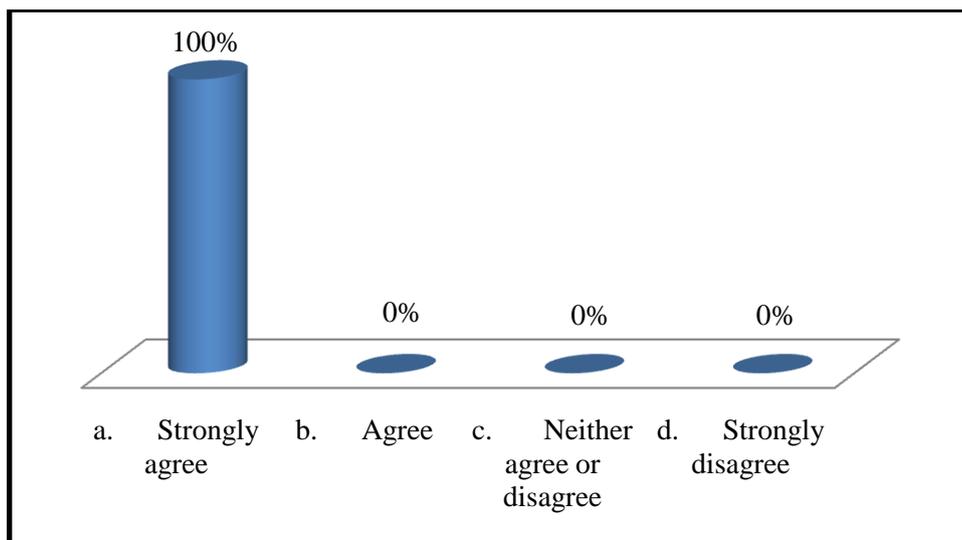


Figure 29: The degree of teachers' agreement about whether a good listener is a good speaker or not

According to the table above, all the respondents 100% strongly agreed with the statement saying that a good listener is a good speaker. This results as the previous one revealed that our teachers are highly aware about the importance of listening activities in developing speaking abilities of the students.

Item 3. What are the listening activities that you usually provide your learners with?

According to the answers of teachers, we have noticed that they try to use various types of listening activities depending on the aim and the exist of the material needed. The following activities was giving by respondents : role play, conversations, listening to short stories, English podcasts, videos, listening comprehension activities, and critical listening activities, gap filling, true / false and jigsaw listening. We have noticed that there is diversity in types of listening activities used; however, the absence of laps still a difficulty that makes teachers' choices limited.

Item 4. According to you, how can listening activities help in improving speaking skill?

From the answers provided by teachers, we have noticed that all of them agree on the positive impact of listening on speaking skill. According to them, listening effects the speaking proficiency in many ways such as acquiring new vocabulary, correcting pronunciation, increasing the awareness of the target language, improving grammatical accuracy and progress their linguistic competence. So, listening affects many aspects in language and eventually leads to the development of it.

Conclusion

As a conclusion to this chapter, the research finding of both students' and teachers feedback concerning the importance of listening activities and its significant role in developing EFL students' speaking abilities were positive. It has confirmed the hypothesis of the study which says that listening activities are necessary in the development of speaking skill. Improving the oral production through listening is a useful technique that teachers as well as students have to give more attention not only in classroom but also outside. This kind of activities provides students with necessary aspects that will help them in enhancing their oral production of the target language.

General conclusion

The present work aims at highlighting the importance of listening activities in improving EFL student's speaking. In this research, it was hypothesized that listening activities are necessary in order to develop the student's oral production. The implementation of this kind of activities creates situations where learners are highly exposed to the target language which first will improve their listening and in turn helps in fostering speaking abilities because of the strong relationship between the two skills.

The current research consists of two chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the theoretical part which reviews related literature and it is purely descriptive. Whereas, the second chapter presents the practical part through administering questionnaires to both students, and teachers of L1 students of English at Mohamed Khider Biskra University. On one hand, The first chapter is mainly about the different aspects of both speaking and listening skills such as : definitions, importance, types, difficulties and so forth...etc. On the other hand, the second chapter includes the analysis and interpretation of data gathered from the questionnaires submitted to students and teachers.

Hence, the obtained results confirmed the aforementioned hypothesis; there exist a positive relationship between the two skills and a significant influence from the part of listening activities on the progress of learners' speaking abilities. The findings that have been presented in this work show that the implementation of listening activities in EFL classes plays a crucial role in enhancing the student's oral production

On the light of these findings, we may illustrate the gist of this entire study in the following points: (1) Students as well as teachers should give more attention and interest to the listening skill in the learning and teaching process especially of speaking skill .(2) EFL teachers should give their students the opportunity to be exposed to the target language through listening activities .(3) Teachers' responsibility is to choose various kinds of listening activities that may encourage students to engage in teaching and learning process . (4) Teachers' role is to make their students aware about the relationship between listening and speaking.

More importantly, this research is not conducted only to help students in the betterment of their speaking skill, but also to remind teachers the importance of listening and its implementation in the process of teaching and learning the English language.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study mainly conducted as an attempt to shed light on the importance of listening activities in developing EFL student's speaking skill. The results found through this research have strongly confirmed that student's speaking abilities can be enormously enhanced through the implementation of listening activities and that what makes is highly important, in the same time this confirms our research's hypothesis. Depending on these findings, a set of recommendations can be set down:

1. Teachers should be aware of the importance of listening activities in teaching speaking since it fosters student's listening skill first and then lead to the development of student's oral production.
2. EFL teachers should select various and interesting listening activities to engage the students in the learning process and motivate them to speak and listen.
3. Syllabus designers should integrate listening activities as a pedagogical tool in textbooks because of its positive effect on the development of speaking proficiency of learners.
4. Teachers need to pay attention more to the material used in listening activities i.e. aspects such as: pronunciation, sound quality and the accent or the dialect used .
5. Teachers should devote more time to practise listening; they may also devote a whole session to listening activities because of its impact on students' speaking abilities.
6. Teachers should make their students aware of the importance of listening in language in general and speaking improvement in particular .
7. Students need to engage in speaking and listening activities with their teachers so that they reduce their problems in both skills.
8. Students should practice listening not only in classroom but also outside because the exposer to the target language continuously helps in its betterment.
9. Students should give more attention to listening activities and try to focus with their teachers
10. Laps and equipment are necessary for effective listening activities .

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Appendix 1

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

You are kindly requested to answer the following questions for the purpose of our study which investigates **The Importance of Listening Activities in Developing EFL Learners Speaking Skill**. We inform you that the answers you provide will certainly remain confidential and will only be used for the research purposes.

Section one: General information

Item 1. Would you specify your gender, please?

- a. Female
- b. Male

Item 2. Would you specify your age, please?

.....

Item 3. How do you consider your level in English?

- a. Very good
- c. Average
- b. Good
- d. Poor

Item 4- What are the reasons that led you to choose English rather than other languages ?
(you may tick more than one option).

- a. You need English for communication
- b. You need English for future job requirements.
- c. You need English for scientific meetings abroad.
- d. You need English for leisure.

If others, please specify

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.....

Section two: Speaking skill

Item 1. To what extent each of the following skills is important for you?

options	Speaking	Listening	Writing	Reading
Very important				
Important				
Somehow important				
Not important at all				

Item 2. Do you find speaking in English :

- a. Easy c. Difficult b. Very easy d. Very difficult

Item 3. Does your teacher encourage you to speak English ?

- a. Yes
b. No

Item 4. what kind of difficulties you face the most when speaking ?(you may tick more than one option).

- a. Grammar
b. Vocabulary
c. Pronunciation
d. Lack of confidence
e. Lack of motivation
f. More than one difficulty
g. All of them

Section Three : Listening activities and the speaking skill

Item 1. Do you your teacher give importance to developing listening skill?

- a. Yes
b. No

Item 2.How often does your teacher provide you with listening activities?

- a. Always
- d. Rarely
- b. Often
- e. Never
- c. Sometimes

Item 3.Do you think listening activities are useful in improving speaking ?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Item 4.learners can improve speaking through listening

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Strongly disagree

Item 5.Do you face difficulties in listening?

- a. Yes
- b. No

if yes say what are they

.....

.....

.....

Item 6.what type of listening activities your teacher provide you with ?(you may tick more than one option).

- a. Listen and complete
- b. Listen and discuss
- c. Tongue twisters
- d. Dictate and write
- e. More than one activity
- f. All of them

Item 7.How often you practice listening outside classroom

a. Always d. Rarely

b. Often e. Never

c. Sometimes

Item 8.Do you think the time devoted to the listening skill is sufficient?

a. Yes

b. No

. If no, what do you suggest?

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.....
.....

Item 9.Would you please suggest some listening activities to develop the speaking skill ?

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Appendix2

Teachers' questionnaire

Dear teacher,

This questionnaire aims at collecting data about **The Importance of Listening Activities in Developing EFL Learners Speaking Skill**. We would be very grateful if you could take some time to provide us with some answers. Your answers are very important for the success of this work. Thank you for advance for your collaboration .

Your answer are voluntary and will be confidential .Responses will not be identified by individuals . All answers will be compiled together and analysed as group.

Section one: General information

Item 1 Would you specify your gender, please?.

a. Male

b. Female

Item2. Would you specify your qualification, please?

a. MA

b. Doctorate

Item 3. How long have you been teaching oral expression session ?

.....

Section two: Teachers and Speaking activities

Item 1. Do you encounter difficulties while teaching speaking activities?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes say what are they ?

.....

.....

.....

Item 2. How would you evaluate your students' level in speaking?

a. Poor

b. Average

- c. Good
- d. Excellent

Item 3.What are the major difficulties EFL learners face when speaking? You may choose more than one option.

- a. Inhibition
- b. Nothing to say
- c. Low uneven participation
- d. Mother tongue use
- e. More than one difficulty

Item 4. According to you, what is the main reason behind students speaking difficulties?

- a. Poor linguistic competence
- b. Lack of practice
- c. Lack of guidance
- d. Fear of making mistakes
- e. Lack of exposure to the English language

Section three : Teachers and listening activities

Item 1.How do find teaching listening activities?

- a. Easy
- b. difficult

Please justify your answer

.....

.....

Item 2. How often do you encounter difficulties when teaching listening activities?

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Rarely

d. Never

Item 3. What are the main difficulties that you face when teaching listening activities?

.....
.....;
...

Item 4. How would you evaluate your students' level in listening?

- a. Poor
- b. Average
- c. Good
- d. Excellent

Item 5. What affects students' listening skill the most?

- a. Listener factors
- b. Speaker factors
- c. Situational factors

Please justify ?

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Item 6. What are the major difficulties EFL learners face while listening activities?.....

Section three: listening activities and students' speaking skill

Item 1- Do you think that the devoted time to oral expression session is enough to develop both speaking and listening skills ?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Item 2 . A good listener is a good speaker .

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree or disagree

d. Strongly disagree

Item 3. What are the listening activities that you usually provide your learners with?

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Item 4. According to you, how can listening activities help in improving speaking skill?

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Thank you for your collaboration and precious time.