

Learners' Challenges and Problems in English Listening Skill (A Study on Students at King Faisal University)

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Abstract:

The goal of the study is to understand the issues and difficulties King Faisal University students encounter at the Applied College when they are learning English listening skills, as well as the strategies they employ to get past these difficulties. This study is significant because it will shed light on the difficulties that students encounter when learning English listening skills, which will benefit King Faisal University, English language instructors, curriculum designers, and researchers. King Faisal University will be aware of the academic standing of its students and might offer native English speakers positions as English language instructors. In order to determine averages, examine causality, and make broader demographic generalizations, the researcher employed a quantitative technique by applying the random sampling of male and female English 101 and 102 students enrolled in the Applied College at King Faisal University in the second semester of 2024. The study's findings indicate that while Saudi female students have more challenges than their male counterparts, both genders in the country have trouble learning English listening skills. The study's recommendations are based on its findings, which include enhancing listening techniques, giving universities and schools the tools they need to teach English listening skills, and pushing students to raise their proficiency levels in the language.

Keywords: Listening comprehension, listening difficulties, EFL learners, Listening skill

1. Introduction:

Our major means of communication are words. It is the process by which we communicate our ideas and opinions to other people. English is not the only language used in English-speaking nations. Thousands of languages are spoken throughout the world, but English is the most common tongue. It's the language of Hollywood, global commerce, international banking, education, the internet, and the press. Worldwide, there are over 1.5 billion speakers of this language.

English is not an easy language to learn, though. To become proficient communicators, students studying English must master four key competencies. They are writing, speaking, listening, and reading. It is acknowledged that listening is the most crucial skill among them all. According to Mendelsohn (1994), listening takes for 40–50% of the total time spent on communication; speaking takes for 25–30%; reading takes for 11–16%; and writing takes for approximately 9%.

The act of hearing intently is called listening. Studies reveal that we spend 45 % of our time listening. More often than not, we listen than we say. By employing listening skills appropriately, we can become proficient in using the instruments of communication. Because the mind is prone to distraction, listening can be challenging. A person who practices mental self-control and careful listening has additional benefits and talents. "Listening is an important skill because successful communication depends on not only receiving messages but also correctly decoding them," according to Guo and Will (2006). Speaking, according to Chaney and Burk (1998), is the act of creating and conveying meaning in a range of situations by utilizing verbal or nonverbal symbols. According to Florez (1999), who had a similar perspective, speaking is an "interactive" process that involves three primary phases: "producing, receiving, and processing information."

Being able to listen well helps you succeed at job, in your family, and in society. A career in sales, management, planning, or communications requires the ability to listen well. A distinct set of netiquettes, asking clarifying questions, demonstrating empathy, and responding appropriately are all part of listening abilities. Understanding is one of the components of strong listening skills. Listening skills also include body language. A good listener makes eye contact with the speaker, sits up straight, and is attentive.

In many EFL programs, listening comprehension instruction has long been a neglected and underdeveloped subject. These days, listening is valued far more in SLA research as well as EFL

courses. Listening comprehension has gained a lot of attention because students appear to only do three things: sit silently in a language lab, listen to prerecorded conversations, and write the answers to some questions pertaining to the oral stimulus. Regrettably, listening comprehension instruction is still undervalued in English language instruction. Because listening is influenced by several important aspects, learners' listening levels vary from one another. The importance of listening, the study of listening teaching theory, and the application of cutting-edge listening teaching techniques are the three most crucial elements that need to be highlighted.

It is generally well acknowledged that teaching practices should focus on improving students' listening skills, and that this is where teachers should focus their own efforts to do so. Although it presents a big obstacle for English teachers, this is essential for the growth of communicative skill in the language. The success of language acquisition may be substantially impacted by an understanding of the teaching and learning methods for listening skills.

1.1. Statement of the problem:

Speaking, listening, reading, and writing are the four language skills that are taught to English language learners. Because they can't understand the accents of native speakers and don't practice their listening skills through various sources including podcasts, songs, YouTube, and other listening sources, listening is a difficult skill for English language learners. Additionally, the majority of teachers in the classroom are not native English speakers, thus students rely solely on their instruction in the language. Due to their inability to understand the listening portion of exams when listening to native speakers, they receive lower scores. However, in some educational settings, such as schools and universities, a lot of teachers haven't given this area of skills much thought, and they frequently just concentrate on teaching writing, reading, and vocabulary mastery, so that students frequently run into problems when learning English skill. Students may be having trouble because of foreign words and cultural differences.

1.2. Objectives of the study:

This study investigated the difficulties with English listening skills that King Faisal University students sometimes have. Additionally, the study seeks to shed additional light on the variables influencing students' English listening.

1.3. Research questions:

1. What are the main problems encountered by King Faisal University students in English listening skills?

2. Are there any statistically significant differences between male and female students in their English-listening skills?

3. How can we help students to improve their English-listening skills?

1.4. Significance of the study:

The findings revealed the problems of King Faisal University students' English-listening skill. This information can be used as a textbook for students on how to improve their listening level using the best methods and strategies. Research to identify effective listening teaching methods can also help teachers better understand the listening skills challenges their students face.

1.5. Study Terms:

Listening comprehension: is used to describe the capacity to understand spoken language and derive its meaning. It requires a variety of abilities, including language recognition, context comprehension, idea identification, and detail inference.

Understanding and making sense of spoken language involves a number of processes, all of which are included in listening comprehension. These cognitive processes encompass the identification of speech sounds, the interpretation of individual words, and the understanding of sentence structure. Put another way, listening comprehension refers to the capacity to comprehend spoken language and draw a connection between it and oneself. This ability is critical for general literacy development because it is a prerequisite for reading comprehension.

Listening difficulties: refer to the challenges individuals face when trying to understand spoken language. These difficulties can occur in various contexts, such as language learning, communication, or everyday interactions. These challenges can impact effective communication and hinder meaningful connections.

EFL learners:

English is taught as a foreign language in countries where it is not spoken or used very often in daily life. Countries such as China, Indonesia, Japan, and many Middle Eastern countries are those where English is said to operate as an EFL. In Saudi Arabia, EFL is taught as a subject in schools.

Sulistiyo (2016) lists several factors that make teaching EFL challenging: first, EFL teachers instruct students in large classes, frequently with more than 50 students; second, not all students who take English classes are motivated; and third, the English language curriculum emphasizes reading skills, grammar and vocabulary more than listening skill. (Sawir, 2005).

In Saudi Arabia, teaching English is a required subject for primary, secondary and high education. The Saudi government has already worked hard to raise the level of English proficiency among students. The author's experience as an English teacher suggests that there could be a variety of causes for the issues, including listening. Learning listening is essential for acquiring new language. Listening is one of the hardest language skills for beginners. Listening is difficult, particularly for EFL learners because of some of the pronunciation and vocabulary features of English.

2. Review of Related Literature:

A case study of EFL students in listening class was the subject of a study on listening comprehension challenges done in 2021 by Hardiyanto, A., Tanjung, M., and Suharjono, S. The purpose of the current study is to look into the challenges that students have when it comes to listening comprehension. Six students in the third semester of Universitas Muhammadiyah Kotabumi's English education study programme are examined in this descriptive qualitative case study with three different proficiency levels: low, moderate, and high. The study's findings demonstrated that low-level students had trouble with new vocabulary (message content), speech rate (speaker), and vocabulary deficiency (listener). Students at a moderate level then found the speaker's speed and the actual surroundings' noises to be challenging. High level students, nevertheless, had trouble with the lengthy spoken text (message content), the speaker's range of accents, and the noises (physical environment). We may conclude that depending on their degree of English proficiency, tertiary students face distinct listening comprehension challenges. Consequently, the current study's implication is that, in order to help students overcome their challenges, lecturers must take into account the facts presented in this study.

In 2021, Phan, M.T., Thang, T.D., and Nguyen, N.M. In order to identify some of the main causes of students' issues with listening to English, a study titled Some Common difficulties in listening of English majored freshmen at Tay Do University was conducted. The study is completed in a span of 12 weeks. 100 Tay Do University freshmen majoring in English, including those in classes 13A, 13B, and 13C, were randomly selected to participate in this study. Participants provide their opinions through paper interviews and questionnaires over the research period. The two primary instruments of this study that are utilized to collect data on the listening difficulties faced by students are the questionnaire and the paper interview. Consequently, the study's anticipated results will highlight certain linguistic challenges that freshmen majoring in

English at Tay Do University face when listening, including issues with vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, accents, and intonation, as well as psychological barriers, background knowledge, and unfamiliar subjects.

In 2020, Diora, L. and Rosa, R.N. did a descriptive study at the English language and literature department at FBS UNP to analyze the listening comprehension challenges of students. The purpose of this study was to determine the most common listening comprehension problems encountered by students as well as the contributing factors at the FBS UNP English Language and Literature Department. The descriptive qualitative research method was used in this study. The 32 students in the K-2 class, who were chosen through the use of the cluster sampling technique, served as the research subjects. Data was gathered through interviews and questionnaires. Every student in the class received a questionnaire from the researcher. Six students were then selected by the researcher for interviews. The study's findings demonstrated that the listening content, the listener, and the physical environment were the three main factors contributing to the listening comprehension issues that the students encountered. In addition, relying on others, feeling embarrassed to ask questions, experiencing emotional disturbances, the lecturer explaining the subject too fast, and a lack of reinforcement and rewards were among the factors that contributed to students' issues with listening comprehension.

Al-nafisah, K.,I. (2019). Carried out a study on the problems and solutions for enhancing listening comprehension in a classroom. This study examines the current instructional strategies used to teach listening skills to English department students at King Saud University, Riyadh's College of Languages and Translation. The challenges students have in mastering the listening skill are discussed in the study. The knowledge and experience gained from teaching listening skills leads to the recommendation of fresh methods that can be used to raise student achievement. The article ends with recommendations for how teachers might use the new methods to help pupils learn listening skills more successfully.

Hadijah, S. and Shalawati, S. (2016). Conducted a study about listening skills and perspectives to first year students at English department of academic year 2015/2016. This study was designed to gather information about the students' challenges in listening activities, their perspectives on listening subject, and positive factors on the students' success in listening. Then, a set of listening test and questionnaire were distributed. Both quantitative and qualitative data were studied to identify the underlying matters in students' listening skills, addressing challenges,

main listening hindrance factors and learning experiences. The findings of this study revealed that the students faced problems in listening because they still could not complete the basic listening skills in the test. Furthermore, most of them considered that the listening classes are challenging for them due to some problems and difficulties during the teaching and learning activities. Besides that, there were 5 factors influenced the students' listening skill; lack of practice, limited vocabulary mastery, native speakers' accent, pronunciation, and uninteresting learning materials. Moreover, their knowledge about English structure and good facilities in listening classes supported them to be able to figure out some challenges in listening activities. In addition, the students realized the important of the listening activities, but assistance from the teachers and some other students were still needed during the teaching and learning activities. In conclusion, having good listening skill still appeared as a challenge for the first-year students at English Department of academic year 2015/2016.

Yildirim, S. and Yildirim, O. (2016) conducted a literature study on the subject of language learners' difficulties with listening comprehension and the significance of listening in language learning. In light of related research, this review of the literature focuses on the listening comprehension issues that second and foreign language learners face. It also attempts to explore the fundamental ideas surrounding the role and significance of listening skills in learning a second or foreign language.

3. Difficulty of English Listening Skill

There are a lot of difficulties that learners may encounter in the listening comprehension processes and the purpose is to be aware of these problems and try to solve them. Some of these problems are as follows:

1. Quality of Recorded Materials:

The ability of students to understand what they hear depends on the quality of the sound system. (Yidliz, Tugrul, Celik, and Azmi, 2014)

2. Cultural Differences:

Language learners must to be conversant in the cultural nuances of the language, as this greatly influences their comprehension. The learners may have serious understanding issues if the listening exercise uses entirely different cultural resources. (Yidliz, Tugrul, Celik, and Azmi, 2014).

3. Accent:

Goh, C. (1999) found that 66% of students cited a speaker's accent as one of the key elements influencing listener comprehension. Both native and non-native accents that are unfamiliar can seriously hinder learners' ability to understand what they are listening; hence it is important for learners to become comfortable with accents.

4. Unfamiliar vocabulary:

A listener will find it difficult to comprehend what a native speaker is saying if they are unfamiliar with or cannot comprehend the vocabularies used by the native speaker.

5. Length and Speed of Listening:

Learners can more easily comprehend short listening sections and feel less fatigued. Under Wood (1989) states that listening passages might be challenging when moving quickly. It could be quite difficult for pupils to understand L2 words if presenters talk too quickly. Because listeners are unable to regulate the speed of speakers in this scenario, listening comprehension issues may arise.

6. Physical Circumstances

Students' listening comprehension skills might occasionally be impacted by classroom inconveniences. Students seated in the back rows of large classes might not be able to hear the recording since they are seated in front. Students who want to sit close to the windows are likewise affected by outside noise. It is our responsibility as educators to consider all of these physical issues. The classroom's size also makes it challenging for the teacher to oversee group activities or to collect student feedback. One element that contributes to the difficulty of listening comprehension is the classroom environment. It could be too hot or cold in the summer or winter for the class without an air conditioner or heater.

7. Absence of focus

Motivation among students is one of the key elements that influence listening comprehension. For students, it might be challenging to stay focused in a classroom when learning a foreign language. The slightest interruption in focus can significantly impair comprehension when it comes to listening comprehension. Understanding would be simpler for students when they found the listening text's content to be fascinating. Despite their enthusiasm in the subject, students find listening to be extremely tedious because it requires so much concentration to understand what is being said.

4. Methodology:

4.1. The study used a quantitative approach because the researcher noticed that her students had difficulties with listening in class and on quizzes and exams. This allowed the researcher to collect a lot of data on the issue from a large sample of students. Also, the researcher used the quantitative approach because it's fast, focused, and scientific and reliable. The study was carried out to address the questions that were raised. The study sample was obtained by applying the random sampling approach online through social networking sites. The researchers used SPSS 26 Program for statistical analysis.

4.2 Participants:

The participants were all male and female English 101 and 102 students enrolled in the Applied College at King Faisal University in the second semester of 2024 to learn about their most frequent English listening skill issues. They were 201 female students and 111 male students.

4.3. Methods of data collection:

4.3.1. Questionnaire

The questionnaire is 22 questions long and asks several questions about issues that students face when they are learning how to listen in English. This survey was created by the researcher.

Reliability test

Table (a): Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.805	22

This table presents the reliability statistics for the skills of listening in English. The Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.805, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the 22 items in the scale. This suggests that the items are highly correlated and measure the same underlying construct.

Table (b): Distribution of students according to gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	111	35.6
Female	201	64.4
Total	312	100

This table shows the frequency distribution of the students by gender. There are 111 males (35.6%) and 201 females (64.4%) in the sample. This distribution is not significantly skewed, indicating that the sample is representative of the population.

Table (1): The difference between male and female in skills of listening in English

	Paragraph	strongly disagree	disagree	agree	strongly agree	χ^2	p-value*
1	The skill of listening in English is a fun skill						
	male	2	12	45	52	3.195	0.362
	female	12	19	84	86		
	Total	14	31	129	138		
2	There is not enough equipment in the classroom to learn to listen in English						
	male	14	38	43	16	8.586	0.035
	female	19	66	59	57		
	Total	33	104	102	73		
3	I don't like the skill of listening in English because it is difficult to understand						
	male	29	45	22	15	.694	0.875
	female	55	88	34	24		
	Total	84	133	56	39		
4	I always listen to news, songs and tutorials in English by watching TV and other sources of listening.						

	male	13	38	41	19	6.779	0.079
	female	16	48	85	52		
	Total	29	86	126	71		
5.	I have difficulty understanding the words the speaker is saying when I listen to the news or watch a YouTube clip in English.						
	male	12	28	45	26	3.202	0.362
	female	12	60	88	41		
	Total	24	88	133	67		
6.	I have a hard time deducing the meanings of words that are new to me when listening to text in English						
	male	8	26	54	23	1.017	0.797
	female	10	54	94	43		
	Total	18	80	148	66		
7.	When I face new words for me, I stop listening to the text and start thinking about the meanings of the words						
	male	7	30	51	23	2.128	0.546
	female	8	47	93	53		
	Total	15	77	144	76		
8.	I have difficulty understanding grammar when I listen to news in						

	English or a song or lecture in English.						
	male	17	27	43	24	4.634	0.201
	female	19	68	77	37		
	Total	36	95	120	61		
9	When I listen to a text in English, I do not care about the way the speaker speaks, whether the rise or decrease in the tone of his voice or the expression of his feelings, whether joy, sadness, anger, etc.						
	male	19	49	32	11	2.463	0.482
	female	27	99	48	27		
	Total	46	148	80	38		
10.	I have difficulty understanding listening texts in English when the subject of the text is unknown to me.						
	male	11	29	45	26	4.055	0.256
	female	9	48	92	52		
	Total	20	77	137	78		
11.	I have difficulty understanding the meaning of the listening text if the text is long						
	male	16	20	52	23	5.912	0.116
	female	15	45	85	56		

	Total	31	65	137	79		
12.	I Write notes to understand the listening text						
	male	5	13	53	40	1.834	0.608
	female	6	18	110	67		
	Total	11	31	163	107		
13.	I use my experience and cultural knowledge on the subject to understand the listening text.						
	male	12	32	44	23	9.923	0.019
	female	6	49	91	55		
	Total	18	81	135	78		
14.	Through the listening skill I can develop my English-speaking skills	1	2	3	4		
	male	6	12	52	41	2.281	0.516
	female	7	15	92	87		
	Total	13	27	144	128		
15.	I don't care about the word of the person who speaks in the listening text.						
	male	29	39	28	15	12.630	0.006
	female	28	107	49	17		
	Total	57	146	77	32		
16.	I can understand the basic idea that the person is talking about in the listening text but I cannot						

	understand all the words in the text.						
	male	8	17	43	43	5.386	0.146
	female	7	24	102	68		
	Total	15	41	145	111		
17.	I have difficulty understanding the transcript of the listening if the speaker is speaking too fast						
	male	7	10	44	50	3.600	0.308
	female	6	25	69	101		
	Total	13	35	113	151		
18.	I have difficulty understanding the listening transcript if the speakers speak more than one dialect in English						
	male	12	23	43	33	10.036	0.018
	female	7	35	73	86		
	Total	19	58	116	119		
19.	I lose my focus if the listening text is too long.						
	male	10	25	38	38	4.793	0.188
	female	8	39	68	86		
	Total	18	64	106	124		
20.	I lose my focus when I start thinking about the meanings of new words.						
	male	12	25	47	27	1.854	0.603
	female	13	47	91	50		

	Total	25	72	138	77		
21.	Stop listening if I don't understand the text.						
	male	22	40	24	25	5.348	0.148
	female	25	68	64	44		
	Total	47	108	88	69		
22.	I have difficulty concentrating in the listening text if it is noise around me.						
	male	4	15	37	55	9.721	0.021
	female	5	10	58	128		
	Total	9	25	95	183		

*Chi Square Test

The above table provided are the results of a survey about English listening skills. The survey asked students about their opinions and experiences related to listening in English. The results are presented in a table format, with the number of male and female students who strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree with each statement. The significant paragraphs ($p < 0.05$) indicate that there is a significant difference between male and females in English listening skills. For example, paragraph 2 suggests that students feel that there is a lack of equipment in the classroom to learn listening skills, which may be a significant obstacle. Similarly, paragraph 13 indicates that students use their experience and cultural knowledge to understand listening texts, which is a valuable strategy. Paragraphs 15 and 18 suggest that students are less concerned about the speaker's words and dialects, respectively, which may be related to their ability to focus on the content rather than the speaker's style. On the other hand, the non-significant paragraphs ($p \geq 0.05$) do not show a significant difference between male and females in English listening skills. For example, paragraph 1 suggests that students find listening in English fun, but this does not seem to be a significant factor in their listening skills. Similarly, paragraph 3 indicates that students do not like listening in English because it is difficult, but this does not appear to be a significant obstacle.

Overall, the significant paragraphs provide a significant difference between male and female at listening in English, while the non-significant paragraphs suggest that there is no significant difference in their listening skills.

5. Results:

5.1. Descriptive analysis of the study data

The researcher adopted the five-way Likert scale in the questionnaire to give more flexibility to the individuals in the choice, as the value ranged between (1-5) shown in table (3-15).

Table (2): Five-point Likert scale to measure agreement

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Source: By Researcher

Likert scale was processed according to the following equation (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

$$\text{category length} = \frac{\text{Maximum Substitute} - \text{Minimum Substitute}}{\text{number of level}} = \frac{5 - 1}{3} = \frac{4}{3} = 1.33$$

Category length + less weight = 1.33+1 = 2.33, The first degree of agreement (1-2.33) becomes the lower level, to move to the second category 1.33+2.33 = 3.66, then the second degree of agreement (2.34 – 3.67) becomes the intermediate level, For the transition to the third category 1.33+ 3.66 = 5 then the third degree of agreement (3.68-5) becomes the high level.

Based on the treatment, the relative approval was determined according to the table (3-16) of the averages of the agreement levels.

Table (3): Likert scale processing

The degree of agreement	Average
weak	1-2.33
Medium	2.34-3.67
High	3.68-5

Source: By Researcher

Table (4): Mean and standard deviation for the skills of listening in English

No.	Paragraph	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank	Importance
1	The skill of listening in English is a fun skill	3.25	0.81	3	Medium
2	There is not enough equipment in the classroom to learn to listen in English	2.69	0.95	17	Medium
3	I don't like the skill of listening in English because it is difficult to understand	2.16	0.96	22	weak
4	I always listen to news, songs and tutorials in English by watching TV and other sources of listening.	2.77	0.91	16	Medium
5	I have difficulty understanding the words the speaker is saying when I listen to the news or watch a YouTube clip in English.	2.78	0.87	15	Medium
6	I have a hard time deducing the meanings of words that are new to me when listening to text in English	2.84	0.82	14	Medium
7	When I face new words for me, I stop listening to the text and start thinking about the meanings of the words	2.90	0.82	9	Medium
8	I have difficulty understanding grammar when I listen to news in English or a song or lecture in English.	2.66	0.92	18	Medium

9	When I listen to a text in English, I do not care about the way the speaker speaks, whether the rise or decrease in the tone of his voice or the expression of his feelings, whether joy, sadness, anger, etc.	2.35	0.88	20	Medium
10	I have difficulty understanding listening texts in English when the subject of the text is unknown to me.	2.88	0.86	10	Medium
11	I have difficulty understanding the meaning of the listening text if the text is long	2.85	0.92	13	Medium
12	I use my experience and cultural knowledge on the subject to understand the listening text.	3.17	0.75	5	Medium
13	Write notes to understand the listening text Listen	2.88	0.85	11	Medium
14	Through the listening skill I can develop my English-speaking skills	3.24	0.78	4	Medium
15	I don't care about the word of the person who speaks in the listening text	2.27	0.88	21	weak
16	I can understand the basic idea that the person is talking about in the listening text but I cannot understand all the words in the text.	3.13	0.82	6	Medium

17	I have difficulty understanding the transcript of the listening if the speaker is speaking too fast	3.29	0.83	2	Medium
18	I have difficulty understanding the listening transcript if the speakers speak more than one dialect in English	3.07	0.90	8	Medium
19	I lose my focus if the listening text is too long.	3.08	0.91	7	Medium
20	I lose my focus when I start thinking about the meanings of new words.	2.86	0.88	12	Medium
21	Stop listening if I don't understand the text.	2.57	1.00	19	Medium
22	I have difficulty concentrating in the listening text if it is noise around me.	3.45	0.76	1	Medium
	skill of listening in English	2.87	0.38		Medium

The data reveals insights into how students perceive and experience listening skills in English. Mean scores vary from a minimum of 2.16 to a maximum of 3.45, showcasing diverse opinions and levels of difficulty across different aspects of listening. Standard deviations, ranging from 0.75 to 1.00, indicate the extent of variability in responses for each statement. For instance, statements like "I have difficulty concentrating in the listening text if there is noise around me" (ranked 1 with a mean of 3.45) and "I have difficulty understanding the transcript of the listening if the speaker is speaking too fast" (ranked 2 with mean 3.29) proved common challenges faced by students. Conversely, statements like "The skill of listening in English is a fun skill" (ranked 3 with a mean of 3.25) and "Through the listening skill, I can develop my English-speaking skills" (ranked 4 with a mean of 3.24) reflect positive perceptions and the perceived importance of listening for language development. The last-ranked statements "I don't like the skill of listening in English because it is difficult to understand" (ranked 22 with a mean of 2.16) and "I don't care about the word of the person who speaks in the listening text" (ranked 21 with a mean of 2.27)

indicate weaker sentiments towards these aspects of listening. This data emphasizes the nuanced nature of listening proficiency, encompassing both enjoyable aspects and notable difficulties encountered by students.

Table (5): The difference between male and female in listening English using independent t test

gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	110	2.80	0.42	-2.488	309	0.013
Female	201	2.91	0.36			

The independent t-test results in Table (5) show a significant difference between males and females in their overall perceptions of listening skills in English ($p=0.013$). Females have a higher mean value of 2.91 ($SD=0.36$) compared to males with a mean of 2.80 ($SD=0.42$).

6. Discussion:

The study's conclusions demonstrate that both male and female students in Saudi Arabia struggle with their English listening skills. This is a reasonable conclusion given that English is taught as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia, despite the fact that, in accordance with textbooks, curricula, and instructors, the Saudi educational system accorded learning English in schools and colleges higher priority. According to my observations as an English language teacher, most English language learners are not motivated to raise their proficiency in the language; instead, they rely only on their teachers to teach them the material they cover in class. Exam passing and grades are the only things on students' minds. Few students enjoy raising their English language proficiency levels. Furthermore, some students lack the motivation to pick up the language. However, learning English today is simpler than it was in the past. The teacher used to be the primary source of information, however these days there are a lot of websites and apps available for learning English. Despite the abundance of digital materials available for learning English, many students fail to pursue the goal of mastering the language in general and listening skills in particular. However, we can't just place the fault on the students; some English language teachers place a greater emphasis on teaching grammar, reading, and writing than on teaching listening. The four skills—speaking, writing, listening, and reading—are therefore not taught in the same importance. Additionally, universities and schools lack the necessary and efficient tools to teach English listening skills.

Additionally, the study's findings demonstrate that when there is noise surrounding them, students are unable to listen. It is the instructor's duty to ask students to be silent because talking indicates that they are not listening. The teacher should also close the classroom door or assign someone to do so and remind students to turn off their phones.

The results indicate that Saudi female students have more difficulties than male students with their English listening comprehension. Based on my experience teaching English, I have seen that Saudi female students prioritize learning grammar, vocabulary, reading, and writing over listening skills. More than receptive skills, they favor productive skills. While some of them enjoy speaking English, many of them dislike listening, and many of them have lower scores when it comes to the listening portion of the test. Additionally, Saudi male students have more spare time than female students, which could mean that they travel more, view more English-language films, listen to English music, and podcasts. However, male students might listen to a wider range of topics than female students, including local, national, and international news, economics, business, projects, transportation, and sports. Furthermore, it's possible that male students in elementary and secondary education receive superior teaching in English listening skills than female students.

7. Conclusion

The current study outlines the challenges faced by EFL male and female Saudi college students, and the conclusions highlight the factors that contributed to their subpar performance in skill that is used in everyday communication as well as in schools and universities. The study's main finding is that there aren't enough efficient listening teaching tools available in classrooms. This means that educational institutions should give their students access to appropriate tools and equipment in the classroom so they can practice their listening skills. Families should also provide their daughters and sons appropriate listening equipment at home. The study's findings indicate that students make use of their background and cultural understanding—a useful strategy—to comprehend listening readings. In conclusion, the development of English listening skills is the responsibility of educators, learners, and curriculum designers. It is important for teachers to be creative in their listening strategies, for students to not be lazy in improving their listening skills, and for curriculum designers to be innovative in creating objectives, activities, and books that are current and cover issues that appeal to young generations.

8. Recommendations:

1. To help students understand the context and concepts, teachers should play audio and video snippets in the classroom.
2. Online listening assessments aid students in honing their listening comprehension.
3. Students ought to engage in more active learning. They should typically practice listening to English by watching English songs or news on TV or the internet so they may become accustomed to the accent and intonation of native speakers.
4. Adequate time should be allocated in the classroom for students to listen English carefully.
5. Students should take listening English exams every week to improve their fluency.
6. English-listening projects and activities should be a part of the curriculum.
7. To motivate their students to listen in English, teachers must be creative in their approach to teaching the language.
8. Universities ought to provide their classrooms with all the tools and resources necessary to motivate students to practice English listening in class.
9. To help students learn more English, all subject courses in all departments of the Applied College should be taught in the language.
10. Websites and helpful technological resources should be made available to students by English language teachers so they can practice listening.

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