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**An Investigation into the Causes of Poor Listening Comprehension among
Libyan EFL Undergraduate Students**

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Degree of Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics**

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Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this dissertation entitled
An investigation into the Causes of Poor Listening Comprehension among
Libyan Undergraduate Students

and that no part has been plagiarized. I also declare that all the material submitted in this work which is not my own work has been identified with proper citation and referencing, and that no material is included which has been submitted for any other assignment of other subjects or courses.

Signature

Date

Dedication

To my late father who taught me the value of listening.

To my mother who lights my eyes towards success.

To my two sons Helmy & Eslam.

Acknowledgement

First, I would like to thank the Almighty Allah who gave me the ability to perform this work. I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my supervisor, Dr. Salama Embark, who guided me to achieve success in this work and his confidence in me. I am grateful to all my teachers in the English Department for their devotion to teaching and for helping me to be a better student and person.

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List of Abbreviations

L2	Second Language
EFL	English as a Foreign language
ESP	English for specific purposes
PDP	Pre listening, during listening, post listening
CD	Compact Disc

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Abstract

The study aimed to investigate the causes of poor listening comprehension among Libyan FFL undergraduate students. The study took place at Sabratha University during the academic year (2017/2018). Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect data, in order to achieve the objectives of the study. The quantitative data of this study was collected through a close-ended questionnaire which was distributed randomly among 100 Libyan EFL undergraduate students. The samples were selected randomly. The qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with five English instructors. The results showed that: noises, unfamiliar words, poor equipments, speech rate, unclear pronunciation, were the major listening comprehension problems encountered by Libyan EFL undergraduate students. In the light of the findings of the study, suggestions were provided for EFL teachers to help their students overcoming listening comprehension difficulties.

CHAPTER:I

INTRODUCTION

0.1 Background of the Study

Listening comprehension plays a pivotal role in effective communication in spoken language. Hasan (2005,p.138) pointed out that "listening comprehension provides the right condition for language acquisition and development of other language skills". Moreover, Listening has emerged as an important component in the process of second language acquisition. Language learning depends on listening since it provides the aural input that serves as the basis for language acquisition and enables learners to interact in spoken communication (Malkawi, 2010). Furthermore, Hamuda (2013) stated that listening is essential not only as a receptive skill but also to the development of spoken language proficiency. Rost (2002) also indicates that developing proficiency in listening is the key to achieving proficiency in speaking.

Listening has assumed a central role in language learning. Therefore, listening is the most important skill for language learning. The skills underlying listening have become more clearly defined. Strategies contributing to listening are now better understood (Carter & Nunan, 2001). However, it has been observed that listening skill is mostly neglected in English classes in Libyan universities and taught only as an additional skill. Listening skill is not an important part of many course books or curricula and teachers do not seem to pay attention to this skill while designing their lessons. For these reasons, this skill has been chosen to be the focus of this study.

Eltomy (2012) reported that teaching listening in Libyan universities are still need greater attention in order to demystify the listening process. Moreover, teachers methodology and techniques in teaching listening are not effective as they mostly focus on rote teaching of listening without using technology. It is clear that there are several difficulties with teaching listening for Libyan learners. These problems include teachers who did not use pre- listening during listening or post-listening activities in teaching listening comprehension. In addition, Libyan university teachers still insist on using classroom activities in traditional way. Moreover, teachers did not do any modifications on the new syllabus tasks to suite their learners level and interest. Most of the teachers were not aware of the impotence of the use of the authentic materials in teaching listening.

It is observed that many EFL Libyan undergraduate students encounter difficulties associated with listening while learning English as a foreign language. Thus, it is important to explore the factors that may lead to poor listening comprehension. It is believed that when listeners become aware of their weakness in listening comprehension, they will try to develop this skill through the help they receive from their teachers.

1.1 The Problem of the Study

It has been observed that many Libyan EFL university students are unable to comprehend natural spoken English delivered at normal speed because they do not understand the spoken content of the lessons.

1.2 Aims of the Study

This study aims at:

1. Identifying the main factors behind Libyan EFL undergraduate students' poor listening comprehension.
2. Enhancing the awareness of both students and instructors about this issue.

1.3 Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following research questions

- 1-What are the main causes of poor listening comprehension among Libyan EFL undergraduate students at Sabratha University?
- 2-What do Libyan EFL university instructors think about this issue?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study intended to identify the difficulties encountered by Libyan EFL undergraduate students from their own perspective. In addition, it intended to raise teacher's awareness of the problematic areas in listening comprehension; so that they can provide proper strategies that improve students' listening comprehension and help them overcome the difficulties. Hopefully, this study provides useful insights about listening comprehension for teachers and students.

1.5 The Methodology

This dissertation employed a mixed-methods approach. A close-ended, questionnaire was used to examine the students' views towards the factors that influence their listening comprehension. A Semi-structured interview was conducted with five Libyan EFL university instructors to obtain in-depth information about the teachers' thoughts towards the causes of university student's poor listening comprehension. 100 EFL undergraduate students participated in this study. This

sample was selected randomly. This study took place at the English Department, Sabratha University. In addition, the researcher interviewed five instructors who were teaching English at the same department from those who have an experience in teaching listening in order to investigate their attitudes about the issue. The obtained data of the questionnaire were analyzed by Microsoft Office Excel. This study used qualitative approach to analyzing interviews. The results of the participants' responses' have been organized and presented in tables.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

This study involved a small number of participants which can hinder the generalization of the results. In addition, this study was conducted in only one university. It would be better if more universities from other Libyan cities were involved as this will provide a clearer picture about the issue under investigation. However, this was not possible due to some difficulties of time, accessibility, security and money.

1.7 Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Chapter one introduces the statement of the problem, the background of the study, and the research questions. Chapter two reviews the related literature which provides an overview about EFL listening problems and its strategies used to comprehend listening better. Chapter three presents the methodology that was used in this study. This chapter studies and explains the research methods and setting. It also describes the data collection, and analysis procedures then the validity and the reliability of this study. Chapter four presents the findings of this study. Lastly, chapter five discusses the results of the study and summarizes the conclusions and provide recommendations of the study

with discussion of the findings delivered from both the questionnaire and the interviews used in the study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the related literature which includes the following topics: defining listening, the importance of listening, listening comprehension, the process of listening comprehension, factors that cause difficulty in listening comprehension, and useful strategies for overcoming listening comprehension difficulties.

2.1 Listening

Listening has been defined from different points of view, for instance, it has been defined as the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary, and grasping meaning (Islam, 2012). Listening is an important skill and plays a vital role to all effective communication, without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood. Thus, being able to listen well is an important part of communication for everyone. The guided practice by the teacher is one of the successful ways to improve this skill. A student with good listening comprehension skill will be able to interact in spoken communication (Kashani, 2011).

Rost (2011) asserted that almost each definition of listening revolves around one of these four orientations: First, receptive orientation, when listening means the act of receiving what the speaker says. Second, constructive orientation where listening means building or representing meaning. Third, collaborative orientation where listening is to negotiate meaning with the speaker and to respond. Fourth,

transformative orientation where listening is to create meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy.

Wolvin (2010) stated that the four elements of listening need to be mentioned in order to provide more understanding of listening. Firstly, the physiological dimension which deals with physiological capacity of receiving the vocal message. Secondly, Psychological dimension which deals with assigning meaning to the incoming sound by the cognitive and mental capacity. Thirdly, sociological dimension, which has to do with the response of the listener for the message once he receives and interprets it. Fourthly, the communication dimension which has to do with how the listener cooperates for the communication purpose.

2.2 Listening Comprehension

Listening comprehension is regarded as a complex, interactive process in which listeners are involved in a dynamic construction of meaning (Rost, 2000). Listeners understand the oral input from sound discrimination, prior knowledge of vocabulary, grammatical structures, stress and intonation, as well as other use of linguistic, paralinguistic, or even non-linguistic clues in contextual utterance (Rost 2002 & Hamouda 2013). Likewise, Buck (2001) indicated that listening comprehension is a complex and interactive process in which listeners are actively engaged in a dynamic construction of meaning on the basis of whatever information that seems available at the time. In such a process, listeners apply to the incoming spoken message related to the various types of knowledge which range from linguistic to non-linguistic knowledge.

MaLinhu (2002) argued that listening comprehension is a complex psychological process in which listeners understand the language by sense of hearing.

It is an interactive process of language knowledge and psychological activities. However, this process is not simply about decoding the message, it also involves the combination of the decoding or the message process with its reconstruction as meaning. Later, Nadig (2013) added that listening comprehension is the various processes of understanding and making sense of spoken language. These involve knowing speech sounds, comprehending the meaning of individual words, and understanding the syntax of sentences.

Lund (1991) categorized comprehension into main-idea comprehension, detailed comprehension, and full comprehension. The main-idea comprehension, involves actual comprehension of the messages and depends primarily on recognition of vocabulary. The detailed comprehension refers to learners when they are getting specific information, and know in advance what information they are listening to, and full comprehension that refers to the goal of listening instruction which involves understanding the whole message.

On the other hand, comprehension does not always require understanding every word or structure. However, language learners usually assume that successful comprehension only occurs with total comprehension. This belief causes some language learners to become frightened when they fail to understand every single word they hear. Indeed, teachers should help their students understand that it is not necessary to recognize and understand every word in order to function well in listening comprehension (Cicccone, 1995).

2.3 Importance of Listening

Rosst (2000), Nunan (2002), and Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) asserted that more attention is directed to the importance of listening comprehension in second language instruction for several reasons: Listening is the first language

mode that children acquire, it provides the foundation of all aspects of language and cognitive development, and it plays an important role in the processes of communication.

Listening is one of the most important skills that students can acquire. Listening is the first language skill to be developed, it comes before speaking, reading and writing (Mcdonagh, 2012). A study related to communication skills by Gilakjani and Ahmaid (2011), found that 45% is dedicated for listening, while 3% is for speaking, for reading it is 16%, and 9% for writing. This means that listening is crucial for communication. Indeed, Wolvin (2010) concluded that both in and out of the classroom, listening consumes more of the daily communication time than other forms of verbal communication. Additionally, Brown (2001) acknowledged the importance of listening comprehension for success in academic setting. Admittedly, it is clear that listening plays a crucial role in students' lives since listening is their medium of second language.

Some researchers and scholars stated that listening has been considered as a secondary skill, with speaking and writing as predominant skill in the second-language education process (Morley 2000 & Numan 2013). On the other hand, some language researchers and scalars viewed that people spend measurably more time on listening than any other communication skill through the normal course of a day. Listening is used nearly twice as much as speaking and four to five times as much as reading and writing (Martinez & Juan 2006). Thus, if listening is considered to be a substantial part of language, then it would seem that students' listening skill is not getting the amount of attention it merit (Rivers, 2012).

2.4 Types of Listening

Many of language researchers identified and classified the types of listening according to two criteria: whether or not listeners have an opportunity to respond or participate in listening communication events, which they are engaged in, and the purpose of listening. According to the first criterion, Buck (2001) has identified two categories of listening, one-way communication, where the listener has no opportunity to respond such as listening to the radio or to a TV program, and a two-way conversation, where the listener has a chance to intervene like a conversation where he can ask or respond to questions.

Rost (2011) has also classified listening by its function. This classification comprises among six types: intensive listening, selective listening, interactive listening, extensive listening, responsive listening and autonomous listening. Intensive listening, it focuses on components (phonemes, words, intonation, etc). Selective listening, it is to listen with a planned purpose in mind by attending to a specific information which needs only to be heard. Interactive listening, it is a type of collaborative conversation when the listeners interact with each other in order to lead the learners' understanding what was not understood before. Extensive listening, which can include both academic listening and listening for pleasure. Responsive listening, it is a type of listening practice in which the listeners response to the goal of the activity, and autonomous listening, where the listeners has no guidance of an instructor, this type refer to independent listening.

Other researchers have classified listening according to its purposes, like Nation and Newton (2009) who have formulated a categorization of listening as two types: transactional listening, such as a lecture that is typically associated with

learning a new information, and interactional listening like face-to-face conversations which is linked most of the time with social relationships maintenance.

2.5 Processes of Listening Comprehension

There are different views about how listeners apply their linguistic and non linguistic knowledge to the incoming sound during the process of comprehension. For this purpose, three processes of comprehension models have been developed in order to account for the spoken language comprehension. According to the principle of schema, there are three modes of information processing: bottom down processing, top down processing and interactive processing (Bartlett, 1932).

Nehi (2003) claimed that bottom-up processing starts with the lowest language units and then moving up to the highest level. Listeners make use of their knowledge of sounds, words, syntax, and grammar to construct meaning. Their understanding starts with phonemes and then they combine them into words which together shape phrases, clauses and so on till they fulfill a literal understanding. Then the interpretation which depends on relevance of the information at that time to understand what the speaker means. This process had its shortcoming since it mainly depended on one's linguistic knowledge. It did not take into consideration the listener's previous knowledge.

On the other hand, top down processing refers to comprehending the meaning of a message. In this process, the listener makes predictions around the meaning of the message based on background knowledge, and general schemata. Then, the listener would search the input for information that would fit into these schemata. New input is considered as clues to help the listener construct meaning (Nehi, 2003).

The third process is the interactive one that is not a simple matter either of moving from lower to higher or from higher to lower element (Machackova, 2009).

As both Nunan (2002) and Buck (2001) argued that linguistic and non linguistic knowledge involved in language understanding can be used simultaneously so that the limitations at one level would be compensated by any other level without looking at its place in the hierarchy. In other words, the interactive process includes the complex processing of background knowledge and linguistic information, which would make comprehension and interpretation easy (Hedge, 2006).

2.6 Schema Theory

Schema theory was proposed by a British psychologist, Bartlett (1932). Schema can be viewed as the role of prior knowledge in language comprehension. It can be defined as the organized background knowledge which can help us make predictions or expectations within our interpretation. One basic principle of schema theory is that any text whether it is spoken or written does not by itself carry meaning. A text provides cues as to how background knowledge should be used to understand meaning. In other words, comprehending language involves an interaction between the linguistic importance and the background knowledge. The structures of background knowledge are called: "schemata". Schemata permits us to leave much details unsaid and inferred when interpreting language. According to Carrell and Eisterhold (1983) *"Much of the meaning understood from a text is not actually in the text, per se but in the reader, in the background or schematic knowledge of the reader"* (p. 73).

2.7 Teaching Listening:

Teaching listening is considered as a challenge for many foreign language teachers, and there have been many improvements in teaching listening over the years. Teachers should be aware of the stages of listening lesson in terms of helping

their students related to their listening comprehension concerns and needs (Field, 2002). There is an overwhelming agreement, that teaching listening has a standard format, like other language skills, should pass through three stages, pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening. Each of these stages involves specific activities which ultimately participate and aim to achieve comprehension of a spoken text (Field 2008, Richards 2006, Brown 2007, Robbins 2000, Echevarria, & Short, 2013 & Buck 1995).

Pre-listening: In this stage, the teacher provides students with the background knowledge of the topic. The purpose, content and language objectives should be made clear to the students because if students do not know what to do, they will find it difficult to proceed with specific vocabulary for specific purposes or expression which may be useful for understanding the recorder (Echevarria, & Short, 2013).

While-listening: The teacher analyses how many times the recorder should be repeated each time, which aims at achieving a specific objective. It allows students know what they are expected to do while listening and provides hints and support whenever necessary to make students note any dates, people or places they hear. Here, students can be divided into groups and giving each group a different listening task (e.g. learning different questions), that helps them to consolidate the learning content (Brown, 2001).

Post-listening: In this stage, activities can be used to check comprehension, evaluate listening skill, use of listening strategies and use the knowledge gained in other contexts. There are two common forms that post-listening tasks can take. First, (reaction to the text), discussion and response to what they heard. Second, (analysis of language) where students are focusing on linguistic features of the text. Helpfully,

students might have chances to develop their knowledge of the language such as vocabulary and grammatical structures (Filed, 2002).

All the previous stages are considered as the main steps in ordinary method of teaching listening skills in EFL classes at universities.

2.8 Assessing Listening Comprehension Skills

It is not easy for teachers to find the best techniques for assessment. However, it is crucial that teachers know how to deal with the existing authentic materials such as (videos, films, radio broadcasts, and television programs) that may be used for instructional an assessment purposes. An assessment of L2 listening comprehension is difficult because of the non-existence of a uniform agreement on the component of listening comprehension and factors contribute to the difficulty of the listening task as well as for non-existence of a general consensus on the best techniques for academic purposes of listening comprehension assessment (Dunkel, 2006).

Brown (2001) list the academic purposes of listening assessment:“recognizing the message, checking comprehension, delivering information, diagnosing listening problems, determining proficiency level, ascertaining general listening capability, and identifying listening strategies” (p. 129). Sometimes it is quite challenging to find and identify academic listening purposes that reflect real-life tasks (e.g. diagnosing listening problems). Therefore, the key to designing authentic assessment should stimulate real world tests of ability. Teachers must think of such academic assessment purposes and design valid and reliable tests that adjust to Wiggins’s criteria of authenticity: requires students to be effective performers with acquired knowledge, presents students with a full array of instructional tasks. (Wiggins, 1990). In addition, Brown (2001) highlights the necessity to help students be aware of the importance of

listening comprehension skills, explaining that "authentic language and real-world tasks enable students to see the relevance of classroom activity to their long term communicative goals"(p.258). The formative assessment of the teaching and learning process should be continuous, so that teachers and students can keep track on the learning process.

Heritage (2007) explained that formative assessment as “systematic process to continuously gather evidence about learning. The data are used to identify a student’s current level of learning and to adapt lessons to help the student reach the desired learning goal” (p.141). It is imperative to also emphasize that assessment focusing on maintains that formative assessment emphasizes the importance of focusing on understanding and improving student learning instead of merely measuring student learning in which students are active with their teachers, sharing learning goals and understanding how their learning is developing and progressing. what next stage they need to take, and how to take them (Heritage ,2007).

Wiggins (1992) affirmed that good teaching comes from good assessment and teachers need to contextualize the tasks given to students and these must be meaningful so they can positively impact students and keep students interested in them. He also added “achieving an aesthetic effect that causes pride or dismay in the results” (p. 28). Therefore, it is important to provide the necessary instruction for listening comprehension to deal with spoken text.

2.9. Factors Cause Difficulty in Listening Comprehension

Factors that influence listening comprehension have been discussed by a lot of researches and scholars who conducted research on listening comprehension difficulties such as Conrad (1989), Blaue (1990), Griffiths (1992), Zahao (1997), Goh (2002), Rost (2002), Chen (2002),and Brown (2007). They tried to find out why

listening comprehension was difficult for EFL students and what factors made it a complex process. A review of research by Hien (2015) reported four factors that affect the English for specific purposes (ESP) listening comprehension: the text, the speaker, the listener, or the situation. Moreover, Lynch (2010) stated that the problems in listening comprehension were accompanied with four factors: the message, the listener, the speaker, and the physical setting. Therefore, this study followed the same process of grouping factors that cause difficulty in listening comprehension: linguistic features of the language of the listening text, the speaker, the listener, and the physical conditions.

2.9.1 Factors Attributed to the Content and Linguistic Features of Listening Text

Koichi (2002) found out several factors beyond the difficulty faced by EFL students in listening comprehension. He emphasized that lacking background information and contextual knowledge were hindrance for listening comprehension. Graham (2006) also supported what Koichi reached to, he revealed that unfamiliarity with the topic of listening text is a constraining factor of listening comprehension. In addition, Anderson and Lynch (2003) claimed that lacking background knowledge causes difficulty in listening comprehension.

Unfamiliar words could be another reason beyond the difficulty that EFL learners face with listening comprehension. A lot of words have more than one meaning and if they are not used appropriately in their appropriate contexts, students will get confused. Moreover, students might know limited number of words. Accordingly, unfamiliar words hinder their ability to understand what is being said in front of them (Tugrul, 2014). Moreover, Goh (2002) indicated that listening comprehension problems are related to listening texts in which there are too many unfamiliar words, and complex and difficult grammatical structures.

Spoken language is characterized by a frequent use of prosodic features such as stress and intonation. Riccherd (2008) revealed that spoken texts are generally spoken many different accents, from standard or non standard to regional, native, non native. Furthermore, Rost (2002) claimed that a source of listening problems were that L2 learners inability to identify the prototypical phonemes of L2, so they could not recognize and process everything spoken in front of them. Moreover, Buck (2001) argued that, intonation and stress, together with false starts and hesitation may result in particular challenges for L2 listeners.

This conforms to the study of Hassan (2000), which showed that the difficulty in listening comprehension was partly due to the structural component of text; for example, slang or idiom expressions, unfamiliar words, complex grammatical structures, and a long listening text. Similarly, Yan and Oller (2007) referred to having too many new words ,not knowing the meaning of new words, not being familiar with the topic of listening text as common problems for listening comprehension. Besides, Juan and Abiden (2013) concluded that the most listening problem encountered by EFL students was the lack of prior knowledge in English vocabulary.

2.9.2 Factors Attributed to the Speaker

The speaker also plays a major role in decreasing the listening effectiveness. To support this claim, Hassan (2000) stressed that listeners face problems when speakers speak too fast with varied accent or when speakers speak with unclear pronounced words. Bloomfield et al (2010) stated that a regional accent can impact the spoken message that is understood by the listener. Furthermore, familiar accents are easier to be understood than unfamiliar accents. In the same line, Buck (2001) indicated that when listener hears an unfamiliar accent such as Indian English accent

for the first time after studying only American English, the listener will encounter critical difficulties in listening.

In addition, the rate of speech and its effect on listening comprehension has been discussed by researchers. Literally, Goh (2002) found that the speed rate of speech should not be a concern when teaching listening comprehension, except at lowest level of L2 proficiency. Similarly, Vandergrift (2002) stated that the faster rate affects listening negatively, whereas the lowest one leads to better understanding. Recently, Osada (2004) found out that impairing factors of the EFL listening comprehension referred to the fast level of speech and the inability to perceive English sounds.

Another difficulty encountered by EFL learners is that there are less pauses in spoken texts. In fact, the more pause were there in a text, the better understanding was accomplished by students. However, many students find it difficult to understand the listening text when the speaker does not pause enough Dunkel (2006). Thus, Carrell et al (2001) stated that the used pause by teachers while lecturing, aided the quantity of note-taking done by students who are required to take notes in classes, as well as writing and organizing the format of their notes.

Recently, Jafar (2013) realized that English accent, colloquial expressions, pronunciation, lack of time, fast rate of speech, and limited knowledge of vocabulary and structure of sentences were the problems that hindered EFL learners in listening comprehension. Speaker factors involve language ability and production, such as (pronunciation, accent, variation, and voice), Osada (2004). Goh (2002) reported that competence in speaking, accent, fluency and their ability to interest listeners or facilitate their comprehension were factors that may influence listening related to the speaker. Moreover, neutral speech which is full of hesitations is other problem that

encounter students in listening comprehension. Harmer (2001), reported that hesitations and pauses in spontaneous speech cause perceptual and comprehension errors for EFL students.

2.9.3 Factors Attributed to the Listener

Poor vocabulary can become a barrier in listening comprehension. Tian (2002) found out that large amount of new words had much influence on the listening ability of high and low proficiency of students. This is in line with the results of Othmans and Vanathas (2005), which revealed that learners could not answer a question once they heard it because they tried to struggle with new words, so the process of interpreting the meaning stopped instantly. This coincides with Hanoi (2010), who reported that the major problem hindering listening comprehension was that the students' vocabulary was too limited to understand the message. This research represented that knowing the meaning of the words might arouse students learning interest and lead to a positive effect in listening ability.

Moreover, another difficulty encountered by EFL learners is the lack of grammar knowledge which is a serious obstacle for most students in listening comprehension. Hasan (2000), indicated that unfamiliar words, complex and advanced grammatical structures, and the length of the spoken passages are the most important factors that cause problems for learners' listening comprehension. He added that clarity, lack of interest, and the demand for complete answers to listening comprehension questions are the serious difficulties of students' listening comprehension. In addition, Butt et al (2010); and Hanoi (2010), also reported that the insufficiency of vocabulary and the difficulty of grammatical structures, the length

of the listening text were the main reasons that why the students can't understand most of what has been said.

EFL proficiency was the most important listener factor for EFL listening problems. It implies that students' difficulties may directly result from their deficient linguistic knowledge, Goh (2002) reported that the listeners complained about problems such as, quickly to forget what is heard, and unable them to a mental representation from words heard were the most common problem. Not only that, Goh (2002) also pointed out that the level of students interfered in their listening comprehension. Lin (2000) also reached to similar conclusion. He differentiated between high-achievers and low-achievers in listening comprehension. He found the major factors affecting listening comprehension for high-achievers were different from those of low-achievers.

Furthermore, Teng (2002) concluded that the aspect that had the highest frequency was students proficiency. Besides, Yang (2007), stated that the main source of difficulty encountered by students' was the listener him/herself. Their proficiency level controlled their comprehension. He revealed that low-level student attributed the weakness in listening comprehension for personal factors, while higher level of students indicated that the difficulty they faced in comprehension referred to the text itself.

Comprehension can also be affected by the psycho affective characteristics of listening. Beklen (2012) stated that anxiety level during listening impaired listening comprehension. students' feelings were negatively affected while listening to audio script, and their anxiety decreased when listening task was about to finish. Moreover, those negative feelings led to disliking the listening text and accordingly not concentrating on what is being spoken. In the same line, Carrell et-al (2001) identified

the listener degree of motivation and the amount of interest in the topic of discussion to be some of the affective variables that can influence comprehension. In addition, Flowerdew and Miller (2010) argued that comprehension can take place only if individuals are motivated to listen. It follows from motivation, interest, and many other feelings may strengthen or weaken the acoustic input to be processed due to lack of attention.

2.9.4 Factors Attributed to Physical Setting

Not only the difficulties come from the message, the listener or the speaker, but also come from the environment surrounding students. According to Bloomfield et-al (2010), noise or distortion in the audio signal interferes with listening comprehension for listeners. In addition, Buck (2001) emphasized that the background noise, phones ringing and other noises may distract the learners' attention and hence affect comprehension. To support this study, Hasan (2000) stressed out that background noises on the recording, environmental noises, and poor quality equipment are factors in developing the listening comprehension

2.10 Useful Strategies for Overcoming Students Listening Comprehension

Difficulties

Hamouda (2013) recommended strategies for teachers and students to employ in improving the effectiveness of teaching and learning listening comprehension. Regarding to how teachers can help their students overcome listening comprehension problems, here are few helpful ideas:

2.10.1. Adapting and Improving Listening Material

Listening materials should be provided based on the students' needs. Therefore, teachers should adopt and adapt listening materials that match their students' interest

and background since the listening materials only become stimulating and motivating them when they are slightly challenging to what they have already known and suit their interest (Gilakjani & Narjes, 2016).

2.10.2. Activating Your Students' Vocabulary

From the investigation, unfamiliar words is one of the great causes for the students in listening comprehension. In order to become an effective listener, teachers should provide students with a broader range of vocabulary needed for listening comprehension since lack of vocabulary becomes a great obstacle to them in listening comprehension, which is also realized by Underwood (1989) and Higgins (1997).

2.10.3. Using Different Kinds of Input

Teachers should provide students with different types of input like lectures, radio news, films, TV plays, announcements, everyday conversation, interviews and English songs (Hamouda, 2013).

2.10.4. Using Visual Aids

Teacher exploit visual aids or draw pictures and diagrams related to the listening topics to aid students to guess and imagine actively. Visual aids draw learners' attentions, increase their motivation on the topic and help them to understand the spoken text, thus listener overcome difficulties such as unknown words, minimal pairs of words (Hamouda, 2013).

2.10.5. Accents

Due to the fact that the American accent is quite different from the British and Australian, teachers need to help students to be familiar with the accents of different native speakers. It is also necessary for students to recognize the differences between both native and non-native accents. Buck (2001) stated that when listeners hear an

unfamiliar accent for the first time after studying only American English will encounter critical difficulties in listening. This will certainly interrupt the whole listening comprehension process and at the same time an unfamiliar accent makes comprehension impossible for the listeners.

2.10.6. Pronunciation

Teachers need to familiarize their students with the rules of pronunciation in order to help them hear the different forms of rapid natural speech and ask them to imitate native speakers' pronunciation. By doing that, the students' pronunciation capacity would become more improved, which will help students find listening to native speakers effective and efficient (Gilakjani & Narjes, 2016).

2.10.7. Activating or Building Students' Prior Topical and Linguistic Knowledge

Teachers should encourage their students to think about and discuss what they already know about the content of the listening text. Teachers can also provide the background needed for them to understand the text, and it can help them focus attention on what to listen for. Consequently, students begin to predict what they might hear and make connections with what they already know, increasing the relevance of the information (Hamouda, 2013).

2.10.8. Arousing Interest and Motivating Students to Attend To the Spoken Message

Students will be more willing to listen actively to what the speaker says if they are able to relate the listening experience to their own lives. In addition, teachers can create a conducive environment to listening and encourage effective listening behaviors that are necessary lifelong skills (Hamouda ,2013).

2.10.9. Encouraging Prediction

This technique can be employed in the pre-listening or while-listening stages. Students are asked to predict what the text is about or what the speaker is going to say next. In order to encourage students to imagine and predict what they are going to hear, teacher may tell something about the topic of the listening text or something about the speaker. By this way, predicting, asking for clarification, and using non-verbal cues are some examples of these strategies that improve learners' listening comprehension ability which is also realized by Hamouda (2013) and Gilakjani and Narjes (2016).

2.10.10. Using Slow Rate of Speech

According to Underwood (1989), speed can make listening passage difficult. If the speakers speak too fast, students may have serious problems to understand L2 words. In this situation, listeners are not able to control the speed of speakers and this can create critical problems with listening comprehension. Therefore, lecturers need to be advised to slow their speech rate down to a level that suits their students.

2.10.11. Providing and Trying to Gain as Much Feedback as Possible

During the course, the teachers should give their students the necessary feedback on their performance because it can promote their error correction and increase their motivation, and help them to develop their confidence in listening exercises. Students' feedback can assist the teacher to judge where the class is going and how it should be instructed (Gilakjani & Narjes, 2016).

2.10.12. Improving the Learning Environment of Listening Skill

Environment of listening skill, which is listening laboratory besides cassette tapes, recorded materials and written listening texts, is a vital key affecting the quality of both learning and teaching listening skill (Hamouda, 2013).

Besides to what has been previously mentioned, different authors have explained various ways of helping students improve their listening comprehension. Brown (1989) proposed a methodology that combined developing the learners' phonological code and helping them use contexts to make predictions. Buck (1995) proposed using pre-communicative and communicative activities, following a pedagogical framework by Littlewood (1998). This included helping learners develop a facility with fast natural speech and use good listening strategies. Field (2002) proposed an approach that took into consideration learners' listening problems and suggested a series of exercises for practicing listening sub skills in short micro-listening exercises.

2.11 Previous Research

Many researchers reported how listening comprehension can be influenced by some factors that may lead to the relative failure of learner's listening comprehension. Hamouda (2013) investigated listening problems encountered by major students of Qassim University in Saudi Arabia. 60 students who took the listening course in 20012/2013 were selected for the study. Data was gathered by means of questionnaires and interviews. The results of the study revealed that accent, pronunciation, speed of speech, insufficient vocabulary, different accent of speaker were the major listening comprehension problems encountered by EFL Saudi learners.

More evidence was reported by Beklen (2012), who examined student's evaluation of their performance as listeners in English. Another purpose of the study was to determine the listening comprehension problems faced by language learners and the factors that made comprehension easier or more difficult. The obtained data through questionnaires and follow-up interviews were conducted with 213 students at

English Department of Dicle University. The analysis of the revealed data that rated the students with their listening performances as "poor" in listening process and they were affected by many factors such as speech rate, tone voice, lack of visual materials and quality of listening materials.

Nizigama (2014), investigated the academic listening problems and strategies. The study employed a survey design which involved administering questionnaires of rating scales to measure the listening problems and strategies from 43 first semester master students of English in Applied Linguistics and ESP branch at Ouargla University. The results of this study revealed that noises in the lecture room (whenever there are), fast speed of lecture delivery, the lecture lab contained too many unfamiliar words including specialist terminology related to the students' field of study, listening to a long listening text, and stress and intonation patterns can sometimes be the source of lecture comprehension problems.

More recently, Mohammad (2015), investigated the causes of speaking and listening weaknes in Saudi Secondary School in Al-Gunfuthah city. A sample of 240 students were selected randomly from three levels in each secondary school, four instruments were used in the study, they are students' questionnaire ,teachers' questionnaire ,students' interview and teacher interview. The results showed that there are many reasons for students' weakness in listening and speaking skills, these reasons are associated with the English textbook used in the secondary level, the students, and the English teachers.

Mastafa (2007) investigated the importance of teaching listening comprehension in English specialization at secondary schools as one of the most important skills in understanding spoken language. It is noticeable that the graduates of Misurata English specialization at secondary schools fail to understand the spoken language. For this

reason, the study aimed to identify the causes of these difficulties and find out suitable solutions for this problem in order to facilitate language learning. The main hypothesis of this study is that the majority of Libyan learners of English who have finished the secondary stage show weakness in understanding the spoken language. This indicates that there must be something wrong with the teaching situation. The results revealed that the inabilities of listening and understanding spoken language in real life situation are due to the shortcomings in teaching methodology. They do not use proper teaching techniques because most of English teachers are not well-qualified, and they lack of teaching aids such of lab orations videos, pictures. Also the allotted time to listening comprehension is not sufficient to give students chances to express their ideas. It is also observed that they still use non-authentic material for teaching listening. Therefore, students of English encounter problems in understanding spoken language easily.

Ahkam (2015) carried out a study to investigate the difficulties EFL students encounter in listening comprehension as perceived by students at the AAUJ. This study aimed to identify the difficulties students face in listening comprehension. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher developed two different methods. Firstly, a questionnaire was given to a sample of 189 EFL students who were studying at the English language center. Secondly, an interview was held with 12 students chosen randomly from the sample of the study. The findings revealed that disability of word recognition, lacking background information about the topic, speed rate of speech and gliding over words while speaking, noises, poor quality listening equipment and enjoying the listening excerpt got high effect degree.

Although there is much research about this issue, a review of the local and international researches did not indicate any similar studies. Therefore, this study

aims to investigate the causes of poor listening comprehension among Libyan EEL undergraduate students.

2.12. Summary of the Chapter

This chapter reviewed the related literature to listening comprehension problems. Studies referred the difficulties faced by students to several factors: linguistic features of listening text, the listener, the speaker, and the physical setting where student listen. This chapter also reviewed some previous studies related to listening and different techniques and strategies.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological procedures of which have been used to collect data of this study, research design, location of the study, the sample of the study, research instruments, piloting study, and data collection methods.

3.2. Research Design

The study employed a mixed- methods approach. A close-ended questionnaire was used to examine the students' beliefs towards the factors that influence listening comprehension, and five semi- structured interviews were conducted with teachers to obtain in-depth information about the teachers' thoughts towards the causes of poor listening comprehension. Using mixed methods is a powerful technique to gain both general and deeper sights that shed light on the research questions to identify the causes of these problems. Wallace (2003), emphasized that using both a questionnaire and an interview are useful research techniques when they come to eliciting factual data, opinions, ideas and experiences.

3.3. Location of the Study

The study took place at the Department of English, Sabratha Faculty of Arts, Sabratha University, because, the researcher knows the teachers who were working there. Besides, the researcher needed the collaboration from the teachers to collect

relevant data. Therefore, they were very helpful to facilitate the researcher to achieve the results of this study.

3.4. The Sample of the Study

The sample consisted of 100 EFL undergraduate students who were studying at the English Department at Sabratha University during the academic year (2017-2018). It included students from different levels (first year, second year, third year, and fourth year) whose ages ranged from 18 to 23. They were mostly females (75%) with a similar social and cultural background. Students were chosen randomly for this study, in order to make the population equal and give any member the chance to participate in the study to increase the validity of the study. Cohen, Morisson and Manion (2007,p.113) defined random sampling as “choosing the nearest individuals to serve as respondent and continuing that process until the required sample size that has been obtained or those who happen to be available and accessible at the time”. In addition, the researcher interviewed five instructors at the same department from those who have an experience in teaching English listening in order to give more details about the research topic. The researcher selected five instructors after suggestions of the head of the English department. The researcher used purposive sampling technique to select the teachers according to the needs of the study. Schutt (2006,p.348) pointed out that " purposive sampling is intentional selection of informants based on their ability to elucidate a specific theme, concept, or phenomenon ".

3.5. Research Instruments

This study was carried out with both quantitative and qualitative research methods for data collection. These methods were a questionnaire and a semi- structured interview. These instruments are described in details below.

3.5.1. The Questionnaire

A close-ended questionnaire was used with students to obtain information about the factors that influence listening comprehension. The questionnaire is a very good quantitative technique since it enable large-scale numerical data to be obtained in short period of time (McLeish,2009).The items of the questionnaire were adapted from Ahkams' study (2015) entitled as (The difficulties encountered by EFL learners in listening comprehension). questionnaire about listening problems. It consisted of 22 items focused on the students' perceptions of listening comprehension and the challenges they face in the class. These items were grouped into four categories: linguistic aspects (1-7 items), listener (8-14 items), speaker (15-19 items), and physical setting (20-22 items). Each statement was followed by a 5-points Likert Scale ranged from strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree (see Appendix1). To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, it was reviewed by four experienced teachers who have taught English listening at Sabratha University.

3.5.2. Semi- structured Interview

In this study, a semi- structured interview was conducted with five teachers at the Department of English, Sabratha Faculty of Arts to obtain information about the reasons behind the learners' difficulties of listening comprehension; and to find out if there are any other listening difficulties that affect the learners' listening comprehension. It consisted of 5 open-ended questions (see Appendix2). It was

conducted after reviewing the related literature with considering the comments and suggestions of the supervisor and 3 more experienced instructors. The interviewees were asked about their permission to record the interviews. Svec et al (1998) find the semi- structured interview suitable for those research setting where one part of the educational phenomenon under investigation can be clearly and objectives preconceived interview frameworks depends on participants perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes.

3.6. Pilot Study

Piloting research instruments are a significant for increasing the validity and reliability (Bryman, 2008). A pilot survey was used to test the data collection tools of this study. Before the pilot study, the researcher took steps in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. To evaluate the questionnaire in terms of its content and structure, the questionnaire was checked by 3 university teachers in order to examine the structure, logical flow of the questionnaire, clarity, length, and the order of the statements. They assured the content of the questionnaire was good and it gave students the chance to identify the difficulties they encountered with listening comprehension. The questionnaire was randomly piloted with 10 students who were studying English at Sabrahta University in April 21, 2018. The pilot participants were asked to fill out the questionnaire to verify if the items are clear and easy before it is actually used . Most of the students finished the questionnaire within 10 minutes. All of the questionnaire items were analyzed (see Appendix 3). Moreover, the researcher tired out the interview schedule by giving it to three university instructors in order to check its quality and to see if this instrument is helpful for collecting the data about the issue. No changes were made to the research instruments and no major issues were discovered.

3.7. Data Collection

At the beginning of the data collection process, the researcher asked the head of the English department for a permission to conduct the study. The data was collected by using a questionnaire and interviews. The survey was completed from April 25, (2018) to May 5, (2018). The researcher administrated the questionnaire to a hundred Libyan EFL students who were randomly selected from each of the four years: first, second, third and fourth year during their class time. It is reasonable to make generalizations from the result of the sample back to the population. Students were provided with oral instructions and information about the research to avoid any misunderstanding. The questionnaires were then distributed among the students and they were completed within 15 minutes.

The interviews were conducted on May 8, 2018, after three days of administering the questionnaire. The researcher spent this time in analyzing the questionnaire data which helped in formulating the interview questions. The first step in conducting the interviews was contacting all interviewees to arrange for the time that suits them. 5 teachers were interviewed individually at the Department of English, Subrata Faculty of Arts. During the interview, each participant responded to five open-ended questions. The interviewees were asked about their permission to record the interviews. All the interviewees were asked the same questions and some of them were encouraged to provide more details and examples about the issue. After finishing the interview, the data was transcribed and analyzed. For the analysis, each participant was given a number, for example, the first teacher was assigned the code "interviewee1", and the second teacher was assigned the cod "interviewee2",....etc.

3.8. Summary of the Chapter

Chapter three cleared how the researcher collected data about the problems encountered by EFL under graduate students. Research design, location of the study, instruments, and sample and population of the study were explained in this chapter.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the obtained data from both the questionnaire and the semi- structured interviews, in order to investigate the listening comprehension difficulties encountered by Libyan FFL undergraduate students. In addition, the results of the questionnaire were analyzed and presented in tables and figures. Whereas, the results of the semi- structured interviews with the teachers were analyzed qualitatively.

4.2 Results of the Questionnaires

The following tables and graphs show the statistical results obtained from the questionnaire in order to answer the research questions that guided the present research study. The responses were merged into three: strongly agree and agree for agree responses, and strongly disagree and disagree for disagree responses, and neutral to the participants' uncertainly about the statement. The following abbreviations are used in the tables; (A) for agree responses, (N) for neutral responses and (D) for disagree responses. The findings of the study have been categorized as follows:

Table 1: Listening Problems Related to Content of the Listening Text

Item No.	Statements	A	N	D
1.	I find it difficult to understand listening texts in which there are too many unfamiliar words.	67%	20%	13%
2.	I find listening comprehension difficult when the text contains complex grammatical structures	60%	26%	14%
3.	I find listening comprehension difficult when the spoken text contains jargons.	49%	32%	19%
4.	I find it difficult to understand listening texts when the topic is unfamiliar.	54%	24%	22%
5.	I find listening difficult when I listen to long spoken texts.	58%	27%	15%
6.	I find listening difficult when utterances contain slang expressions.	47%	32%	21%
7.	I find listening difficult to understand every single word of incoming speech.	41%	26%	33%

As shown in table 1, more than half of students (67%) have stated that unfamiliar words interfered with their listening comprehension. Whereas (13%) of them stated that they can easily overcome this difficulty, while (20%) of them were not certain about this item. The next problem was about the difficult grammatical structures, (60%) of the participants declared that they scarcely found difficulty in listening comprehension due to the component structure of the text. Whereas, (26%) of them were not certain about the item. Only (14%) of the students disagreed about this issue. In addition, nearly half of them (49%) viewed that unfamiliar words including jargon

and idioms greatly influenced their listening comprehension. The rest (32%) of them were not certain about this item. Regarding this matter, only (19%) of them had no difficulties. Results revealed that (54%) of the students agreed that they find it difficult to understand the listening text when the topic is unfamiliar, while (22%) of them found no difficulties in understanding the spoken text when the topic is unfamiliar. The attitudes of (24%) participant students were not certain about this idea. Additionally, it has been noticed that moderate degree of response (58%) have responded that long spoken texts can be a major factor that negatively affects listening comprehension. Whereas (15%) of them stated that they can easily understand long spoken texts. While (27%) of the participants were not certain about this item. Only (21%) of the students disagreed that the use of colloquial and slang expressions made it difficult for them to comprehend the listening text, but (47%) of them agreed that using slang expressions make the process of listening comprehension more difficult. Regarding this matter, (32%) were not certain about this item. Finally, (41%) of the students find it difficult to understand the meaning of every single word in the speech, but (33%) of them disagreed that find difficult to understand every single word of incoming speech, but (26%) were not certain about this item.

Table 2: Listening Problems Related to Listener

Item No.	Statements	A	N	D
8-	I found it difficult to recognize the words I know because of the way they are pronounced	48%	26%	26%
9-	I find it difficult to understand the spoken text which is not of interest to me.	37%	31%	32%
10-	I find listening comprehension difficult when I feel tired.	60%	19%	21%
11-	I find it difficult to understand the listening text when I lack prior knowledge about the topic	54%	26%	20%
12-	I find it difficult to get a general understanding of the first listening	58%	26%	16%
13-	I found it difficult to predict what would come next.	48%	27%	25%
14-	I find it difficult to tell where one word finishes and begins there are words that I would	46%	34%	20%

Table (2) shows that (48%) of the students found it difficult to recognize the words they knew because of the way they were pronounced, whereas (26%) of the students did not agree about this statement and (26%) of them were not certain about this idea. The attitudes of (37%) participant of students were positive about finding difficulty in understanding the spoken text which is not of interest to them. While (32%) of them showed that they had no problems with this issue. (31%) of them were not sure about this item. This is in line with the findings of previous research which indicated that some students lost interest in listening and found it boring. More than half of the students (60%) responded that they fail to understand the listening text when they feel tired and, only (21%) of them reported that they can overcome this difficulty easily. Moreover, (19%) of the students were not certain about this idea. The next statement was about the influence of prior knowledge about the topic.

Regarding this matter, (54%) of the students believed that they frequently had problems with it. Only (20%) of students faced no difficulties in understanding the spoken text. The rest (26%) of the students were not certain about this issue. Results showed that (58%) of the students found it difficult to predict what would come next and to get a general idea from the first listening. While (16%) of the students did not highly evaluate with this matter. The rest (26%) of students were not sure about this matter. The results revealed that (25%) of the students did not believe that it is difficult to predicate what would come next. Yet, (48%) of them claimed that they find this difficulty, (27%) were not certain about this item. Finally (46%) of the students found it difficult to identify the words they knew in their written form when they hear them in a stream of speech and (20%) have never been in that situation. Surprisingly, (34%) of the students were not certain about this item.

Table 3: Listening Problems Related to Speaker

Item No.	Statements	A	N	D
15-	I find it difficult to understand the natural speech which is full of hesitation and pauses.	33%	43%	24%
16	I find it difficult to understand the meaning of words which are not pronounced clearly.	63%	24%	13%
17-	I find it difficult to understand well when speakers speak too fast.	66%	26	8%
18-	I find it difficult to understand well when speakers speak with a variety of accents.	48%	33%	19%
19-	I find it difficult to understand well when the speaker dose not pause long enough.	59%	30%	11%

According to the results from the questionnaire, (33%) of the students find it difficult to understand natural speech which is full of hesitations and pauses. Whereas

(24%) of them had no difficulties. The rest (43%) of them were not sure about this matter. It can be clear that (63%) of the students showed positive responses toward the inability in recognizing the words they knew because of the way they were pronounced. Whereas, (13%) of them were negative about this notion. At this point, (24%) of the students were not certain. The table indicates that (66%) of the students find it difficult to understand the listening text when speakers speak fast. Only (8%) of them reported that this matter did not affect their comprehension, but (26%) were not certain about this idea. Related to a variety of accents, (48%) of the participant students claimed that this issue causes difficulties in understanding the listening text. While, (19%) of them had never experienced this kind of problem, (33%) of them were not certain about this matter. Additionally, (59%) of the students find it difficult to understand the listening text when the speaker does not pause long enough. (11%) of them viewed the opposite. However, (30%) of the students were not certain about the item.

Table 4: Listening Problems Related to the Physical Setting

Item No.	Statements	A	N	D
20-	It is difficult for me to concentrate with noises around.	73%	18%	9%
21-	Unclear sounds resulting from a poor quality CD-player interfere with my listening comprehension.	66%	21%	13%
22-	Unclear sounds resulting from poor equipment interfere with my listening comprehension.	66%	24%	10%

Table (4) shows that (73%) of the participant students faced the problem of noises. Whereas, (9%) of them reported that this matter did not affect their comprehension

and (18%) of them were not certain about it. (66%) of them believe that the difficulties they encounter in listening comprehension are due to the bad recording quality / poor- quality tapes or disks. (13%) of them viewed the opposite. However, (21%) were not certain about this item. Similar to the previous one, (66%) of them responded that unclear sounds resulting from poor-quality equipment can also interfere with their comprehension. Only (10%) of them had never experienced this kind of problems. However, (24%) of the students were not certain about the idea.

Figure1. The Most Common Factors that Influence the Students’ Listening Comprehension

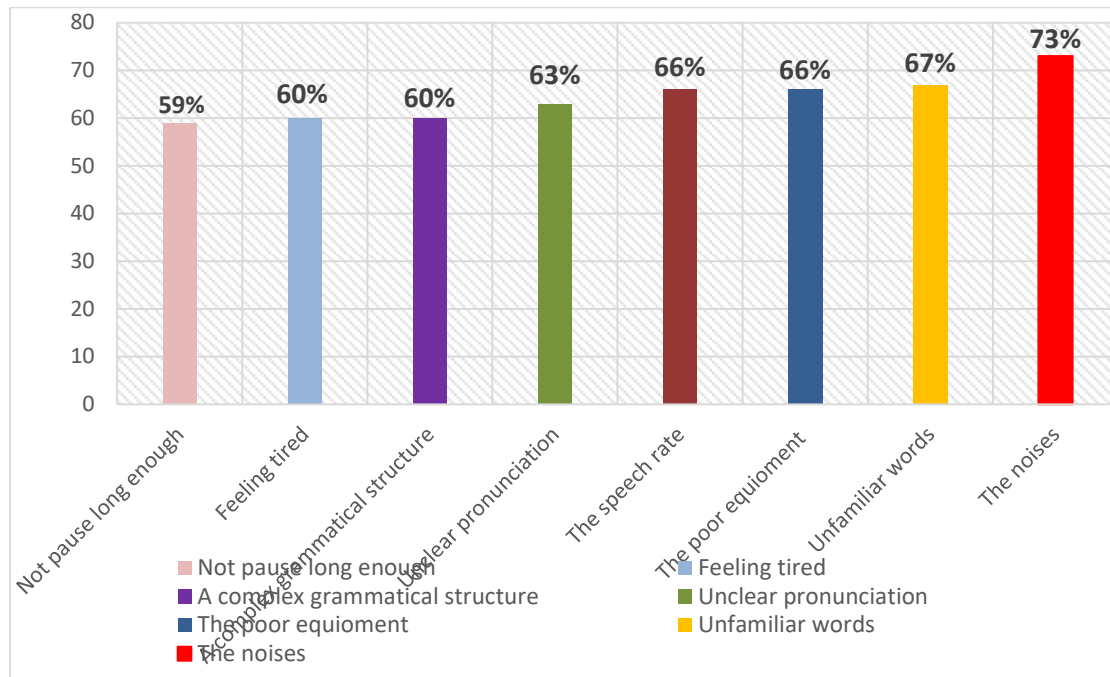


Figure1 shows that eight factors were reported as the most influential factors from twenty tow factors, and these were classified under four categories: text, listener, speaker, and physical setting. The factors were frequently mentioned in order: the noises, unfamiliar words, the poor equipments, the speech rate, unclear pronunciation, a complex grammatical structure, feeling tired, and not long pause enough.

Table 5 .The Three Last Reported Factors by Students

Factor	Percentage
Hesitation	33%
Lack of interest	37%
Understanding every single word	41%

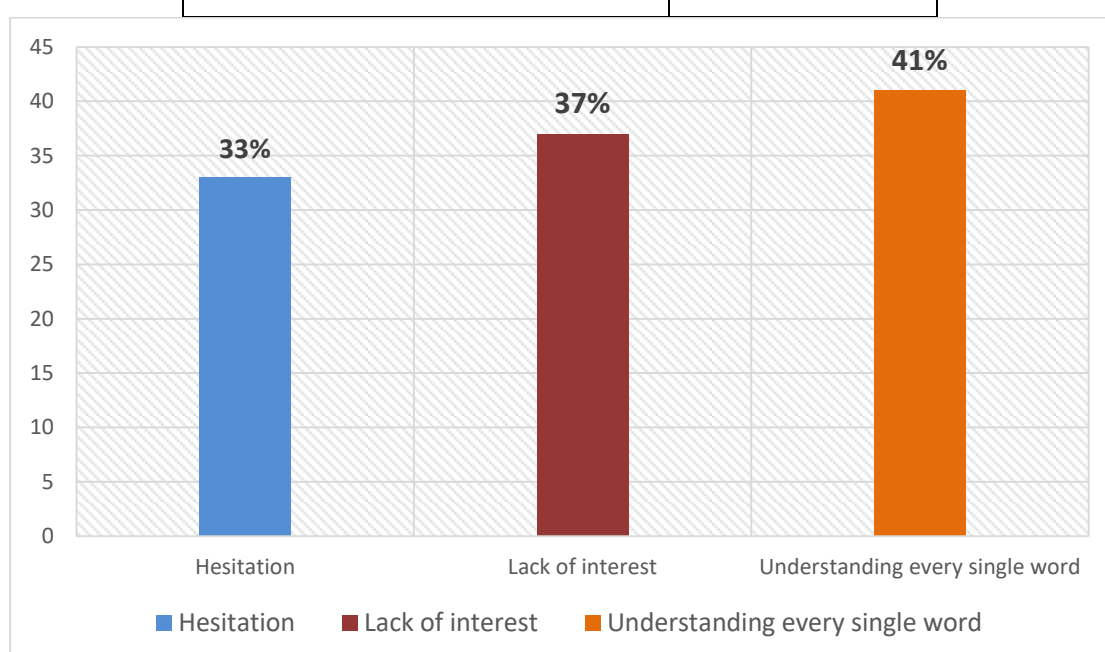


Figure 2

In addition, three other factors were reported to have less influence on students' listening comprehension. These include: the hesitation (33%), lack of interest (37%), and understanding every single word (41%).

4.3 Interview Data

The interviews were carried out with five teachers, who were teaching English at the same department from those who have experience in teaching listening in order to give additional views about the difficulties encountered by EFL students in listening comprehension. To present various views regarding different topics from the interviewed teachers, key comments or quotes were analyzed and presented.

4.3.1 Students' Listening Comprehension Problems

All of the participant teachers agreed that there are many reasons that cause listening comprehension difficulties. They believed that most of these causes are related to either text, listener, or physical conditions. The interviewee 2 explained that

"We have different types of problems that we face in our class or my students face in the class, first one is the lack of good equipment that we use in the class to help students to listen to the speaker are not right, and weak ones. The other thing is get general understanding from first time. For example, Scotland speaker is very difficult even for teachers to understand". This means that the quality of the listening equipment and the quality of recording play crucial role in listening comprehension. Interviewee 3 added *"some students lose their attention because of noises around them"*. The English teachers who participated in this study provided many causes of weakness with regard to listening English at the University such as, lack of equipments, unfamiliar words, lack of interest, a variety of accents, and lack of prior knowledge. For example, interviewee 2 said *"lack of vocabulary is key word in this case, it is a big problem for them to understand the text"*. In addition, he conducted that Lack of words was another major problem that impedes students' listening comprehension. According to interviewee 4 *"their attention focus on unfamiliar*

words and thus they often miss the following part". She added that *"Students have limited English vocabulary"*. Interviewees 1 and 5 declared that unfamiliar topics hinder the listening comprehension of the majority of the students. Interviewee 5 stated that *"poor background knowledge makes them not to understand the text well, so they cannot respond to the whole questions after the listening"*. But interviewee 1 said *"I think it is the teachers role ,they need some information about the text before playing the recorder"*. Some teachers stressed the importance of grammar in relation to listening comprehension. For instance, interviewee 3 said *"the students ability to listen for complex sentences is too bad, because their English grammar is poor"*.

Similarly, interviewee 1 stated that *" their grammar is poor so their listening comprehension is not good"*. This shows that these teachers were believed that complex grammatical structure in listening text makes comprehension difficult for students.

4.3.2 Listening Comprehension Strategies

All of the participant teachers stated that they employed different strategies in their classes. The most frequently used strategies are, building prior topical and linguistic knowledge, note-taking, paying special attention to the introduction of the lecture, and preparing the topic by doing all the required exercises. This is agree with what interviewee 5 says. Interviewee 5 commented that *"Before listening, I give some information about the topic"*. However, Interviewee 2 pointed out that *"before starting listening , I give some instructions in order to achieve the purposes of listening"*. She also added *"while listening, I make sure that they understand any key terms, for example, slangs or jargons"*. In fact, all of the teachers believed that note-taking strategy while listening might influence positively. As a result, interviewee 1 stated that *" I ask them to take notes then compare students note with the ones of my*

students". But interviewee 5 pointed out that *"during the listening, I add some clarifications and repetition if they miss or do not understand the point"*. Interviewee 4 also added that *"after listening, I back to how they listened and what they do differently next time"*. Likewise, *"to keep the concentration, I sit the students where they can hear and see"*. This indicates that all teachers were considered the previous stages (peg-listening, while- listening, and post-listening) as the main steps in ordinary method of teaching listening skill in EFL classes at universities.

Some teachers provided few helpful ideas such as, provide students with suitable listening materials, do some useful exercises to help them discover effective listening strategies, make students aware of different native-speaker accents, using different types of input, create conducive environment for listening, and encouraging prediction.

4.3.3 Portion of Time for Listening during Listening Classes

All of the interviewed teachers reported that they spent about thirty hours for listening in language laboratory. Interviewee 4 commented that *"It is mainly thirty of time"*. They also added that they give their students enough time for practicing listening. Some teachers declared that students levels were weak in terms of listening because of the limited time for listening in the classroom. Interviewees 1 and 5 said that they usually enough time for listening. For example, interviewee 1 explained that *"it depends on the task , thirty minutes for listening, then twenty minutes for sharing all information and ideas"*. Among whom, only one interviewee who had different opinions about average time of practicing listening, he stated that *"It depends on students level, specially, in early stages, we usually offer good time for listening"*.

4.3.4 Listening Tasks

Teachers were asked to report the kinds of listening tasks they do during the listening classes. They reported that many of the implemented tasks include listening to a recorded interview and carrying out various tasks such as (multiple choice, filling the blank, and matching). For example, interviewee 1 explained that *"there are three main activities applied in each listening text which called , pre listening activities, while listening, and after listening. We need to do some warming up activities, so students have an idea about the topic that going to listen to"*. Interviewee 4 commented *"we use videos and recording, and use pet listening exam as well"*. Interviewee 3 replied that there are many activities which help students to orient their tasks such as listening to songs and dialogues in different stations (hospital, restaurant). Moreover, interviewee 2 pointed out that *"listening to tape recorders with written listening texts, is a vital key affecting the quality of both learning and teaching listening skill"*. In addition, interviewee 5 and 1 stated that they familiarize their students with key concepts and vocabulary before listening to or spoken text. In order to encourage students to imagine and predict what they are going to hear, this technique can be employed in the pre-listening or while-listening stages. All teachers agreed that they should also provide students with different kinds of input, such as lectures, films, TV plays, everyday conversation, interviews, and English songs. This indicated that there were statistically difference in using language activities associated with the objects and content of the curriculum of English language.

4.3.5 Importance of Listening Comprehension

All of the interviewed teachers agreed that students perceive listening comprehension as an important skill. They ranked it as the second important skill for students after the speaking skill. For example, interviewee 5 said that *"the listening skill is the most important skill for students, it helps them to understand grammar , how they use vocabulary , and it helps how to speak and what to say in particular situation"*. According to interviewee 3, *"listening comprehension is the first skill to be taken into their considerations"*. In addition, interviewee 4 stated that *"Our students were aware of this fact. So, our students preferred to spend much time on listening"*. Moreover, interviewee 2 commented *"yes, they know it is very important skill , they know it is the key to improve their conversation and their speaking skill ,but they afraid of listening test, think they might not understand everything"*. Furthermore, interviewee 1 stated that *"yes, almost all of them perceived listening as important, because they had only one purpose, preparing for the final exam"*. Interviews also revealed that many students feel that listening skills in English were important for them in class. As teachers often emphasized listening comprehension skills in their classes. This means that all students are aware of how much listening comprehension is important.

4.4 Summary of the Chapter

The findings indicated that students at Sabratha University, especially English Department, encounter various kinds of listening comprehension problems. Based on the students' questionnaire, the results show that students face many difficulties including unfamiliar words, the noises, the speed of speech, a poor quality CD-player, poor equipment, unclear pronunciation, a complex grammatical structure, feeling tired, and not pausing long enough. In addition, teachers in the interview mainly

referred to the difficulties that students face while listening, such as noise, unfamiliar words, the speech rate, a poor quality CD-player and poor equipment. In fact, the results of the interview supported the questionnaire. Moreover, the results of the questionnaire and the interview approved a positive perspective towards (unfamiliar words) which is ranked as the most commonly factor that influence students' comprehension. Furthermore, this study discovered that students are not only weak with listening comprehension but also they lack vocabulary and their usage and lack enough understanding with grammatical complex structure.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter aims at discussing the results of the questions and connecting them with the results of previous studies. In addition, it presents conclusion, limitations of study, and recommendations which are based on the results of the study.

5.1 The Discussion of the Results of the Questionnaire

In regard to the difficulties students encounter in listening comprehension, the following were the results of the study.

5.1.1 Listening Problems Related to the Content of the Listening Text

Most of the responses agreed that listening text caused listening problems when they have a listening exercise. Unfamiliar words was the most significant factors that made them difficult to understand the listening text. The majority of the students stop listening and think about the meaning of the word. It seems, therefore, for many learners, knowing the meaning of words in the text is crucial for their comprehension. This result supports the following studies, Trgrul (2014) and Hanoi (2010) who claimed that unfamiliar words in the listening text make comprehension difficult for most of the students. This shows that the respondents felt the problem with the highest percentage were unfamiliar vocabulary and difficult grammar structure. Moreover, the participants stated that vocabulary learning plays an important role in language teaching specially in the context were English thought as a foreign language.

Apart from the mentioned factors, difficult grammatical structure, the participant students were positive about complex grammatical structure interfered with the

learners' listening comprehension. The great majority of the students have responded that difficult grammatical structures interfered with their listening comprehension. This conforms with Hasan's study (2000), who concluded that grammatical complex structure is the major factor that causes problems for students' listening comprehension.

Additionally, it has been noticed that moderate degree of response has responded that long spoken text can be one of the major factors that negatively affects the learners listening comprehension. This coincides with the results of a study done by Gilakjani and Ahmaid (2011), which concluded that the difficulty of listening comprehension is partly because of the length of listening text.

As well, the participants agreed that they find it difficult to understand the listening text when the topic is unfamiliar. This result is consistent with Yan's study (2007), who found out that unfamiliar topic is a major factor in their listening comprehension. Students' attitudes towards trying to understand every single word of listening were positive. Therefore, students find it difficult to understand the meaning of every single word in the speech, which leads the students to stop listening and do not know what come next in a listening excerpt. This supports the claims of Ciccon (1995), who stated that what made listening comprehension difficult was that learners who did not understand every single word in the spoken text so that made it difficult for them to fully understanding the whole meaning (see 2.2).

5.1.2 Listening Problems Related to the Speaker

Speed of delivery was other problem students faced in listening comprehension as explained in Hasan's study (2000) who reached to the same conclusion, he found out that slower speech led to better comprehension. Students found it difficult to understand the meaning of the input texts delivered quickly (see 2.9.2). This indicates that students absolutely encounter certain difficulties in listening comprehension since they lack control over the speed of speaking received from the speakers.

In this study, (59%) of the participant students were positive about the idea that not pausing long enough while speaking confused students in listening comprehension as the current study had showed, as well as Vandergift (2002), who indicated that many students find difficulty in understanding the listening text when the speaker does not pause long enough, and few students were not sure about this idea.

Moreover, the majority of students responded that they found it difficult to recognize the words they knew because of the way they were pronounced. This result is also consistent with Hamouda's study (2013), who reported that students always find it difficult to recognize the words they knew because the words were mispronounced in different way. This indicates that the majority of students have found it difficult to recognize the words they knew because the way they were pronounced.

Other problems that encounter students in listening comprehension received a low effect degree. For example, students find it difficult to understand natural speech which is full of hesitations and pauses. This is in line with the findings of Harmer (2001), who reported that dialogues are full of hesitations, and pauses cause problems

to understand natural speech. This means that hesitations and pauses in spontaneous speech cause different problems for EFL students.

5.1.3 Listening Problems Related to the Listener.

The participants also pointed out that the listener was one of the factors that affect listening comprehension. Related to a variety of accents, half of the participants claimed that a variety of accents cause difficulties to them to understand the listening text. While few of them stated that they had never experienced this kind of problem. Bloomfield (2010), indicated that unfamiliar accents such as Indian accent can cause serious problems in listening comprehension. This shows that strong regional accents are not suitable for training in listening, but in spontaneous conversation native speakers do have certain accents. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to let students deal with different accents, especially in extensive listening.

Moreover, more than half of the students have responded that they fail to understand the listening text when they feel tired, and only a small number of them reported that they can overcome this difficulty easily. Beklen (2012) reached to a similar conclusion and stated that students feel nervous and uncomfortable and may not be concentrate during listening.

Furthermore, it is not easy for students to understand the spoken text which is not interesting for them. This may be due to the types of listening exercises which remain the same. Therefore, listeners feel bored because of the repetition of the same exercises. This is in line with the findings of Hamouda (2013), who indicated that some students lose interest in listening and found it boring with unmotivated topics

and activities. This means that students will be more willing to listen actively to what the speaker says if they are able to relate the listening experience to their own life.

Students' attitudes towards trying to understand listening text for one time were positive. This supports the claims of Hasan (2000), who reported that listening comprehension was difficult for students because what they listened to in the class was different from real life communication situations. The teacher should repeat the listening text more than time, so that students could answer the assigned tasks.

5.1.4 Listening Problems Related to the Physical Setting

Most of the responses stated that poor quality equipment played a major role in affecting their listening comprehension. This result corresponded with Hassan's study (2000), who reported that noise and poor quality of sounds in recorded materials can impact the comprehension of learners' listening (see 2. 9. 4).

Moreover, (73%) of the students claimed that they cannot concentrate during listening due to noise, including both background noises on the recording and environmental noises. If listening task is carried out with noises around, it is difficult to have a good result in listening. Moreover, participants think that the difficulties they encounter in listening comprehension are due to the bad recording. This means that the recording's noises or the listening tool is used for such a long time so the quality gets affected by that. As a poor-quality equipment interferes with listener's comprehension.

5.2 Teacher's Views about the Difficulties

Actually, the participant teachers agreed that students face difficulties in listening comprehension due to the following reasons: the noises, unfamiliar words, speakers speak quickly, a poor quality CD-player, poor equipment. The results of this study supported the findings of Goh (2000), Hasan (2000), Graham (2006), Koichi (2002), Anderson & Lynch (2003), Underwood (1989) and Juan & Abidin (2013). They all concluded that all of the previous reasons could lead for a bored class. For example, students face problems when listening texts contain jargons and idioms. Also they face problems when listening texts are long and causes to concentration lose. Hasan (2000), Osada (2004), Jafar (2013), Goh (2001), Dunkel (2006), and Juan & Abidin (2013). They all reached to the same conclusion that speed rate of speech impact students' comprehension. On the other hand, Lin (2000), and River (2012) disagreed with the findings. They claimed that speed rate of speech did not cause poor listening comprehension. This indicates that there are many factors that contribute to the difficulties in listening comprehension. Not recognizing words, unfamiliar words, noises, quality of equipment, and fast rate of speech are the top factors that impair listening comprehension.

Interviews also revealed that many students feel that listening skills in English were important for them as their English teachers often emphasized on reading comprehension skills in the classrooms. Teachers ranked listening as the first and second amongst the other skills. This finding coincides with Hamouda (2013) who reported that students think that listening is an important skill and their proficiency levels in listening skills are quite low. This means these students were perceived listening comprehension as an important skill.

The majority of the participants attributed the difficulties they encountered in listening comprehension to the following reasons: the noises, the speech rate, the poor equipments, unclear pronunciation and unfamiliar words. In fact, these were the statements that took very effect degree. This result contradicts with the result of the study conducted by Hamuada (2013) who revealed that accent, pronunciation, speed of speech, insufficient vocabulary, different accent of speaker were the major listening comprehension problems (see2.10). This shows that students are not bad at listening comprehension, but also they lack lots of vocabulary, and they have very little idea about using and understanding vocabulary in context. Students were not thought how to use what they learn.

5.3 Teachers Views about Listening Comprehension strategies

In regard to the strategies that they use for helping students overcome classes, they provided suggestions based on the students' needs. The strategies assist comprehension such as using visual clues, taking notes, listening to all kinds of materials and listening to different varieties of accents. Anderson and Lynch (2003) believed that the active listening strategies can guide and improve the learners' learning performance. This shows that singing songs, watching TV programs, films and common and effective strategies for learning and reviewing grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. It is great tool to improve listening skill by practicing intonation and pronunciation, practicing listening to news and review in advance.

Moreover, interviews reported that the opportunity to practice English listening skills is lacking. Students feel hard to improve their listening ability when studying English because the English language environment is limited. This conform with a study done by Hamouda (2013) which showed that teachers should provide different types of input (see 2.10.3). However, the presence of foreign language

teachers in the university allows them to use and practice their English skills. Activities such as listening to English songs and guided English movie class, and English Camps in order for them to develop and enhance their English skills. This indicates that most EFL Libyans students feel hard to improve their listening ability when studying English because there is no English language environment.

Additionally, interviews revealed that materials should be reliable. The listening materials should reflect real discourse, including hesitations, rephrasing, and a variety of accents. Buck (2001) reached to the same result, he reported that the language needs to be comprehensible but does not necessarily need to be constantly modified or simplified to make it easier for the learner. Most importantly, listening should be relevant. Thus, keep motivation high, listeners must have a purpose for listening.

All of the interviewed teachers reported that they spent an hour practicing listening in the language laboratory. The participants were asked to report the kind of listening tasks, such as, multiple choice, filling the blank, matching, and songs. Hamouda (2013) reached to the same result, he reported that teachers should apply listening tasks that arouse students interest and help them learn listening skills and the types of listening strategies. This shows that the teachers played an important role in listening process, they also implemented different strategies to facilitate their students' listening comprehension, and showed availability when clarifying doubts inside the classrooms. Also, teachers are using different strategies that they have learned, which have a successful impact on the learning of the students. The students' job is to put into practice the strategies learned whether by themselves or by their teachers.

From the previous discussion, it can be seen that there are a number of problems which listeners face that interfere with listening comprehension. However, if these factors are carefully put into consideration by instructors when teaching English language, there is higher possibility that the level of listening comprehension will be greatly increased. Hence, understanding students learning difficulties in listening skills will help EFL teachers to use effective learning strategies and improve their English listening abilities. These results were in line with Hasan (2000) and Hamouda (2013) results. Therefore, instructors play an important role in selecting suitable listening strategies and applying useful listening tasks.

5.4 Conclusion

Listening is really important in foreign language learning and the key to acquire a language. Thus, being able to listen well is an important part in communication for everyone. The guided practice by the teacher is one of the best ways to improve this skill. A student with good listening comprehension skills will be able to participate more effectively in communicative situations. Teaching listening skill is one of the most difficult tasks for teachers. This is because that successful listening skills are acquired over time and with lots of practice. Therefore, they need to think of how they can incorporate listening into their teaching and provide opportunities both inside and outside the classroom to improve their students' achievement.

This study was conducted to find out the difficulties encountered by EFL undergraduate students in listening comprehension. It also aimed to highlight how the process of listening comprehension works and what useful strategies can be used in listening comprehension. After the long survey, it can be figured out that Students at Sabratha University encounter various kinds of listening problems in listening comprehension such as, the noises, the speech rate, the poor equipments, unclear

pronunciation and unfamiliar words. These results lead to the same conclusion in different research projects stated by researchers, such as, Goh (2000), Hasan (2000), Graham (2006), Koichi (2002), Anderson & Lynch (2003), and Juan & Abidin (2013). These problems may be related to the content of the listening text such as: complex grammatical structures, or related to the psychological characteristics like the lack of interest or could also be related to the listener or to the speaker like when they face difficulty to recognize the words which they know because of the way they are pronounced, or the difficulty to understand a speech which is full of hesitation and pauses, or due to physical setting such as the bad classes equipments, bad recording quality and poor quality tapes.

To conclude, the questionnaire and interview findings showed that students at Sabrata University face a lot of problems and difficulties, especially English Department, which deal with English as EFL. This requires new pedagogical methods that help the development of the educational process in listening comprehension.

5.5 Implications and Reconditions

The results of this study revealed that Libyan EFL students at Sabrata University encounter serious difficulties in listening comprehension. This might be a reflection with a lack of familiarity with knowing how to teach listening, and it is also that teachers do not consider listening as useful for their students. Thus, these problems need to be taken into consideration and to have solutions. Based on the results of the study, there are some recommendations that the researcher suggests to be taken into consideration:

1. Using schema theory in teaching listening to EFL students. For example, activating prior knowledge of the students improve the listening comprehension knowledge,

listeners construct meaning according to their prior knowledge as well as own purposes for listening rather than processing and receiving meaning.

2. Adopting task-based approach when teaching listening. For example, (that is pre listening, during listening, and post listening P D P;) or by setting various listening activities in teaching listening skill in order to enhance learner's abilities to receive the listening task with no difficulties.

3. Providing listening authentic material will provide a better learning environment. In addition to provide materials that supplement the process of teaching listening.

4. Integrating the listening skill with the other language skills to promote learners' communicative competence.

5. The researcher recommends that EFL teachers provide their students with more guidance on how to listen.

6. Teachers should motivate their students to use audio material for practicing their listening comprehension skill.

7. Students should seek opportunities to be in contact with English speakers in order to help them to get familiar with different accents and cultures.

8. Students are likely to lose concentration when listening to a long text. Teachers should therefore adopt activities with more interactive lecturing style to characterize communicative approach to language teaching.

9. A standardized list of listening difficulties could be created to provide instructors and learners with an efficient way to diagnose strategy difficulties.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

1. Further studies could be done to search for strategies used in the classroom that would enhance students' levels in listening comprehension.
2. A study investigating how to improve listening skills have to be conducted.
3. Conducting studies related to other skills of listening comprehension.
4. Evaluating listening courses in the light of the important skills determined by specialists.

5.7 Summary of the chapter

This chapter discussed the results of the study and linked them to previous studies. The questions of the study are discussed fully. Besides, an attempt to give possible explanations to the listening problems encountered by the participants was also made. Moreover, the researcher drew conclusion based on the finding of the study. Finally, based on the findings, several recommendations and suggestions for further research have also been formulated.

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APPENDIX:1

Students Questionnaire

Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is one of the tools used to collect the necessary information for this study entitled (An investigation into the Causes of Poor Listening Comprehension among Libyan Undergraduate Students). The researcher would be pleased if you answer this questionnaire. You are kindly invited to indicate your opinion as honestly as possible, for your answers will be used for research purposes only.

Thank you for your cooperation

Please put a cross (X) in one of the boxes that best expresses your perspectives.

Item No.	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly disagree	Disagree
1.	I find it difficult to understand listening texts in which there are too many unfamiliar words.					
2.	I find listening comprehension difficult when the text contains complex grammatical structures.					
3.	I find listening comprehension difficult when the spoken text					

Item No.	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly disagree	Disagree
	contains jargons.					
4.	I find it difficult to understand listening texts when the topic is unfamiliar.					
5.	I find listening difficult when I listen to long spoken texts.					
6.	I find listening difficult when utterances contain slang expressions.					
7.	I find listening difficult to understand every single words of incoming speech.					
8.	I found it difficult to recognize the words I know because of the way they are pronounced.					
9.	I find it difficult to understand the spoken text which is not of interest to me.					
10.	I find listening comprehension difficult when I feel tired.					
11.	I find it difficult to understand the listening text when I lack					

Item No.	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly disagree	Disagree
	prior knowledge about the topic					
12.	I find it difficult to get a general understanding of the first listening					
13.	I found it difficult to predict what would come next.					
14.	I find it difficult to tell where one word finishes and begins there are words that I would normally understand in writing, but when I hear them in a stream of speech.					
15.	I find it difficult to understand the natural speech which is full of hesitation and pauses.					
16.	I find it difficult to understand the meaning of words which are not pronounced clearly.					
17.	I find it difficult to understand well when speakers speak too fast.					
18.	I find it difficult to understand well when speakers speak with a variety of accents.					
19.	I find it difficult to understand					

Item No.	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly disagree	Disagree
	well when the speaker dose not pause long enough.					
20.	It is difficult for me to concentrate with noises around.					
21.	Unclear sounds resulting from a poor quality CD-player interfere with my listening comprehension.					
22.	Unclear sounds resulting from poor equipment interfere with my listening comprehension.					

Thank you for your time

APPENDIX:2

Interview Schedule

Questions of the teachers interview

Question(1)

What are the problems that affect your students' listening comprehension?

Question(2)

What strategies do you use for helping your students in overcoming classes?

Question(3)

What is the portion of time do you offer for listening during your classes?

Question(4)

What are the listening tasks you implement in your class?

Question(5)

Do you think that your students perceive listening as an important skill ? Why ? why not ?

APPENDIX:3

Pilot Study

THE PILOT STUDY

Results

In order to maintain the reliability and validity of the questionnaire , the researcher applied it on a pilot sample of (10) students . The results are presented on table(1).

Table: 1

Item No.	Statements	SA	A	N	SD	D
1	I find it difficult to understand listening texts in which there are too many unfamiliar words.	5	4	0	1	0
2	I find listening comprehension difficult when the text contains complex grammatical structures.	2	4	0	1	0
3	I find listening comprehension difficult when the spoken text contains jargons.	4	2	2	1	1
4	I find it difficult to understand listening texts when the topic is unfamiliar.	1	5	1	0	3
5	I find listening difficult when I listen to long spoken texts.	1	6	0	0	3
6	I find listening difficult when utterances contain slang expressions.	2	3	3	2	0
7	I find listening difficult to understand every single words of	1	5	1	1	2

Item No.	Statements	SA	A	N	SD	D
	incoming speech.					
8	I found it difficult to recognize the words I know because of the way they are pronounced	5	1	1	1	2
9	I find it difficult to understand the spoken text which is not of interest to me.	2	3	2	1	2
10	I find listening comprehension difficult when I feel tired.	2	3	2	1	2
11	I find it difficult to understand the listening text when I lack prior knowledge about the topic	3	5	2	0	0
12	I find it difficult to get a general understanding of the first listening	4	2	2	2	0
13	I found it difficult to predict what would come next.	3	3	2	2	0
14	I find it difficult to tell where one word finishes and begins there are words that I would	2	4	2	1	1
15	I find it difficult to understand the natural speech which is full of hesitation and pauses.	2	3	3	1	0
16	I find it difficult to understand the meaning of words which are not pronounced clearly.	4	3	0	2	1
17	I find it difficult to understand well when speakers speak too fast.	4	3	0	2	1
18	I find it difficult to understand well when speakers speak with a	1	4	2	0	3

Item No.	Statements	SA	A	N	SD	D
	variety of accents.					
19	I find it difficult to understand well when the speaker dose not pause long enough.	2	5	2	0	1

Item No.	Statements	SA	A	N	SD	D
20	It is difficult for me to concentrate with noises around.	2	5	0	1	2
21	Unclear sounds resulting from a poor quality CD-player interfere with my listening comprehension.	7	2	1	0	0
22	Unclear sounds resulting from poor equipment interfere with my listening comprehension.	4	2	2	1	1

Table 2: listening problems related to the content of the listening text

Item No.	A	N	D
1	%90	0	10%
2	60%	20%	20%
3	60%	20%	20%
4	60%	10%	30%
5	70%	0	30%
6	50%	30%	20%
7	60%	10%	30%

As shown in Table (2) , the great majority of the students 90% have responded that unfamiliar words in the listening text make comprehension difficult for them. More than half of the students 60% claimed that difficult grammatical structures interfered with their listening comprehension. Moreover, 60% of the participants stated that the text contains jargon and idioms interfered with their listening comprehension.

Additionally, it is noticed that 60% of the students found it difficult to understand the listening text when the topic is unfamiliar. Only 30% of students disagreed that use of long and complex sentences make it hard for them to understand the listening text. But 70% of them agreed that the use of long and complex sentences did cause them problems in understanding the text. Also, 60% of them find it difficult to understand the meaning of every single word in the speech.

Table 3: Listening problems related to listener

Item No.	A	N	D
8-	%60	10%	30%
9-	%50	20%	30%
10-	%50	30%	20%
11-	%80	20%	0
12-	%60	20%	0
13-	%60	20%	20%
14-	%60	20%	20%

Table(3) shows that very high percentages of students (80%) reach an agreement that they find it difficult to understand the listening text when they lack prior knowledge about the topic, and they use their experiences and schemata to understand the spoken text. Matters of motivation and interest are also important factors in understanding the topic of the spoken text, (50%) Of them find it difficult to understand the spoken text which is not of interest to them .(60%)of the whole number claimed that it is difficult to recognize the words they knew because of the way they were pronounced. Almost all of the students in this pilot study (60%) have responded that they found it difficult

to predict what would come next and to get a general idea from the first listening. (50%) of them agreed that they fail to understand the listening text when they feel tired and, only (20%) of them report they can overcome this difficulty easily. More than half of the students (60%) have responded that they often or always found it difficult to identify the words they knew in their written form when they hear them in a stream of speech. Finally, (60%) of them have responded that they found it difficult to predict what would come next.

Table 4: Listening problems related to speaker

Item No.	A	N	D
15-	%50	%30	%10
16	%70	0	%30
17-	%60	0	%30
18-	%50	% 20	%30
19-	%70	%20	0

Table 4 shows that 50% find it difficult to understand natural speech which is full of hesitations and pauses. The same number of students viewed that variety of accents causes difficulties to them in listening comprehension since they do not have much exposure to different accents. Results show that 70% find it difficult to understand the meanings of words which are not pronounced clearly meanwhile 30% are never in that situation. 60% of the whole number point out that when the speaker speaks at a rapid speed, it is difficult for them to comprehend what is being said. Pauses are another factor that impeded the respondents' comprehension. Table indicates that

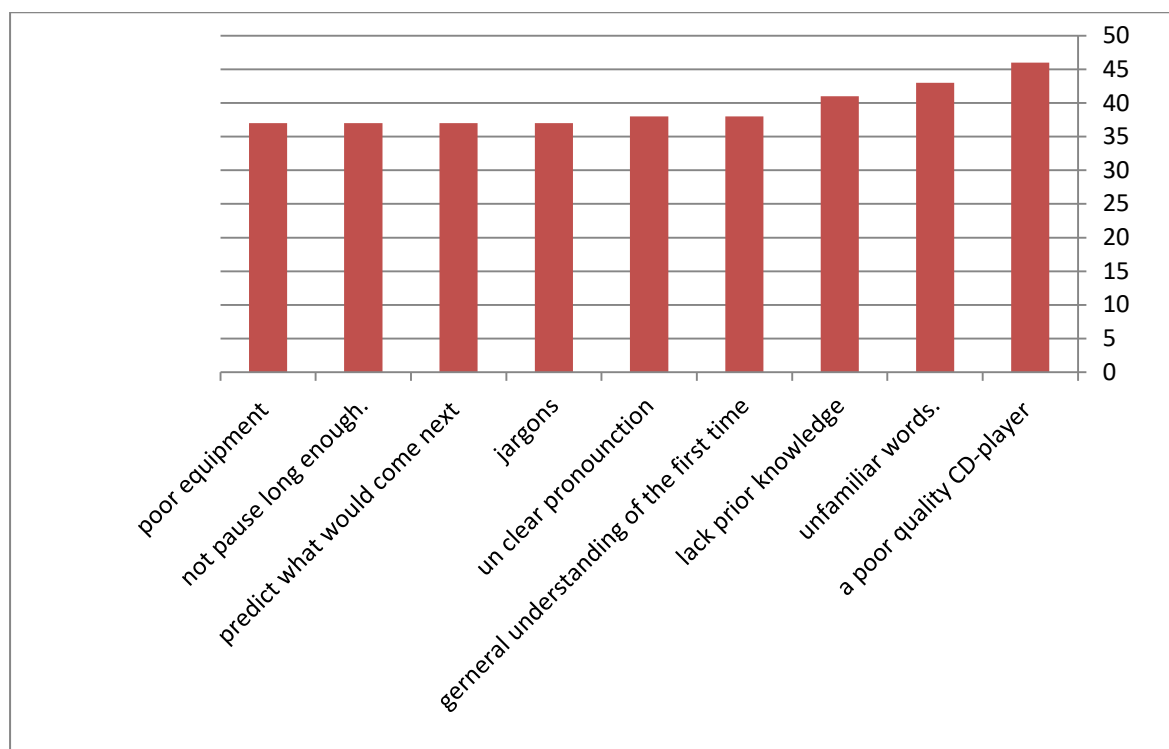
many students 70% find it difficult to understand the listening text when the speaker does not pause long enough. While, only 10% stated that they do not have such a problem.

Table 5: Listening problems related to the physical setting

Item No.	A	N	D
20-	%70	0	%30
21-	%90	%10	0
22-	%60	%20	%20

Table 5 shows that there are 70% of students have to face the problem of noises. The great majority of the students 90% think the difficulties they encounter in listening comprehension are due to the bad recording quality / poor- quality tapes or disks. Additionally, 60% of them have responded that Unclear sounds resulting from poor-quality equipment can also interfere with their comprehension.

Figure 1 The most common factors that influence the students' listening comprehension



We can see from figure 1 that most common factors were identified by the students, and these were categorized under four characteristics: text, listener, speaker, and physical setting. The factors in order of frequency of mention were: a poor quality CD-player, unfamiliar words, lack of prior knowledge, un able of understanding of the first listening, unclear pronunciation, lack of predicate would come next, not pauses enough, and poor equipment.

APPENDIX:4

Results of the Listening Comprehension Problems Encountered by Participant Students

The following table indicates the overall results of the listening comprehension problems encountered by participant students.

Item No.	Statements	SA	A	N	SD	D
1.	I find it difficult to understand listening texts in which there are too many unfamiliar words.	23	44	20	3	10
2.	I find listening comprehension difficult when the text contains complex grammatical structures.	19	41	26	2	12
3.	I find listening comprehension difficult when the spoken text contains jargons.	22	27	6	32	13
4.	I find it difficult to understand listening texts when the topic is unfamiliar.	17	37	24	7	15
5.	I find listening difficult when I listen to long spoken texts.	16	42	27	4	11
6.	I find listening difficult when utterances contain slang expressions.	16	31	32	5	16
7.	I find listening difficult to understand every single words of incoming speech.	12	29	26	14	19
8.	I found it difficult to recognize the words I know because of the way they are pronounced	15	33	26	7	19
9.	I find it difficult to understand the spoken text which is not of interest to me.	17	20	31	7	25
10.	I find listening comprehension difficult when I feel tired.	26	34	19	10	11
11.	I find it difficult to understand the listening text when I lack prior knowledge about the topic	16	38	26	4	16
12.	I find it difficult to get a general understanding of the first listening	23	35	26	5	11
13.	I found it difficult to predict what would come next.	17	31	27	5	20
14.	I find it difficult to tell where one word finishes and begins there are words that I would	15	31	34	4	16

Item No.	Statements	SA	A	N	SD	D
15.	I find it difficult to understand the natural speech which is full of hesitation and pauses.	13	20	43	6	18
16.	I find it difficult to understand the meaning of words which are not pronounced clearly.	26	37	24	5	8
17.	I find it difficult to understand. well when speakers speak too fast.	35	31	26	2	6
18.	I find it difficult to understand well when speakers speak with a variety of accents.	20	28	33	7	12
19.	I find it difficult to understand well when the speaker dose not pause long enough.	16	43	30	4	7
20.	It is difficult for me to concentrate with noises around.	38	35	18	3	6
21.	Unclear sounds resulting from a poor quality CD-player interfere with my listening comprehension.	28	38	21	2	11
22.	Unclear sounds resulting from poor equipment interfere with my listening comprehension.	24	42	24	5	5

APPENDIX:5

Sample of Interview Transcript

Appendix 5: Sample of Interview Transcript

Interviewer: What are the problems that affect your students listening comprehension?

Interviewee: we have different types of problems that we face in our class or my students face in the class, first one is the lack of good equipment that we use in the class to help students to listen to the speaker are not right, and weak ones. The other thing is get general understanding from first time. For example, Scotland speaker is very difficult even for teachers to understand. Other problem is lack vocabulary those are key words in this case , it is a big problem to them to understand the text.

Explain? Amm.. The students most of time consider the listening as being most challenge task. We don't really why? But they usual consider as being problematic area.

Interviewer: What strategies do you use for helping your students overcome classes?

Interviewee: Before starting listening , I give some instructions in order to achieve the purposes of listening. while listening, I am make sure that they understand any key terms, for example, slangs or jargons. After listening, then we start to talk about what we listen to compare notes, sharing information and exchange ideas. You want to deal with them as the same, because if you have like one how have some problems in listening , you need to use different strategies deal with her or his difficulties. He/she sit in the front , make the recorder louder, and you need to control the noises, so she or he can listen carefully.

Interviewer: What is the portion of time do you offer for listening during your classes?

Interviewee: It is really depends on the type of task. **Explain how?** Amm...well, sometimes we spend 30 minutes of listening. Some case, we listen for 20 minutes.

Interviewer: What are the listening tasks you implement in your class?

Interviewee: listening to tape recorders with written listening texts, is a vital key affecting the quality of both learning and teaching listening skill.

Interviewer: Do you think that your students perceive listening as an important skill ? Why ? why not ?

Interviewee: Yes, **How?** they now it is very important skill, they know it is the key to improve their conversation and their speaking skill ,but they afraid of listening test, think they might not understand everything. But, they afraid of listening test, they think they might not understand everything. That's why to change to here and watch videos of speaker, Native one, Canadian one, Indians speakers. So, they could here and understand different pronunciations of other people.

