

Perceived Causes for the Weakness of Ninth Grade Students  
in English Listening Skill at West Bank UNRWA Schools

**Master Thesis**

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**By**

Samih Yousef Mohammad Faraj

96135778

8101

**Supervised by**

Dr. Hanna Yousef Tushyeh

**Approved by**

Dr. Hanna Yousef Tushyeh

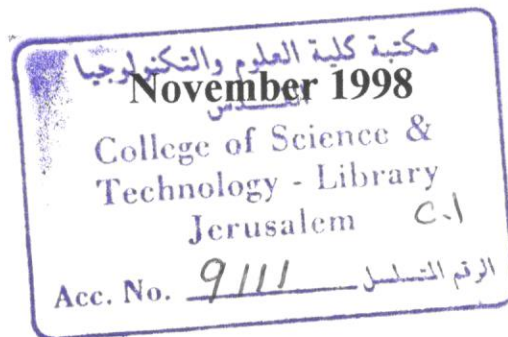
*Hanna Tushyeh*

Dr. Ahmed Fahim Jaber

*Ahmad Fahim Jaber*

Dr. Adnan M. Shehadeh

*A. Shehadeh*



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## Abstract

This study investigated the causes for the weakness of the ninth grade students in English listening skill at West Bank UNRWA schools .

The population of this descriptive study consisted of all the ninth grade, English, male and female teachers in West Bank UNRWA schools, who were teaching during the academic year 1997-1998 . According to the records of the UNRWA Educational Development Centre, they were 72 teachers, so they received 72 questionnaires while 57 of them were returned to the researcher . This instrument, the questionnaire, was conducted by the researcher himself . In this questionnaire, the 5-point Likert scale was used . It also contained 61 items covering the following seven questions of the study :

- 1) To what extent does the use of audio and audio visual media in the class affect the students' level of English language listening skill ?
- 2) To what extent does the students' exposure to English language in real life affect their level of English language listening skill ?

- 3) To what extent does the starting age of teaching English affect the students' level of English language listening skill?
- 4) To what extent does the knowledge of English vocabulary affect the students' level of English language listening skill?
- 5) To what extent does the speech rate of the native speakers affect the students' level of English language listening skill?
- 6) To what extent do the cultural listening habits of our society affect the students' level of English language listening skill?
- 7) To what extent does our teachers' listening skill level affect our students' level of English language listening skill ?

The validity of the questionnaire was ensured by submitting it to a jury of 6 teachers . Then the reliability was computed by using Cronbach Alpha Formula . It was 0.87 . Also the means and standard deviations were considered in analyzing the results . (SPSS) and (SAS) programs were used, too .

The results of this study showed that all the seven factors which were indicated previously in the questions of the study were important causes for the weakness of ninth grade students in English listening skill at West Bank UNRWA schools .

According to the results, the researcher recommended that the relationship between the mentioned causes for the listening skill weakness and this skill should be studied, each in a separate study . Also he recommended to replicate this study in the governmental and private schools . He further recommended to increase the number of the listening activities, and encouraged teachers to urge their students to listen to English programs and news . He suggested having active English language clubs in our schools and holding English language summer courses, too . He recommended to start teaching English at the age of six . Then he emphasized educating our students to be active listeners .

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Page</u>
<b>Dedication</b>	i
<b>Acknowledgement</b>	ii
<b>Abstract</b>	iii
<b>Table of Contents</b>	vi
<b>Chapter One: Introduction</b>	1
- Background	1
- The Importance of Listening	1
- Is Our Students' Listening Really Weak ?	3
- Statement of the Problem	5
- Purpose of The Study	5
- Research Questions	6
- Significance of the Study	7
- Limitations of the Study	8
- Definition of Terms	9

11	Chapter Two: Review of Relevant Literature
11	- Introduction
12	- Section One: The Role of the Audio and Audio Visual Aids
12	- A. Tape-Recorder
17	- B. Language Laboratory
20	- C. Radio
22	- D. Television
24	- E. Video
25	- Section Two: The Effect of Other Factors
25	- A. Exposure to English Language
28	- B. Age of Starting Teaching English
31	- C. Knowledge of English Vocabulary
34	- D. Speech Rate
36	- E. Cultural Listening Habits
38	- F. Teachers' Listening Skill
40	- Summary
41	Chapter Three: Methodology
41	- The Design of the Study
42	- Population

- Instrumentation	44
- Validation Procedure of the Questionnaire	44
- Questionnaire Reliability	45
- Statistical Analysis	46
- Summary	47
<b>Chapter Four: Results And Analysis</b>	<b>48</b>
- Results And Analysis	48
- Summary	64
<b>Chapter Five: Discussion, Conclusions And Recommendations</b>	<b>65</b>
- Discussion	65
- Conclusions	78
- Recommendations	80
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Arabic Abstract</b>	<b>95</b>

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

#### The Importance of Listening

In spite of its importance, listening is called “the neglected skill”. The following points may reveal its importance :

1. Without good listening there is no good communication .

“Oral communication”, says Byrne (1981:8) “is a two-way process between speaker and listener (or listeners),... . Both speaker and listener have a positive function to perform : the speaker has to encode the message to be conveyed in appropriate language, while the listener ( no less activity ) has to decode ( or interpret ) the message .”

So, what kind of communication do we have when we have a weak listening skill ?

Also Burley-Allen (1982:1) quoted an important opinion for Norbert Weiner from The Human Use of Human Beings :

“Speech is a joint game between the talker and the listener against the forces of confusion . Unless both make the effort, interpersonal communication is quite hopeless .”

2. Weak listening usually leads to “misunderstandings, hurt feelings, confused instructions, loss of important information, embarrassment and frustration” (Burley-Allen, 1982:2) .
3. A good listener usually supports the self-esteem of the speaker, Burley-Allen (1982:4), and considers it “a potent force for reducing stress and tension” . It is important, too, for self-confidence .
4. Good listening usually leads to success in a profession . Burley-Allen (1982:6) reported the following statement of workers about workers’ supervisor : “I like my boss, he listens to me, I can talk to him .”
5. According to Burley-Allen (1982:2), we spend high percentage of our communication time in listening .
6. By good listening we save time .
7. Some students may fail as a result of their weak listening skill. Conaway’s (1982) in Oxford (1993:206) indicated that “Conaway’s (1982) review of many studies showed that

deficient listening skills were a stronger factor in college failure than were poor reading skills and low academic aptitude.”

8. The weakness of a skill affects the other language skills, because they are integrated (Oxford, 1993:206) .

Of course, there are other advantages for good listening and disadvantages for the weak listening, but the previous ideas are some of them.

### **Is Our Students' Listening Really Weak ?**

The researcher considered listening as a weak skill depending on two indications :

- 1) He taught English in the UNRWA schools for more than twenty years . It is a quite long experience in the field which helps him at least to feel how big and serious the problem is .
- 2) Many researchers and educators agree that listening is a neglected skill .

Kelly (1991:137) says: "Although syntax is not generally viewed as a serious contestant, auditory factors are often considered to be the foreign language learner's main enemy."

Kalivoda (1980:2) indicates that "listening is probably the most neglected of the four language skills. This neglect causes problems that frustrate, embarrass, and discourage the learner."

Oxford (1993:205) says : "Listening is a fundamental language skill, but it is often ignored by foreign and second language teachers."

In the same vein Burley-Allen (1982) called it "the forgotten skill".

Also Brent and Anderson (1993:123) presented a similar opinion.

However, Nofal (1996) in Nofal (1998:1) (c) studied PETRA curriculum and said while commenting on the students' English achievement which was not satisfactory, by saying: "This result is also confirmed by the frequent complaint voiced by teachers that, even when students are able to construct a message correctly, their performance on listening comprehension tests is usually terribly bad."

## **Statement of the Problem**

It is argued that the four skills of English - reading, writing, listening and speaking - are integrated, and each single skill is affected by the other three and strongly affects them . However, Listening has a significant importance, especially in communication . It is a neglected skill as we mentioned . This study investigates the causes for the weakness of ninth grade students' listening skill in West Bank UNRWA schools .

## **Purpose of the Study**

Development of learners' listening skill depends on the knowledge of the main causes for its weakness . Therefore, this study is conducted to investigate the main causes of the ninth grade students' weakness in the listening skill, in UNRWA West Bank Schools . It is worth mentioning that the findings of this study - the causes for listening skill weakness - as perceived by the English teachers, who are in the field .

## Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following seven questions :

- 1) To what extent does the use of audio and audio visual media in the class affect the students' level of English language listening skill ?
- 2) To what extent does the students' exposure to English language in real life affect their level of English language listening skill ?
- 3) To what extent does the starting age of teaching English affect the students' level of English language listening skill ?
- 4) To what extent does the knowledge of English vocabulary affect the students' level of English language listening skill ?
- 5) To what extent does the speech rate of the native speakers affect the students' level of English language listening skill ?
- 6) To what extent do the cultural listening habits of our society affect the students' level of English language listening skill ?
- 7) To what extent does our teachers' listening skill level affect our students' level of English language listening skill ?

## Significance of the Study

Although listening is a very important skill in a foreign language setting, a very little number of studies have been conducted to find out the causes of students' low level in this skill (Boyle, 1984; Al-Jamal, 1995; Goh, 1997) .

However, this study is the first one in our country that is conducted to investigate the causes of the students' listening skill weakness together .

It is worth investigating the causes for the listening skill weakness as listening is much needed in both the formal language learning process and real life situations. This is in addition to its importance for, and impact on the other three skills. Furthermore, the results of testing the questions of the study is expected to achieve the following results :

- 1) A heated discussion, during this new era of the Palestinian life, is taking place among psychologists, sociologists, teachers of education and others about the best age to start teaching English as a foreign language in Palestine. Is it the age of six or the age of eleven? Therefore the researcher is trying to contribute by not presenting a personal impression, but as it is

needed, the result of a research. In brief it will be helpful for the Palestinian decision makers and curriculum designers .

- 2) It is known that the first step to design a remedial plan, is to diagnose the real causes of weakness.
- 3) This research is expected to alert English language supervisors and teachers, and draw their attention to a serious problem which deserves consideration and needs urgently to be solved regarding the expected recommendations.

### **Limitations of the Study**

- This study is limited to the causes of weakness for listening skill of ninth grade West Bank UNRWA students. The students are enrolled in schools of :
  - a) some cities such as Hebron, Jerusalem and Nablus,
  - b) some villages,
  - c) and some camps.
- All of these schools use PETRA curriculum .
- All of these schools used New Living English for Jordan curriculum before 1985 .

- All of these schools use English as a foreign language and not as a second language.
- All of the students are non-native speakers of English, and Arabic is their mother tongue language.
- The study is also limited to West Bank UNRWA ninth grade English teachers' views.

## **Definition of Terms**

- **Listening :**

Howatt and Dakin (1974) in Yagang (1993:16) defined listening saying : "Listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying . This involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, his grammar and his vocabulary, and grasping his meaning".

- **Lexical ability :** The ability of vocabulary knowledge.
- **EFL :** English as a foreign language.
- **B.B.C. :** British Broadcasting Corporation.
- **UNRWA :** United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

- **PETRA :** It is the syllabus of English language which has been used in the West Bank and Jordan UNRWA and governmental schools since 1985-1986.
- **PATEFL conference :** It is the yearly conference which is usually held in different universities in West Bank by the Palestinian Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign language .

# CHAPTER TWO

## REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

### Introduction

This chapter is divided into two sections . The first section presents the role of the audio and audio visual aids including the tape-recorder, language laboratory, radio, television, and video in teaching the listening skill . The second section discusses the effect of exposure to English language, age of starting English teaching, knowledge of English vocabulary, speech rate, cultural listening habits and teachers' listening skill on teaching the listening skill .

## **SECTION ONE**

### **The Role of the Audio and Audio Visual Aids**

#### **A. Tape-Recorder**

The tape-recorder is probably the most common audio and audio visual medium used in classrooms nowadays . There are many advantages for this medium :

1. It is small enough and easy to carry and move .
2. We do not waste time while moving our students from a room to another as it is done when using an English laboratory .
3. Students may easily use it at home .
4. According to Al-Ansari and Wigzell (1996:233), tape-recorders “Offer learners the chance to respond to verbal cues, and by means of a rewinding facility, to check their responses against the correct response, thereby providing immediate feedback and reinforcement...”
5. Comparing its price to other audio, and audio visual equipment, it is not expensive .
6. Teachers may record students’ voices and they may listen to them (Dawood, 1987:30) .

7. Students hear native speakers and not only the voice of their teacher (Dawood, 1987:30) .
8. It is an interesting medium if the teacher uses it effectively . It may turn the boring traditional lesson into a vivid one . It creates a lively educational atmosphere .
9. According to Reissman (1992:76), it is important for many skills . “Through audiocassettes students can enhance the listening, recording, relating and interpreting skills which promote literacy and reading .”
10. According to Rathbun (1986:62), there are many other advantages for the tape-recorder . “The cassette recorder can be used to integrate language skills and to initiate writing activities . It can also help teach listening and critical thinking skills .” Then Rathbun made a more clear connection between listening and thinking :

“As good listening has to do with the mind, not merely the ear, teaching listening leads directly into thinking . The listening lesson can easily be made into a thinking lesson by playing a recorded panel discussion of a topic interesting to students ” .

Furthermore, some important studies were conducted to investigate the effectiveness of this medium and tried to evaluate the experience of using it . The study of Al-Ansari and Wigzell, (1996:233-243) was one of them . The two researchers tried to find out if there was a significant connection between the student's level of attainment in English in Bahrain secondary schools and the following three variables pertaining using tape-recorders :

1. Availability of tape-recorders in schools,
2. teachers' frequency of using them,
3. and teachers' manipulative skill .

The sample consisted of 327 randomly chosen secondary school students . A self-report questionnaire was used . It contained only three questions - in Arabic, answered by students . Scores were obtained from students' end-of-term English achievement examination . They were considered reliable as they had been correlated to scores of the students' second-term achievement examination . The researchers used a One Way Analysis of Variance in order to decide if there was a significant correlation between attainment and each of the mentioned variables .

Then “multiple classification analysis techniques were used in the further statistical analysis of the data (p.338).”

In brief, the researchers found that students’ attainment in English was influenced by the three variables .

Another study by Abu Hanieh (1996), was conducted to investigate the effect of using the tape-recorder in teaching the listening skill for the ninth grade classes which use the PETRA curriculum . The researcher selected two ninth grade classes randomly at Jeansafout Secondary School . The researcher spent two weeks teaching two units for the two classes . The first class ( the experimental group ) was taught by using the tape-recorder, while the second class ( the control group ) was taught by the traditional method ( chalk and board ) . The researcher used the t-test in testing his null hypotheses . He found, “there was a significant difference between the means of the two groups, ..., in favor of the experimental group, which means that the performance of the experimental group is higher than that of the control group in pronunciation” . This means it is important to use the tape-recorder in teaching English .

Also Dobson (1983), Allar (1985), in Abu Hanieh (1996) - emphasized the same importance .

Chaudron (1988) in Nofal (1998:1-2) (a) indicated that audio or video-tapes are important in developing listening comprehension . Also Doge (1980) in Nofal (1998:2) (a) indicated that technology is important for efficiency .

However, Nofal (1998:90) (b) found that “frequency of exposure to pre-taped native-speech has no significant effect” .

## **B. Language Laboratory**

Since language laboratories were established, their existence and their educational outcomes, have been directly connected with different elements . The language approach and the teacher could be the most important of them . According to Al-Ansari and Wigzell (1996:223) “audio-lingual approach in the late fifties and sixties shifted the main focus of attention in foreign language (FL) programmes away from reading and writing towards listening and speaking” . Therefore, tape-recorders were considerably used . Then the language laboratory was established . It is according to Al-Ansari and Wigzell (1996:233) “a number of tape-recorders connected to and under the command of central console” .

Then the communicative approach came later on . “ The new approach, by emphasizing the development of communicative rather than purely linguistic competence, revealed a further major weakness of the language laboratory” . Then later on many language laboratories were abandoned .

## **Disadvantages of Language Laboratories**

Here are some of them :

- 1) They are very expensive (Al-Ansari and Wigzell, 1996:234) .
- 2) Teachers waste time when they move their students from their classroom to a laboratory (Al-Ansari and Wigzell, 1996:234) .
- 3) Epting and Bowen in Celce-Murcia and McIntosh (1989:74) say : “The operation and maintenance of a laboratory are extremely expensive, and the time and effort involved in developing useful laboratory materials is difficult to justify,...”. Also Taylor (1979) mentioned that repairing language laboratories costs too much money .

In spite of the previous disadvantages there is an opinion which says that language laboratories are useful . Oda (1988) conducted a study to investigate the importance of language laboratories in Iraq and whether they are used properly . Two groups of students were randomly selected as a sample . The two groups were tested (pre-test), and the results showed no significant difference between both of them . Then the experimental group were taught by the researcher using specific techniques . The control group were taught by another teacher . They had five lessons every week . The same language

laboratory was used by the two groups and teachers . The experiment started on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February and finished on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March 1988 . The pre-test was used again as a post test . The results showed a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group . So the researcher considered that the language laboratories in Iraq were not used properly .

However, Sultan (1987) in Oda (1988:8-9) indicated that there is no need for language laboratories as they do not affect the student's oral competence .

### C. Radio

Listening to different English radio programmes may help our students improve their listening skill level . Chinese students find it difficult to understand English native speakers while speaking at a normal speed . Also, we feel that our Arab students have the same problem . But the Chinese had an interesting experience in solving it . Jiaju (1984:242) says : “The next best thing is to make use of news programmes broadcast by the BBC World Service or the Voice of America .” Students were trained to listen to news for two months. They had three or four classes per week . The period of each class was about 15 – 20 minutes . Specific steps were followed in the lessons . Then Jiaju says : “After two months, students’ listening ability had improved significantly” . He added , “We have been doing this for more than two years, and the results have been very satisfactory” . Jiaju found many advantages for thus training :

- 1) Train students to get the gist of news .
- 2) This training helps students to cope with life and the new culture .
- 3) It improves the students’ listening skill and this helps them to pass exams .

## **D. Television**

Because children usually like watching television very much, it could play a great role in the educational process . Children may listen while watching and benefit either from the “educational television” or other different programmes, films, songs, ... etc . But, “educational television” as Dawood (1987:32) mentioned needs the role of the classroom teacher .

Jayousi (1986) conducted a study investigating the difference between “the effect of Instructional Television (ITV) and the Conventional Classroom Instruction (CI) on the achievement of Jordanian third secondary literary students in English conditional sentences and phrasal verbs” .

The researcher had two groups; (experimental) taught by (ITV) and control group taught by the (CI) . Pre and post tests were made . He found that the (ITV) was more effective than the (CI) .

Jiyad (1975:60) conducted an Arabic study to investigate the effect of age, gender, parents' occupation, exposure to English language through watching television, family members' number, and the mother's language on learning English language . It was applied on (206) students; 113 of whom were in the third grade, and 93

students in fifth grade . All of them were in Baghdad . The two groups were taught the same material for four months, then they were tested in English language . One of the results of this study indicated that exposure to English language through the television affects the students' attainment .

Poon (1992) indicated in her study “that the use of television news recordings had a positive influence on student motivation” .

## **E. Video**

The video is another medium which all English language teachers need in their lessons . But using it is more difficult, for teachers, than our everyday normal traditional lessons . To use it very efficiently, the teacher has to plan and prepare well, to know the methods of using it, and to know how to manipulate the equipment . Also, videos should be chosen carefully . Otherwise using them will be a waste of time . However, there are many benefits for using videos . According to Al-Titi et al (1996), improving listening skill is one of them .

## SECTION TWO

### The Effect of Other Factors

#### **A. Exposure to English Language**

Learners usually learn the language in order to communicate, or to use it in their life to achieve different goals in the different fields . It is taught only to help them to pass examinations . So, it is not enough to teach our students the language without practice .

In short if students have a better opportunity to practise the language and to be exposed to it, either in class, or outside the school, their language is expected to become better . An anonymous scholar in Oxford et al (1994:266) said : “Theory without practice is futile, and practice without theory is fatal” .

Jiaju (1984:242) mentioned that Chinese students suffered from the limited exposure to English Language . They feel that their listening is weak, especially when they travel to study abroad . The problem was solved by listening to news broadcasts regularly in a special training course .

Nofal (1998:4) (c) referring to McDowell & Stevens (1990) said: “Listening is a complex skill and what students actually need to

develop their listening ability is regular systematic practice in developing first micro skills of recognition, selection, short-term memory and inference” .

A similar idea was presented by Burley-Allen (1982:34) : “One way to become more conscious of your listening habits and to increase your listening efficiency is to practice regularly” .

Mukattash (1980:7-31) conducted a study to investigate the English language level of Jordanian students of different ages, and its relationship with many variables . Exposure to English language outside schools was one of these variables . To achieve his goals, the researcher used an objective English grammar test . He tested 4835 students from the University of Jordan, teachers’ training institutions and different secondary schools . Then he indicated the result related to this variable by saying : “Language practice outside the classroom plays a positive role in improving the students’ proficiency in the language” .

Boyle (1984:34-38) asked in his study thirty teachers from two universities in Hong Kong and sixty students in a college to list the most important six factors affecting listening . Lack of practice was number 1 for both groups .

Byrne (1981:9) indicated that students should be exposed to the language through regular training .

Qawasmi (1995:1-118) indicated that university students of English language have a limited chance to communicate in English . “93.02% have never lived in a country where English is the language of communication, and 87.68% have never been to a country where English is the language of communication” . Also “ 89.60 % do not always have an opportunity to meet and speak with native speakers of English in their country” . And “85.55 % of the students asked for increasing the number of conversation courses” .

## **B. Age of Starting Teaching English**

Countries which do not teach a second language from the very early years of school, at the age of six for example, defend their policy saying that teaching a second language at this age affects teaching the native language negatively . So what does literature say about this ?

Lambert and Tucker (1972) in Helms and Turner (1978:314) found as a result of their longitudinal study, in which they compared between bilingual learners, who studied English as a native language and French as a foreign language, with learners who studied only English or French, that learning the two languages together did not decrease learning the native language .

According to Wright (1989:29-30) teaching English in the very early classes is possible and desirable, too . He recommended, from an experience, teaching English as a foreign language in the first and second primary classes . To justify his opinion he said :“... the earlier a child starts to learn a foreign language, the easier it will be for him / her to acquire the pronunciation” . He also mentioned that children at this age have mental flexibility .

Mukattash (1980:29) reached the same conclusion and said :  
“The younger a student begins to learn English, the better his command of the language will be” .

Also Hatamleh and Jeradat (1986) found as a result of their study that it is better to start teaching English as a foreign language from the first elementary class and this does not negatively influence teaching other subjects, especially the Arabic language .

In his study, Jiyad (1975), recommended to start teaching English very early .

On the other hand, there is another opinion which absolutely rejects starting teaching English from the first elementary class . Ash-Shamriyy (1989) indicated that there are many disadvantages for this early start :

- 1) Teaching English at the early elementary stage negatively affects teaching Arabic and religion . It confuses students, too .
- 2) It is dangerous to teach the language through its culture . The child will mistrust his own language and education .
- 3) This will be contrary to the trend which calls for teaching all subjects in Arabic .

- 4) Saudi Arabia, where the researcher teaches, will need thousands of English teachers and pay a lot of money .
- 5) This gives the English language more importance than it should have, and supports private schools .
- 6) This experience did not succeed in the United States of America and Britain .

### C. Knowledge of English Vocabulary

It is generally known that good knowledge of vocabulary helps the listener to understand the material he hears . On the other hand, if the student's lexical knowledge is very limited it makes listening comprehension very difficult and some students are confused at the time . It is required from the listener to recognize as much as he can out of the words he hears . Rivers (1980:17) emphasized this by saying : "... foreign-language learners need a wide recognition vocabulary for rapid comprehension, rather than a sophisticated knowledge of syntax" . And Kelly (1991:135-149) considered lack of vocabulary as the main obstacle to listening comprehension . He says : "Instead of attributing the learner's listening comprehension difficulties to an auditory or perceptual deficiency, about which very little can be done, and, instead of focusing on developing strategies, the functioning of which very largely depends on language knowledge, the main effort on the part of the learner and the teacher at this stage must be on lexical expansion" . Thus Kelly pointed to the cause of the problem, and its solution .

In Boyle's study (1984:34-38), thirty teachers and sixty students were asked to list the most important six factors affecting listening .

Vocabulary as a factor, was listed by both teachers and students, but it was given more importance by students rather than teachers .

Also Al-Jamal (1995:1-53) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between linguistic proficiency represented by lexical and structural abilities and listening comprehension amongst tenth graders in Jordan . His sample was 447 male and female students . He constructed two exams : one for linguistic proficiency, the other was for listening comprehension . The researcher found “a significant relationship between the lexical ability and listening comprehension”. Also Hortens (1994:1-145) reached the same result .

Goh (1997:361-369) conducted a study in the People’s Republic of China, to investigate English as a second language learners’ beliefs and knowledge about their listening skill . Flavell (1979) in Goh (1997:361) called the learners’ awareness and beliefs about his own skill, the “metacognitive knowledge” . The average age of the 40 learners of the study was 19 . The researcher asked them to keep diaries and write about their listening during their English programme. This took place three months after starting the diaries . She helped by asking them some printed questions . So she used what is called “self reporting” method . They reported about themselves .

They handed her an entry per week . This continued for ten weeks .  
Then she analyzed what they wrote . She found that vocabulary  
affects listening comprehension . Here is an extract from a diary of a  
student (Zhong) . He said : “I plan to read more newspapers etc., and  
increase my vocabulary which is the base of listening skills .  
Certainly, the most important thing is to continue listening to BBC  
World Service news programme . I am confident that it can both  
improve my listening skills and news knowledge” .

## D. Speech Rate

When listeners of English as a foreign language listen to English native speakers and do not understand some or most of what they hear, they attribute this result to many different reasons . But it is common knowledge that English native speakers speak very fast . It is not only a problem for students who are learning the language, but also for teachers who “have been unable to find ways of turning academic descriptions of fast speech processes into teaching material which helps learners with perception”, says Cauldwell (1996:521) . Then Cauldwell (p.522) described the matter saying : “In fast speech words do not occur one after another like a line of bricks : they occur in a stream with the sound shape of individual words being heavily influenced by the words which precede and follow them . The influence of neighbouring words in fast speech can be so great as to make an individual word unrecognizable” .

In her study, Goh (1997:364) also found that the speech rate is an important element that affects listening . Here is an extract from the diary of (Wei) . She said : “I listened to an English programme this evening through the radio . Though the speed was not very fast, I didn't understand well . I often heard some words that sounded

familiar but I couldn't know their meanings quickly . I must think for a while and when I know it, the programme already past a lot . Maybe I wasn't familiar with the pronunciation of such words because I only read or wrote but never listened to or spoke them” .

However, speech rate was highlighted by students more than teachers in Boyle's study (1984:36) and was emphasized as a factor that affects listening . Also Yong (1997:194) indicated that if we slow the speech rate, we get better listening comprehension .

Qawasmi (1995:60) indicated, in her thesis regarding West Bank university students of English language that “58.90% of students misunderstood the speech of native speakers because they speak very quickly” .

## **E. Cultural Listening Habits**

To teach our children to develop the good habits, especially through practical behavior, is much better than spending a lot of time correcting their mistakes in the future, and we may not succeed. In short, it is beneficial to educate our children to be good and active listeners while they are young. It may be because they are flexible and like to imitate the old people very much. Being a good listener, as a student, indicated in Brent and Anderson (1993:123) does not mean just to sit quietly and look at the teacher. The student may sit or move, watch or not. Good listeners, they say: "are those who make appropriate responses to what they hear. They actively process information, make pertinent comments, and ask relevant questions". Active listening was defined by Wajnryb (1991:30) as "a way of responding to spoken English in an interactive dialogue situation". The active listener should listen carefully, is not judgmental, and gets far from agreeing or disagreeing. It is not nice from him to give his opinion or suggestions. Also he should not interrupt the speaker, but he should acknowledge him.

As it is difficult to control the role of open society toward teaching bad habits of listening, we could blame homes and schools

## F. Teachers' Listening Skill

One of the important factors which lead to success in teaching English language is to have a good teacher of English . It is not enough that the teacher's ability in English is good, but his teaching habits should also be good . We concentrate on habits because, as we previously said, children like to imitate their teacher .About this point, Brent and Anderson (1993:124) say : "One of the most effective ways Ms. Hernandez helps her students learn to value listening and to practice it daily is by being an effective listener herself . She knows that her students see her as an adult model to emulate" . Then they give further examples :

"For instance, she observes that if she leans forward as she listens, children imitate her actions . When she nods as she listens to a shy student speaking, she notices other students nodding also . Modeling is one way Ms. Hernandez helps her students increase their listening skill" .

Then they said : "Attentive listening should be a part of every teacher's natural interaction with children" . They explained that it is not meant to listen to every word, but to "present good listening behavior" .

Also, it is important to make the student feel that the teacher is carefully listening to him . Smith (1998:1) quoted from one of the Family Circus cartoon strips what a little girl asked her father by saying : “Daddy, you have to listen to me with your eyes as well as your ears” .

We still remember that we said that if the student is sitting quietly and watching the teacher, this does not mean that he is a good listener . He may be or may not be . But the teacher should make the student feel that he is not neglected while speaking .

In brief, we should not only teach our students the material of listening, but good listening habits as well .

Udwan (1995:7-47) conducted a study to investigate the common ‘ verbal communication patterns ’ in Bethlehem University . The study reflected the student’s perspective. The population was (1842) students, while the sample was (372) students . The instrument was the questionnaire . The researcher found that teachers use the verbal behaviors a lot . Musleh and Adas (1980) in Udwan (1995:9) indicated that 70% of teacher’s work in the classroom is verbal . This means that they prefer giving information and lecturing . So the teacher speaks too much in the classroom and listens little .

## Summary

Most views, experiences and studies which dealt with the relationship between listening skill and audio and audio visual aids such as the tape-recorder, the language laboratory, the radio, the television and the video, concluded that these aids, if they are used properly, contribute in improving this skill . Also they indicated that exposure to English language, age of starting teaching English, knowledge of vocabulary, speech rate, cultural listening habits and teachers' listening skill are important factors affecting listening skill . In short these factors should be considered and not neglected .

# CHAPTER THREE

## METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the design of the study, the population, the instrument, validation of the questionnaire, questionnaire reliability, and data analysis .

### **The Design of the Study**

In this descriptive study, the dependent variable is the level of listening skill for the ninth grade students in West Bank UNRWA schools . The independent variables are the following : the audio and audio visual aids (tape-recorder, language laboratory, radio, television, and video), exposure to English language, age of starting teaching English, knowledge of English vocabulary, speech rate, cultural listening habits, and teachers' listening skill .

## Population

The population of this study consisted of all the ninth grade, English male and female teachers in West Bank UNRWA schools, who were teaching during the academic year 1997-1998. They were working in different camps, villages and cities in three areas: Hebron, Jerusalem and Nablus. The total number of these teachers as documented in the records of the UNRWA Educational Development Centre is 72 teachers :

20 ( 13 males, 7 females ) work in Hebron area .

24 ( 9 males, 15 females ) work in Jerusalem area .

28 ( 15 males, 13 females ) work in Nablus area .

Each of the 72 teachers received a questionnaire . The questionnaires were distributed through UNRWA . 57 questionnaires were returned to the researcher also through UNRWA . Details about the population are shown in tables number 1, 2, 3 and 4 .

### Demographic Characteristics of the Population

**Table 1 : Distribution of the Population by Sex .**

Variable : (Sex)	Frequency	Percent
Male	27	47.4 %
Female	30	52.6 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100 %</b>

**Table 2 : Distribution of the Population by Area .**

<b>Variable : (Area)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Hebron	19	33.3 %
Jerusalem	10	17.5 %
Nablus	28	49.1 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100 %</b>

**Table 3 : Distribution of the Population by School Location .**

<b>Variable : (School Location)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Camp	30	52.6 %
Village	18	31.6 %
City	9	15.8 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100 %</b>

**Table 4 : Distribution of the Population by Qualification .**

<b>Variable : (Qualification)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
MA	—	—
BA	48	84.2 %
Diploma	9	15.8 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100 %</b>

## **Instrumentation**

The researcher built a questionnaire of 61 items covering the seven questions of the study . The responses were expected to reflect the perspectives of the ninth grade English language teachers who were teaching in West Bank UNRWA schools . The researcher used the 5-point Likert scale . The options were used as the following :

Strongly Agree : 5; Agree : 4; Moderately Agree : 3;

Disagree : 2; Strongly Disagree : 1 .

## **Validation Procedure of the Questionnaire**

In order to achieve the content validity of the questionnaire, it was submitted to six teachers who were teaching either English or Education in different universities such as Al-Quds University, Bethlehem University and the University of Hebron . One of them was not a teacher at any of the universities, but she taught English language using PETRA curriculum . They were asked to evaluate the whole instrument as it was related to specific purposes . Their opinions, recommendations and suggested modifications were highly appreciated . So the researcher deleted or modified some items of the questionnaire .

## Questionnaire Reliability

The reliability of the questionnaire of this study was calculated by using Cronbach Alpha Formula . It was 0.87 .

Cronbach Alpha Formula was also used to calculate the reliability for the seven main tasks, as shown in table number 5 .

**Table 5 : Reliability Coefficient for the Questionnaire Tasks .**

Number	Tasks	Reliability Coefficient
1	Use of audio and audio visual aids.	0.63
2	Students' exposure to English language.	0.73
3	Starting age of teaching English.	0.72
4	Knowledge of English vocabulary.	0.59
5	Speech rate of native speakers.	0.79
6	Cultural listening habits.	0.78
7	Teachers' listening skill level.	0.80

## Statistical Analysis

As soon as data collection was completed, the process of coding took place. This means the responses were given specific numbers so that they could be processed by computer. The response “strongly agree” was given five points, “agree” was given four points, “moderately agree” was given three points, “disagree” was given two points, and “strongly disagree” was given one point. As all the items of the questionnaire were considered negative ones, the questionnaire measured the teachers’ perspectives about the causes for the students’ English language weakness of listening skill positively. So the more points we have, the stronger the causes of weakness in listening skill are. Then analysis depended on means and standard deviations were taken into consideration. Also (SPSS) and (SAS) programs were used to analyze the data.

In order to understand the results of the study, a new scale was computed for the results and a key for the means as follows :

<u>Means</u>	<u>Key</u>
1 – 2.60	Disagree + Strongly Disagree (To a small extent)
2.61 – 3.40	Moderately Agree (To a moderate extent)
3.41 – 5	Agree + Strongly Agree (To a large extent)

## Summary

In this chapter, the researcher explained the variables of this descriptive study . Then he presented the necessary information about the population (all West Bank UNRWA ninth grade English teachers). The researcher built his own questionnaire to be used as an instrument . It contained 61 items covering 7 tasks . 5-points Likert scale was used . The validation of the questionnaire was ensured by submitting it to a jury of 6 teachers . Also the questionnaire reliability was computed by using Cronbach Alpha Formula . It was 0.87 . Frequency counts, means and standard deviations were taken into consideration to analyze the results . (SPSS) and (SAS) programs were used .

# CHAPTER FOUR

## RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter contains the results which are related to each task and item in this study . Through these results and their analysis the researcher tried to answer the questions of the study .

Table 6 below, shows the means and the standard deviations for the tasks of the study in general .

<b>NO.</b>	<b>Tasks of the study</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Level</b>
1	Use of audio and audio visual media.	57	4.11	0.44	Large extent
2	Students' exposure to English language in real life.	57	4.26	0.43	Large extent
3	Starting age of teaching English.	57	4.24	0.55	Large extent
4	Knowledge of English vocabulary.	57	4.10	0.44	Large extent
5	Speech rate of the native speakers.	57	4.09	0.44	Large extent
6	Cultural listening habits.	57	3.82	0.53	Large extent
7	Teachers' listening skill level.	57	3.57	0.58	Large extent

The data in this table show that ninth grade UNRWA teachers of English language confirmed the role of each mentioned factor as a cause for the students' listening skill weakness of the same class . Also the results show that teachers' views indicate that the most effective cause for the weakness of this skill was the second task (students' exposure to English language in real life) . The mean of its effect is 4.26 . Then comes task number 3 (starting age of teaching English) . The mean is 4.24 . Then comes task number 1 (use of audio and audio visual media). The mean is 4.11 . These factors were followed by the task number 4 (knowledge of English vocabulary) . The mean is 4.10 . Then comes task number 5 (speech rate of the native speakers) . The mean is 4.09, then followed by the task number 6 (cultural listening habits) . The mean is 3.82 . The last one was the task number 7 (teachers' listening skill level ) . Its mean is 3.57 .

**Table 7 below, shows the means and standard deviations of the items of the first task (use of audio and audio visual media ) .**

No.	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
1	Using the tape recorder in English Ninth grade classes for three times per unit is not enough to develop our students' listening skill.	3.59	1.03	Large extent
2	Many teachers use it less than three times in every unit.	3.38	1.11	Moderate extent
3	When some units are poor in listening activities, most English teachers do not prepare other activities instead.	3.66	1.10	Large extent
4	Most of our students do not listen to English cassettes at homes.	4.68	0.57	Large extent
5	Most celebrations in our schools do not include activities in English.	3.47	1.10	Large extent
6	Most of our students do not listen to English news, songs or programs in B.B.C. or "The Voice of America".	4.56	0.59	Large extent
7	When our students watch an English film or program on the T.V. they prefer to read the Arabic translation rather than to listen to it.	4.42	0.75	Large extent
8	Most of our students do not have even a monthly English video activity.	4.50	0.84	Large extent
9	Our schools have no English language labs.	4.70	0.59	Large extent

This table shows that the highest item of the first task affecting the listening skill is item number 9 ( our schools have no English language labs ) . Its mean is 4.70 . The second item is number 4 (most of our students do not listen to English cassettes at homes) . Its mean is 4.68 . The third item is number 6 ( most of our students do not listen to English news, songs or programs in the B.B.C. or “The Voice of America” ) . Its mean is 4.56 . The fourth item is number 8 (most of our students do not have even a monthly English video activity) . Its mean is 4.50 . The fifth item is number 7 ( when our students watch an English film or program on the T.V. they prefer to read the Arabic translation rather than to listen to it ) . Its mean is 4.42 . Then comes item number 3 in the sixth grade ( when some units are poor in listening activities, most English teachers do not prepare other activities instead ) . Its mean is 3.66, then followed by item number 1 ( using the tape recorder in English Ninth grade classes for three times per unit is not enough to develop our students’ listening skill ) . Its mean is 3.59 . Then comes item number 5 ( most celebrations in our schools do not include activities in English ) . Its mean is 3.47 . The last item is number 2 ( many teachers use the tape recorder less than three times in every unit ) . Its mean is 3.38 .

## Summary

In this chapter the researcher presented the results, which consequently gave the answers for the seven questions of this study . These answers are considered the causes for the weakness of ninth grade students in English listening skill at West Bank UNRWA schools . These causes will be discussed in chapter five .

# CHAPTER FIVE

## DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As the researcher wanted to reveal the causes in this study for the ninth grade students' listening skill weakness, in West Bank UNRWA schools, answers for his seven questions were given through the data which was presented in chapter 4 . In this chapter, the researcher is going to highlight and discuss those answers. Also he is going to compare the results with the literature in this study . The necessary recommendations, which depend on the results, will be presented too.

**Question One :** To what extent does the use of audio and audio visual media in the class affect the students' level of English language listening skill ?

The mean of this task (4.11) shows that lack of using audio and audio visual media is a cause for the students' listening skill weakness . Despite the importance of the English language labs Oda (1988), we find none of them in West Bank UNRWA schools . It

could be because they are very expensive . We do not deny here that Sultan (1987) in Oda (1988) presented an opposite result .

Also the results of this task show that most students do not listen to English audio cassettes at homes . Maybe because they are not motivated to do so .And it could be for the same reason they do not listen to English radio programs in the B.B.C. or “The Voice of America” . This result conforms with the result of Jiaju (1984) who found that listening could be improved by listening to radio news . Also results show that teachers do not use videos even once per month . Reasons for this could be that some schools do not have neither videos nor films . And some of those who have videos feel it is difficult to move their students to the video room or the video to the class . In addition to this, video lessons need planning, preparation and controlling the class well . Also they require good manipulative skills and good knowledge of how to teach English by using videos . We would like to add here that according to the results, our students prefer to read the Arabic translation rather than to listen to English television programs . This may happens because of two reasons . The first one is the absence of motivation . The second is a psychological one . We usually prefer the easiest job . We remember here that Poon

(1992) encouraged students to listen to television news. Also the results show that the tape-recorder is not used enough to develop the students' listening skill . This could be because it requires extra efforts from English teachers to manipulate the tape-recorder and control the classes during English lessons . Also it is easier for English supervisors to evaluate the progress in reading, writing and speaking, than to evaluate the progress of students' listening skill . And it is important for many teachers to win the confidence of their supervisors . So, concerning the previous explanation, they may succeed in achieving this goal without using tape-recorders . Thus, this result, the importance of using tape-recorders for our students' listening skill coincides with the results of Al-Ansari and Wigzell (1996) who concentrated on the availability of tape-recorders in schools, the frequency of using them and the teachers' manipulative skill in the same field . The same result coincides with the results of Abu Hanieh (1996) . It also supports the views of Dawood (1997); Reissman (1992); Rathbun (1986) who emphasized using the tape-recorder in teaching the language . It supports the views of Dobson (1983); Allar (1985) in Abu Hanieh (1996); Chaudron (1988) in Nofal (1998) (a) too . Also it fits in with the view of Doge (1980) in

Nofal (1998) (a) who emphasized the role of technology for efficiency .

Whereas this result, concerning using tape-recorders in teaching English, disagrees with the result of Nofal (1998:90) (b) who indicated that "... frequency of exposure to pre-taped native speech has no significant effect", Nofal, however, said later on, "Perhaps the problem lies not in the tape-recorder itself but in the way it is used (p.89) " .

**Question Two** : To what extent does the students' exposure to English language in real life affect their level of English language listening skill ?

The mean of this task (4.26) shows that the lack of our students' exposure to English language in real life is another important cause for their listening skill weakness . Our students' chance to communicate with native English language speakers either accidentally or in organized English summer courses is limited . Also English language clubs do not exist in our schools . To organize English summer courses especially with the participation of English language native speakers, and to have active English clubs in our

(1989) who indicated that it is easier to learn the pronunciation very early . Furthermore, students at this age (six years) are better in learning by imitating their teachers especially in pronunciation which is important for listening . Also starting learning the language when students are six years old gives them confidence, because they feel that they are doing something special . It is learning a foreign language despite the fact that they are still young and they feel proud of it . This confidence is expected to support them while learning other subjects . The results of this study, also show that starting teaching English at the age of six does not influence learning Arabic negatively . It could be because it is the mother tongue language and it is spoken by students everywhere in real life . They hear it from their friends, relatives and all other people . All other school subjects are taught in Arabic, too . This result conforms with the results of Lambert and Tucker (1972) in Helms and Turner (1978:314) “who found that learning both French and English did not decrease the bilingual children’s English-language skills when compared with the English-only subjects, ... ” . Also our results conform with the results of Hatamleh and Jeradat (1986) who found that there was no negative effect for teaching English, from the first elementary class, on other

subjects . Moreover our results in this task conform with the results of Mukattash (1980) and Jiyad (1975) who disagree with the view of Ash-Shamriyy (1989) who indicated that teaching English from the first elementary class negatively influences teaching Arabic and religion and mentioned other disadvantages .

**Question Four :** To what extent does the knowledge of English vocabulary affect the students' level of English language listening skill ?

The mean of this task (4.10) shows that lack of vocabulary is another cause for the weakness of our students' listening skill . As we know, West Bank UNRWA schools, nowadays use PETRA curriculum, which, according to our results, does not concentrate on teaching vocabulary as the New Living English for Jordan . Teachers, while using the New Living English for Jordan curriculum, used to revise, in every lesson, the words which were taught in the last period, and to teach every single new word in the lesson by using the aural-oral approach . This approach used to concentrate on every student to use the new vocabulary and structures . Nowadays, however, while using PETRA curriculum, teachers are required only

to teach the key words and structures . They use the communicative approach which mostly concentrates on the message of the speech .

Our results show that the listener is more able to distinguish a known word from an unknown word . This means that the known words help the listener to understand the listening text, and the unknown words delay this process . The same results show that good knowledge of vocabulary gives our students confidence, and positive feedback . And that is what they need to understand the listening text and to continue listening . This understanding also helps them to predict . Good predictions also usually lead to better understanding . However lack of knowledge of vocabulary, as the results show, leads to confusion and even to frustration . This is the case because when the student does not know the meanings of many words, he tries to remember them, while the speaker is going on, so he loses more and more of the message and he may not be able to follow it .

The results of this study conform with the view of Rivers (1980) who emphasized the recognition of vocabulary for rapid comprehension . The results also conform with the view of Kelly (1991) who indicated that lack of vocabulary knowledge is the main obstacle to listening comprehension and recommended enriching the

students' lexical knowledge . The results conform with the results of Boyle (1984), too. He found that vocabulary is an important factor affecting listening . Also they conform with the results of Al-Jamal (1995) which were similar . The results of our study support the results of Goh (1997) which were similar, too .

**Question Five** : To what extent does the speech rate of the native speakers affect the students' level of English language listening skill ?

The mean of this task (4.09) shows that the high speech rate of English language native speakers is one of the causes for the weakness of our students' listening skill . When our students listen to English language native speakers, according to the results, most of them do not understand what they hear . This happens because of the rapid speech . Also, while the English language native speakers are speaking rapidly, some written syllables disappear . So our students find that the written language is somehow partially different from the rapid spoken language . However, rapid speech, according to the results, causes many disadvantages . It leads to misunderstanding and causes confusion, and frustration . As a result of the same cause, the student may lose his self-confidence . All the previous negative

consequences are serious and may delay the development of our students' listening skill.

The results of this task conform with the results of Goh (1997) who found that the speech rate affects listening skill, too . They conform with the results of Boyle (1984) which were similar . The results here also conform with the results of Qawasmi (1995) who found that rapid speech causes misunderstanding for 58.90% of the students whom she studied .

**Question Six ;** To what extent do the cultural listening habits of our society affect the students' level of English language listening skill ?

The mean of this task (3.82) reveals that our cultural listening habits affect the level of our students' listening skill . Thus these cultural listening habits are considered a cause for our students' listening skill weakness .

The results of this study show that we mostly prefer talking to listening . This could be the case because we feel the speaker is more active and effective than the listener . Also the results show that we are more proud of good speakers than careful listeners . Furthermore, our literature has a lot of praise for good speakers and a little for good

listeners . These elements urge people to speak more than to listen especially when speaking is followed by success and careful listening is not appreciated . Also the results show that authoritarianism is more widespread than democracy in our society . We think that such authoritarianism is usually expected to lead to passive listening . Also being impatient does not cause people to be active listeners . According to the results, when we think while listening about how to defend our opinions, this means that we are not active listeners, too . In brief, all the above mentioned disadvantages exist in our social and educational life . It could be the case because the streams of emotions are overflowing in our life, and sometimes strongly interfere in our behavior . So we need, to some extent, to be objective and scientific .

The results of this study conform with the view of Wajnryb (1991) who described the active listener in detail . They also conform with the view of Bormann and Bormann (1977) who indicated that schools neglect teaching listening very early because it is thought that homes have done this job .

**Question Seven :** To what extent does our teachers' listening skill level affect our students' level of English language listening skill ?

The mean of this task (3.57) shows that our teachers' listening skill level is one of the causes for the weakness of our students' listening skill . The results show that most of our teachers have not visited Britain or U.S.A. It could be the case because of financial reasons and they did not have scholarships to attend even short English courses which help them to get in touch with English native speakers . Most of our English teachers, even when they are at home, do not endeavour to work on improving their English language . It might be the case because they are not motivated to do so . Thus they tend to live contentedly and prefer easy jobs to hard work . So, according to the results we find that most of our teachers do not listen to the B.B.C. English programs even for 2 hours a week . They prefer to read the Arabic translation when they watch T.V. rather than to listen to the English language programs . Also less than 30% of them attend the yearly PATEFL conference, although it is very beneficial for our English teachers . The results show that they had no chance to listen to English cassettes while they were learning New Living

## Conclusions

It is worth mentioning that all these conclusions are based on the teachers' perception of the students' weakness in listening skill .

To explain the results of this study the researcher indicated that the use of audio and audio visual aids in teaching English language listening skill is neglected . Furthermore, when some of these aids are used, they are used inefficiently . This use needs extra efforts from teachers, motivations, planning, preparation, and good manipulative skills . He also indicated that our students' exposure to the native English language is limited . He indicated that it is better to start teaching English at the age of six rather than eleven, because students at the age of six are more flexible, and there is a better chance to learn by imitation . He found that learning English at the age of six gives students confidence and usually they are proud of it . He also found that teaching English at this age does not influence learning Arabic negatively . Then the researcher indicated that the students' lack of vocabulary was another cause for their listening skill weakness . This was due to the curriculum and the approach which was used in teaching it . Then he indicated that the high speech rate of the native

speakers sometimes lead to misunderstanding, confusion, frustration and losing self-confidence . These disadvantages affect the students' listening skill development . Also, the researcher added that our cultural listening habits affect our students listening skill level . He indicated that we prefer speaking to listening and explained the causes for the passive listening . Then he indicated that our students' listening skill level is affected by our English teachers' listening skill level which did not have the chance to be developed because of many reasons which were discussed by the researcher . It is worth mentioning that the results of this study conformed with most of the views and the studies of the relevant literature .

## Recommendations:

The results of this study revealed the causes for the weakness of ninth grade students in English listening skill at West Bank UNRWA schools . Concerning these results, the researcher recommends that :

- 1) Further separate studies, are suggested, about the relationship between our students' listening skill and :
  - a) audio and audio visual media,
  - b) students' exposure to English language in real life,
  - c) starting age of teaching English,
  - d) students' knowledge of English language vocabulary,
  - e) speech rate of the native speakers,
  - f) our cultural listening habits,
  - g) and our teachers' listening skill level .
- 2) Our study could be replicated in West Bank governmental and private schools instead of UNRWA schools and the results should be compared .
- 3) More English listening activities should be added to those which exist in our curriculum .

- 4) English teachers should encourage their students to listen to English cassettes, and English radio and T.V. programs and news and they should follow up these activities at school .
- 5) All UNRWA schools which do not have active English language clubs are recommended to start this experience .
- 6) English language summer courses should be held every year and volunteers of English language native speakers are preferable to participate .
- 7) It is recommended to start teaching English in our schools at the age of six as it is very beneficial to our students .
- 8) English teachers are advised to use the aural-oral approach in teaching the key words in PETRA curriculum .
- 9) In addition to knowing how to use vocabulary, students need to learn it by heart .
- 10) Homes and schools should play a role in educating children to be active listeners and to avoid the passive listening . This could be achieved through two suggestions:
  - a) The parents and the teachers should be real active listeners in their real everyday behaviour .

- b) The curriculum itself should contain literature, which, in its themes, criticizes the passive listening, and on the other hand promotes and reinforces the active listening habits .
- 11) UNRWA Educational Development Centre should work on improving the level of English language teachers' listening skill either through local English language listening skill courses or sending some of them to attend short English language courses in Britain or U.S.A. so they have the best exposure to the language .
- 12) UNRWA English language teachers should be motivated to attend the yearly PATEFL conference because it is beneficial to them .

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## Appendix

# Al-Quds University College of Education Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Colleague ,

This questionnaire attempts to investigate the causes for the ninth grade students' listening skill weakness, in West Bank UNRWA schools . I'll be very grateful for your precise answers . These answers will be confidential and only will be used for the purpose of this study .

*Thank you for your co-operation .*

*The researcher*

*Samih Faraj*

### Part 1

1) *Gender*

Male

Female

2) *Area*

Hebron

Jerusalem

Nablus

3) *School Location*

Camp

Village

City

4) *Qualification*

MA

BA

Diploma

Other

## Part 2

*Please, tick the suitable choice :*

No.		5. Strongly Agree	4. Agree	3. Moderately Agree	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
1	Using the tape recorder in English Ninth grade classes for three times per unit is not enough to develop our students' listening skill.					
2	Many teachers use it less than three times in every unit.					
3	When some units are poor in listening activities, most English teachers do not prepare other activities instead.					
4	Most of our students do not listen to English cassettes at homes.					
5	Most celebrations in our schools do not include activities in English.					
6	Most of our students do not listen to English news, songs or programs in B.B.C. or "The Voice of America".					
7	When our students watch an English film or program on the T.V. they prefer to read the Arabic translation rather than to listen to it.					
8	Most of our students do not have even a monthly English video activity.					
9	Our schools have no English language labs.					
10	Our students' opportunity to communicate in English after school is very limited .					
11	Most of our students do not listen to English radios when they leave school .					
12	'B.B.C.' and "The Voice of America" are not known for most of our students.					
13	Most schools have no active English clubs .					
14	Most of our students have no chance to participate in English summer courses .					
15	Our students usually prefer channel 1 (The Arabic Channel) (JTV) to channel 2 (The English Channel) .					

No.		5. Strongly Agree	4. Agree	3. Moderately Agree	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
16	There are no English plays played in our local society .					
17	English songs in our buses, cars, houses, etc are not preferable .					
18	Our students' chance to talk to British and American visitors is very limited .					
19	Six year old students are more flexible to learn the language than eleven year old students .					
20	Six year old students are more able to learn the language by imitation than eleven year old students .					
21	It costs too much money to start teaching English at the age of six but we achieve great educational outcomes .					
22	Learning English at the age of six gives students more self confidence .					
23	Learning English at the age of six does not influence learning Arabic negatively .					
24	To start learning English at the age of six does not prevent students from enjoying life .					
25	Students in our country feel sorry as they did not start learning English at the age of six .					
26	Private school students are in general better in English than UNRWA school students because they start learning English at an earlier age .					
27	It is easier to distinguish a known word from an unknown word as they occur in a listening text .					
28	Our student's knowledge of enough vocabulary gives him confidence .					
29	Lack of vocabulary causes confusion in understanding a listening text .					
30	Good knowledge of vocabulary helps the listener to predict what the speaker is going to say .					

No.		5. Strongly Agree	4. Agree	3. Moderately Agree	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
31	Good knowledge of vocabulary usually leads to the positive feedback .					
32	PETRA curriculum does not concentrate on teaching vocabulary as the <u>New Living English for Jordan</u> does .					
33	In addition to knowing how to use vocabulary, students need to learn it by heart .					
34	Lack of vocabulary leads students to be frustrated so they do not follow listening .					
35	As native speakers usually speak rapidly, most of our students do not understand most of their speech .					
36	Rapid speech in English leads to misunderstanding .					
37	Rapid speech in English confuses our students .					
38	Sometimes rapid speech in English frustrates our students .					
39	The foreign listener, sometimes loses his self confidence as a result of the high speech rate .					
40	As the Canadian and Italian speakers of English speak more slowly, we understand them better than the British and the Americans .					
41	When native speakers speak rapidly, some written syllables disappear .					
42	If we hear the same text twice from the same native speaker: once quickly, and once slowly, we understand the latter better.					
43	Even when some Arabic songs, are sung very quickly, we misunderstand them .					
44	In many places in our society, we find too many people speaking and almost nobody is listening .					

No.		5. Strongly Agree	4. Agree	3. Moderately Agree	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
45	We are usually proud of the person who speaks fluently more than the person who listens carefully .					
46	The student usually imitates his teacher .					
47	Till now authoritarianism in our society is more widespread than democracy .					
48	Listening needs patience .					
49	The person who becomes angry quickly is usually a bad listener .					
50	Most of our couples listen to each other because they are forced to, and not because they are convinced.					
51	While listening, most of us are usually thinking how to defend our opinions .					
52	Our literature has a lot of praise to good speakers but a little to good listeners .					
53	We did not learn to be good listeners neither at home nor at school .					
54	Few of our English teachers had the chance to visit Britain or U.S.A. .					
55	Our teachers' weakest skill is listening .					
56	Most teachers do not listen to the B.B.C. English programs even for 2 hours a week .					
57	When teachers watch T.V. they prefer to read the Arabic translation, rather than to listen .					
58	English teachers had no chance to listen to English cassettes while they were learning <u>New Living English for Jordan</u> curriculum.					
59	Most English teachers do not have the chance to talk and listen to native speakers.					
60	Less than 30% of UNRWA English teachers attend the yearly PATEFL conference .					
61	Most English teachers prefer Arabic T.V. programs to English programs .					