

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT**



**Undergraduate Research:**

FACTORS THAT AFFECT STUDENTS' LISTENING COMPREHENSION FROM THE MODERN LANGUAGES MAJOR IN THE BASIC ENGLISH COURSES IN THE SEMESTER I FROM THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR.

**To obtain the degree of:**

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**Presented by:**

Karla Irene Lemus Portillo	LP10013
Katia Yanira López Fabián	LF10005
Cindy Carolina Méndez Alas	MA10035

**Advisor:**

LIC. JUAN CARLOS CRUZ

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## INTRODUCTION

Listening is the capacity of listening and understanding what we hear at the same time, Nunan (1997). It means that listening is one of the most important skills when learning a foreign language in order not to misunderstand the message; therefore, listening helps to improve new vocabulary, to get the correct accent and sound. However, beginners who learn a foreign language face with many problematic factors that do not allow them to obtain good listening skill. This is the reason why this research work was carried out.

The following study contains a wide description of the factors that affect students' listening comprehension from the Modern Languages Major in the Basic English courses, the study was carried out at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

For this study a mix approach was adopted qualitative and quantitative and a descriptive type of the study was applied. The sample for this research project were three groups of Basic English I students; moreover, three types of instruments were used which are: survey, interview and nonparticipant observation guide.

Lastly, the findings of this research project were used as an important source to generate some recommendations that will help students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador to improve their performance in listening skill.

## **ABSTRACT**

Throughout this research study, the researchers will prove the need to improve the factors that affect students' listening comprehension.

This investigation project is formed by five chapters

The first, is the Research project and includes a Description of the Problematic Situation, and a delimitation of the problem and the objectives, it includes general and specific objectives that will guide this research study.

The second, is about the theoretical framework all the information that the researchers collect from book, magazines, articles on internet.

The third part, contains the methodology of the investigation, which describes the Population and Sample for this investigation as well as the description of the instruments that will be used to gather the information.

The chapter four is about the data analysis process, here all the information collected from the instruments is analyzed

And interpreted.

And finally the chapter five, is related to the conclusion and recommendations that the researcher propose based on this research project.

## GLOSSARY

**Listening skill:** is a basic skill for learning a language. It differs from hearing. It includes a wider meaning and achieved through different ways and means.

**Motivation:** is an internal process that makes a person move toward a goal.

**Lack of vocabulary:** the fact of not having an extended knowledge of the words.

**Background knowledge:** information that is essential to understanding a situation or problem

**Anxiety:** a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome.

**Lack of concentration:** the inability to focus the mind on one thing at a time.

**Authenticity:** is a piece of real language created by a real speaker for a real audience in order to convey a message of some sort.

**Speaker accent:** is a manner of pronunciation peculiar to a particular individual, location, or nation.

**Environmental noise:** is the summary of noise pollution from outside, caused by transport, industrial and recreational activities.

**Teachers' personality:** is the manner in which the teacher expresses him during the class.

**Quality of Recorded Materials:** refers to the sound quality of a reproduction or recording.

**Age:** is the length of time during which a being or thing has existed.

**Gender:** is a socially constructed definition of women and men. Gender is determinate by the conception of task, functions and roles attributed to women and men in a society.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

### **1.1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Learning a second language may result a difficult task especially if students have never been used to listen another language aside their native tongue. Acquiring a new language may imply learning four different important areas: speaking, writing, reading and listening. Listening and reading are known as 'receptive' skills while speaking and writing are known as 'productive' skills. Students will need to master these skills whether they learn English, or any other language. However, the area that requires more attention is listening, given that listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. Listening involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary and grasping meaning. Therefore, effective listening comprehension in classrooms is more than hearing. Usually in classrooms there are some elements that may have a negative impact in the listening comprehension. Having an awareness of the factors that affect listening comprehension helps teachers better address to the needs of their students. It is important to discover which are the factors that may interfere with the listening understanding in students because it is evident that if students encounter some difficulties at the moment of comprehension it is because there exists causes that enable them to understand. Consequently, it is essential to identify the problem that students are having regarding listening comprehension, and for that reason the research group decided to carry out this study and throughout the project this question is answered: Which are the factors that affect student's listening comprehension?

## 1.2. JUSTIFICATION

The purpose of this research project is to find out some factors that might interfere with students of modern languages major in getting a good listening comprehension on English audios. This research is carried out to discover the main problems students have to understand an audio at the moment of listening.

It is important to define the concept of listening and everything that involves a good listening comprehension since in that way students will be conscious at the moment of speaking, consequently this will help them to enhance the listening skills too.

According to Howat and Dakin (1974) listening is “the ability to identify and understand what others are saying, this involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, his grammar and vocabulary and grasping his meaning”. Based on the previous definition listening is not just hearing what other people say, listening is a very active process, in which the listener is paying attention to the words and the message the person is transmitting. In this point is when challenges may affect with the effective listening to a foreign, here emerges this research.

In brief, this research will help us to understand the main problems and the reasons why listening comprehension as a foreign language becomes difficult, in addition, not only the problems will be taken in considerations but also the strategies that teachers and students must follow to improve the listening skill.

As a summary, this research project not only will inform students about the factors that affect their listening comprehension, but also the findings gathered through this research study will be used as a basis to propose some recommendations that will help students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador to improve their performance in listening skill.



## 1.3. OBJECTIVES

### 1.3.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- To identify the factors that affect students' listening comprehension from the Modern Languages major in the Basic English courses in the semester I from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.
- To explain the factors that affect students' listening comprehension from the Modern Languages major in the Basic English courses in the semester I from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

### 1.3.2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- ✚ To list the different efficient techniques, strategies and methodologies that teachers use when teaching listening comprehension skill on Basic English courses.
- ✚ To describe the authenticity of the material that teachers use when teaching listening comprehension skill on Basic English courses.
- ✚ To outline the most common difficulties students, face when learning listening skill.
- ✚ To analyze how the external factors such as speaker accent, environmental noise, type of passage, authenticity, quality of recording material and teaching strategies affect student's listening comprehension.
- ✚ To verify how the internal factors such as age, gender, aptitude, and motivation affect on student's listening comprehension.
- ✚ To propose the possible solutions to improve listening skill for Basic English courses in the semester I from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

#### **1.4. SUBSIDIARY QUESTIONS**

- Are listening activities an efficient technique in Basic English courses to improve listening comprehension?
- Is a student's background knowledge a factor that affects listening comprehension?
- Is the manner in which the teacher speaks a factor that affects on the student's listening comprehension?
- What are the most common troubles that students face at the moment when learning English listening skill?
- What are the strategies students apply in a listening activity?
- Do students have enough resources provided by the teacher on a listening activity?

#### **1.5. DELIMITATION**

This research study will be developed with the aim of identify the factors that affect students' listening comprehension. This descriptive study will be carried out at the University of El Salvador, in the Foreign Language Department, the data will be gathered from six groups of Basic English.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. WHAT IS LISTENING?

There are numerous definitions of listening; however, it is important to start with a standard definition of this term, (Purdy, 1997) Listening is the active and dynamic process of attending, perceiving, interpreting, remembering, and responding to expressed (verbal and nonverbal) needs, concerns, and information offered by others human beings.

According to Howatt and Dakin (1974) Listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This process involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, the speaker's grammar and vocabulary, and comprehension of meaning.

The process of listening is often contrasted with hearing. Lundsteen (1979) considered hearing a physical act and listening a mental act. Hearing she said had to do with our physiological capacity to receive and process sounds. Problems with our ability to hear could hinder our listening. Hence, it behooves each of us to have our hearing checked if we think it could be affecting our ability to listen. In contrast to hearing, listening has to do with assigning meaning to the stimuli received by our brain. To listen, is to attach "meaning to the aural symbols perceived" (Purdy, 1997).

Listening is not the same as hearing. While hearing is a physiological process, listening is a conscious process that requires us to be mentally attentive (Low & Sonntag, 2013). It means we have to know the difference between listening and hearing. We are able of hearing but we need to be conscious to listening

Listening is a significant language skill to develop foreign language learning. Despite its importance, language learners consider listening as the most difficult language skill to learn. Since the role of listening comprehension in language teaching has been repeatedly emphasized, many teachers do not pay enough

attention to its importance in their classes. It means that listening skill is the most important skill at the moment to learn a language; however, it does not receive enough attention when this skill is taught.

Listening skill constitutes the basic structure for all the courses in primary education. So in people's lives, it is indispensable for them to be able to understand what they listen effectively. Improving students' listening skills effectively is strongly related to being aware of the factors which have an effect on their listening performance. Listening is necessary in people's lives to get communication with others.

As it has been mentioned before, listening has to do with understanding what others say that is why it is important to define what listening comprehension is.

## 2.2. WHAT IS LISTENING COMPREHENSION?

Dirven and Taylor (1984) described listening comprehension as follows: the term listening comprehension is a typical product of teaching methodology, and is matched in phonetic and psycholinguistic research by expressions such as speech understanding, spoken language understanding, speech recognition and speech perception. Bowen, Madsen and Hilferty (1985) defined listening as: Listening is attending to and interpreting oral language. The student should be able to hear oral speech in English, segment the stream of sounds, group them into lexical and syntactic units (words, phrases, sentences), and understand the message they convey.

There are four types of listening: Informational Listening, Critical Listening, Empathic Listening and Narrow Listening. They all have different characteristics as it is explained in the following paragraph.

## 2.3. TYPES OF LISTENING

- **Informational Listening**

Whenever you listen to learn something, you are engaged in informational listening. This is true in many day-to-day situations, in education and at work,

when you listen to the news, watch a documentary, when a friend tells you a recipe or when you are talked-through a technical problem with a computer.

- **Critical Listening**

Consists when the goal is to evaluate or scrutinize what is being said. Critical listening is a much more active behavior than informational listening and usually involves some sort of problem solving or decision making.

When the word 'critical' is used means engaging in what you are listening to by asking yourself questions such as, 'what is the speaker trying to say?' or 'what is the main argument being presented?', 'how does what I'm hearing differ from my beliefs, knowledge or opinion?'. Critical listening is, therefore, fundamental to true learning.

- **Empathic Listening**

Empathic listening involves attempting to understand the feelings and emotions of the speaker – to put yourself into the speaker's shoes and share their thoughts.

- **Narrow listening**

Narrow listening originates from narrow reading, and has been found to be helpful for language acquisition (Krashen 1981). Narrow listening means that learners focus on the topic, e.g., weather or sports, or one author.

In conclusion, the type of listening is used and which behaviors are involved depend on the situation and the people engaged in a conversation.

After being studied the four types of listening, it is important to ask and provide an answer to the following question: *Why teach listening?*

## 2.4. WHY TEACH LISTENING?

One of the main reason for getting students to listen to spoken English is to let them hear different varieties and accents rather than just the voice of the teacher with its own idiosyncrasies. In today's world, they need to be exposed not only to one variety of English (British English, for example) but also the varieties such as

American English, Australian English, Caribbean English, Indian English or West African English, these varieties of English which are different from the teacher's, it will give them a better idea of the world language which English has become.

The second main major reason for teaching listening is because it helps students to acquire a language subconsciously even if teachers do not draw attention to its special features.

Finally, just as with reading, students get better at listening the more they do it! Listening is skill and any help we can give students in performing that skill will help them to be better listeners.

There are three basic steps on listening process: Hearing, Understanding and Judging.

**1. Listening is an active process that has three basic steps.**

1. **Hearing.** Hearing just means listening enough to catch what the speaker is saying. For example, when you are listening to the news and the reporter says there has been an automobile accident on any street, you have heard what has been said if you can repeat the fact.
2. **Understanding.** The next part of listening happens when you take what you have heard and understand it in your own way. For example, in the case of the news, you can create a mental image of the crash.
3. **Judging.** After you are sure you understand what the speaker has said, you start reasoning what the consequences might be. You can decide not to take that street because you consider that there could be a traffic jam due to the accident.

When teaching listening, the teacher has to consider so many aspects so this process can be achieved in the classroom, that is the reason why teachers should know what to teach when they teach this important skill.

## 2.5. WHAT DO TEACHERS TEACH WHEN THEY TEACH LISTENING?

“The teacher is of course an artist, but being an artist does not mean that he or she can make the profile, can shape the students. What the educator does in teaching is to make it possible for the students to become themselves.” – Freire.

Being a good teacher means not only teach but also be a guide for the students, especially in the area of listening that seems to be the hardest part of learning a foreign language. Listening is a complex, active process of interpretation in which listeners match what they hear with what they already know. These are some aspects what teachers teach when they play an audio during the class for the students.

### **Vocabulary**

Studies by Elley (1989) and Brett, and Hurley (1996) clearly establish that learning vocabulary via listening activities is possible even with limited exposure to new words. Although most words are learned incidentally, providing learners with explicit in vocabulary is an effective way to deliver words and phrases, especially at lower levels. There are many ways of doing this, about how learners can pick up new vocabulary through listening activities, Nation (2001) outlined five important conditions which can easily be adapted to fit within any interactive vocabulary program. His conditions, elucidated below, are: interest, comprehension, repeated retrieval, decontextualization, and generative processing.

- **Interest** is perhaps the most important condition of acquiring new vocabulary because without any enthusiasm for learn something new, learners become boring with the activity, so teachers must to encourage them with interesting audios that make them be concentrate and to hold students' attention. Teachers can also maintain students' interest levels by breaking up listening passages into sections, summarizing the text and listening in portions over a period of time.

- **Comprehension** refers to learners' ability to recognize and understand what they hear. Passages with large amounts of new or difficult vocabulary are more difficult to understand. Vidal (2003, p. 79) found that “the higher level of lecture comprehension, the greater vocabulary gains.” It’s means that the degree to which a lecture is understood influences students' vocabulary acquisition.
- **Repeated retrieval** refers to exposure. Learners need to meet target vocabulary as many times as possible. An easy way to make sure students acquire new words in the same context is to repeat the number of times a listening is heard. The student not only see the word through the reading but also hear the word, it permits students to memorize and associate it.
- **Decontextualization** is one of the most popular ways for teachers to introduce new vocabulary to students. it consists of drawing learners' attention away from the listening passage as a whole and focusing directly into the words contained within the text. This can be accomplished in many ways such as writing the words on the whiteboard as they occur in the text, pausing to define and explain the word.
- **Generative processing** refers to encountering vocabulary in broad and varied ways. Generative word use occurs when teachers make sentences using words in ways that differ from the way they appear in the text. In that way students can learn the different meanings that a word can have and they can use it in different context.



## Linguistic Aspects

Vandergrift (2009) argues that, when listening, people draw on the following knowledge sources: linguistic knowledge, pragmatic knowledge, and prior (experiential) knowledge. They consider the linguistic source to be the fundamental one. It is represented by semantic, phonological and syntactic knowledge of the target language which helps the listener to assign meaning to the sound stream of the connected speech.

As Mendelsohn (1994) claims that "there is a certain level of linguistic proficiency that is required in order to handle listening comprehension" . Linguistics is important for language teaching because they can be likened to the relationship of knowledge. Some branches of this scientific study are present in listening activities, e.g.

- **Phonetics** is the study of speech sounds, which are known more technically as phones. Phonetics focuses about how the speech sounds are produced by using speech organs.
- **Phonology**, on the other hand, is essentially the description of the systems and patterns of speech sounds in a language. It is based on theory of what every speaker of a language unconsciously knows about the sound patterns of that language. This study regards the speech sounds as having functions to differentiate meanings.
- **Grammar** includes phrase-structure rules, lexical-insertion rules, and transformational rules. The grammar can be thought of as a machine which generates all the possible sentences of the language. A grammar containing such rules is called a generative grammar.
- **Pragmatics** is the interpretation of the sentence, includes the speaker's understanding of the context in which a sentence is uttered, and their knowledge of the way in which language is used to communicate information.

Besides these aspects to consider at the moment to teach, teachers should also

know that there are some factors that affect listening comprehension as it is explained in the following paragraph.

## 2.6. FACTORS THAT AFFECT LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Listening knowledge of a foreign language is often important to academic studies, professional success, and personal development. Listening in a language that is not the learner's first language, nevertheless, is a source of considerable difficulties for L2 learners. Some authors (Underwood, 1989; Thompson and Rubin, 1996; Goh, 2000) indicate that problems with foreign language listening maybe either listening problems or language problems, depending on the listener learning abilities and skills.

It can be seen that at the beginning learners have to deal with a great deal of difficulties in listening comprehension as listening in somehow is a receptive skill. However, the listening process is often described from an information processing perspective as "an active process in which listeners select and interpret information that comes from auditory and visual clues in order to define what the speakers are trying to express" (Thompson and Rubin, 2006). Considering various aspects of listening comprehension; language learners may encounter some difficulties in understanding the incoming speech. Hedge (2005) divides these difficulties into two as internal and external problems. Internal problems can be listed as lack of motivation, lack of knowledge of the topic under discussion, lack of concentration and unknown vocabulary of what is being heard. On the other hand, external problems are related to listeners' failure in understanding as a result of the characteristics of the passage (type, authenticity, distortion and noise) speakers' accent and environmental noises.

## **INTERNAL FACTORS**

Base on the studies and findings made by different experts in listening, we can list internal factors as: age, gender, aptitude, motivation and listener characteristics (lack of vocabulary, concentration and background knowledge) these factors are considering internal because they are within the listener or the EFL learners.

- **Age**

Experts agree that the best age to start studying a foreign language is at the age of 6 and 7 because at these ages children acquire and process any kind of information very quickly, in the other hand, adults have more difficult learning a foreign language because they don't have the same mental capacity to acquire or process the information as young people do.

This problem is noticed when a teacher has a group in which there are students from different ages, given that the topics and the activities that the teacher performs in the classroom will be chosen and developed according to the age of the student.

- **Gender**

“There do appear to be some sex differences in language acquisition and processing, but the research evidence is mixed. For example, women outperform men in some tests of verbal fluency (such as finding words that begin with a certain letter), and women's brains may be less asymmetrically organized than men's for speech” (Kimura 1992). Kimura states that gender defers on the learning language process and he mentions that women are better in tests that evaluate oral communication, in the other hand, he explains that men are more organized for speech, also he mentions that even in some cultures it is believed that females tend to be better at learning a language than males.

- **Aptitude:**

Aptitude is a natural ability for learning in a specific area, moreover, aptitude is expressed in interest and it is reflected in current performance which is expected to

be improved with the time, that is why learning a foreign language should be a natural process.

### **Motivation**

When students are not interested in learning English, especially listening subject, their low interest in the learning process causes their attention to the material taught becomes low. Their low interest can be caused by their low learning motivation. According to Ur (1998), students' motivation loses more easily because of monotonous, apparently pointless activity. Consequently, the low motivation can cause unsatisfactory result in learning. Previous research shows that learners who have low learning motivation tend to get unsatisfactory achievement or low achievement.

In foreign Language learning field, to be motivated means that the learner needs to have something to look forward to, a purpose related to goal or objective. This objective would be learning a foreign language. There must be something that the learner wishes to accomplish or gain, being the target language the vehicle to attain it. The learner's reasons for another language could vary from achieving a sense of success (Garner, 1985).

### **Listener characteristics**

#### **Lack of vocabulary**

Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. Without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners often achieve less than their potential and may be discouraged from making use of language learning opportunities around them such as listening to the radio, listening to native speakers, using the language in different context, reading or watching television, (Nunan 1998).

## **Background Knowledge**

Background knowledge plays an important role in learning a foreign language specially in the developing of the listening skill, However, EFL students have difficulty understanding and recalling information contained in spoken and written discourse when they lack familiarity with the topic of, or the cultural elements contained in the discourse (Carrell, 1983; Connor, 1984).

## **Lack of concentration**

Concentration has been defined as "the ability to direct one's thinking in whatever direction one would intend" (Cambridge University, 2012), Concentration is so important for developing listening skill because it helps listener to receive accurate information and it also indicates that the listener is interested in what speaker is saying. We all have the ability to concentrate some of the time. But at other times our thoughts are scattered, and our minds race from one thing to another.

Low concentration, or not paying close attention to speakers, is detrimental to effective listening. It can result from various psychological or physical situations such as visual or auditory distractions, physical discomfort, inadequate volume, lack of interest in the subject material, stress, or personal bias. Regardless of the cause, when a listener is not paying attention to a speaker's dialogue, effective communication is significantly diminished.

## **EXTERNAL FACTORS**

According to Hedge (2005) external factors are those which are outside the listener, they are listed as: characteristics of the passage (type, authenticity, distortion and noise) speaker's accent and environmental noises.

### **Characteristics of the passage**

#### **Type of passage**

The type of the passage has been noted as a factor affecting listening comprehension, (Rubin, 1990). Different types of spoken passages have different

structure, which can make them easier or more difficult for second language listeners to understand. Lectures (monologues, speeches) and recorded conversations, have very different structures, for instance in a conversation, participants are allowed to ask for repetition and clarification, and they often do not distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information (Flowerdew, 1994). Furthermore, conversations do not necessarily require specialized knowledge or an understanding of implied and indirect speech acts (Flowerdew, 1994). They are by nature informal, contextualized, and involved (Biber, 1988).

In addition, studies have suggested that types of passage with visual support can enhance listening comprehension, (Rubin, 1990). According to the study made by Georgetown University, students who watched dramas on video improved significantly over students who receive no video support for the listening training, it argues that video can serve as a haven to enhance listening comprehension.

### **Authenticity**

Authenticity of aural materials can be defined in many ways, involving the speaker, the listener, the context, and the message (Breen, 1985). One prevalent way of defining authenticity for a passage itself, and the definition that this report adopts, is that an authentic passage is a piece of real language created by a real speaker for a real audience in order to convey a message of some sort (Gilmore, 2007; Thanajaro, 2000). This characterization is designed to exclude passages that are created to exemplify some aspect of the language (the use of the future tense or speech acts such as apologies) rather than to convey an actual message. The characterization does include other types of passages such as speech from a native speaker to a non-native speaker and scripted television programs (Gilmore, 2007).

### **Quality of Recorded Materials**

Authentic recorded passages are not always recorded in ideal conditions. Recordings from telephone calls, conversations, or radio transmissions are often distorted or mixed with background noise. Recorded conversations are rarely held

in perfectly silent places: other conversations, background noise, and modulated volume can all contribute to speech that is difficult to understand. Radio and television transmissions are subject to interference from external sources.

Indeed, these acoustic distortions can have a profound effect on a listener's ability to understand what they are hearing. When listening to sentences under less than ideal circumstances, even people listening to their native language struggle to understand what was said (Payton, Uchanski, & Braida, 1994; Adank et al., 2009). This is due in part to the fact that it is difficult to recognize words when the signal is degraded (Aydelott & Bates, 2004.) when words are difficult to hear due to noise and distortion in the signal, it is also difficult to build a strong semantic framework into which the listener can integrate incoming words (Aydelott, Dick, & Mills, 2006; Moll, Cardillo, & Aydelott Utman, 2001.) These difficulties are even more pronounced when a listener is trying to understand a non-native language, especially if they are in a low proficiency level.

### **Speaker accent**

Comprehending spoken language involves adapting to the idiosyncrasies of a particular speaker (e.g., speaking rate or the pitch of voice). In general, the comprehension of the spoken language becomes considerably more challenging when the speaker has a different accent than the listener (Weil, 2003). Accented speech has been found to affect both the extent to which listeners successfully retrieve a speaker's message and the effort involved as listeners identify particular words in the message (Floccia et al., 2009). In the case of a speaker with a different accent, a listener must cope with variation arising from both the speaker's own idiosyncrasies and additional variation the speaker shares with others from the same linguistic background (Weil, 2003). Such difficulties in adaptation are further exacerbated when the spoken language is not the listener's native language, particularly when proficiency in that language is low.

## **Environmental noises**

Environmental factors such as lighting, temperature, and furniture affect our ability to listen. A room that is too dark can make us sleepy, just as a room that is too warm or cool can raise awareness of our physical discomfort to a point that it is distracting. Some seating arrangements facilitate listening, while others separate people. In general, listening is easier when listeners can make direct eye contact with and are in close physical proximity to a speaker. When a group of members are allowed to choose a leader, they often choose the person who is sitting at the center or head.

## **Teachers' personality**

"Personality is a pattern of relatively permanent traits and unique characteristics that give both consistency and individuality to a person's behavior."

(Feist and Feist, 2009)

Teacher's personality has a big impact on students learning process. The following six teacher personality traits make classroom management more difficult. Teachers should leave them outside the classroom door.

### **. 1. Impatience**

Impatient teachers talk fast, move fast, and tend to either look the other way in the face of misbehavior, or react emotionally to it. They rush through lessons, gloss over instructions, and out of necessity have lower expectations for students. This produces a restless, excitable classroom that is primed to cause trouble.

### **2. Quick To Anger**

A single flash of anger can undo weeks of rapport building with the students. When teachers yell, scold, use sarcasm, or otherwise lose the cool, they distance themselves from their students and undermine their trust and respect of them.



Teachers become less approachable, less likeable, and less influential—all critical keys to creating a well-behaved classroom.

### **3. Pessimism**

Teachers who are pessimistic in nature are unable to create the well-behaved classroom they desire. Negative thoughts, feelings, and attitudes about students—particularly difficult students—are impossible to hide. They reveal themselves through teacher's words, body language, and tone of voice and make building relationships with them an impossibility.

### **4. Irritability**

Irritability (grouchiness, moodiness) communicates to students that they can't trust teachers or depend on them. It creates resentment, confusion, and instability. It also causes teachers to be inconsistent—both with teachers' classroom management plan and in teachers' interactions with students—leading to more frequent and more severe misbehavior.

### **5. Overly Sensitive**

Teachers with thin skin—those who take misbehavior personally—inevitably, and often subconsciously, seek revenge against their students. They can't help themselves. Out of their resentment and spite they make the kind of classroom management mistakes like yelling, scolding, and holding grudges that result in a spiraling of student behavior.

### **6. Easily Frustrated**

Frequent sighs, rolling eyes, red-faced lectures. Outward signs of frustration can cause enveloping, knife-cutting tension in the classroom. When teachers allow students to get under their skin, it not only makes teachers' classroom unnerving and unpleasant, but it causes students to challenge teachers' authority and test them whenever they get the chance.

In order these factors previously studied do not affect on students' listening comprehension teachers should apply some strategies as follows.

### **Teaching strategies:**

The strategies that teachers use in a classroom have a big impact on language learners. Since every student learn in a different way, teachers should use different techniques in the classroom.

## **2.7. HOW TO TEACH LISTENING TO COMPREHEND WELL?**

According to Downs, listening involves a five-step process: attending, understanding, interpreting, responding, and remembering. This process is active rather than passive and involves using a number of behaviors and tools to be most effective.

It is important that teachers encourage students to listen to information in English as often as possible. This helps to get used to the foreign language in the oral mode. Having as frequent input as possible helps students when later trying to express their own ideas about what they have learned. Even at the beginning when students might understand very little, teachers should encourage them to continue listening to English because the results will soon appear if students are patient enough.

Although listening comprehension skills cannot be “taught” by themselves, the English (EFL) teacher can guide the learner’s practice in listening and increment their intensity of study and practice to aid in the development of listening comprehension skills in EFL learners.

Furthermore, listening is an active activity (Lombardo). That is why it is important to apply strategies, activities and resources that can contribute directly to the comprehension of it.

On the other hand, strategy is defined as “A general plan for achieving something, often over a long period of time.” (Larousse, Advanced learners English Dictionary).

Now that it is already known what strategy and listening is, it is important to define what listening strategies refers to:

### Listening Strategies

Listening strategies are techniques or activities that contribute directly to the comprehension and recall of listening input. Listening strategies can be classified by how the listener processes the input.

Appropriate listening strategies also need to be actively taught. They can be classified as follow:

#### **Top down and bottom up strategies**

- **Top down strategies are listener based.**

In these, the listener taps into background knowledge of the topic, the situation or context, the type of text, and the language. This background knowledge activates a set of expectations that help the listener to interpret what is heard and anticipate what will come next.

#### **Top down strategies include:**

1. **Listening for gist (or main idea)**, in this listening, students are not asked detailed questions. For example, they might just be asked the following general questions: "Where are the speakers talking?" "What are they talking about?" "Why are they talking?" In short, students have to grasp the main ideas without worrying about the details.

**2. Listening for inference**, Inferences are different from predictions.

In this listening, students infer about the possible answers having prior knowledge. In this type of listening, students need to understand that "everything is comprehensible, but there is meaning to the discourse that exceeds the understanding of each of the utterances or parts of it" (Mendelsohn, 1994, p. 105).

**3. Listening to predict** It is impossible for students to catch all the information as they listen. They have to guess what they cannot understand or what would come next by using many clues, such as speakers' gestures and facial expressions, rhetorical markers, key words, their own world or topic knowledge, etc. In this listening activity students would be asked the following questions: (after listening to a conversation) "Can you guess what words will be said next?", can you guess what words are being said?" ?".

- **Bottom up strategies are text based.**

In these, the listener decodes the sounds that one hears in a linear fashion from the smallest meaningful units to complete texts.

Bottom up strategies include:

**1. Listening for specific information**, in this listening, students are asked the following more detailed questions, such as "What time did this event happen?" "Who are they talking about?"

**2. Using non-verbal cues**, using non-verbal cues means paying attention to paralinguistic signals. Paralinguistic signals include body language, gestures, facial expressions, speakers' lip movements, settings of where conversations take place.

Most foreign language students are simply not aware of how to listen. One of the teacher's jobs is to equipping them with listening strategies that extend beyond the classroom. Teachers have to consider strategies as the following:

- Looking for key words
- Looking for nonverbal cues to meaning

- Predicting a speaker’s purpose by the context of the spoken discourse
- Guessing at meanings
- Listening for the general gist.

## 2. **Psycholinguistic strategies**

Psycholinguistic strategies are unseen actions that are in the head” (Færch, & Kasper, 1983). They involve the listener’s conscious use of their personal “comprehension resources”: For example, the listener might exploit contextual clues and background knowledge, or to guess at meaning on the basis of a word’s structure. Lynch (1996) refers to these as internal strategies.

## 3. **Behavioral strategies**

**Behavioral strategies** on the other hand, are visible actions “in the world”. They include negotiation with the speaker—making general requests (“I don’t understand”), specific requests (“What does X mean?”) and admitting ignorance (“I don’t know the word”) (Færch, & Kasper, 1983). Lynch (1996) call these interactive strategies, as they depend on collaboration with other person or people.

Moreover, it is also important to mention what type of methodology and techniques to use when teaching listening.

## 2.8. METHODOLOGY AND TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING LISTENING SKILL

There are some specific guidelines in methodology that teachers should follow in order to help students developing their listening skill (Lin, 2003). What follows is a summary of her suggestions.

There are three different stages of teaching listening: pre-listening, while listening and post-listening. Pre-listening means that the teacher makes the students aware of a situation and activates their prior knowledge.

Some of the activities using in pre-listening are:

- looking at pictures, maps, diagrams, or graphs
- reviewing vocabulary or grammatical structures

- reading something relevant
- constructing semantic webs (a graphic arrangement of concepts or words showing how they are related)
- predicting the content of the listening text
- going over the directions or instructions for the activity
- doing guided practice

While-listening means that the teacher gives the students visual support or guiding questions beforehand, activities for while-listening are the following:

- listening with visuals
- filling in graphs and charts
- following a route on a map
- checking off items in a list
- listening for the gist
- searching for specific clues to meaning
- completing cloze (fill-in) exercises
- distinguishing between formal and informal registers

Post-listening is the stage where the students become active and work with what they had heard, for post-listening there are some activities as:

- review the transcript
- detect the problem
- discussion
- revising the dialogue
- set a speaking task
- quizzing teams
- Listening needs to be taught with interest, variation and motivation.

The methodology and the techniques that teachers apply in their classroom have a big impact on the student's learning process to improve listening skill, furthermore, teachers play a really important role in the classroom. To improve listening skill on

their students, teachers should take into account some aspects, that is why it is considered very important to know what is the role of a teacher in listening classrooms.

### **The role of a teacher in listening classrooms**

It is necessary to reconsider the roles of a teacher in a listening class. According to Field's opinion, first of all, the role of teachers in listening classes is a guide, who is to give their students some help, including skills, in the process. Then, the teacher should be a diagnoser, who can identify listening problems and put them right. Having in mind these questions;

1. *How is the information organized? Does the story line, narrative, or instruction conform to familiar expectations?* Texts in which the events are presented in natural chronological order, which have an informative title, and which present the information following an obvious organization (main ideas first, details and examples second) are easier to follow.
2. *How familiar are the students with the topic?* The teacher has to provide background knowledge due to cultural differences and create major comprehension to his/her students.
3. *Does the text contain redundancy?* At the lower levels of proficiency, listeners may find short, simple messages easier to process, but students with higher proficiency benefit from the natural redundancy of the language.
4. *Does the text involve multiple individuals and objects? Are they clearly differentiated?* It is easier to understand a text with a different objects or people. In other words, the more marked the differences, the easier the comprehension.
5. *Does the text offer visual support to aid in the interpretation of what the listeners hear?* Visual aids such as maps, diagrams, pictures, or the images in a video help contextualize the listening input and provide clues to meaning.

At this point, “wrong answers are more informative than right ones; it makes sense to spend time finding out where and how understanding broke down.”(Field, 2002).

- Make sure there is sufficient variety of listening materials, of pace and intensity, and of activity to allow to work in their style and with their own strategies” (Hedge, 2002).
- The teacher should be a designer who is able to elect or design suitable texts and tasks for his students. It is commonly suggested that pieces of authentic listening be introduced at the early stage of listening, alongside scripted texts, to help the learners get familiar with the cadences of the target language (Field, 1998). .
- A listening teacher should try his best to be a motivator who can get his students more involved in their listening classes and learn more listening skills. To enhance motivation, the following suggestions might be helpful to teachers: (1) Give a purpose of listening. (2) “Make sure there is sufficient variety of listening materials, of pace and intensity, and of activity to allow to work in their style and with their own strategies” (Hedge, 2002). (3) Acknowledge that listening is quite difficult to non-native speakers, and be sure to give reassurance (Hedge, 2002).

As it has been mentioned previously, teachers play an important role in the classroom, as a matter of fact, teachers should also know how to design lessons for EFL Listening Comprehension classes.

## 2.9. DESIGNING LESSONS FOR EFL LISTENING COMPREHENSION CLASSES

When teachers design listening comprehension lessons, they should follow some basic principles that serve as useful guides for successful activities. the rationale for some of these basic principles, including descriptions for (1) motivating students to focus on the learning objective, (2) maintaining the same topic and objective for consecutive activities, (3) applying appropriate teaching



methods and techniques, (4) selecting materials for listening comprehension activities, and (5) using authentic materials.

### **1. Motivating students to focus on the learning objective**

When students clearly understand the purpose of a particular listening comprehension activity, they will be better able to focus on essential vocabulary and grammar and listen for specific information. This will help them to complete the learning objectives in a shorter amount of time. For example, if the teacher informs the students at the start of a lesson that the objective will be “understanding directions,” they can focus on listening for and remembering the vocabulary associated with giving directions. If students are unaware of the objective for a lesson, they may be able to complete a simple activity requiring a “Yes” or “No” answer, but they may not remember specific vocabulary used in giving directions or be able to reiterate specific phrases in more open-ended activities. As a result, students will be less likely to retain the specific learning objectives of the lesson.

### **2. Maintaining the same topic and objective for consecutive activities**

Learning is more effective when different activities within a lesson maintain the same topic and learning objective, as opposed to a lesson being a series of unrelated activities with changing topics and objectives. When activities share the same topic and learning objective, students will reinforce their learning through repetition and continued association with a familiar topic. For example, if the topic is “celebrations,” and the objective is to understand speech that is spoken at a certain rate, teachers can maintain the same topic and objective throughout several activities in one lesson. The following example includes a warm-up activity, a listening comprehension activity, controlled practice, and an open-ended listening/speaking activity.

1. Start with a warm-up question to the class, such as: “What’s your favorite celebration?” or “What’s the favorite celebration in this class?”

2. Then, introduce a listening comprehension activity in which two people have a conversation about their favorite celebration, and have students answer True or False questions based on the conversation.

3. Next, conduct a controlled practice activity, which could be a drill activity that models vocabulary or an important grammatical structure.

4. Finally, introduce an open-ended activity that allows students the freedom to practice listening comprehension and speaking, such as interviewing other members in the class about their favorite celebration and asking for further information.

In the above example, each activity builds on the preceding one using the same objective throughout. The idea is that communication and listening comprehension should expand the students' knowledge by maintaining a topic throughout consecutive activities and reinforcing the same learning objective.

### **3. Applying appropriate teaching methods and techniques**

When designing listening comprehension lessons, teachers should apply the following methods and techniques to make the lessons challenging, effective, and interesting to the students. Use a variety of activities. If a teacher always uses the same activities, they will become boring for students. It is important to vary activities to stimulate the students' interest and challenge them with something new. It is also important to consider activities that involve group work and problem solving and that instigate communication and listening comprehension development. A variation of the simple "Fill in the Missing Word" listening activity is to use the same listening materials but to combine pair work with an information-gap activity. For example, give student A and student B worksheets containing the lyrics to the same song, but make sure that each student has different pieces of missing information. Without showing their worksheets to each other, the two students take turns asking questions about the missing information, and the answers supplied by their partner will complete the lyrics to the song. Using this technique, students have to practice effective communication by accurately forming

the correct questions necessary to elicit the missing words from their partners. Finally, students can check their answers by listening to the song.

#### **4. Selecting materials for listening comprehension activities**

When selecting materials, it is important to decide how relevant they are to the learner's life and long-term learning goals. One way to determine this is to conduct a needs assessment of the learners: identify the students' interests, language learning strengths and weaknesses, and the real-life situations they are likely to encounter. Then set appropriate learning objectives. This way, the content of the didactic material will be relevant and will appeal to the students. This approach will go a long way towards maintaining students' interest and motivation levels.

Focus on the clear design and layout of materials the design and layout of the materials are another factor to consider when developing listening comprehension activities. Teachers should avoid including too many activities that may cause the learner to feel overwhelmed and unable to focus on each listening comprehension task. When designing listening comprehension materials, give clear instructions at the beginning of each activity and one or two examples of the expected response. This confirms the expected outcome by students and prevents feelings of confusion and frustration. If students misunderstand the expected response, they may give teachers the wrong impression of their listening comprehension ability.

- **Select materials appropriate for students' level**

When evaluating listening materials, carefully consider the level of difficulty and the language level of the students. The responses required should be appropriate for their level. For example, it would be unrealistic to use a listening activity in which beginning students listen to a conversation involving two friends discussing environmental problems and then expect the students to give their opinions on the environmental problems, based on the comments of the speakers in the listening activity. It would be more appropriate to give beginning students a listening activity that requires them to give a short answer that confirms information given in the listening activity or which asks them to directly transfer what they have heard in a

gap-fill activity. These activities are more appropriate to help beginning students develop their linguistic knowledge, thus avoiding the danger of overestimating their comprehension and language ability.

## 5. **Using authentic materials**

The use of authentic texts helps students to further develop their communicative skills (Porter and Roberts 1987; Brown 2001; Mangubhai 2002). When designing listening comprehension materials, the teacher should be aware that authentic materials give the learner the chance to develop skills that are needed in real-life situations. With the use of authentic listening materials, students learn to comprehend challenging language elements such as a natural rate of delivery and intonation, false starts, slang, reduced forms, abbreviations, and other characteristics of spoken language. This exposure helps students comprehend real-life, everyday language, make allowances for performance errors by other speakers, deal with interruptions, and so on. Some texts are limited in the amount of authentic listening activities they provide, especially for the lower levels. It is therefore important to take the opportunity, wherever possible, to help students become communicatively competent by exposing them to examples of how language is actually used. The use of authentic materials is beneficial for learners because the skills that are developed transfer beyond the classroom. Some examples are listening to a telephone message to understand a cancelled appointment, to a newscast to learn about current events, or to songs to relax and learn about the English lyrics and popular bands.

### 2.10. TIPS TO DEVELOP LISTENING

**Some tips to become a good listener are the following:**

- Give your full attention on the person who is speaking. Focus your sight on the person and avoid distracting yourself.
- Do not focus only your sight but also your mind. It can be easy to let your mind wander if you think you know what the person is going to say next.

- Do not interrupt the person you are speaking to. Doing so can give the impression that you are not listening, even if you really are.
- Concentrate your attention on the main ideas. The main ideas are the most important points the speaker wants to get across.
- Ask questions. If you are not sure you understand what the speaker has said, just ask for clarification.
- Use facial expressions to give feedback. For example, nodding, smiling, frowning, laughing, or being silent are good ways to show that you are really listening.
- Avoid emotional environment. When you are too emotionally involved in listening, you tend to hear what you want to hear- not what is actually being said. Try to remain objective and open- minded.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This part details about the methodology and the steps that allowed the research took place. Several aspects were taken into account at the moment of performing the research such as type of study, techniques used to gather and process of the relevant information, as well the instruments and the procedures to analyze the resulting data.

#### 3.1. Research approach: qualitative and quantitative

This research study adopted a quantitative and qualitative approach. First, it was qualitative because it dealt with teachers and students 'opinion of Basic English courses of Modern Language Major at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador. Second, it was also quantitative because the data collected through the questionnaires were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted to know the percentages concerning to each answer.

#### 3.2. Type of the study: Descriptive mixed- approach

This investigation is a descriptive study, according to Arriola et al. (2006), the purpose of the descriptive research is to examine a phenomenon that is occurring at a specific place and time. The descriptive research is concerned to describe the current existing characteristics such as conditions, practices, structures, and differences or relationships that exist, this study focus in the research of factors that affects students' listening comprehension in the Basic English Courses. So, this group considered that this type of study fits with the objectives set, and it was convenient for the topic developed.

Moreover, the author states that the descriptive research can be used in qualitative or quantitative approaches. In this research, the collection of data provided a description of the objects of study, groups or situations. The instruments

that were applied to obtain the data are questionnaires, observation checklists, and interviews.

### 3.3. Research design: non-experimental

This study is non-experimental because the researchers were not allowed to control, manipulate or modify the variables. The main purpose was to observe the phenomenon in their natural environment. Moreover, the information obtained in this research study was gathered from students who were experiencing the phenomenon. At the same time this study is also a cross-sectional design because researchers collected the data in a specific period of time.

### 3.4. Population and Sample

#### **Population:**

The study was carried out at the University of El Salvador in the Foreign Language Department; the population were all the students enrolled in the Basic English courses from the Modern Languages Major.

#### **Sample:**

The sample were three groups of Basic English Courses, each group is made up of approximately 30 students. But only thirteen students were the participants based on the following formula.

$$n = \frac{Z^2PQN}{Z^2PQ + E^2(N - 1)}$$

n= sample for each group

N= universe =30 students

P= success probability = 50%

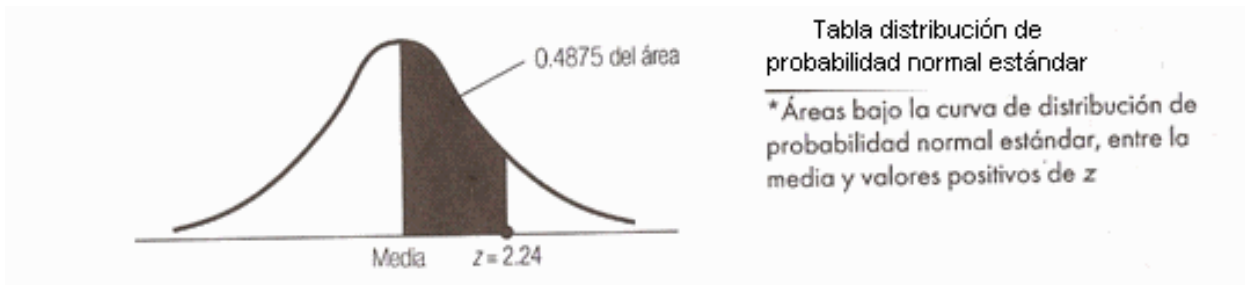
Q= failure probability =50%

Z= confidence level =85%

E= sample error = 15%

$$Z = \frac{0.85}{2} = 0.425$$

Verifying on deviation standar table



Z	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.07	0.08	0.09
0.00	0.5000	0.5040	0.5080	0.5120	0.5160	0.5199	0.5239	0.5279	0.5319	0.5359
0.10	0.5398	0.5438	0.5478	0.5517	0.5557	0.5596	0.5636	0.5675	0.5714	0.5753
0.20	0.5793	0.5832	0.5871	0.5910	0.5948	0.5987	0.6026	0.6064	0.6103	0.6141
0.30	0.6179	0.6217	0.6255	0.6293	0.6331	0.6368	0.6406	0.6443	0.6480	0.6517
0.40	0.6554	0.6591	0.6628	0.6664	0.6700	0.6736	0.6772	0.6808	0.6844	0.6879
0.50	0.6915	0.6950	0.6985	0.7019	0.7054	0.7088	0.7123	0.7157	0.7190	0.7224
0.60	0.7257	0.7291	0.7324	0.7357	0.7389	0.7422	0.7454	0.7486	0.7517	0.7549
0.70	0.7580	0.7611	0.7642	0.7673	0.7704	0.7734	0.7764	0.7794	0.7823	0.7852
0.80	0.7881	0.7910	0.7939	0.7967	0.7995	0.8023	0.8051	0.8078	0.8106	0.8133
0.90	0.8159	0.8186	0.8212	0.8238	0.8264	0.8289	0.8315	0.8340	0.8365	0.8389
1.00	0.8413	0.8438	0.8461	0.8485	0.8508	0.8531	0.8554	0.8577	0.8599	0.8621
1.10	0.8643	0.8665	0.8686	0.8708	0.8729	0.8749	0.8770	0.8790	0.8810	0.8830
1.20	0.8849	0.8869	0.8888	0.8907	0.8925	0.8944	0.8962	0.8980	0.8997	0.9015
1.30	0.9032	0.9049	0.9066	0.9082	0.9099	0.9115	0.9131	0.9147	0.9162	0.9177
1.40	0.9192	0.9207	0.9222	0.9236	0.9251	0.9265	0.9279	0.9292	0.9306	0.9319
1.50	0.9332	0.9345	0.9357	0.9370	0.9382	0.9394	0.9406	0.9418	0.9429	0.9441
1.60	0.9452	0.9463	0.9474	0.9484	0.9495	0.9505	0.9515	0.9525	0.9535	0.9545
1.70	0.9554	0.9564	0.9573	0.9582	0.9591	0.9599	0.9608	0.9616	0.9625	0.9633
1.80	0.9641	0.9649	0.9656	0.9664	0.9671	0.9678	0.9686	0.9693	0.9699	0.9706
1.90	0.9713	0.9719	0.9726	0.9732	0.9738	0.9744	0.9750	0.9756	0.9761	0.9767
2.00	0.9772	0.9778	0.9783	0.9788	0.9793	0.9798	0.9803	0.9808	0.9812	0.9817
2.10	0.9821	0.9826	0.9830	0.9834	0.9838	0.9842	0.9846	0.9850	0.9854	0.9857
2.20	0.9861	0.9864	0.9868	0.9871	0.9875	0.9878	0.9881	0.9884	0.9887	0.9890
2.30	0.9893	0.9896	0.9898	0.9901	0.9904	0.9906	0.9909	0.9911	0.9913	0.9916
2.40	0.9918	0.9920	0.9922	0.9925	0.9927	0.9929	0.9931	0.9932	0.9934	0.9936

$$0.425 \rightarrow Z = 1.44$$

$$n = \frac{1.44^2 * 0.5 * 0.5 * 30}{1.44^2 * 0.5 * 0.5 + 0.05^2 * (30 - 1)}$$

$$n = 13.2 \approx 13 \text{ students per group}$$

$$n_{total} = n * \text{groups}$$

$$n_{total} = 13 * 3 = 39$$



### 3.5. Research instruments:

To carry out this research study, three types of instruments were used with the purpose of getting the information that researchers needed to find out.

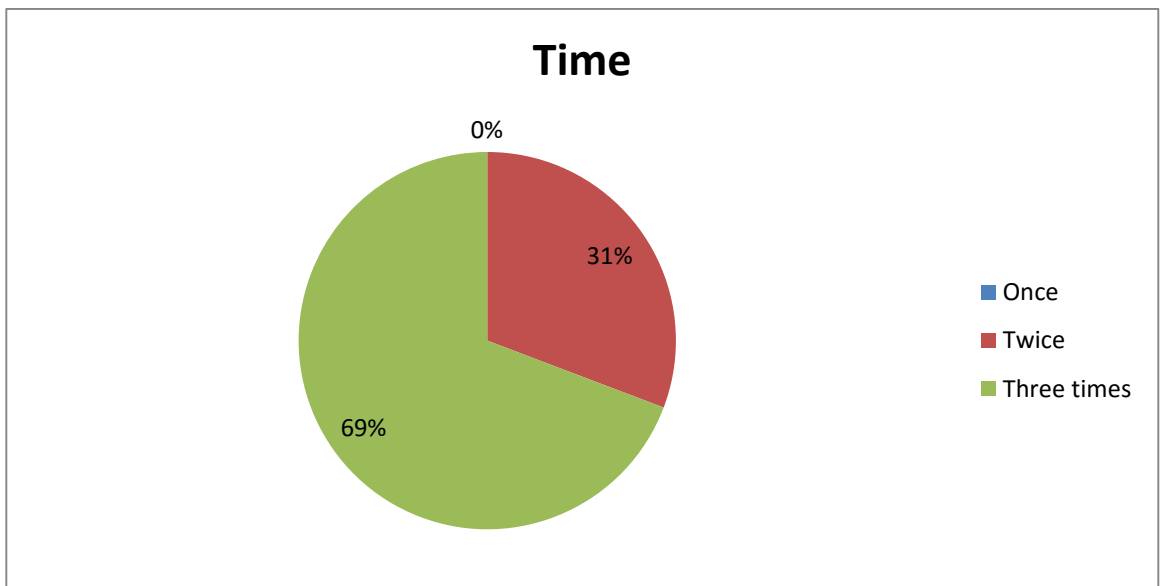
- ✓ **Non-participant Observation guide:** Researchers observed the Basic English classrooms in order to verify the factors that affect students' listening comprehension. The observation process was executed in a period of four weeks.
  
- ✓ **survey:** This was applied to the students in order to obtain their opinion about the factors that affected their listening comprehension, the questionnaire contained 10 open-ended questions and it took 15 minutes to complete it.
  
- ✓ **Interview:** This was applied to the teachers to know, based on their studies and experiences, what were the factors that affected students' listening comprehension.
  
- ✓ **Setting:** This research study took place in the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador.

## 4. DATA ANALYSIS

### 4.1. ANALYSIS OF SURVEY

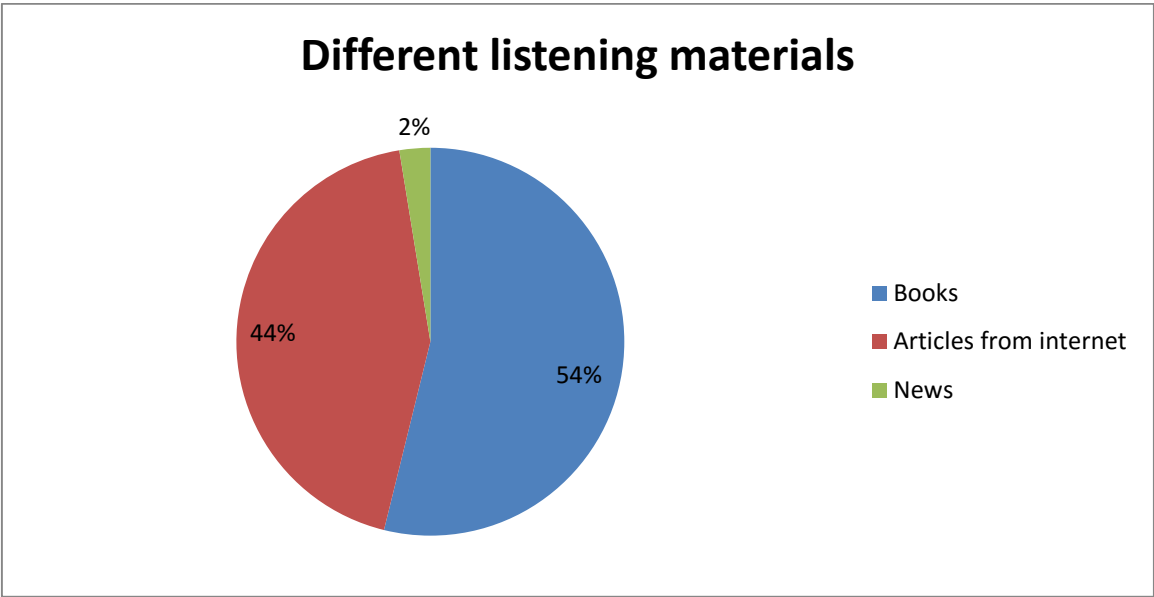
The research team passed a survey to three groups of Basic English courses of the Modern Language major. Thirteen students per group were taken into account to find out the different points of view from students regarding the factors that affected them in the listening comprehension area.

#### 1- How many times does the teacher play the same recording audio on a listening activity?



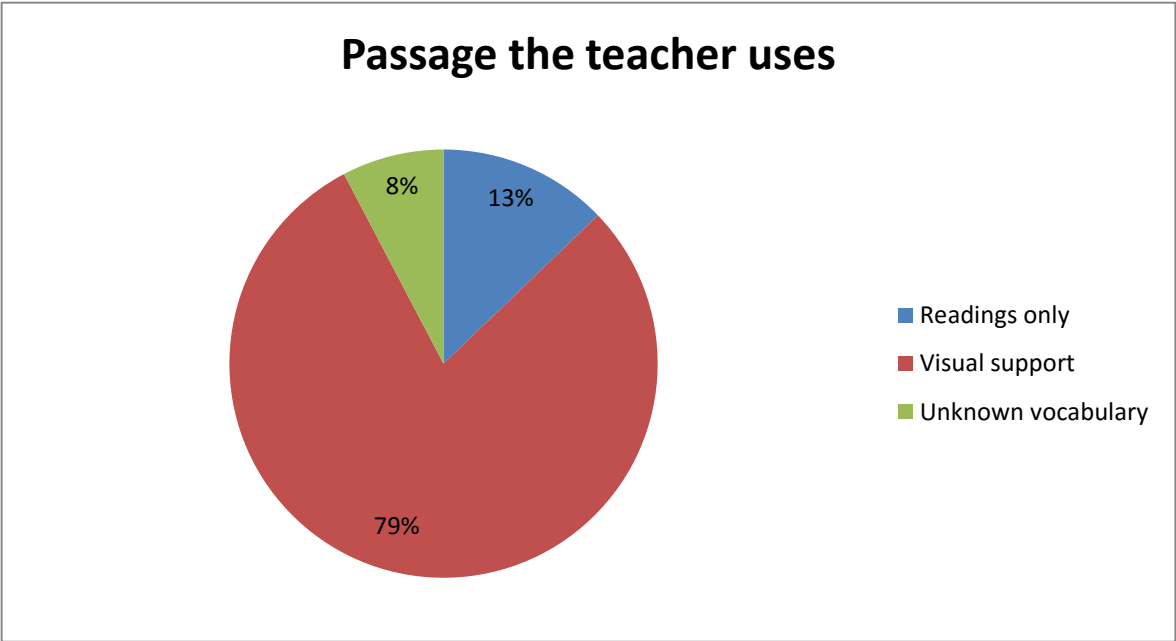
The research team found out that most of the teachers play the same recording audio three times with 69% and some of them play it twice with 31%.

#### 2- Does the teacher use different listening material rather than the listening material that is on the text book?



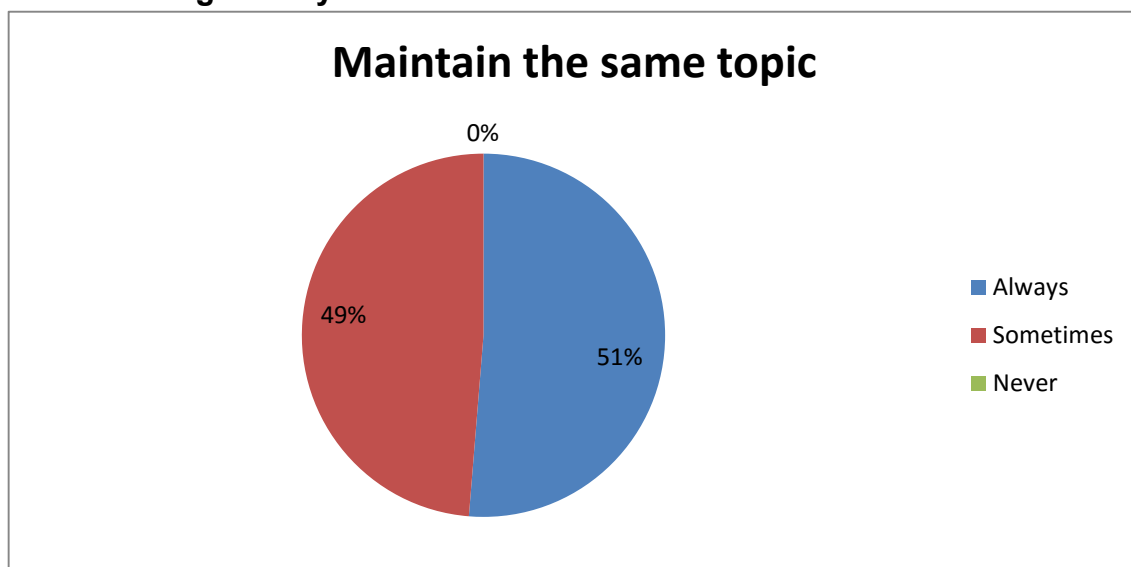
The research group found out that the 54% of the students said that teachers used the book only, while the 44% used articles from the internet and the 2% used material taken from the news.

**3- What type of passage does the teacher use the most on a listening activity?**



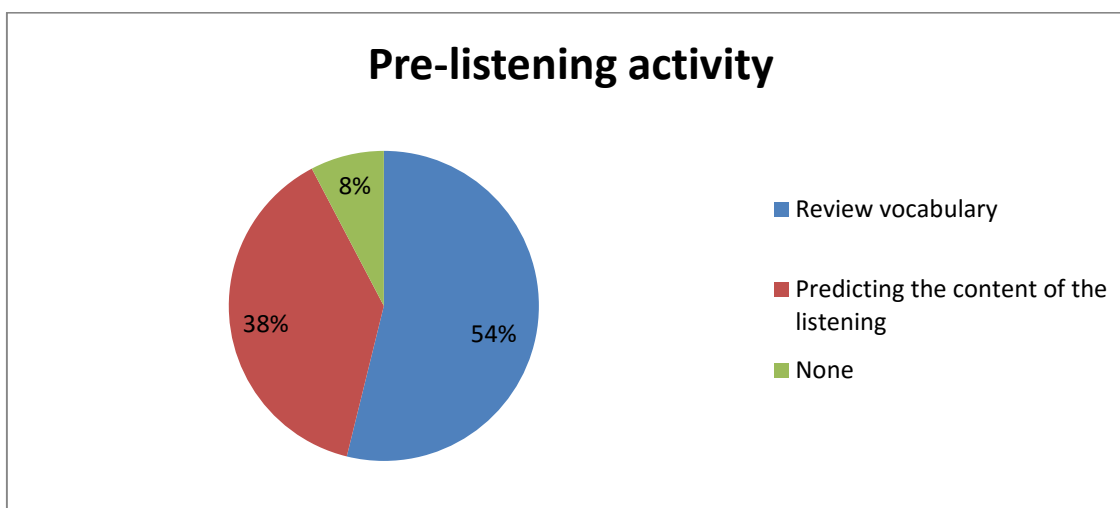
The majority of students said that the most common passage used by a teacher was visual support with 79%. Then the 13% used reading only and the 8% used unknown vocabulary.

4- Does the teacher maintain the same topic from the beginning to the end on a listening activity?



Most of the students said that the teacher always maintained the same topic from the beginning to the end on a listening activity with 51%. And the 49% said that the teacher sometimes maintain the same topic.

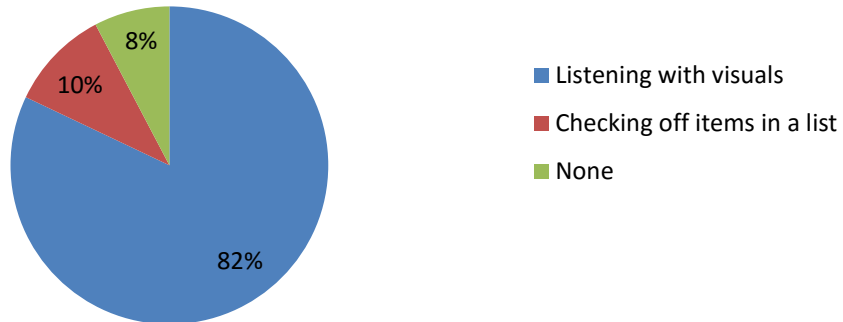
The three different stages of listening are: pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening. What kind of activity does the teacher apply in the pre-listening stage on a listening activity?



The 54% of students said that review vocabulary was the most applied in the pre-listening stage. Then, predicting the content of the listening with 38%. Finally, the 8% said that no activity was applied.

5- What kind of activity does the teacher apply on the while listening stage on a listening activity?

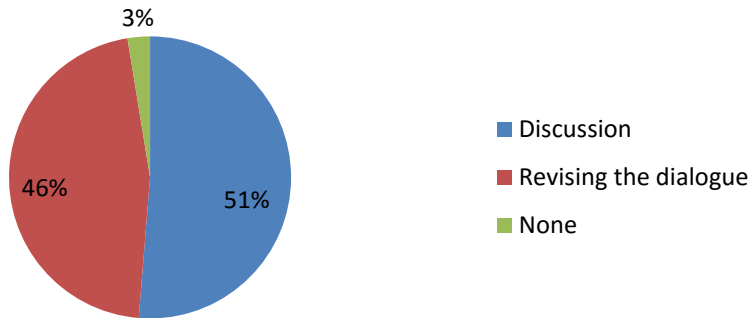
### While listening activity



The research team noticed that listening with visuals was the most applied activity, while listening stage with 82%. Then, checking off in a list with 10%. Finally, the 8% said that no activity was applied.

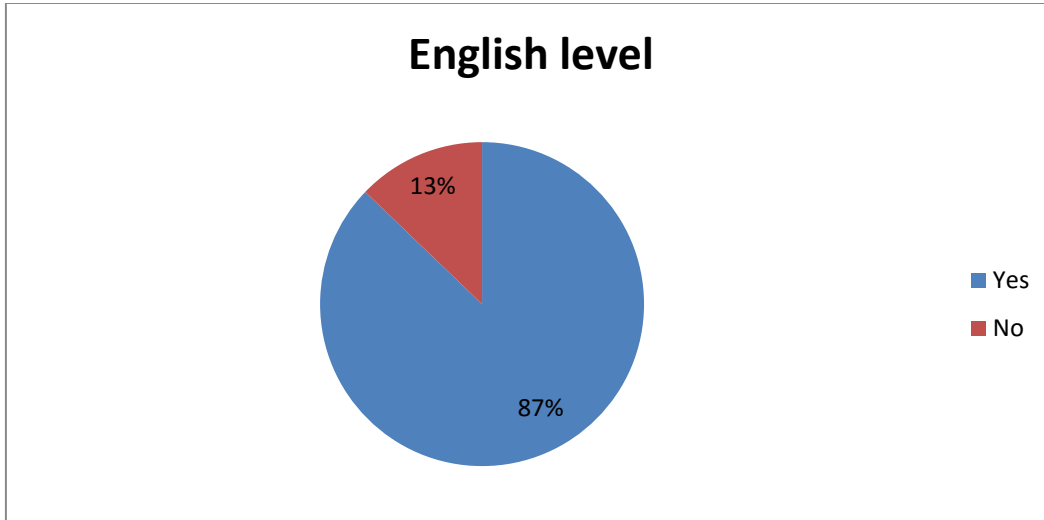
### 6- What kind of activity does the teacher apply on the post-listening stage on a listening activity?

### Post-listening activity



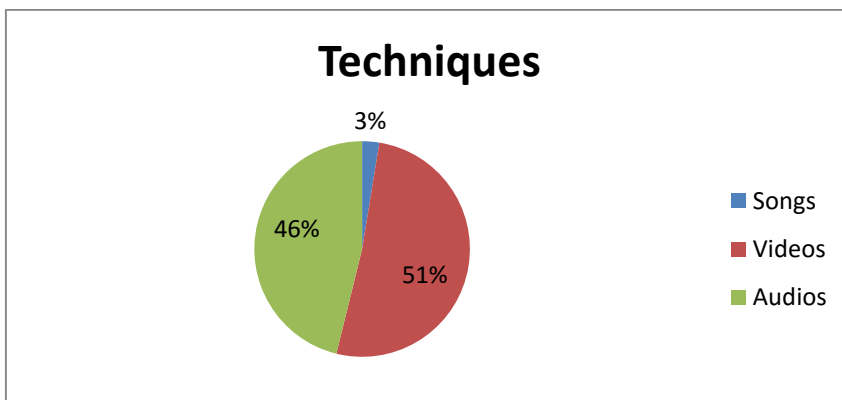
The 51% of students said that on the post-listening stage the most common activity applied was discussion, the 46% said that revising the dialogue is another activity applied. Finally, the 3% said that no activity is applied.

**7- Does the teacher use recording materials according to the English level he/she teaches?**



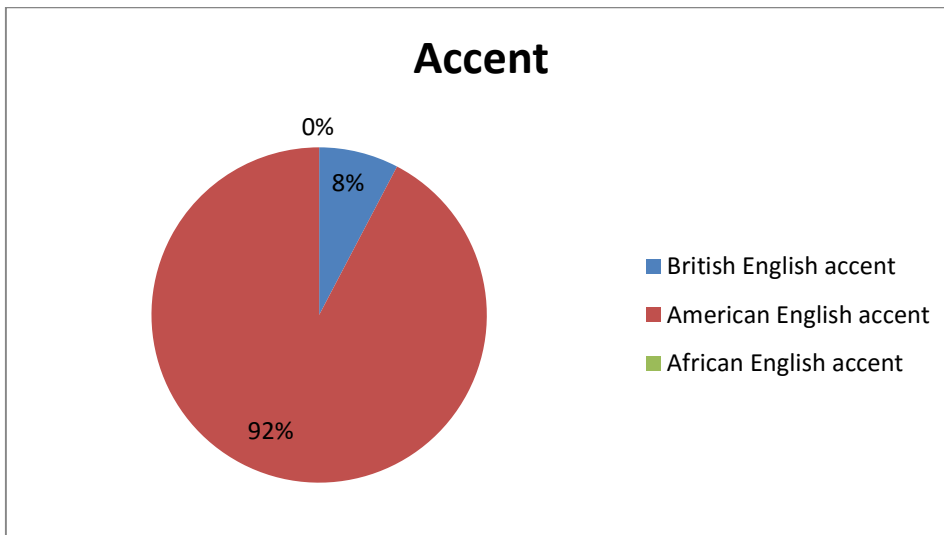
The research team found out that the teachers used recording materials according to the English students' level need with the 87%, the 13% did not use recording material according to students' level.

**8- What kind of techniques does the teacher use the most when teaching listening?**



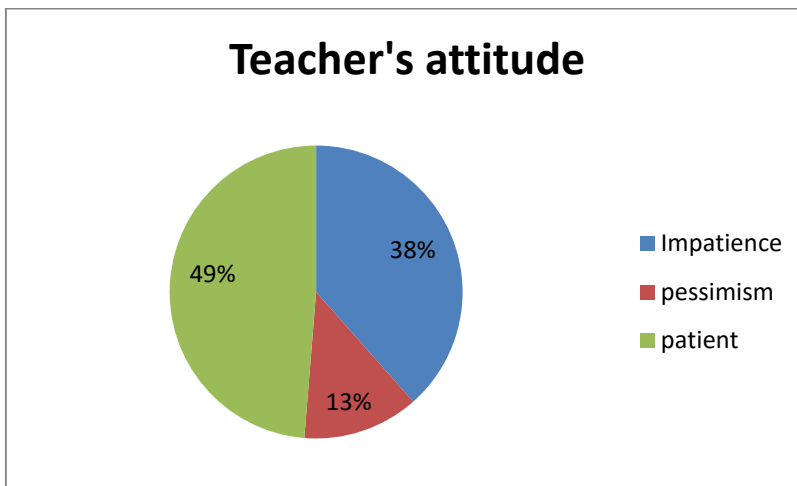
According to the results, the techniques that teachers used the most while teaching listening were *videos* with 51%. *Audios* with 46%. *Songs* with 3%.

**9- What is the accent that the teacher uses the most on a listening activity?**



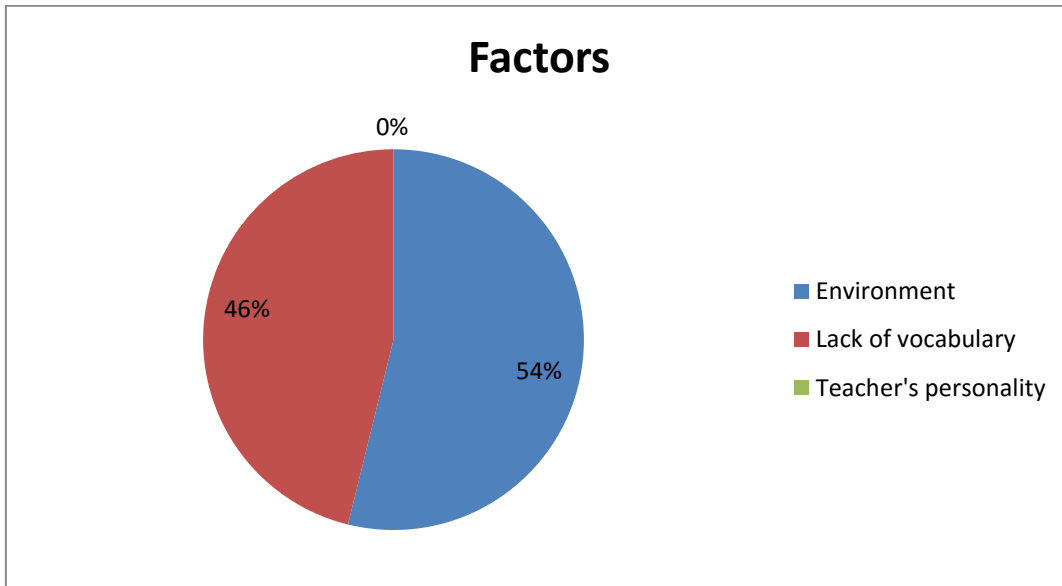
Students considered that the main accent used on a listening activity was American English accent with 92%. Then, British English accent with 8%

**What is the attitude that the teacher shows when you don't understand a listening?**



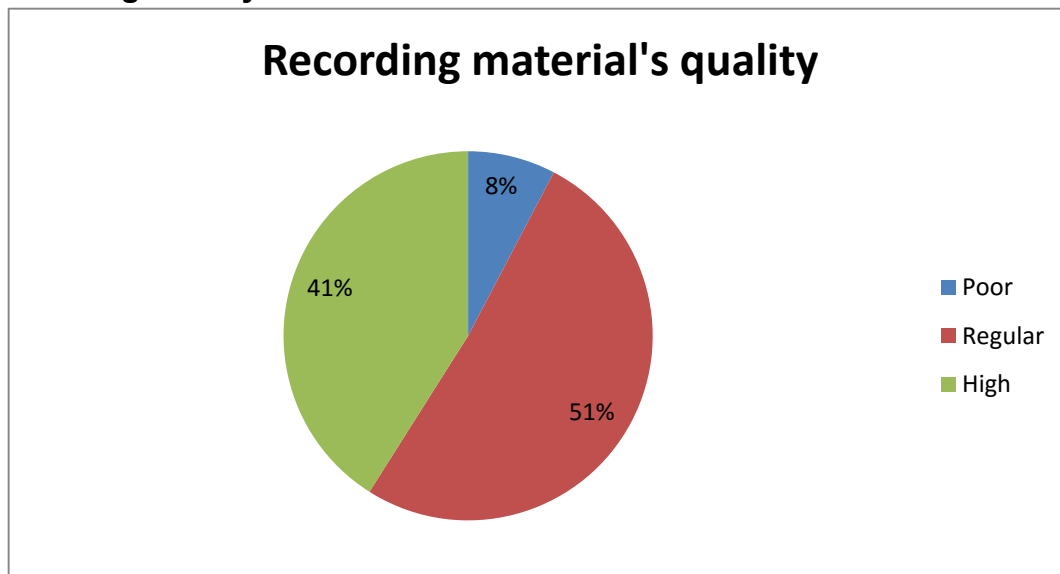
Population agreed that the attitude a teacher showed when students do not understand a listening activity, is patient with 49%. However, impatience had a percentage of 38%. The same percentage of the population chose the pessimism attitude with 13%.

**10-Which of the following factors affect the most your listening comprehension?**



In this question the 54% of students answered environment is the factor that affected the most on their listening comprehension. Another factor was lack of vocabulary with 46%.

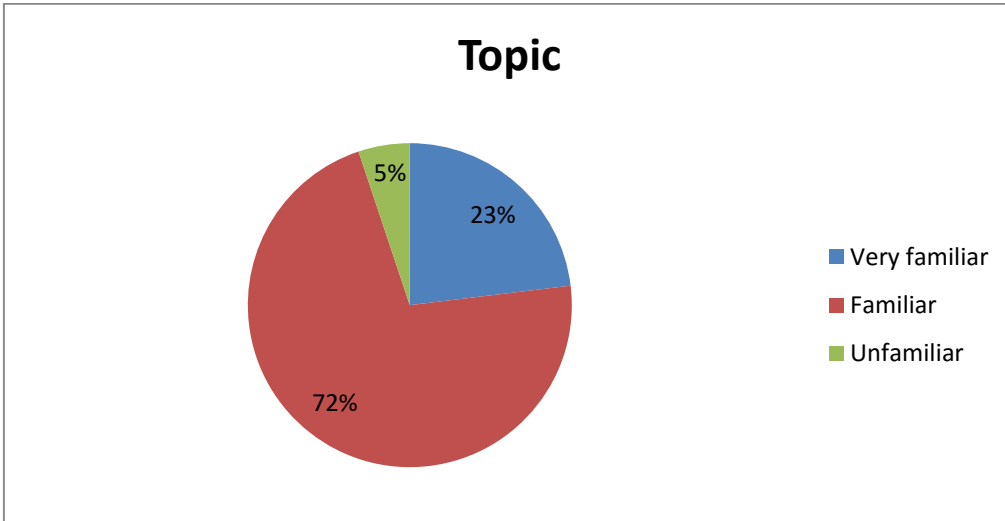
**11-How is the quality of the recording material that the teacher uses on a listening activity?**



The 51% of students agreed that the quality of recording material was regular. On the contrary, the 41% of students said that is high. The 8% said that it is poor.

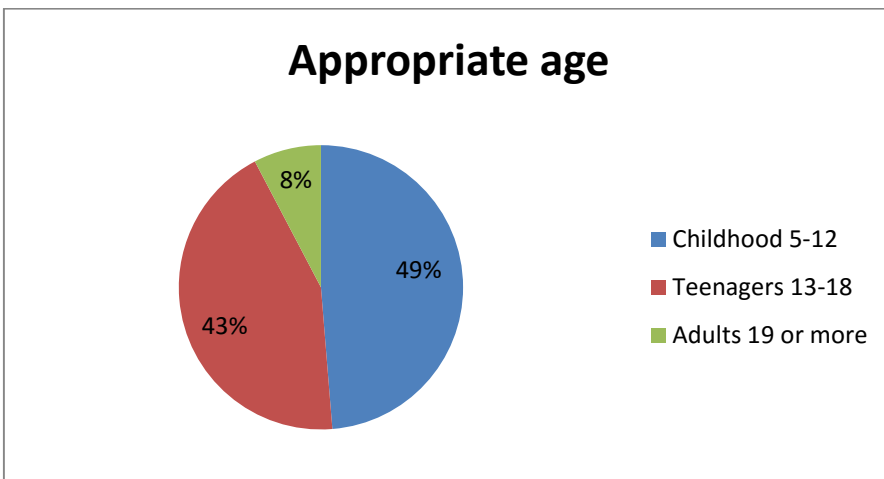
**12-How familiar do you feel with the topic on a listening activity?**





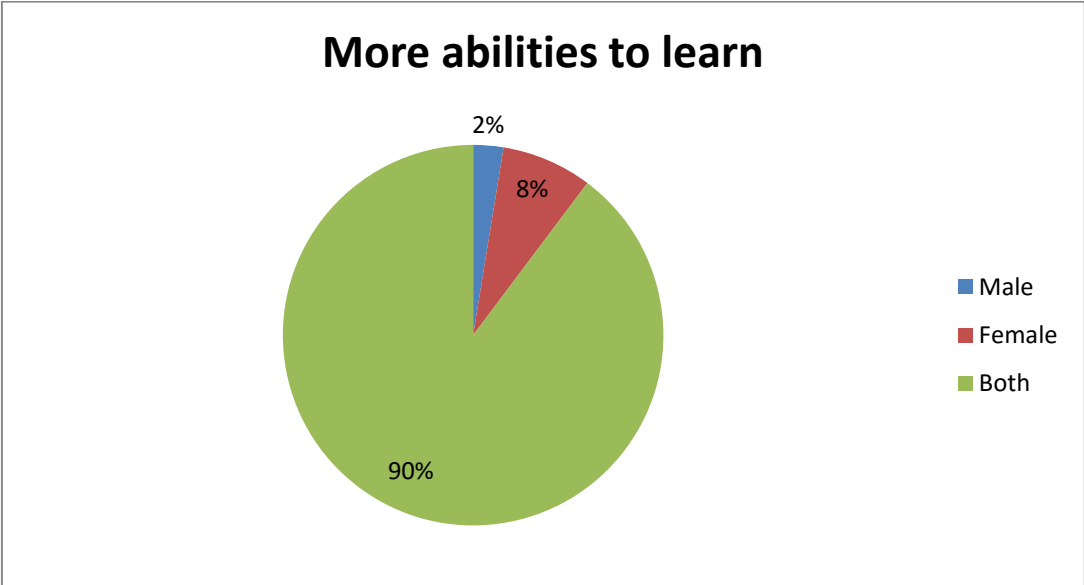
The 72% of population said that they felt familiar with the topic on a listening activity. While the 23% felt very familiar and the 5% said that they felt unfamiliar with the topic.

**13-In your opinion, what is the appropriate age range to study a foreign language?**



The 49% students considered that childhood was the appropriate age range to study a foreign language. Then, teenagers with 43%. Adults is considered the less appropriate age range to study a foreign language with the 8%.

**14-In your opinion, who has more abilities to learn a foreign language?**



The 90% of students agreed that both (male and female) are able to learn a foreign language. On the contrary the 8% said that female had more abilities to learn a foreign language. And the 2% said that male had more abilities to learn it.

## 4.2. ANALYSIS TEACHER'S INTERVIEW

With the purpose of knowing how concerned the teachers were about the factors that affected the listening comprehension of their students, the researchers made an interview to the three teachers taken in the sample of this research study, here are their answers about the questions the investigators made them.

<b>1. How many times do you consider it is appropriate to play the same audio on an English listening activity?</b>		
Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Three times	Twice	Three times
conclusion		
According to the teachers the most appropriate was playing the audio three times, because first, they introduce the vocabulary, then the students answer the questions, and finally as a group they check the answers. Although in the real life we hear just once according to one teacher.		
<b>2. Besides the listening material that is in the book, do you use a different listening material from Internet for example?</b>		
Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
No	Yes	Yes
conclusion		
Two of the teachers used pages such as <a href="http://www.britishcouncil.org">www.britishcouncil.org</a> . The activities were according to the levels of the students, also, they used videos taken from youtube.com, on the contrary, one of the three teacher did not use any extra material because she stated that she did not have enough time to look for it.		
<b>3. What type of passage do you use the most on a listening activity?</b>		
Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
• conversations	• conversations	• passage with visual support. • conversations
conclusion		
The three of them used conversations, one of the teachers mentioned that visual support		

was very important, in that way the students can understand better the context in which the speakers were talking.

**4. What is the process that you follow to maintain the same topic from the beginning to the end on a listening activity?**

Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Introduce the topic	Introduce the topic	Pre-listening
Teach vocabulary	Show pictures	While-listening
Play the audio	Post activity	Post-listening
Check the answers		

Conclusion

All teachers used the stages of a listening activity to avoid confusion on students with the topic of the activity.

**5. Do you apply the three different stages of listening (Pre-listening, while listening and post listening) when playing an audio? Could one of these stages be skipped during a listening activity?**

Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
No	Yes	No

Conclusion

Two of the teachers agreed that these stages cannot be skipped during a listening activity because they helped students to become better listeners, on the other hand, one of the teachers said that the stages can be skipped.

**6. What are the aspects that you consider at the moment to select a listening activity for your students?**

Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Listening for specific information	Level	Level
Understanding the main idea	Multiple intelligences vocabulary	Vocabulary

conclusion

As we were able to see, the teachers varied the aspects that they took into account at the moment of selecting a listening activity because they had to engage with the needs of their students.

**7. Which are the techniques that you use when teaching listening?**

Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Lead-in Read the answers Play the audio Check vocabulary	Brainstorming	Check vocabulary Play the audio

conclusion

The teachers used different techniques the ones they considered were better for their students.

**8. Do you consider it is important for students to listen the different English accents when learning English?**

Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Yes	Yes	Yes

conclusion

All teachers agreed that it was important to expose to the students to the different accents because there are varieties of the language and it can help students to understand better the language.

**9. How do you feel when students don't understand a listening?**

Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Concerned	Normal	worried

conclusion

Teachers expressed different opinions, they said that sometimes students did not understand the listening activities because of the stress that they were having at the moment of the listening activity.

**10. In your opinion, what is the factor that affects the most the listening**

<b>comprehension of your students?</b>		
Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
anxiety	Lack of practice	Lack of vocabulary
Conclusion		
These factors were the ones that affected the most to the students at the moment of listening activity.		
<b>11. Do you think the listening material that is on the text book has a high quality for students to improve this skill?</b>		
Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Yes	Yes	Yes
conclusion		
The three of them considered that the quality was excellent because the materials were according to the English level of the students.		
<b>12. What is the process that you follow to make students familiar with the topic before a listening activity?</b>		
Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Guessing the meaning Using clues in the text Making inferences Selecting key information	Vocabulary Questions about the topic	Making inferences Check vocabulary
conclusion		
All teachers considered these steps helped them because the students do not get confused about the topic in the listening activity.		
<b>13. Have you ever been affected by having students from different ages on a Basic English course? In which aspects?</b>		
Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Yes	No	No
conclusion		
The three of them agreed that it was so difficult to work with students from different ages because what seems to be interesting for a teenager could be boring for an adult. They		

recommended to work in separate groups according to their ages.

**14. Do you think gender is a factor that interferes on student's listening comprehension when learning a foreign language?**

Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
No	No	No

conclusion

Teachers agreed that everybody can learn a foreign language, it depends on the strategies and techniques they use to improve the any skill.

**15. Do you think that the techniques that you apply when teaching listening are helpful for your students to improve this skill?**

Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Yes	Yes	Yes

conclusion

Teachers said that their techniques help the students but also they said that they try to motivate their students to look for more techniques and strategies that can help them in learning a Foreign Language.

### 4.3. ANALYSIS OF THE OBSERVATION

As it was stated in the objectives of this research study, the researchers had to identify the internal and external factors that affected on students' listening comprehension in the Basic English courses. The following non-participant observation guide, helped the researchers to find out which were the factors that affect on student's listening comprehension while developing a listening activity.

#### **1. The teacher plays the audio more than once on a listening activity.**

Two of the three teachers played the audio three times, the other teacher played the audio just once.

#### **2. The teacher uses different resources on a listening material, he/she does not use the listening material on the text book only.**

The three teachers used the listening material that was on the text book only, however, these activities were supported by images taken from Internet and unknown vocabulary by two of the three teachers.

#### **3. The teacher uses different kind of passages such as visual support, readings and unknown vocabulary on the listening activity.**

One of the teachers used images that she got from Internet, the second teacher used unknown vocabulary before the listening activity , this unknown vocabulary was developed during the listening activity and the last teacher used the material that was on the book only.

#### **4. The teacher maintains the same topic from the beginning to the end on the listening activity.**

One of the teachers maintained the same topic from the very beginning to the end on the listening activity, the topic was about daily routine and the listening activity was about the daily routine of a person as well. The second teacher played an audio about numbers but actually the general topic was about pollution. The same



issue happened with the third teacher, the main topic was about traditions and the listening activity was about natural resources.

**5. The teacher applies the three different stages of listening (pre-listening, while listening and post-listening) on the listening activity.**

Only one of the teachers applied the three different stages of listening, the other two teachers, did not applied the three different stages of listening, given that the topics of the listening activities were completely different from the main topic.

**6. The teacher uses recording materials according to the English level he/she teaches.**

The three teachers used recording materials according to the English level he/she taught.

**7. The teacher uses different techniques when teaching listening.**

One of the teachers applied visual support, the second teacher used vocabulary and the third teacher used the material that was on the book only.

**8. The teacher shows the variety of English accents that exist around the world on the listening activity.**

The audio that the three teachers used on their listening activities contained American accent only, there was not a variety of English accents on the listening exercises.

**9. The teachers get frustrated when the students don't understand a listening.**

The three teachers were able to manage the activity even though if there were some student's that did not understand all the words of the listening activity.

**10. The external factors such as environment, teachers personality and accents are the ones that affects the most on student's listening comprehension.**

These factors are not the ones that affect the most on student's listening comprehension.

**11. The recording material that the teacher uses on the listening activity have a high quality.**

The recording materials that the three teachers used had a high quality, the speeches were clear.

**12. The teacher perform some activities to make student familiar about the topic he/she is teaching before performing a listening activity.**

One of the teacher performed an activity to make student's familiar with the topic of the listening before the listening activity, the other two teachers just performed the listening activity without making student's familiar with the topic of the listening activity.

**13. The techniques that the teacher uses on a listening activity are helpful to improve this skill.**

The techniques that the teachers used on the listening activities are helpful to their students to improve their listening skill.

#### 4.4. SUBSIDIARY QUESTIONS

**1- Are listening activities an efficient technique in Basic English courses to improve listening comprehension?**

According to the research listening activities are really efficient given that there are many listening activities for example: pre- listening, while listening and post-listening. This helps students to better understand the listening comprehension. Moreover, students improve their listening with techniques as audios, videos and songs.

**2- Is a student's background knowledge a factor that affects listening comprehension?**

In accordance with the investigation a student's background knowledge may be a factor that affects listening comprehension. That's why some teachers use techniques like listening a song, because songs are the procedure more adequate or easy to use by many teachers, also students prefer to listen songs when they develop their listening skill because they learn vocabulary while they sing. The rhythm of songs helps students to remember vocabulary because these are in their mind.

**3- Is the manner in which the teacher speaks a factor that affects on the student's listening comprehension?**

Through this reaserch, the invertigators could confirm that the manner in which the teacher speaks is a factor that affects on students' listening comprehension given that each teacher had a different way to speak, a different way to explain a topic and a different accent as well. So, the students got used to hear just the accent of

the teacher, as a result, the students were not able to understand every word on a listening activity.

#### **4- What are the most common troubles that students face at the moment when learning English listening skill?**

According to the research, the common troubles that students face at the moment when learning English listening skill were:

- There was a lack of vocabulary on the students.
- There environment of the class (Noise, lack of desks).
- The techniques that the teachers applied on the listening activities.

#### **5- What are the strategies students apply in a listening activity?**

Based on the data collected from the students' opinions they mentioned that the strategies they use the most is look for the main idea to know what is topic of the listening activity, also if the passage contains visual support, they guess what about the conversation is related.

#### **6- Do students have enough resources provided by the teacher on a listening activity?**

As the researcher could appreciate through the observation part, teachers most of the time just work with the book, they do not use an extra material that can help to improve the listening skill of their students, so students at the FLD do not count with enough resources that can help them to acquire new and valuable knowledge.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1. CONCLUSIONS

- Based on the final results obtained in this research project, it can be concluded that listening is one important skill when learning a foreign language because this is a process that requires a lot attention and if students do not have the care of being fostering this skill the results can be not so pleasant so what researchers conclude through the results of this research project is that:
- The researchers found out that the techniques, the strategies and the methodologies that teachers applied when teaching listening skill were helpful for the students, however, they need to be improved.
- The investigators discovered that the listening material that the observed teachers used on the listening activities was adequate for the Basic English level, given that the recording materials were clear, the vocabulary used was understandable, the chosen material was authentic.
- The investigators found out that the internal factors such as motivation and lack of vocabulary, affected the most on students' listening comprehension.

## 5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the study carried out in the Basic English courses at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador, the researchers were able to make some suggestions that may have a positive impact on EFL learners. Some recommendations for helping students to improve their listening performance are outlined below:

- Suggest the coordinator of the FLD to create listening clubs in which students from Basic English level have the opportunity to practice their listening skill.
- The FLD should be in contact with different associations or entities that have native speakers, but not only natives from the USA, but also from other countries where English is spoken as well, so the students listen the language expressed with naturalness, so they get used to different accents rhythms and styles.
- Encourage teachers to use different kind of passages such as visual support, readings and unknown vocabulary on each listening activity.
- Encourage students from social service to create listening clubs in which students from basic levels have the opportunity to practice their listening skill.

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# **7. ANNEXES**

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT**



**Undergraduate Research:**

FACTORS THAT AFFECT STUDENTS' LISTENING COMPREHENSION  
FROM THE MODERN LANGUAGES MAJOR IN THE BASIC ENGLISH  
COURSES IN THE SEMESTER I FROM THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR.

**To obtain the degree of:**

Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas: Especialidad en Francés e Inglés

**L10412**

**Presented by:**

Karla Irene Lemus Portillo	LP10013
Katia Yanira López Fabián	LF10005
Cindy Carolina Méndez Alas	MA10035

**Advisor:**

LIC. JUAN CARLOS CRUZ

CIUDAD UNIVERSITARIA, JUNE 06TH, 2017

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Listening is the capacity of listening and understanding what we hear at the same time, Nunan (1997). It means that listening is one of the most important skills when learning a foreign language in order not to misunderstand the message; therefore, listening helps to improve new vocabulary, to get the correct accent and sound. However, beginners who learn a foreign language face with many problematic factors that do not allow them to obtain good listening skill. This is the reason why this research work Will be carried out.

The following study contains a wide description of the factors that affect students' listening comprehension from the Modern Languages Major in the Basic English courses, the study will be carried out at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

For this study a mix approach will be adopted qualitative and quantitative and a descriptive type of the study will be applied. The sample for this research project will be six groups of Basic English I students; moreover, three types of instruments will be used which are: survey, interview and nonparticipant observation guide.

Lastly, the findings of this research project will be used as an important source to generate some recommendations that will help students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador to improve their performance in listening skill.

## **II. RESEARCH TOPIC**

## **2.1. TOPIC**

Factors that affect students' listening comprehension from the Modern Languages Major in the Basic English courses in the semester I, from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

## **2.2. DELIMITATION**

This research study will be developed with the aim of identify the factors that affect students' listening comprehension. This descriptive study will be carried out at the University of El Salvador, in the Foreign Language Department, the data will be gathered from six groups of Basic English.

## **2.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Learning a second language may result a difficult task especially if students have never been used to listen another language aside their native tongue. Acquiring a new language may imply learning four different important areas: speaking, writing, reading and listening. Listening and reading are known as 'receptive' skills while speaking and writing are known as 'productive' skills. Students will need to master these skills whether they learn English, or any other language. However, the area that requires more attention is listening, given that listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. Listening involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary and grasping meaning. Therefore, effective listening comprehension in classrooms is more than hearing. Usually in classrooms there are some elements that may have a negative impact in the listening comprehension. Having an awareness of the factors that affect listening comprehension helps teachers better address to the needs of their students. It is important to discover which are the factors that may interfere with the listening understanding in students because it is evident that if students encounter some difficulties at the moment of comprehension it is because there exists causes that enable them to understand. Consequently, it is essential to identify the problem that students are having

regarding listening comprehension, and for that reason the research group decided to carry out this study and throughout the project this question is answered: Which are the factors that affect student's listening comprehension?

#### **2.4. SUBSIDIARY QUESTIONS**

- Are listening activities an efficient technique in Basic English courses to improve listening comprehension?
- Is a student's background knowledge a factor that affects listening comprehension?
- Is the manner in which the teacher speaks a factor that affects on the student's listening comprehension?
- What are the most common troubles that students face at the moment when learning English listening skill?
- What are the strategies students apply in a listening activity?
- Do students have enough resources provided by the teacher on a listening activity?



# **III. SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT**

## **ABSTRACT**

Throughout this research study, the researchers will prove the need to improve the factors that affect students' listening comprehension.

This investigation project is formed by seven sections:

The first, is the Research project and includes a Description of the Problematic Situation, and a delimitation of the problem.

The second, are the objectives, it includes general and specific objectives that will guide this research study.

The third part, is about the justification in which the researchers explain the reason of this investigation project.

The section fourth, contains the methodology of the investigation, which describes the Population and Sample for this investigation as well as the description of the instruments that will be used to gather the information.

The fifth part, is about the expected results that the researchers are looking for in order to improve it.

The sixth part, contains the resources that will be used in order to carry out this research study

Finally, the seventh section, contains the timetable which establishes the order in which the activities will take place.

# **IV. OBJECTIVES**

#### **4.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVES**

- To identify the factors that affect students' listening comprehension from the Modern Languages major in the Basic English courses in the semester I from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.
- To explain the factors that affect students' listening comprehension from the Modern Languages major in the Basic English courses in the semester I from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

#### **4.2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

- ✚ To list the different efficient techniques, strategies and methodologies that teachers use when teaching listening comprehension skill on Basic English courses.
- ✚ To describe the authenticity of the material that teachers use when teaching listening comprehension skill on Basic English courses.
- ✚ To outline the most common difficulties students, face when learning listening skill.
- ✚ To analyze how the external factors such as speaker accent, environmental noise, type of passage, authenticity, quality of recording material and teaching strategies affect student's listening comprehension.
- ✚ To verify how the internal factors such as age, gender, aptitude, and motivation affect on student's listening comprehension.
- ✚ To demonstrate the possible solutions to improve listening skill for Basic English courses in the semester I from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

## VI. JUSTIFICATION

The purpose of this research project is to find out the factors that might interfere with students of Modern Language major in getting a good listening comprehension on English audios. This research is carried out to discover the main problems students have to understand an audio at the moment of listening.

It is important to define the concept of listening and everything that involves a good listening comprehension since in that way students will be conscious at the moment of speaking, consequently this will help them to enhance the listening skills too.

According to Howat and Dakin (1974) listening is “the ability to identify and understand what others are saying, this involves understanding a speaker’s accent or pronunciation, his grammar and vocabulary and grasping his meaning”. Based on the previous definition listening is not just hearing what other people say, listening is a very active process, in which the listener is paying attention to the words and the message the person is transmitting. In this point is when challenges may affect with the effective listening to a foreign, here emerges this research.

In brief, this research will help us to understand the main problems and the reasons why listening comprehension as a foreign language becomes difficult, in addition, not only the problems will be taken in considerations but also the strategies that teachers and students must follow to improve the listening skill.

As a summary, this research project not only will inform students about the factors that affect their listening comprehension, but also the findings gathered through this research study will be used as a basis to propose some recommendations that will help students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador to improve their performance in listening skill.

# **VI. METHODOLOGY**

## **VII. METHODOLOGY**

This part details about the methodology and the steps that will allow the research to take place. Several aspects will be taken into account at the moment of performing the research such as type of study, techniques used to gather and process of the relevant information, as well the instruments and the procedures to analyze the resulting data.

### **7.1. Research approach: qualitative and quantitative**

This research study adopted a quantitative and qualitative approach. First, it will be qualitative because it will deal with teachers and students 'opinion of Basic English courses of Modern Language Major at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador. Second, it is also quantitative because the data collected through the questionnaires will be tabulated, analyzed and interpreted to know the percentages concerning to each answer.

### **7.2. Type of the study: Descriptive mixed- approach**

This investigation is a descriptive study, according to Arriola et al. (2006), the purpose of the descriptive research is to examine a phenomenon that is occurring at a specific place and time. The descriptive research is concerned to describe the current existing characteristics such as conditions, practices, structures, and differences or relationships that exist, this study focus in the research of factors that affects students' listening comprehension in the Basic English Courses. So, this group considered that this type of study fits with the objectives set, and it was convenient for the topic developed.

Moreover, the author states that the descriptive research can be used in qualitative or quantitative approaches. In this research, the collection of data will provide a description of the objects of study, groups or situations. The instruments

that will be applied to obtain the data are questionnaires, observation checklists, and interviews.

### **7.3. Research design: non-experimental**

This study is non-experimental because the researchers are not allowed to control, manipulate or modify the variables. The main purpose is to observe the phenomenon in their natural environment. Moreover, the information obtained in this research study will be gathered from students who are experiencing the phenomenon. At the same time this study is also a cross-sectional design because researchers collected the data in a specific period of time.

### **7.4. Population and Sample**

#### **Population:**

The study will be carried out at the University of El Salvador in the Foreign Language Department; the population will be all the students enrolled in the Basic English courses from the Modern Languages Major.

#### **Sample:**

The sample will be six groups of Basic English Courses, each group is made up of approximately 30 students. But only thirteen students will be the participants based on the following formula.

$$n = \frac{Z^2PQN}{Z^2PQ + E^2(N - 1)}$$

n= sample for each group

N= universe =30 students

P= success probability = 50%

Q= failure probability =50%

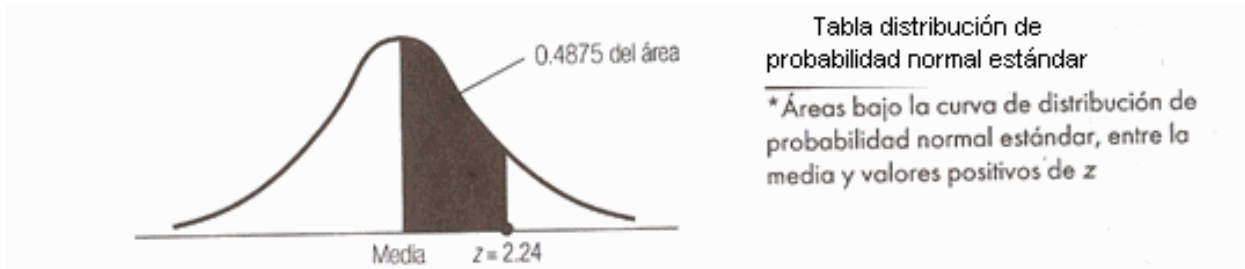
Z= confidence level =85%

E= sample error = 15%



$$Z = \frac{0.85}{2} = 0.425$$

Verifying on deviation standar table



Z	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.07	0.08	0.09
0.00	0.5000	0.5040	0.5080	0.5120	0.5160	0.5199	0.5239	0.5279	0.5319	0.5359
0.10	0.5398	0.5438	0.5478	0.5517	0.5557	0.5596	0.5636	0.5675	0.5714	0.5753
0.20	0.5793	0.5832	0.5871	0.5910	0.5948	0.5987	0.6026	0.6064	0.6103	0.6141
0.30	0.6179	0.6217	0.6255	0.6293	0.6331	0.6368	0.6406	0.6443	0.6480	0.6517
0.40	0.6554	0.6591	0.6628	0.6664	0.6700	0.6736	0.6772	0.6808	0.6844	0.6879
0.50	0.6915	0.6950	0.6985	0.7019	0.7054	0.7088	0.7123	0.7157	0.7190	0.7224
0.60	0.7257	0.7291	0.7324	0.7357	0.7389	0.7422	0.7454	0.7486	0.7517	0.7549
0.70	0.7580	0.7611	0.7642	0.7673	0.7704	0.7734	0.7764	0.7794	0.7823	0.7852
0.80	0.7881	0.7910	0.7939	0.7967	0.7995	0.8023	0.8051	0.8078	0.8106	0.8133
0.90	0.8159	0.8186	0.8212	0.8238	0.8264	0.8289	0.8315	0.8340	0.8365	0.8389
1.00	0.8413	0.8438	0.8461	0.8485	0.8508	0.8531	0.8554	0.8577	0.8599	0.8621
1.10	0.8643	0.8665	0.8686	0.8708	0.8729	0.8749	0.8770	0.8790	0.8810	0.8830
1.20	0.8849	0.8869	0.8888	0.8907	0.8925	0.8944	0.8962	0.8980	0.8997	0.9015
1.30	0.9032	0.9049	0.9066	0.9082	0.9099	0.9115	0.9131	0.9147	0.9162	0.9177
1.40	0.9192	0.9207	0.9222	0.9236	0.9251	0.9265	0.9279	0.9292	0.9306	0.9319
1.50	0.9332	0.9345	0.9357	0.9370	0.9382	0.9394	0.9406	0.9418	0.9429	0.9441
1.60	0.9452	0.9463	0.9474	0.9484	0.9495	0.9505	0.9515	0.9525	0.9535	0.9545
1.70	0.9554	0.9564	0.9573	0.9582	0.9591	0.9599	0.9608	0.9616	0.9625	0.9633
1.80	0.9641	0.9649	0.9656	0.9664	0.9671	0.9678	0.9686	0.9693	0.9699	0.9706
1.90	0.9713	0.9719	0.9726	0.9732	0.9738	0.9744	0.9750	0.9756	0.9761	0.9767
2.00	0.9772	0.9778	0.9783	0.9788	0.9793	0.9798	0.9803	0.9808	0.9812	0.9817
2.10	0.9821	0.9826	0.9830	0.9834	0.9838	0.9842	0.9846	0.9850	0.9854	0.9857
2.20	0.9861	0.9864	0.9868	0.9871	0.9875	0.9878	0.9881	0.9884	0.9887	0.9890
2.30	0.9893	0.9896	0.9898	0.9901	0.9904	0.9906	0.9909	0.9911	0.9913	0.9916
2.40	0.9918	0.9920	0.9922	0.9925	0.9927	0.9929	0.9931	0.9932	0.9934	0.9936

$$0.425 \rightarrow Z = 1.44$$

$$n = \frac{1.44^2 * 0.5 * 0.5 * 30}{1.44^2 * 0.5 * 0.5 + 0.05^2 * (30 - 1)}$$

$$n = 13.2 \approx 13 \text{ alumnos por grupo}$$

$$n_{total} = n * \text{grupos}$$

$$n_{total} = 13 * 6 = 78$$

## 7.6. Research instruments:

To carry out this research study, three types of instruments will be used with the purpose of getting the information that researchers needed to find out.

- ✓ **Non-participant Observation guide:** researchers will observe the Basic English classrooms in order to verify the factors that affect students' listening comprehension. The observation process will be executed in a period of two weeks.
  
- ✓ **survey:** this will be applied to the students in order to obtain their opinion about the factors that affect their listening comprehension, the questionnaire will contain 10 open-ended questions and it will take 15 minutes to complete it.
  
- ✓ **Interview:** this will be applied to the teachers to know, based on their studies and experiences, what are the factors that affect students' listening comprehension.
  
- ✓ **Setting:** this research study will take place in the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador.

## VIII. EXPECTED RESULTS

This research is based on finding out the factors that affect students' listening comprehension from the Modern Language major in the Basic English courses in the semester I from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

For collecting results, researchers will use different kind of instruments such as interview and survey. The results obtained will be divided into the following groups:

Student's survey:

With the survey, the researchers will find out the different points of view of the students from Basic English from the Modern Languages major of the University of El Salvador regarding the factors that affect them on their listening comprehension, by mentioning those factors that students can feel identified with, the investigators can list the following: Environmental noise, quality of recording materials, teaching strategies and lack of vocabulary.

Teacher's interview.

The researcher team will use the interview to know the teacher's points of view about which are the factors that affect student's listening comprehension to precede with a comparison between student's and teacher's points of view.

# **X. RESOURCES**

## VIII.RESOURCES

The resources used to carry out the present research are as follow:

- **Financial**

As follow there is the budget the researchers will use.

Internet	\$ 50.00
Bond Paper	\$ 15.00
Photocopies	\$ 15.00
Transportation	\$ 25.00
Food and snacks	\$ 30.00
Prints	\$ 60.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 195.00</b>

- **Material**

Books, Handouts, Internet articles, Computer, USB, photocopies, among others.

- **Human**

- ✓ Head of the Foreign Languages Department
- ✓ Coordinator of the graduation process
- ✓ Advisor Lic. Juan Carlos Cruz
- ✓ Students from Basic English semester I, 2017
- ✓ Teachers from Basic English semester I, 2017
- ✓ Researchers

### IX. TIME TABLE

MONTH		FEBRUARY				MARCH				APRIL				MAY				JUNE				JULY				AUGUST				SEPTEMBER				
N°	Activity	week	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1	Group work selection		■	■																														
2	Assessor assignment				■	■																												
3	Assessing			■		■		■		■		■		■		■		■		■		■		■		■		■		■				
4	Topic selection				■																													
5	First draft profile								■																									
6	Second draft profile											■																						
7	Third draft profile															■																		
8	Theoretical framework															■	■	■																
9	Gathering data instruments																			■														
10	Gathering data and instruments application																			■														
11	Summarizing data																								■									
12	Data analysis process and interpretation of the results																								■									
13	Conclusions and recommendations																								■									
14	Report elaboration																								■									
15	Report correction																								■									
16	Final report presentation																								■									
17	Presentation																								■									

# QUESTIONNAIRES



**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCE  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



**OBJECTIVE:** To gather information about the point of view of students at the Basic English courses regarding to their opinion about the factors that affect student's listening comprehension.

**Instructions:** Underline the answer based on your own criteria.

**1. How many times the teacher plays the same recording audio on a listening activity?**

- a) Once                                      b) Twice                                      c) Three times

**2. Does the teacher use different listening material rather than the listening material that is on the text book?**

- a) Books                                      b) Articles from Internet                                      c) News

**3. What type of passage the teacher uses the most on a listening activity?**

- a) Readings only                                      b) Visual support                                      c) Unknown vocabulary

**4. Does the teacher maintain the same topic from the beginning to the end on a listening activity?**

- a) Always                                      b) Sometimes                                      c) Never



**5. The three different stages of listening are: Pre-listening, while listening and post-listening. What kind of activity does the teacher apply in the pre-listening stage on a listening activity?**

- a) Review vocabulary      b) Predicting the content of the listening      c) None

**6. What kind of activity does the teacher apply on the while listening stage on a listening activity?**

- a) Listening with visuals      b) Checking off items in a list      c) None

**7. What kind of activity does the teacher apply on the post-listening stage on a listening activity?**

- a) Discussion      b) Revising the dialogue      c) None

**8. Does the teacher use recording materials according to the English level he/she teaches?**

- a) Yes      b) No

**9. What type of techniques does the teacher use the most when teaching listening?**

- a) Songs      b) Videos      c) Audios

**10. What is the accent that the teacher uses the most on a listening activity?**

- a) British English accent      b) American English accent      c) African English accent

**11. What is the attitude that the teacher shows when you don't understand a listening?**

- a) Impatience                      b) Pessimism                      c) Patient

**12. Which of the following factors affect the most your listening comprehension?**

- a) Environment                      b) Lack of vocabulary                      c) Teacher's personality

**13. How is the quality of the recording material that the teacher uses on a listening material?**

- a) Poor                      b) Regular                      c) High

**14. How familiar do you feel with the topic on a listening activity?**

- a) Very familiar                      b) Familiar                      c) Unfamiliar

**15. In your opinion, what is the appropriate age range to study a foreign language?**

- a) Childhood (5-12)                      b) Teenagers (13-18)                      c) Adults (19 or more)

**16. In your opinion, who has more abilities to learn a foreign language?**

- a) Male                      b) Female                      c) Both



**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCE  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



**OBJECTIVE:** To gather information about the point of view of teachers at the Basic English courses regarding to their opinion about the factors that affect student's listening comprehension.

**Instructions:** Please provide the information that is required according to the objective by reading the following questions and answering them.

**1. How many times do you consider it is appropriate to play the same audio on an English listening activity?**

**Why?** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**2. Besides the listening material that is in the book, do you use a different listening material from Internet for example? Why?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3. What type of passage do you use the most on a listening activity? Why?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**4. What is the process that you follow to maintain the same topic from the beginning to the end on a listening activity?**

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**5. Do you apply the three different stages of listening (Pre-listening, while listening and post listening) when playing an audio? Could one of these stages be skipped during a listening activity? Why?**

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**6. What are the aspects that you consider at the moment to select a listening activity for your students?**

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**7. Which are the techniques that you use when teaching listening?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**8. Do you consider it is important for students to listen the different English accents when learning English? Why?**

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**9. How do you feel when students don't understand a listening? Why?**

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**10. In your opinion, what is the factor that affects the most the listening comprehension of your students? Why?**

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**11. Do you think the listening material that is on the text book has a high quality for students to improve this skill? Why?**

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**12. What is the process that you follow to make students familiar with the topic before a listening activity?**

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**13. Have you ever been affected by having students from different ages on a Basic English course? In which aspects?**

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**14. Do you think gender is a factor that interferes on student's listening comprehension when learning a foreign language? Why?**

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**15. Do you think that the techniques that you apply when teaching listening are helpful for your students to improve this skill?**

**Why?** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCE  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



**OBJECTIVE:** To identify the factors that affect student's listening comprehension of Basic English courses through class observation in order to provide some recommendation to develop a better teaching- learning process for this skill

**1. The teacher plays the audio more than once on a listening activity.**

Yes

No

Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. The teacher uses different resources on a listening material, he/she does not use the listening material on the text book only.**

Yes

No

Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. The teacher uses different kind of passages such as visual support, readings and unknown vocabulary on the listening activity.**

Yes

No

Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. The teacher maintain the same topic from the beginning to the end on the listening activity.**

Yes

No



Observation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**5. The teacher applies the three different stages of listening (pre-listening, while listening and post-listening) on the listening activity.**

Yes  No

Observation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**6. The teacher uses recording materials according to the English level he/she teaches.**

Yes  No

Observation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. The teacher uses different techniques when teaching listening.**

Yes  No

Observation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**8. The teacher shows the variety of English accents that exist around the world on the listening activity.**

Yes  No

Observation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**9. The teachers get frustrated when the students don't understand a listening.**

Yes  No

Observation: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**10. The external factors such as environment, teacher's personality and accents are the ones that affects the most on student's listening comprehension.**

Yes  No

Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

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**11. The recording material that the teacher uses on the listening activity have a high quality.**

Yes  No

Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

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**12. The teacher perform some activities to make students familiar about the topic he/she is teaching before performing a listening activity.**

Yes  No

Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

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**13. The techniques that the teacher uses on a listening activity are helpful to improve this skill.**

Yes  No

Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

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