

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



Undergraduate Research:

“EXPLORING THE LISTENING STRATEGIES APPLIED BY ADVANCED INTENSIVE ENGLISH II STUDENTS FROM THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR TO DEVELOP THE LISTENING COMPREHENSION SKILL DURING THE FIRST SEMESTER-2018”

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ABSTRACT

This research presents, explore and describes listening strategies in order to help students to improve and develop their listening comprehension skill, when they are exposed to real listening input: spoken messages, daily life conversations with native and non-native speakers, movies, music and all kind of available multimedia sources in the web. This research work is focused on EFL students from Advanced Intensive English II from the Foreign Language Department of The University of El Salvador.

The current investigation has been performed with the purpose of providing some recommendations for teachers and students about how to develop the listening comprehension skill. This study highlights how to apply some different listening strategies that might help students to develop their listening comprehension skill and encourage them to be exposed to real English listening input as they work to organize and process their ideas within the listening process. Strategies as top-down process, pre-listening or just by selecting a material about a topic of the students' interest to encourage self-motivation could make a difference and might help to improve the listening comprehension skill. Teacher's feedback is included to show if strategies are promoted in class, how students actually respond, and students point of view will be considered to achieve a better overview and perspective about how to develop the listening comprehension skill and how to help students and teachers to take advantage of the listening strategies in the best way possible.

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 TOPIC

Exploring the Listening Strategies Applied by Advanced Intensive English II students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador to Develop the Listening Comprehension Skill during the First Semester- 2018

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Language learning in general and language skills learning in particular are not always easy to everyone. One of the most difficult language skills that the advanced English students need to acquire is listening skill (Chen, 2005; Teng, 1998). For this reason, research on listening strategies and how to develop the listening skill are important, since they allow to facilitate listening comprehension processes and attracts growing interests in second or foreign language learning. Thus, listening strategies are discussed in two different but relevant aspects: theoretical consideration and practical consideration.

For theoretical consideration, Underwood (1989) stated that if English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students do not learn to listen effectively, they will be unable to take part in oral communication and production in the target language will be limited. Meanwhile, Anderson (1995) pointed the importance of language acquisition as children have months of listening to their native language before they ever utter their first words. Although many researchers highlighted the importance of listening in learning language as it remains the most neglected and one of the least understood aspects of language teaching (Rubin, 1994). Therefore, the final aim of many studies about listening skill is exploring the most effective process to develop it.

Throughout Western history mankind assumed listening was automatic and needed no attention. For a long time, study and training in the art of listening did not concern researchers. Nowadays, based on EFL students' experiences, it is a fact that to be better listeners, EFL learners need to understand, and work with the components of the listening process. In general, any definition of listening, implies that listening might be learned and taught, since it is an active process involving mind and body, with verbal and nonverbal processes working together that allows the possibility to be receptive to the needs, concerns, and information of others, as well as the surrounding environment.

According to previous research (Chen, 2005; Vandergrift, 2004), a positive impact and correlation between listening strategies use and listening comprehension skill development can be proved by foreign language students experiences. For those reasons, training learners in listening strategies use, plays a more and more important role in language teaching. Nunan (2003) observed that learners should be trained to apply appropriate listening strategies for specific listening tasks. Therefore, the literature confirms that listening strategies use, strongly affects learners' results in their performance to apply the listening skill on a daily basis and their experiences have taken to a practical consideration of this research field.

From a practical consideration, it cannot be denied that listening is one of the most communicative activities in daily life. However, the reality of teaching and learning listening at a foreign country university as the University of El Salvador where this study was conducted has revealed that most advanced English students have difficulties to develop their listening comprehension skill. When asking a few students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador with an advanced English level they shared their personal experiences with the research team and expressed:

“Conversations in the movies and the news are really difficult to understand”

“When people talk too fast I easily get lost, I get frustrated and I’m unable to understand not even the main idea”

“During any listening assessment I could understand the CD workbook recordings, but when it’s about a real life broadcasting I got nervous immediately and I have many problems to understand”

“In a conversation, with classmates or teachers if I don’t understand what they’re saying, I feel anxious and nervous, so I’m unable to pronounce a word and answer...”

“I catch keywords and main or general ideas, but when somebody speaks fast, no comments about details!! I have problems to catch them!”

“Don’t ask me what they say, when they speak fast! I don’t know about the details... I just got the a general idea”

“Native speakers talk really fast, I got nervous because I could barely understand and I got in troubles to answer”

“Accents of non-American English speakers are a huge problem for me, I can’t understand sometimes a single word”

“I don’t know what to do to improve my listening! I watch movies, YouTube Videos and Netflix, listen to music in English and guess what? Still I have problems...”

The reasons for these struggles can be explained in terms of listening skill assessments, if listening strategies are promoted, which listening strategies are promoted, learning time to be exposed to real listening input as well as students’ awareness of existing strategies to develop their listening skill.

An English listening activity in most of the cases, is designed and pays little attention to the development of listening skill. There is a time pressure to complete it and sometimes teachers rely on learners just for the fact of being advanced English students and at some point they might forget students need some advices and tips to use listening strategies and develop the listening skill.

Some particular situations, as the prior lack of learners' motivation in classrooms in the past, the uncontrolled anxiety and stress levels at the moment to perform any listening task or activity, or at the moment to interact in a real life setting going from a conversation with a native or non-native speaker to just the frustration of being unable to understand, or barely catch general ideas when watching movies, Netflix or YouTube videos or listening to a real broadcasting; all of these factors have encouraged advanced English students to create an intrinsic motivation to develop their listening skill and improve.

In consequence, thanks to self-motivation and external continuous motivation based on students' interests, the perception of advanced English students towards the listening skill is different and any expected positive results that can be obtained by practicing some listening strategies and using real listening input are very welcome. As a result, this research work is aimed on exploring and describing the listening strategies applied by Advanced Intensive English II Students from the Foreign Language Department to develop the listening comprehension skill during the first semester- 2018. All this comes up with some research questions related to the improvement and development of the listening comprehension skill and the listening strategies that can be applied to achieve a higher level of comprehension when students are exposed to real listening input:

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1-How does the use of real listening input in classrooms of Advanced Intensive English II students affect the development of the listening comprehension skill?

2-How does the use of listening strategies help Advanced Intensive English II students to develop their listening comprehension skill?

3-What are the listening strategies applied by Advanced Intensive English II students that contribute to develop the listening comprehension skill?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To describe the listening strategies applied by Advanced Intensive English II students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador in the semester I-2018 that contribute to develop the listening comprehension skill.

1.4.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To describe how the use of real listening input affects the development of the listening comprehension skill of the Advanced Intensive English II students.

2. To identify the advantages of the use of listening strategies for Advanced Intensive English II students to develop their listening comprehension skill.

3. To identify the most successful and effective listening strategies applied and recommended by Advanced Intensive English II students to develop their listening comprehension skill during the semester I-2018.

1.5 JUSTIFICATION

The research team presents this project as a guide that describes by exploring the listening strategies that are applied by Advanced Intensive English II students that contribute to develop the listening comprehension skill.

Krashen (1988) emphasized that listening skill is the macro skill of any language that really influences speaking output according to the listening input students are exposed to. Listening plays a vital role and is a keystone in the development of language skills. Besides, listening is important because it prevents miscommunication, can make a message more clearly understood and can help reduce the amount of frustration, anxiety and stress for the speaker.

Listening comprehension becomes very essential when learning a foreign language and building up the knowledge to reach an outstanding level. Also, it is one of the first contacts people have in life, to be able to communicate efficiently in a conversation, because it takes most of the time people spend every day communicating and interacting with each other (Krashen, 1988).

Vandergrift (2004) has observed and confirmed in prior research, that in many cases, students did not know the existence of some strategies that might help them to develop their listening skill, they struggled and felt uncomfortable whenever they needed to proof their English proficiency in listening comprehension through a listening activity or an evaluated assessment. Therefore, students need to know and learn about strategies that might help them to develop, improve the listening comprehension skill, and find out which strategies could be the most appropriate based on the requirements of listening activities or the type of information they are trying to get from the listening input they need or want to understand, and to overcome the difficulties they deal with.

Moreover; by creating this students' awareness, they will be able to confirm that listening strategies are particularly significant to help them to obtain better and faster

results. Students need to be aware about the benefits of applying different strategies to develop their listening comprehension skill and how to take advantage of them as its best.

As a result, this research work is aimed at describing the listening strategies applied by Advanced Intensive English II Students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador to develop the listening comprehension skill during the First Semester- 2018.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The research team dealt with certain limitations while conducting the investigation that at some point interrupted the development of the research in a timely manner. At the beginning, during the first advisories, the team members had some problems to synchronize a schedule to meet sometimes each other and the advisor. In consequence, they had to make some work schedule changes to attend to the advisory sessions and perform the investigation.

In regards logistics facilities and study factibility, the researchers selected a topic depending on study population, places and available time to collect the information from all team members. These factors were analyzed by researchers and the advisor to choose a topic that fulfills those characteristics.

The population taken into consideration for this research work was: 280 students of the 10 different groups from Advanced Intensive English II from the Foreign Language Department during semester I-2018. The researchers worked with a sample population of 22 students from the ten different groups. Since the selection of students must be significant, they were selected through a convenience sampling, delivering invitations more than once to groups receiving classes within the time frame with a higher likelihood to participate in the focus group session conducted for data collection purposes.

Besides, based on the principle of the rule of thumb, explained by Krueger (1988) that consists on determining the number of necessary participants for the focus group, the size of the group should have been between 8 to 12 participants. Since the sample was 22 it was planned to conduct between 2 to 3 groups at the same time, each one conducted by one team research member. However, only 12 students attended to the invitation and only one group was conducted. In order to have a representative sample, there were participants from almost each group of Advanced Intensive English II; except from 6 am course, and from groups before and right after the focus group, 2 or 3 participants took part in the investigation. Both situations were excellent and perfect for research purposes as well, because the sample was representative and groups over twelve people have often proven to be too big, while under four have shown that not enough total experiences exist to collect reliable and valuable information.

In addition, only 6 out of 10 teachers who delivered the Advanced Intensive English II course were interviewed, since some of them just work part time schedules in the University and was really difficult for them to meet the researchers before or after their class time.

Despite, the previously described situations, everything was completed in the estimated period of time in the chronogram planned by team members at the beginning of the investigation and the time frame for the undergraduate research established for the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Describing the listening strategies and how advanced English learners apply them is important and relevant to improve their listening comprehension skill and achieve in language proficiency at the moment to receive continuous real listening input and be exposed to the language. Especially, if it is about a real life environment or situation. It is also essential, to know the available strategies and resources advanced English students have to develop the listening skill and confirming how they selected and used them to achieve a good level of language comprehension.

At first, some important authors that have written about this topic in the past, present some listening definitions focused on the purpose of this research investigation. Establishing some definitions for “listening”, it looks crucial before, starting to introduce any type of listening strategy.

Listening is defined by Amaro (2014) as a skill that investigators and researchers consider a relevant part in competences of a language, since it is about language exposure; it is used at school, at work and everywhere. The process of listening is often contrasted with hearing. Hearing can be considered as a physical act. On the other hand, listening is a mental action, developed by perceiving, paying attention and responding (Glen and Purdy, 2001).

Another definition of listening skill explains that it is developed through attention by learning to perceive sounds and words accurately as they work on meaning-oriented activities so learners can make steady progress, and gain confidence in listening for meaning (Amaro, 2014). Also, listening has been defined as a hidden way to pay attention carefully when a message is provided or when someone is speaking (Van Duzer, 1997).

In addition, Austin Shrope (1970) cited by Saricoban (1999), defines listening as a skill that requires to use imagination and a way to interpret messages, keeping ideas in order to get

the main purpose of a message by getting words that will guide people to share their impacts and characteristics to evaluate the meaning. Also the listener needs to have a perception and prior knowledge about the topic as backup and at least to be able to understand general ideas.

Secondly, taking into consideration the meaning of listening as a skill, for this research it is important to analyze the importance of the use of real listening input in classrooms and to remark how the use of listening strategies help EFL learners to develop this relevant skill and the process they follow to achieve in their proficiency training for understanding any input they are exposed to.

Even if learners belong to an advanced level, to develop the listening skill, it is imperative to be exposed to comprehensible input and if this is from a real life source even better. In the words of Rost (2002), the comprehensible input refers to the language that listeners are able to understand, even though it contains some linguistic elements that are unfamiliar to the listener. To fill out those gaps and make the life of learners easier, Vandergrift (2004) proposed some cognitive processes or strategies to develop the listening skill.

Vandergrift (2004) proposed the concept of top-down listening, that refers to the use of background knowledge in order to understand the meaning of the message; favor cognitive awareness or encourage a conscious process. Background knowledge consists of context and co-text, the situation, topic, general ideas and key words, what came before and after. Once the topic has been established, the prior knowledge helps to 'match' the incoming sound signal to fill out specific details. This is an essential skill, given that in a real-life listening situation, advanced learners are likely to come across some unknown vocabulary. By using their knowledge of context and co-text, they should either be able to guess the meaning of the unknown word, or understand the general idea without getting distracted by it.

In contrast, Vandergrift (2004) explained as well about bottom-up listening, based

on the micro skill of word recognition and segmentation. Bottom-up listening is a developed process for listening, aimed to catch specific details; comprehension is achieved by dividing and decoding the sound signal bit by bit. The ability to separate the stream of speech into individual words becomes more important here to recognize.

To encourage and promote cognitive strategies, teachers can include activities of listening development by using lectures, extracts from news or movies as audio recordings and increase in this way students' comprehension skill through the bottom-up and top down processes to make learners more aware of 'real-life' listening. Vandergrift (2004) states that EFL learners will have to use a combination of both processes to develop listening comprehension skill, with more emphasis on 'top-down' or 'bottom-up' process depending on their reasons for listening. EFL learners often refer to their knowledge of the topic and situation when facing with unfamiliar vocabulary or structures, which means using top-down processing to compensate the difficulties in bottom-up processing.

The emphasis of EFL real listening materials, in recent years, has been on developing top-down listening processes, since even higher-level students fail to recognize known words when speakers talk too fast. Advanced EFL learners need to be able to listen effectively even when they confront unfamiliar vocabulary or structures. However, if the learners understand very few words from the incoming signal, even knowledge about the context may not be sufficient for them to understand what is happening and they can easily get lost. Bottom-up listening activities can help learners to understand enough linguistic elements of what they hear so they can be able to use their top-down skills to fill in the gaps.

Based on Vandergrift's cognitive strategies approach, Raphael Ahmed (2015) a teacher at the British Council in Bangladesh, also shared some useful strategies focused on top-down and bottom-up processes:

1. Listening for gist: When listening, it is also possible to get the 'whole picture' but with one crucial difference; information comes in a sequence composed by content

words as nouns, adjectives and verbs that can help the advanced English students to have their own point of view and opinion of the situation.

2. Detecting signposts: Just like the traffic lights on roads, there are signposts in language that help to follow what students are listening to. In this particular case, these signposts are connectors or transition words, which link ideas and help to understand what the speaker is talking about and where they are taking it from. They are particularly important in presentations and lectures.

3. Listening for details: Similarly, learners are interested in a specific kind of information perhaps a number, name or object. In this case, it is possible to ignore anything that does not sound relevant. Students are able to narrow down their search and get the details they need.

However, these strategies are not stand-alone. Cognitive processes need to be used simultaneously to get the best result when listening. Prior to this, Vandergrift (2004) has emphasized and highlighted that successful listening, in real life environments and situations, depends on the ability to combine these two types of processing operating simultaneously. Activities which work on each strategy separately should help students to combine top-down and bottom-up processes to overcome real-life situations and increase their level of listening comprehension.

Vandergrift (2004) in his research makes emphasis in all these important unconscious processes that encourage EFL students to naturally assimilate elements from the target language supported by prior background and knowledge, because there is a willingness to learn, to memorize and analyze. Besides, intrinsic and external motivation have been proved to be crucial for students' improvement and outstanding good performance (Krashen, 1988). As a result, it's necessary for teachers to promote strategies that contribute to the development of the listening skill into advanced English students.

Carol Van Duzer (1997) proposed and mentioned some other of these types of strategies to develop the listening skill and particularly in advanced levels of learning where the social and affective factors play a title role and students need to be conscious about how to go beyond when they are exposed to the language.

At this stage of learning, listening should be relevant, material should be authentic, opportunities to develop both top-down and bottom-up processing skills should be developed by going deeper and/or using at some point, conscious or metacognitive processes. As an example, Brown (2006) suggested that a pre-listening task should consist of two parts: First, students should be provided with an opportunity to learn new vocabulary or sentence structures used in the listening activity and after that a chance to activate their prior knowledge.

The development and awareness in all types of listening strategies should be encouraged; activities should teach, not test and to accomplish them, Van Duzer (1997) proposed that metacognitive strategies could be applied when following the steps in a listening lesson:

1. Engage the learners in a pre-listening activity: This activity should describe, establish and explain the purpose of the exercise and should provide students a breakdown of the task itself, by encouraging the learners to think about it and discuss what they already know about the topic. This activity can also provide the background needed for students to be able to understand the text, and it can focus attention on what to listen for.

2. Do the listening task itself: The task should involve the listener in getting information and in immediately doing something with it. Students take notes of ideas they catch.

3. Engage in a post-listening activity: This activity should help the students to evaluate success in fulfilling the task and to integrate listening with the other language

skills, teachers must request students to discuss in groups what they have understood. The teacher should encourage practice outside of the classroom whenever it is possible.

Taking into account those factors and advices to help advanced English students to develop their listening skill; encouraging these types of activities and following those steps create a commitment on students, the stress and anxiety levels are reduced and students get motivated to continue improving.

In addition, Vandergrift (1999) confirmed and showed that metacognitive strategies development is important for listening training because strategies should be conscious, this means that learners can guide and evaluate their own comprehension and responses. To describe this better, Ahmed (2015) also made a reference to metacognitive strategies to develop and practice the listening skill and suggested two different processes, both associated to pre-listening and while listening activities:

1. Predicting content: Knowledge of the language helps to anticipate the kind of information students are likely to hear. Moreover, when the topic of a talk or a conversation is predicted, all the related vocabulary stored in the brain is “activated”, to help listeners to better understand what they are listening to.

2. Inferring meaning: Using clues, context, background and prior knowledge about a situation to find out and discover the meaning of what students listen to.

From a developmental and practical perspective, the listening skill and all the listening strategies presented in this research work are interrelated with the acquisition of verbal and social skills through prior knowledge and real life listening input that are critical for students' success across many contexts.

To highlight the importance of the practical perspective, Nunan (2003) explained in his brief essay “Listening in a Second Language” how listening in practice and the use of listening strategies help students to develop the listening comprehension skill and showed

some of the practical ways in which these ideas might be activated in the classroom.

Nunan (2003) from the point of view of Rost (2001) presented how significant selecting and applying “real” listening input as live or audio/video recordings and designing instructional listening activities are for students and teachers to apply in classrooms :

1. A careful selection of input sources: appropriately authentic, interesting, varied and challenging according to the level of learners.

2. Creative designs of tasks: Tasks should be well-structured, with opportunities for EFL learners to activate and use their own knowledge and experience and to monitor what they are doing.

3. Assistance to help EFL learners: To put in practice effective listening strategies, as metacognitive, cognitive, and social.

4. Integration of listening with other learning purposes: With appropriate links to speaking, reading and writing related to students interest or other topics.

On top of that, Nunan (2003) cited Helgesen (2003) who proposed the following principles and advices for effective use of listening strategies:

1. Expose students to different ways of processing information: Bottom-up versus top-down. Bottom-up processing involves making sense of individual sounds and words. Top-down processing, on the other hand, involves using prior or the 'inside the head' knowledge to make sense of aural input.

2. Expose students to different types of listening: Good language learners and good listeners have a range of strategies for processing aural input. It is therefore important to train learners to be flexible listeners, to know when, for example it is appropriate to

listen for specific information, and when it is appropriate to engage in more global or 'gist' listening to get a general idea of what a text is all about.

3. Teach a variety of tasks: Just as learners need to be able to deal with a range of different listening input, they also need to deal with a range of different task types. It is important to point out that if learners are expected to complete a task while actually listening rather than after, then production demands need to be reduced. This principle can be captured by the notion of basing the listening lessons on developing strategic listening that is not only focused on the direct development of listening proficiency, but also adding a process dimension to the classroom by developing in learners a flexible range of strategies. The simplest way of doing this is to make the strategies underlying a task explicit. For example, if a task requires students to identify attitudinal information, according to Nunan (2003) this might be prefaced with a pre-listening instruction by saying something like:

"Listening sometimes means focusing not just on what people say but the way they say it. This means paying attention to pronunciation, sentence rhythm and intonation. In the next task, you are listening to the speakers' intonation to identify which speakers are stating a fact and which speakers are surprised."

In this essay Nunan (2003) reviewed recent theoretical approaches and how to bring it to practice to improve listening comprehension and showed some of the practical ways in which these ideas might be activated in the classroom.

In addition, Nunan (2003) depicts this as a challenge for the teacher in the listening classroom, since they should provide learners some degree of control over the content of the lesson, and to personalize content so learners are able to bring something of themselves to the task or increase learner involvement by providing extension tasks which take the listening material as a point of departure, but which then lead students into providing part of the content themselves.

A learner-centered dimension can be lent to the listening class in one of two ways. In the first place, tasks can be devised in which the classroom action is centered on the student not the teacher. In tasks exploiting this idea, students are actively involved in structuring and restructuring their understanding of the language and in building their skills in using the language. Secondly, teaching listening materials, like any other type of materials can be given a learner-centered dimension by selecting them based on students' personal interests and getting them involved in the processes underlying their learning and in making active contributions to the development of the listening comprehension skill. This can be achieved in the following ways:

1. Making instructional goals explicit to the student: Pre-listening activities emphasizing metacognitive strategies importance to prepare students for the outcoming listening input and reduce the anxiety levels.

2. Giving EFL students a degree of choice: Designing and preparing activities that allow students to resolve them and develop in different ways.

3. Giving learners' opportunities to bring their own background knowledge and experience into the classroom: This makes allusion to cognitive strategies, top-down processes can be used to put into practice the acquired knowledge to catch and process key words and main ideas to complete some type of tasks from listening activities.

4. Encouraging students to develop a reflective attitude to learning and to develop skills in self-monitoring and self-assessment: The social-affective factor plays always a title-role according to Nunan (2003) external and self-motivation are factors that help to encourage listening comprehension, everything is about attitude and teachers are entitled to inspire through empathy, continuous support and taking into account topics of students interest.

Nunan (2003) highlights this practical perspective to simulate the interactive nature of listening, and also proposed to involve students personally in the content of a language

lesson through activities in which learners can listen to one side of a conversation, and react to written responses. Obviously, this is not the same thing as taking part in an actual conversation, but it has been found that it does generate a level of involvement on the part of learners that goes beyond the usual sort of non-participatory listening task. Because learners are providing the possibility to create personalized responses, there is variation between them, and this creates the potential for following-up speaking tasks, in which learners compare and share their responses with others, this could be considered one of the main benefits of these type of listening activities, the more type of listening input students are exposed to, the more different kind of output they can produce.

Furthermore, for Nunan (2003) the non-reciprocal listening tasks as well can draw on a rich variety of authentic data, not just lectures and one-sided anecdotes. Nunan explained that during his listening classes, he used the following data as sort of real listening input for students: answering machine messages, store announcements, announcements on public transportation, mini lectures, and narrative recounts. The increasing use of digitalized messages on the telephone by companies and public utilities can also provide a rich source of authentic data for non-reciprocal listening tasks.

Despite of the continuous focus on cognitive and metacognitive strategies, Nunan works were at some point aimed at a recurring theme in recent books and papers on language teaching methodology, which is the need to develop the students' awareness of the processes underlying their own learning and capacity to develop the listening skill so that, eventually, they will be able to take greater and greater responsibility for that learning process.

Nunan (1997) stated that this can be achieve through the adoption of a learner-centered strategy at the level of classroom action, and partly through equipping students with a wide range of effective listening strategies. Through these, students will not only become better listeners, they will also become more effective language learners because they will be given opportunities to focus on, and reflect upon the processes enlighten their own learning. This is important, because if learners are aware of what they are doing, if

they are conscious of the processes underlying the listening comprehension skill they are involved in, then the development of it will be more effective.

The key strategies presented by Nunan (1997) and previously explained and carefully introduced in this research work, that can be taught in the listening classroom include selective listening, listening for different purposes, predicting, progressive structuring, inferencing, and personalizing. These strategies should not be separated from the content teaching but woven into the ongoing fabric of the lesson so that students can see the applications of the strategies to the development of the listening comprehension skill and effective learning.

In his essay about “Listening in Language Learning”, Nunan set out some of the theoretical, empirical, and practical aspects of listening comprehension. He suggested that listening classrooms of today need to develop both bottom-up and top-down listening skills in EFL learners. Nunan in that research work enhanced the importance of a strategies-based approach to the teaching of listening. Such an approach is particularly important in classrooms where students are exposed to substantial amounts of authentic data and listening input because they will not and should not expect to understand every word.

In summary, Nunan (1997) recommended that an effective listening course will be characterized by the following features:

1. The materials should be based on a wide range of authentic texts, including both monologues and dialogues: Real listening input, not just daily life conversations but lectures and storytelling, narrations, Etc.

2. Schema-building tasks should precede the listening: This is the importance of a pre-listening activity to explain and provide details, to break down the activity students should develop.

3. Strategies for effective listening should be incorporated into the materials:

Nunan (2003) suggested the importance of including a strategy or methodology that would guide easily students to develop and complete the listening activity so this one can be completed successfully and help them to create their own schema-building to achieve them and improve the level of listening comprehension.

4. Learners should be given opportunities to progressively structure their listening by listening to an audio several times, and by working through increasingly challenging listening tasks: By following this students could be required at first to get main ideas and keywords, then details; another example can be paraphrasing in general way what the audio is about and then talk about the attitudes and moods they were able to identify.

5. Learners should know what they are listening for and why: The set of metacognitive strategies in their three stages are really helpful to accomplish this, in order for students could know “the purpose” through a pre-listening, identify “what it is about” while-listening and be able to explain both through the post-listening task.

6. The task should include opportunities for learners to play an active role in their own learning: Personalize listening activities by using topics of students interest and applying empathy and continuous support will always encourage students from the teachers’ side and would stimulate self-motivation.

Finally, each developmental and practical perspective explained for Nunan in his different research studies about strategies to develop the listening comprehension skill and from all other authors presented in this literature review for this investigation brings to the table the most important question for this research work: What are the listening strategies applied by Advanced Intensive English II students that contribute to develop the listening comprehension skill?

This research work is intended to answer this question, describe by exploring all those relevant applied listening strategies, the processes students followed to develop them and achieve a good level of comprehension of a real English listening input. It is essential for students learn to listen carefully to ideas, integrate information from oral, visual, and media sources, evaluate what they hear dividing main ideas from details or predicting phrases, use media broadcastings and visual displays strategically to adapt task in context to achieve communicative purposes. Finally, it is a must to highlight the importance of more and continuous exposure to listening input by performing more listening activities to create models to face daily life language situations and develop abilities and the strategies students believe are the best for developing their listening comprehension skill.

3. METHODOLOGY

At the first stage of this investigation, the researchers were aimed at exploring and describing different types of listening strategies applied by Advanced Intensive English II students to develop their listening comprehension skill.

In this chapter, the participants or target population and sampling, the instruments, data collection process and the information analysis plan are described.

3.1 TYPE OF STUDY

The project was conducted using a descriptive type of research. Through this investigation, researchers described how students developed listening comprehension skill and highlighted the top strategies that Advanced Intensive English II students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador in semester I 2018 applied to achieve it.

This type of research allowed the researchers to gather reliable source of data by the application of the different instruments for data collection. A focus group session was conducted by researchers to gather information from students' answers through a questionnaire and an interview to some of the teachers delivering the subject was performed with the purpose that researchers could explore and describe the strategies applied to develop the listening comprehension skill and carry over the analysis through the qualitative research approach.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A Qualitative Research Design was used to perform this research work. The study is aimed at exploring and describing the listening strategies that Advanced Intensive English II students apply to develop their listening comprehension skill. The qualitative research design is focused on highlighting and remarking characteristics, since this is a descriptive study. This type of design is generally based on a social constructivism perspective.

Social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) focus on social nature of cognition, and suggests approaches that gives researchers the opportunity for concrete, contextually meaningful experiences and perceptions through the search of patterns, contradictions, similarities, raise their own questions, and decide their methods. Under a qualitative research design, research problems become research questions based on prior research experience.

At first, identifying and framing research questions to demonstrate the importance or relevance as an area of inquiry; was essential because the research questions were the guidelines for the subsequent methodological choices.

This qualitative research was meant to proceed inductively, not deductively. In other words, the researchers were not proposing to test hypotheses or make a deductive type of study, but answer some research questions. Instead, the researchers proposed an investigation from which understandings and findings could emerge (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2006). The investigation needed to maintain a link between reviewing the literature and developing a framework with fundamental theories descriptions about listening comprehension skill and strategies and how to develop them as reasons for this study by proposing at the beginning inductive qualitative inquiries and answering these questions eventually in order to find and establish conclusions and provide some recommendations.

To prepare this qualitative research, it was necessary to develop a theoretical framework, using some of the available literature, that supports and help to the research team for performing a qualitative descriptive study. The methods for data collection for this qualitative study were selected based on the research questions.

The research questions were aimed to get answers from Advanced Intensive English II students and teachers. They're designed to understand the thoughts, experiences, feelings, perceptions of Advanced Intensive English II students and the teachers that are delivering the course.

Cohen and Crabtree (2006) explained in their Qualitative Research Guideline Project that a qualitative research requires researchers to ask members of a group and/or individuals questions to gather data. There are a variety of approaches for interviewing people to collect data. The goals of the project will often shape the method chosen. However, other important considerations as budget, time and access might influence methods decisions. Since, this research design may require a combination of interviewing methods, a personal interview for teachers and a focus group to gather data from a group of students.

The research team decided to implement a qualitative research design because they are concerned with making inference based on perspectives, points of views, though, feelings and experiences from sources, teachers and students (Qualitative Research Design, n.d.). As a result, it is extremely important to get as much data as possible for later analysis from both sides. Interviews and Focus Groups are designed to generate participant perspectives about ideas, opinions, and experiences; this was the main reason of selecting these data collection methods, because through them it is possible to highlight contradictions and similarities, confirming theories and details by performing a deeper analysis.

3.3 STUDY POPULATION AND SAMPLE

This study was conducted at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador, on semester I, 2018. The target population on this research work were the students from Advanced Intensive English II of Bachelor in Modern Languages and Bachelor of English Teaching. The researchers worked with a sample population of 12 students. The students for the sample were selected through a convenience sample criteria from all 10 Advanced Intensive English II courses population from Foreign Language Department.

For a qualitative research and a known population of 280 students of Advanced Intensive English II the next formula proposed by Graham R. Gibbs (2007) was applied to calculate an estimated sample:

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

Where:

N=280

Confidence is 85%,

Z=1.44

Margin of Error,

E=0.15

p=q because the probability is unknown

p=0.5

q=0.5

Substituting

$$n = \frac{280 \times 1.44^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{(280 - 1) \times 0.15^2 + 1.64^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}$$

$$n = 21.36$$

$$n = 22 \text{ Students}$$

The total population of 280 students of the 10 different groups from Advanced Intensive English II from the Foreign Language Department was taken into consideration for this research work. The researchers worked initially with the estimated sample of 22 students from the ten different groups. Since the selection of students must be significant, they were selected through a convenience sampling, delivering invitations more than once to groups receiving classes within the time frame with a higher likelihood to participate in the focus group session conducted for data collection purposes.

Consequently, based on the principle of the rule of thumb, explained by Krueger (1988) that consists on determining the number of necessary participants for the focus group, the size of the group should have been between 8 to 12 participants. Since the sample was 22 it was planned to conduct between 2 to 3 groups at the same time, each one conducted by one team research member. However, only 12 students attended to the invitation and only one group was conducted, which it was excellent and perfect for research purposes as well, because groups over twelve people have often proven to be too big, while under four have shown that not enough total experiences exist to collect reliable and valuable information.

For teachers' population since it was really small and composed only for 10 different professors delivering the Advanced Intensive English II course, all of them were considered by the researchers to be interviewed and became the sample. However, only 6 out of 10 teachers who delivered the Advanced Intensive English II course were

interviewed, since some of them just work part time schedules in the University and was really difficult for them to meet the researchers before or after their class time.

3.4 CONVENIENCE SAMPLING

Convenience sampling also known as availability sampling, it is a specific type of non-probability sampling method that relies on data collection from population members who are conveniently available to participate in study according to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012). A second definition presented by Business Dictionary.com (2018) explains that convenience sampling is a statistical method of drawing representative data by selecting people because of the ease of their volunteering or selecting units because of their availability or easy access. The advantages of this type of sampling are the availability and the quickness with which data can be gathered. The disadvantages are the risk that the sample might not represent the population as a whole, and it might be biased by volunteers.

Based on these principles, since there were 280 students signed up for the 10 different groups and the calculated sample was only 22 students, researchers required the active participation of some students from each group.

There was a variety of schedules for advanced English II groups, the first groups started at 6 am and the last ones finished at 7 pm. Taking into account that the scheduled time to develop the focus group was at 12 md, for study factibility and convenience sampling the groups with higher likelihood to participate were the ones that had classes within the timeframe from 8am to 3pm and for that reason, some more invitations were delivered for students that belong to those groups in order to increase the possibilities to complete the 22 students required by the sampling obtained from the formula calculation above.

The research team took into account the fact that not all the invited students were going to participate to the focus group for many different reasons. As a result, the most of

the invitations were distributed to the students based on the schedule of each course of Advanced English II.

Furthermore, the selected students received a personal and motivational invitation to attend the place where the focus group was developed to encourage them to take active part of this research work process and in order to collect all the possible information, a recorder and computers were used to save digital files with the most remarkable points and the highlights of the discussion of around 45 min to 1h.

In addition, under the same convenience sampling criteria and to support all the gathered data from the participant students in the focus group, all the teachers delivering the Advance English II course for both careers were considered to be interviewed by all the research team members, that tried to schedule individual appointments with each of them to collect the information. However, only 6 out of 10 teachers from Advanced Intensive English II course participated in the data collection process for this study, due to scheduled availability problems before or after their class.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

The data collection for this research work was intended to gather information oriented to describe the listening strategies applied by Advanced Intensive English II students from the Foreign Language Department to develop their listening comprehension skill.

The instruments conducted on this study were focused on gather data about the different strategies students applied and the results they obtain. The questionnaire objective was to find out the top strategies with the best results to develop the listening comprehension skill, applied by students and realize which of them were promoted in class. On the other hand, the teacher's interviews had the purpose to describe the strategies applied and promoted in class by teachers to support and help their students to improve and

develop their listening skill based on their experience, prior results and the background theories or approaches that back up the listening comprehension strategies.

3.5.1 STUDENTS FOCUS GROUP

A focus group is defined as a talk, an exchange of remarks and ideas in a good-humored teasing way, as defined by Tremblay, Hevner and Berndt (2010). A focus group will explore needs, thoughts and feelings and listening strategies perceptions in the particular case of this investigation process. This technique is the well appropriate to gather data, since it permits to explore students level of development in listening strategies, understand their selection criteria for their applied listening strategies and activities/techniques, and influential factors.

The main characteristic of a focus group is the existing interest of the target population and sample on the study that researchers carry out, the possible benefits and improvements they might get as a positive effect of being active participants during the research process while gathering data and information. A focus group should be small and diverse, since it is aimed to determine the reactions that can be expected from a larger population (Marczak and Sewell, n.d.)

For this particular research work, it was composed of students of all different morning and afternoon groups from Bachelor in Modern Languages and English Teaching and whose reactions were determinant in a guided opened discussion about theories and approaches intended to support students to develop the listening comprehension skill. A focus group approaches directly to the purpose of the investigation.

In order to get the necessary data for the investigation, the focus group needed to be developed with an interesting agenda to avoid students get bored, the researchers had come up with the idea of having a fun discussion and shared a lunch time so that participants could talk about their listening strategies and techniques and how they do to develop the listening skill during their learning process.

The development of this activity required to create a harmonious environment in which students feel comfortable at the time to give their personal opinions about the topic with the objective to get accurate information.

According to Cohen and Crabtree (2006), focus groups are a data collection method, generally used to collect data on a specific topic and are moderated by a group leader to introduce the questions and clarify doubts of participants. For this research work, data was collected through a semi-structured questionnaire of 10 open-ended questions conducted for all the research team members. The design of the focus group was based on the research questions being studied.

The purposes to carry over the focus group in this study were:

1. Standardization of questions: A semi-structured questionnaire composed by open-ended questions permitted discussion to emerge.

2. Number of focus groups conducted or sampling: A single focus group was conducted. This was previously explained in population and sampling selection process, this depended on the 'segmentation' or different conveniences that were identified as important for the research topic.

3. Number of participants per group: The rule of thumb explained by Krueger (1988) mentioned that from 8 to 12 participants are allowed to be part of a focus group and are good enough to gather reliable data. In addition, Morgan (1996) confirmed this, explaining that there may be reasons depending on the research need to have smaller or slightly larger groups. Initially, researchers decided to conduct between 2 to 3 focus groups at the same time, because the calculated estimated sample was 22 students. However, only 12 students coming from the 10 different courses attended to the invitation and a single focus group was conducted, fulfilling the research needs and the rule of thumb, since groups over twelve people are too big, while under four have demonstrated that not enough

total experiences exist to collect reliable and valuable information.

4. Level of researchers' involvement: Research team members participated actively as moderators by introducing the questions and clarifying doubts.

For this research work, the focus group was used to explore and describe the research areas, to explore a topic that is difficult to observe and not easy to gain access, since researchers might be able to observe what students and teachers do sometimes in class, but not at home by themselves. Also, it took a really short period of time to collect the data, the focus group session allowed the researchers to look at certain perspectives and experiences from people who played a determinant role in the investigation process.

The main purpose of the focus group was to compare and look for contradictions in research findings in contrast with the teachers' interviews. Both data collection sources were selected to provide access to comparisons between the focus group participants' perceptions and teachers experiences gather from the interviews. This information was really valuable, reliable and provided access to consensus and diversity of experiences on a topic.

3.5.2 TEACHER'S INTERVIEWS

As a backup and support of all the gathered information, all the teachers delivering the Advance English II course for both majors were required to participate, through a semi-structured interview, a set of 7 open-ended questions conducted for all the research team members and with the purpose to get specific information from teachers experiences, points of view and perception towards the use of listening strategies or what it is done to develop the listening skill from their own perspective. The interviews were scheduled as individual appointments, but it was not possible to interview all of them due to scheduled problems, 6 out of the 10 teachers participated in the study. During each interview, researchers have taken notes of teachers' answers.

The qualitative research instruments as the questionnaire for the focus group and the interview for the teachers provided the research team with really important facts about the subject in question, a lot of factors might interfere in the objective to get the most accurate results, such as lack of time, external distractions, lack of interest to be part of the investigation, among others. All of these points were barriers that might have not produced the most precise data for the investigation.

In order to provide a solution to reduce bias in the obtained results and resolve the issues and discrepancies that were very likely to find by just applying a questionnaire in a very traditional way, going to the classroom and ask students to write their answers on a paper, or just performing the teachers' interviews, as single research instrument; the focus group session was planned and carried over to allow the researchers learn and be able to describe by exploring the Advance Intensive English II students' opinions and experiences, teachers' points of view and perspective towards the topic

3.6 INFORMATION ANALYSIS PLAN

The first stage of the analysis was a classification process of the information obtained from interviews and focus groups, this was completed by reviewing notes and discovering common "themes". Themes describe the patterns/phenomenon as results.

The second step, was selecting the analysis method for both sources of information. The selected method was triangulation, explained as a cross examination process, often used when there are two data collection sources and instruments as in this research work. Triangulation could be performed because researchers have used at two different instruments and two types of data collection methods. Since, a single method could have never adequately shed light on a phenomenon, using multiple data sources could help to facilitate deeper understanding. (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006).

To analyze the collected data in this research work, triangulation was applied as a method for corroborating findings and as a test for validity. According to Rahman and Yeasmin (2012) the main purpose of triangulation in educational and social science research is to increase the credibility and validity of the results.

In contrast, Patton (2001) explained that it is a common misconception that the goal of triangulation is to arrive at consistency across data sources or approaches. In fact, inconsistencies may be likely the relative strengths coming of the different data sources. In Patton's view, these inconsistencies should not be seen as weakening the evidence, but should be viewed as an opportunity to uncover deeper meaning in the data.

Four types of triangulation were identified by Denzin (1978) and confirmed by Patton (1999): Methods triangulation, triangulation of sources, analyst triangulation and theory/perspective triangulation.

However, for a descriptive and qualitative research design a triangulation of sources was the best option for this research work purposes. O'Donoghue and Punch (2003) have confirmed and supported the researchers' selection, since they defined triangulation as a "method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data"

Triangulation of sources is defined as examining the consistency of different data sources. For example: At different points in time, in public vs. private settings (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2006). In the case of this investigation, the focus group vs private interviews were conducted to compare teachers and students different points of view and perspectives, etc. This type of triangulation, where the researchers used different sources, is perhaps the most popular because it is the easiest to implement.

The reasons to triangulate, to consider in this research work, were the weaknesses in one data source were compensated by strengths from another source, collected data from

both instruments was corroborated and confirmed from each other, and contradictions were analyzed. In addition, conclusions, recommendations for teachers, students and the Academic Administration of the Foreign Language Department were proposed based on the findings that have been obtained.

As conclusion for this chapter, rather than seeing triangulation as a method for validation or verification, in a qualitative research this technique generally is applied to ensure that results and findings are comprehensive and well-developed (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2006). The analysis for interviews and focus groups findings were conducted through triangulation to gain insight into participant perspectives to propose outcomes after the analysis stage. Finally, feedback from the participants was compared to determine areas of agreement as well as areas of divergence.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS PRESENTATIONS

4.1 TEACHERS' INTERVIEWS RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The following results present the real and current information from this research work. The classification or categorization criteria are highlighted in bold within the analysis presented below. The analysis classification and interpretation are based on the responses given by teachers who delivered the course Advanced Intensive English II during the First Semester -2018 in the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador.

Exploring the Listening Strategies Applied by Advanced Intensive English II Students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador to Develop the Listening Comprehension Skill during the First Semester- 2018.

1. To improve and develop the listening comprehension skills on students, do you know if your students apply any type of listening strategies? Yes? No? Why?

To develop the listening comprehension skill, students were recommended to take notes with a purpose to organize information and retain as much as they could when listening, as per teacher A. Teacher B did not know at all if students applied strategies to develop the listening comprehension skill. Teacher C stated that, even there were some students who knew about metacognitive, which consist on knowing how to study; this just ensured that they did not use this at all. Teacher D said that she did not know if students applied strategies before getting her course but on her class she acknowledged and identified when students applied strategies, even if the strategies were not mentioned by name or type of strategy. In addition; teacher E told the research team, some students were listening to English music, they watched movies and TV in general with subtitles. Also, this worked as external motivation because teachers noticed students needed to be motivated by

someone else. On the other hand, teacher F confirmed that he did not identify any particular strategy but some of his students watched English movies with subtitles.

According to most of the teachers, the majorities of students listened to music and sometimes watched English movies with subtitles. This indicated that students were receiving external motivation to improve and develop their listening comprehension skills and at the same time, they felt self-motivated, this meant; students were more into social affective strategies. Besides, this could be an indicator of cognitive strategies being used unconsciously. If students turned on subtitles every other time, this meant they were trying to get keywords and main ideas or even details of the listening input they were exposed to, this was a clear signal of attempts to apply cognitive strategies through bottom up and top down processes to improve and develop their listening comprehension skill.

Moreover, some teachers said they were promoting metacognitive strategies to get students developing the listening comprehension skill, since students were asked to take notes to organize information and retain while listening. One of the teachers stated that students seemed to know unconsciously about metacognitive strategies since they talked about “how to study” but since there was not a significant improvement this was a clear indicator students did not use it all.

2-Do you notice student's improvement when applying listening strategies?

Yes, No? Explain

According to five professors, they did notice students applying strategies. Teacher A shared with the researchers that there was an improvement but it took a long term period of time. It was a matter of paraphrasing and inferring that it took several months. It was a systematic process, even if there was not a huge improvement because it needed more analysis. Teacher B ensured that students really improved the listening comprehension skill. He said that they should have followed the directions of the experts to develop this skill and succeed in it. He recommended students to get the main ideas of a message, first. However; teacher C did not know if there was student's improvement, just because they applied strategies. Besides, he mentioned students should have identified how helpful

listening strategies were for them and that not to use any strategies meant not to take advantage of the advantages they offered. Nevertheless; teacher D indicated that students were not aware about the improvement they got but they did practice and she noticed the difference when they had conversations with native speakers. Moreover, students pronounced pretty different, when they tried to imitate an accent and they got more vocabulary, it really sounded on them as English, based on teacher E answer. Also, when students performed pre-listening activities, they answered in a faster way, they got better ideas and when they discussed in pairs, stated teacher F.

Most of the teachers stated they did notice improvements when students applied listening strategies. However; it was difficult to measure this during one semester, while students were taking the advanced English course, since teachers considered this should be a long term process.

Two teachers considered, students should have analyzed by themselves if applying strategies would help them to improve and to take advantages of listening activities. Students needed to be aware about the improvement but it seemed that students did not notice. However, some other teachers stated that they did notice the improvement and a difference, because when students were talking they tried to imitate the accent, they catch new words and their pronunciation was outstanding. This improvement was a clear highlight of using social affective strategies. According to a specific observation from one single teacher, there was a real improvement when students had a real self-motivation to practice and improve their listening comprehension skill.

One of the teachers asked students to get the main idea of any listening input they got when performing a listening activity; this was what it is called “to follow a top down process”, that confirmed that this teacher was encouraging students to use cognitive strategies, since he could observe that applying them would help students to improve.

One more teacher mentioned he performed pre-listening activities and he noticed student’s answers were faster with better ideas, because he considered that the activity was really helping students to improve. Also, he asked his students to discuss the ideas they got.

This means, this teacher was clearly promoting metacognitive strategies because of the good results he noticed.

3. Based on your experience and knowledge, do you apply any specific theory or approach related to develop listening comprehension skill? If your answer is yes, which one? And why?

Based on professors' experience and knowledge, teacher A used videos where students could listen to speeches as a specific approach related to the listening comprehension skill, he got them listening to podcasts and authentic material. Teacher B worked with the activities presented by the book but teacher C stated that students needed a lot of input, spoken output and they should have had a lot of exposure to better understand. Because the activities that came on the book did not help too much, he provided students with podcast activities which changed every day because they presented news or videos so he could discuss with one on one activity as well. Professor D prepared pre-listening activities, vocabulary discussion and post-listening activities to a basis, she also used subtitles after at least replaying it twice. With comprehension questions such as; true or false, she considered that students would have reduced the stress before understanding. On the other hand, teacher E did not apply any theory or approach related to the skill. She tried to expose students to the language, she introduced different accents and she emphasized in American English because it was more common and standard English and teacher F performed listening exercises in class, exposure to continuous input, he was breaking the activity down. Pre-listening and while-listening were useful.

The majority of teachers tried to use materials where students could apply any specific type of listening strategy or approach since they considered the exposure to authentic material was a must and really important. This was leaving an open possibility to use social, cognitive or metacognitive strategies. Teachers believe that book activities did not help the students that much, based on their experiences in the past. They tried to change the listening activities everyday by watching videos, news and listening to podcasts. They used materials based on interesting topics for students that in most of the cases they could

link to contents studied in class. This would motivate students to look for more of these media sources. In consequence, this developed external and intrinsic motivation directly linked to social affective strategies.

Two of the teachers focused their listening class exercises on metacognitive strategies, because they prepared their students through a pre-listening activity by breaking the activity down. Then; they followed with a while and post listening activity to have a vocabulary discussion. These teachers considered that using a pre-listening activity helped to reduce stress and anxiety feelings connected as well with the social affective factor.

One of the interviewed teachers, made emphasis on different accents and American English, so students could identify patterns and differences in pronunciation and they could learn to identify keywords, main ideas and details while listening. This made a reference to cognitive strategies, because the teacher encouraged bottom up and top down process approaches on students without their notices.

4-To improve and develop the listening comprehension skills on students, do you promote any type of listening strategies in the classroom? Yes? No? Explain and mention some listening strategies:

To improve and develop the listening comprehension skill on students, Teacher A promoted English listening activities with transcript. They repeated some fragments of the listening. The idea was to reduce the anxiety, to complete the activity students needed to find the part of the listening that they did not understand. Teacher B said that there was no enough time to develop listening activities in class but he provided multimedia sources so that students could take advantage of them. Teacher C said that the ones provided by the book did not help in class so, he suggested to listen to podcasts. In addition, teacher D promoted as well; pre, while and post-listening because those activities were not in the book and she invited students to talk to native speakers. Teacher E played English videos from people all over the world, radio stations, recordings and podcasts because the book presented a lot of accents. Teacher F used a platform provided by the foreign language

department at University of El Salvador, which is called “Moodle” to upload the material from the book and to get it available for each student to listen to it outside the classroom.

Most of the teachers promoted to use multimedia sources as Moodle: a platform used usually at FLD, videos, radio stations and podcasts, since time in class was not enough and book exercises did not help a lot, according to them. They used these media sources so students could learn to identify accents too and because they were available most of the time out of the classroom. This made a clear reference to social affective strategies since to select materials that teachers might have used in class, they took into consideration students’ interests and preferences. Besides, students were motivated to get conversation with native speakers to involve the social aspect even more.

Some teachers were promoting pre-listening and while and post-listening activities. They used a transcript to check the ideas at the end of the listening activity and while students were listening, they replayed some fragments from the recording so students could understand details they were missing and in order to help them to reduce the anxiety levels. These remarks made by teachers are oriented to promote cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

5-Based on your experience and theories and listening strategies knowledge, which type of techniques/ activities would you recommend to be the most efficient for students? Why?

There was one listening technique/activity which teachers considered the most efficient for students; Teacher A: Students should have listened to English as much as they could to get intonation, to get the way to say things; podcasts, speeches news and verify the transcripts. They needed to listen until they have understood what they were saying for several times. Teacher B suggested listening to the radio, music and news to pay attention to conversation from native speakers and to get interested in these conversations. Teacher C recommended listening to real English, relevant and interesting material, and multimedia source with the transcripts. Teacher D said that students will need to read English material an input exposure. Teacher E stated that reading helps to get vocabulary, to watch movies

to be familiar with the language. Each student needed to discover the proper genre of movie that worked better for everyone. Also, teacher F advised to watch movies, cable TV to use transcript and listen to material they like and he suggested being and staying motivated.

Most of the teachers recommended to be exposed to real English, because listening input was a must, to catch the way language was expressed, accent and pronunciation by listening to news, speeches, videos, podcast, etc. where clearly, students could listen to native speakers or different accents from all around the world. Materials should have been relevant and attractive for students since the external and intrinsic motivation factors were involved and the social affective approach played a relevant role. Some teachers believe if students would have used these handy resources, they would have been able to replay them when they needed to understand details and get more information about the background and context, based on that, they recommended to perform activities that involve cognitive strategies, since they consider it will be the most efficient for students. Only one of the interviewed teachers recommended using a transcript for a post-listening activity, so this means only this teacher was recommending to use activities based on metacognitive strategies.

6-What kind of listening activities or strategies do you share with your students in class?

Professors had listening strategies to share with students; Professor A shared speeches, Ted talks, extended listening from the books , songs but this process did not help advanced listening procedures or academic topics. Teacher B shared videos from the laptop with subtitles to take notes and keywords to understand. Teacher C explained how to do listening activities and how to approach to do things but students always went back on their own ways. Teacher D shared with students the obligation to get their own cultural background, to investigate and to prepare themselves. Teacher E provided a multiple choice list, quiz funny videos to listen to and to interpret and teacher F shared exercises from the book and motivation with listening process for gist.

The most of the teachers shared and perform activities based on speeches, recordings about academic topics, videos of trendy and interesting topics for students. They motivated students to investigate the different cultural backgrounds and prepare by themselves, to encourage a social affective value.

Just a few of the interviewed teachers used these same materials taken from different websites and multimedia sources to share with students different kind of listening exercises and complete listening activities as make multiple choice list, quizzes or exercises in order to understand and interpret by listening to get the main and general idea, keywords and detailed information. To complete those type of listening activities students needed to know the benefits to put in practice the cognitive and metacognitive strategies. First, students needed to get familiar with the content of the material and then with the activity and the questions to answer, in order to make easier to understand while they were listening and discussing to respond at the end.

7-Do you believe that encourage students to listen to materials found in any type of multimedia sources, would motivate them to reinforce their listening skills? Yes? No? Why?

Teacher A believed that encouraging students to listen to material found in multimedia source was a good way to be motivated externally and internally. Teacher B said that when students felt motivated, they could improve faster. Teacher C said that students acquired competences with external motivation encouraged to listen to real material. If they did not get used to, they would be handicapped for the listening skill. Teacher D confirmed that students would leave the comfort zone with a comprehensible material according to their level. Teacher E agreed with this process of multimedia source because with the real listening they were offering, students practiced a lot. Finally, teacher F believed that with students' motivation and their current topics such as; health, news and sports, students' level of stress and anxiety to understand and improve their listening skill would be reduced.

All teachers believed that listen to material found on internet and different multimedia sources would motivate students and reinforce their listening skill. Because students should have felt self-motivated to improve, but also they must have received external motivation since that would have encouraged them to improve and develop their listening comprehension skill. Teachers have help and achieved this on students by using real material as listening input, so students could get more familiar to real language and to be always listening to something that slightly surpass their current possibilities. This was the best way to practice, according to them.

According to teachers, the emotional and social affective factors played the most important role to encourage students to improve their listening comprehension skill. Since using videos, podcasts, speeches based on students' interests, would help a lot to reduce the stress.

4.2 STUDENTS' FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The following results present the real and current information from this research work obtained after the focus session with students. The classification or categorization criteria for the kind of listening strategies is highlighted in bold within the analysis presented below. The analysis classification and interpretation are based on the responses given by students from Advanced Intensive English II who participated in the focus group.

Exploring the Listening Strategies Applied by Advanced Intensive English II Students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador to Develop the Listening Comprehension Skill during the First Semester- 2018.

To achieve a listening activity or for more effective communication in a real life setting:

1-What do you do to develop your listening skill? Have you ever thought if there is any type of strategy that you can try and can help you to develop and improve your listening skill? Yes, No? Explain:

In connection with what students did in order to develop their listening skill, their answers were: listening to music and watching movies or series in English. These common factors put in evidence that these options were considered the most appropriated for them to master their listening comprehension skill. This finding was a positive result of the easiest access to technology for students as searching music, movies or series on internet whenever they wanted to.

All the participants from the focus group expressed that there should have been some strategies or ways that would help them to improve their listening comprehension

skill. At the same time, to develop their listening comprehension skill, students followed **Cognitive** and **Social Affective Strategies** in the same level.

All students applied **Cognitive Strategies**, students were unconsciously using and following top down and bottom up processes to identify main ideas when watching videos or listening. They also tried to use the context to identify keywords. To identify details, students followed a bottom up process. When they were unable to catch and understand details, students tried sometimes to use the subtitles to guess the words that were missing through the context and background knowledge about grammatical structures. They used translation when it was needed.

Besides, all students highlighted the importance of **Social Affective Strategies**, they were used by students, since they encouraged themselves in the most of the cases to look for those media resources that they believed would help them to develop their listening comprehension skill. They felt motivated to look for material and content of their interest. In addition, they tried to have conversations with native speakers to improve and when they did not understand, they used to ask to repeat. Students believed interactions with native speakers were really social strategies that would help them to build up self-confidence.

2- What do you know about listening strategies? What is it important for you to comprehend the listening material? Explain:

Two of the students mentioned they had a small notion what listening strategies were about. In contrast, most of the learners said that they had already heard about listening skill and they wrote: “This skill is useful in the process of learning a new language because it helps to have a fluent conversation”. Students recognized the vital role that listening played in learning a new language in order to get the message effectively, as part of the four macro skills that a language is composed of.

Students knew about **Cognitive** and **Social Strategies** to comprehend the listening material.

All students were unconsciously aware about the importance of **Social Strategies**, at the moment they were talking with native speakers, friends and teachers, they stimulated themselves to improve their listening input because they considered continuous exposure was important to learn how the language was expressed and they understood they needed to look for it. Students knew they would have learned to listen just by getting a continuous listening exposure, and have a real self-motivation to comprehend the listening material.

All students were applying **Cognitive Strategies**, unconsciously they were already familiar with top down and bottom up processes. Since, they expressed they needed to focus on keywords, main ideas and context to comprehend the listening material.

After listening to the participants' answers, researchers will present brief definitions of listening strategies and listening activities.

To develop and improve your listening skill:

3-What kind of listening materials are promoted in class? Explain:

Regarding to the listening materials promoted in class, there was a huge variety of this kind of materials proposed by teachers during the class to develop listening comprehension skill. In fact, an acceptable percentage of students said that videos and audios were the top promoted materials in class by teachers. Some of them mentioned that radio forums, documentaries and exercises proposed by the book were promoted in class as well. Most students were recommended using listening materials in order to improve their listening comprehension skills.

All the materials promoted in classroom by teachers were oriented in the most of the time to **cognitive** and **metacognitive strategies**. However, in some cases teachers

considered the importance of students' interests towards any topic to present any type of listening material, taking into consideration at some point: **social affective strategies**.

Teachers were promoting in first place CD book audios, recordings, songs, dialogues, online exercises during the class, these type of materials were more oriented to practice through **metacognitive strategies** in order to perform pre, while and post listening activities.

Secondly, with the same continuous frequency teachers promoted performing activities with CD book audios, recordings, songs, dialogues, sometimes; exercises online during the class in order for students to be able to use to down and bottom up processes to get first the main idea and keywords and then the details, these exercises were clearly focused on **cognitive strategies**.

In third place, just a few teachers tried to promote materials of the students' interest by using movies, documentaries, songs, etc. This was a proof that the **social affective aspects/strategies** were almost forgotten at the moment to choose the materials for classroom activities.

4-Which kind of listening materials do you use to develop your listening skill on your own? Explain:

Among the listening materials preferred by students were: videos from YouTube, listening songs, and voice recordings to identify through listening the errors when speaking and material related to the context of the situation. All students had a specific strategy that worked the best for them because of the results they have obtained. According to their needs and experiences, learners trusted in some strategies or just in a specific one with the purpose to achieve the goals they were proposed to.

To develop listening comprehension skill, students were using materials focused on **social affective** and **cognitive strategies**:

First, strategies were emphasized in the **social-affective** aspect. All students selected materials as music, movies, online exercises, YouTube videos, news and documentaries, TV shows, radio broadcastings, interviews, podcasts. All of them were oriented to contents and topics of students' interest.

Secondly, all students highlighted the importance to select material to practice through **cognitive strategies**, as music, movies, online exercises, YouTube videos, book audio, CD's provided by teacher, news and documentaries, TV shows, radio broadcastings, interviews, podcasts, with all these materials students were always focused on looking for the general, main idea and keywords, they tried to understand and interpret the context.

5-What kind of listening strategies are promoted and recommended in class at the moment to work in listening activities or being exposed to the language? Explain:

Furthermore, students expressed that certain options were promoted in class by the teachers in order to improve their listening. These options were: listening to music, watching English videos, watching sketches, using pronunciation recordings. In this sense, it was important to remark the fact that students were the ones who confirmed if they were or not encouraged by teachers to apply listening strategies.

The listening strategies promoted and recommended in class at the moment to work on listening activities or being exposed to the language were:

In first place, the most recommended were **social-affective strategies**, exposure to real listening input, as talking with native speakers, watching videos, news and movies, listening to music, and topics of the students' interest and motivation of continuous social interactions.

Secondly, the most of the students believe that **cognitive strategies** were promoted and recommended to them, so that they could apply them. They believe that if they were unable to understand, at least they should have been able to catch the meaning, so they used top down and bottom up processes.

At the end, just a few students considered that **metacognitive strategies** were promoted by checking a grammar structure, checked most likely because it was previously introduced in class and probably in a pre-listening activity; this was performed just for a few students.

Every time you're exposed to the language, in a real life conversation or in any evaluated listening activity:

6-What kind of feelings do you experience when you notice that you don't get at least the most important key points? Explain:

Undoubtedly, learners had great expectations when listening to real English input because they considered that at that stage of their learning process they should have been able to understand almost everything what they were listening to. In this way, students could have the bases to get a fluent conversation and at the same time evaluated their personal performance after having applied different strategies. However, a lot of bad feelings were experienced by students when they did not understand what someone was saying. They dealt with these feelings: anger, nervousness, frustration, anxiety and a feeling of lost. In consequence, most of the students got stuck in the conversation and some of them explained that they tried to manage their feelings when they were involved in this kind of situations. The most common solution that learners applied was guessing, because they could have a closer idea whenever they were not understanding a thing.

In this specific question, the importance of the **social affective strategies** got highlighted. The affective factor made a difference, students expressed that when they were nervous and stressed no matter if they tried to apply the top down process or any type of cognitive strategy to get main ideas, it was hard to understand and it got even worse to get details. The value of students' interest and control of emotions became an essential key to develop the listening skill.

7- What kind of listening strategies do you try to apply to get the key points? What do you do to get the key points and main ideas? Explain:

Definitely, not all the time, it would be possible to understand the whole information when listening. In this case, it was acceptable to get just the main idea in order to understand the messages in a very general way. This was helpful to avoid getting students lost when the information was not clear or familiar for them. Learners mentioned some strategies applied by them in order to get the general idea: getting keywords, applying guessing, watching videos, asking people and using the context to identify the most important information

The majority of students used **cognitive strategies** by following a top down process, they tried to understand the context to get the main ideas, to use perception and catch keywords, and they used the prior knowledge to see if it had to do with a topic previously studied in class.

Besides, the **metacognitive strategies** were applied just for a few students, since they used to visit websites to perform listening exercises for advanced English level students and the most of these exercises had three different stages: pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening.

8-What kind of listening strategy do you use to find about details? What do you do to understand very specific information? Explain:

Sometimes, it was not well enough to get just the general idea. In fact, details and specific information were useful for students to *deep* on the situations they were listening to, because in this way they got involved in the situations and could be well informed what they were listening to. Some of the strategies that students applied when they were interested in finding details were: searching on internet, finding keywords, getting concentrated, taking notes, reading previously, and using repetitions.

The most of students used **Cognitive strategies**, the bottom up process was a must, and they took notes and understood the context after getting the main idea and keywords.

Just a few students were using **Metacognitive strategies**: Students paid attention and read about topics before the activities, as a kind of pre-listening. They were replaying the audios for repetitions while listening to get the details, they were taking notes and read more if it was necessary.

9-Do you consider or perceive any improvements when you apply any listening strategy? What is the most successful and effective strategy and listening material for you to develop the listening skill? Explain:

In most of the cases, based on the students' experiences after applying any specific strategy, the improvement was evident since they could understand in a better way what they were listening to. The strategies that have given them the best results were: getting interest in the topic, getting involved in the context, identifying keywords, looking materials on internet, watching videos and interviews on internet, and repetition of the recordings.

All students believe they would have improvements as a positive result of applying listening strategies. However, the most of the answers were oriented to **social affective**

strategies, students looked for materials encouraged by self-motivation and interesting topics for them. Secondly, the **cognitive strategies** were the next ones under students' perceptions that would help them to get more improvements and success because they were really effective in their opinion, according to their answers. Students were focused on recognizing keywords, main ideas, then in understanding the context to find details. Moreover, they worked on identifying different accents, tips of phonetics and pronunciation; this was clearly with the purpose of getting details too. Finally, **metacognitive strategies** seemed not to be used a lot since just few students perceived improvements by replaying the audios while listening, this meant that under students' perceptions, doing this did not really cause a significant improvement or it was not an effective process, since just two of them mentioned it.

Base on your experiences and your obtained results during the process to develop the listening comprehension skill:

10- Which strategies and listening materials would you recommend to the advanced English students to apply so they can develop successfully, effectively and faster their listening skill? Explain:

Some recommendations that students would suggest to other advanced English learners in order to improve their listening skill were as follows: listening to music with subtitles, watching interesting videos on YouTube, listening to English native speakers, listening to English radios and watching news in English. Students recommended following these advices because they obtained better academic results after applying any of those real listening sources.

According to students' answers, all the real listening input exposure from different media sources and conversations with native speakers were the best option, and this could have come from materials about interesting topics for them. Students once again placed on the top the importance of **social affective strategies** to develop successfully, effectively

and faster their listening skill. Secondly, some students recommended **cognitive strategies** as a good alternative to recognize keywords and general ideas, to identify accents and to highlight vocabulary importance, all those factors that would help them to perform the top-down and bottom-up process successfully. Finally, none students have recommended **metacognitive strategies**.

5. MAJOR FINDINGS

This research was aimed at describing the listening strategies applied by Advanced Intensive English II students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador to develop their listening comprehension skill. The research was based on defining the listening comprehension skill and its characteristics aspects, identifying the different and most effective listening strategies applied by Advanced English students and how they develop their listening skill.

The research work findings are divided in three different groups: The findings obtained from the questionnaire answered by 12 student participants from different groups of Advanced Intensive English II during the focus group session, the findings obtained from the different interviews to 6 teachers from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador that are delivering the Advanced Intensive English II course and the findings obtained after the triangulation comparative analysis between both data sources.

5.1 TEACHERS' FINDINGS

The findings obtained from the interviews revealed the main strategies promoted more often in classroom to develop the students' listening comprehension skill from the teachers' point of view. Based on what teachers considered, indeed would help students to develop their listening comprehension skill, the type of listening strategies are listed below in hierarchical order according to the frequency teachers promoted each type of strategy.

5.1.1 SOCIAL/ AFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

Social Strategies: According to some teachers, students showed sometimes interest of talking with native speakers, since socializing would allow them to receive real listening input and be familiar with accents. Besides, in a conversation when they don't understand they could ask to repeat or clarification. Teachers stated if students were not motivated by themselves to approach to somebody to practice, even if they would have encouraged them, students would never look for somebody because they were not interested.

Affective Strategies: According to some teachers' answers, they used the CD audio book activities almost every single time they have carried over a listening activity in classrooms. Sometimes, some teachers used in class radio broadcastings, podcasts, videos, speeches related to topics of students' interests to encourage them to be exposed to the language.

5.1.2 COGNITIVE STRATEGIES

Top-down process: Teachers prepared listening activities oriented in answering questions by finding out the main idea and some keywords. In order to identify the main idea, general information and keywords of the audio recording or video in this type of activities, teachers stated students took advantage of prior background knowledge, the content just presented and studied in class as vocabulary, and context to complete the tasks.

Bottom-up Process: Teachers replayed audios and made emphasis on the answers students needed to look for by stopping it, they used a transcript at the end of the activity, a vocabulary list and grammar structures studied in class, with the purpose to make easier for students the task to find details after having already main ideas. Prior knowledge was really important in order to students could guess and get details or catch the pronunciation patterns or comprehend in spite of a particular accent.

5.1.3 METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES

Pre-listening: Teachers presented the instructions and a plan for the listening task, they were always breaking down the activity, read the questions and explain. In this first stage of a listening activity, vocabulary and grammar structures studied in class or prior background knowledge were required so students could follow the instructions and know what they were looking for and trying to understand while listening. Teachers believed this helped students to reduce the stress and level of anxiety because while they were discussing with teacher and classmates what the activity was about they tended to forget and got relax. As a result, once the audio started to play they were ready and more focus on the content and not on the fact they might not be able to understand.

While- listening: Teachers kept silence and just monitored students, they noticed some students were taking notes whenever they listened to something relevant that could help them to complete the activity and tried to pay attention as much as they can. Some students looked stressed. Teachers replayed it twice or three times if necessary.

Post-listening: Teachers evaluated comprehension, asking students to discuss in pairs or groups so they could share their answers and listen to each other and teacher could find out and monitor how much students have been able to understand, their level of comprehension of the task and if they were able to get main ideas, keywords and/or details.

5.1.4 TEACHERS' FINDINGS SUMMARY

Most of the teachers mentioned they suggested or advised students how to work on a listening activity by following a specific listening strategy as listening to real materials of their interest, or pre, while and post listening, but at the end students were always looking for their own strategies and ways to improve and develop their listening comprehension skill based on their own motivations, no matter what the teachers have said in class.

Teachers stated students were always looking for a way to improve and develop their listening comprehension skill in their own based on personal interests and what they believed, it works better for them and could really help them to achieve and get the effectiveness and results they expected.

Teachers remarked the fact that if students would have not been interest in the topics of the listening activities developed in classroom or homework, they could probably have completed them, but most likely students would have learned nothing, since it was not worthy for them listen about a topic that did not call their attention. According to a few teachers, external and intrinsic motivations were working by hand so students could develop effectively and successfully their listening comprehension skill. In other words, this meant that topic selection for class was the type of external motivation and students' continue interest to improve was considered a self-motivation, they complemented each other with the purpose that students could achieve.

5.2 STUDENTS' FINDINGS

The findings obtained from the students' questionnaire answers during the focus group session revealed the main and top type of strategies among cognitive, metacognitive and social/affective strategies that students used to develop their listening comprehension skill, and they are listed below starting from the ones most effective and used really often to the ones used least frequently.

5.2.1 SOCIAL/ AFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

All students that attended to the focus group placed them on the top, the importance of these type of strategies to develop successfully, effectively and faster their listening skill was really remarkable and highlighted in all the answers. Students liked them since these were focused on practicing and willingness to achieve.

According to students, social-affective strategies were considered the most efficient or appropriate to improve and develop their listening comprehension skill.

Social strategies: All students mentioned the importance of having a daily life or casual conversation with native speakers either face to face if it is possible or at least over the phone or any media source. Besides, they remarked that those type of conversations help them to identify and adapt their ears to different accents, the way language is expressed and improve pronunciation. Students believe that if they did not understand what speakers were saying in English during a conversation they could always tell or ask each other to repeat what they said. Also, students believe conversations were a real exposure to the language that could help them to get used to it and develop their listening skill.

Affective strategies: Students encouraged themselves to look for materials and listening activities that could allow them a real exposure to the language. Also, they believe the external motivation is important, but all participant students highlighted the importance

of self-motivation to be exposed to the language through real listening material and conversations with native speakers as much as possible.

It is really important to mention that students preferred to do activities and looked for different type of listening input related to topics of their interest. They always were always looking for these activities on the internet; they liked watching videos in YouTube, searched for songs, educational topics, speeches, news, radios, TV series, etc. Besides, they looked for the possibility of talking to native speakers.

5.2.2 COGNITIVE STRATEGIES

Secondly, all Advanced Intensive English II students participating in the focus group, preferred to listen to real English listening materials that they could always find on the internet, such as videos, podcasts, speeches, movies, radio broadcastings, news, TV series, documentaries and listening to music. Students consider that continuous exposure to real listening input was really effective to improve a lot and develop way better their listening comprehension skill. To understand the content presented in these type of real listening input materials students were using and following these processes:

Top-down strategies: The strategy students used the most was listening to comprehend general or main ideas and keywords. Students were trying to identify the context and background situation prior to start and pretend to comprehend specific details.

Bottom- up strategies: Students tried to find details and understand each word. In this process, to understand before the context and background situation, has helped students a lot to try to guess details, secondary ideas and patterns of pronunciation.

5.2.3 METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES

Just few students said they visited websites to perform listening exercises for advanced English level. It is important to remark and highlight the most of these exercises for advanced English levels, have three different stages: pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening. These stages were followed unconsciously by students either in class or when they were practicing by themselves at home and the evidence was marked in their answers.

Pre-listening Activities: Both students mentioned a pre-listening activity was performed by teachers before a listening exercise during the class, whenever there was a recording from the book and a grammar structure was involved. Besides, they were looking for these type of exercises on the internet for further practice.

While-listening Activities: Both students stated they were taking notes while listening, they were checking what part of the content they did not understand. If they were in a classroom listening activity, they asked teachers to replay it, if they were at home they replayed it by themselves and if it was necessary turned on subtitles as well.

Post-listening Activities: Both students specified teacher encouraged to discuss in pairs their different answers to the questions and what they have understood at the end of the listening exercise and to compare with their notes and answers.

5.2.4 STUDENTS' FINDINGS SUMMARY

All the students based their opinions and answers on the effectiveness and results they obtained applying a strategy, because they were focus on the improvement and level of comprehension they noticed whenever they listened to real English they were exposed to, after a lot of practice. Since practice to improve was a matter of self-motivation and real willingness to achieve.

According to the students' answers, social-affective strategies, presented a positive effect on them and were surely helpful to increase, improve and develop their listening comprehension skill. Students could practice as much as they wanted, since with social-affective strategies the intrinsic and external motivation factors played a title role.

Cognitive strategies were recommended as well by students, because they were effective and successful to help them to start to understand by using their prior knowledge, then to get main ideas and finally consolidate meanings through details. Students could practice as much as possible.

Based on the answers, just a few students were using metacognitive strategies, but they did not recommended or mentioned anything that would indicate a positive impact or improvement to develop their listening comprehension skill.

5.3 FINDINGS TRIANGULATION AND ANALYSIS

5.3.1 SIMILARITIES AND COMMON PERSPECTIVES BETWEEN DATA COLLECTION SOURCES

-According to teachers, the social affective strategies were the top strategies applied by students. -Students confirmed the social affective strategies were the top strategies applied, because they were the most helpful and with the best results to develop the listening comprehension skill.

-The social affective strategies were highly recommended by teachers and students to develop the listening comprehension skill.

-According to students and teachers, the social affective were the top strategies promoted in classroom since they were the ones that would have helped to develop as its best the students listening comprehension skill.

-Teachers stated that they encouraged students to have conversations with native speakers, in order to learn patterns of pronunciation and get used to the language.

-Students mentioned that teachers said in class “talking to native speakers, would help them to learn to identify accents and pronunciation from native speakers”.

-Students’ answers reflected that they had been told by teachers in class about the importance of having exposure to real listening input as videos from YouTube, speeches, songs, movies, news, etc.

-According to students and teachers, the cognitive strategies were the second listening strategy promoted in class.

-The top-down process was frequently applied, students explained in their answers that to complete a lot of the listening activities in class they tried to catch the main ideas and at least keywords.

-The top-down process was frequently promoted in class, teachers prepared listening activities oriented to answer questions by finding out the main idea and some keywords.

-Teachers have created students awareness about prior knowledge, grammar structures and vocabulary to place any situation in context and to be able to get main ideas from it.

-Students answers remarked the first thing that came to their minds was always trying at least to infer meanings, general ideas through the context and keywords when completing a listening activity or exercise in classroom or even at home.

-Metacognitive strategies were at the bottom of the preferences from teachers and students.

-Students and teachers answers remarked about the importance of real listening input materials oriented to students' preferences and topics of their interest.

5.3.2 CONTRADICTIONS AND DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN DATA COLLECTION SOURCES

-All interviewed teachers stated that they were promoting metacognitive strategies by performing a pre-listening activity. However, students did not mention something about any type of particular activity performed before, while and after the audio was played during a class.

-Unconsciously, it seems that a few students were applying every other time metacognitive strategies. The answers of just two students confirmed it. They looked for listening exercises, for advanced English levels on different websites and most of times, for completing these tasks, students needed to apply metacognitive strategies, even if students were not aware about the process they followed to understand the content.

-Teachers mentioned that they explained and made a breakdown of the listening activities based on the topics studied in classes. However, students did not mentioned anything about performing any type or particular activity before any listening exercise.

-All interviewed teachers stated they encouraged their students to look for real listening input to use it, instead of just the audio CD book. In class, they took into consideration topics of student's interests to be an external motivation. However, students mentioned that in class the most of audios teachers played were from the audio CD book, just in some cases they brought real listening materials.

-Teachers mentioned they motivated suggesting speeches, YouTube videos, English music, movies, news and so forth. However, according to students, real English input was only used in classroom, sometimes.

-According students, teachers did encourage to be exposed to real listening input, but mostly at home, since to bring other materials different than those from the book to classroom was more difficult.

-Listening strategies were promoted only when teachers suggested to look for real listening materials to be familiar with real English and pronunciation.

-Self-motivation was highlighted and its importance for students was remarked over external motivation. Students stated that they searched on internet materials and this was done always on their own to develop effectively their listening comprehension skill, in

order to be exposed to real English and not just because a teacher recommended them to do it.

-Teachers did not mention any reference to something special to follow a bottom-up process so students could identify details. However, students mentioned they tried to look for videos on YouTube about pronunciation patterns and accents' differences with the purpose to be able to discover details and identify those patterns in a listening exercise or real life conversation.

-Teachers asked students to try to be exposed to real listening input as much as they could, but students encouraged by intrinsic motivation were giving purposes to do it. Students were listening to real English audios and having real life conversations even with native speakers and were applying unconsciously different listening strategies above all top-down and then bottom-up processes to develop their listening comprehension skill and had a higher level of understanding of the listening input they were receiving.

-Students applied the listening strategies that they considered that worked better for them. Even if teachers promoted something in class, students applied them in classroom but once they were home they would always go back in their own.

-Some teachers mentioned that students, who were exposed to the real English language at least for a short time, could have developed their listening skill faster and it was easy to notice when they were interacting to each other in class. Some other teachers contradicted this by stating that even if students were exposed to real English language it was a long term process to develop the listening comprehension skill and within a semester of classes it was hard to notice a real difference and huge improvement in the development of the listening comprehension skill.

-According to teachers, anxiety and stress levels could be reduced and control by preparing students through a pre-listening activity, this was contradictory because teachers

performed this type of activities focused on metacognitive strategies and not really thinking initially in the impact they would have on the affective factor for students.

-Reduction of stress and anxiety before a listening evaluation was especially relevant for students; since they believed that the stress they felt played a really important role in the results they would obtain and in concentration while listening and answering questions. However, students did not confirm teachers' affirmations, or something that would really indicate a pre-listening was made before any activity or listening evaluation.

5.3.3 NEW QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

-What is the importance of the time students were exposed to real listening input?
Does it make a difference in the process to develop the listening comprehension skill?

-How would the knowledge about patterns of pronunciation and different accents help students to catch details in a listening exercise?

- What are the steps that students really apply to identify details in a listening activity?

-What other factors could be considered that might affect the development of the listening comprehension skill?

-What other factors are considered that could help students to develop more effectively the listening comprehension skill?

-How would anxiety and stress control might help to develop more effectively the listening comprehension skill?

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

Social affective strategies were the top strategies applied by students, because they were oriented to self-motivation and real willingness to achieve a good listening level. Also, the external motivation factor made a remarkable difference, this was the reason why teachers mentioned the importance of using in class topics of students' interest and emphasized on having conversations with native speakers to reinforce the relevance and positive impact of the social factor.

Furthermore, students were following an unconscious top-down process to understand and use prior knowledge to get main ideas and keywords to consolidate a general context. Also, students were unconsciously applying a bottom-up process to find out specific details. Both cognitive strategies were effective and successful to help students to obtain good results, and to facilitate the process to develop the listening comprehension skill.

Moreover, students explained that teachers applied a pre-listening activity to explain and break down listening exercises to remark the relevance of grammar structures in context. While-listening activities were applied, as well, to take notes and identify what students could not understand followed by post-listening to discuss answers and the benefits these types of strategies offered to improve and develop the listening comprehension skill.

Even though students and teachers were not aware about the usage of strategies when teachers guided the students and when students applied the strategies. Both ends confirmed that by applying any listening strategy learned in class such as top-down,

bottom-up, pre-listening, post and while-listening or new activities which students could find among their way, there may always be an improvement to develop the listening comprehension skill.

To conclude, teachers intended to encourage students to continue applying listening strategies or activities to perceive the proper development on this English area. Otherwise; students would not be motivated to discover extra listening activities out the classroom as when they are exposed themselves to English conversations with native speakers.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.2.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS

1-Teachers should highlight the importance of performing a top-down process over a bottom-up process, explaining students they should gather main ideas and keywords first, and then to make easier the task of looking for details follow a bottom-up process to help them to develop the listening comprehension skill and get successful results.

2-Teachers should perform a pre-listening activity before any listening evaluation or exercise to help students to reduce and control their anxiety and stress levels. They should be conscious that even for advanced English learners; the affective factor could make a difference in the students' performance.

3-Teachers should monitor students in class when they are exposed to listening input in order to identify which strategies are the best, based on the context or type of listening activity they need to complete and to overcome difficulties and listening gaps students might have.

6.2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS

1-Students should put in practice the listening activities learned in class. They should motivate themselves to identify and know more listening strategies even teachers have not recommend and look for more.

2-Students should go beyond and exercise themselves to avoid getting only keywords when they develop any listening activity so that they get more relevant aspects and details.

3-Students should expose themselves to practice their English competences; they should look for conversation clubs or interact with international people to communicate using English language and to be continuously exposed to real daily life listening input.

6.2.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE AUTHORITIES OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

1-Authorities of the Foreign Language Department should encourage teachers to evaluate students confirming if students apply the real listening material promoted in class and identify areas of opportunities to work on for future courses.

2-Authorities of the Foreign Language Department should add up the most relevant listening strategies such as; top-down, bottom-up, pre, while and post-listening activities on the semester curricula for each developed English class in the Foreign Language Department.

3-Authorities of the Foreign Language Department should create co and extracurricular trainings for English teachers where they can learn more about listening strategies and techniques to teach and guide students to develop their listening comprehension skill in a higher specialization way.

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ANNEXES



**University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Science
Foreign Language Department**



INTERVIEW FOR PROFESSORS

Objective: To describe the listening strategies applied by Advanced Intensive English II students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador that contribute to develop the listening comprehension skill.

Instructions: Answer the following questions related to the listening strategies, theories/approaches and listening materials. The information is confidential and will be used for academic research purposes.

Date: _____

1. To improve and develop the listening comprehension skills on students, do you know if your students apply any type of listening strategies? Yes? No? Why?

2. Do you notice student's improvement when applying listening strategies? Yes, No? Explain

3. Based on your experience and knowledge, do you apply any specific theory or approach related to develop listening comprehension skill? If your answer is yes, which one? And why?

4. To improve and develop the listening comprehension skills on students, do you promote any type of listening strategies in the classroom? Yes? No? Explain and mention some listening strategies:

5. Based on your experience and theories and listening strategies knowledge, which type of techniques/ activities would you recommend to be the most efficient for students? Why?

6. What kind of listening activities or strategies do you share with your students in class?

7. Do you believe that encourage students to listen to materials found in any type of multimedia sources, would motivate them to reinforce their listening skills? Yes? No? Why?



University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Science
Foreign Language Department



QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS' FOCUS GROUP

Objective: To describe the listening strategies applied by Advanced Intensive English II students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador that contribute to develop the listening comprehension skill.

The researchers will use this questionnaire to collect the answers to the following questions by taking notes that best describes the way students apply each listening strategy, theory/approach, listening materials to develop successfully and effective their listening skill as Advance English II students. To start with the focus group session, researchers will introduce themselves and will explain to the participants the research work objectives and aims in a friendly and funny voice tone and using standard vocabulary to build rapport with the students so they can feel confident and comfortable and to obtain the most accurate results.

The information is confidential and will be used for academic research purposes.

To achieve a listening activity or for more effective communication in a real life setting:

1-What do you do you do to develop your listening skill? Have you ever thought if there is any type of strategy that you can try and can help you to develop and improve your listening skill? Yes, No? Explain:

2- What do you know about listening strategies? What is it important for you to comprehend the listening material? Explain:

After listening to the participants' answers, researchers will present brief definitions of listening strategies and listening activities.

To develop and improve your listening skill:

3-What kind of listening materials are promoted in class? Explain:

4-Which kind of listening materials do you use to develop your listening skill on your own? Explain:

5-What kind of listening strategies are promoted and recommended in class at the moment to work in listening activities or being exposed to the language? Explain:

Every time you're exposed to the language, in a real life conversation or in any evaluated listening activity:

6-What kind of feelings do you experience when you notice that you don't get at least the most important key points? Explain:

7-What kind of listening strategies do you try to apply to get the key points? What do you do to get the key points and main ideas? Explain:

8-What kind of listening strategy do you use to find about details? What do you do to understand very specific information? Explain:

9-Do you consider or perceive any improvements when you apply any listening strategy? What is the most successful and effective strategy and listening material for you to develop the listening skill? Explain:

Base on your experiences and your obtained results during the process to develop the listening comprehension skill:

10- Which strategies and listening materials would you recommend to the advanced English students to apply so they can develop successfully, effectively and faster their listening skill? Explain:

Thank you for your participation!