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

Universidad de El Salvador
Hacia la libertad por la cultura

RESEARCH PROJECT:

"THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE INTENSIVE ADVANCED ENGLISH I STUDENTS IN THEIR PERFORMANCE OF THE LISTENING SKILL AT THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR DURING SEMESTER I-2019"

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ABSTRACT

The researchers conducted the descriptive research entitled "**The internal and external factors that influence Intensive Advanced English students in their performance of the listening skill at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador during the semester I -2019.**" Through this descriptive research, the researchers intended to identify the internal and external factors that hinder the development of the listening skill. To achieve this, the researchers carried out a series of steps. The descriptive research involved the researchers, two teachers, and fifty Advanced English students at the University of El Salvador, Semester I, 2019. To know the target population's problem with regards to their listening skills, the researchers made use of different data collection instruments. After collecting and analyzing the data, the researchers provided the findings and conclusions. The results of this descriptive research showed that the internal and external factors might hinder the students' development of their listening skills.

INTRODUCTION

Listening is a skill which is essential for the mastery of the English Language because it makes users understand the language in intensity, making it easier to produce a language. Gebhard (2000) stated that listening is not a passive skill but an active one because we need to be receptive to others. Also, this includes paying attention to explanations, questions, and opinions. Brown (2001) also defined listening as an interactive process that provides for cognitive, psychomotor, and effective mechanisms. According to Thomlison Hamouda (2013), listening is the ability to identify and understand what people are saying. This process is also about learning a speaker's accent or pronunciation vocabulary and comprehension of meaning.

Listening is the most difficult skill to be mastered. According to Graham (2005), the various difficulties that commonly occur in listening comprehension, such as making a prediction, guessing the unknown word, recognizing the main point, and many other such problems encountered by the students in the listening comprehension subject. Furthermore, many factors affect listening subjects like internal and external factors. For this reason, the following study contains a brief description of the internal and external factors that influence the Advanced English students in their Listening performance; the investigation carried out at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador. Moreover, in this project, the researchers take the descriptive type of study because it helps to provide knowledge about the characteristics of every internal and external factor, regarding the sample for the research project it was for three groups of Advanced English students of the University of El Salvador. At the end of the research process, the researchers will present the results to demonstrate the relationships between the different factors that affect the development of the students listening skill.

CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 Description of the Problem

Learning a second language is not an easy task; students must master the four macro skills that will allow them not only to understand the language but also to produce it effectively. These four macro skills are speaking, writing, reading, and listening. Students need to work on the development of those skills as they are the basis of developing proficiency.

Some skills are more challenging for students to master, and one of these skills is listening since listening is an active form of communication and is a dynamic process. As well, listening is one of the basic needs of human beings, and without it, it is difficult to understand between one another. When being immersed in a class in which a student is not exposed enough to the foreign language, listening turns to be one of the most affected skills when learning a target language. Class time will never be enough to practice and develop such a remarkable ability.

For this reason, the research team has decided to carry out a descriptive study to find out the main internal and external factors that are affecting the listening performance in Intensive Advanced English students at the Foreign Language Department during semester I-2019.

1.2 Research Questions

General Research Question

- ➢ What are the internal and external factors that influence Advanced English students´ listening performance at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador?

Specific Research Questions

- ➢ What are the internal factors that influence the listening performance of the Advanced English students of the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador?

- ➢ What are the external factors that influence the listening performance of the Advanced English students of the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador?

- ➢ What kind of teaching can help students to improve their performance in listening skills?

- ➢ What kind of advice can help the teachers to improve the listening class for the students?

1.3 Justification

The goal of any language is communication, and the aim of learning a language is to be able to communicate effectively. When getting a foreign language, the learners must develop four macro skills which are speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Teachers have to build student's skills and integrate them so that students do not have any difficulties communicating with others. However, not all the teachers can achieve this goal since all the students have different learning styles, and not all students develop the four skills at the same level. For example, some students are skillful when writing, whereas some others are very good at speaking. For instance, it is frustrating to participate or to give opinions in class when a student has not understood what the teacher has said. At this point, the listening skill plays an essential role in daily lives, and as Cross stated without listening skill, no communication can be achieved (1998).

This phenomenon is occurring with Advanced English students at the University of El Salvador. Thus, the researchers consider of great importance to find out what are the main internal and external factors that are affecting the development of the listening skill. Therefore, the researchers will carry out a descriptive research since is one in which information collected without changing the environment, and it was used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe what exists for variables or conditions in a situation. This research will help the researchers to find out what are the main internal and external factors that hinder the development of the listening skill in the Advanced English course at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador.

This way, the researchers will be more informed about this type of problem, which can lead to successful prevention of the phenomenon to occur in the future. On the other hand, this study will help teachers to become aware of the factors that are affecting their student's listening ability and consider them when teaching different classes. Also, this research will allow teachers to know their student´s points of view about the listening methodology that they are using. As well, the students will be benefited since they will learn their weaknesses in regards to their listening skills so that they can find strategies to solve the problem and reduce its impact.

Finally, this study will help the authorities of the Foreign Language Department to analyze which areas of the teaching methodology being used are working and which of them need to be improved or replaced.

The contribution of this research will be to determine the main internal and external factors that affect negatively the Intensive Advanced English students at the University of El Salvador during the semester I-2019.

1.4 Objectives

General Objective:

To identify the internal and external factors that influence the performance of the listening skill of students taking Intensive Advanced English semester I-2019 at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador

Specific Objectives:

- ➢ To list the internal factors that influence the performance of listening skills to the Advanced English students, such as motivation, lack of vocabulary, lack of concentration, and background knowledge.
- ➢ To list the external factors that influence the performance of listening skills to the Advanced English students such as speaker accent, speech rate, environmental noises, and material.
- ➢ To describe to what extent the internal and external factors are hindering the development of the listening skill
- ➢ To present some recommendations that can help students to improve their performance in listening skills.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 What is language?

Language is "the expression or communication of thoughts and feelings using local sounds, and combinations of such sounds, to which meaning is attributed" (Simon & Schuster, 1972). It is essential to learn a language as well as having a better and more precise understanding of the transmitted and received message. It will help to avoid some inconveniences of misunderstanding in the future. Moreover, according to Amberg, J. and Vause, D (2013): Language is foremost a means of communication, and communication almost always takes place within some sort of social context. It is why effective communication requires an understanding and recognition of the connections between a language and the people who use it. These connections are complex: for example, they tell you when to use slang with a friend or formal language with a boss, how to judge a candidate's campaign speeches, and whether to abbreviate an email. These acts require knowledge of the language, as well as the cultural and social forces acting on that language.

Language as a tool of communication

Throughout the years, language has always been a factor in being able to communicate with others. Language is a system of conventional spoken, manual, or written symbols through

which human beings, as members of a social group participants in their culture, to express themselves (Robert Henry Robins et al. 2005). Language plays a vital role in human beings' life even though that is the tool everybody uses to be able to communicate with others. According to Leonardo De Valoes (2014), language helps express our feelings, desires, and queries to the world around us. Words, gestures, and tone are utilized in the union to portray a broad spectrum of emotion.

Moreover, humans never finish the process of learning it. It is said that knowing a language means being able to produce an infinitive number of sentences never spoken before and to understand sentences never heard ago. It is known as the ability of the "creative aspect" of language (Chomsky, Noam 1996).

English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

All human beings should be able to speak at least one language, which is called the native language. However, some others begin the process of acquiring a second language for different reasons. According to Anne Merritt (2013), Physiological studies have found that speaking two or more languages is a great asset to the cognitive process. The brains of bilingual people operate differently of single language speakers, and these differences offer several mental benefits. One of the main reasons why people learn a second language is because a foreign language also increases people's employment opportunities and enriches their working experience, whether they chose to work abroad or in their native country (Bloomsbury International 2013). Another primary reason why people learn a second language is that business skills plus foreign language skills make an employee more valuable in the marketplace. Thus, learning to communicate

fluently in multiple languages provides additional job security and advancement opportunities in uncertain economic times. A doctor can communicate with his or her patients in their native tongue is more likely to have success at diagnosing them. A scientist or engineer capable of explaining his findings and ideas to his peers will be able to expedite and perfect their work, even if his peers could not understand him in his first language (Leonardo De Valoes 2014).

As the Cambridge Dictionary states, EFL (English as a Foreign Language) is the teaching of English to students whose first language is not English. Nowadays, the majority of non-English speakers study English as a foreign language. People want to learn the English language because they know they would have more opportunities to succeed and to be in touch with foreigners. Taking into account that English is one of the most prominent languages in the world, many people find learning English as a necessity; for example, to run businesses and to get to know other cultures. (Harmer 1972) stated, "EFL describes situations where students were learning English to use it with any other English speakers in the world when the students might be tourists or business people." According to this, most people study English said that most people learn English as a foreign language for communicational purposes.

2.2 Listening

The listening skill is one of the macro skills that a student who is learning English as a foreign language needs to master to become a proficient bilingual person. Listening involves physiological and cognitive processes at a different level. (Field 2002 Lynch, 2002¨; Rust 2002) stated that listening is the activity of paying attention and trying to get meaning for something that we hear. This skill is a complex process that enables the brain and constructs the intention

from the sounds heard and understood spoken language. This skill is also the means through which people gain a considerable portion of their education, their information, their understanding of the world and human ideas, sense of values. At the same time, listening is the ability to identify and understand what other people are saying. This process involves understanding a speaker s grammar, vocabulary, and comprehending their meaning.

Moreover, listening is an essential skill in communication; it is a mental operation involving processing sound waves, interpreting their meaning, and storing them in memory. In addition to listening, it is a communication technique that requires listeners to understand, analyze, and evaluate what they hear. Finally, listening is an essential skill, and it is present in most of the activities we carry out throughout our lives.

Process of listening

According to Nunan (2001:page 23), listening is a six-staged process consisting of Hearing, attending, understanding, remembering, evaluating, and responding. These stages occur in sequence and rapid succession.

➢ The first one is hearing and has to do with the response caused by sounds waves stimulating the sensory receptors of the ear; hearing is the perception of sound, not necessarily paying attention.

➢ We have attending, and it refers to a section that our brain focuses on the brain screen stimuli and permits only a select few to come into focus.

➢ The third stage is to understand, which consists of analyzing the meaning of what we have heard like applause.

➢ The next stage is remembering; this is a crucial stage in the listening process because it means that an individual has not only received and interpreted a message, but it has also added it to the mind´s storage bank. It means that the information will be remembered in our minds.

➢ The following stage is evaluating; the listener considers the message that has been received. It is at this point when active listeners weigh evidence, sort fact from opinion, and determine the presence or absence of bias or prejudice in a message.

➢ Finally, we have responding, which is the stage that requires that the receiver complete the process through verbal or nonverbal feedback because the speaker has no other way to determine if a message has been received correctly. However, it is sometimes complicated as we do not have the opportunity to go back and check comprehension (Nunan 2001: page 23).

When dealing with the listening process, it must be mentioned that there are two possible ways of performing this task. The first way is the top-down listening process, and the other one is the bottom-up listening process. This way consists of understanding the general meaning of a listening selection without paying attention to specific structures, words, and so on. It is like a comprehensive overview where the listener gets a general view of the listening passage while still understanding the general idea. On the other hand, experts talk about the opposite process: the bottom-up listening process. In this case, Madrid and Mclaren stand out its linguistic quality.

Bottom-up processing is essentially a linguistic process in which we try to make sense of acoustic signals by using knowledge of the language. According to this model, the sound is assumed to be decoded by accreditation and in a linear fashion. From phonemes to words, to

phrases to utterances, to complete meaningful texts- whereby meaning itself is derived as the last step in the process (2006. Page 286).

The difference between them is that for the top-down process, students take into account the context and do not need to pay attention to specific details. In contrast, in the bottom-up listening process, students must pay attention because here, particular details are vital to understanding the whole conversation or another kind of listening activity. The listener focuses on individual words and phrases and achieves understanding by stringing these specific elements together to build up a whole.

2.3 Main Factors that Affect the Listening Skill

Students will be able to manage a second language once they acquired the four macro skills, which are speaking, writing, reading, and listening. It is not an easy task, although they need to spend time not only studying the language but also practicing inside and outside the classroom. According to some research, listening is one of the skills students seem to have more difficulties with when learning English as a second language.

2.3.1 Internal Factors

According to some experts, internal factors can be listed as motivation, lack of vocabulary, lack of concentration, and background knowledge. These factors are considering internal because they are within the listener or the EFL learners. Krasi (2012) stated that the attitude of individual guides internal factors.

Motivation

Motivation is an essential factor in learning a second and foreign language; besides, it is a unique encouragement factor in the all process and stage of life. Gardner (1985), Scarcella and Oxford (1992) stated that motivation is defined as the individual's attitudes, desires, and effort. It is well known that when a student is learning a second language, he or she needs to be stimulated; otherwise, if the student is not interested in learning English, especially in the listening skill, they will have a low performance during the course. Ur (1998) students' motivation loses more easily because of monotonous, apparently pointless activity. Consequently, low motivation can cause unsatisfactory results in learning.

When learning a foreign language, to be motivated means that students must have something to look forward to, they must have an achievement to accomplish. The main goal will not only learn a second language but also master the four macro skills. The learner's reasons for another language could vary from achieving a sense of success (Garner) 1985.

Elliot (200) cited that there are two types of motivation intrinsic motivation and extrinsic one. Intrinsic motivation is the desire of students themselves to learn, without the need for external motivation. When motivation generates interest and enjoyment, and a reason for performing the activity lies within the activity itself, this indicates that the motivation comes from the learners'" needs, wants, and desires for their own sake. This motivation exists when the learner learns because of an inner desire to accomplish a task, whether it has some external value or not.

On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is rewards and external inducements to students, such as scores, prizes, and additional bonuses. Students" reason for doing an activity is to gain

something outside the action itself. Thus, it is clear that extrinsic motivation exists when an external outcome motivates the learners. Extrinsically motivated students carried out the task in anticipation of reward from outside and beyond themselves.

Lack of vocabulary

Vocabulary is the process of acquiring new words in daily life, and more specifically, the basis for learning any language. Besides, vocabulary development focuses on helping students understand the meaning of new words and concepts in various contexts and all academic content areas. Nunan (1998) stated that without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners often achieve less than their potential. This may be discouraged from making use of language learning opportunities around them, such as listening to the radio, listening to natives speakers, using the language in a different context, reading, or watching television.

Vocabulary can be defined as the words of a language, including simple items and phrases of several words which convey a particular meaning, the way individual words do". If students gain more vocabulary through their learning process, they will be able to express their ideas and thoughts in different but specific ways; this will require them to carefully select the words that will convey the message they want to transmit. Listening passages with known words are more susceptible for learners to understand, even if the theme is unknown to students. According to some studies, the meaning of the words opens students learning interest and leads to a positive effect in the listening ability. Also, many words have more than one sense, and if they are used their less common usage students, get confused. Hung (1998) informed that listening passages with known words are more manageable for learners to understand, even if the theme is

unknown to them. His research represented that knowing the meaning of the words might arouse students learning interest and lead to a positive effect in listening ability.

Learning vocabulary is essential when learning a second language because students must know vocabulary for them to be able to speak, write, and listen nicely. That means that students must know the meaning of a word and understand it for them to be able to use it in a sentence even though many words in English sometimes have more than one purpose. When learning vocabulary, people will experience development each year appropriate with their age. Richard (1989), for native speakers of a language, they continue to expand their vocabulary in adulthood.

Lack of concentration

Students' motivation is one of the crucial factors that affect listening comprehension. It can be difficult for students to maintain engagement in a foreign language learning classroom. In listening comprehension, even the smallest pause in attention may considerably spoil comprehension. When students find the topic of the listening text engaging, comprehending would be more comfortable. For all that, students find listening very exhausting even if they are interested in the subject because it needs a considerable amount of effort to not miss the meaning.

Concentration is vital for developing listening skills because it helps students to get accurate information at the same time; it indicates that the listener is interested in what a speaker is saying. According to Cambridge University (2012), it defined as the ability to direct one´s thinking in whatever direction one would intend.

Characteristics of concentration

Low concentration, or not paying attention to the speaker, is harmful to active listening. It can result from various psychological or physical situations such as visual or auditory distractions, physical discomfort, low volume, lack of interest in the subject material, stress, or personal bias.

When a listener is not paying attention to a speaker's dialogue, effective communication is significantly diminished. Also, when listening to speech, there is a time delay between the time a speaker utters a sentence to the moment the listener comprehends the speaker's meaning. Typically, this happens within the span of a few seconds. If this process takes longer, the listener has to catch up to the speaker's words if he or she continues to speak at a pace faster than the listener can comprehend. Often, it is easier for listeners to stop listening when they do not understand. Therefore, a speaker needs to know which parts of a speech may be more comprehension intensive than others, and adjust his or her speed, vocabulary, and sentence structure accordingly Boundless (2015).

Factors that affect concentration

Lack of sleep

One of the factors that affect concentration is lack of sleep. It´s important because if students do not get enough sleep even for just one night, their thoughts process can slow down. Also, it is hard to remember and learn new things if students are sleepy, and that also affects focus negatively. Inadequate sleep then cuts into working memory, an essential part of focusing. Lack of sleep makes students less vigilant and reduces both accuracy and speed on mental tasks.

If their sleep problems become chronic and long-term, students struggle with the ability to focus, which can negatively affect their listening activities, relationships, and personal goals.

Lack of physical activity

If students do not exercise, they will not know how deeply their ability to focus is affected until they get moving. For example: how the brain benefits from exercise, one study showed that three months of aerobic exercise linked to the creation of new neurons, and broader and deeper interconnections between them. These types of neuronal improvements can increase and strengthen concentration. Besides that, it helps to increase the lack of concentration in the target listening performance.

Environment

Is it too loud or too quiet when you're trying to concentrate? Is your environment filled with distractions like ringing phones, humming light fixtures, rattling heater vents, or visual disruptions? Maybe it's too hot or too cold. How about your comfort level (chair, desk height, lighting)? Are people always interrupting you? All of these elements can affect focus.

Age

Learners' age is one of the most crucial factors affecting the learning process. Also, the acquisition is one of the essential factors affecting the performance of the second language. According to Collier (1988), successful language acquisition depends on the learner's age Lenneberg (1967), expresses that there is a certain period in the acquisition of a second language. In this period, which identified critical period hypothesis in language acquisition, Lenneberg theorizes that the acquisition of speech is a natural process determined by biological factors that

limit the crucial period for the acquisition of a language from roughly two years of age to puberty. Lenneberg thinks after lateralization, which is a process by which the two sides of the brain develop specialized functions, the brain loses plasticity, and lateralization of the language function is normally completed by puberty, making post-adolescent language acquisition difficult. After Lenneberg, in some other studies examining subjects' pronunciation after over five years of exposure to the second language, it was found that the large majority of making post-adolescent language acquisition difficult. After Lenneberg, some studies examining subjects' pronunciation after over five years of exposure to the second language.

Besides that, it was found that the majority of adults retain their knowledge when the second language is acquired after puberty, for example, based in two different studies on assessing students' acquisition of pronunciation after three years of exposure to the second language. Fathman (1975) et al., discovered that younger students had retained more accent-free pronunciation when compared to adolescents just past puberty. On the other side, critical period studies usually focused on child-adult differences and suggested that younger learners should be superior learners. Studies of oral language skill acquisition by children of different ages have led to the conclusion that older children acquire faster than younger children (Collier, 1988). In a study made by Ervin-Tripp (1974), it was found that after nine months of instruction in French, 7- to 9-year-olds performed better than 4- to 6-year-olds did in comprehension, imitation, and conversation. Fathman (1975), found that in the first year of study, 11- to 15-year-olds were from these studies, it can be asserted that older students between the ages of 8 to 12 are faster and more efficient acquirers of school language than younger students between the ages of 4 to 7. In many of the studies, young children beginning the course of a second language between the ages of 4 and 7 take much longer to master skills needed for academic purposes than older children

do. The reason why students acquire the language skills better is that children who enter school at the age of 5 or 6 have not completed the acquisition of their first language, which continues through at least age 12. From ages 6 to 12, children still are in the process of developing in first language the complex skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Moreover, following the acquisition of more complex rules of morphology and syntax, elaboration of speech acts, expansion of vocabulary, semantic development, and even some subtleties in phonological development (McLaughlin, 1984).

Background Knowledge

Background knowledge has been defined in a variety of ways, such as religious, technical, and cultural knowledge or topic familiarity. Concerning the relationship between listening comprehension and prior knowledge, some studies have been carried out by Bransford, Johnson, Anderson, and Steffensen et al. (Schmidt-Rinchart, 1994). Their findings supported the idea that prior knowledge would aid comprehension of the first language. (Murphy & Cooper, 1995). For instance & Lynch (1996) emphasize that in many cases, it is our unfamiliarity with the appropriate background knowledge that prevents us in understanding something rather than an inadequate understanding of the language. Anderson (1998, cited in Schmit-Rinehart 1994) made emphasis on schematic knowledge as one of the information sources incomprehension. At the same time, Rost (1990, cited in Schmidt-Rinehart 1994) introduces editing principles and procedures, such as application of cultural schema and filling in schematic slots, for the construction of meaning. For that reason, Listening comprehension requires the linguistic and background information to be processed. Gonen (2009) as well as accommodating the uncontrollable speed of delivery. Thus, listening comprehension is concerned with a great amount of mental and cognitive processes (Vandergrift, 1999).

In fact, "listening is a complicated activity and difficult to understand that requires a lot of mental exertion" Holden (, 2004) in which background knowledge plays a significant role. According to Goodman (1994), reading strategies, primarily cognitive and metacognitive strategies, emphasize the mental decoding process in reading such as prediction, guess, inference, analysis, synthesis, and assessment. Since listening like reading is an active process, we can utilize Goodman's statement in this skill. Listeners with high metacognitive ability can take advantage of effective cognitive listening strategies to meet their needs. Some previous studies confirmed the effect of providing learners with prior knowledge to help their listening comprehension (Chiang et al.). They proved that this type of advance organizer plays a critical role in aiding learners to comprehend and retain information better. According to Hasan (2000), using clues from the context and background knowledge reduces the intensity of listening effort for learners.

Finally, the majority of studies have indicated the positive relationship between learners' background knowledge and their listening comprehension; there are a few studies that incorporated the teaching of background knowledge as pre-listening support into classroom settings. Therefore, it remains unclear whether activating background knowledge would be useful for test questions directly related to the listening task. According, Chang, and Read (2006) enriched learners' background knowledge by providing them with an L1 reading passage related to the listening topic. Their findings revealed that, on the whole, this type of listening support is significant.

2.3.2 External Factors

External factors are those who are outside the listener; they are listed as: characteristics of the passage (type, authenticity, distortion and noise speed rate) speaker"s accent and environmental noises Hedge (2005)

Speaker accent

It is distinct from dialect; it refers to features of pronunciation that identify where a person is from regionally or socially. An emphasis is a way of speaking that every speaker has; it consists of the use of particular consonant and vowel sounds as well as rhythmic, intonation, and prosodic features. Also, it includes the interrelationships between these features and sounds and the rules that control their use. (Wells 1982) stated that the difference between accent and dialect is that accents only include features of pronunciation, whereas languages include specific sets of syntax, morphology, lexicon, and pronunciation (Wells 1982). Each stress and each speaker have a different set of prosodic features that influence the intelligibility of speech for the listener. These features include speech rate, pausing, tone, stress, and rhythm. Some features may make words unrecognizable for the listener, whereas some may cause a delay in recognition. It is vital to bear in mind, however, that no accent is objectively more intelligible than any other stress. Ikeno and Hansen (2006) studied the effect of the native pronunciation of varying degrees of familiarity on transcription accuracy for a native speaker and discovered that a more unfamiliar native accent led to lower efficiency. Recent investigations suggested that difficulty for a native speaker with a strange accent may be overcome through repeated exposure. Other results indicated that familiarity with a particular speaker is as crucial to determining comprehensibility as familiarity with a specific emphasis. Gass & Varonis(1984) discovered better performance on

a listening comprehension measure when aural materials where presented in a familiar accent and the highest level of comprehension when the particular speaker was close to the listener. Other factors that influence the effort required to comprehend spoken language have been shown to interact with accent familiarity. For instance, Anderson- Hsieh Koeder (1988) found that a faster speaker rate had a more negative impact on listening comprehension for native listeners when the speech was produced by a non-native speaker rather than a native speaker. This result suggests that when the accent of the speaker is less familiar, L1 listening comprehension will be more affected by the speech rate.

Besides, another factor that interacts with the difficulties presented by unfamiliarly accented speech is noise. Similar results were found by Clopped and Bradlow (2008), who demonstrated that the differences in the comprehension of a native speaker for familiar and unfamiliar native accents were more pronounced when noise presented.

Speech Rate

One of the external factors that affect listening is speech rate, which is the term given to the speed at which people speak. It calculated in the number of words spoken in a minute. Speech rate measures vary in their units of analysis like words and syllables and their treatment of pause duration. Brindley & Slatyer (2002); Griffiths (1990) cited that Speech rate may appear to be a basic concept that distinguishes between faster and slower speakers, two speakers one quick, one slow producing the same spoken passage, but in actuality, it corresponds to one common measure, particularly in the literature on L2 listening comprehension, is words per minute.

The speaking rate includes silent intervals in its duration calculation, whereas the articulatory rate excludes silent intervals that exceed a given threshold. These thresholds aim to eliminate silent gaps that correspond to pauses or disfluencies and to preserve silent intervals that correspond to articulatory gestures, to obtain a purer measure of the speed of motor movements related to the pronunciation of speech sounds Quene (2007). Speaking rate and articulatory rate both dependent on how quickly a speaker produces speech sounds, but speaking part provides a more global measure of content over time that incorporates silent durations related to pausing phenomena (e.g., Barreto & Ortiz, 2008; Moore et al., 2007).

According to Griffiths (1990), speeches faster than two hundred words per minute is difficult for lower-intermediate students to understand even though the level of English that these students performed is at best 127 words per minute. Besides, the type of text used and the background knowledge required for the passage can be variables that are also related to the speech rate; in fact, the wrong combination of this variable with speech rate can influence the students' listening comprehension, Rubin, (1990) negatively.

Environmental Noises

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

when the teacher cannot control the class. Listening activities are hard to understand if the sound is not acceptable, and the classroom environment is affected by the external noise from students in the hallways, wind, cars, or factories. In this case, the teacher can close the front windows or move to a room where there is less noise.

Gerges (1991) says that sound and noise are the same physic phenomenon, although they are not synonyms. Noise is just a type of sound, but a sound is not necessarily noise. It is well known that noise is part of our everyday lives, not only for those people who live in great urban centers and that are becoming more and more patient with the sounds (desirable or not) that might be music, honks, bird, sirens, etc. Students must focus on how they deal with these sounds when they occur together with learning situations. All subject's energy should be directed to the studies during the challenging task of listening, saving, and learning regardless of the noise.

The noise originated inside the school may be the cafeteria, the backyard, the play area noise, etc. As the noise started inside the classroom, we have the feet and desk crawling, the teacher and students' voices, the air conditioning, ventilator, etc. The outside noises include honks, car engines, planes, churches, etc.

The noises generated inside the classroom could be minimized with some basic adequacies of the space, if the school presents cold floor (such as ceramic, tiles, etc.) that is highly reverberant, it would be recommended its covering with absorbent material (carpets, rugs, rubber, etc.) The classrooms must always be separated by walls that will absorb the energy between the classes. Even though the sound of one group is interfering with the other ones, it would be indicated its covering with some kind of material (such as cork, panels, furniture, etc.). The windows without silent treatment must have curtains to minimize the impact of the noise coming from outside. If these classrooms are equipped with ventilators and air conditioners, the

noise generated by this equipment must also be monitored. The noise of desk crawling is intense inside the schools, and it could be controlled by carpeting or even by putting perforated tennis balls under the desk's feet.

Materials

Listening skills materials are materials such as films, music, recorded texts, etc. They are essential for listening to classes because they help the teacher when it is necessary to present language differently. In listening practice, the teacher should prepare materials he/she thinks are suitable to achieve the aims of the lesson. We should not disregard the fact that listening materials have not only advantages but also disadvantages. In this chapter, I will discuss the different types of listening materials; how to select authentic listening materials; how to use these materials in class, and how to conserve and maintain them.

It is important to exemplify the types of listening products or materials when we talk about listening. The first product is the human voice, the other product is audio material, and the third is video equipment. Moreover, it is also important to remember that the human voice is not appropriate for all listening activities.

Yagang (1993) cited that in spontaneous conversations, twelve people sometimes use ungrammatical sentences because of nervousness or hesitation. It may make it impossible for the listener to understand the meaning. Spontaneous and authentic speech does not give the student the kind of practice needed for listening comprehension if it just happens in the classroom and, because they are not native speakers.

The second type of listening material is audio, audio equipment contains the native speaker's voice, and this is better for a student who is learning English as a foreign language. Recorded material has some advantages: it allows the teacher to bring the voices of native

speakers into the classroom and present a variety of voices and accents. The teacher or student can stop the tape and repeat any part of a conversation that may not have been understood; the student has the chance to use this material outside the classroom. As speech does, the recorded material or the tape recorder also may present a disadvantage while it is being used. As Harmer (1983) stated, "In the first place it is not always a perfect machine, and the tapes are sometimes less than totally clear. People speaking on audiotape cannot be seen, and yet much of what we hear in real life takes place with the speaker being present (177)." Another type of material is video. Compared to audio material, the video seems to be better because, despite the advantage's audio material offers, the student can see the people speaking. Through their gestures, facial and body expression, he understands better what is being said. This type of material can provide some useful comprehension practice just for advanced students.

On the other hand, videotapes have their disadvantages since not all tapes and recorders are of good quality. Then there is the possibility of sound distortion that affects the student's understanding of a passage. Also, In English language teaching, a listening class will be more effective if the teacher makes use of suitable listening materials. If the teacher uses listening materials during the course, students have the opportunity to improve their skills through practice. It may also motivate them to practice other skills. It is vital that when teachers teach through listening materials, specially recorded material, they use different listening situations to help students familiarize themselves with the varieties of speech which they will face in real life. Ur (1984) believes that: "When planning listening exercises, it is essential to bear in mind the kind of real-life situations for which we are preparing the student. In this aspect, the student cannot be a passive listener. He/she reacts to what he/she hears around him/her.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter gives a thorough account of the descriptive research that the researchers carried out at the University of El Salvador at the Foreign Language Department during the semester I 2019. it contains a detailed account of steps taking by the researchers during the whole research process as well as all the necessary techniques and tools that the researchers used and administered during the research process.

3.1 Research Approach

To carry out the descriptive study "The Internal and External Factors that Influence Intensive Advanced English Students in their Performance of the Listening Skill at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador during Semester I-2019" the researchers used **the mixed method paradigm** in order to gather data. The quantitative method provided the researchers with numerical data of the internal and external factors that are affecting the listening skill. Meanwhile, the qualitative method helped the researchers to know the students' attitude and perspective towards the problematic situation. Therefore, the researchers did a descriptive study because this type of study depicts the participants in an accurate way.

3.2 Type of Study

This research project is a descriptive study, although it describes the characteristics of a population or phenomenon being studied. This methodology focuses more on the "what" of the

research subject rather than the "why" of the research subject. The term descriptive also refers to research questions designed for the research, a data analysis that would be conducted on the topic. It is called an observational research method because none of the variables that are part of the research study are influenced in any capacity. This research follows qualitative and quantitative approaches because of the "why" of the subject that will be investigated. The research team will collect and analyze the information through graphics. The data collected was used three different instruments, such as tests about listening self-assessment directed to the Advanced Intensive English I students, an interview conducted to the Advanced English students during semester I-2019 teachers, and a checklist of students' behaviors during the Advanced English classes semester I-2019.

3.3 Research Design

In this study, researchers will observe, describe, and document all the relevant information to find out the most common factors that are making students struggle when developing the listening skill. Besides that, the researchers will not interfere or get involved in the teaching or developing process of the listening skill, but the researchers will focus on gathering all the data to determine what the main factors that are affecting the listening skills are.

The researchers will use **the mixed method paradigm** in order to gather data. The quantitative method will provide the researchers with numerical data. The qualitative data will include close-ended information to measure attitudes, behaviors, and performance instruments. The analysis of this type of data consists of statistically analyzing scores collected on instruments to answer research questions or to test hypotheses. Meanwhile, the qualitative method will help the researchers to know the students' attitudes and perspective towards the problematic situation.

3.4 Population and Sample

This study was carried out at the University of El Salvador in the Foreign Language Department during semester I-2019, the population was all the students enrolled in the Advanced English I courses (160 students approximately)

a) **Participants:** the research involved two groups of Advanced English I students, each group of 25 students approximately, Bachelor of Arts in English Emphasis in Teaching. The research team worked with the groups taking their Advanced English Classes in the afternoon, a total of 50 students

b) **Sampling:** The population was the students taking Advanced English classes Bachelor in Arts, Emphasis in Teaching English. The sample was two groups of Advanced English I students; each group made up of approximately 25 students. To obtain the sample, the researchers selected a specific sample since the participants had to accomplish certain characteristics.

3.5 Research Techniques

The information for this study was administered through a diagnostic test with a listening self- assessment and checklist and a questionnaire. To analyze all the data gathered in a quantitative way, which scored using the results and the information was tabulated to present and interpret the results through graphs, as well, a teachers' questionnaire was done and analyzed it qualitatively.

3.6 Research Instruments

The researches collected the data through different tree instruments. The first instrument was a checklist containing other behaviors that students may present or adapt during the English classes. The researchers were paying close attention to all the behaviors and attitudes; moreover, they took notes and added extra information towards students' reactions during the class in the area of listening. This checklist was administered to Intensive Advanced English students during the semester I-2019.

The second instrument was a Listening Self-Assessment containing eighteen items; each item was supposed to measure student's perceptions and the ability that they have acquired developed the listening skill. The third instrument passed to teachers in charge of the Advanced English I course groups was the questionnaire so it helped the researchers to get the teachers' opinions related to the listening skills, and the different factors that they consider are affecting the development of such a skill. The questionnaire contained six punctual questions that focused on the other factors that affect the development of the listening skill in Advanced English students and the teachers' point of view in regards to the problematic situation in regards to the listening skill.

3.7 Expected Results

The research team is looking forward to showing clear evidence that Advanced English students are properly developing their listening skills. Also, the research group expects that students can overcome all different internal and external factors that are affecting their performance in the listening. As well, the team is hoping to demonstrate and emphasize the

problematic situation taking place in the Foreign Language Department in Advanced English students at the University of El Salvador.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

This research project has been designed to find out useful information about the internal and external factors that influence Intensive Advanced English students in their performance of the listening skill at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador, semester I-2019. We present all the information gathered through a qualitative and quantitative analysis as follows:

Listening Self-Assessment

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered all along with the listening self-assessment guide, which served to know the point of view that each student from the Advanced English course had towards the problematic situation.

Besides, the graphs presented in this chapter reflect the essential data gathered throughout the process. The data collected from the other instruments: the questionnaire and the observation guide helped the researchers to support the analysis of the graphs. These data allowed the researchers to know whether the research objectives were reached and whether the research questions were answered. The researchers present the data in graphs so that they be better organized, and the analysis is more understandable.

Finally, the findings of this study have been carefully analyzed to determine whether or not the factors indicated in the literature review were the same as the ones the Advanced English students were facing at that time.

4.1 Hearing

According to the results, the researchers found out that 16 out of 50 students considered themselves as good listeners, and 34 out of 50 students considered themselves as excellent listeners. Students stated they could accurately hear what is said to them as well as they concentrated on what the speaker was saying even though the information may be complicated. Also, they claimed that they might overcome distractions, such as the conversation of others, background noises, and telephones when someone is speaking. The following graph represents the results obtained.
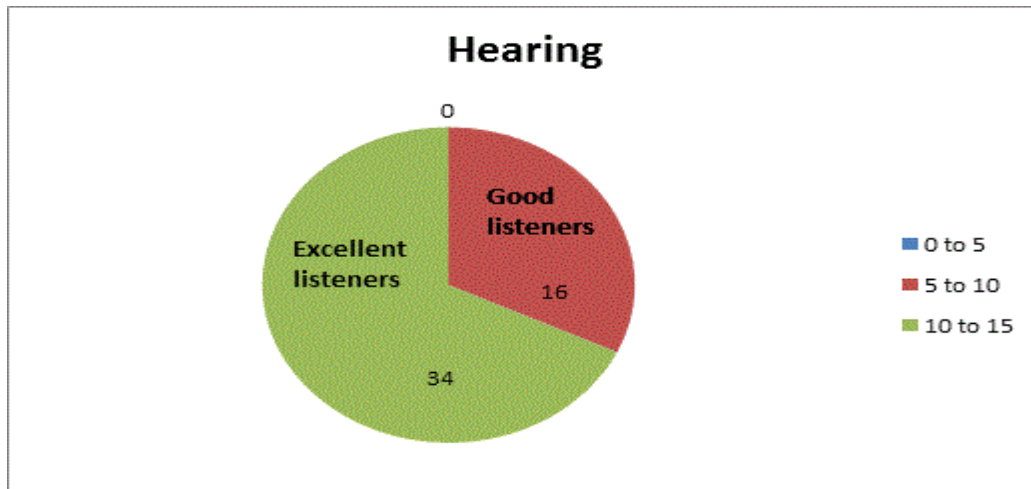
4.2 Understanding

Based on the results, the research team found out that 23 out of 50 students considered themselves good at understanding, and 27 out of 50 students considered themselves excellent at knowledge as they provided some of the following reasons. Firstly, they stated that they could understand their partners' vocabulary and recognized that their understanding of a word is likely to be somewhat different from the speaker's performance. Second, they claimed they knew their weaknesses and did not let them influence their listening.

4.3 Remembering

The researchers determined that 25 out of 50 students considered themselves as being good at remembering, and 25 out of 50 students viewed themselves as being excellent at identifying. They stated that they could recall what they had heard even when they were in a

stressful situation. Besides, they also claimed that they listen to and accurately remember what a speaker says, even when they do not agree to the speaker's point of view.

Remembering

4.4 Interpretation

According to the data obtained, the researchers found out that 15 out of 50 students considered themselves as competent interpreters, and 35 out of 50 students considered themselves as excellent interpreters. The students claimed that they let the other person know what they had or had not understood. Also, they felt how the speaker's facial expressions, body posture, and other nonverbal behaviors related to the verbal message.

Interpretating

0

Good at interpretating
15

Excellent at interpretating
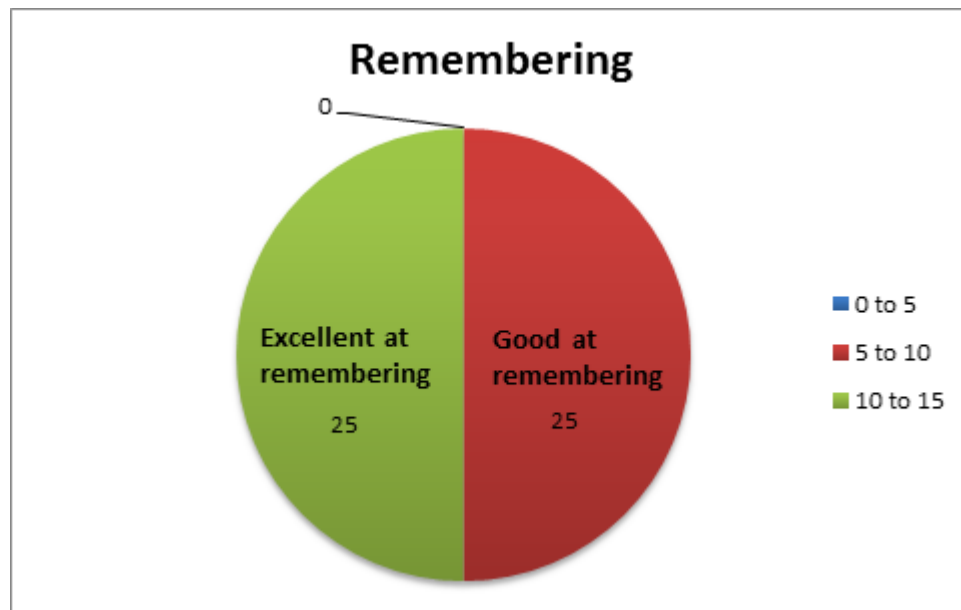35

- 0 to 5
- 5 to 10
- 10 to 15

4.5 Evaluating

Based on the results, the research team found out that 26 out of 50 students considered themselves as good evaluators, and 24 out of 50 students considered themselves as excellent evaluators. Students stated that they evaluated things or situations based on concrete facts and evidence rather than on emotional factors.

Evaluating

0

Excellent at evaluating
24

Good at evaluating
26

- 0 to 5
- 5 to 10
- 10 to 15

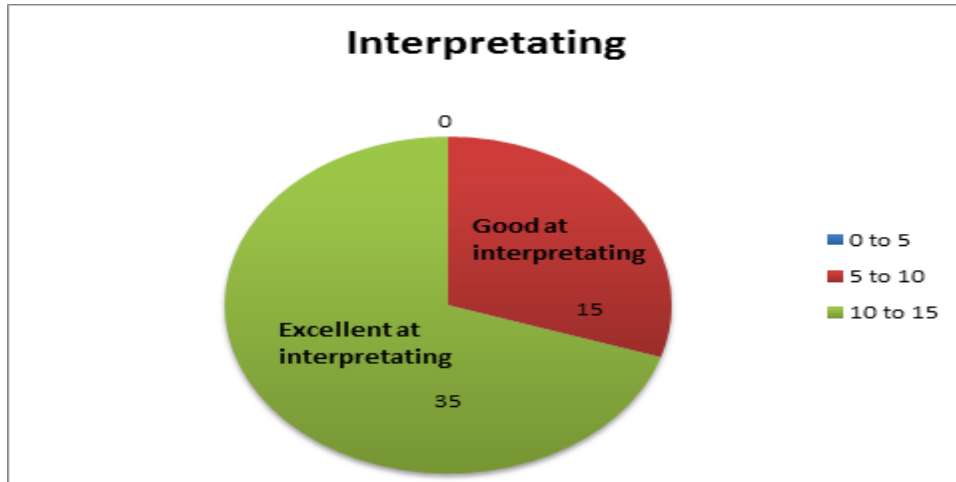## 4.6 Responding

According to the results, the researchers found out that 20 out of 50 students considered themselves as being good at responding, and 30 out of 50 students considered themselves as being excellent at responding. The students claimed that they adapt their responses to a particular situation, and they also provide clear and direct feedback to others.
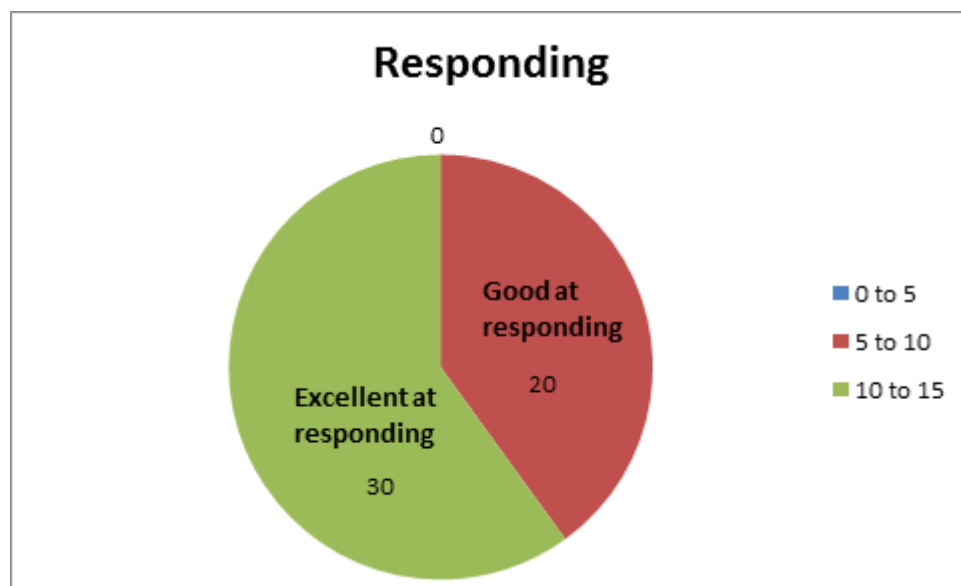
4.7 Observational guide

The observational guide administrated trough a checklist that helped the researchers to have an idea about the different behaviors students presented during the Advanced English classes. The research team emphasizes listening activities are paying attention to the different reactions and responses during the study.

The checklist administered to Intensive Advanced English students during the semester I-2019, the research team took two groups of 50 students in total. The researchers were able to

observe and filled out 30 checklists containing ten different items about the various behaviors that students presented during the English class. The result for each item is described below:

List of Behaviors

1- Listens carefully without interrupting the speaker

The results showed that 87% of students focused on what the teacher asked them, and the other 13% did not show interest in the class and asked the speaker to repeat.

2- Takes time to give a response

The results showed that only 30% of the students took the time to think about the response they were going to provide an appropriate response. The other 70% of the students answered right after the teacher finished the question.

3- Asks the speaker to repeat

The results for this behavior showed that 73% of the students understood the problem and did not ask the teacher to repeat, while the other 27% of the students asked the teacher to repeat to make sure the understood the question.

4- Asks for the meaning of some words

The results showed that 70% of the students did not ask for the meaning of some words to make sure they had understood everything even though, some of the answers given were not the correct ones. The other 30% asked the teacher about the meaning of some words to make sure they understood everything and provided an appropriate response.

5- Structures seem to be hard to understand.

Results in this behavior showed 40% of the students did not have any inconvenience understanding the structure of the questions been asked. In contrast, the other 60% were not sure about what to respond and seemed to have difficulties understanding the structure.

6- Gives an appropriate answer.

The results showed that 47% of the students gave an appropriate answer according to the question asked while the other 53% was not able to provide the right solution, and they seemed to be confused during the activity.

7- Takes too much time to give a response.

The results showed that 83% of the population did not take the time to think about the answer, and they responded immediately while the other 30% took time to give an answer making sure to provide the correct response. It is essential to mention that the percentage of the students that answered quickly were the ones that did not give the right answer.

8- Repeats to make sure understood the question.

According to the results, 16% of the students repeated the question to the teacher to make sure they understood. For the other 83%, it was not necessary to repeat.

9- Request help.

Results showed that 13% of the students requested help to the teacher to understand the structure or to give an answer during the listening activity. However, 87% of the population did not ask for any help or seemed to have doubts during the exercise.

10- Is an active participant.

According to the results, 30% of the students showed interest during the listening activities and wanted to participate. In contrast, the other 70% did not show any interest and did not participate unless the teacher asked them something.

In short terms, the research team found that the majority of the students showed interest during the class and were active participants. Moreover, they responded immediately, and the majority of them did not ask for the meaning of some words. However, the results showed that even though they focused on what the teacher was saying or asking them the answers that they gave were not the correct ones. The research team got to the conclusion that the majority of the students were afraid to ask the teacher to repeat the question even though they did not understand it. Thus, they had inconveniences understanding some of the words used in class; therefore, structures were also hard to understand for them. In conclusion, the researchers consider that students should not be afraid to ask the meaning of some words to give an appropriate answer. It is also important to mention that students should be motivated to get extra material and practice outside the classroom.

4.8 Teacher's Interview

The purpose of knowing the teachers' point of view is to find out the different factors that are affecting the listening skills of Intensive Advanced English students at the Foreign language department at the University of El Salvador during semester I-2019. The researchers interviewed the two teachers taken in the sample of this research study; here are their answers about the questions the investigators made to them.

Question #1

Why do you think that listening skill is essential when learning a second language?

Teacher A:

We can still be learning English as the wheels of a car, taking the four macro skills as the wheels of a vehicle. Let´s supposed that a student is strong in speaking, writing, or reading, but if he is not that good in listening to that will hinder his performance. That is why we talk about holistic learning, or when you talk about proficiency, you are dealing with competences or strong command of the four macro skills. So, listening is undoubtedly essential because if you do not understand what someone is saying, how can you deal with it or address it correctly.

Teacher B:

I think it is an essential skill to communicate with other people. It is not that the other skills are not important in terms of how important skills are for communication; that is probably one of the skills that are necessary and understand the message that the other people conveyed. It is workless, and communication is blocked.

Question #2

Do you consider listening is one of the most challenging skills for students to develop?

Teacher A:

I will say especially for adult learning or for young adults. When you have people that have passed the optimal period, which goes from 0 to 13 according to experts certainly listening

becomes a challenge, you can see that with adults even when they prove a lovely vocabulary in grammar, they always struggle with listening.

Teacher B:

Probably it is in our countries because teachers are not native speakers, that seems it is a little bit more complicated. However we have resources, nowadays we have internet access, we have videos and any other resources that you may probably expose to develop the skill.

Question #3

How often do you perform listening activities during your English classes?

Teacher A:

We work here base on textbooks, so we develop lessons pretty much weekly. Everything prepared by unit, and the unit has three or four lessons. So, usually, we make around seven listening exercises throughout the unit. That sometimes includes holistic listening or listening for specific information, general listening comprehension, you know the best. We do around seven exercises a week devoted to listening develop.

Teacher B:

I will say every day since I speak every day, that is an input. Teachers are input that is the first-hand input that we have in class. Then we have some other control listening activities that we usually used every day like the tech, which is a source for practicing listening skills.

Question #4

 What type of activities do you carry out in your English classes?

Teacher A:

As I said, listening for specific information, listening for main ideas. Sometimes you asked the students to summarize what the listener has presented. Some of the listening activities that we do are also related to complaining about specific tasks, for example, multiple-choice questions, etc.

Teacher B:

We have a variety of listening activities that go from control activities to free activities, so we usually notified the kind of activities that we have in class. We have the textbook; we have the same control and free activities, and then we use some other sources like videos, songs, then we usually built listening with integrating skills we go from looking to speaking sometimes.

Question #5

Based on what you have observed, what do you think are the main factors that make students struggle when developing the listening skill?

Teacher A:

It is exciting and to think that these students are not very familiar with English sounds. When you have 11 vocalic sounds in English you can see students struggling, how can you explain students that for example you have the word cap such as a baseball cap or the world cap which is synonymous of police officer, but you also have the world cup such as a cup of coffee a sound that does not exist in Spanish. Very few students are talented enough, let say are talking the proper way to learn that and those students that do not learn that are those who are left behind. That is why it is more difficult for students to deal with.

Teacher B:

I would say that probably in the class may be the vocabulary. Most of the time, they have struggled with the speed of the listening they are exposed to, and most of the time, since they do not understand 100%, they feel frustrated because they realize at list what they are expecting too. So the problem may be the vocabulary and the speed they are exposed too.

Question #6

What would you recommend to students to improve their listening skills?

Teacher A:

It is a million-dollar question. When students do not understand listening, they should be given the script of the listening, and this goes with listening and reading. If you listen to something for the first time and you did not get it, you need to listen for a second time. If after listening for a second time you still did not get it and even do not get it you can listen for the third time, but if after a third time you do not get it the problem is not you but the text, or in these case, the audio is beyond your level of comprehension. So you are good at active practice, but you need to work in trigonometry. It is another level. So with listening is a bit of the same. My recommendation will be for students who are struggling with listening to get exposed to authentic material but also get exposed to material that has the transcript. If you have the transcript, then that is a possibility. You have to acknowledge that improving listening takes a lot of time. It is not something that happens overnight. Some experts suggest that if you do it systematically, you will receive a list from 6 months to a year to improve your listening skills.

Teacher B:

I would probably go for realizing exposure to expose students to let say not understand but something real and make them have the experience real listening. Usually, the textbook is a source of listening activities, but they are kind of slow, and they come to talk in real life; they often have problems, and they are probably sometimes frustrated; it is what happens. So we use the material of the book, but it is good to get them to expose some real-life experiences regarding listening.

Based on the data collected on the teachers' interview, the researchers found out that both teachers agree that listening skill is essential. They said listening is vital to be able to communicate with other people. In other words, if a person does not understand the message, they will not be able to give a response. However, they also expressed that listening seems to be hard for students, and each of them gave their point of view. One of the teachers said it would depend on the age and the level even though listening skills can be more difficult for adults than for young people. Structures will be more difficult to understand.

On the other hand, the other teacher stated that students are not exposed to native speakers, and that might be one of the reasons the struggle in the listening activities. Although the teachers had different points of view, they mentioned that there were a lot of resources for students so they can improve their listening skills. They said students should look for authentic material and make use of internet access to improve such skills.

The research team also found out that both teachers use the textbook to develop listening activities during the class. They mentioned free and control activities and the use of the

laboratory that is at about seven activities per week. However, one of the teachers stated that he tries to innovate with different listening activities using different resources like videos and songs so that students can get exposed to authentic materials. According to the teachers, the main factors that are affecting the listening skills are motivation because students should be encouraged to participate in class and complete all the listening activities given in class. Another factor that they mentioned was interest, although students should use the different resources that they have nowadays and be exposed to a native speaker's accent.

To sum up, teachers recommended getting extra material with the transcript because most of the time, the content is not appropriate according to the level of English. The teacher stated that if students have the transcript, that is a possibility because they can look for a new vocabulary or ask for help if they do not understand the structure. Also, they recommended getting exposed to real-life activities and not only the activities from the textbook used in class.

CHAPTER V

5.1 Conclusions

Listening is one of the most important skills when learning a foreign language because this is a process that requires a lot of attention. Besides, if students do not have the motivation and care about listening, they would probably fail in their performance. For this reason, this project focused on the main internal and external factors that affect listening skills in the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador. The researcher team considers that Listening comprehension is a challenge, although demands both the teacher and student attention due to the critical role that listening plays, not only in communication but also in the acquisition of language. According to the obtained results, the research team was able to confirm that the main factors that are affecting the listening skills in Intensive Advanced English students are motivation because students do not participate in a class unless the teacher asks them to do so. Besides, students do not take the time to get extra material to improve their performance. Another factor that is affecting the listening skill is Lack of vocabulary because students do not take the time to look for new words, and sometimes they give a wrong answer since they do not understand the meaning of a word. In regards to external factors, the researchers concluded that the ones that are affecting the listening skill are speaker accents because students are not used to listening to native speakers. The problem is that they exposed to authentic material in which they can listen to the different accents that native speakers have. The researchers also concluded that the other external factor affecting the listening skill is materials, even though the majority of the listening activities performed in class are activities from the textbook. Students should be provided with different materials such as videos, movies, songs, recorded texts, and films so they can not only get used to native speakers' accents but also to learn new vocabulary. It is also

important to mention that the majority of the students are not aware of the problematic situation since they stated or they considered themselves as good or excellent listeners. This project pretended to help teachers and students to emphasize the development of listening skills and find some solutions to the problematic situation. The research team also wants to give some recommendations to improve or apply different strategies in and out of the classroom during the teaching and learning process and help students to improve their listening comprehension and get a high proficiency level in listening.

5.2 Recommendations

- ➢ It is necessary to concentrate more efforts on listening activities that help specific areas in which students consider they have problems.

- ➢ Professors might consider implementing those activities they claim to be appropriate and that have good results in the learning process.

- ➢ It is recommendable that teachers motivate students to use audio material for practicing their listening comprehension skills.

- ➢ Listening exposure should be maximized in class and be present in all instructional activities.

- ➢ Students should practice more frequently the different strategies for improving their listening comprehension skills and become more active controllers of their learning.

CHAPTER VI

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APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR

FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

QUESTIONARY

This instrument intends to gather useful information to carry out the thesis work "The internal and external factors that influence Intensive Advanced English students in their performance of the listening skill at the foreign department of the University of El Salvador, semester I-2019."

1- Why do you think that listening skill is essential when learning a second language?

2- Do you consider listening is one of the most difficult skills for students to develop?

3-How often do you perform listening activities during your English classes?

4- What type of activities do you carry out in your English classes?

5-Based on what you have observed, what do you think are the main factors that make students struggle when developing the listening skill?

APPENDIX B

CHECKLIST OF STUDENTS´ BEHAVIORS

Student´s name: _____

Level: _____

BEHAVIOR	YES	NO	COMMENTS
1- Listens carefully without interrupting the speaker			
2- Takes time to give a response			
3- Asks the speaker to repeat			
4- Asks for the meaning of some words			
5- Structures seem to be hard to understand			
6- Gives an appropriate answer			
7- Takes too much time to give a response			
8- Repeats to make sure			

understood the question			
9- Requests help			
10- Is an active participant			

APPENDIX C

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR

FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

GUIDE

This instrument intends to gather useful information to carry out the thesis work "The internal and external factors that influence Intensive Advanced English students in their performance of the listening skill at the foreign department of the University of El Salvador, semester I-2019."

Listening Self-Assessment

Listening is a complex skill that requires a great deal of energy. This survey is designed to help you assess your own listening skills.

Consider your listening interactions on a typical professional day, then complete the following questions. Each question corresponds to a different category of listening skills. Write the appropriate number in the blank line on the left side, using the following key:

5 = almost always

4 = usually

3 = sometimes

2 = infrequently

1 = almost never

    1. I accurately hear what is said to me.
    2. I understand my partner's vocabulary and recognize that my understanding of a word is likely to be somewhat different from the speaker's understanding.
    3. I adapt my response according to the needs of a particular situation.
    4. I quickly follow conversations and can accurately recall which member contributed which ideas in small group discussions.
    5. I consider my partner's personal expertise on the subject when they try to convince me to do something.
    6. I recognize my "hot buttons" and don't let them influence my listening.
    7. I take into account the person's motives, expectations, and needs when determining the meaning of the message.
    8. I provide clear and direct feedback to others.
    9. I let the speaker know immediately that they have or have not been understood.
    10. I overcome distractions such as the conversation of others, background noises, and telephones when someone is speaking.

_____11. I listen to and accurately remember what a speaker says, even when I strongly disagree with their viewpoint.

_____12. I concentrate on what the speaker is saying, even when the information is complicated.

_____13. I consider how the speaker's facial expressions, body posture, and other nonverbal behaviors relate to the verbal message.

_____14. I weigh all evidence before making a decision

_____ 15. I make sure that the physical environment encourages effective listening.

_____16. I ask relevant questions and restate my perceptions to make sure I have understood the speaker correctly.

_____17. I listen carefully to determine whether the speaker has solid facts and evidence or whether they are relying on emotional appeals.

_____18. I can recall what I have heard, even when I am in stressful situations.

Now that you have completed all the questions, you can tally your score below.

- Transfer your self-ratings for each question to the corresponding question numbers.
  - ✶ If you gave yourself a 4 on Question 1, you would find Question 1 below under "Hearing," and would put a 4 on the appropriate line. Do so for all 18 questions.
- Total the points you assigned for each of the six sets of questions.
- Place your total for each component in the *Total* space.

Hearing	Understanding	Remembering
1 ____	2 ____	4 ____
10 ____	6 ____	11 ____
12 ____	16 ____	18 ____
____Total	____Total	____Total
Interpreting	Evaluating	Responding
7 ____	5 ____	3 ____
9 ____	14 ____	8 ____
13 ____	17 ____	15 ____
____Total	____Total	____Total

Transfer your totals for each component to the *Total Points* column below. Rank the order of each of the six components according to your totals.

		Total Points	Rank
COMPONENT I:	Hearing	_____	_____
COMPONENT II:	Understanding	_____	_____
COMPONENT III:	Remembering	_____	_____
COMPONENT IV:	Interpreting	_____	_____
COMPONENT V:	Evaluating	_____	_____
COMPONENT VI:	Responding	_____	_____

Use the following guide to assess each skill area:

12-15 points: You see yourself as an
excellent listener.
 9 - 12 points: You believe you are a good
listener.
6 - 9   points: You consider your listening skills adequate.
3 - 6   points: You perceive some problems in your listening behavior.