IDENTIFYING LISTENING PROBLEMS AND THE NEED FOR TECHNOLOGY ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (TALL) TO IMPROVE LISTENING SKILLS AMONG DIPLOMA STUDENTS

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Abstract: Listening is one of the major skills in English language acquisition. However, mastering listening in acquiring the language can be challenging. Failure to listen well may cause misunderstanding and unnecessary conflicts. Realizing the importance of listening and how difficult it is, the paper focuses on listening issues experienced by 210 Part 1, Diploma students of UiTM Kelantan Branch. The objectives are to identify the perceived level of listening proficiency among students, ascertain listening problems faced by them and determine students' need for Technology Assisted Language Learning (TALL) to enhance listening skills. Thus, a survey on listening problems and the need for TALL was conducted. 150 stu dents responded and the majority identified physical setting as the main listening problem thus, leading to a conclusive need for technology to help improve their listening ability. Based on the findings, a technological language tool in the form of multimedia application is innovated to fulfil the students' needs. The application is designed to be easily accessible, user-interactive, user- friendly and affordable. The features are customized to be as 'friendly' as possible of which they include local and Malaysian-based contents, familiar accents and slangs as well as relevant vocabulary, listening practices and quizzes.

Keywords: listening problems, TALL, multimedia application, listening ability, learners' autonomy

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Listening can be a challenging skill in the process of language learning. Acquisition of effective listening involves various techniques that most of the time are taken for granted by the language learners. As the 21st century generation continues to grow up with technology and use it with ease, Technology Assisted Language Learning (TALL) is said to be an essential medium to aid the learning process. Technology-based learning is considered a better choice since it offers convenience in terms of accessibility and cost which can be applied by both language teachers and learners. Therefore, the use of technological aids has become an important feature in English Language classrooms.

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This paper highlights the inter-relation between technology and effective listening in English language teaching and learning. A survey was conducted to find out the answers for three, critical related aspects of listening. They are the students' proficiency level of listening, the listening problems they face and their preference to use technology in listening activities. The findings are crucial in search of a practical, convenient technological tool to help enhance students' listening comprehension and their overall listening proficiency. Eventually, the study aims to contribute possible solutions to help overcome some listening problems faced and improve the students' listening ability.

1.2 Problem Statement

Mastering listening skills has become a significant problem among Part 1, Diploma students of UiTM Kelantan Branch due to several factors. The factors include the nature of listening itself, the methods used in listening practices and limited sources of relevant listening materials.

1.2.1 Listening Challenging Nature

Listening is challenging because listeners have to undergo a few processing phases before comprehension takes place. According to Richards, Platt& Platt (2000) and Pourhosein and Ahmadi (2011), listening comprehension is "the process of understanding speech and it concentrates on role of linguistic units such as phonemes, words, and grammatical structures and the role of listener's anticipations, the situation and context, previous knowledge, and the subject." This means, the process involves many tasks whereby learners have to focus not only on linguistic units of the input itself but also their certain anticipation of the speech. At the same time, they need to make full use of their schematic knowledge and observation of context and subject to arrive to a certain conclusion. Inaccurate analysis occurred at any phase of these will eventually lead to unwanted misunderstanding and miscommunication.

1.2.2 Conventional Teacher-Centred Listening Methods

Apart from the complex nature of listening, the methods used in teaching and learning listening are also teacher-centred. In current practices, instructors have the sole authority and control over listening materials. They decide when and how frequent to do the practices. The materials, which include the audio and listening questions, are of the instructors' own choice. Sources of materials are usually from past year listening questions which access to the collection favours only the teachers. Thus, the students do not have the flexibility and freedom to adjust the listening activities to their own personal pace and preference.

In addition, conventional listening practices involve the use of old-school CDs, a CD-player, and speaker. Sometimes, the equipment is old and of poor quality. The problem combined with at times, some background noise, naturally affects sound quality and leads to poor listening comprehension.

The conventional method is also a bit different from the assessment procedure. While practising listening, the instructors may play, pause, rewind and stop the audio several times so that students may get the exact messages. Yet in the actual test, the assessment is done online. The duration is limited to 30 minutes and test takers can only stop and play the audio while at the same time, check on the questions and answers. Hence, the students do not have the opportunity to undergo listening drills based on the exact listening test procedures. This may eventually affect their scores of the assessment.

1.2.3 Limited Relevant Sources for Listening Drills

At present, the only helping tool for listening practices readily accessible for students is the CD which comes together with a recommended textbook. The features however, may or may not suit the students' need. Some of the textbooks are international based and thus, culturally-biased. The native speakers' socio-cultural background included in most imported textbooks is foreign to students with no or lack of schematic knowledge. This is in line with Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016) who asserted that "learners should be familiar with the cultural knowledge of language that has a significant effect on the learners' understanding. If the listening task involves completely different cultural materials then the learners may have critical problems in their comprehension." Besides, the audio is also recorded using native speakers' accents which are hard to grasp. Therefore, the existing CD does not really help the students to improve their listening proficiency.

Another alternative listening source is the internet. Again, relevant materials which totally match the students' need in terms of contents, accents, questions format, etc. are limited. Most materials and audio clips uploaded utilize native speakers' accents and foreign socio-cultural subjects. Difficulties in dealing with the materials may eventually lead to boredom and demotivation in pursuing appropriate listening activities.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are:
1) To identify the perceived level of listening proficiency among UiTM Kelantan Branch, Part 1 Diploma students.
2) To ascertain listening problems faced by the students.
3) To determine students' need for Technology Assisted Language Learning (TALL) to enhance listening skills.

1.4 Research Questions

This study has come up with three research questions and hopes to obtain the answers upon completing the research.
The questions are:
1. What are the perceived levels of listening proficiency among Universiti Teknologi MARA Kelantan Branch, Part 1 Diploma students?
2. What are the listening problems faced by the students?
3. Do the students need Technology Assisted Language Learning (TALL) to enhance their listening skills?

1.5 Theoretical Framework

Technology Assisted Language Learning (TALL) as the name suggests, provides massive and multifaceted means to aid language teaching and learning. This study found its ground in patented innovations of a team led by Dr. C. Ray Graham from Brigham Young University, way back in 1993. The team consisted of geniuses in computer science, instructional psychology, linguistics and educational design which collaboration was aimed at finding solutions to a known problem throughout education. The innovations, coined by the name of the pillars of TALL learning technology is as illustrated below:

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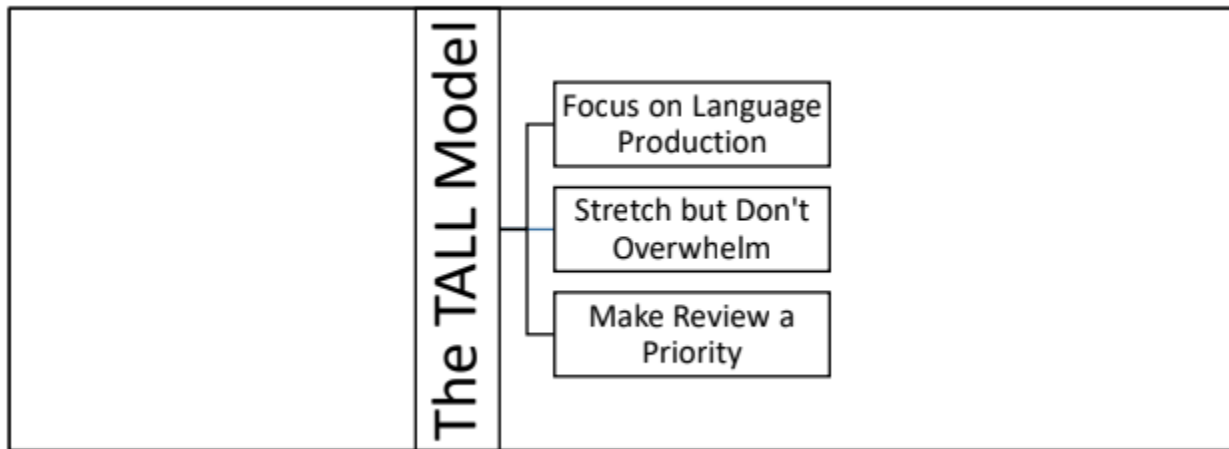
Figure 1: The Pillars of the TALL Learning Technology
(adapted from Graham, 1993 as cited in Graham & Parry, 2007)

The TALL model which focuses on language production, the concept "stretch but not overwhelm" and the importance of reviewing, seeks to find ways for students to not only be able to grasp the information, but also retain and apply it in their real lives. The model incorporates basic elements such as adaptability, spaced review and task- based learning where "lessons naturally adapt to the users' knowledge level and learning pace, review is required to evaluate what has already been learned based on learners' current performance and emphasis is on the application of learned principles rather than rote memorization" (Graham, 1993 as cited in Graham & Parry, 2007). The TALL model supports this study in which its fundamental aim is to provide a learning tool with the afore-mentioned elements and technology-based, flexible and adaptable to the language users' needs.

Apart from the TALL model, the study also found its base in John Keller's (1983) Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction (ACRS) model. The model explains how motivation in language learning can be maintained. Keller propagated ACRS model as the main principles of TALL in a way that language users are the focal point or the utmost concern in language learning. This study which orientation is learner-centred, has drilled and associated its methodology in accordance with the understanding of ACRS. Here, the model considers what matters to language learners in the process of learning and acquiring a language. Attention is when the TALL system retains language learners' attention through the nature of various activities which includes thought-provoking situations and real-life applications. Relevance is when TALL integrates simulation experiences based on various real-life scenarios which provide connections between what is learnt through technology and what is experienced in reality. Confidence is when TALL uses a principle called "stretch but don't overwhelm" which in other words, ascertains that contents inTALL are adjustable to the learners' pace and needs to give them confidence in their abilities while at the same time, keep them feel challenged and motivated to improve. Satisfaction on the other hand, comes in various ways. TALL gives opportunities for learners to savour satisfaction through progress report provided by the software, positive feedback from teachers and peers and abilities to master language tasks and simulations which are applicable in real lives.

Henceforth, with reference to these two models, the study was conducted to make full use of the advantages brought by TALL in enhancing listening skills among the second language learners as part of the efforts to help smooth and successful language learning and acquisition.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations in conducting this study: Firstly, students' proficiency level of listening is based on their own perception. They were asked to rate the levels between excellent, good, average and poor based on their performance in in-class listening activities. The majority is found to belong to the average level. The finding may not be fully accurate.

Secondly, the study outlines and focuses on six categories of listening problems. They are problems related to listening text contents, linguistic features, psychological characteristics, listeners, speakers and physical setting. These categories are listed based on a review in a number of literatures. In reality, there might be other listening problems other than these six categories. Yet, the study did not include them due to limited time to search forth-eexact reference.

The final limitation is related to the need for TALL among the students. The majority supported and preferred the use of technology in teaching and learning listening. They were confident that technology can help improve their listening comprehension. However, effectiveness of TALL is subjected to users' autonomous personality. This means, they must make the effort and fully utilize technology for maximum listening drills. The drills are to ensure significant progress in their listening ability. The study however, is not able to monitor the students' learning autonomy. There is no mechanism to check on the frequent use of technology and its impact on the respondents yet.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Common problems that students face with listening comprehension

There are several difficulties that students encounter during listening comprehension process. Yagang (1994) identified four sources of listening comprehension problems and they are the message, the speaker, the listener andphysical environment. According to Buck (2001), these problems involved unknown vocabularies, unfamiliar topics, fast speech rate and unfamiliar accents. Teng (2002) on the other hands classified the problems to four factors, namely speaker factor, listener factor, stimulus factor and context factor. In this literature, six factors that negatively affect listening comprehension are discussed, and they are; unfamiliar context, different accent and slang, difficult vocabulary, limited control, limited access and physical setting.

According to Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) in 'Learners' Listening Comprehension Difficulties in English Language Learning', one of the main problems students experience during listening activities is they have no background knowledge of what they are listening. The listening material can be about completely different culture or variety of fields in life which requires students to have certain background knowledge to understand the context and the listening text. Azmi, Celik, Yidliz and Tugrul Mart (2014) stated if students are not familiar with cultural knowledge of language, students may have difficulties to understand the context and imagine what has been told. As a result,

Hien (2015) revealed students feel strange, discouraged and bored throughout the listening activities. This is because there is no bases that can help them link between the listening text and their previous knowledge.

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Yagang (1994) asserted that listeners have tendency to get familiar with the accents which they mostly listen. For Malaysian students who used to their teacher's Malaysian-English accent, listening to audio recorded by native or non-native speakers of English, which contain rich British, American, Australian, Indian or Chinese accents and slangs cause serious difficulty for them to understand. According to Hien (2015) who did a study on 'Difficulties and Strategies in Listening Comprehension', 78.9% of the respondents found accented speech causes problem forthem to comprehend listening text. Hien continued, this is because the respondents have been exposed to materials which are designed for teaching and listening purposes and not the real language or authentic listening materials.

This is undeniable true as Munro and Derwing (1999) claimed that the effect of listening to too many accented speech contributes to significant reduction in comprehension. Besides, Goh (1999) stated, 66% of students said a speaker's accent as one of the main factors that reduce listening comprehension. Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) also mentioned unfamiliar accent will certainly disturb the whole listening comprehension process, thus makes comprehension becomes impossible for listeners. Another factor that can negatively affect the whole listening comprehension process is when listening text contains difficult words. According to Underwood (1989), when students come across unfamiliar word during listening activities, they will stop to think about the meaning of the word for a while. As a result, they miss the next part of the speech. Based on a study done by Homouda (2013), it was discovered majority of the students (85%) responded unfamiliar words, including jargons and idioms interfered their listening competency. Later, Nemati, Qareqani and Falahati (2016) found in their study 40% of the subjects appeared to had problems in listening comprehension due to the reason 'weak at vocabulary and colloquial terms'. It is clear, when listening passages contain known words, it would be easier for students to understand, even if the theme is alien to them (Azmi et al., 2014). Hung (1998) further informed knowing the meaning of words not only increases students' learning interest, but it also gives positive effect on their listening ability.

In conventional method of teaching listening, only teachers are given the authority to control the audio of a particular listening practice. Students are not given opportunity to control (pause, rewind, forward, and repeat) the audio and they act as passive recipients throughout the activities. This situation impedes listening comprehension process among students as once they miss an important point of the content, it will be difficult for them to understand the listening text and answer the following questions correctly. Underwood (1989) listed down several barriers of effective listening comprehension, among them are listeners cannot control the speed of speech and cannot have words repeated. He added, inability to control the speed of speech is the greatest difficulty in listening comprehension compared to reading comprehension. Hamouda (2013) unveiled 90% students pointed out that when the speaker speak at a rapid speed, it was difficult for them to understand what was being said. Besides, Hayati, 2010 (as cited in Hamouda, 2013) reported one of the greatest obstacle faced by the respondents in understanding the aural text was speed of delivery.

According to Read and Kukulska-Hulme (2015), it is evident that developing listening comprehension requires extensive listening practices which involve students doing a lot of easy, comprehensible, and enjoyable listening practices. However, in traditional approach of teaching listening, it is challenging to increase listening comprehension as the only access that students have to listening practices is solely on their teacher in the classroom. Furthermore, Azmi et al. (2014) stated listening skills is often neglected in language classroom, as much attention is given to structure, reading, writing and vocabulary. Azmi et al. (2014) continued, this is due to great number of teachers believes this skill will develop naturally and unconsciously during language learning process.

Another common problem related to listening comprehension is physical setting. This refers to the environment surrounding the students that interrupt their listening comprehension process, like noise, poor tape quality and poor equipment. According to Hien (2015), 63.1% students said they are distracted by the noise no matter how hard they try to focus on the listening task. Sharing similar discovery, Hamouda (2013) found 96.6% of the

students claimed they could not concentrate during listening activities due to the noise in the classroom and the poor preparation of lab. Apart of that, Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) stated in some classes, teachers use recorded materials that do not have high quality. The quality of the sound system can give negative impact on students listening comprehension (Azmi et al., 2014).

2.2 The practice and importance of TALL

In our era, technology is inseparable with the teaching and learning of listening skills in ESL classrooms. New technologies enhance the importance of listening by changing our view on what listening is, what the relationship between listening and literacy is, and what listening program should be implemented in language teaching. A survey has been done at the department of English language, college of arts, Al-Jabal Al Gharbi University in Libya to study students' perceptions on the use of technology in language learning shows positive feedback as majority of the participants agreed that technology helps them in the process of learning English (Nomass, 2013). Using technology in learning a second language is necessary. Technology helps to develop language skills of the learners.

Computer- Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is significant in the learning of listening skills. The use of CALL in the teaching of listening skill is one of the effective ways in developing listening comprehension (Khoshima & Mozakka, 2017). Listening skill can be more effectively developed by using CALL (Lakshimi & Reddy, 2015). Nachoua (2012) also agrees that CALL is useful to enhance students' performance in listening comprehension. Internet is also a useful tool to enhance students' listening skill (Ghalami Nobar & Ahangari, 2012). A study done by Barani in 2011 showed that CALL had positive impact to improve learners' listening skill. CALL encourages improvement of ESL learners' ability in listening comprehension.

Starting in 1993, Technology Assisted Language Learning (TALL) was developed to find the solution to a known problem throughout education, which is how can teachers teach students to not only grasp information, but to retain the information and apply it in their lives. TALL is a comprehensive and multifaceted mechanism that combines latest technology with the most effective teaching practices. According to Ahmad (2016) TALL instills in learners illimitable passion for task-based and skills oriented learning which embrace real-life situations. This therefore helps students to not only learn, but retain the information they have learnt in meaningful way rather than rote memorization. TALL is proven can give positive impact on students' listening comprehension. Based on findings of a case study 'Technology Assisted Language Learning is a silver bullet for enhancing Language Competence and Performance',

Ahmad (2016) unveiled the outstanding performance of Saudi EFL students who were exposed to TALL in listening comprehension test compared to students who used traditional approach. The students who used TALL outperformed their counterparts owing to their frequent exposure to native speakers of English online, namely YouTube and online English Dictionaries. The exposure has helped them to easily learn the authentic accentuation and intonation patterns of English words and sentences and later gave correct responses in listening comprehension test. On the contrary, the performance of the students who used traditional approach was abysmally weak because they were unable to understand the accentual pattern of English words and hence made a lot of mistakes in listening comprehension test.

In developing listening comprehension among ESL students, providing familiar context that suit students' prior knowledge and experience is also very crucial (Walker, 2014) and TALL supports this notion. According to Aldera (2016), TALL has taken a variety of forms in terms of teaching listening, and one of them is Advance Organizer (AO). AO involves pictorial context, verbal description and cultural background cues. In AO activity, students watch a video regarding a relevant topic or vocabulary for discussion. The execution of this activity improves

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students' listening comprehension as it helps students to organize their ideas; in which they relate their previous knowledge to a new one.

TALL also promotes autonomous learning among students. In TALL, students can access and consult pedagogIcal materials online and be exposed to variety of media. This is an advantage for students who want to improve their listening comprehension as this tool enables them to do extensive listening practices independently at anytime and anywhere. According to Read and Kukulska-Hulme (2015) the portability offered by TALL extends the time the students are actually exposed to listening practices outside the classroom and this enables them to carry on learning. Besides, Ahmad (2016) believed technology boost students' self-confidence, facilitates independent and self-paced learning and student-centered learning. Kim (2013) stated TALL is useful tool for students who encounter shortage of time to be exposed to English since it has the capacities to be used as independent learning tool promoting the shift from teacher-led to student-led.

In the same vein, TALL also encourages students to learn listening independently through Help Option (HO). According to Mohsen (2016), HO refers to any form assistance such as visual, auditory or text that is displayed synchronously or asynchronously on the computer screen to facilitate language learning. Meaning negotiation is established as HO allows students to interact with language input displayed on the screen. Zhang (2016) revealed through pre-programmed software embedded in the device, students have access to negotiate meaning through interaction with the software or teachers, thus ensuring comprehensible input. Moreover, this tool clearly encourages students to improve their listening comprehension independently as according to Warschauer and Healey (1998) they can get immediate feedback and monitor their overall performance. Besides, Aldera (2015) in his study 'Investigating Multimedia Strategies to Aid L2 Listening Comprehension in EFL Environment' discovered that the subjects' listening comprehension was significantly improved when multimedia was used rather than when using audio alone. The difference in the listening scores signifies the use of images, videos and graphic eases students to process information and provides motivating as well as interesting input during listeningcomprehension task. This is also the reason Hosam (2012) considered TALL as a cure for demotivated learners of English, as traditional method of teaching listening which depend on audio alone, whereas TALL engage students actively and increase their enthusiasm.

Listening comprehension is described by Kim (2013) as challenging as students are required to simultaneously process and store the information they listen. Considering the challenges, TALL helps students to effectively develop their listening competence and overcome the existing problems through modern technological devices. For example, the two features in multimedia application like user-interactive and user-friendly allow students to easily control the speed of speech, thus, students can pause, rewind, forward, and repeat the audio. By virtue of the fact, these features give them extra opportunity to review pieces of information to understand and remember the aural text better. Besides, according to Bloomfield, Wayland, Rhoades, Blodgett, Linck and Ross (2010), how quickly someone talks can hurt comprehension, however, with opportunity TALL gives to exploit the modern facilities and be the manager of their own learning, listening comprehension can be improved to a higher level. On the other hand, for students who have problem to understand different accent and slang, Ahmad (2016) suggested students to listen to native speakers on television, radio, BBC, chat forum, YouTube and Podcast to become familiar with accented speech and slangs.

3. Methodology

3.1 Subjects of the Study

Subjects of the study are based on convenience sampling. This is due to time constraints which prompted sample selections to be among the group of students taught by researchers for easy data collection. A survey in the form

of questionnaire was distributed to Part 1, Interim semester students of UiTM Kelantan Branch. A total of 210 students were involved but only 150 did and submitted the responses. The students were enrolled in Integrated Language Skills 1 (ELC121) subject which code is meant for semester one students. The students were selected based on the following reasons:

i.   Integrated Language Skills 1 (ELC121) is compulsory for all Part 1 students.

ii.   The students are of various programmes such as Arts & Design, Business Management, Office Managment,Accounting, etc.

iii.   ELC121 is relevant to the study as it focuses on listening skills and a major portion of the course's marks come from listening assessments.

3.2 Procedures

A survey on perceived level of listening proficiency, listening problems and the need for TALL to enhance the skill was conducted. The instrument employed is a set of questionnaire which comprises 8 sections. The list of sections is as below:

Section 1: Listening Proficiency Level (4 levels – excellent, good, average and poor)

Section 2: Using Different Means to Enhance Listening Skills (9 items).

Section 3: Listening Problems Related to Linguistic Features (8 items).

Section 4: Listening Problems Related to Learners' Psychological Characteristics (7 items).

Section 5: Listening Problems Related to the Listener (4 items).

Section 6: Listening Problems Related to the Speaker (6 items).

Section 7: Listening Problems Related to the Physical Setting (3 items).

Section 8: The need for Technology to Enhance Listening Skills (7 items).

To ensure the reliability of questionnaire, 30 out of 210 students were selected for pilot study. The students were randomly chosen to test whether the questionnaire contains any flaw or anomaly in all its sections and items. The questionnaire was distributed online via a specified link in a form of Google doc. Respondents were given two weeks to answer the questions. Then, the submitted response was transferred into SPSS for quantitative data analysis.

Upon completing data entry in SPSS, the first test done was on reliability. Again, this is to ensure all items are relevant to the study so that the data make up reliable, trustworthy and valid conclusions. For the purpose, Cronbach alpha was run on all sections to check whether they fulfil the standard acceptable reliability score of 0.7 and above.

The alpha recorded ranges between 0.7 and 0.9 which suggests all sections have high internal reliability and consistency.

The questionnaire was then distributed to the rest of 180 students. 120 of them responded and the same procedure repeats– the data were transferred from Google doc. into SPSS and the response was analysed descriptively. Correlations between specified chosen sections were done and analysed for proper interpretations. The step is necessary to enable the researchers draw valid and relevant conclusions.

4. Results

a) Reliability of the Questionnaire

Findings of the study are projected based on a set of questionnaire piloted for 30 Part 1, Diploma students of Universiti Teknologi MARA Kelantan Branch, then distributed to 120 actual respondents of Part 1, Diploma

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students from various programmes and faculties of the same campus. A Cronbach's alpha was run beforehand to understand whether the multiple Likert items in the questionnaire measure the same latent variables (different means used to acquire listening comprehension, problems in listening acquisition and the need of technology to enhance listening skills). The table below summarizes reliability scores for every section of the questionnaire:

Table 1: Summary of Cronbach's Alpha Scores for All Sections in the Questionnaire

Reliability Statistics

Sections	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items	Result
Use of Different Means to Enhance Listening Skills	.702	5	Reliable
Listening Problems Related to the Content of the Listening Text	.751	9	Reliable
Listening Problems Related to Linguistic Features	.787	8	Reliable
Learners' Perceptions of Listening Problems Related to Psychological Characteristics	.844	7	Reliable
Listening Problems Related to the Listener	.844	7	Reliable
Listening Problems Related to the Speaker	.707	4	Reliable
Listening Problems Related to the Physical Setting	.762	6	Reliable
Need for Technology to Enhance the Listening Skills	.934	8	Reliable

The alpha coefficient for all sections ranges between .702 and .934, suggesting that all items have relatively high internal consistency.

b) Students' Perceived Level of Listening Proficiency

Students were asked to rate their level of listening proficiency from 'excellent' to 'poor'. The result shows only 19 respondents rated their listening skill as 'good' and the rests perceived their listening proficiency as either 'average' or 'poor'.

Table 2: Gender * Listening Level Crosstabulation

Count

		Listening Level			Total
		Good	Average	Poor	
Gender	Male	3	11	5	19
	Female	16	74	11	101
Total		19	85	16	120

The table also indicates female students dominating the number of those surveyed. However, it is interesting to note that both genders share almost the same percentage (15.78% and 15.84%respectively) in terms of having perceived 'good' listening ability. In overall, the females were found to be more proficient in listening based on only 10.89% (equals to 11 respondents) who categorized themselves as having 'poor' listening proficiency as compared to26.32% male students (equals to 5 respondents) who fall under the same category.

c) Use of Different Means to Enhance Listening Skills

There are various means used to acquire listening comprehension. Among the common methods are listening to teachers and classmates in class, English language study cassettes and CDs and English radio channels. Apart from those, the students also practice their communication and listening skills through social media and British or American television programmes. Table 3 below points out the five listening methods used and mean scores for every category. It is observed that the most common method used is listening to teachers and classmates communicating in English with 4.10 mean score.

Table 3: Use of Different Means to Enhance Listening Skills

		Teachers & Classmates Methods	Study Cassette and CD	English Radio Channel	Social Media Communication	British American TV Program
N	Valid	120	120	120	120	120
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.10	3.35	3.72	4.02	3.94
Median		4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Mode		4	3	4	4	4

d) The Main Listening Problem Faced by Students

Second language learners always face challenges when they listen to the target language. The challenges vary and may involve several aspects such as the listeners themselves, speakers, psychological characteristics, context, linguistic features and physical setting. The following table reveals the respondents' response towards six categories of listening problem faced to comprehend general listening in English. The result proves physical setting with the mean score 3.94 to be the most prominent challenge in listening. Surrounding noise and poor listening equipment like low quality CD player and speakers are found to interfere with respondents' listening comprehension.

Table 4: Listening Problems Faced by Students

		ListTextContent	LinguisticFeatures	PsychoCharacteristics	ListenerRelated	SpeakerRelated	PhysicalSetting
N	Valid	120	120	120	120	120	120
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.2463	3.1469	3.2821	3.1958	3.4583	3.9417
Median		3.2222	3.0000	3.2857	3.0000	3.5000	4.0000
Mode		3.00	3.00	3.14	3.00	3.00	4.00

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e) The Need of Technology to Enhance Listening Skills

Understanding various listening difficulties has prompted the study on the need of technology assisted language learning (TALL) as one of the solutions to help improve listening comprehension. All items under this section are constructed to see students' preference and interest in technology. The findings show encouraging response which supports the idea of technology as a significant listening tool to assist the target language learning.

Table 5: The Need of Technology to Enhance Listening Skills

		Enjoy Technology	Technology is important	Technology improves	Practice through technology	Technology stimulates interest	Technology motivates	Happy motivated	Technology essential
N	Valid	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.79	4.03	4.08	4.08	4.02	3.96	3.99	4.05
Median		4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Mode		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

Based on Table 5, two significant uses of technology perceived by the respondents are 'technology improves listening' and 'listening practices through technology help me to become a better learner' with equal mean scores of 4.08 each. Other items under the section also display high overall mean scores which range between 3.79 and 4.08. Thus, the results verify the need of technology to enhance listening skills among the language learners.

5. Conclusion

It is undeniable that listening skills are very important yet quite challenging to a lot of language learners. The skills involve complex, intricate processes which do not only concern the input or message per se, but also the speakers, listeners, situations and contexts, linguistic units of the language, schematic knowledge and the anticipation both interlocutors have in mind. Before the learners can listen and learn, they must actually first, learn to listen. Empowering effective listening ability is what the paper is trying to achieve. It is hope that, the study serves as a preliminary step towards understanding the root cause of listening problems and suggesting the practical, possible solutions to the problem. Listening comprehension should be everyone's responsibility and concern as the skill may reduce unwanted misunderstandings and conflicts caused by failure to listen well.

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