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**DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY  
ENGLISH MAJOR**

**MODALITY: RESEARCH REPORT**

**THEME:**

**“DIFFICULTIES IN EFL STUDENTS TO DEVELOP ENGLISH  
LISTENING SKILLS”**

Research report before obtaining the bachelor degree in National and  
Foreign Language Pedagogy, English Major

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## **GRATEFULNESS**

*I want to express my deep gratitude to my mom and sister for supporting me financially and being a fundamental pillar during this process. Thank you for your unconditional love and the trust you placed in me at all times. To my teachers, I am very grateful for sharing their knowledge with me. Their patience and dedication in teaching for motivating me to continue despite the obstacles. To my tutor Andrade Moran José Ignacio, Mg. For continuously guiding me in this research process. His guidance and advice was a fundamental part of improving my research.*

## **DEDICATION**

*I dedicate this thesis to my mother who has been my inspiration and refuge every step of the way. Her words have been a constant support that has helped me through the difficulties I have had. To my sister Yuly for being a fundamental part of this learning process that I have had. In addition to her advice and guidance that she has given me, which has helped me to be a better person.*

*Thank you all for helping me to be a better person, for being with me unconditionally and for being a fundamental part of my life to fulfill this dream of being a teacher.*

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**ENGLISH MAJOR**

**THEME:** “Difficulties in EFL Students’ to Develop English Listening Skills”

**Author:**

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**ABSTRACT**

Listening is one of the four skills of the English language. It is considered a receptive skill based on understanding and interpreting what they hear, which represents a challenge for students of English as a foreign language. These difficulties were presented to the students in three phases: perception, parsing, and utilization, and it did not allow them to have a good understanding of what is transmitted during audio, creating a deficiency in listening comprehension. The main objective of this study was to identify listening comprehension difficulties in students of English as a foreign language. The data collection was employed, in 33 third-cycle students of the national and foreign language pedagogy career at the Technical University of Cotopaxi. A mixed method was used through the Listening Comprehension Problems Questionnaire, which was replicated as a means of data collection. This questionnaire was used in previous studies by Zur, Nowrouzi, Tam, Zareian, and Nimehchisalem. The study’s effectiveness was measured by collecting data and obtaining results to know the difficulties of students when developing listening skills. The questionnaire consists of 23 questions that were adapted to reality, where 15 questions were selected and divided into three cognitive stages which are perception, parsing, and utilization, in each stage the questionnaire was composed of 5 questions. The data obtained were tabulated using percentage tables and frequency graphics. Through the questionnaire, the difficulties of listening comprehension in English as a foreign language will be analyzed. It is expected that the findings obtained will be useful for students who want to increase their performance in listening comprehension. Also, it will be useful for researchers who wish to address the study of listening comprehension difficulties in students of a foreign language.

**Keywords:** Listening Skills, Perception, Parsing, Utilization

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**RESUMEN**

La escucha es una de las cuatro habilidades del idioma inglés. Considerada una habilidad receptiva basada en la comprensión e interpretación de lo que se escucha, lo que representa un reto para los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera. Estas dificultades se presentaron en los estudiantes en tres fases: percepción, análisis y utilización, y no les permitieron tener una buena comprensión de lo que se transmite durante un audio, creando una deficiencia en la comprensión auditiva. El objetivo principal de este estudio fue identificar las dificultades de comprensión auditiva en estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera. La recolección de datos se realizó en 33 estudiantes de tercer ciclo de la carrera de pedagogía de los idiomas nacionales y extranjeras de la Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi. Se utilizó un método mixto a través del Cuestionario de Problemas de Comprensión Auditiva, el cual fue replicado como medio de recolección de datos. Este cuestionario fue utilizado en estudios previos por Zur, Nowrouzi, Tam, Zareian y Nimehchisalem. La efectividad del estudio se midió mediante la recolección de datos y la obtención de resultados para conocer las dificultades de los estudiantes al desarrollar la habilidad de escuchar. El cuestionario consto de 23 preguntas que fueron adaptadas a la realidad, donde se seleccionaron 15 preguntas y se dividieron en tres etapas cognitivas que son percepción, análisis y utilización, en cada etapa el cuestionario estuvo compuesto por 5 preguntas. Los datos obtenidos fueron tabulados mediante tablas de porcentajes y gráficos de frecuencia. A través del cuestionario se analizaron las dificultades de comprensión auditiva en inglés como lengua extranjera, se espera obtener datos de las dificultades a través de las tres fases. Los hallazgos obtenidos revelan ser de utilidad para los estudiantes que quieran incrementar su desempeño en comprensión auditiva. También, será de utilidad para investigadores que deseen abordar el estudio de las dificultades de comprensión auditiva en estudiantes de una lengua extranjera.

**Palabras claves:** Análisis, Habilidad de Escucha, Percepción, Utilización

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## UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE WORK STRUCTURE

### 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

**Theme:** “Difficulties in EFL Students to Develop English Listening Skills”

**Starting Date:** October 16, 2024

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**Place of Research:** Campus Pujilí

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**Sponsoring Major:** National and Foreign Language Pedagogy: English

**Macro Project of the Major:** Academic discourse: A transdisciplinary study of education and linguistics in linguistic-communicative contexts for teaching English

**Research Group:** Mg. José Ignacio Andrade Morán and María Fernanda García Jaen

**Knowledge Area:** Education

**Research Line:** Education, communication and design for human and social development

**Extension Subline:** Education, Linguistic, Literature, Interculturality, and society

## 2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The four English skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing are all part of teaching English as a foreign language. “English has long established itself as the global language of communication, connecting individual from diverse background and cultures” (Solidjonov, 2024). Listening involves paying attention to sounds, giving and receiving information in a verbal message, and then decoding the message to understand it. Since the ability to listen is a complex acquisition process, its learning must be guided in a way that allows students to express their ideas and thoughts more clearly. Through this, they will be able to develop the linguistic knowledge necessary to express their ideas.

When two different languages interact, the grammar tends to mix between both languages causing confusion in the student, often resulting in the use of the grammar from the mother tongue into the new language. Therefore, when students learn a new language, the influence of the mother tongue as well as the medium of learning the new language must be taken into account. Additionally, the students’ poor performance in learning the new language becomes an important factor in difficulty to develop listening comprehension. Lack of practice of the new language generates a low level of listening comprehension in students.

The influence of the mother tongue is an agent that produces difficulty in understanding the foreign language, the type of teaching that the student is receiving also influences their ability to understand what they hear. This problem in listening comprehension occurs from students in early levels of English learning to more advanced students. This low development in this skill is due to the lack of practice and the students' low level of English in different educational institutions.

The development of listening comprehension skills requires constant practice through songs, podcasts or other media, as well as constant interaction with the new language. Performing this type of listening practice helps students

develop an understanding of the new language and allows students to acquire a habit of self-learning through these tools that prove to be beneficial.

The application of listening comprehension teaching methods to students is carried out in different ways depending on the students' abilities. According to Alzamil (2021) listeners cannot influence the rate of the speech of the speaker, and not be able to catch particular words or phrases. That is, the classroom environment in which the student is has a great influence on the development of their listening ability. Therefore, the student's auditory perception is a challenging factor when it comes to understanding and analyzing the message that is being transmitted in the new language. Therefore, when students have a good auditory perception they can generate a good understanding of what is being conveyed.

1. What are the students' difficulties in Listening comprehension skills in English as a Foreign Language?

## **2. JUSTIFICATION**

The English language is taught in schools, colleges and universities from an early age, there are multiple challenges in the process of improving students' listening comprehension. According to Alzamil (2021), the size of a student's vocabulary plays an important role during listening comprehension since a limited language will decrease comprehension. Additionally, the low students' knowledge is an important factor in listening comprehension. The purposes of this research is to analyze the listening comprehension difficulties in the third-semester students of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages career from the technical University of Cotopaxi.

Furthermore, this research provided a wide information about the students' listening difficulties and describe the importance of listening comprehension in

English as a foreign language. According to Kurtuldu & Ozkan (2022), students' listening competencies could be enhanced by being exposed to different English accents. In other words, when learning a second language (L2), it is necessary to be continuously exposed to the L2. In addition, the low interaction with the L2 may cause the misinterpretation of it and cause the student to misinterpret the message that the speaker is sending, causing poor use of the foreign language.

This study contributed to the listening comprehension difficulties in English as foreign language students by identifying the difficulties in which they have the most problems. Additionally, it provides information on how the three phases of listening comprehension perception, parsing, and utilization influence the development of listening comprehension. The main beneficiaries of this research will be students who have problems with their listening. Also this study has indirect beneficiaries which are the English teachers and students of National and Foreign Language Pedagogy career. Likewise, teachers will also benefit from it, since through the findings of this research they can use new teaching strategies in the classroom that cover the main difficulties of students during listening comprehension. This research is feasible because there is access to a great deal of information about listening comprehension difficulties and their importance.

## **4. OBJECTIVES**

### **4.1 General Objective**

- To identify listening comprehension difficulties in students of third-semester in National and Foreign Language Pedagogy career from the Technical University of Cotopaxi

### **4.2 Specific Objectives**

- To analyze the listening comprehension difficulties
- To explore the listening comprehension difficulties
- To determine the listening comprehension difficulties in perception, parsing, and utilization phases

## 5. ACTIVITIES AND TASK SYSTEM IN RELATION TO THE OBJECTIVE PROPOSED

TABLE I

Specific Objective	Activities	Result of activities	Verification Means
To analyze the listening comprehension difficulties	Find books E-books Search definitions Articles	Obtain relevant information	Collect information Theoretical framework
To explore the listening comprehension difficulties	Design questionnaire Apply questionnaire	Data collection	Analysis and Interpretation of the results
To determine the listening comprehension difficulties in perception, parsing, and utilization phases	Using the questionnaire data for categorize the results obtained.	Results	Analyze the data and conclusions from the questionnaire conducted

*Note: This table shows the activities that were carried out in the project*

## 6. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL FOUNDATION

### 6.1 Background

While listening comprehension is one of the most important English language skills there are a myriad of difficulties that students have faced throughout their English education. Over time, several studies have been carried out in order to identify these difficulties for example, in the study by Al-Khresheh (2020), a qualitative study was executed through a survey that identified listening comprehension difficulties in EFL students. Using three categories perception, parsing and utilization. Through this study, it was possible to identify that students had problems with listening comprehension in all three phases but their greatest difficulty was in the Perception phase, this is due to poor listening comprehension. On the other hand, a study carried out by Jemadi et al. (2023), using the same survey with similar objectives found that the students' greatest difficulty was in the Utilization phase, stemming from students' low knowledge of practical expressions and lack of breadth in different topics. Moreover, according to Megasari (2021) in their research on hearing difficulty problems the researchers found that the biggest

challenge to EFL students' development of this skill is that they are only connected to the language in classes once a day or a few times a week. Oftentimes the students do not practice outside their educational centers impeding their ability to improve their comprehension skills. Moreover, research carried out by Islomova & Yeakub (2020-2021) found that the difficulty in developing listening comprehension skills are due to the little knowledge that students have in recognizing new words, grammatical structures and their lack of vocabulary. Furthermore, a study carried out by Alrawashdeh & Al-Zayed (2017), in their research on hearing difficulty problems found that the main generator of these difficulties is the lack of competence of EFL teachers as well as the lack of teaching resources available to them.

In Ecuador there are similar results as mentioned from research carried out in the other country such as the study carried out by Alexandra (2023), that found the challenges to learning to listen in English stemmed from the way teachers execute English lesson plans. This was because the teachers did not apply teaching resources appropriately according to the learning difficulties of their students. Additionally, research carried out by Chacon L (2024) in his investigation of the factors that affect listening comprehension in adolescent EFL students agreed that lack of resources provided by the teacher according to the students' English level is the main hurdle that students face when developing their listening skills.

## **6.2 Theoretical Framework**

### **6.2.1 English receptive skills**

“The ability to comprehend a language is known as receptive abilities” (Nuraeningsih, 2022). Reading and writing conform to the receptive skills these also could call passive skills. These are receptive skills because they need students to understand the information in a reading or listening way. “Effective listening and reading comprehension rely heavily on cognitive processes” (Hartani, 2022). Students need to have a high cognitive capacity to develop these skills.

Understand reading and listening, students need to know about phonology, syntax, and semantics. “These processes can broadly be categorized into the phonological process for word recognition, the syntactic process for grammar recognition, the semantic process for meaning identification, and working memory for storing and retrieving information” (Hartani, 2022). During the cognitive process, comprehending reading or listening makes a challenge for students because they need to have a bigger knowledge in vocabulary and other categories.

Developing receptive skills means using the brain to understand and decode what the reading or listening wants to transmit. “Receptive listening skill is the capacity to comprehend communication in the language” (Maulida et al., 2022, p. 95). Receptive skills are the interpretation and recognition of the message of texts heard or written.

Inside of listening and reading comprehension the vocabulary has a big influence to understand both subskills. “Academic vocabulary refers to the set of words that are linked to academic discourse and can be utilized in many disciplines” (Kamola, 2023, p. 79). Vocabulary is a special setting that students can use to understand much better the receptive skills, because with more vocabulary knowledge they would understand all the information transmitted in a reading or listening way.

“Learning vocabulary is not a simple task. The L2 vocabulary learning process is the most demanding and complicated” (Rosyada-As & Apoko, 2023). Learning vocabulary represents a challenge for students and also means that they cannot improve it. For this reason, understanding reading or listening is difficult for students. The low vocabulary knowledge represents a barrier to developing English receptive skills.

Furthermore, in the development of receptive skills, it intervenes follow instructions. The ability of students to follow instructions is a fundamental part of

receptive skills since through it, students begin a stage of understanding which sometimes turns out to be a challenge since some students do not always understand the instructions the first time. According to Lavania and Nor (2021), it is essential to identify and address challenges in an agile manner to ensure that education is equitable for all students. Each student has a different way of learning, so learning to follow instructions must be tailored to each student according to their learning level.

Following instructions in the classroom is essential for the student to adapt to the new language. According to Olagbaju et al. (2024), interactions within the classroom give English learners the ease of learning the new language in a comprehensive way since students can integrate the target language and then produce correct and meaningful sentences. Learning to follow instructions helps students to have better skills in learning the English language, it also helps teachers to have a better classroom environment where they can develop their full potential to transmit good teaching.

On the other hand, within the development of receptive skills we find the understanding of questions. The understanding of questions is the ability of students to understand simple questions. According to Pakpahan et al. (2021) students must obtain correct answers related to the use of stimulation of the concept of logical knowledge and reasoning. Therefore, correctly capturing the questions is part of the development of the student's skills, in addition to developing and integrating new knowledge into their language development.

However, understanding questions merits the use of other skills such as grammar. According to Andriani et al. (2021) the teaching of grammar is a fundamental component in English. Grammar has been taught since ancient times, even though teachers currently believe that teaching grammar is not really fundamental, it continues to be taught. When understanding questions, grammar plays a major role since it provides the structure with which the questions are developed for the students.

The ability to understand grammatical structures is crucial for the development of receptive skills. According to Mashudi et al. (2022), grammar is defined as the understanding of rules, structures, and norms of the foreign language. In other words, it refers to how English learners organize and order vocabulary and then construct sentences according to what they need.

Grammar allows the identification of how students configure their first language to learn a foreign language and also allows the identification of the variation in the use of grammar in the foreign language influenced by the mother tongue. According to Enrique (2021), grammar has several approaches that have been developed over time, such as historical, normative, comparative, general, and descriptive or functional grammar. Therefore, grammar seeks to describe the language with all its variations.

### **6.2.2 Reading comprehension**

Reading is one of English skills, with its students can understand the reading by doing a mental image about what they are reading. According to Imbaquingo y Cárdenas (2023) Reading is the understanding of the ideas in a text and relating them with what the reader knows also makes conclusions and uses it information according to the intention of the message.

Learning reading is useful for accurate comprehension of the text by making use of the students' knowledge. "Reading is a fundamental skill that plays a crucial role in acquiring knowledge and understanding the world around us" (Ikhtiyorovna, 2023). Through reading students can increase their knowledge and be prepared to put it into practice in real life.

Reading has two techniques: skimming and scanning. "Previous studies have shown that the implementation of the skimming and scanning techniques can increase students' ability in reading comprehension" (Fatmawan et al., 2023). Skimming is a fast reading to have a general idea of what the text is about.

“Skimming refers to the process of reading only main ideas within a passage to get an overall impression of the content of a reading” (ANarzullayeva, 2023). It is an excellent technique to develop a quick understanding of the text.

Scanning is reading carefully; it is useful to locate specific information in a text. According to Afriani et al (2022) scanning is use for specific details of information for instance, when we look for a phone number, what is on television at a certain time or quickly scan an article looking for precise information. This technique is useful when students do not have enough time to complete a task. Through it students can look for the specific information and do not waste the time reading all the text.

These techniques are beneficial to develop a better reading comprehension because students can perform their reading ability, however these techniques have a little difference that students always have to take into consideration. “The main difference between skimming and scanning is that skimming tells you what information is contained in the section or in the document, while scanning helps you position a particular piece of information” (ANarzullayeva, 2023).

Reading comprehension is an important part of receptive skills because through reading students can understand better a listening, during the listening the students can read and it helps to make more sense to the reading and listening. “Reading comprehension is a process of improving and understanding what you’re reading entails making your reading materials sturdier so that you can identify situations, objects, functions, and reading effects” (Agustin et al., 2023). Developed reading skills students can understand a text much better.

Reading development involves five skills, one of which is decoding. Decoding is the reading and comprehension process that the student uses. According to Saputri et al. (2021), teachers can also use strategies such as vocabulary development, text comprehension, reading strategies, text visualization, among others. In other words, the comparison of words with mental images and sounds is used, which makes it easier for the student to understand the text.

Fluency is another skill that must be developed to have good reading. Fluency consists of the rhythm by which students can read and at the same time understand what they read. According to Kim et al. (2021), fluency is characterized by the reader's ability to connect texts with precision, speed, and expression. Developing this skill helps students have good reading comprehension as well as better development of their English reading skills.

Good reading development involves relating the text to the knowledge one has. However, it is difficult for students to understand all the sentences in a text because they are very long. According to Nurmalasari & Haryudin (2021), long sentences are of extensive structure, which makes it difficult for the student to organize the structure and meaning of the sentence and does not allow them to find an adequate meaning. If a student does not have good knowledge, it is more difficult for them to identify the meaning of a text.

Reading is a process through which the student develops their comprehension skills from their early years and improves them as they progress. According to Yapp et al. (2021), teaching reading strategies is a model that explicitly focuses on the teacher who teaches students to be aware of and have control over their reading process. Therefore, in the students' school years, their reading ability improves thanks to the practice and strategies that the teacher teaches them.

According to Wenying (2022), reading comprehension is important because in this way students acquire new information and expand their knowledge. Through reading, students create a reading habit which facilitates the acquisition of external knowledge that, through the processing of information by the brain, becomes the student's knowledge.

Reading skill is considered receptive skills because new knowledge is acquired through reading. According to Muhamad (2023), reading comprehension is the ability to understand a written text that is used as a tool for change for

readers. This helps to have a greater learning process and development of receptive skills in English as a foreign language.

### **6.2.3 Listening comprehension**

Listening skills in English are defined as a receptive skill. According to Abdushukurova (2024) receptive skills include reading and listening, are essential to language acquisition because they allow students to understand and analyze language input from a variety of sources, including spoken language and written texts. This type of skill represents a challenge for learners, however it is important to develop it. “The importance of listening is increasing in the world, and technological advances in global communication have made listening by non-native speakers even more crucial” (Mendelsohn 1998, p. 81).

According to Afriyuninda & Oktaviani (2021), English is an important skill that must be mastered by students to improve their competitive skills in the workplace and at university. Oftentimes listening skills are underestimated by students, which causes a difficulty for optimal development. When we refer to listening skills, we intuit that it is the act of perceiving sounds, processing them, understanding them and transmitting them. “Listening is an act of perception which includes focusing, becoming aware, and selecting cues from the environment” (Afriyuninda & Oktaviani, 2021, p. 81). In other words, listening is not just hearing, it is understanding a sound, processing it and capturing the message that is being given or received.

When discussing listening comprehension, audition is another important skill. According to Afriyuninda & Oktaviani (2021), auding is the act that begins with hearing and listening. Auding is defined as the identification of what is being heard and associating sounds with something already known in order to organize, imagine, and appreciate what is being heard. The development of listening skills is important because it is through them that sounds are interpreted; a message is captured or transmitted. In addition, there are advantages to developing good listening skills. Some of these include: successful communication, greater

productivity, comfort in a foreign environment, familiarity with accents and dialects, and awareness of intensive and extensive listening. “By becoming a better listener, we can improve our productivity, as well as the ability to influence, persuade and negotiate, and avoid much conflict and misunderstanding” (Yurko & Styfanyshyn, 2020, p. 40-41). Having a good listening ability helps productive interaction by offering a better exchange of information.

Maintaining the development of listening skills involves constant practice. In addition, developing this skill creates potential for communication with native English speakers. According to Mukhtorova and Ilxomov (2024), listening is a fundamental skill for maintaining effective communication as well as acquiring new information and learning new languages, in this case English. Listening is necessary to maintain adequate communication with people.

The ability to listen not only improves the interaction between speakers but also helps the overall development of the new language. According to Pham (2021), listening skills help to understand what the speaker wants to say, modify their production and standardize it. Through different communication factors, effective interaction and transmission of information can be achieved.

According to Altun (2023), the importance of listening skills is based on the fact that it provides adequate and easy-to-understand information to acquire a language. That is, through listening, new knowledge can be acquired that later becomes one's own, in addition to providing new information suitable for putting into practice in everyday life.

Listening comprehension helps students understand information from different sources. It is also essential to maintain a good development of oral language since it helps us to have fluid communication. The listener's perceptions can also be more accurate. According to Kluger and Itzchakov (2021), perceptions are the judgments made by the speaker that are made towards the listener and how

these impact the speaker. It is the way in which they receive and handle the information heard.

The importance of listening lies in the effect it can have on the listener, that is, how he or she feels about what is being said. According to Nichols, P. & Straus, B. (2021), being listened to means that the person we interact with takes us seriously, recognizes the feelings that are transmitted through speech and the intention of the message. These factors influence the listener's understanding of the message, which adds significance to how the listener will interpret the message.

#### **6.2.4 Listening comprehension problems**

“Listening plays an important role in communication as it is said that of the total time spent on communicating” (Ramadhianti & Somba, 2022). It needs careful attention from students to understand what the listening transmits. Teaching and learning listening skills is a challenge because students can feel frustrated if they have to listen for a long time. For this reason, developing listening comprehension is difficult and implies some listening comprehension problems.

Students' proficiency in listening is also a factor that influences their comprehension. “Listener factors: language proficiency, lacking vocabulary, comprehensive ability, background knowledge” (Phan & Nguyen, 2023). Students' lack of knowledge makes listening comprehension difficult because they do not have a vocabulary and comprehension ability appropriate to their level.

Numerous researchers have focused their studies on the various problems and challenges that language learners confront in listening comprehension. Anderson (1995) points out (2020) listening comprehension problems are associated with difficulties that listeners have across the perception, parsing, and utilization stages of comprehension. Firstly, in perception phase students face phonological and lexical problems. Speech rate and a person's limited vocabulary also affect their listening ability. Secondly, during the parsing phase, sentence

construction problems arise that involve syntactic and semantic issues. Semantics is the study of language, while syntax is the relationship between the order of words in a sentence. Utilization is another phase within the problems of listening comprehension. In this phase, the greatest problems that students have are related to the recognition of the overall structure of the ideas in a text.

The development of listening in the English language represents several difficulties. According to Islomova (2021) Students have great difficulties in listening comprehension because listening is a skill that is rarely taught in universities and schools. Therefore, students have little development of this skill and are not always able to capture the information that is transmitted through listening.

Within listening comprehension, vocabulary plays a fundamental role since it is necessary to have extensive vocabulary knowledge to be able to understand listening. According to Luo et al. (2021) vocabulary is an important factor within listening comprehension, so in order to have good listening comprehension, students need to master a good knowledge of vocabulary. This implies a deep study of vocabulary and constant practice of it.

The difficulties faced by students during listening comprehension have been the result of poor practice. According to Ha and Ngo (2021), listening has been ignored or poorly taught during the school period. This causes the student to not have a good development of this skill, representing a challenge to perform in listening activities.

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The speed with which English speakers communicate is a factor that makes comprehension difficult for students of English as a foreign language. According to Wong et al. (2021), the speed and clarity of native English speakers influences the comprehension control of non-native speakers. Because not all the information is captured due to the speed with which they speak.

The development of listening comprehension is one of the strongest skills of the English language because due to the influence of external factors, it has little development. According to Egamnazarova and Mukhamedova (2021), in order to train listening ability, it is important to have active participation during listening, that is, to pay full attention to what is heard. Therefore, to achieve excellent development of listening ability, it is necessary to have constant practice.

### **6.2.5 Listening comprehension phases**

Listening comprehension difficulties is divided in three principal problems which are perception, parsing, and utilization. The first is perception phase. According to Zur (2020), it refers to the attention of the information receiving and the inability to distinguish sounds and words. It means that perception involves the listeners' inability to distinguish sound and words in a steam of speech and the intonation, stress, and different accents.

The second is parsing phase. According to Si (2022), parsing problems state the activity of changing the linked meaning of words and sentence structures to get information from the listeners'. These problems include the quickly forgetting of the listening, do not form a mental image, lost others parts of the listening, and not understanding all the information.

Finally, the third is utilization phase. It involves the ability to communicate meaning and interpret meaning in an appropriate manner. According to Zur (2020), utilization phase concerns the use of the previous knowledge to interpret the information for the storage and discourse in nature.

These problems occur when the listener is unable to understand the flow of ideas in connected speech.

### **6.2.6 Listening comprehension problems in perception phase**

Students normally have difficulty in listening comprehension. These problems are related to listeners' inability to distinguish sounds. According to Kurvanova et al (2022) perception is the process of analysis and synthesis in the different language units thereby converting heard sounds into semantic registers. It means difficulty to understand the listening due to internal and external factors.

Phonological and lexical problems are internal factors that influence the perception phase. Phonological problems cover the inability to comprehend intonation, stress, and various accents during listening process. According to Maharani et al (2023) phonology investigates the complex interrelationships among speech sounds, their perception, production, and the physics that underlie them. It means that this problem is caused by the low proficiency of students and the basic education that students receive during their school.

Lexical problems refer to deficient knowledge in vocabulary. In which students know common words but not words that are more idiomatic language, proper nouns, and low frequency words. "Lexicology, a branch of linguistics, is devoted to the systematic study and organization of vocabulary within a language" (Tursunovich, 2024, p. 59). Within it, the use of slang is part of these problems because it involves aspects of contemporary English that become difficult to understand for foreign English students. These two categories conform to a higher difficulty for students because their low knowledge and interaction with the foreign language means less understanding in what they are listening and how to interpret it depending on the different context and use of the language.

### **6.2.7 Listening comprehension problems in parsing phase**

Listening comprehension problems from parsing involve the ambiguity of the interpretation of the phrases because each sentence or phrase has different ways to be interpreted depending on the context. In addition, it involves the union

of prepositions and the use of words with several meanings. In this phase, the majority of problems that students encounter is syntactical and semantic. According to Weissweiler et al. (2022) Syntax is the study of the order of the words in a sentence. Syntactic problems refer to quickly forgetting what is heard, not forming a mental image about what they are listening to and low understanding of the information that they are hearing.

Semantics is the other problem that students have. According to Kutlu et al. (2021) Semantic is the study of the meaning of language and their classification of words and phrases depending on the meaning. It means that semantic problems occur when students focus only on the meaning of a specific word while losing the other part of the listening that causes a low processing capacity of their memory and results in a non-understanding of the information.

Syntax and semantics are fundamental within listening comprehension because they contribute to understanding the information in a listening. However, due to the poor development of this skill in students it becomes a challenge because they must relate them and know how to use them.

#### **6.2.8 Listening comprehension problems in utilization phase**

Students commonly have problems with utilization during the listening comprehension. According to Jemadi et al (2022) a low pragmatic competence is linked to the utilization phase of L2 listening comprehension. The two main issues with utilization problems are pragmatic and discursive in character. According to Roever (2021) pragmatic means to know how to adapt the use of language to other people. Pragmatics problems refer to the inability to communicate and interpret meaning. This interpretation depends on the relationship that students have with the other person because with more confidence the students can feel less nervous and thus can have a better interpretation of the listening. Also, the influence of different content determines what would be the interpretation of the message according to every situation represented in a listening.

On the other hand, discorsal problems refers to the low student capacity to organize their ideas during the listening. It can include grammatical and structural problems. Also it can represent a challenge in applying discourse analysis. According to Jaya et al. (2021) These difficulties arise from students' difficulty in understanding English, which involves grammatical understanding and vocabulary collection. It causes students to not have good listening comprehension.

Utilization problems cover all the difficulties to interpret that students have during listening and it also causes students confusion in understanding the main idea while listening and understanding the detailed information that is transmitted. That is to say, they cannot recognize the intended message. This problem is caused because of the low proficiency of students.

## **7. METHODOLOGY**

This study aims to identify the difficulties in listening comprehension. To address the objective, mixed method will be applied since it helps collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data. According to Taherdoost (2022), mixed-method is a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a better understanding of the subject. Quantitative method used numerical data and measure its extent or amount, while qualitative method involves the collection of non-numerical data and measures a state change or the existence of something. The technique of this research was the survey and the instrument used was the listening comprehension problems questionnaire, taken from the research study carried out by Zur (2020). The questionnaire consists of twenty-three questions that were adapted to this investigation selected fifteen questions that are mainly divided into three parts: perception, parsing, and utilization. The number of questions was divided accordingly, five questions for perception, five questions for parsing, and five questions for utilization. The questionnaire was split into three sections to allow for a deeper understanding of the difficulties students face during their listening comprehension development. Moreover, these three sections made it possible to identify which areas were most challenging. The participants

were from the Technical University of Cotopaxi, specifically in third year students of National and Foreign Languages Pedagogy. There were thirty-three respondents. They were selected based on the criteria that they are not native English speakers and have been studying the English language for two semesters or more.

The data was collected using the quantitative method and after the corresponding permission that was requested from the respective teacher in charge was acquired. In addition, it was requested from the students that when completing the questionnaire, they do so consciously, giving answers in accordance with their experience. This questionnaire was completed in thirty minutes and examined listening comprehension problems in three phases starting with: the first, perception. Perception covers any problems that students have in listening, especially around the phonological and lexical problem. The second is the parsing section that reveals problems focused on the syntactic and semantic understanding of language. The third is utilization that measures the discursive and pragmatic problems that students have in listening comprehension.

The quantitative data from the survey was analyzed using an Excel computer program to extract the data from the questionnaires. With the data obtained, a tabulation was made into three groupings divided into perception, parsing, and utilization through which the percentage of each answer given by the students was analyzed in a table of percentage and a graphic of frequency. The results were then analyzed qualitatively and it was possible to identify the listening comprehension difficulties of students who are halfway through their language studies. In addition to identifying the main difficulty they have when listening, the research was also compared with other research carried out previously to see if the difficulties that students have are the same or change based on the location where the research was conducted.

## 8. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The analysis of the information is shown and examined according to the sequence of the research inquiries, which are divided into three sections: perception, parsing, and utilization.

### 1. Perception problems

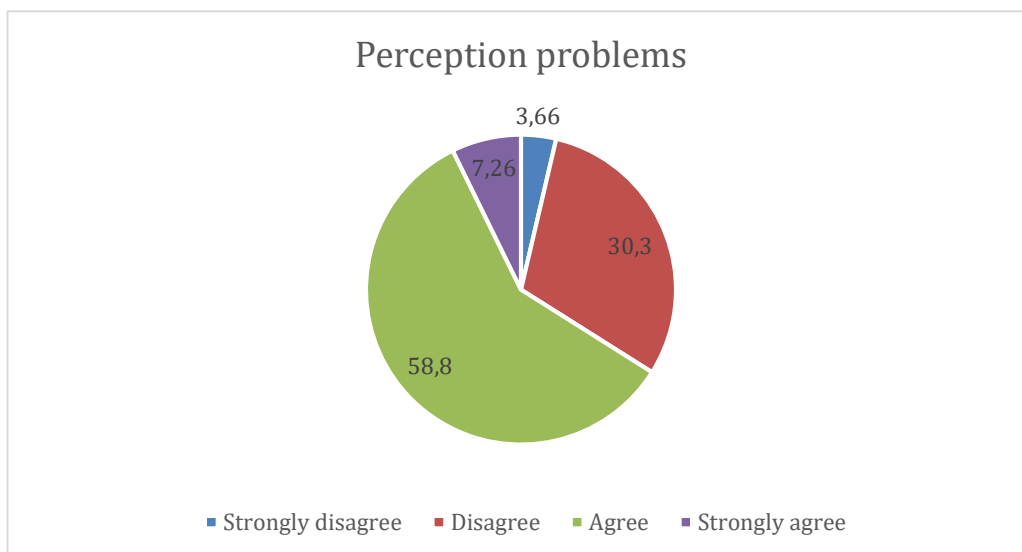
The data from the table on perception issues is present in this section (questions 1 to 5) in LCPQ are presented (Table 1).

**Table II**  
*Perception problems*

Question	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Percentage %
1. I can hear the sound but not clear words.	6,1	33,3	57,6	3	100%
2. I find it difficult when missing the beginning of the text.	0	21,2	69,7	9,1	100%
3. I know the meaning of the words when seeing it.	0	39,4	51,5	9,1	100%
4. I find it difficult not recognize so many sound and words.	6,1	21,2	69,7	3	100%
5. I find it difficult to really concentrate on listening.	6,1	36,4	45,5	12,1	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3.66</b>	<b>30.3</b>	<b>58.8</b>	<b>7.26</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Note: These table shows the percentages of students got in every item of perception phase.*

### Graphic 1: Perception problems



Based on the 60.6 % of students that agreed with question 1 it can be observed that a majority of students face difficulty when trying to decipher words. While the other 39.4% of students disagreed, they did not have problems deciphering words during the audio. In question 2, 78.8% of students agreed that they had difficulties understanding the audio when they missed the start of the text. The remaining 21.2% of students disagreed, pronouncement that even though they lost the beginning of the text, they had not problems understanding the listening. In question 3, 60.6% of students agreed that they could understand a word when they saw it, but not when they heard it. The other 39.4% of respondents disagreed that they could understand the meaning of the word when they saw a word. 72.7% of students agreed with question 4, meaning a majority of students had problems recognizing many sounds and words during the listening. However, 27.3% of students disagreed saying they did not have problems listening to a lot of words during the audio. Additionally, 57.6% of students agreed with question 5, that they could not concentrate on the listening. While 42.5% of students disagreed they did not have difficulties concentrating during the audio. These problems could be because they are only halfway through their degree and have received fewer English classes. Additionally, a lack of practice with listening could be why a majority of students had problems with perception of the listening.

## 2. Parsing problems

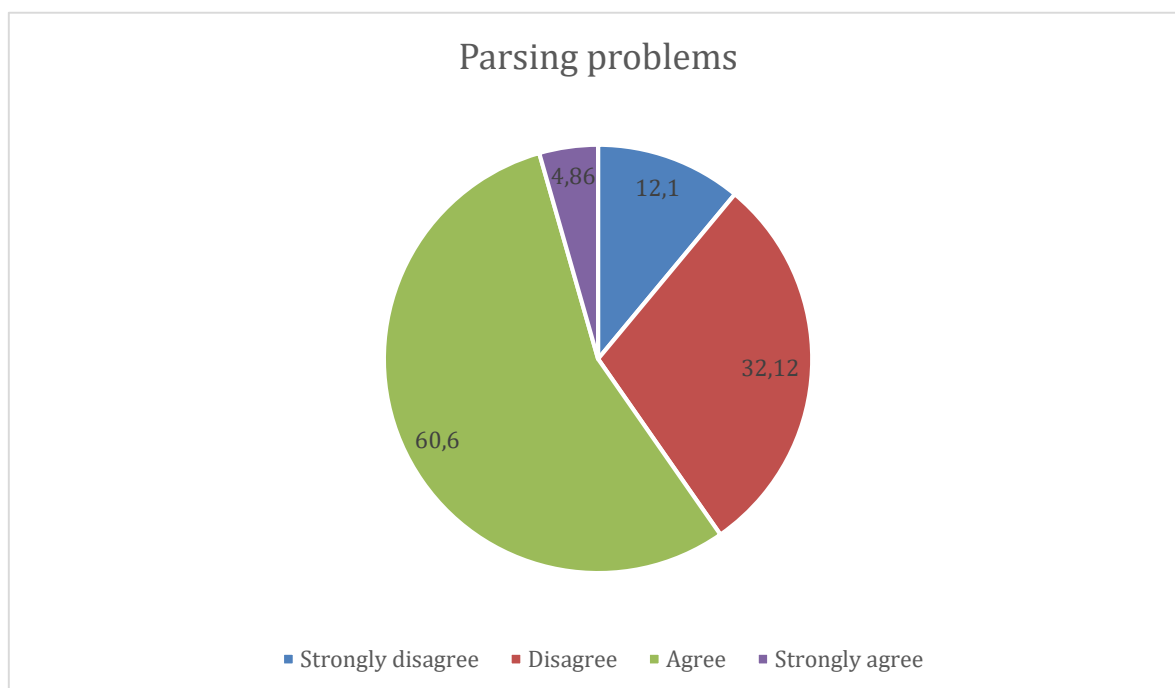
This section presents the data of parsing problems experienced by the students (Table 2).

**Table III**  
*Parsing problems*

Question	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Percent age %
6. I find it difficult to quickly remember words or phrases I have just heard.	0	30,3	60,6	9,1	100%
7. I find it difficult to understand the meaning of sentences.	12,1	51,5	36,4	0	100%
8. I find it difficult to remember the meaning of a long listening text.	0	27,3	72,7	0	100%
9. I find it difficult to follow unfamiliar topic.	0	21,2	72,7	6,1	100%
10. I find it difficult to understand a lot of new information in a short time.	0	30,3	60,6	9,1	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,42</b>	<b>32,12</b>	<b>60,6</b>	<b>4,86</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Note: These table shows the percentages of students got in every item of parsing phase.*

**Graphic 2: Parsing problems**



70.3% of students who agreed with question 6, had difficulty remembering words or phrases that they had just heard while the other 30.3% disagreed. In question 7, 36.4% of students agreed that they had difficulty deciphering the meaning of the sentences. The remaining 63.6% of students found it easy to grasp the significance of a sentence. On the other hand, 72.7% of students agreed in question 8 that they struggled to recall the significance of an extended audio. Even so 27.3% of students did not have difficulty remembering the material from the audio. 78.8% of students agreed with question 9, meaning the students found it difficult to follow unfamiliar topics. The other 21.2% of students disagreed, expressing they did not have problems understanding new topics. Moreover 69.7% of students agreed in question 10 that they had difficulty to grasp a lot of new information quickly. However, 30.3% of respondents did not have difficulty understanding new knowledge quickly. The challenges may stem from the students' inadequate skills and limited practice in listening, along with a deficient experience with strong vocabulary they have encountered at school. Furthermore, comprehending a significant amount of information can be challenging because students lose the intention of the listening and need to repeat it to catch all the ideas.

### 3. *Utilization problems*

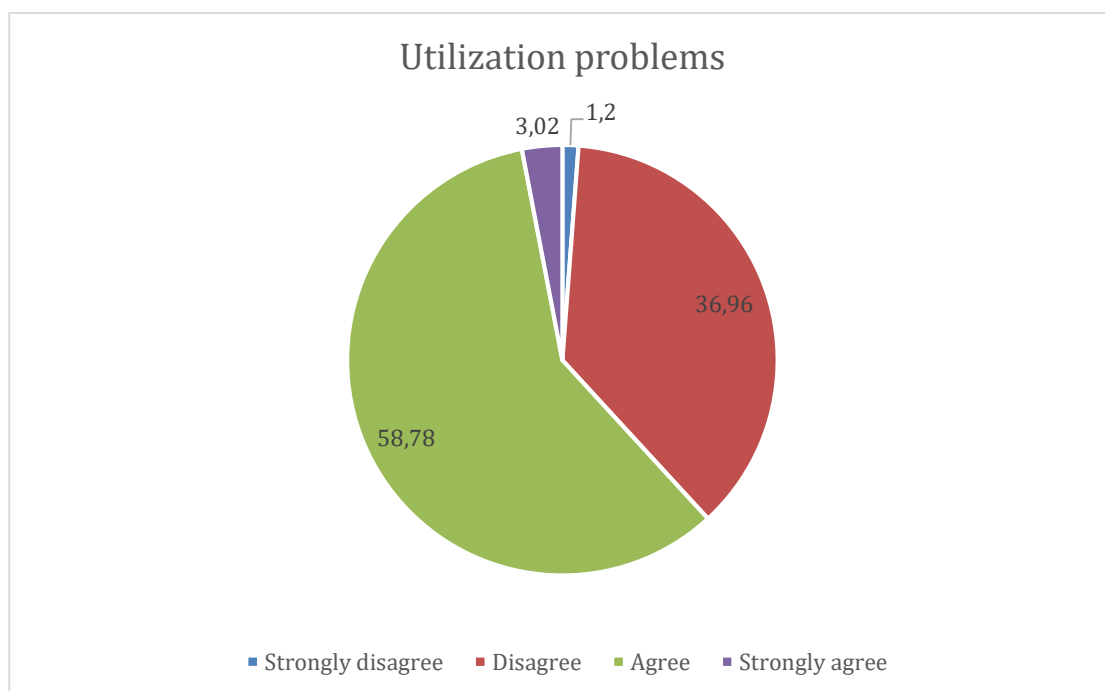
The third section of the questionnaire is concerning the overall intention of a text, the central concept along with its connection to the supporting ideas, the relationship they have and their order. The results obtained in the utilization problems are shown in Table 4.

**Table IV**  
*Utilization problems*

Question	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Agree %	Strongly agree %	Percentage %
11. I understand the words but not the intended message.	3	24,2	72,7	0	100%
12. When I listen to texts in English, I get confuse to understand the main idea of the text.	3	33,3	57,6	6,1	100%
13. I find it difficult in getting the detail information.	0	39,4	57,6	3	100%
14. While listening, I find it difficult to relate among ideas.	0	42,4	54,5	3	100%
15. I find it difficulties to get the supporting ideas.	0	45,5	51,5	3	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,2</b>	<b>36,96</b>	<b>58,78</b>	<b>3,02</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Note: These table shows the percentages of students got in utilization phase.*

**Graphic 3: Utilization problems**



As seen, 72.7% of students agreed with question 11, the majority of students had difficulty understanding the purpose of the message in the audio. The rest of 27.2% disagreed, they did not have problems understanding the intended meaning of the message. 63.7% of students agreed in question 12

that they faced difficulties understanding the main idea of a listening. The remaining 36.3% of students disagreed they did not get confused to grasp the main idea of a listening. In question 13, 60.6% of students agreed that they found it difficult to specific detail from the listening. The other 39.4% of students disagreed with this question. In question 14, 57.5% of students found it difficult to connect concepts in the audio. The other 42.4% of responders did not have difficulty relating ideas during the listening. Moreover 54.5% of students agreed in question 15, they had difficulties to get the supporting ideas in the audio. However, 45.5% of students disagreed with this question. There were a lot of utilization problems while developing their listening skills. This is because of students had a poor auditory ability for this reason lost the intendent of the listening and the less knowledge and listening practice created a difficult for knew what the listening transmit.

### **Discussion**

The findings of this study are similar to the outcomes obtained in previous studies. Perception, parsing, and utilization were the three listening domains in which a majority of EFL students had listening problems. A considerable percentage of students experienced difficulties related to perception problems, which affects their ability to develop listening skills in English. 66.06% of students stated that they agreed that they have difficulties concentrating and processing sounds properly, specifically regarding the speed of speech, which prevents them from capturing the beginning of the text, or even recognizing words despite hearing them. This lack of auditory clarity was a significant obstacle to understanding audio. In contrast, 33.96% of students stated that they have no significant perception problems. This could occur because their basic education had other practices and forms of teaching. Moreover, the economic difference among students could have a fundamental role because the education in private school is better and allows students to build a better baseline in English than in public education. In other words, the private education system has a better teaching of English and

dedicates more hours to teaching English while in public schools teaching English is not really strict and dedicates less hours to teaching it.

On the other hand, 65.46% of students reported difficulties related to parsing problems. These problems refer to the inability to quickly recognize words or phrases they hear, difficulty understanding the significance of phrases, and the problem of retaining the meaning of lengthy passages. Hardiyanto et al. (2021), mention in his research a long spoken text is the most difficulty which related to the message content in parsing problems. As in this research these difficulties can be particularly challenging because the ability to analyze a text or speech requires efficiently processing the words and phrases heard, analyzing them to grasp the full meaning of the message. When students fail to do this quickly, their audio comprehension is compromised as they lose the connection between ideas. In addition, students also reported having difficulty recognizing unfamiliar topics and understanding new information in a short period of time. This challenge is common in listening comprehension, as listening to a topic that is not well known can make it more difficult to grasp the main ideas or essential details of the text.

Likewise, 61.8% of students experienced great difficulty in utilization problems, that is, identifying the intention of the message in audios. This data suggests that many of the participants failed to grasp the main purpose of the message conveyed, which may reflect a difficulty in the overall interpretation of the content. Comparing with a study conducted by Ramadhianti & Somba (2022), students cannot recognize the words are said by the speaker, as a result student cannot understand the message of the passage. This type of difficulty is common in advanced listening tasks, where not only understanding vocabulary or structures is required, but also interpretation. Furthermore, students mentioned having similar difficulties in understanding the main idea of the text and in identifying specific details in the information provided in the audio.

As Zur (2020) mention in his research, the most important problems in the perception area were the misperception of the beginning of the text, the recognition of unknown words or sounds, and the speed of the speaker. While poor memory for remembering long sentences and recognizing specific words is related to the problem of syntactic analysis, the misperception of the intended message of the text is related to the issue of utilization. As in this research, the students had the greatest difficulty in perception problems, that is, in the perception of what is said in a listening session and the recognition of words during a listening session. By addressing these gaps, students can improve their listening comprehension, which will allow them to have better interaction within the classroom, as well as improve their academic performance. In addition, students can have a better development of their listening skills through the use of listening strategies.

## **9. RESEARCH IMPACTS**

The findings presented highlight several critical areas for improving the teaching of listening comprehension in English, particularly in regard to addressing problems of perception, parsing and utilization. This problem comes from primary school because of the poor education that students had in the state curriculum. It means that students could not develop their English skills during their scholarship.

This research contributes to the educational field, especially in the area of English. Through the findings. The curriculum design used by teachers can be improved by applying new strategies to develop listening skills, strategies like use of podcasts or innovative apps, and learning new methods to help students' proficiency. This research provides crucial information to English students as a foreign language, which shows the greatest difficulties that students have when developing listening skills. This information also helps teachers to know new ways to teach and give detailed information on what students lack during the listening practice. In addition, this research provides information about the difficulties in listening for future researchers who want to address the topic of

listening skills. Therefore, this research provides relevant data and clarifies what are the necessities of the students for improving their English listening skills to the educational community.

## **10. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The correct development of listening comprehension can help students to enrich their comprehension and understanding during a listening. However, development of listening comprehension is considered a challenge for students because it involves several problems. Some of these problems are perception, parsing, and utilization. Each one has a function during the listening comprehension, the first one covers the inability to understand sounds and words during the speech, the second involve not understanding of the all information in the listening and quickly forgetting of the information, and the third refers to inability to communicate meaning and interpret it.

The biggest problem students face when developing listening skills are perception problems. That is, phonological problems. They had an inability to distinguish the sounds and words in a stream of speech. Students faced several problems when interpreting an audio in English, including perception, parsing, and utilization problems. It means they had problems distinguishing the sounds and words. Also had problems communicating meaning and interpreting meaning in a socially appropriate manner. During data collection was discovered that students did not utilize any methods to enhance their listening skills, which is why they had difficulties in interpreting.

Students' low vocabulary meant that they could not fully understand what was meant in a spoken text, which created a low level when capturing information from a listening session. The students' lack of knowledge caused a low listening comprehension. Moreover, it was revealed that the teaching that students get is not consistently appropriate for their proficiency level.

## **Recommendations**

It is recommended that learners develop a plan with various learning strategies where the separation of grammatical parts of a sentence is applied to help students develop this skill. This would allow student to address their different needs, in addition, to encourage self-learning through listening practice. For students this information is important because they can use it in their learning practice and notice the principal part that they had to work. This is necessary to recognize their difficulties to improve the listening comprehension and be easier for them develop listening skill.

It is recommended that students continuously practice their listening skills, in order to improve their communication. This not only helps the student with their listening difficulties but also encourages practice in face to face communication as a discipline that helps continuous improvement. In addition is relevant to mention that identify the listening difficulties can help students to work on their difficulties and work on it for be better at listening. Also, teachers should apply more listening teaching strategies in the classroom, in addition to maintaining continuous practice in their assigned work. As well as closely involving the students in the development of listening work hand by hand students and teachers is the best way to be better.

It is recommended that students practice their vocabulary constantly so that they can acquire new knowledge according to their level of study. They can also use strategies for learning vocabulary in the English language. They should also put the new knowledge into practice, since through practice students can improve their area of knowledge and become in better listeners.

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## 12. APPENDIX

### Questionnaire

Instruction: Select the answer according to your learning experience

1. **I can hear the sound but not clear words.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
2. **I find it difficult when missing the beginning of the text.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
3. **I know the meaning of the words when seeing it.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
4. **I find it difficult not recognize so many sound and words.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
5. **I find it difficult to really concentrate on listening.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
6. **I find it difficult to quickly remember words or phrases I have just heard.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
7. **I find it difficult to understand the meaning of sentences.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
8. **I find it difficult to remember the meaning of a long listening text.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
9. **I find it difficult to follow unfamiliar topic.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**10. I find it difficult to understand a lot of new information in a short time.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**11. I understand the words but not the intended message.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**12. When I listen to texts in English, I get confuse to understand the main idea of the text.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**13. I find it difficult in getting the detail information.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**14. While listening, I find it difficult to relate among ideas.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**15. I find it difficulties to get the supporting ideas.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

Questionnaire taken from "EFL Students' English Listening Comprehension Problem: A study of English Teacher Education Program" Zur (2020).

**ANNEX 1**

- 1. I can hear the sound but not clear words.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
  
- 2. I find it difficult to understand well when speakers speak too fast.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
  
- 3. I find it difficult when missing the beginning of the text.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
  
- 4. I know the meaning of the words when seeing it.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
  
- 5. While listening, I get slow in recalling the meaning of familiar words.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
  
- 6. I find it difficult to understand listening text in which there are too many unfamiliar words or expression.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
  
- 7. While listening, I find it difficult to guess the meaning of unknown words by linking them to known words.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
  
- 8. I find it difficult not recognize so many sound and words.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
  
- 9. When thinking about meaning of unfamiliar words, I neglect the next part of the listening text.**
  - a. Strongly disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly agree
  
- 10. I find it difficult to really concentrate on listening.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**11. I find it difficult to quickly remember words or phrases I have just heard.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**12. I find it difficult to understand the meaning of sentences.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**13. I find it difficult to remember the meaning of a long listening text.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**14. I find it difficult to guess the accurate meaning of words in sentences.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**15. I find it difficult to follow unfamiliar topic.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**16. I find it difficult to understand a lot of new information in a short time.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**17. While listening, I miss the next part because of earlier problem.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**18. I understand the words but not the intended message.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**19. I find difficulties to get the order of ideas in text.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**20. When I listen to texts in English, I get confuse to understand the main idea of the text.**

a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**21. I find it difficult in getting the detail information.**

- a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**22. While listening, I find it difficult to relate among ideas.**

- a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

**23. I find it difficulties to get the supporting ideas.**

- a. Strongly disagree      b. Disagree      c. Agree      d. Strongly agree

Questionnaire from "EFL Students' English Listening Comprehension Problem:

A study of English Teacher Education Program" Zur (2020).