

EFL Listening Anxiety: Online and Face-to-Face Learning

Reem Abdullah Almalki¹

Dr. Miriam Abdullah Alkubaidi¹

Dr. Dalal Abdulrahman Bahanshal¹

English Language Institute (ELI), King Abdulaziz University (KAU), Jeddah, Saudi
Arabia

Received: June 6, 2023 Accepted: June 19, 2023 Published: June 20, 2023

doi:10.5296/ijele.v11i2.21101 URL: <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijele.v11i2.21101>

Abstract

Saudi Arabia is undergoing constant educational changes with online learning as one of the convenient alternatives to face-to-face (FTF) classrooms. This study focuses on English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' anxiety when learning English, especially in listening skills. Several studies have addressed EFL listening anxiety in FTF classrooms. However, there is a dearth of literature on EFL listening anxiety in online classrooms, especially in the Saudi context. The present study aimed to contribute to a better understanding of EFL listening anxiety in both online and FTF learning modes. Therefore, the study explored EFL students' attitudes toward listening skills in online as well as FTF classrooms. Moreover, it examined whether EFL learners experienced listening anxiety in the aforementioned learning modes. A quantitative approach was employed, and a questionnaire was used to obtain data from a sample of 212 students studying in the English Language Institute at King Abdulaziz University. The findings revealed that despite the learning mode (online or FTF), EFL learners experience listening anxiety. However, online classrooms reduced the listening anxiety for beginner and intermediate EFL students slightly. Therefore, they were more confident in their listening skills in online classrooms. Based on these findings, the study offers pedagogical implications and recommends further research in this area to generalize the results to wider contexts.

Keywords: EFL listening anxiety, EFL learners, online learning, online education, FTF classrooms, EFL Saudi students

1. Introduction

In Saudi Arabia, English is considered a foreign language instead of a second language. To illustrate the difference, English as a foreign language (EFL) learners learn English in countries where English is not the official language (Iwai, 2011). On the other hand, English as a second language (ESL) learners learn the language in countries where English is the country's formal language and is perceived as the language of communication (Iwai, 2011). Therefore, English in Saudi Arabia is considered a foreign language and Arabic is the official language used for work and general communication. For this reason, Saudi EFL learners must make more effort to learn the four language skills, especially the listening skill, as it requires greater attention and concentration.

In addition, since English is a mandatory course at universities in Saudi Arabia, it has become necessary for learners to learn English. Therefore, besides the other skills, according to Kajiura et al. (2021), acquiring a second language (L2) requires the development of listening skills. To practice listening skills as well as other language skills, EFL learners are usually exposed to English in traditional face-to-face (FTF) classroom learning settings where they have fewer chances to practice the language outside the classroom. A traditional FTF classroom is defined by Hassan et al. (2014) who recognized it as a teacher-student interaction and vice versa, in which the interaction occurs in a classroom setting.

However, the Covid-19 pandemic took the world by surprise as it affected the education system all around the world, including Saudi Arabia. In March 2020, all Saudi schools and universities began utilizing online platforms to continue delivering lessons (Binmahboob, 2022). Ultimately, online education was adopted to cope with the sudden outbreak. A number of online platforms were considered in the teaching/learning process such as Blackboard and Zoom (Alsuhaibani, 2021). As stated by Binmahboob (2022), online education in Saudi Arabia is not new; however, it was not considered as the first option in education prior to the pandemic (Alkinani, 2021).

1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

All preparatory year students at the English Language Institute (ELI) at King Abdulaziz University (KAU) typically attend FTF classrooms as the standard learning mode at the ELI. However, since the pandemic, online classrooms have been integrated and become the standard learning mode for several preparatory year tracks. That is to say, the online mode has become a convenient alternative to deliver lessons when it is not possible to do FTF.

This shift to the online mode created a knowledge gap that has not been investigated yet. To illustrate, less attention has been paid to exploring anxiety related to listening skills in online classrooms in the Saudi context. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, most studies related to listening anxiety have been conducted either in a non-Saudi context or in traditional FTF classrooms. Therefore, this study constitutes a relatively new area of research, which has emerged from the online learning mode. The present study aims to bridge this gap in the existing literature through an in-depth investigation of EFL Saudi students' listening anxiety in online classrooms compared to the students' experiences in FTF classrooms.

1.2 Research Aims and Questions

Overall, the present study aims to contribute to a better understanding of Saudi EFL listening anxiety in both online and FTF learning modes. The main aim is divided into two objectives. First, to investigate students' attitudes toward listening skills in online as well as FTF classrooms. Second, to identify whether EFL learners experience listening anxiety in online and FTF classrooms. Based on the aim and the research gaps in the available literature, the following research questions are proposed:

RQ: What are the Saudi preparatory year students' attitudes toward learning listening skills in online and face-to-face classrooms?

RQ: To what extent do Saudi EFL students experience listening anxiety in online and face-to-face classrooms?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The limited research on listening anxiety in online classrooms emphasizes the significance of the current study. Exploring students' attitudes toward listening skills in online and FTF classrooms as well as whether they experience listening anxiety in these learning modes may provide EFL teachers and policymakers with a more thorough understanding of listening anxiety. It will also recommend changes as to whether to consider online mode in English courses at the ELI. To elaborate, the study's findings may contribute to improving the university in the development of education, which would foster new ways of enhancing the listening skills of preparatory year students. Moreover, the findings may assist EFL teachers to know the students' attitudes toward learning listening skills and the listening anxiety that is experienced in English classes. This would allow teachers to find solutions to help the students to learn listening skills better.

In addition, Saudi Vision 2030 aims to transform Saudi Arabia's economy from one based on oil to one based on knowledge by the year 2030 (Al-Mwzaiji & Muhammad, 2023). For this reason, successful businesses require that Saudi citizens must be able to communicate in the global language, which is English to convey the Saudi vision to the outside world (Al-Seghayer, 2019). Therefore, it has become more important than ever to acquire English due to its great benefits for Vision 2030. Al-Mwzaiji and Muhammad (2023) indicated that for Saudi citizens to become more competitive in the global and labor markets, EFL learning is a crucial strategic catalyst.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Foreign Language Listening Anxiety

There is no doubt that some foreign language learners face difficulties when learning listening skills. According to Ren (2011), many EFL learners struggle with listening for reasons such as low language proficiency and confidence. In addition, the author contends that some personality traits like anxiety may affect listening comprehension. Christenberry (2003, as cited in Golchi, 2012) shed light on the listening skill and its problematic nature and emphasized the

difficulty of teaching it effectively, making it likely to cause anxiety. Furthermore, according to Alsowat (2016), many factors, including cultural background, motivation, learning styles, beliefs and attitudes, may influence language learning. Moreover, he states that emotional factors, for instance anxiety, play a crucial role in which they may facilitate or hinder the language learning process. Through the review of the previous literature on language learning anxiety, many learners revealed that the speaking skill is the most anxiety-provoking skill (Phillips, 1992, as cited in Namaziandost et al., 2018; Suleimenova, 2012). On the other hand, listening is also one of the most anxiety-provoking skills (Horwitz et al., 1986; Wang, 2010; Alzamil, 2021).

Nord (1980) was one of the first researchers to suggest that anxiety plays a role in listening comprehension. He indicated that an anxious person might experience more difficulty when learning listening. Listening anxiety, or as Wheelless (1975) clarifies as receiver apprehension, is “the fear of misinterpreting, inadequately processing and/or not being able to adjust psychologically to messages sent by others” (p. 2). Additionally, Elkhafai (2005) looks at listening comprehension anxiety as feeling nervous or frustrated when listening to a foreign language.

In the area of foreign language education, Horwitz et al., (1986) report that counselors find anxiety being more focused on two skills when learning a foreign language, which are listening and speaking. Anxious learners also experience challenges in grasping what the teacher says in the foreign language. Accordingly, von Worde (1998) states that the main causes of anxiety are listening exercises and incomprehensible listening recordings. However, a number of researchers have revealed that anxiety could be a motivator for learning (Alpert & Haber, 1960; Chang, 2010).

Alpert and Haber (1960) determine that anxiety may be either debilitating or facilitative. Moreover, Chang's (2010) study, which used extensive listening exercises to improve listening skills and reduce listening anxiety, found that although the students' listening skills improved, their listening anxiety rose dramatically. The researcher explains that the increased level of anxiety may have resulted from several factors. For example, the students had not experienced such a great number of listening materials before. This high increase in the listening anxiety did not hinder their listening skills from progressing. However, the study would have been more useful if the researcher had interviewed the participants regarding the increase of their anxiety after the experiment to give more insight into the phenomenon.

On the other hand, Legac (2007) states that even though anxiety can sometimes be beneficial, many researchers emphasize its debilitating effect. For example, Vogely (1998) argues that listening anxiety is hard to detect, yet one of the most debilitating. The author further clarifies that to have better interaction, the listener must comprehend what is being said. In addition, Wang (2010) found a significant negative relationship between foreign language listening anxiety and listening achievement, suggesting that anxiety does indeed have a negative impact on listening proficiency.

2.2 Empirical Research on EFL Listening Anxiety in Traditional Face-to-face Classes

Findings from a considerable amount of literature confirm that many students experience listening anxiety in FTF classrooms. Variables that affect the comprehension of spoken language have been researched since the 1970s (Kim, 2000). Therefore, previous studies have been conducted with the purpose of exploring the factors which may provoke anxiety in foreign language listening classrooms (Elkhafafi, 2005; Baran-Łucarz, 2013; Serraj, 2015; Namaziandost et al., 2018).

Serraj (2015) stated that emotionality such as nervousness, annoyance and discomfort might lower listeners' ability to concentrate, which would eventually result in listening anxiety. Moreover, the author found that the environment and the classroom atmosphere can increase or decrease anxiety. The more relaxed, quiet, and less threatening the classroom, the less anxious the students would feel.

Listening anxiety may result from the learners' own pronunciation level. Baran-Łucarz (2013), in her study regarding foreign language pronunciation and listening anxiety, found that the majority of EFL learners whose levels were pre-intermediate level and intermediate level argued that their poor pronunciation led to difficulties in understanding the aural input. Furthermore, highly anxious learners were found to be poor at using listening strategies as well as being competitors. They reported that they were concerned that their classmates may perceive them as poor listeners.

In addition, researchers such as Elkhafafi (2005) and Wang (2010) discovered that students' levels of anxiety vary depending on how well their listening ability is. Similarly, it has been found that there is a significant negative relationship between listening anxiety and foreign language listening comprehension (Namaziandost et al., 2018). The previous study confirms Golchi's (2012) findings which revealed that learners who were less anxious performed better on the listening comprehension tests than anxious learners. Additionally, female learners showed higher levels of listening anxiety than male learners did.

In some cases, the aural text itself may influence listening comprehension in terms of phonological modifications (e.g., linking and stress), familiarity with the vocabulary, idioms and academic terms as well as the speech rate (Goh, 1999). A notable example of this could be seen in Xu's (2011) study which found that several characteristics related to the text were considered anxiety-provoking by learners. For instance, in the study, the students reported that fast speech, new vocabulary, complex grammar rules, lack of repetition, and the absence of visual cues were some of the causes of their high anxiety levels. A recent research study by Yekeler and Ulusoy (2021) also drew attention to the use of visual aids in listening tasks and they found that the absence of visual materials could cause anxiety.

On the other hand, Wang (2010) investigated the impact of anxiety on listening comprehension in Chinese students learning English and the possible sources of listening anxiety. The results showed that many participants have difficulty understanding English spoken in a different accent from Standard English. The reason behind this is that they are not used to listen to English with a different accent or dialect. Physical surroundings like small noisy classrooms and the room's temperature may also affect listening anxiety (Xu, 2011). Moreover, Avci and Doghonadze (2017) found that EFL learners often experience anxiety in listening more than in

other language skills. The authors discussed that complete reliance on the speaker's speech clarity and rate as well as the use of grammar and the choice of vocabulary could explain students' listening anxiety.

Similarly in the Saudi context, Hamouda (2013) conducted a study to investigate Saudi EFL students' listening comprehension problems. The results revealed that EFL Saudi students encounter difficulties in listening comprehension due to several factors such as different accents, lack of concentration, anxiety, and environmental factors like classroom temperature and noise.

In 2017, Otair and Abd Aziz conducted a study to investigate the causes of listening comprehension anxiety among Saudi EFL learners. They found three causes of anxiety. First, the problematic nature of listening comprehension that is related to different accents, speech speed, and long audios. These caused learners to lose concentration, which led them to experience anxiety. Second, the classroom atmosphere, such as the lack of clarity of the audio materials, noisy students, and strict teachers, increased anxiety. Third, students with a lower level of language proficiency and negative perceptions of listening skills were additional factors that provoked anxiety.

In a similar vein, Alzamil (2021) conducted a study to find out whether there are listening difficulties faced by Saudi students and their attitudes toward improving their listening skills. It was found that speech pace, pronunciation, lack of background information and anxiety were the prominent causes of listening difficulties. However, students were positive regarding enhancing their listening skills and considered it one of the crucial skills to be learned in a foreign language. The studies mentioned in this section demonstrate that EFL learners frequently encounter a variety of listening comprehension challenges in FTF classrooms, which affect their listening anxiety as well. The following section discusses learning English in online classrooms.

2.3 English in Online Classrooms

Online learning is defined as learning that takes place through the internet in a synchronous classroom, in which students can learn and interact with their teachers and peers regardless of where they are physically (Singh & Thurman, 2019). Distance learning, web-based learning, and virtual learning are other terms that could be used to describe online learning (Hassan et al., 2014). Despite the plethora of research regarding anxiety in different second or foreign language learning contexts, there is not much research conducted in distance learning contexts (Hurd, 2007).

Yadav's (2016) reflection on online classrooms identified several benefits of this learning mode over the FTF classrooms. Some of the advantages discussed were the availability of the sessions in which learners can go back and listen to the recorded session. Unlike the traditional FTF classrooms, students can hardly ever have the chance to be engaged in the missed lesson. Besides, online classrooms enable students and teachers to engage in the learning session regardless of their geographical location. Thus, scheduling or rescheduling the online class is easier.

Nevertheless, although there are some useful benefits of online classrooms, the challenges of this learning mode cannot be overlooked. Dung (2020) investigated the advantages and disadvantages of online learning. Among the drawbacks of online learning is students' lack of concentration, which resulted from the extensive time spent on the screen. Furthermore, the students reported having trouble hearing the instructors' voices. Despite the challenges of online classrooms, the participants of this study believed that the effectiveness of online learning makes it worthwhile for it to continue.

2.4 Empirical Research on EFL Listening Anxiety in Online Classes

Various studies have revealed conflicting results regarding language anxiety and listening anxiety in online learning contexts (Hassan et al., 2014; Al-Shamsi et al., 2020; Chen & Ren, 2021; Liu & Yuan, 2021). For instance, Chen and Ren (2021) investigated Chinese EFL students' classroom anxiety and listening anxiety in online classes and whether there are gender differences between the two variables. The results showed that students experienced lower levels of anxiety in listening activities and showed good English listening skills in online classrooms. To put it differently, students in online classrooms were more in control of their listening in terms of the clarity and the volume of the listening, which may have resulted in reducing listening anxiety. Moreover, there were no significant gender differences in classroom anxiety or in listening anxiety.

In support of the previous study, Al-Shamsi et al. (2020) found significantly positive attitudes toward enhancing listening skills through mobile-based learning. That is, there was significant improvement in the students' listening skills than those in traditional FTF classrooms and they experienced lower levels of anxiety in more resilient classroom settings, in which they can learn listening skills at their own convenient time and place.

On the contrary, Hassan et al. (2014) attempted to explore learning listening skills in online and traditional FTF classrooms and found different results from the above studies. After giving the participants pre and post-tests, it was found that although students had the same proficiency level, the students who took listening lessons in FTF classrooms outperformed the ones in online classrooms. The authors explained that this result occurred because there might be a problem with the courseware that the teacher used. Additionally, inadequate instruction in the online classrooms may have affected the students' performance on the listening tasks.

Likewise, Liu and Yuan (2021) confirmed that there is a significant positive relationship between foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) and listening anxiety. In online classrooms, the subjects of their study experienced severe levels of FLCA and listening anxiety due to being distant from their classmates and teachers and having little opportunity to practice speaking and listening. These results confirm the vital role of the learning environment in influencing the levels of FLCA and listening anxiety.

From the above discussion, previous literature offered conflicting findings regarding the impact of EFL online classes on listening anxiety, and the results may vary depending on the context. In addition, online listening classes and listening anxiety to be more precise have received relatively scant attention in the Saudi context. The current study is expected to be a good

addition to the previous efforts, and it aspires to contribute to filling the gaps through an in-depth investigation of EFL Saudi students' listening anxiety in online classes compared to the students' experiences with FTF classes.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

There are several theories and models that examine the role of language anxiety in the process of learning a language. One prominent theory found to be the most relevant to the aims of this study is Krashen's Second Language Acquisition theory (SLA). The primary focus of his theory is that an individual has the same ability to acquire a second language as they do to acquire their mother tongue (Raju & Joshith, 2018). Krashen (1982) proposes his theory with five hypotheses which are the acquisition-learning hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the input hypothesis, the natural-order hypothesis and the affective-filter hypothesis. The current study relies on the input and the affective-filter hypotheses because the central idea of this theory is based on two factors which are the comprehensive input and the affective filter's strength (Le, 1999, as cited in Ren, 2011).

According to Krashen (1982), the input hypothesis emphasizes the significance of understanding the input that is a little bit beyond the current competence level. This hypothesis proposes that the ability to acquire a second language requires exposure to clear and comprehensible input (Rost, 2001). He stresses that this hypothesis' prime focus is on meaning not structure. Moreover, Krashen believes that the speaking ability emerges after sufficient understandable listening input. To put it another way, producing meaningful output can only happen if we receive comprehensible input (Raju & Joshith, 2018). In addition, listening proficiency was found to have a positive correlation with overall foreign language proficiency (Feyten, 1991).

Concerning the affective-filter hypothesis, Krashen (1982) accentuated that affective factors such as motivation, confidence, and anxiety could determine the success of second language acquisition. Similarly, these factors are crucial in discouraging students from acquiring a second language (Raju & Joshith, 2018). In terms of anxiety, Krashen suggests that the aural input is anxiety provoking if it is incomprehensible. Furthermore, this hypothesis clarifies that low levels of anxiety seem to be beneficial to second language acquisition. Therefore, he points out that the classroom should help provide understandable input in a low-anxiety classroom environment. Thus, it can be said that this theory could be useful in illustrating the reasons behind students' anxiety whether in FTF or online classrooms.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The current study employs the positivist paradigm, which aims to explain phenomena and offer predictions on quantifiable results (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Therefore, this study was conducted utilizing a quantitative research design to further advance the understanding of Saudi EFL learners' attitudes toward learning listening in online and FTF classrooms. Moreover, it

aims to investigate whether EFL Saudi learners experience listening anxiety in online and FTF classrooms.

3.2 Context and Participants

This study was conducted at KAU at the ELI, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in which the participants of the study were students enrolled in the preparatory year program. Recently, the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia considered dividing the academic year into three semesters instead of two for the year 2022/2023. The program involves taking several courses including English, which involves three levels that students are obliged to complete over one academic year, with one level per semester. In the first semester, some preparatory year tracks attended campus for a few classes and then shifted to online education for the remaining of the semester except for final exams; students had to attend on campus. Then, in the second semester, the university considered all preparatory year tracks to return to FTF education as continuum practice for the remaining academic year.

The target population for the current study was preparatory year students who have experienced taking English in both learning modes, online and FTF classrooms. A sample of 212 Saudi students studying at KAU participated in the study, with 40 males and 172 females. They were taking English as a mandatory course and were placed at different levels according to their results in the placement test. Most of the participants took more than five FTF classrooms (out of more than 30 classes per semester) and then shifted to online classes as a continuum practice for the rest of the semester.

The competence level of many of the participants was A2 and B1 and a few were C1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This indicates that most of the participants' language level was beginner to intermediate with few demonstrating advanced proficiency levels. Table 1 below illustrates the distribution of the participants regarding gender, competence level, and the number of FTF classrooms taken before shifting to online classrooms.

Table 1. Demographic Data of the Participants

Demographics		N	%
Gender	Male	40	18.9
	Female	172	81.1
Competence level	Beginner	74	34.9
	Intermediate	93	43.9
	Upper-intermediate	33	15.6
	Advanced	12	5.7
Number of FTF classrooms	Less than 3 lectures	59	27.8
	3 lectures	38	17.9
	5 lectures	29	13.7
	More than 5 lectures	86	40.5
Total		212	100

3.3 Sampling Strategy

For the current study, a non-probability sampling technique was used for collecting data. Moreover, a snowball sampling technique was used to collect quantitative data. With this technique, the researcher reaches out to a few participants who meet the criteria of the researcher's study and asks them to find additional and suitable participants from the target population (Dörnyei, 2007). The reason behind utilizing this technique is due to the difficulty of reaching participants who experienced learning listening skills in both FTF and online classrooms. Therefore, the researchers used the snowball sampling technique to reach as many participants who meet the criteria as possible.

3.4 Research Instrument

3.4.1 Questionnaire

The current study seeks to find out students' attitudes toward learning listening online, and FTF classrooms and whether they experience listening anxiety in these learning modes. The quantitative data for this study included the completion of an online closed-ended questionnaire. The questionnaire's items were adopted from previous literature (Avcı & Doghonadze, 2017; Kim, 2000) and reworded to suit the current study. It is worth mentioning that some items in the original questionnaire were left out, as they do not answer the study's research questions. An example for an omitted item is "I am nervous when listening to an English speaker on the phone or when imagining a situation where I listen to an English speaker on the phone".

The questionnaire consisted of 34 items divided into three scales: (1) students' attitudes toward listening activities regardless of the learning mode (online or FTF classrooms), (2) students' attitudes toward the listening skill in FTF classrooms, and (3) students' attitudes toward the listening skill in online classrooms. Table 2 below describes the scales and the number of items each scale contains.

Moreover, competence level was added in the demographic information to compare their competence level with their attitudes in both learning modes. All the 34 items were measured using a four-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), agree (3), to strongly agree (4). The questionnaire was bilingual (English/Arabic) to ensure the participants' understanding of each item.

Table 2. Description of each Scale on the Questionnaire

Scale	Description	Items
Listening activities	Students' attitudes toward listening activities regardless of the learning mode	11
Listening in FTF classrooms	Students' attitudes in FTF classrooms	15
Listening in online classrooms	Students' attitudes in online classrooms	8

3.5 Procedure and Ethical Considerations

Before starting with the quantitative data collection, several ethical concerns were considered in the current study. Initially, the consent of the university was obtained before starting to collect data from the sample. Secondly, the questionnaire was sent via email to four professors who were experts in the TESOL field (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) to review and validate the items of the instrument. The result showed no significant differences between the original and validated instruments. However, for more clarity, slight changes were made to the wording of some statements. Then, the questionnaire was administered to the participants for a pilot study, and they were reached through WhatsApp and Telegram in which they were asked to fill in the questionnaire. The participants' permission was obtained after being informed about the aims of the study and that the data would be used for academic purposes only. The informed consent was on the first page of the questionnaire, so the participants would not be able to proceed if they were not willing to participate.

The pilot study was conducted on a small group consisting of 11 participants who were like the target population to determine the reliability of the instrument and to measure the time required to complete the questionnaire. One of the participants indicated that the survey items helped them understand the challenges they face when listening to English which they did not know how to express. No difficulties were encountered by the participants in understanding the questionnaire's items.

To check the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha was used to calculate the internal consistency of the items by means of IBM SPSS software version 25. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), the range of the optimal values of Cronbach's alpha is between .7 and .9. The overall calculated value of the questionnaire's items was 0.83, which suggests a high internal consistency of the questionnaire. Table 3 below depicts the reliability of each scale as well as the overall reliability of the items combined. Moreover, while computing the scores, the items that reflected no anxiety when listening to English were reverse-coded.

Table 3. Reliability Statistics

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Listening activities	11	.82
Listening in FTF classrooms	15	.82
Listening in online classrooms	8	.82
All items combined	34	.87

After conducting the pilot study and calculating the Cronbach's alpha of the questionnaire and finalizing it, the questionnaire was then administered to the target population via Telegram and WhatsApp groups that were specified only for preparatory students at the university. The quantitative data were collected over a period of two months.

3.6 Data Analysis Tools

SPSS software version 25 was used to analyze the obtained data. Descriptive statistics: frequency, percentage, means and standard deviations (SDs) of each variable were calculated. Additionally, a chi-square test was conducted to examine the relationship between students' attitudes toward learning listening in FTF classrooms, and their attitudes toward learning listening in online classrooms. Moreover, the chi-square test was used to test the relationship between the two mentioned variables and the participants' English competence level.

4. Results

The current study aims to investigate EFL Saudi students' attitudes toward learning listening skills in online and FTF classrooms. In addition, it aims to explore whether EFL learners have listening anxiety in these two modes of learning. The first stage of the data analysis generated descriptive statistics for the three variables to identify frequencies, percentages, means and SDs of the EFL learners' responses to the questionnaire items that examine their attitudes toward learning listening skills in online and FTF learners. Descriptive statistics were also calculated to determine whether EFL students experience listening anxiety in these two learning modes.

Table 4. Attitudes toward Listening Skills Regardless of the Learning Mode

Item	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
When listening to English, I tend to get stuck on one or two unknown words.	99	46.7	93	43.9	13	6.1	7	3.3
When someone pronounces English words differently from the way I pronounce them. I find it difficult to understand.	84	39.6	69	32.5	52	24.5	7	3.3
I am able to guess the parts that I miss while listening to English.	46	21.7	92	43.4	62	29.2	12	5.7
During English listening activities, I get anxious when I don't understand every word.	95	44.8	67	31.6	43	20.3	7	3.3
I am not able to understand oral instructions given to me in English.	53	25.0	60	28.3	74	34.9	25	11.8
When I listen to English, I am usually not able to guess the parts that I miss.	64	30.2	73	34.4	62	29.2	13	6.1
I am able to understand English even if someone pronounces words differently from the way I pronounce them.	41	19.3	69	32.5	77	36.3	25	11.8
I keep thinking that everyone else except me	50	23.6	60	28.3	76	35.8	26	12.3

understands very well what an English speaker is saying.									
When listening to English, I often understand the words but still can't quite understand what the speaker means.	65	30.7	98	46.2	38	17.9	11	5.2	
I understand oral instructions given to me in English.	58	27.4	98	46.2	46	21.7	10	4.7	
I get anxious when listening to important information in English	75	35.4	77	36.3	44	20.8	16	7.5	

Reflecting upon the analysis of the data obtained from Table 4 above, the major findings of the first scale, which measures students' attitudes toward listening skills regardless of the learning mode show that many of the participants agreed or strongly agreed (90.6%) that they get stuck on unfamiliar words when they listen to English. Similarly, a large percentage (72%) indicated that participants face difficulties with understanding English speakers if they pronounce words differently from the participants' own pronunciation.

Other major findings from Table 4 indicate that 65% of the participants usually struggle to guess the missed parts when listening to English. In a similar vein, 77% of the participants agreed and strongly agreed that they understand words when listening to English, but they are still not able to grasp what the speaker is trying to say. Moreover, most of the participants of this study agreed with items regarding anxiety when listening to English, in which 76% of them get anxious when they do not understand every word in a listening activity. Furthermore, 72% of the participants experience anxiety when they listen to important information in English.

Table 5. Attitudes toward Listening Skills in FTF Classrooms in Numbers and Percentages

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
In face-to-face (FTF) classes, I get anxious because I cannot concentrate when doing a listening activity.	65	30.7	66	31.1	62	29.2	19	9.0
In FTF classes, I am usually comfortable during listening classes.	54	25.5	81	38.2	58	27.4	19	9.0
I do not feel confident when I listen to recordings in FTF classes.	36	17.0	71	33.5	78	36.8	27	12.7
I do not feel confident when I listen to my teacher and classmates in FTF classes when they talk or read in English.	45	21.2	57	26.9	79	37.3	31	14.6
Even with background noise, I can still concentrate when listening to English in FTF classes.	39	18.4	50	23.6	76	35.8	47	22.2
It makes me anxious when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in FTF classes.	86	40.6	80	37.7	35	16.5	11	5.2
Even if I am well prepared for the lesson, I feel anxious while listening in FTF classes.	68	32.1	65	30.7	60	28.3	19	9.0

When the speakers do not speak very clearly, I worry about not being able to understand them.	73	34.4	94	44.3	33	15.6	12	5.7
In FTF classes, I feel more anxious listening than while speaking, reading, or writing.	61	28.8	54	25.5	71	33.5	26	12.3
In FTF classes, I get anxious when I do not understand every word the teacher or speakers in the recording use.	71	33.5	89	42.0	38	17.9	14	6.6
In FTF classes, I am usually anxious during listening activities.	59	27.8	69	32.5	65	30.7	19	9.0
In FTF classes, I get anxious when I cannot listen to English dialogues at my own pace.	81	38.2	85	40.1	29	13.7	17	8.0
In FTF classes, it is difficult for me to listen to English when there is even a little bit of background noise.	70	33.0	75	35.4	45	21.2	22	10.4
In FTF classes, I can concentrate when doing a listening activity.	52	24.5	92	43.4	52	24.5	16	7.5
Preparing for the lesson makes me feel confident in FTF listening classes.	100	47.2	77	36.3	24	11.3	11	5.2

Table 5 above illustrates the frequencies and percentages for each item in the second scale, which measures the participants' attitudes toward listening skills in FTF classrooms. As shown in the table, a high percentage of the participants agreed or strongly agreed on the items that mentioned anxiety. For instance, items as "In FTF classes, I get anxious when I cannot listen to English dialogues at my own pace" (78%) and "In FTF classes, I get anxious because I cannot concentrate when doing a listening activity" (62%). In addition, background noise was rated by a large proportion of the participants representing 68% as a difficulty when listening to English in FTF classrooms. Similarly, compared to other language skills, more than half of the participants (54%) responded that they feel more anxious about listening than about the other skills.

Table 6. Attitudes toward Listening Skills in Online Classrooms in Numbers and Percentages

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
It is hard to concentrate on what English speakers are saying unless I see their faces.	62	29.2	51	24.2	63	29.7	36	17.0
When I am listening to English in online classes, I worry that I cannot see the lips or facial expressions of a person who is speaking.	62	29.2	53	25.0	62	29.2	35	16.5
The online classes increased my anxiety in learning listening skills.	56	26.4	57	26.9	63	29.7	36	17.0
In online classes, I was usually anxious when	57	26.9	58	27.4	66	31.1	31	14.6

practicing listening skills.								
In online classes, I felt more anxious listening than while speaking, reading or writing.	51	24.1	53	25.0	70	33.0	38	17.9
During online classes, I am able to understand English speakers even if I do not see their faces.	67	31.6	84	39.6	42	19.8	19	9.0
In online classes, it was difficult for me to listen to English when there was even a little bit of background noise.	51	24.1	86	40.6	49	23.1	26	12.3
Online classes help me feel confident about my listening skills.	67	31.6	84	39.6	41	19.3	20	9.4

Table 6 depicts the participants' attitudes toward learning listening skills in online classrooms, in frequencies and percentages. As can be seen, over half of the participants (54%) agreed or strongly agreed with items that mentioned that students' inability to see the facial expressions of the English speakers would lead to an increase in their listening anxiety. An unexpected result from this scale is that over half of the surveyed participants, representing 53%, proved that online classes lead to an increase in their listening anxiety.

Similar to their experience in FTF classrooms, the participants agreed that they were more anxious while listening than while practicing the other skills in the online classrooms. However, their listening anxiety slightly decreased from 54% in FTF classrooms to 49% in online classrooms. In the same way, a large proportion of the participants (64%) viewed background noise when listening to English in online classrooms as a difficulty; compared to their attitudes in FTF classrooms, there is also a slight decrease from 68% in FTF classrooms to 64% in online classrooms. Therefore, a significant majority of the participants (71%) believe that online classes make them feel confident about their listening skills.

Turning to the means and SDs of each scale on the questionnaire, the following paragraph will first present the total weighted means and SDs for the scales in Table 7 to show how it was analyzed through a four-point Likert scale. Then, the means and SDs for each scale are presented in the following table (Table 8).

Table 7. Illustration of the Weighted Means for a 4-Point Likert Scale

Mean values	Description
1.00 – 1.75	Strongly Disagree
1.76– 2.50	Disagree
2.51 – 3.25	Agree
3.26 – 4.00	Strongly Agree

Table 8. The Weighted Means and SDs for each Scale

Scale	N	Mean	SD
Attitudes toward listening skills regardless of the learning mode	212	2.76	.507
Attitudes toward listening skills in FTF classrooms	212	2.68	.511
Attitudes toward listening skills in Online classrooms	212	2.50	.653

As Table 8 shows, the total mean score of the first scale is 2.76 with a standard deviation of .507, which denotes a response of "Agree" on the four-point Likert scale. This indicates that the participants agree that listening anxiety is experienced whether in FTF or in online classrooms. Similarly, the table depicts the overall calculated mean and SD of the second scale that measures the participants' attitudes toward learning listening skills in FTF classrooms with a mean of 2.68 and a standard deviation of .511. This indicates that the participants agree that they experience listening anxiety in FTF classrooms.

Turning to the last scale, which is related to online classrooms, Table 8 shows the lowest mean score out of the other scales with a mean of 2.50 and a standard deviation of .653. This denotes a response of "Disagree" on the Likert scale meaning that the participants disagreed with the scales' items that reflect listening anxiety in online classrooms. However, the mean score of the online scales is slightly less than the mean score of the FTF scale which indicates that online classes helped the participants reduce their listening anxiety.

In order to investigate the relationship between students' attitudes toward learning listening skills in FTF classrooms and their attitudes toward learning them in online classrooms, the normality of the distribution was first tested to determine the appropriate test to find out the relationship between the two scales. As shown in Table 9 below, the Sig. values for Kolmogorov-Smirnov for both scales are .018 for the FTF scale and .000 for the online scale.

Table 9. The Distribution of Data

Variable	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
FTF Scale	.068	212	.018	.985	212	.023
Online Scale	.102	212	.000	.981	212	.006

According to Pallant (2016), if the Sig. value is greater than .05, then the sample is assumed to be normally distributed. However, in this study, the Sig. values for both scales are less than .05, which indicates abnormal distribution. In the same way, the Shapiro-Wilk test showed similar Sig. values, i.e., .023 for FTF scale and .006 for the online scale. Therefore, it can be concluded that the data is not normally distributed.

After testing the normality of distribution, the chi-square test was performed to examine the relationship between students' attitudes toward learning listening skills in FTF classrooms and their attitudes toward learning them in online classrooms (i.e., FTF variable and online variable). The results showed that there is a significant association between the two variables, $X^2 (9, N = 212) = 27.6 p < .001$.

In addition, the chi-square test was used to test the relationship between students' attitudes toward learning listening skills in FTF classrooms and their attitudes toward learning listening skills in online classrooms with a demographic factor, which is competence level in English. First, the result of testing the relationship between the students' attitudes toward listening in FTF classrooms and their competence level showed that there is a significant association between them, $X^2 (9, N = 212) = 58.6 p < .000$. Figure 1 below demonstrates that beginner and intermediate students experienced listening anxiety in FTF classrooms more than upper-intermediate and advanced students.

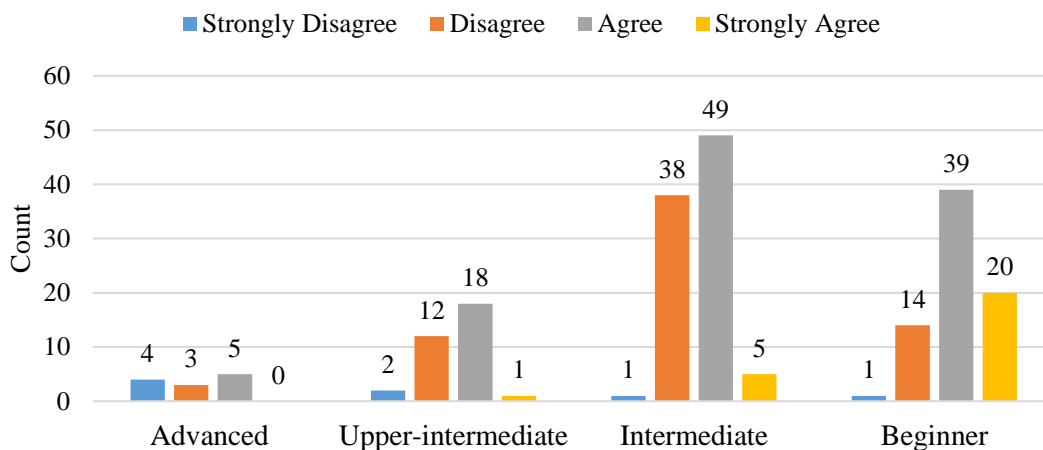


Figure 1. Attitudes toward Learning Listening Skills in FTF Classrooms and Language Competence

In the same way, a chi-square test was performed to examine the relationship between the students' attitudes toward listening in online classes and their competence level. The results showed contradicting results with no significant association between online classrooms and their English competence level, $X^2 (9, N = 212) = 9.21 p < .417$. As shown in Figure 2 below, beginner and intermediate students experienced less listening anxiety in online classrooms compared to FTF classrooms.

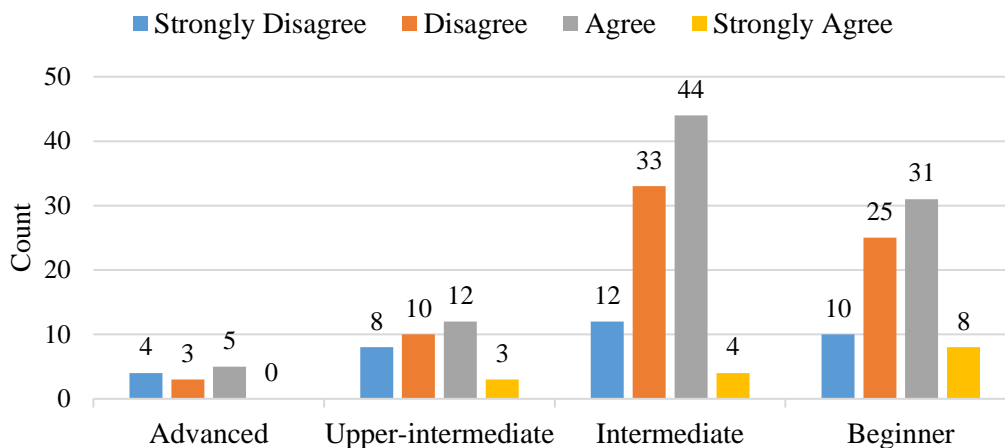


Figure 2. Attitudes toward Learning Listening Skills in Online Classrooms and Language Competence

5. Discussion

The current study aimed to identify EFL learners' attitudes toward learning listening skills in two different learning settings (FTF and online classrooms) and whether they experience listening anxiety in these learning modes. To begin with, the findings of the study suggested that EFL learners do indeed experience listening anxiety. Regardless of the learning mode, EFL learners encounter difficulties when it comes to new unfamiliar words, or words pronounced differently from the way they pronounce them. This finding is not surprising because a number of text characteristics such as familiarity with words and pronunciations of the words were acknowledged by several researchers as factors that challenge EFL learners (Baran-Łucarz, 2013; Hamouda, 2013; Xu, 2011). These challenges may lead to listening anxiety, especially for beginner EFL learners.

Regarding learning listening skills in FTF classrooms, most of the earlier research was conducted in traditional FTF classrooms and denoted that EFL students usually struggle when listening to English, which may lead to experiencing listening anxiety (Serraj, 2015). The findings of the current study revealed that the majority of the participants acknowledged having experienced listening anxiety when they cannot listen to English at their own pace as well as being in a noisy environment which coincides with previous literature (Alzamil, 2021; Hamouda, 2013; Xu, 2011). These studies confirmed that speech pace and background noise could make listening more challenging. Indeed, the learning environment should be taken into consideration as it could affect the learning process. Being unable to listen clearly due to such factors as noise may lead to listening anxiety. This has previously been acknowledged in Krashen's (1982) affective filter in which he argued that anxiety is one of the factors that could hinder students' learning development. In order to prevent that, he suggested that students should be in a low-anxiety learning environment.

Moreover, the analysis of the data showed that students in FTF classrooms experience anxiety

more often while listening than while practicing other language skills. A possible explanation for this finding might be related to the complicated nature of the listening skill as mentioned in the study of Avci and Doghonadze (2017) who argued that this anxiety might result from such factors as the complete reliance on the interlocutor's speech clarity and rate. In addition, a prior study conducted by Baran-Łucarz (2013) found that some highly anxious students tended to have concerns that their peers might perceive them as poor listeners, which may as well explains the listening anxiety of the participants of the current study.

On the other hand, according to data obtained from the questionnaire, students in online classrooms experienced a slight decrease in their listening anxiety compared to the other language skills. This might be because in the online classroom, students are able to return to the recorded lectures and listen to them as many times as they like. This is consistent with Chen and Ren (2021) who found that students experienced lower levels of anxiety in listening activities and showed good English listening skills in online classrooms. Students had greater control over the clarity and the volume of their listening, which may have helped them feel less anxious while listening.

In support of this finding, Al-Shamsi et al. (2020) confirmed that students in EFL online classrooms experienced less listening anxiety. This might be related to the fact mentioned in Yadav's (2016) reflection on online classrooms, in which she shed light on the advantage of online classrooms in terms of availability. This means that students in online classrooms are more able to catch the missed information and repeat the parts that they did not grasp at first as many times as they wish. This may help to reduce listening anxiety, especially in beginner and intermediate EFL learners.

In addition, the results of the questionnaire showed that background noise was a challenge, but it was also relatively minimal in online classrooms. Therefore, most of the students who participated in the questionnaire confirmed that they feel more confident about their listening skills in online classrooms. This result is in line with the results of Al-Shamsi et al. (2020) who found a major enhancement in the students' listening skills as well as being less anxious in online classrooms.

Moreover, looking at the questionnaire's results with respect to the language proficiency, it was revealed that it was not only beginner EFL learners who experienced less listening anxiety in online classrooms but also intermediate learners, when compared to their anxiety in FTF classrooms. This result is likely to be related to the flexibility of the online classes in which the students are in control of their own learning environment and other factors that could affect their listening comprehension, which was discussed earlier in this section. This flexibility might have changed their perspective on listening skills, which as a result reduced their listening anxiety. This finding reflects the results of Otair and Abd Aziz (2017) who found that students with low language proficiency had negative perceptions of listening skills in FTF classrooms, which eventually provoked their listening anxiety. Students' attitudes toward the learning mode may have a significant impact on their learning process.

5. Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to explore Saudi EFL learners' attitudes toward learning listening skills in online and FTF classrooms. In addition, it aimed to investigate whether Saudi EFL learners experience listening anxiety in online and FTF classrooms. The research questions were answered by utilizing an online questionnaire. It was revealed that EFL learners experience listening anxiety in both learning modes. However, the findings showed that beginner as well as intermediate EFL students experienced less listening anxiety in online classrooms. Moreover, not only was listening anxiety slightly reduced in online classes, but they were also more confident in their listening skills.

6.1 Pedagogical Implications

The current study's findings provide several pedagogical implications to improve EFL learners' listening skills as well as reduce their listening anxiety. First, since the findings indicated that students' listening anxiety was slightly reduced in online classrooms, the online learning mode should be considered for improving the students' listening skills and reducing their listening anxiety. Another possibility would be providing students with authentic and interesting listening materials for at-home listening and then discussing and revising the given materials in the FTF classroom. This would allow students to practice listening at home as many times as they wish, and it would increase their listening confidence.

In addition, the findings of the study suggest that students experience listening anxiety when there is background noise and when they are not able to listen to the audio multiple times. This could be avoided by providing students with proper headphones during listening activities not only during exams but also during regular classes and considering whether students need to listen to the audio multiple times. This would reduce their listening anxiety and would help them feel more confident to participate in answering the listening activities.

Another issue that was found is that listening anxiety seems inevitable for beginner and intermediate learners in both FTF and online classrooms. Therefore, EFL instructors are encouraged to train students to use listening strategies that may result in enhancing students' listening skills. Moreover, group listening activities should be implemented as they can make listening more fun and less serious. This may make students feel more at ease when practicing listening skills. Overall, based on the results, it is recommended to make the two learning modes (online and FTF) available for mandatory English courses and give students the option to enroll in the learning mode that best suits them.

6.2 Limitations of the Study

Although the current research has reached its aims and generated several useful pedagogical implications, there are several limitations that should be addressed in this section. First, the scope of the study was limited to the preparatory EFL learners at KAU and did not include other contexts. Second, although the study included male and female participants, the gender variable was not fully explored due to the small number of male participants compared to the females. Third, being limited to only one research method which is an online questionnaire, this study may lack some important information that could have been obtained by conducting

semi-structured interviews. Nevertheless, the sample is representative of the population even though the results might not be generalizable to a wider scope in Saudi Arabia.

6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

The present study investigated EFL learners' attitudes toward FTF and online classes as to whether they experience listening anxiety in those learning modes. It is recommended that further research be undertaken using the experimental design where there is an experimental group and a focused group and implement the same listening materials but in different learning modes. In addition, future research that compares male and female participants' attitudes toward learning listening skills in online classrooms is needed to find out whether there are differences in their attitudes. Finally, further research needs to be carried out in different Saudi contexts to increase the generalizability of the findings.

Acknowledgments

The authors of the study would like to express deep appreciation for all those who participated in this study for their time and effort.

References

- Al-Mwzaiji, K. N. A., & Muhammad, A. A. S. (2023). EFL learning and Vision 2030 in Saudi Arabia: A critical perspective. *World Journal of English Language*, 13(2), 435–449. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v13n2p435>
- Al-Seghayer, K. (2019). Unique challenges Saudi EFL learners face. *Studies in English Language Teaching*, 7(4), 490–515. <https://doi.org/10.22158/selt.v7n4p490>
- Al-Shamsi, A., Al-Mekhlafi, A. M., Busaidi, S. Al, & Hilal, M. M. (2020). The effects of mobile learning on listening comprehension skills and attitudes of Omani EFL adult learners. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 19(8), 16–39. <https://doi.org/10.26803/IJLTER.19.8.2>
- Alkinani, E. A. (2021). Saudi Arabian undergraduate students' perceptions of E-learning quality during Covid19 pandemic. *IJCSNS International Journal of Computer Science and Network Security*, 21(2), 66–76. <https://doi.org/10.22937/IJCSNS.2021.21.2.8>
- Alpert, R., & Haber, R. N. (1960). Anxiety in academic achievement situations. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 61(2), 207–215. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0045464>
- Alsowat, H. H. (2016). Foreign language anxiety in higher education: A practical framework for reducing FLA. *European Scientific Journal*, 12(7), 193–220. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2016.v12n7p193>
- Alsuhaibani, Z. (2021). Saudi EFL students' use and perceptions of Blackboard before and during online learning amid COVID-19. *Arab World English Journal Special Issue on CALL*, 7, 22–37. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/call7.2>
- Alzamil, J. (2021). Listening skills: Important but difficult to learn. *Arab World English*

Journal, 12(3), 366–374. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol12no3.25>

Avci, R., & Doghonadze, N. (2017). The challenges of teaching EFL listening in Iraqi (Kurdistan region) universities. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 5(11), 1995–2004. <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2017.051116>

Baran-Lucarz, M. (2013). Foreign language pronunciation and listening anxiety: A preliminary study. In Piechurska-Kuciel, E., Szymańska-Czaplak, E. (eds) *Language in cognition and affect* (pp. 255–274). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-35305-5_15

Binmahboob, T. (2022). EFL learners' perspectives of E-learning during the Covid-19 pandemic: A study on Saudi college students. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)*, 13(3), 467–481. <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol13no3.30>

Chang, A. C. S. (2010). Second-language listening anxiety before and after a 1-yr. intervention in extensive listening compared with standard foreign language instruction. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 110(2), 355–365. <https://doi.org/10.2466/PMS.110.2.355-365>

Chen, Z., & Ren, J. (2021). A Study of Chinese university EFL learners' online English classroom anxiety and listening anxiety. *International Journal of TESOL Studies*, 3(4), 79–95. <https://doi.org/10.46451/ijts.2021.12.06>

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). Sage publications.

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dung, D. T. H. (2020). The advantages and disadvantages of virtual learning. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 10(3), 45–48. <https://doi.org/10.9790/7388-1003054548>

Elkhafaifi, H. (2005). Listening comprehension and anxiety in the Arabic language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 89(2), 206–220. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2005.00275.x>

Feyten, C. M. (1991). The power of listening ability: An overlooked dimension in language acquisition. *The Modern Language Journal*, 75(2), 173–180. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1991.tb05348.x>

Gilakjani, A. P., & Ahmadi, M. R. (2011). A study of factors affecting EFL learners' English listening comprehension and the strategies for improvement. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(5), 977–988. <https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.2.5.977-988>

Goh, C. (1999). How much do learners know about the factors that influence their listening comprehension? *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 4(1), 17–41.

Golchi, M. M. (2012). Listening anxiety and its relationship with listening strategy use and listening comprehension among Iranian IELTS learners. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 2(4), 115–128. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v2n4p115>

Hamouda, A. (2013). An investigation of listening comprehension problems encountered by Saudi students in the EL listening classroom. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 2(2), 113–155.

Hassan, A., Abiddin, N. Z., & Yew, S. K. (2014). The philosophy of learning and listening in traditional classroom and online learning approaches. *Higher Education Studies*, 4(2), 19–28.

<https://doi.org/10.5539/ijele.v4n2p19>

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125–132. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1986.tb05256.x>

Hurd, S. (2007). Anxiety and non-anxiety in a distance language learning environment: The distance factor as a modifying influence. *System*, 35(4), 487–508. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2007.05.001>

Iwai, Y. (2011). The effects of metacognitive reading strategies: Pedagogical implications for EFL/ESL teachers. *Reading*, 11(2), 150–159. http://readingmatrix.com/articles/april_2011/iwai.pdf

Kajiura, M., Jeong, H., Kawata, N. Y. S., Yu, S., Kinoshita, T., Kawashima, R., & Sugiura, M. (2021). Brain activity predicts future learning success in intensive second language listening training. *Brain and Language*, 212, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bandl.2020.104839>

Kim, J. hae. (2000). *Foreign language listening anxiety: A study of Korean students learning English*. [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas, Austin].

Kivunja, C., & Kuyini, A. B. (2017). Understanding and applying research paradigms in educational contexts. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 6(5), 26–41. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v6n5p26>

Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Pergamon Press, Inc.

Legac, V. (2007). Foreign-language anxiety and listening skill in Croatian monolingual and bilingual students of EFL. In J. Horváth, & M. Nikolov (Eds.), *Empirical studies in English applied linguistics* (pp. 217-243).

Liu, M., & Yuan, R. (2021). Changes in and effects of foreign language classroom anxiety and listening anxiety on Chinese undergraduate students' English proficiency in the COVID-19 context. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.670824>

Namaziandost, E., Hafezian, M., & Shafiee, S. (2018). Exploring the association among working memory, anxiety and Iranian EFL learners' listening comprehension. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, 3(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-018-0061-3>

Noordin, N., Shamshiri, K., & Ismail, A. (2012). Effects of task difficulty in listening comprehension. In N. M. Seel (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Sciences of Learning* (pp. 1093–1095). Springer, Boston, MA. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-1428-6>

Nord, J. R. (1980). Developing listening fluency before speaking: An alternative paradigm. *System*, 8(1) 1-22. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0346-251X\(80\)90020-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0346-251X(80)90020-2)

Nunan, D. (1997). Approaches to teaching listening in the language classroom. In *Proceedings of the 1997 Korea TESOL Conference*, 1–10.

Otaif, I., & Abd Aziz, N. H. (2017). Exploring the causes of listening comprehension anxiety from EFL Saudi learners' perspectives: A pilot study. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 8(4), 79–84. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.all.v.8n.4p.79>

Pallant, J. (2016) *SPSS survival manual: A step by step guide to data analysis using IBM SPSS*.

(6th ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003117407>

Raju, N., & Joshith, V. P. (2018). Krashen's theory of second language acquisition: A practical approach for English language classrooms. *International Journal of Innovative Knowledge Concepts*, 6(12), 179–184.

Ren, J. (2011). Affective variables and listening comprehension in college English classrooms. In *International Conference on Advances in Education and Management* (pp. 317–321). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-23065-3_46

Rost, M. (2001). Listening. In Carter, R., & Nunan, D. (Eds.), *The Cambridge Guide to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages* (pp. 7–13). Cambridge University Press.

Sejdiu, S. (2017). Are listening skills best enhanced through the use of multimedia technology. *Digital Education Review*, 32, 60–72. <https://doi.org/10.1344/der.2017.32.60-72>

Serraj, S. (2015). Listening anxiety in Iranian EFL learners. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 5(6), 1–8. <http://www.ijsrp.org/research-paper-0615/ijsrp-p4285.pdf>

S Singh, V., & Thurman, A. (2019). How many ways can we define online learning? A systematic literature review of definitions of online learning (1988-2018). *American Journal of Distance Education*, 33(4), 289–306. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08923647.2019.1663082>

Suleimenova, Z. (2012). Speaking anxiety in a Kazakhstani foreign language classroom. *Sino-US English Teaching*, 9(12), 1766-1774.

Vogely, A. J. (1998). Listening comprehension anxiety: Students' reported sources and solutions. *Foreign Language Annals*, 31(1), 67–80. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.1998.tb01333.x>

v von Worde, R. (1998). *An Investigation of Students' Perspectives on Foreign Language Anxiety*. [Doctoral dissertation, George Mason University]. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/62163189?accountid=14548>

Wang, S. (2010). An experimental study of Chinese English major students' listening anxiety of classroom learning activity at the university level. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 1(5), 562–568. <https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.1.5.562-568>

Wheless, L. R. (1975). An investigation of receiver apprehension and social context dimensions of communication apprehension. *Communication Education*, 24(3), 261–268. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03634527509378169>

Xu, F. (2011). Anxiety in EFL listening comprehension. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1(12), 1709–1717. <https://doi.org/10.4304/tpls.1.12.1709-1717>

Yadav, G. (2016). Reflection on virtual classes: Spirit of the time. *International Journal of Advanced Research*, 4(4), 1162–1167. <https://doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01>

Yekeler, A. D., & Ulusoy, M. (2021). The relationship among listening comprehension and factors affecting listening. *Education & Science/Egitim ve Bilim*, 46(205), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1038/120105a0>

Copyright Disclaimer

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).