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Factors Affecting the Teaching of Listening in United Arab Emirates Public Schools

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Abstract

The main aim of this study was to explore the factors which might hinder the teachers to teach listening effectively in UAE public schools, in particular primary and preparatory schools. One hundred (100) English language teachers were asked to fill out a questionnaire, and 79 responded. Using a descriptive analysis, it was found that the major factors which might hinder the teaching of listening effectively are mainly (i) lack of equipment (no labs, and the tape recorders are neither good nor enough), (ii) poor materials (no suitable listening materials, and the available cassettes are neither interesting nor clear), and (iii) students' interest lies mainly in passing exams rather than in achieving communicative competence in English.

1. Introduction

The idea of the priority and importance of listening is supported and emphasized by theories which stress the similarities between foreign language learning and second language acquisition such as the monitor model (Krashen, 1978), the information processing model (McLaughlin, Rossman, & McLeod, 1983), the interaction model (Hatch, 1983) and the intake model (Chaudron, 1985). Byrnes (1984), Dunkel (1986), and Asher (1988) have also highlighted the valuable insights gained from studies of child language acquisition. They suggest that children are typically allowed a 'silent period' in the early part of their lives during which they are not expected to attempt to produce adult-like language.

Eastman (1987) described listening as the most difficult of the four language skills a foreign language learner has to develop. Burely-Allen (1995) pointed out that more than forty percent (40%) of the daily communication is spent on listening.

Without having been taught to listen, a learner will never be able to communicate with native speakers. The greatest problem facing the non-native speaker is decoding the message she/he is listening to (River, 1980).

This has led many educators (Nunan & Miller, 1995; Mendenson and Rubin, 1995; Buck, 2000; Rost, 2002) to pay greater attention to the study of listening skills.

It is expected that listening in UAE public schools is paid greater attention because a large number of Emirati citizens go abroad as tourists or as students. In addition, school leavers are required to pass an English standard proficiency test (TOEFL/ IELTS) to join the Emirati institutions of higher education. Nevertheless, listening skill tends to be neglected in public schools in the UAE. Such a phenomenon is observed in both teaching and testing (see Jendli, 2005). In short, listening has never been taught effectively and sometimes not taught at all.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Nature of Listening

Listening has been considered for a long time as a passive skill, though it is an important part of the second language learning process. Bentley & Bacon (1996) define it as an active process during which the listener constructs meaning from oral input. Richards et al. (1992) define listening comprehension in learning English language as involving individual linguistic units (e.g., phonemes, words, grammatical structures, background knowledge), linguistic and cognitive skills, strategies and expectations that the listener uses in decoding what is presented in the topic and situation. In Nagle and Sanders' model (1986) of listening comprehension processing, the listener utilizes both automatic and controlled processes to synthesize meaning from oral input. Similarly, in Vandergrift's (1999) Interactive-Constructivist model, the listener is actively engaged in constructing meaning from a variety of contexts and input sources. That is, listeners do many activities either physically or mentally; we take notes, they nod their heads, they discuss (agree/disagree), they interpret and so on. Such activities do not only occur when the speaker and the listener are not face to face. Rivers (1980) puts it as follows:

Listening is not a passive skill, nor even, as has traditionally been believed, a receptive skill; in order to comprehend the sounds falling in our ears; we take the row material of words, and the rise and the fall of the voice, and from these materials we create significance (p.160).

In accordance with what has been mentioned above, it is noticed that the listener has to process the incoming signals of the input in order to interpret and decode it. McKeating (1981, p.59-61) calls this "the process of comprehension–perception, decoding, prediction and selection".

The listener receives the input from the speaker as a stream of sounds or chunks which are by themselves meaningless. In the mind of the listener, or in her/his Short Term Memory (STM), these sounds are constructed and interpreted in order to make meaningful utterances. Clark and Clark (1977, p. 43) summed it up," it is a building of meaning from sounds". Because STM has a limited capacity to store these meaningful phrases, by active

rehearsal they can in turn be passed on for storage in the Long Term Memory (LTM) (see Clark & Clark, 1977). This operation which includes perceiving and decoding is accomplished, in fact, by the help of different clues, such as intonation, stress, lexical meaning, tense markers and various structures. In the words of Widdowson (1978), "we are given linguistic clues to what propositions are expressed and what illocutionary acts are performed, and on the bases of these clues we make sense of the sentence"(p.81).

However, the listener often tends to store just the general meaning, the gist, of the message. Sometimes he cannot store such a message in his LTM especially if there is no rehearsal, thus he writes it in the form of notes. If, for example, a boy is asked by his mother to go to the market to buy different items does not write these items in notes, he may forget most of them. Another example is when one repeats a telephone number and cannot store it, so she/he writes it in a diary.

Moreover, when we listen to something in our mother tongue, we do not listen for all the details. But we usually predict what the speaker is likely to be going on to say and also we select the information which is related to our need and then retain it in our memory while we continue to listen. For example, if we are listening to the news and we want to know certain events, in this case we will first listen, then identify and then reject those events or things we are not interested in. When a native listener listens, he selects what seems for him important "to develop a coherent model. A good deal of detail will not be recorded in a form of which he will remember"(Brown & Yule,1983, p.73).

In addition, when we listen we are helped by other factors: first, our experience of the speaker and the topic she/he is dealing with (Brown, 1978); second, the false redundant information delivered in the utterances –repetitions, false starts, rephrasing, self-corrections, and verbal fillers (e.g.' you know' or 'I mean')-has its effective role in making our listening process quite appropriate because it gives us time to think and grasp the meaning of the message we are listening to. However, according to Ur (1984), the role of this redundancy is only to enable the speaker to express himself as he goes along, so he "helps the listener to follow him by providing an abundance of extra information and time to think"(p.7). Also, MacKeating (1981, p. 61) points out that: "redundant information is vital for the protection of the

message".

Nevertheless, we cannot always make use of the previous factors because of time and short-term memory limitations (Abbott, 1981). Further, even if we listen to something in our mother tongue, we sometimes encounter difficulties resulting from our limited knowledge of the topic as well as the language used. The latter point is well expressed by Byrne (1976):

Certain varieties of language and certain topics make understanding more difficult and require us to concentrate harder. And sometimes the length of time we are required to listen for, without participating, may cause memory problems or even fatigue, so that in the end we simply no longer listen with understanding (p.13).

2.2. Difficulties in Listening to English in EFL Classroom

Bearing the above in mind, one can ask: what if the listener is a non-native speaker, a student, and the message is coded in EFL? In fact he/she will experience enormous difficulties. Ur (1984) lists many problems which foreign and second language learners may face. They can be summarized as follows:

1. phonological problems of sounds which include pronunciation, rhythm, intonation and stress;
2. lack of the ability to skim what is heard, which includes the inability to keep up with redundancy, noise, and the inability to guess;
3. lack of exposure and practice with different kinds of accents and colloquial vocabulary in specific texts, and practice with different kinds of accents and colloquial vocabulary; and
4. inability to link words to the context, and unskillful in using strategies to summarize heard information at the macro and micro-level.

Rixon (1986) mentioned four main areas of listening difficulty an EFL learner encounters:

1. the English structures with the weak relationship between English sounds and the meaning in language expressions in the context,
2. changes in the sounds when they occur in rapid, connected speech with various tones,
3. the rhythm pattern of English speech, and
4. different ways of pronouncing the "same" sound.

Further, Richards (1983) highlighted the problems that the foreign and second language learners face in general conversational listening tasks: students have trouble processing reduced forms, colloquialisms, and prosodic features even at higher proficiency level.

A study conducted at Zayed University by Osman and Kamhieh (2003) regarding the difficulties UAE learners of English encounter, revealed that more than 40% of participants considered "listening" as the main difficulty.

The difficulties reviewed above strengthen the need for focusing on listening in the foreign language classroom.

2.3. Why is Listening neglected?

Based on surveying related literature, the following can be considered factors that have contributed to the negligence of the teaching listening:

1. Teachers may not be good listeners themselves and as a result 'hesitate' to teach it. Also, they may not be well trained to teach listening. Swanson's study (1986) concludes that teachers do not get enough training in teaching listening. However, Anderson and Leynnch (1988) argue that most EFL teachers consider listening as a passive skill; as a result it is simply left to take care of itself and develops naturally.
2. Materials may be inappropriate (Al-Sohbani, 2000). They are neither graded nor authentic, for example. Noblitt (1995) adds that "even when well designed, most tape recordings offer little opportunities for interaction; and once the content of a tape recording is understood, it offers no opportunity to rehearse rapid comprehension of novel utterances" (p.1-2).
3. Listening is not tested and as a result teachers do not pay attention to it (Richards, 1983).
4. "Teachers seem to think that listening and comprehension generally, is fairly easy" (MacKeating, 1981, p. 58).
5. Practical constraints such as crowded classes and lack of equipments (Al-Sohbani, 2000).

3. Background of the Study: The ELT Situation in the UAE Public Schools

Learning of English in the UAE is viewed as a desirable end since it is seen as the language of wider international communication and of business and technology. It enjoys a prominent role, and there is growing realization of its importance in the public schools curriculum.

English curriculum is uniform throughout the country and it is one of the compulsory subjects taught in UAE public and private schools. Students are given a total of twelve years of English language instruction. These are spread over nine years (primary and preparatory stages) and three years at the secondary schools. Students take six English periods a week, each lasting for 45 minutes.

It appears that the UAE school learners of English enjoy an advantage over many Arab learners in the Arabic speaking world. Rababah (2003), for instance, feels that in the UAE "people use English in their daily lives because of the multilingual nature of the residents" (p.15), which provides Emirati learners considerable opportunities to the exposure of the English language in use for real communicative purposes. However, the situation does not differ from other Gulf countries. English in the public UAE schools is perceived as merely a subject among many in the school syllabus.

Though it is intended to follow the communicative language teaching, traditional teaching is still practiced; the students seldom use English in or outside the classroom. Teachers are obliged "to educate students in a manner which is directed to meet the requirements of the exams" (Qashoa, 2006, p.8); as a result, it is difficult to come across fluent school graduates. Jendli (2005) adds:

While some English Language teachers might be ready and qualified to utilize current communicative teaching and assessment approaches in their classrooms, including assessment of oral competence, they lack specific directions, guidelines, and logistical support from decision makers (p.173).

Further, Qashoa (2006) postulates that listening is not viewed as important in the UAE public schools because it is not tested particularly in the final examinations, as a result, it is simply not taught.

Generally, "the language competency of students is below expectations" (Owais, 2005, p.3). Therefore, the teaching of English at the public schools has been severely criticized as ineffective (see Gallagher, 2007).

Reforms in the UAE are being implemented to innovate the teaching of English (See Gunn & Raven, 2007). However, according to Alwan (2007, p.232), "most innovations are introduced without training and without getting feedback to evaluate the practice and improve the implementation… and teachers in the UAE are overburdened with work duties."

4. Statement of the Problem

Listening is a fundamental language skill, and as such it merits a critical priority among the four skill areas for language students. As Hasan (2000) pointed out, "listening comprehension provides the right conditions for language acquisition and development of other language skills" (p.138). Until recently, however, it has attracted "the least attention of the four skills" (Call, 1985, p. 765). In many instances it is treated "like a neglected stepchild" (Oxford, 1993, p. 205) and is, in Feyten's (1993, p.173) words, "an overlooked dimension in language acquisition."

As indicated above, listening has been neglected in the language classroom in the UAE public schools. As a result, school leavers who have been studying English for about twelve years do not have a satisfying proficiency in listening comprehension in particular, and in other skills, in general (see Section 3). This neglect has been for a long time, based on personal observations rather than empirical evidence, thought to be due to factors such as the lack of appropriate materials, equipment, and the nature of the teaching of listening, learners and examinations. This study mainly aims to find answers to this problem guided by three questions, given in Section 5.

5.Questions of the Study

The aim of the present study is to answer the following questions:

1. What are the major factors which mostly hinder teachers to teach listening effectively?
2. What do teachers think about the teaching of listening?
3. How do teachers view students' interest in listening?

6. Limitations

This study is limited to the population surveyed; English language teachers in Sharjah and Ajman Emirates, at the primary and preparatory public schools (grades 1-9). However, the insights gained from this study can be worth taking into account in similar situations such as Um Al Quin and Ra'as Al-khimah Emirates.

7. Methodology

7.1. The instrument

The instrument underwent a four-stage process. First, the researcher interviewed 18 teachers and 8 supervisors following a semi structured interview. It was found that most of these teachers and supervisors agreed that listening was seldom taught, and if was taught, it was not taught effectively. Second, 13 supervisors and 26 teachers were asked to write the factors which hinder teachers to teach this skill effectively. Based on their responses, a first draft was created; it consisted of 33 items. Third, it was given to five members of the TEFL department at Ajman University, who are experts in educational research, evaluation, and TEFL education to ensure face and content validity. Fourth, guided by the experts' comments and notes, a final draft was developed. It consisted of two parts: the first one included 21 closed items and the second part included an open ended question. Then, the items of this instrument were tested for the internal consistency reliability estimate by using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded 0.81. The first part of the questionnaire was designed on a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" with values 1-5 assigned to each alternative.

7.2. Participants

The participants of the study were 100 teachers from Ajman and Sharjah Emirates public schools. Eight-one (81) teachers, (34 male and 45 female) filled the questionnaire; two were discarded for being incomplete. Fifty-nine (59) of these teachers were from Ajman and Sharjah cities. That is, the majority of the sample of this study represents schools whose teachers could have opportunities to participate in training workshops as well as

support from the decision makers. Further, the facilities at these schools are supposed to be better compared to the schools located out side these two main cities. Table1 shows the background of the participants.

Table 1. The distribution of the sample according to experience, gender, Emirate, and qualification.

Years of Teaching Experience						Gender		Emirate		Qualification (Degree)				
Category	2-6	7-14	15-20	21-25	26-30	Female	Male	Ajman	Sharjah	Diploma	B.Ed	B. A	MA	Others
Total	20	20	22	8	9	44	35	35	42	20	17	30	1	2
Not given								2		9				

7.3. Analysis

Descriptive statistical analysis was used to analyze the percentages, means, and standard deviations of the data.

8. Results and Discussion

As indicate in Section 5, the purpose of the present study is to explore the factors which may hinder the teaching of listening skill effectively.

The scores of the participants on the questionnaire were processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 11.5. The given Appendix shows the descriptive statistics obtained.

8.1. Question One:

What are the major factors which mostly hinder teachers to teach listening effectively?

The percentages and mean scores of the responses to the 21 statements (see Appendix) show that the majority of the respondents assert the importance of listening for their learners. Of the total participants, 87.4% disagreed with item 4, and 83.6% disagreed with item 17. Further, sixty three point-

three percent (63.3%) of these participants indicated that the neglect of the teaching of listening is not because of the textbooks or the place of listening in the examination nor the English level of the learners (see the Appendix; items 6, 8 and 1). The major factors which mostly hinder the teaching of listening effectively are mainly related to equipment, materials and students' interest, which is presented and discussed in Section 8.3.

8.1.1. Equipment

As shown in Table 2, the participants' responses seem to suggest that equipment could be the major factors which affect teaching listening in UAE public schools. Three items (i.e., 11, 14 and 21) related to this component were assigned. All of them received high agreement responses form the majority of the participants. A high mean score of agreement (M= 4.20) was recorded for item 11, "No language labs in the schools." Of the total number of respondents, 41.8 % strongly agreed and 44.0 % agreed. Item 21, "There are not enough tape recorders," and item, 14 "There are not good tape recorders," also received considerable high mean scores of agreement, 3.32 and 3.43. As shown in Table 2, twenty seven point-eight percent (27.8%) of the participants strongly agreed, 24.1% agreed and 20.3% strongly agreed and 38.0% agreed, respectively. This result leads one to say that teachers in the UAE, namely in Sharjah and Ajman Emirates' public schools belief that laboratories can be very useful in teaching listening. Such response can be due to their background that mainly related to the era of audio-lingual approach, which used to utilize laboratories, as these teachers, to the best knowledge of the researcher, have no experience in using laboratories; their awareness of the role of laboratories in giving learners more opportunities to practice listening; and the strong reason that has led them to say so is, perhaps, the lack of good or enough tape recorders at schools and; therefore, laboratories could be for them the best solution.

Table 2. Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Responses Regarding Equipment, Classroom and Time

		Statements	SA %	A %	UD %	DA %	SD %	Means	SD
Equipment	11	There are no language labs in the schools.	41.8	44.3	6.3	7.6	0	4.20	.87
	14	There are not good tape recorders.	27.8	24.1	8.9	30.4	8.9	3.32	1.39
	21	There are not enough tape recorders.	20.3	38.0	11.4	25.3	5.1	3.43	1.22
Class room	3	The classroom is very crowded.	7.6	34.2	5.1	38.0	15.2	2.81	1.27
	5	The classroom is not suitable for teaching listening.	10.1	24.1	13.9	34.2	17.7	2.75	1.29
Time	16	The period is too short to teach listening.	3.8	29.1	8.9	45.6	12.7	2.66	1.14
	2	If I teach listening, I will not finish the syllabus.	2.5	16.5	25.3	39.2	16.5	2.49	1.04

SA= strongly agree, A=agree, UD= undecided, D= disagree, SD= strongly disagree

Classroom quality and time do not seem that problematic, compared to laboratories and tape recorders. Only 41.8% of the participants indicated that crowded classrooms affect negatively the teaching of listening and only 34.0% of them expressed their agreement with the statement number 5, which states that "the classroom is not suitable for teaching listening". Similarly, the respondents did not consider 'time' a problematic constraint. See the mean scores of item 16 and 2 provided in Table 2, given above.

8.1.2. Materials

As shown in Table 3, materials were found to be one of the major factors which affect the teaching of listening. Statement 13, "The available cassettes are not clear," obtained the third highest mean value, 3.68. Of the total participants, 26.6% strongly agreed and 40.5% agreed and only 21.8 % disagreed with this statement. Item 19, "The available cassettes are boring", ranked the sixth with a mean sore of 3.23, followed by item 7, "There are not suitable listening materials," which received a mean score of 3.11. This result shows how the materials, mainly, cassettes are seen important for the participants. Such concern might reflect a fact that cassettes have a problem; they cannot be graded or as indicated in Section 2.3 not well prepared to suit learners regarding clarity or interest. According to the researcher's experience, the participants might be themselves not prepared to deal with listening due to lack of training or competency. As Loughrey et al. (1999) state that most of these teachers are expatriates who "seem to have received almost no development or training" (p. 54).

Table 3. Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Responses Regarding Materials

Statements		SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %	Means	SD
7	There are not suitable listening materials.	13.9	32.9	12.17	31.6	8.9	3.11	1.25
13	The available cassettes are not clear.	26.6	40.5	8.9	19.0	3.8	3.68	1.18
19	The available cassettes are boring.	19.0	25.3	17.7	35.4	2.5	3.23	1.20

SA= strongly agree, A=agree, UD= undecided, D= disagree, SD= strongly disagree

8.2. Question Two:

What do teachers think about the teaching of listening?

From the data given in Table 4, it can be said that the teachers who participated in this study look at listening as worth teaching. Forty-point-five percent (40.5%) disagreed and 44.3% strongly disagreed with item 9, "Teaching listening is a waste of time." Further, of the total participants, 30.4% disagreed and 21.5 % strongly disagreed with the statement which states that "most English language teachers do not know how to teach listening," item 10. However, they revealed quite similar response to the statement number 12, "Teaching listening needs too much preparation," 45.6% agreed and 44.3% disagreed.

As discussed earlier, most of the teachers, participated in this study, showed their concern of the role and importance of listening, which is good. Moreover, 51.9% of these teachers indicated, by disagreeing with item 10, their knowledge and preparedness to teach listening. Therefore, it can be argued that they may only need certain support from the decision makers. The support can be logistical as well as technical.

Table 4. Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Responses Regarding the Teaching of Listening

	Statements	SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %	Means	SD
9	Teaching listening is a waste of time.	1.3	5.1	7.6	40.5	44.3	1.77	.90
10	Most English language teachers do not know how to teach listening.	6.3	26.6	15.2	30.4	21.5	2.66	1.26
12	Teaching listening needs too much preparation.	7.6	38.0	10.1	38.0	6.3	3.03	1.15

SA= strongly agree, A=agree, UD= undecided, D= disagree, SD= strongly disagree

8.3. Question Three:

How do teachers view the students' interest in listening?

Tow items were created to seek an answer to this question. They are presented and discussed respectively. As shown in Table 5, item 18, "Most students are mainly interested in just passing exams," scored considerable high mean scores, 3.86. Further, sixty nine point-six percent (69.6%) of the total respondents agreed with this statement, 26.6% strongly agreed and 43.0% agreed, and only 9.9% showed their disagreement. As indicated in Section 3, it could be due to the system of the examinations in the UAE public schools. Students do not need training in listening to pass examinations. English is still taught as a school subject that needs to be mastered and traditionally tested rather than a tool of oral communication where listening plays a prominent role. Also, the belief of teachers could contribute to this result, which consciously or unconsciously may affect their teaching of listening negatively. That is, they do not teach listening effectively. Another explanation, can be because, as argued earlier by Jendli (2005, p. 137), that such teachers lack of 'logistical support from decision makers." Concerning item 20 which states that "students are not motivated to do listening exercises," received only 2.90 mean scores. Approximately 47% of the teachers in this study disagreed more than the teachers who agreed (37.9%) with this item. This result is interesting as it contradicts the commonly-held assumption that learners in UAE public schools are not motivated to learn English in general. It, to some extent, also contradicts the result of item 18, discussed above.

Table 5. Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Responses Regarding the Students' Interest in Listening

Statements		SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %	Means	SD
18	Most students are mainly interested in just passing exams.	26.6	43.0	19.0	8.9	1.3	3.86	.93
20	Students are not motivated to do listening exercises.	12.7	25.3	15.2	41.8	5.1	2.99	1.18

SA= strongly agree, A=agree, UD= undecided, D= disagree, SD= strongly disagree

Additional Results

The open ended question was answered by twenty teachers. Their answers could be classified as follows:

* Most of these teachers reaffirmed what the close-question had revealed. See the following quotations:

"In my opinion, the most important reason is there are no language labs in the schools"

"We should have separate lab sessions for students with ready made materials. Textbooks' tapes must be made especially for that purpose"

"My recommendation is to separate listening skill and to be worked out privately with labs, headphones…with absolute quite atmosphere…"

* Two respondents referred to the role of the teachers as indicated below:

"Teachers should be more aware of listening procedures. Teachers' voice should not be alternative of the cassettes in any case (we are not native speakers)"

"The success of any skill depends mainly on the teacher. And if listening is not taught successfully in our schools, it is mainly because most of the teachers don't like to teach this skill"

* Two respondents thought that:

"Students are not well prepared for doing the skill properly. Curriculums suffer from the lack of the appropriate procedures and active critical listening situations"

"Arab children are not good listeners"

* One of the respondents suggested that "It is better to add more listening lessons (stories, comprehension) in the textbook or in the teachers' book"

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

It can be concluded that listening is not taught effectively, according to the responses of the teachers, mainly because of the following factors:

1. No laboratories in schools.
2. No good or enough tape recorders.
3. The cassettes are neither available in most schools nor good enough for the teaching of listening.
4. The students are mainly interested in passing the exams.

Based on the conclusions summarized above, the following recommendations can be useful:

1. Compensating for the lack of laboratories in schools; this can be done by creating resource centres in schools with multimedia which technically can be used as laboratories. Practically speaking, tape recorders are very useful; they can be simply used in each English period. Therefore, enough and good ones should be available in every school.
2. Evaluating and assessing the available cassettes currently used in schools taking into account their suitability, clarity and teachability.
3. Assuring that each teacher gets the cassettes on time.
4. Including listening skills in examinations and making students aware of the importance of listening skills in oral communications as well as in passing international standardized tests such as TOFEL. This should be accomplished by involving students in exercises which require them to listen and do tasks similar to what is included in such standardized tests. These cannot practically be done unless teachers receive enough support from the decision makers. This support can be by allowing teachers some freedom to deal with the syllabus, negotiating with them during the process of choosing/designing the syllabus, writing exams and providing appropriate in-service training and evaluation.

5. Conducting more research:

As this study is still limited to the Emirates of Sharjah and Ajman, and only based on teachers' responses, further research with different tools,

including other emirates, supervisors and students can be valuable. Such research may lead to explore different factors that could help educators to define other problems facing the teaching of English, in general and listening, in particular.

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Item No	Item rank	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Means	SD
			%	%	%	%	%		
1	11	The students' level is very low.	6.3	32.9	12.7	48.1	0	2.97	1.04
2	18	If I teach listening, I will not finish the syllabus.	2.5	16.5	25.3	39.2	16.5	2.49	1.04
3	12	The classroom is very crowded.	7.6	34.2	5.1	38.0	15.2	2.81	1.27
4	20	Listening is not important for my students.	1.3	5.1	6.3	34.2	53.2	1.67	.90
5	13	The classroom is not suitable for teaching listening.	10.1	24.1	13.9	34.2	17.7	2.75	1.29
6	17	The textbooks do not encourage teaching listening.	7.6	20.3	8.9	50.6	12.7	2.59	1.17
7	7	There are not suitable listening materials.	13.9	32.9	12.17	31.6	8.9	3.11	1.25
8	15	Listening skill is not a main part in exams.	10.1	24.1	2.5	46.8	16.5	2.65	1.29
9	21	Teaching listening is a waste of time.	1.3	5.1	7.6	40.5	44.3	1.77	.90
10	14	Most English language teachers do not know how to teach listening.	6.3	26.6	15.2	30.4	21.5	2.66	1.26
11	1	There are no language labs in the schools.	41.8	44.3	6.3	7.6	0	4.20	.87

12	8	Teaching listening needs too much preparation.	7.6	38.0	10.1	38.0	6.3	3.03	1.15
13	3	The available cassettes are not clear.	26.6	40.5	8.9	19.0	3.8	3.68	1.18
14	5	There are not good tape recorders	27.8	24.1	8.9	30.4	8.9	3.32	1.39
15	16	I cannot teach listing because my students need to know more about grammar.	6.3	22.8	12.7	41.8	16.5	2.61	1.19
16	14	The period is too short to teach listening.	3.8	29.1	8.9	45.6	12.7	2.66	1.14
17	19	Listening is not as important as other skills.	3.8	7.6	5.1	41.8	41.8	1.90	1.06
18	2	Most students are mainly interested in just passing exams.	26.6	43.0	19.0	8.9	1.3	3.86	.93
19	6	The available cassettes are boring.	19.0	25.3	17.7	35.4	2.5	3.23	1.20
20	9	Students are not motivated to do listening exercises.	12.7	25.3	15.2	41.8	5.1	2.99	1.18
21	4	There are not enough tape recorders	20.3	38.0	11.4	25.3	5.1	3.43	1.22

Appendix: Percentages, means, & standard deviations of all statements' responses

العوامل التي تؤثر في تدريس مهارة الاستماع في المدارس الحكومية في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة

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الخلاصة

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استطلاع آراء المدرسين في إمارة الشارقة وعجمان في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة بشأن العوامل التي تعيق تدريس مهارة الاستماع بصورة فاعلة في المدارس الحكومية وبالذات في المرحلة الابتدائية والإعدادية. ولتحقيق ذلك حلل إحصائيا استجابة 79 مدرسًا من المدرسين العاملين في مدارس الإمارتين. أظهرت النتائج أن أهم العوامل التي تؤدي إلى عدم تدريس هذه المهارة بصورة فاعلة يعزى بصورة رئيسة إلى:

1- القصور في التجهيزات اللازمة لتدريس مهارة الاستماع مثل المعامل، وآلات التسجيل.
2- رداءة وندرة المواد التعليمي.
3- أن رغبة الطلاب الدارسين تكمن بصورة رئيسة في اجتياز الاختبارات، وليس في تحقيق الكفاءة في استخدام اللغة الانجليزية.