



LISTENING FACTORS ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION AMONG GRADE 7 OF FATHER SATURNINO URIOS UNIVERSITY, PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to know the listening comprehension factors on learning English language of Grade 7 students at Father Saturnino Urios University (FSUU), Butuan City, Philippines. The socio-economic profile of the participants and the listening levels such as content, critical, and appreciative were sought. It presented the participants' listening comprehension factors that determine their listening level for learning English language such as listening to English programs on TV, adequacy of listening instruction, and engaging in interaction using English language as medium. The study made use of the descriptive- survey technique for 130 respondents. It utilized frequency count and percentage distribution, mean and standard deviation, t-test, and analysis of variance. The study found out that the respondents' critical and appreciative levels of listening required attention, their profile variables of the students do not affect their listening comprehension levels, and their listening factors do not affect much to listening comprehension levels. It gave way to deal with the listening levels of the respondents that were weak and required remedy from English teachers and School administrator.

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INTRODUCTION

English language has been used almost everywhere in Schools, Offices, and even among laborers. English language provides greater opportunity for students toward learning at schools, and on interpersonal communication (Swanson, 2010). This has to be learned by early practitioners of this field. Learning English should start from early childhood. It is a good starting point in acquiring this language for future formal communication, and for work purposes. But one of the macro skills in learning English has to be developed, aside from speaking, reading and writing, and that is Listening (Cohen, 2011). This has been considered a strong foundation which can provide deeper cognitive development for information acquisition. This requires how the learner understands what the Speaker says. English language learning provides the audio input that serves as the starting point for its acquisition and enables learners to interact in spoken communication. Listening is the first language, as a manner, that students acquire for academic foundation and cognitive development.

And it plays a life-long role in the processes of communication. According to Howatt and Dakin (1984) as cited in Swanson (2010), listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This process involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, the speaker's grammar and vocabulary, and comprehension of meaning (Brewser and Fager, 2009). Listening is the most frequently used form of language skill to any school (Swanson, 2009). It plays a significant role in daily communication and in educative process (Nichols, 2008). In spite of its importance, the development of listening ability has received slight emphasis in language instruction. Listening is an important part of communication for everyone. To students, guided practice by a teacher is one of the best ways to improve this skill. A student with good listening comprehension skills, aside from getting the idea, think critically, and appreciate about it, will be able to participate more effectively in communicative situations (Hennings, 2006). However, there are common listening problems considered as students' handicaps faced by most of English teachers. In a classroom, they encounter students who are less attentive, less interactive, preoccupied, anxious, and even less confident (Divine, 2002).

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These problems are the growing concerns to teachers, students, and school administrators. Subjects in a communicative classroom cannot be properly taught if those problems are not given attention for those listeners. It is within this context that the researcher was prompted to study their profile, their listening factors and their listening comprehension levels in English of the Grade 7 Students of Father Saturnino Urios University High School in Butuan City, Agusan del Norte.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The framework of the study was illustrated on the schematic diagram of figure 1 below. The first box on the upper left contains the variables of respondents' socio-economic profile. The second box on the lower left contains the listening levels: Content level refers to comprehending the meaning and concept of the oral communication through listening. Critical level refers to listening that evaluate and judges and forms opinion about what is being said. Appreciative level seeks certain information for appreciation based from ones needs and goals. And the third box on right side contains the factors which determine the participants' listening levels in English; *Listening to English programs on TV* determines the influence of TV shows to the reading habits of the students, *Adequacy of Listening Instruction* reinforces the students to listen and learn English language for information, for grade, and for competition adequately and interestingly, *Engaging in interaction using English language as Medium* refers to the ability to connect English as the medium of instruction to learners' experiences and needs in order to promote engagement and learning in the classroom and even outside.

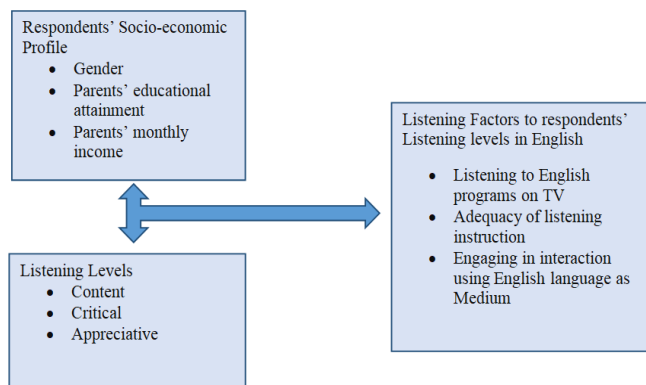


Figure 1. Paradigm

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study made use of the descriptive - survey method. This served as a technique which focused and identified the respondents' profile, listening factors, and their listening levels that are weak of the 130 Grade 7 FSUU students in Butuan City, Philippines on school year 2013-2014. In gathering the data, the researcher- made questionnaire was used as reflected on the variables of knowing the socio-economic profile of the respondents, their listening comprehension skills (levels), and listening factors that could affect their listening skills in learning English language. This was done through dictation by their respective advisers. The questions for listening comprehension levels were classified and anchored on the Higher Order Thinking Skills and the work of Castigador (2007: 54-60). After which, the data gathered were

statistically tabulated, analyzed and interpreted through the following statistical tools:

Frequency Count and Percentage distribution, Mean and Standard Deviation, The t-test, and The analysis of variance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result (Table 1) on gender shows that female students (78) are greater in number than the male students (52). As to their parents' educational attainment, fathers has the total of 101 (77.27%) and their mother of 98 (75%). This points out that the majority of their parents are College graduates, and implies that the educational attainment respondents' fathers is slightly higher compared than of their mothers'. Dutcher (2004) mentioned in his study that the attitude of a child towards school works maybe influenced by the interest of the parents in sending their children to school. As to their parents' monthly income, it can be garnered in the table that majority of the participants have parents who can support them to school and even provide materials for listening at home for personal consumption. As Henry (2008) affirmed that the higher the socio-economic status of the students' family is, the higher ones aim for academic achievement will be.

Table 1. Respondents' Profile

Variables	f (n = 130)	%
Gender		
Male	52	40.15
Female	78	59.85
Educational Attainment		
Father		
Elementary	1	0.75
High School	23	17.42
College graduate	101	77.27
M.A. level and graduate	6	4.54
Ph. D. level and graduate	0	0.00
Mother		
Elementary	1	0.75
High School	24	18.18
College graduate	98	75.00
M.A. level and graduate	7	5.30
Ph. D. level and graduate	1	0.75
Parents' Monthly Income		
P 5,000 and below	11	8.33
P 5,000 to P 9,999	18	13.63
P 10,000 to P 14,999	25	18.93
P 15,000 to P 19,999	34	25.75
P 20,000 and above	44	33.33

Listening Levels

Table 2. Respondents' Listening Comprehension Levels

Indicators	M	SD	VI
Content	6.02	1.71	S
Critical	4.98	1.79	F
Appreciation	3.89	1.54	F
Overall	4.96	1.68	F

Legend:
 Scale Parameters Verbal Interpretation (VI) Qualitative Description
 7.25 - 10.00 Very Satisfactory (VS) Very Good
 2 5.00 - 7.24 Satisfactory (S) Good
 3 2.50 - 4.99 Fair (F) Weak
 4 0.00 - 2.49 Poor (P) Bad

Table 2 presents content level with a mean of 6.02 and standard deviation (sd) of 1.71 interpreted as *Satisfactory*. This indicates that the participants were able to listen and get the

ideas as heard in the form of dictation. Critical comprehension level of listening is marked with an average mean of 4.98 and sd of 1.79 which is verbally interpreted as *Fair*. At this level, effective critical listening requires careful judgment about the expertness and the trustworthiness of the speaker. Likewise, appreciative level of listening has an average mean of 3.89 and sd of 1.54 which verbally interpreted as *Fair*. This has the lowest rate compared to the other two levels, content and critical. The overall result of the listening comprehension levels is marked with an average of 4.96 (sd 1.68) which is verbally interpreted as *Fair*. This strongly recommends the need to improve critical level with an average mean of 4.98 (sd 1.79), and appreciative levels with an average mean of 3.89 (sd 1.54). This requires the polishing of the analysis of the participants' minds, and exposure to known literary authors and write ups. In sharpening one's mind, Henry (2008) pointed out that a student must learn to make inferences or draw conclusions from what is being heard.

Factors that Determine Listening Comprehension Levels

As summed up, the extent factors in listening levels have an overall average mean of 3.07 (sd 0.41), which is interpreted as "Extensive". The result implies that there are some factors which require slight assistance, like spending more time in listening best English programs on T.V., and use it English often. Henning (2006) pointed out that a focus on listening awareness could be best tested on how we choose, expose, and listens to TV programs and shows day-by-day could help improve language proficiency of the listener.

parents' monthly income, it shows that the financial status of their families has nothing to do with their listening ways. Elley (2003) asserted in his research on vocabulary and information acquisitions from listening that it is developed first not by socio-economic factors but by how one's interest leads him/her. Table 5 shows that listening factors have the p-value of 0.984. The p-value is greater than 0.05 test of significant relationship. Hence, null hypothesis is not rejected. This warrants that there is significant relationship between the factors of listening to listening levels. This means that listening levels of the respondents are affected by the factors that determine their listening skills.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The research study drawn the conclusion that majority of the respondents were females, and majority of their parents were educated with good income. The factors that determine both listening comprehensions of the students are extensive. The profile variables of the students do not affect their listening comprehension levels. And the factors that determine listening comprehension of the respondents relatively influence to their listening comprehension levels. However, the critical and appreciative levels of listening comprehension are fair, and require attention for their better cognitive understanding of English language. As recommended, English teachers should consider developmental activities in school that would develop students' critical and appreciative listening skills, and conduct regular evaluation to monitor their academic progress in listening comprehensions.

Table 3. Listening Factors

Factors for Listening	M (Ave.)	SD	VI
Listening English Programs on Television	3.04	0.55	Extensive
Adequacy of Listening Instruction	3.12	0.49	Extensive
Engaging in interaction using English Language as medium	2.73	0.62	Extensive
Overall	2.96	0.55	Extensive

Table 4. Mean Difference on the Participants' Listening Level According to their Profile

VARIABLES	SS	Df	MS	SS	Df	MS	F	P-values	DECISION
	Effect	Effect	Effect	Error	Error	Error			
Gender	0.08	1	0.08	22.00	130	0.17	0.46	0.4976	Don't Reject H ₀
FEA	0.43	3	0.14	21.65	128	0.17	0.84	0.4724	Don't Reject H ₀
MEA	0.76	4	0.19	21.31	127	0.17	1.13	0.3435	Don't Reject H ₀
PMI	0.29	4	0.07	21.78	127	0.17	0.42	0.7905	Don't Reject H ₀

Legend:

FEA- Father's Educational Attainment
 MEA- Mother's Educational Attainment
 PMI- Parents' Monthly Income

Table 5. Relationship Between the Respondents' Listening Levels and listening Factors

VARIABLES	Factors in Listening	Decision
Listening Level	r = 0.002 (p = 0.984)	Ho is not rejected

*p < .05 significant

The figures shown in Table 4 tell that since the p-values of gender (0.4976), fathers' educational attainment (0.4724), mothers' educational attainment (0.3435), and parents' monthly (0.7905) are far greater than 0.05 test of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that respondents' profile does not affect the listening comprehension levels. As to the gender profile, this shows that it has nothing to do with the skill in listening. Everybody does listen for the sake of getting information. As regards parents' educational attainment, it manifests that listening skill does not depend on the achievement a family has. And as to their

Students must be exposed to literature for literary appreciation, and some activities that would develop their critical and appreciative thinking. Teachers need to help students organize their thoughts, to activate appropriate background knowledge to prepare for listening (Vandergrift, 2010).

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