Investigating the Relation of Anxiety to Learners' Listening Comprehension Proficiency Using Visual Strategies

Iman Ghanim Shaban   Ziyad Fadhil Himood

University of Mosul/ College of Basic Education/ Dep. of English Researcher

Abstract: Listening comprehension is a cognitive approach to deal with spoken texts. However, listening to foreign language causes anxiety to the learners of that language. Two null-hypotheses have been employed to investigate the relation of anxiety to learners' listening comprehension proficiency using visual strategies, namely, picture strip story strategy and video strategy.

To find out the relation between learners' anxiety and their listening comprehension proficiency by using picture strip story strategy and video strategy, the researcher has used a questionnaire which is consisted of (20) items. The questionnaire is likert-type scale . A quantitative method research design is adopted. The sample consists of (50) participants whom are randomly selected and split equally into two groups. The subjects study at Department of English /Basic Education College / Mosul University. Each group is taught by using one strategy (group A is taught by using picture strip story strategy (PSSS) and group B is taught via using video strategy).

Pearson Correlation Formula is used for data-analysis. The results are as follows:

There is a positive relation between learners' listening anxiety and their listening comprehension proficiency of the group whom taught by using picture strip story strategy.

There is a positive relation between learners' listening anxiety and their listening comprehension proficiency of the group whom taught by using video strategy.

Key words: Anxiety, Listening Comprehension Proficiency, Visual Strategies, Picture Strip Story Strategy, Video Strategy

إستقصاء علاقة القلق بكفاءة الاصغاء الاستيعابي للطلاب باستخدام الاسترتيجيات البصرية*

ايمان غانم شعبان   زياد فاضل حمود

جامعة الموصل / كلية التربية الأساسية / قسم اللغة الانكليزية

المستخلص: الاصغاء الاستيعابي هو عملية عقلية للتعامل مع النص المنطوق. إلا أن الاصغاء للغة أجنبية يسبب القلق لمتعلمي تلك اللغة. تم توظيف فرضيتين صفريتين لاستقصاء علاقة القلق بكفاءة الاصغاء الاستيعابي للطلاب باستخدام الاستراتيجيات البصرية،على وجه التحديد، استراتيجية الصور المتتالية واستراتيجية الفيديو.

لأيجاد العلاقة بين قلق الطلاب وكفاءة إصغائهم الاستيعابي باستخدام استراتيجية الصور المتتالية واستراتيجية الفيديو، استخدم الباحث استبيانا مكونا من (20) فقرة من نوع مقياس ليكرت. إذ تم تبني طريقة البحث الكمي في هذا البحث. تكونت العينة من (50) مشاركا تم أختيارهم بشكل عشوائي وتم تقسمهم الى مجموعتين. يدرس المشاركون في البحث بقسم اللغة الإنكليزية/كلية التربية الأساسية/جامعة الموصل. وكل مجموعة درسّت باستخدام استراتيجية (المجموعة أ درست باستخدام استراتيجية الصور المتتالية و المجموعة ب درست باستخدام استراتيجية الفيديو).

استُخدِم معامل ارتباط بيرسون لتحليل البيانات وتم الحصول على النتائج التالية:

○ توجد علاقة إيجابية بين قلق الاصغاء للطلاب وكفاءة اصغائهم الاستيعابي عند استخدام استراتيجية الصور المتتالية

○ توجد علاقة إيجابية بين قلق الاصغاء للطلاب وكفاءة اصغائهم الاستيعابي عند استخدام استراتيجية الفيديو.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القلق، كفاءة الاصغاء الاستيعابي، الاستراتيجيات البصرية.

Introduction

Anxiety is 'a negative emotion' that takes place when someone concentrate**s** (Szyszka**,** 2017)**.** 'It also occurs when an individual faces an unavoidable situation, which is personally threatening, either physically or psychologically'(ibid.). Up to this date, there are little studies about the relationship between anxiety and Listening Comprehension (henceforth LC) .

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Shakir (2014) mentions that anxiety 'is one of the most widely experienced emotion and one of the most essential constructs of all human behaviour'. In listening comprehension research, the emotional states of learners are overlooked (Dalman, 2016).

Listening anxiety can affect the comprehension of the text. That is, anxiety considered as an obstacle that can lower learners' listening skill (Pan , 2016). Thus, this study tries to find answers to the following questions:

☞ Is there any relation between listening anxiety and learners' LC proficiency when using Picture Strip Story strategy (henceforth PSSS)?

☞ Is there any relation between listening anxiety and learners' LC proficiency when using video strategy?

1.2. Aims of the Research

This research aims at:

○ Finding out the relation of anxiety on learners' listening Comprehension proficiency by using PSSS.

❍ Finding out the relation of anxiety on learners' listening Comprehension proficiency by using video.

1.3. Hypotheses of the Research

1. There is no statistically significant difference in the relation of anxiety to LC proficiency by using PSSS.
2. There is no statistically significant difference in the relation of anxiety to LC proficiency by using video strategy.

1.4. Significance of the Research

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, this is the first research that investigates the relation of anxiety to learners' listening Comprehension proficiency using PSSS and video strategy.

1.5. Literature Review
1.5.1. Listening Strategies

Listening strategies are ways in which listeners approach and manage their listening (Richards, 2008:10). Good listeners select strategies that work together in an 'orchestrated way' and that fulfill listening task (Bobanovic & Randic, 2006:283). Then, using appropriate strategies in learning process can inhance learners' proficiency and achievement (ibid.).

Oxford classification of learning strategies can be applied to the four language skills listening, reading, speaking and writing (Oxford, 1990). Thus, Oxford(1990) classifies listening strategies into two general types:

1-Direct Strategies

Direct strategies involve dealing directly with the target language. This kind of strategies can be classified into three sub-classifications:
- ➲ Memory strategies: such as 'helping students store and retrieve new information'.
- ➲ Cognitive strategies: such as enabling 'learners to understand and produce new language by many different means'.
- ➲ Compensation strategies: such as 'guessing or using synonyms'.

2-Indirect Strategies

Indirect strategies involve dealing indirectly with the target language. This kind of strategies can be classified into three sub-classifications:

⇨ Metacognitive strategies: give learners a chance to 'control their own cognition'. For example 'arranging, planning and evaluating'.

⇨ Affective strategies: help learners to manage their 'emotions, motivations and attitudes'.

⇨ Social strategies: 'help students learn through interaction'. Such as 'asking-questions' and 'cooperating with others'.

1.5.2. Visual Strategies

Over than 2000 years ago, the Roman poet Horace says that "What we learn only through the ears makes less impression upon our minds than what is presented to the trustworthy eye"(Suvorov, 2013:12; Elmankush,2017:20). Therefore,'Technology available for the purpose of listening development made leaps forward from audio recordings with the advent of visual media, such as film, television, and, eventually, digital video. Adding a visual component to listening instruction increased the authenticity of classroom listening practice.' (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012:219).

According to Zhang (2009) and Vandergrift & Goh(2012:220), listeners will comprehend any spoken language better when they are supplied with visual supports because visual materials are processed automatically in working memory so this will help learners to get the meaning behind the speech faster and easier.

In addition, Jones & Plass(2002) find out that listening comprehension can make language learners acquire more vocabularies. Consequently, using authentic materials such as videos in the listening class can be a motivating tool for learners to do more listening outside the class (Burns & Siegel, 2018:47). Then, we can come up with that text-books are not enough for language teaching and they need to be supported by visual aids (Surkamp & Viebrock, 2018:31; Macháčková, 2009).

This reseacher tackles the use of two types of visual strategies as strategies in teaching listening comprehension (Picture Strip Story and Video).

1.5.3. Anxiety

Anxiety is ' a feeling that can be experienced in any part and situation of one's life.' (Tayşi , 2019:357). Anxiety affects every single activity that human do especially learning process (ibid.). Therefore, this justifies why Ellis (1999:522) states that anxiety is a result of 'poor performance, communication apprehension, tests or fear of negative evaluation'. He also mentions that 'how anxiety affects learning will depend on its strength and the situational context'.

However, Gay (2000:151) points out that choosing materials that often used by native speakers of the language can lower their level of anxiety while they are listening. In addition, encouraging learners to do more listening will lessen their negative attitudes towards the new language (Rost, 2011). As a consequence, teaching learners how to be relaxed as well as creating supportive 'classroom setting' and 'supportive environment' while listening to a foreign language can be helpful for them to overcome listening anxiety then they can learn the new language 'efficiently and demonstrate their language abilities more fully.' (Ko , 2010:10-11).

Furthermore, Melanlioglu(2013: 1178) mentions four causes of listening anxiety that students face in listening lesson:

- Difficult subjects.
- New subjects.
- Not being able to hear the words.
- 'Misunderstanding' what they hear which lead them to make 'wrong inferences '.

In addition, he commented that these causes could prevent a healthy listening process, especially, in after listening stage because 'the level of anxiety may increase if the listener fails to establish a link between her new and previous knowledge'. Finally, Few researches tackle the effect of anxiety on oral skills (Tóth , 2006:25;Kuciel , 2006:59; Katalin , 2006:39).

Methodology

2.1.Population and Sample

The population of this research was [237] third stage students in the first semester of academic year [2019-2020] at Mosul University. The chosen

sample of this research was [50] students whom have been selected from two different group.

2.2.Research Instruments

The instrument of this study was listening anxiety questionnaire Adapted from Elkhafaifi (2005). It was Likert-type items with five choices which used to study the relationship between anxiety and students' listening proficiency when using video strategy or PSSS.

2.3.Procedure:

1. The participants were juniors at Department of English, Basic Education College, University of Mosul.
2. The subjects were spilt into two experimental groups. Each group was taught by different type of treatment (video strategy and PSSS).
3. After implementing the both suggested strategies, the participants were given listening anxiety questionnaire in January/2020. Likart-type questionnaire was consisted of (20)items with the following five options :
    ➲ Strongly Agree
    ➲ Agree
    ➲ Undecided
    ➲ Disagree
    ➲ Strongly Disagree
4. The researchers adapted El-Khafaifi (2005) listening anxiety questionaire which was made for Arabic learners in USA. Furthermore, they changed the target laguage from Arabic to English.

3.4. Data Analysis of the Results

The data analysis of this research is as follows:

3.4.1.The First Hypothesis

The first hypothesis statement is:

''There is no statistically significant difference in the relation of anxiety to LC proficiency using PSSS.''

The aim of this hypothesis is to investigate the relation of anxiety to learners' LC proficiency using PSSS. Pearson Correlation Formula was used to infer the strength of correlation between the scores. (See **figure (3.1)**)
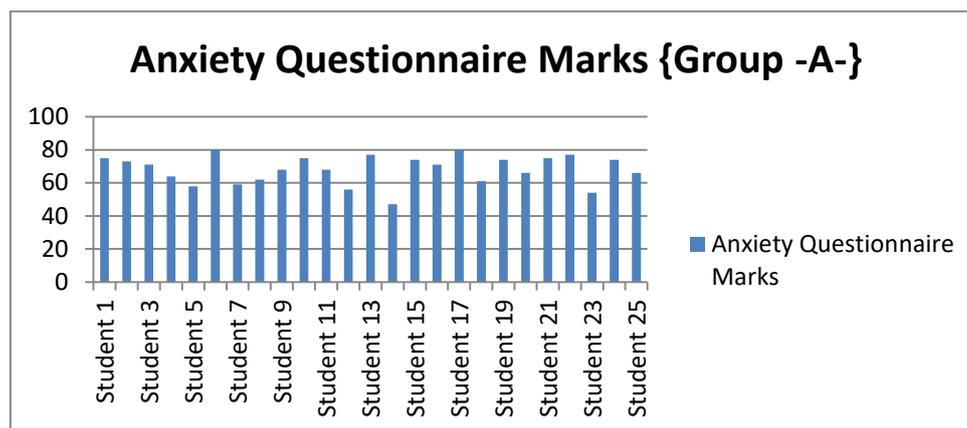
Figure(3.1) Anxiety questionnaire marks(Group –A-)

The results (as it is shown in **table (1)**) reveal that the calculation of [t] value is higher than the tabulation of [t] which means that *There is a statistically significant difference in the relation of anxiety to LC proficiency using PSSS*. Then, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Consequently, there is a positive correlation between learners' anxiety and their LC proficiency when PSSS is used**.(see Appendix(2)**)

 Table(1) The relation of learners' anxiety to their Listening Comprehension in group-A-

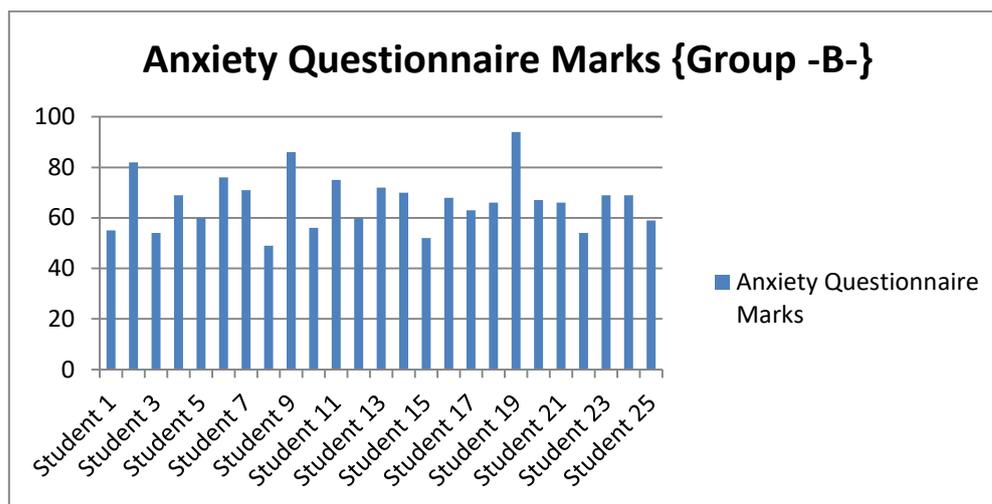| N	r	T cal.	T tab.	Sig.
25	0.411	2.162	2.069	0.038*

 $\propto$ = 0.05 , df= 23

3.4.2.The Second Hypothesis

The second hypothesis statement is:

''There is no statistically significant difference in the relation of anxiety to LC proficiency using video strategy.''

The purpose of this hypothesis is to find out the relation of learners' anxiety to their LC proficiency using video strategy. Pearson Correlation Formula was used to conclude the strength of the correlation between the scores as displayed in figure3.2.

Figure(3.2) Anxiety questionnaire marks(group-B-)

Table(2) The relation of learners' anxiety to their Listening Comprehension in group-B-

N	r	T cal.	T tab.	Sig.
25	0.457	2.464	2.069	0.022*

$\propto$ = 0.05 , df= 23

The results detect that the calculation of [t] value is higher than the tabulation of [t] which means that ''There is a statistically significant difference in the relation of anxiety to LC proficiency using video strategy as shown in table 2.

Obviously, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. As a consequence, there is a positive correlation between learners' anxiety and their listening comprehension proficiency when video strategy is used.(also see **Appendix(2)**

4.Discussion

This study was trying to answer two questions:

❍ **Is there any relation between listening anxiety and LC proficiency using PSSS?**

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that there is a positive relation between listening anxiety and learners' LC proficiency when PSSS is used. As well as the strength of the correlation is moderate.

❍ **Is there any relation between listening anxiety and learners' LC proficiency using video strategy?**

Based on the research findings, it can be inferred that there is a positive relation between listening anxiety and learners' LC proficiency when video strategy is used. Therefore, the strength of the correlation is moderate.

According to the foreign language listening anxiety scale, 'lower scores indicated lower anxiety, and higher scores indicated higher anxiety' (Elkhafaifi, 2005:211). Remarkably, the relation between anxiety and LC proficiency using PSSS was (**0.411**) while the relation between anxiety and listening comprehension proficiency using video strategy was (**0.457**) which indicated that there was a positive relation between learners' anxiety and their LC proficiency. This might be because of the fear of failure or listening to a foreign language put the learners under the pressure of that they should do their best to understand the meaning behind the spoken text. Furthermore, Pan (2016) concluded that moderate amount of anxiety can support learners and increase their motivation during listening task.

Conclusions

Listening is an art of receiving a language. Vandergrift & Goh (2012:4) mention that listening 'enables language learners to receive and interact with language input and facilitates the emergence of other language skills'. Pair-work fosters the spirit of competition between learners. Additionally, moderate amount of anxiety can increase learners' LC proficiency.

Teaching listening strategies can assist students through their journey in learning L2. However, pair-work fosters the spirit of competition between learners. Therefore, teachers are advised to prepare tasks that increase ineraction between students in order to lower the their level of anxiety.

Finally, more research need to be done about the relation of anxiety to learners' LC proficiency using visual strategies

Bibliography

Burns, A., & Siegel, J. (2018). "International perspective on Teaching the Four Skills in ELT". Switzerland: *Palgrave Macmillan*.

Dalman, M. R. (2016). "The Relationship between Listening Anxiety, Listening Comprehension Strategies, and Listening Performance among Iranian EFL University Students". Tehran, Iran: *International Journal of Modern Language Teaching and Learning*, pp.241-252.

Elkhafaifi, H. (2005). "Listening Comprehension and Anxiety in the Arabic Language Classroom". Washington: *The Modern Language Journal*, pp.206-220.

Ellis, R. (1999). "The Study of Second Language Acquisition". USA: *Oxford University Press*.

Elmankush , I. Y. (2017, April). "Investigating the Impact of Including Videos or Still Images in Computer-Based Academic Listening Comprehension Tests" . USA: *University of York/thesis* .

Gay, G. (2000). "Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice". New York:*Teachers College Press*.

Jones, L., & Plass, J. (2002). "Supporting Listening Comprehension and Vocabulary Acquisition in French with Multimedia Annotations". France: *The Modern Language Journal*.

Katalin, P. (2006). "Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety: A Classroom Perspective". In M. Nikolov, & J. Horváthm "Empirical Studies in English Applied Linguistics". Hungary:

Lingua Franca Csoport.

Ko, Y. (2010). ''The Effects of Pedagogical Agents on Listening Anxiety and Listening Comprehension in an English as a Foreign Language Context''. Korea: *Utah State University*.

Bobanovic, M., & Randic, N. (2006 November 22). ''Language Learning Strategies in Different English as a Foreign Language Education Levels''. *Pula*.

Macháčková, E.(2009). ''Teaching Listening''. Masaryk University.

Melanlioglu, D. (2013). ''Impacts of Authentic Listening Tasks upon Listening Anxiety and Listening Comprehension''. Turkey, Kirikkale: *Academic Journals*, NO.8, pp. 1177-1185.

Oxford, R. L. (1990). ''Language Learning Strategies –What Every Teacher Should Know-''. Boston: *Oxford University Press*.

Pan , Y. (2016).'' Analysis of Listening Anxiety in EFL Class''. *China: IJSELL*, VOL.4, pp. 12-16.

Kuciel, E. (2006). ''Foreign Language Anxiety in Polish Dyslexic Secondary School Students''. In M. Nikolov, & J. Horváth, ''Empirical Studies in English Applied Linguistics''. Poland: *Lingua Franca Csoport*.

Richards, J. C. (2008). ''Teaching Listening and Speaking –From Theory to Practice''. New York: *Cambridge University Press*.

Rost, M. (2011). ''Teaching and Researching Listening''. GB: *Pearson Education Limited*, (2nd ed.).

Shakir, M. (2014). ''Academic Anxiety as a Correlate of Academic Achievement''. India: *Journal of Education and Practice*, p.29.

Surkamp, C., & Viebrock, B. (2018). ''Teaching English as a Foreign Language –An Introduction-''. Deutschland: *Springer*.

Suvorov, R. (2013). ''Interacting with Visuals in L2 Listening Tests : An Eye tracking Study''. *Iowa state university*.

Szyszka, M. (2017). "Pronunciation Learning Strategies and Language Anxiety -In Search of an Interplay-". Switzerland: *Springer.*

Tayṣi, E. K. (2019). "The Effect of Listening Attitude and Listening Anxiety on Listening Comprehension": A Regression Model". Turkey: *University Journal of Educational Research.*

Tȯth, Z. (2006). "First-Year English Majors' Perceptions of the Effects of Foreign Language Anxiety on Their Oral Performance". In M. Nikolvo, & J. Horvath, "Empirical Studies in English Applied Linguistics". Hungary: *Lingua Franca Csoport.*

Vandergrift, L., & Goh, C. M. (2012). "Teaching and Learning Second Language Listening –Metacognition in Action-". New York: *Routledge.*

Zhang, Y. (2009). "An Experimental Study of the Effects of Listening on Speaking for College Students". *English Language Teaching*, NO.2, pp.194-204.

Appendix ((1))

Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS)

(Adapted from: Elkhafaifi, 2005)

no.	statements	Fit	Unfit	Modifications
1.	I get upset when I'm not sure whether I understand what I'm hearing in English.			
2.	When I listen to English, I often understand the words but still can't quite understand what the speaker is saying.			
3.	When I'm listening to English, I get so confused I can't remember what I've heard.			
4.	I feel intimidated whenever I have a listening passage in English to listen to.			
5.	I am nervous when I am listening to a passage in English when I'm not familiar with the topic.			
6.	I get upset whenever I hear unknown grammar while listening to English.			
7.	When listening to English, I get nervous and confused when I don't understand every word.			
8.	It bothers me to encounter words I can't pronounce while listening to English.			
9.	I usually end up translating word by word when I'm listening to English.			
10.	By the time I get past the strange sounds in English, it's hard to remember what I am listening to.			
11.	I am worried about all the new sounds, so I have to learn to understand spoken English.			
12.	I enjoy listening to English.			
13.	I feel confident when I am listening to English.			
14.	Once I get used to it, listening to English is not so difficult.			
15.	The hardest part of learning English is learning to understand spoken English.			
16.	I would be happy just to learn to read English rather than having to learn to understand spoken English.			

17.	I don't mind listening to English by myself but I feel very uncomfortable when I have to listen to English in a group.			
18.	I am satisfied with the level of listening comprehension in English that I have achieved so far.			
19.	English culture and ideas seem very foreign to me.			
20.	I have to know so much about English history and culture in order to understand spoken English.			

Appendix ((2))

Data Analysis (Group A&B)

student	Anxiety Questionnaire Marks Group -A-	Anxiety Questionnaire Marks Group -B-
S 1	75	55
S 2	73	82
S 3	71	54
S 4	64	69
S 5	58	60
S 6	80	76
S 7	59	71
S 8	62	49
S 9	68	86
S 10	75	56
S 11	68	75
S 12	56	60
S 13	77	72
S 14	47	70
S 15	74	52
S 16	71	68
S 17	80	63
S 18	61	66
S 19	74	94
S 20	66	67
S 21	75	66
S 22	77	54

S 23	54	69
S 24	74	69
S 25	66	59