

# Sources and Suggestions to Lower Listening Comprehension Anxiety in the EFL Classroom: A Case Study

Mohd. Yasin Sharif<sup>1</sup> & Farhiba Ferdous<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English Language and Literature, International Islamic University Chittagong, Bangladesh

Correspondence: Farhiba Ferdous, English Language and Literature, International Islamic University Chittagong, 154/A, College Road, Chittagong-4203, Bangladesh. E-mail: farhibaf@yahoo.com

Received: July 4, 2012 Accepted: August 6, 2012 Online Published: August 16, 2012

doi:10.5539/elt.v5n10p92 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n10p92>

## Abstract

Listening is a creative skill that demands active involvement. The listeners share their knowledge from both linguistics and non linguistics sources. Listening comprehension (LC) tasks which is always accompanied by anxiety needs closer examination. In the listening process a low-anxiety classroom environment inspires the listeners to participate actively and effectively, research shows that. So if we want students to experience success in listening comprehension task in Foreign Language (FL) learning, an important step, is to create a positive low-anxiety atmosphere within the class room. This study tries to find out the sources that evokes LC anxiety as reported by students and suggestions offered by the foreign language learners of International Islamic University Chittagong, Bangladesh.

**Keywords:** anxiety, listening comprehension (LC), visual support, distressing technique, personality clash

## 1. Introduction

Listening can be defined as “the process of understanding speech in a second or foreign language” (Richard J. C. et Al-1985). It is “the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This involves understanding a speaker’s accent or pronunciation, understanding his grammar, recognizing his vocabulary and being able to grasp the meaning of what he says” (Howatt and Dakin1974). In the study by Harlow and Muyskens (1994), listening comprehension is ranked by the students as “the second most important goal for intermediate-level instruction.” As LC has become an extremely important modality in language learning, Lund (1990) developed “a taxonomy for teaching second language learning” (105). Listening has increasingly become recognized as “a process of constructing meaning based on multidimensional relationships between the learners and all of the internal and external elements involved in that learners reality” (Vogely 1995, 43).

Listening, in the field of education, has long been recognized as “the most frequently used language skill in the class room,” (Taylor 1964) and has been shown to contribute “to success more than reading skill or academic aptitude” (Conaway 1982). Consequently many researchers have focused on “making listening comprehension an integral and active part of the foreign language (FL) classroom” (Byrnes et. al. -1984). Yule (1996) makes the distinction “between ‘international talk, used to refer to speech that is primarily social, and ‘transactional communication’ whose main purpose is to achieve a successful transfer or exchange of information.” Whatever the type of listening is, research in foreign or second language learning has shown that anxiety is something that “directly undermines motivation and creates a negative affective response to the foreign language being studied” (Gardener et al. 1987). Thus in the FL classroom LC anxiety is fast becoming a priority. According to Scarcella and Oxford (1992), “listening anxiety occurs when students feel they are faced with a task that is too difficult or unfamiliar to them.” Joiner (1986) points out “a negative listening self-concept,’ responsible that arises LC anxiety during the listening process.” Horwitz (1987) defines this negative listening self-concept as the false impression that “in order to be ‘good’ at a language they need perfect pronunciation, massive amounts of vocabulary, extensive grammar knowledge, overseas experience, and a natural aptitude for language before they even open their mouths.” Little research has been done on the sources and solutions of LC anxiety in the FL classroom.

## 2. Implications for Research

International Islamic University Chittagong (IIUC) consists of seven departments fewer than four faculties.

Remedial English Course (REC) is a program offered every semester to the freshmen graduates enrolled under four different departments (BBA, ELL, CSE, and LLB) at IIUC. The Department of English Language and Literature (ELL) conducts four courses under this program. The candidates eager to enroll in the university have to sit for a 100 marks exam which is called English Proficiency Test (EPT) comprising of all four skills. After a rigorous test of the four skills the students are segregated into two groups – one with the candidates who approximately achieve 50% marks out of 100 and are allowed to go directly to the respective departments to take departmental courses. Another group consists of those who fail to show their potentiality in English and are offered four English courses of six months' duration. Among these four courses *Listening and Speaking Skills* of 100 marks, is the only course on listening skill. The students attend 28 classes (1.30 hr per class duration) where 'Speaking Skill' part gets much priority rather than 'Listening Skill' part. Most of the students have reported that they feel anxiety in the LC class room.

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Objectives

The primary objectives of this study are to find out:

1. Whether the learners are experiencing or the teachers observing LC anxiety.
2. If they do, what makes them anxious when participating in the LC task; and
3. What types of exercises, settings, or activities help to lower the anxiety level.

#### 3.2 Respondents of This Research

Some sixty (60) students registered for the course, *Listening and Speaking Skills* designed for Remedial English Course Program at International Islamic University Chittagong (IIUC) and 3/4 teachers who are teaching the course in different departments and faculties had been asked to participate for the study.

#### 3.3 Research Procedure

Before the actual data collection period, a prior study was conducted to test validity of the questionnaire as well as to get feedbacks and suggestions from the respondents.

#### 3.4 Research Instrument

In order to explore the sources and possible solutions to LC anxiety, which are the purposes of our study we have used two data-collecting instruments:

- i) classroom observation
- ii) administering questionnaires to:
  - teachers (Appendix A)and
  - pupils (Appendix B)

#### 3.5 Data Collection

The questionnaires were distributed immediately among the learners and teachers. There was a hundred percent return of responses. The participants were asked to complete a questionnaire (see Appendix A for the teachers and Appendix B for the learners). Of the 63 or 64 participants no one has reported that he / she does not experience LC anxiety. The report emphasizes the need to address directly LC anxiety.

#### 3.6 Data Analysis

The analysis of the questionnaires consists of two parts: a) analysis of participants' responses about sources of LC anxiety and b) analysis of suggestions for reducing LC anxiety.

### 4. Findings of the Research

#### 4.1 Findings from Classroom Observation

The students are provided with a prescribed book namely, *Foundation English Course*, Book II with a audio CD for listening tasks. There are 51 listening comprehensions with a great variety of MCQ tasks, question- answer tasks, true-false statements fill in the blanks tasks, tick out the correct answer tasks etc. The remarks have been found while investigating:

1. The objectives are not clear to learners though it is mentioned at the very beginning of the book.

2. The students are assigned very clear tasks before listening as they have been provided with book and an audio CD.
3. Inappropriate use of DVD player in the classroom.
4. Classrooms are not well equipped with multimedia devices specially designed for LC class.
5. No arrangement for any visuals either in the course or in the classroom as a result, teachers do not use visuals to facilitate listening.
6. Unexpected disruptions of the listening activity.( frequent power failure, fuel problem of Dynamo etc)
7. Learners are not prepared for listening as they do not know how to listen. Most of the learners usually come from such an educational background where they did not encounter any listening classes using modern tools earlier so they need to be oriented before going to the listening class.
8. Listeners want to understand every single difficult word of LC. ( no selective listening skills )
9. Learners fail to catch the words as the pronunciation of their teachers as well as native speakers recorded on the CD are unfamiliar to them.
10. Listening is treated as a sub skill awarded zero (0) credit.
11. Unfavourable or hostile environment.
12. Most of the tasks are done by the best pupils while the majority of the students just remained silent.

#### 4.2 Findings from the Questionnaires

After reading the data yielded by the participants' questionnaires carefully, their comments can be categorized into three following sections:

- i) LC anxiety associated with attributes of the teachers or learners;
- ii) LC anxiety associated with material and process;
- iii) LC anxiety associated with other aspects.

These three categories fell into several sub categories. The responses are summarized by percentages under each category. (see Table 1). The findings of the study will be discussed by first presenting the sources of LC anxiety reported by the participants and then the suggestions offered by the participants for reducing LC anxiety.

Table 1. Students' reported sources of LC Anxiety (N=63)

<u>Category</u>	<u>Sources</u>	<u>% of responses</u>
<u>Teachers and learners</u>		
	a) Lack of motivation	7%
	b) Fear	15%
	c) Unfamiliarity	15%
	d) Instructor personality	2%
<u>Materials and Process</u>		
	a) Nature of speech	28%
	b) Lack of comprehensibility of input	18%
	c) Level of difficulty	20%
	d) Lack of repetition	7%
	e) Lack of processing time	5%
	f) Evaluation on the target language	17%
<u>Other factors</u>		
	a) Poor quality equipment	8%
	b) Uncomfortable environment	12%
	c) Lack of practice	12%
	d) Lack of visual support	15%

#### 4.2.1 LC anxiety Associated with Attributes of the Teachers or Learners

Thirty nine percent of the participants' comments focus on personal and interpersonal attributes as sources of LC anxiety.

##### 4.2.1.1 Lack of Motivation

Many participants have reported that many learners lack motivation into a LC classroom. As most of the learners do not have background knowledge about LC task they feel helpless.

##### 4.2.1.2 Fear

Many learners face nervousness and fear of making mistakes in front of others. This emotional state of mind might stem from a negative past experience or from the belief that they lack of prerequisites necessary to be 'good' English learners.

##### 4.2.1.3 Unfamiliarity

Ninety-eight percent of the learners have not received their lesson in English other than Bangla in their previous study life. The participants have stated that they miss most of their lesson in English. They realize that the more they understand the less anxious they are. As the learners are not familiar with the English speaking classroom they consider it very stressful and therefore LC anxiety increases.

##### 4.2.1.4 Instructor's Personality

Though very few, some have reported that when the teachers have unrealistic expectations, that is, when they expect everything to be perfect and are critical when the learners do not answer correctly, the learners experience LC anxiety. On the other hand, when the teachers do not show any reaction to their learners that also inspires LC anxiety. These kinds of harsh teaching manners can be considered a source of LC anxiety and referred to "hostile" environment. The instructors who are not friendly rather put students on the spot, press for answers, and openly demonstrate frustration might create personality clashes in the LC classroom and inspire LC anxiety. On top of that, learners are expected to respond quickly to the students. The very nature of the LC classroom can evoke anxiety among learners.

#### 4.2.2 LC Anxiety Associated with Material and Process

Seventy –nine percent of the participants' comments focus on the materials and process as being a source of LC anxiety.

##### 4.2.2.1 Nature of Speech

Twenty –eight percent participants have reported the nature of speech as a source of LC anxiety. They also point out that too fast speech created the most anxiety. The other twenty-two claim different accents as a source of LC anxiety.

##### 4.2.2.2 Lack of Comprehensibility of Input

Eighteen percent of participants feel that if the LC lack of comprehensibility to them they feel anxiety. If the comprehensions are based on familiar, meaningful topics and vocabulary, it can lower the anxiety. Many have reported that anxiety can be inspired by formal and graded activities. Difficult dictions and lack of practice of translation exercises can be blamed as a source of LC anxiety.

##### 4.2.2.3 Level of Difficulty

The participants have reported feeling anxious with LC exercises which are very difficult. Many Participants blame the level of difficulty of materials in terms of the use of vocabulary that is beyond their level or unfamiliar, the use of complicated syntax, and different pronunciation and accent and the use of LC based on unfamiliar topics as the source of LC anxiety.

Participants express anxiety and frustration with LC when they do not know why they are listening to it, what they are supposed to be listening for, what kind of LC they are listening to and what they are supposed to do once when they are through listening. Lund (1990) points out that, "the issue of text difficulty that stem from the nature of text itself (e. g. authentic vs. edited ) can impact the listeners' orientation to the text, and ultimately their comprehension of the text." The participants have reported that if the LC are not interesting or lack relevance to real life needs or long as well as complicated, evoke difficulty with anxiety.

##### 4.2.2.4 Lack of Repetition

The traditional approach of LC practice where text is presented only twice makes the participants anxious. Anxiety is associated with the 'two strikes and you're out' approach to LC tasks. In a testing situation this

feeling is strong where the listeners must decipher the questions to be answered, then come up with or select the correct response and fill up the blanks.

#### 4.2.2.5 Lack of Processing Time

Listeners feel anxious when they are asked to respond immediately to the listening comprehension and they do not get enough time to process the information in the comprehension or the questions about the comprehension. Learners have reported feeling anxious because unlike reading comprehension, LC is a 'one-shot deal.'

#### 4.2.2.6 Evaluation on the Target Language

Seventeen-one percent participants have reported that they end up being evaluated on the target language they produce in the answer rather than comprehension of the text. Many participants feel that being able to answer questions in their native language will lessen their LC anxiety they experience when they lack adequate target language to express what they actually comprehend. The learners have also reported that they even do not know how to confirm whether what they understand is accurate or not. Lee (1986) in one of his studies supports the use of native language to test reading comprehension. Lee observed that "recall protocols written in the subjects' native language contained statistically significantly more of the passage than written protocols in the subjects' target language" (350). Applicability to LC would be plausible, though not yet proven.

#### 4.2.3 LC Anxiety Associated with Other Aspects

Forty-seven percent participants consider factors other than teachers, learners, materials, or process.

##### 4.2.3.1.1 Poor Quality Equipments

Many participants blame the poor quality equipments as an important source that evokes anxiety in the LC classroom. When old listening equipments are used and echo or any noise on the recording occurs, anxiety is inspired among the students. Moreover, frequent failure of electricity and unavailability of equipments have been reported as a great source of anxiety in the LC classroom.

##### 4.2.3.2 Uncomfortable Environment

Some participants have reported that, large class inspires LC anxiety among the learners as they face difficulties to listen it. Moreover, learners' physical surroundings, such as a room being too hot or too cold are important and often interfered with LC anxiety. When a room is too noisy, lacks oxygen or is small and cramped that also inspires anxiety in the LC classroom.

##### 4.2.3.3 Lack of Practice

Learners also feel anxious when little or no time has been devoted or there are no equipments of their own especially to LC practice by the pupils which help them 'feeling competent and unprepared.'

##### 4.2.3.4 Lack of Visual Support

The students have reported that they feel LC anxiety when 'they don't know what's being talked about.' According to some neuroscientists (Fiske and Taylor 1984; Nisbett and Ross 1980), "concrete, vivid images exert the most powerful influences on learners' behavior." Using visuals in LC activities will reduce learners' LC anxiety as visual support not only "makes the topic more accessible to listeners who are more spatial learners but also helps all learners to relate personally with the topic. Peripheral inputs, like posters and models, not only offer listeners a variation on the LC input but also can have as strong an impact as centrally located visual input" (Caine and Caine 1994).

### 4.3 Suggestions and Pedagogical Implications

#### 4.3.1 Suggestions and Pedagogical Implications Associated with the Attributes of the Teachers and Learners

- 1) Use students background knowledge. According to Ausbel (1968), "the most important single factor influencing learning is what the learner already knows. Ascertain this and teach him accordingly" (VI).
- 2) Give importance of their linguistic knowledge of their first language that learners bring with them. Long (1989) underlines the importance of being able to construct meaning during the comprehension process, then to match that intake with "existing linguistic and world knowledge" (32).
- 3) Be understanding and sensitive to students' fear about FL learning and LC. According to Mckeachie (1994), "an important instructor characteristic that can go a long way in relieving personal anxiety is a sympathetic attitude towards the problems and fear of the students." Crookall and Oxford (1991), provide numerous activities to help determine and deal with the anxiety learners experience in the FL classroom.
- 4) Give learners a summary of the listening material with the new words, as a pre-listening activity in order to

speed up understanding.

- 5) Suggest more listening passages.
- 6) Experience small success.
- 7) Make the learners confident in the target language through small successes and through the use of anxiety-reducing techniques.
- 8) Use breathing exercises, meditations or self-affirmations to reduce LC anxiety.
- 9) Suggest students that 'thinking about something less stressful was useful.'
- 10) Resort to prayer.
- 11) Encourage students to watch English-speaking channels.
- 12) Make the listening lesson a training session: let the students hear a passage several times in small sections with pauses or any other way that is helpful to them.
- 13) Leave the learners with a sense of achieving during and after the listening lesson. Do not leave them with a sense of failure or anxiety that will incapacitate them.

#### 4.3.2 Suggestions and Pedagogical Implications Associated with Materials and Process

- 1) Make input or materials comprehensible with familiar, meaningful topics and vocabulary.
- 2) Use variety of materials or input incorporating games and other fun activities in the EFL classroom as the vehicle for listening activities.
- 3) For the new learners 'practice with listening with visual support' but for the advanced learners 'practice with listening without watching.'
- 4) For lessening LC anxiety, repeat the passage if possible.
- 5) Take notes while listening.
- 6) To decrease LC anxiety the teacher would train listeners to use LC strategies.
- 7) Evaluate the learners' comprehension skills on the basis of their native language, not the target language.
- 8) Use clear and concise structured tasks. Structured input activities consist of steps that "guide and focus learners' attention when they process input" (Lee and VanPatten 99).
- 9) Guide the learners through the LC texts by focusing their attention on one thing at a time. Lund (1990) provides teachers with a taxonomy that promotes the development of listening skill as a progression through functions in a cyclic rather than a linear manner. Based on this taxonomy, Omaggio-Hadley (1993) emphasizes that this 'cyclic' approach should include "learning to do new functions with familiar texts or performing lower-level functions with more difficult texts" (173).
- 10) Vary the types of tasks. Do not over use any type of exercise.

#### 4.3.3 Suggestions and Pedagogical Implications Associated with Other Factors

- 1) Increase class time for LC practice. There must be a more class activities that focus specially on the LC skill.
- 2) Receive regular feedback. Most agreed that the more immediate the feedback, the better.
- 3) Combine LC with other skills. Traditionally, listening has been combined with other activities and is treated as an auxiliary skill to writing and speaking (Meyer 1984). According to Mendelsohn (1984), developing LC through "osmosis" is not sufficient. For learners to become effective learners, they must actively and strategically participate in the listening process. Recent research by Thomson and Rubin (1997) confirm their hypothesis that "systematic in the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies will result in the improvement of listening comprehension" (336).
- 4) Create out-of-class opportunities.
- 5) Try to create a comfortable physical environment.
- 6) Use better equipment quality/better taps.
- 7) Make specialized room available for the LC tasks.

### 5. Conclusion

We have found in this study LC anxiety associated with attributes of the teachers and learners (39 percent), LC

anxiety associated with materials and process (95 percent), LC anxiety associated with other factors (47 percent). This study has also sought sources that inspire anxiety among the learners as reported by the pupils, suggestions offered by them to alleviate LC anxiety with brief discussion of pedagogical implications that might help instructors address LC anxiety in their classroom.

In general term, it is important to recognize the limitations of this study. The findings should not be generalized beyond the context of the sample used in this study as no inferential statistics are involved. The limited suggestions offered here can be modified to fit the level of most FL classes.

## References

- Ausubel, D. P. (1968). *Educational Psychology: A Cognitive View*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Byrnes, H. (1984). The Role of Listening Comprehension: A Theoretical Base. *Foreign Language Annals*, 17, 317-29. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.1984.tb03235.x>
- Caine, R. N., & Caine, G. (1994). *Making Connections: Teaching and the Human Brain* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley.
- Conaway, M. (1982). Listening: Learning Too and Retention Agent. In A. S. Algier, & K. W. Algier (Eds.), *Improving Reading and Study Skills*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Crookall, D., & Oxford, R. (1991). Dealing with Anxiety: Some Practicle Activities for Language Learners and Teachers Trainees, 141-50. In Elaine Horwitz, & Dolly Young (eds.), *Language Anxiety From Theory and Research to Classroom Implications*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Fiske, S. T., & Taylor, S. E. (1984). *Social Cognition*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Gardener, R. C., Lalande, R. N., Moorcraft, R., & Evers, F. T. (1987). Second Language Attention: The Role of Motivation and Use. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 6, 173-80.
- Harlow, Linda L., & Judith A. M. (1994). Priorities for Intermediate-Level Language Instruction. *Modern Language Journal*, 78, 141-54. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1994.tb02025.x>
- Horwitz, E. K. (1987). Surveying Student Belief About Language Learning, 119-29. In A. Wenden, & Joan R. (Eds.), *Learning Strategies in Language Learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Howatt, A., & Dakin, J. (1974). *Language Laboratory Materials*. In J. P. B. Allen, S. P. B. Allen, S. P. Corder (Eds.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Joiner, E. (1986). Listening in the Foreign Language, 43-70. In B. H. Wing (Ed.), *Listening, reading, and Writing: Analysis and application*. Middlebury, VI: Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.
- Lee, J. F. (1986). Background Knowledge & L2 Reading. *Modern Language Journal*, 70, 350-54. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/326812>
- Lee, J. F., & Vanpatten, B. (1995). *Making Communicative Language Teaching Happen*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Long, D. R. (1989). Second Language Listening Comprehension: A Schema-Theoretic Perspective. *Modern Language Journal*, 73, 32-40.
- Lund, R. J. (1990). A Taxonomy for Teaching Second Language Listening. *Foreign Language Annals*, 23, 105-15. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.1990.tb00348.x>
- McKeachie, W. J. (1994). *Teaching Tips* (9<sup>th</sup> ed). Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath & Co.
- Mendelsohn, D. J. (1984). There ARE Strategies for Listening. *TEAL Occasional Papers*, 8, 63-76.
- Meyer, R. (1984). Listening My Children and You Shall Hear ... *Foreign Language Annals*, 17(4), 334.
- Omaggio H. A. (1993). *Teaching Language in Context* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Richard, J. C. (1985). *The Language Teaching Matrix* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Scarcella, R. C., & Oxford, R. (1992). *The Tapestry of Language Learning: The Individual in the Communicative Classroom*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Taylor, S. E. (1964). *Listening: What Research Says to the Teachers*. Washington, DC: National Education Association.
- Thompson, I., & Rubin, J. (1997). Can Strategy Instruction Improve Listening Comprehension? *Foreign Language Annals*, 29, 331-342. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.1996.tb01246.x>

Vogely, A. (1995). Perceived Strategy Use during Performance on three Authentic Listening Comprehension Tasks. *Modern Language Journal*, 79, 41-56. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1995.tb05414.x>

Yule, G. (1996). *The Study of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## Appendix A

**Research title:** Sources and Suggestions to Lower Listening Comprehension Anxiety in the EFL Classroom: A Case Study

### Questionnaire for teachers:

The main aims of the questionnaire relate to the following two points:

- 1) Identifying the sources of LC anxiety teachers observe in the Listening Class.
- 2) Teachers' suggestions and recommendations for future action.

Would you please complete the attached questionnaire as soon as possible and return it.

Thank you very much indeed for your help.

The Researchers

Please answer all questions. Beside each item below, indicate the degree of the problem by a check mark.

### General Problems:

Topics	Never	Occasionally	Often	Very often
How much time do you expect a student to spend on your homework over a period of a week?	0	1	2	3
How often do you give homework?	0	1	2	3
How often do you correct homework?	0	1	2	3
What (on average) is the turn around time in terms of returning homework?	0	1	2	3
What is the frequency of your feedback?	0	1	2	3
Do students seem to listen when spoken to directly?	0	1	2	3
Do learners follow through on instructions and fails to finish class-work (not due to oppositional behavior or failure to understand)?	0	1	2	3
Do students have difficulty organizing tasks and activities?	0	1	2	3
Do learners avoid, dislike, or reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort?	0	1	2	3
Do your learners have difficulty sustaining attention to tasks or activities?	0	1	2	3
Are learners in your class fearful, anxious or worried?	0	1	2	3
Do learners feel any sort of self-consciousness or embarrassment in the class	0	1	2	3
Do you feel that learners are usually afraid of trying new things for fear of making mistakes.	0	1	2	3
Do you think that students feel worthless or inferior due to anxiety?	0	1	2	3
Do learners self-blame self for problems or feel guilty?	0	1	2	3
Do you believe that learners feel lonely, abandoned or neglected?	0	1	2	3
Do learners ever feel sad, unhappy or depressed?	0	1	2	3
Do you use English news programs from the Voice of America and the BBC World Service as teaching material besides the textbook for LC tasks?	0	1	2	3
Do you use any methods to simplify the comprehensions?	0	1	2	3
Do you use any techniques to lower LC anxiety of the learners in the class?	0	1	2	3



**Ways in which you approach teaching / evaluation of listening comprehension tasks:**

Which of the following approaches do you use most frequently? Tick under your choice.

(N: Never; R: Rarely; S: Sometimes; O: Often; NA: Nearly always)

Topics	N	R	S	O	NA
1. prepare learners for the listening materials (brainstorming, warm-up activities ...)					
2. write questions that help learners understand the comprehensions.					
3. give learners different roles in a listening task ( and do it as a group activity )					
4. let learners take notes while listening					
5. play a section of a tape-recorded passage and stop when necessary to allow requests for clarification and repetition.					
6. give learners a list of comprehension questions to read silently for themselves.					
7. play an audio-recorded passage entirely.					
8. limit the number of repetitions of the material ( maximum twice).					
9. use role-play as a follow-up activity.					
10. read the listening material to the learners, several times if necessary, in a listening test, to help them answer quickly and correctly.					
11. assign a listening task in an oral test.					
12. use poems and songs to encourage extensive and intensive listening and bring variety and fun to teaching listening.					
13. ask comprehension questions a-before b-while c-after playing the tape.					
14. use visuals to facilitate listening.					
15. use videotapes as listening material.					
16. give learners a summary of the listening material with the new words, as a pre-listening activity in order to speed- up understanding.					
17. use good eye contact.					
18. allow the learners to use their native language to do their tasks.					
19. show frustration when the learners cannot do their tasks.					
20. understand the reasons behind the anxiety of the learners.					
21. practise distressing techniques with students to lower learners' anxiety.					

Please list the sources of LC anxiety among the learners as you have observed in your class:

**Sources of LC anxiety:**

A. Teacher and Learner related problems:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

B. Material and Process related problems:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

C. Other types of problems:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**Suggestions/ Recommendations for the future:**

What suggestions would you want to make in order to lower LC anxiety in the classroom:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

5.  
 Name of person completing the form: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B**

**Research title:** Sources and Suggestions to Lower Listening Comprehension Anxiety in the EFL Classroom: A Case Study

**Questionnaire for learners:**

Name of the student	(If you do not wish, you do not have to write your name.)	
Languages for class discussion		Nationality
Dept.		
Email (Please write your email if you have any.)		

**1) A. During the listening comprehension task, I generally feel anxious:**

<b>Yes</b>	
<b>No</b>	

**B. I feel anxiety:**

<b>Never</b>	
<b>Occasionally</b>	
<b>Often</b>	
<b>Very Often</b>	

**C. I feel anxiety for the following reasons:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**2. Now I'd like you to suggest what you might do to lower the LC anxiety in the classroom:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

*Please write any comments you wish to make about the textbook, the CD, and other aspects of the course.*

**The Textbook**

1. How many chapters are there in a textbook?
2. How many chapters do you cover usually?
3. Do you think that the textbook has many varieties of tasks?
4. Is your textbook interesting?
5. Is the allocated time adequate for completing the comprehensions of the textbook?
6. Do you think that the LC given in the textbook evokes anxiety?
7. Are the objectives of the course clearly mentioned in the textbook?
8. Are the course and the textbook well organized and contain meaningful information concerning Listening comprehension?
9. Are the questions in the textbook helpful in guiding meaningful thinking or inspire anxiety?
10. Is the textbook creative and original?
11. Do you think that the chapters are not appropriately giving your cultural values and norms? Please describe briefly why.

12. Is it clearly structured with appropriate information in each section?
13. Are there clear explanations & illustrations?
14. Is there explicit sign-posting?
15. Do the comprehensions of the textbook achieve its purpose?
16. List three important things that you like of the textbook.
17. List three important things that you like to change of the textbook.
18. Would you recommend this textbook to your friends?

---

### The CD

---

1. Is the CD well-recorded?
2. Is the recording of the CD noisy or disturbed?
3. Are the comprehensions recorded on the CD recorded by the native English speakers?
4. Are the comprehensions interesting enough?
5. Do you understand the comprehensions of the CD well?
6. Are the words of the comprehensions and accent of the native speakers familiar to you?
7. Is there natural spoken language on the CD?
8. Are varied pacing, intonation, stress, & pausing used?
9. Is pronunciation clear & comprehensible?
10. Is it fluent & intelligible?
11. Do the comprehensions of the CD evoke anxiety?
12. If yes, list three important things that you think the source of the anxiety.

### Students' Previous Experience

---

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 1  | Have you taken any Listening comprehension class before?<br>Yes / No<br>If yes, when (your age and school year), where (name of the school or institution and the city), and by whom (name of the teacher or program)?<br><b>Response:</b> |
| 2  | If yes, how long was the course and what were the textbooks?   |
| 3  | Were there other books and materials (movies, story books, slides, documentary, field trip etc.) for the class?<br>Yes / No<br>If yes, what were they?<br><b>Response:</b>   |
| 4  | How would you describe the experience of learning "Listening comprehension"?<br><b>Response:</b>   |
| 5. | What was the medium of instruction in your S.S.C. and H.S.C. level?<br><b>Response:</b>  |

### Students' Present Experience

---

1. How long are you taking the course *Listening & Speaking Skills*?  
**Response:**
  2. How many classes do you usually get for the course?  
**Response:**
  3. Do you feel LC anxiety in the class room?  
**Response:**
-

4. If yes, what are the reasons that inspire anxiety in the classroom?

**Response:**

5. Are you habituated to take your lesson in English?

**Response:**

#### ***The teacher and the classroom activity***

1. Are you prior-motivated for the LC class?
2. Does the teacher help students to get interested in the topic?
3. Does the teacher make good use of examples and illustrations?
4. Does the teacher welcome questions/comments?
5. Does the teacher answer/respond to questions and comments clearly and concisely?
6. Do you feel fear of making mistakes?
7. Do you feel helpless in the LC class room?
8. Do you think that LC anxiety is caused for using English as the only medium of instruction?
9. Do you think your teacher's expectations are realistic?
10. If no, which behaviour of your teacher helps you to think that?
11. Does your teacher encourage you for your good respond?
12. Does your teacher react harshly if you make any mistakes?
13. Does your teacher's personality clash with that of yours?
14. Do your teacher's posture and gestures demonstrate confidence?
15. Have you ever informed your teacher that you feel anxiety in your LC class room?

#### ***Material, process and the classroom activity***

1. Are the speech of your teacher and the native speaker recorded on the CD too fast to understand?
2. Do you think this fast deliver of speech evokes anxiety?
3. Is the unfamiliarity of the words or accent or language responsible to inspire anxiety?
4. How many times the text is presented to you?
5. If not more than twice, do you think the text should be presented more than twice?
6. Are the answers expected very immediately?
7. Do you get enough time to process the information in the comprehension?
8. Are you evaluated by your target language?
9. Are you allowed to use your native language for answering the questions?
10. Do you think that if you were allowed to answer your questions in your native language you could have done better?

#### ***Other factors and the classroom activity***

1. Do you have any particular room for the LC tasks?
2. Is your classroom well-equipped for doing LC tasks?
3. Is equipment used competently?
4. If no, does it evoke anxiety in the LC classroom?
5. How does the listening equipment run?( battery, electricity etc )
6. Do you have to face power failure frequently?

7. How many learners are there in your class?
8. Do you think that, the environment of your LC classroom is in your favour?
9. Does lack of practice of LC tasks work as a source of anxiety?
10. Are you provided with any visual support or do you get any visual facilities in your classroom?

<b>Comments and Suggestions</b>
(You can write more on additional sheets)