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Iraqi EFL Preparatory School Students` Listening Anxiety

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Abstract

The present study aimed to investigate the Listening anxiety level among Iraqi preparatory students who study English as a foreign language . The sample of the present study consists of (165) students from Iraqi EFL preparatory school students chosen randomly from Baghdad city, to achieve the aim of the study, an adopted instrument ;English Foreign language listening anxiety scale, after ensuring the validity and reliability of the instruments, it applied and the data collected. Then a number of statistical tools to analyze the data. The researcher found that Iraqi EFL students have a high degree of listening anxiety. Finally, some conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions have been exposed

Keywords: *Listining anxiety, Listening comperhensition, Iraqi EFL Preparatory School Students*

Introduction

Learners obtain language input through listening therefore listening is important in language learning and it take place place only when learners obtain sufficient comprehensible input where, it has also an important role in the development of learners' language knowledge (Hein, et al., 2020, p.46).

There are many sources lead to increase students anxiety in listening such as background knowledge of new vocabulary, new information and familiar and unfamiliar words, listening task strategies such as type of passage, pronunciation, and the way the passage was read by the speaker and heard by the listener, pronunciation, insufficient vocabulary, lack of concentration, accents, speed of speech, the different accent of the students and lake of self-confidence (Guler, 2018, p.146).

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Investigated on listening has concerned how anxiety clearly undermines the listening comprehension procedure and negatively affects learners' achievement. In listening, the learners cannot control the pronunciation, speed, or accent of the speaker, which results in the experiencing feeling of anxiety. Sharif and Ferdous (2012) explained that listening anxiety could be triggered thanks to learners being particularly scared of confusion about what they listen to and worried about interpreting a speech wrongly. Moreover, other studies for instance Krashen (1985), Elkhalaifi (2005), and Vogely (1999) assured that anxiety is greatly provoked within the listening setting; thereby causing one to deal with the matter is fast becoming vital.

In collected works, some meanings of listening anxiety are presented, one among which describes it because the feelings or responses of people that are thanks to the scenario of learning a language (Young, 1991). It can also be called the sensation of fear, nervousness, and of listening to a foreign language (Elkhafaifi, 2005); Scarcella and Oxford (1992) believe that listening anxiety occurs when a task is either unfamiliar or too difficult for learners. Additionally, Maclntyre (1997) explains that it should arise when the listeners worry about confusion, non-understanding, and fearing embarrassing outcomes.

Iraq is one of the countries where the English language is taught as a foreign language and it is one of the main subjects at all educational levels. The teaching of the English language starts from kindergarten up to the higher grades in the university levels. Despite the long years of learning the target language inside the classrooms, Iraqi EFL learners mostly do not have the capacity to use it to communicate fluently (Al-Salihi, 2006, p.3).

According to Yaseen (2016, p. 27), most Iraqi learners still find difficulties in using EFL speaking skills. These difficulties may be attributed to one or more of these elements: use of the mother tongue, lack of vocabulary, anxiety due to the fear of making errors, improper listening strategies, inadequate training, large classes, and lack of time. It is impossible to speak if one does not listen; therefore, whenever communication takes place, of course, there is a speaker and a listener.

Several studies have shed light on the listening anxiety (e.g., Kim ,2000; Elkhafaifi ,2005; Jaber ,2012; Zhang ,2013;Shi ,2017;Ali ,2020)

Literature Review

Previous Studies on Listening Anxiety

Examination of listening comprehension has concerned how anxiety clearly weakens the listening comprehension practice and negatively affects learners' achievement. In listening, the learners cannot control the pronunciation, speed, or accent of the speaker, which leads to the suffering the feeling of anxiety. Sharif and Ferdous (2012, p .92) have described that listening anxiety can provoke attributable to learners being exclusively scared of confusion about what they listen to and anxious about deducing a speech incorrectly.

Bekleyen (2009, p.665) has argued that listening anxiety is a kind of anxiety associated with language learners who experience feelings of tension and worry in conditions requiring the action of listening. Moreover, Gao et al (2020, p.66) describe the term as a "receiver's apprehension, fear of misinterpreting, inadequately processing, or not being able to adjust psychologically to messages sent by others".

a brief discussion of the previous studies would be presented in the light of the aims, the population of the study, the sample, the procedures, the used instruments, and the findings, as long as the present study is concerned.

The purpose of Kim (2000)is to examined the existence of listening anxiety, and general foreign language anxiety, and the identified relationship between listening anxiety and learner background factors. The population of the study is (253) Korean EFL students. The instruments of the study the Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS), Foreign Language Classroom (FLCAS) and listening proficiency test (TOFEL). The results of this study indicated that listening anxiety actually found with foreign language learning, and it has inverse relationship with listening competence.

In another study Elkhafaifi (2005), the purpose of this study is to find out how FL learning anxiety and listening anxiety are related, and how, in turn, they affect student achievement and listening comprehension performance. The sample of the study is (233) post-secondary students of Arabic as a FL. The instruments of the study the Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS) and Foreign Language Classroom (FLCAS). The results of this study indicated that FL learning anxiety and listening anxiety are separated but related phenomena that both correlate negatively with achievement. Jaber (2012) the aim of this study is to find out the relationship between foreign language learners' anxiety and their English oral conversation performance. The population of the study is the students of the English Language Department at Wasit University, while the sample consists of 193 students in the Department. Two instruments (Speaking Anxiety Scale) [SAS] by Van Dalen, 1973, and an oral conversation test are used. The results of the present study indicated that foreign language anxiety has a negative relationship with foreign language learning. Zhang (2013)

the purpose of this study is to explore the possible causal relations between foreign language English listening anxiety and English listening performance. The participants consisted of (300) first year English majors at a university in China. Among them, (261) were female and(39) were male. Both the FLLAS and an IELTS listening test were administered to these participants. The results of the this study indicated that the FL listening anxiety could affect FL listening performance, but FL listening performance did not appear to affect FL listening anxiety systematically. Shi (2017) the purpose of this study is to investigate the levels and sources of listening anxiety among diverse background international students in a secondary school in the UK, and further explore their learning strategies and self-regulation in the listening learning process. The sample of the study is (33) students in a secondary school in the UK. The instruments of the study Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986)'s Foreign

Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, Elkhafaifi (2005)'s Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale and Strategy Inventory for Language Learning designed by Oxford (1990) to measure participants' listening learning strategies and interview. The results of this study indicated that participants suffer from moderate and low listening anxiety. In the interviews, all the participants state that they only suffer from moderate listening anxiety, which accords with the result from questionnaires. Ali (2020) the purpose of this study is to find out the relationship between listening anxiety among Iraqi EFL University Students' and their performance in listening comprehension. The sample of the present research consists of (131) male and female students from the first and third stages at English Department / College of Education for Humanities university of Tikrit. Two instruments have been constructed a listening anxiety scale and a listening comprehension skill. Result shows that Iraqi EFL students' have a high degree of listening anxiety and they low performance in listening comprehension.

The previous studies have been discussed in terms of the aim, sample, methodology, instrument, and statistical tools and as below:

All the previous studies, just like the present one descriptive. The studies of Zhang, 2013, Ali, 2020 investigate the relationship between EFL students' Listening Anxiety with other variables. The current study aims at finding out the relationship between EFL students' listening anxiety and their speaking performance, while Akeel, 2012 aims is to find out the relationship between foreign language learners' anxiety and their English oral conversation performance.

All the previous studies, just like the present one, deal with EFL students to be the population and sample, but they are different in the levels of students which mean that the present study deals with preparatory school students, while all the previous studies deal with university students except Shi, 2017 deals with secondary school.

Data related to EFL students' language anxiety in all the previous studies is collected through a language listening anxiety scale (FLLAS) except Jaber, 2012 used the Speaking Anxiety Scale (SAS). In addition to the questionnaire Kim, 2000 used listening proficiency test (TOFEL), Zhang, 2013 used IELTS listening test, while Akeel, 2012 used an oral conversation test. However, the present study instruments comprise an adopted listening anxiety scale and speaking test.

The results of the present study show the existence of a considerable degree of listening anxiety among Iraqi EFL students. This listening anxiety is highly experienced when students need to listen in the foreign language. This study supports the finding of previous studies as in: (Kim, 2000, Zhang, 2013 and Ali, 2020).

Method

The whole population of the present study includes (739) Iraqi EFL fifth preparatory school students in Baghdad city. The sample consists of (165) students who have randomly been selected from the population of this study and distributed as follows:(40) students from AL- Noor preparatory school for boys (42) students from

AL –Shulla preparatory school for boys,(40) students from AL-Faooz secondary school for girls and (43) students from AL-Naser preparatory school for girls students who are studying at the academic year 2020-2021(50% of both gender). See table (1)

Table (1)

The Distribution of the Sample

School	Number of Population
AL- Noor preparatory school for boys	40
AL –Shulla preparatory school for boys	42
AL-Faooz secondary school for girls	40
AL-Naser preparatory school for girls	43
Total	165

Data Collection Instrument

To achieve the aims of the present study, a scale of Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS) has been adopted from Kim (2000)

Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scales (FLLAS)

A scale can be defined as "A measurement instrument used to determine a respondent's attitude toward self, others, activities, institutions, or situations" (Mills, 2019, p.668). Scales may take the form of a series of questions or statements to which respondents can react by selecting from among existing answers (Brown, 2000, p.6).

Whiston (2012, p.5) define a scale as one of the appraised instruments that could be used in some educational and psychological studies.

To finding out EFL students' listening anxiety levels, a scale has been adapted from Kim (2000) by the researcher and after consultation of specialists in the field of ELT, Educational Psychology, and applied linguistic.

The scale comprises three main domains and (33) items distributed into:

1. Listening anxiety related to background knowledge (of new vocabulary, new information, and familiar and unfamiliar words) which consist of (8) items.
2. Listening anxiety related to listening text and strategies such as type of passage, pronunciation and the way the passage was read by the speaker and heard by the listener, also speed delivery)which consist of(8) items.
3. Listening anxiety related to listeners' characteristics theme (students characteristics, for example, students` concentration as well as the feeling of confidence, fear, and nervousness) which consist of (17) items. (See appendix A)

The rating scale also consists of five points Likert scale and each item has five responses. The scores that are given to each response are:

- Strongly agree 5 points
- Agree 4 points
- Neutral 3 points
- Disagree 2 points
- Strongly disagree 1 point

Items No. (3, 4, 18, 28, 32) are scored in reverse order.

The calculation of the statistical indicators for the scale of listening anxiety and relying on the results of the application later, requires the researcher to use the Statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS) in extracting those statistical indicators.

Statistical Procedures for Analyzing (FLLAS)

The main aim of the statistical analysis is to find out the discrimination power of the instrument items and their consistency degree and to exclude the items that have no discrimination powers as well as finding out the instrument's validity and reliability, so the researcher conducted a statistical analysis of the items according to the following:

Discrimination Power

According to Collins and O'Brien (2011, p.251) and Kassin (2013, p. 169), item discriminatory power is the ability of an item to differentiate high performing and low performing examinees on an entire test. McDonald (2013, p. 287) believes that when the obtained discriminatory power of an item is (0.30) and above, the item is acceptable. If the item discriminatory power is less than (0.30) the item is weak and needs to be modified or changed.

In order to compute the discriminatory power of the items of the Listening Anxiety Scale, the researcher adopted the method of the two extreme groups as follows:

This method is used to find out the ability of the scale items to distinguish between respondents with higher scores and lower scores for the characteristic or phenomenon to be measured in the test. Also, this method is characterized by the accuracy of results and the ease of statistical operations, and the adoption of (27%) is the best percentage that can be adopted in determining the two groups. The two extremes of the sample members in order to reach the best discrimination coefficient and give us the largest possible size and the maximum variance (Anastasi, 1976, P. 208).

To achieve this, the researcher took the following steps:

1. Applying the scale to the research sample of (165) male and female students.
2. Correct the scale forms and compute the total score for each form.
3. The scores obtained by the sample members are arranged in descending order from the highest degree to the lowest degree.
4. A percentage (27%) was chosen from the forms obtaining the highest scores and was called the highest group, as well as (27%) from the forms obtaining the

lowest scores, and it was called the lowest group, and in light of this percentage, the number of applications in each group reached (45) forms. This was to subject them to a statistical analysis process to obtain the maximum extremes in the responses between the two groups.

5. Using t-test for two independent samples and computing the arithmetic mean and standard deviation to identify the differences between the higher and lower groups for (33) items of the scale which is equal to (1.98) at the level of significance (0.05) and with a degree of freedom (88). It was found that all the items are distinct and statistically significant, and the table (2) shows that.

(Table 2)

Discrimination Power of the (FLLAS) Items

For Two-Extreme Groups

No.	Upper Group		Lower Group		Computed T. Value	The level of significance
	Mean	Devia.	Mean	Devia.		**(0.05)**
1	**3.84**	**0.975**	**2.73**	**1.136**	**4.976**	**Significant**
2	**4.08**	**1.144**	**2.95**	**1.413**	**4.180**	**Significant**
3	**3.35**	**1.316**	**2.15**	**1.043**	**4.791**	**Significant**
4	**3.60**	**1.656**	**2.04**	**1.476**	**4.702**	**Significant**
5	**3.86**	**1.307**	**2.33**	**1.167**	**5.868**	**Significant**
6	**3.93**	**1.031**	**2.66**	**1.167**	**5.454**	**Significant**
7	**2.84**	**1.155**	**1.66**	**1.000**	**4.280**	**Significant**
8	4.02	1.033	2.37	1.211	6.928	Significant
9	**3.80**	**1.099**	**2.20**	**1.289**	**6.333**	**Significant**
10	**4.13**	**0.967**	**2.33**	**1.331**	**7.336**	**Significant**
11	**4.22**	**0.950**	**2.80**	**1.307**	**5.902**	**Significant**
12	**3.40**	**1.074**	**2.28**	**1.217**	**4.590**	**Significant**
13	**3.57**	**1.011**	**2.02**	**0.965**	**7.466**	**Significant**
14	**3.95**	**1.086**	**2.35**	**1.170**	**6.721**	**Significant**

15	**3.53**	**1.159**	**2.86**	**0.919**	**7.553**	**Significant**
16	**3.80**	**1.159**	**2.17**	**1.028**	**7.886**	**Significant**
17	**4.06**	**0.863**	**2.24**	**1.111**	**8.688**	**Significant**
18	**3.77**	**1.346**	**2.00**	**1.296**	**6.379**	**Significant**
19	**3.66**	**1.224**	**1.97**	**1.157**	**6.722**	**Significant**
20	**3.68**	**1.144**	**1.97**	**1.117**	**7.175**	**Significant**
21	**3.84**	**1.086**	**2.42**	**1.177**	**5.956**	**Significant**
22	**3.46**	**1.035**	**2.17**	**0.960**	**6.121**	**Significant**
23	**4.11**	**0.934**	**2.66**	**1.314**	**6.008**	**Significant**
24	**3.4**	**1.178**	**1.77**	**0.765**	**7.956**	**Significant**
25	**4.08**	**0.924**	**2.44**	**1.178**	**7.363**	**Significant**
26	**3.42**	**1.117**	**2.06**	**1.136**	**5.705**	**Significant**
27	**4.08**	**0.972**	**2.77**	**1.294**	**5.430**	**Significant**
28	**3.75**	**1.464**	**1.91**	**1.427**	**6.051**	**Significant**
29	**3.48**	**1.236**	**2.11**	**1.132**	**5.512**	**Significant**
30`	**3.93**	**1.095**	**2.55**	**1.197**	**5.694**	**Significant**
31	**3.22**	**1.363**	**1.86**	**1.179**	**5.044**	**Significant**
32	**3.73**	**1.371**	**1.93**	**1.268**	**6.463**	**Significant**
33	**3.06**	**1.498**	**1.77**	**1.203**	**4.498**	**Significant**

Items Correlation with the Total Score (Internal Consistency)

Internal consistency reflects the degree to which differences between individual responses to an item are consistent (and are correlated) with differences between responses to the other items (Kline, 2000). Kaplan and Saccuzzo (2005, p.120) believe that internal consistence means the intercorrelations amongst items during the same test. When the test is structured to gauge one construct and all the items are evenly adequate nominees to scale that merit, which is why there should be an elevated correspondence among all the items.

To achieve this, the researcher used the Pearson Correlation Coefficient to extract the Correlation Coefficient between the scores of each item and the total score of the Listening Anxiety Scale. This is an indication that the scale is valid to measure the phenomenon that it was designed to measure, and the table (3) explains that.

Table (3)
Correlation coefficients between the score of each item and the overall score of the listening anxiety scale

No.	Correlation Coefficients Values with the Total Score	No.	Correlation Coefficients Values with the Total Score	No.	Correlation Coefficients Values with the Total Score
1	0.423	12	0.420	23	0.475
2	0.340	13	0.491	24	0.484
3	0.409	14	0.502	25	0.574
4	0.345	15	0.547	26	0.441
5	0.484	16	0.513	27	0.421
6	0.385	17	0.559	28	0.459
7	0.326	18	0.453	29	0.439
8	0.526	19	0.515	30	0.468
9	0.517	20	0.586	31	0.386
10	0.543	21	0.478	32	0.511
11	0.503	22	0.492	33	0.393

Items Scores Correlation with the Domain Score of (FLLAS)

Since the (FLLAS) scale includes three domains, the correlational relationship between the score of each item of the scale with the total score of the domain in which the item is included should be found out. Hence, the total score of each form of the sample which is (165) forms according to the scale domains (Listening anxiety related to background knowledge, Listening anxiety related to listening text and strategies,

Listening anxiety related to listeners' characteristics theme) has been calculated. After that, Pearson Correlation Coefficient has been computed between each item and the total scores of the domain in which the item is included it became clear that all the correlation coefficients are statistically significant comparing it with the critical value of (0.161) at the level of significance (0.05) and with a degree of freedom (163). Through this indicator, it became clear that all the scale items express their domains, and the table (4) shows that

Table (4)

Pearson Correlation Coefficient has been calculated between each item and the total scores of the domain of FLLAS

Listening anxiety related to background knowledge		**Listening anxiety related to listening text and strategies**		**Listening anxiety related to listeners' characteristics theme**			
Items ' No.	**Items correlation coefficient with the total score**	**Items ' No.**	**Items correlation coefficient with the total score**	**Items ' No.**	**Items correlation coefficient with the total score**	**Items ' No.**	**items correlation coefficient with the total score**
1	**0.516**	**9**	**0.566**	**17**	**0.570**	**26**	**0.472**
2	**0.599**	**10**	**0.703**	**18**	**0.495**	**27**	**0.483**
3	**0.411**	**11**	**0.640**	**19**	**0.593**	**28**	**0.494**
4	**0.388**	**12**	**0.531**	**20**	**0.639**	**29**	**0.503**
5	**0.500**	**13**	**0.581**	**21**	**0.512**	**30**	**0.524**
6	**0.520**	**14**	**0.600**	**22**	**0.474**	**31**	**0.371**
7	**0.345**	**15**	**0.598**	**23**	**0.457**	**32**	**0.515**
8	**0.623**	**16**	**0.666**	**24**	**0.498**	**33**	**0.438**
				25	**0.624**		

Internal Correlations Matrix of Foreign Lang Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS)

This type of construction has been verified by finding out the correlational relationship of respondents' scores of each domain of the FLLAS domains with each other and with the total score of the scale. Therefore, the statistical analysis sample of (165) male and female students was relied upon. The results indicated that all Correlation Coefficients for each domain with other domains and the overall score are statistically significant, and this indicates that all three domains measure one thing which is listening anxiety, as all were the calculated correlation coefficients are higher than the critical value of (0.161) at the level of significance (0.05) with a degree of freedom (163). Table (5) illustrates this.

Table (5)

Correlations Matrix between the FLLAS scale and the Total Scale Score

Domains	Total marks	Listening anxiety related to background knowledge	Listening anxiety related to text listening and strategies	Listening anxiety related to the characteristics of the listeners
Total marks	**1**	**0.830**	**0.827**	**0.938**
Listening anxiety related to background knowledge		**1**	**0.608**	**0.681**
Listening anxiety related to text listening and strategies			**1**	**0.638**
Listening anxiety related to the characteristics of the listeners				**1**

The Psychometric Features of the (FLLAS)

Validity of the Scale

Validity is “the ability of an instrument to measure what it is designed to measure"(Kumar, 2018, p.166). Mills (2019, p.558) defines validity as “the degree to which qualitative data gauge accurately what we are trying to measure".

There are several types of validity such as face validity, content validity, and construct validity. Thus, as long as the aims of this study are concerned, face validity and construct validity are both the appropriate ones as follows:

Face Validity of the scale

Face validity the degree to which a test appears to measure what it claims to measure (Mills, 2019, p.665). Mouskowitz (2012, P. 26) states that face validity is the degree to which a test seems appropriate, and looks as if it measures the knowledge or abilities that it claims to measure, based on the subjective judgment of the observer. To ensure the Face Validity of the scale, it has been presented to a group of specialists in the field of educational psychology, measurement, evaluation, and methods of teaching English language, their number reached (27) experts .All modifications and notes stated by jurors have been considered.

Construct validity

Construct validity is described as one of the most important types of Validity because it depends on empirical verification of the extent to which the scores of the items correspond to the psychological structure of the characteristic to be measured. Construct validity can be defined as “The degree to which a test measures an intended hypothetical construct or no observable trait that explains behavior” (Mills, 2019, P. 664).

The researcher has secured such type of validity by following these procedures:

1. The discriminatory power through the method of the two extremes, and the results show that all the items are distinct between the upper and lower groups.
2. The relationship of the item score to the total score of the scale, that is, through the internal consistency of the scale, and that the item score is related to the total score of the scale means that the item measures the same concept that the total score of the scale measures the table.
3. The relationship of the score of the item to the domain to which it belongs. The correlation between the score of each item and the total score of the domain to which it belongs has been extracted. It was found that the items of the scale of listening anxiety belong to the field in which they are.
4. The relationship of the scale domains with each other and the overall score (the internal correlations matrix).

Reliability of foreign language listening anxiety scale

Reliability is “refers to the quality of a measurement procedure that provides repeatability and accuracy "(Kumar, 2018, p.26).Mills (2019, P.203) views reliability as the “degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it is measuring ". Furthermore, reliability, as believed by Harmer (2001, p. 322), can be " enhanced by making the test instructions absolutely clear, restricting the scope for variety in the answers, and making sure the test conditions remain constant ".

In order to find out the reliability of the instrument, the researcher has used test-retest method and Alpha Cronbach Formula as shown below

Test-retest method

Test-retest is " an estimate of the reliability of a test determined by the extent to which a test gives the same results if it is administered at two different times. It is estimated from the coefficient of correlation that is obtained from the two administrations of the test "(Richards and Schmidt, 2002, P.548). Also, test-retest reliability can be defined as " one of three basic reliability strategies, most appropriate for estimating the stability of a test over time, where a test is administered twice to the same group, with a reasonable interval time between testing sessions, then scores from both tests are correlated (Brown,2005, p. 295). Accordingly, (30) students who were randomly selected, and after a period of two weeks had passed from the first application, the scale was applied again to the same group, then their answers were corrected, using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Between the scores of the two applications, the reliability coefficient was (0.83), and this value is a good indicator of the stability of the respondents' answers on the scale over time.

Alpha Cronbach Formula (Internal Consistency)

It is " The general formula for estimating internal consistency based on a determination of how all items on a test related to all other items and the total test". (Mills, 2019, P.685). Hence, the Alpha Cronbach formula has been used to find out the reliability of the instrument.

The responses of the statistical analysis sample, which reached (165) responses. After applying the equation, the reliability coefficient was (0.80).

Statistical Indicators for FLLAS

The calculation of the statistical indicators for the scale of listening anxiety and relying on the results of the application later, requires the researcher to use the Statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS) in extracting those statistical indicators and a table (6) illustrates that.

Table (6)

Statistical indicators for the scale of listening anxiety

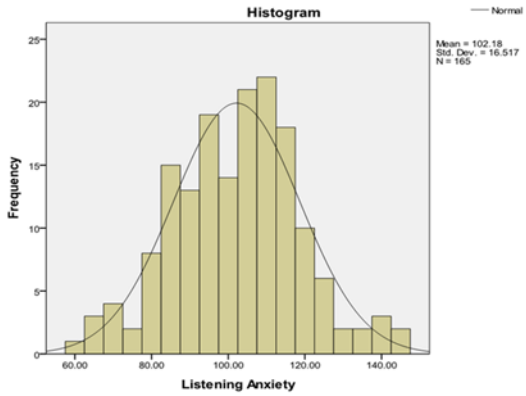
N.	Statistical indicators	value
1	**arithmetic mean**	**102.18**
2	**Mean**	**103.00**
3	mode	**106.00**
4	**standard deviation**	**16.51**

5	variance	**272.80**
6	skewdness	**0.026**
7	kurtosis	**0.094**
8	median	**87.00**
9	The lowest degree	**60.00**
10	**The highest degree**	**147.00**

When observing the values of the statistical indicators of the Scale of Listening Anxiety, we find that these indicators are consistent with most indicators of the scientific measures, as the scores of the Scale of Listening Anxiety and their frequencies are relatively close to the moderate distribution, and a figure (1) illustrates this graphically.

Figure (1)

The distribution of scores for the statistical analysis sample on the scale of listening anxiety



Pilot Administration of the scale

One of the important steps in a research project is a pilot administration which it is "a small scale trial of study to identify problems with research plan" (Mills, 2019, p.668)

The Pilot administration of the scale has been conducted to:

1. Check the clarity of the items.
2. Compute the time allotted for responding to the scale. and
3. Compute the reliability of the scale.

Accordingly, a sample of EFL (30) students from Al Hak Al Mobeen preparatory school has been randomly selected for the sake of conducting the pilot administration of the scale.

However, no ambiguity is found in the items of the scale .It has been found that the time required for answering the scale is (30) minutes.

Final Administration of the Instruments

After attaining the validity and reliability of the instruments, the scale and then the interview have been administrated to the sample of the study.

The scale has been administrated on Monday, 18th of January, 2021 at Al- Shulla preparatory school for boys in Baghdad
,25th of January,2021 at AL-Faooz secondary school for girls, Monday 1st of February,2021 at Al-Noor preparatory school for boys, and on Monday 8th February,2021 at AL-Naser preparatory school for girls. (See Table 7).
The students are asked to write their names, gender, schools` names on their scales paper and then to respond to each item.
Table (7) illustrates the dates where the researcher applied both instruments in their schedule.

(Table 7)
Time Table of the Instruments Application

No.	School	Number of Students	Instrument	Date
1	Al Shulla preparatory school for boys	42	1-FLLAS 2-Speaking test	Monday, 18th of January , 2021
2	AL-Faooz secondary school for girls	40	1-FLLAS 2-Speaking test	Monday, 25th of January , 2021,
3	Al-Noor preparatory school for boys	40	1-FLLAS 2-Speaking test	Monday, 1st of February , 2021
4	AL-Naser preparatory school for girls	43	1-FLLAS 2-Speaking test	Monday, 8th of February , 2021
Total		165		

Statistical means

In this research, the researcher used:

1. the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)to extract the following:

- The t-test for two independent samples: used to test the significance of the difference between the two extreme groups in calculating the discriminatory power of the Listening Anxiety Scale.

- The t-test for one sample: used to test the significance of the difference between the arithmetic mean and the theoretical mean of the scale of listening anxiety and the speaking performance test.
- Person Correlation coefficient, which was used to find the following:

a) The relationship of the item score to the total score of the scale and the test.
b) The relationship of the items of Listening Anxiety Scale score to the domain to which it belongs to. .
c) The Internal Correlations Matrix of Listening Anxiety Scale.
d) Stability coefficient by retest method for the Listening Anxiety Scale.
e) Finding the correlation between the two variables.

- The Alpha-Cronbach equation for internal consistency, used to extract the alpha consistency for the internal consistency of the scale and the test.
- The z-test: used to identify differences in the relationship between the two variables.

2. Microsoft Office Excel (2010) to extract:
Essay item ease factor (calculation of ease of speaking performance test):

$$\text{The ease factor} = \frac{\text{Total Score} * \text{Item Weight P} + \text{Total Score} * \text{Item Weigh}}{\text{Item Weight} * \text{Number of the two groups}}$$

Difficulty factor = 1 - ease factor
The power of discrimination equation for the essay item (to calculate the discrimination of the items of the speaking performance test):

$$\text{Discrimination coefficient} = \frac{\text{Total Scores} * \text{Item Weight P} - \text{Total Scores} * \text{Item Weight}}{\text{Item weight} * \text{half the number of the two groups}}$$

Results
This section presents results about the level of listening anxiety among Iraqi EFL preparatory school students.

Iraqi EFL preparatory school students are found to have a high degree of listening anxiety
In order to achieve the aim which is finding out the level of Iraqi EFL preparatory school students' listening anxiety. To achieve this aim, the researcher applied Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale consisting of (33) items on the research sample consisting of (165) male and female students. The result indicates that the arithmetic mean score is (102.182) and the standard deviation is (16.517). In order to find out the significance of the difference

between the arithmetic mean and the theoretical one, t-test for one independent sample is used. It is found out that there is a statistical significant difference at (0.05) level of significance. The calculated t-value (2.475), is found to be higher than the tabulated T- value of (1.96), and with a degree of freedom (164) Thus, it has been found that there is a significant difference between the arithmetic mean of the sample and the theoretical mean of the scale (99) and in favor of the arithmetic mean of the sample, which means that the level of listening anxiety is high among students, and the table (7) shows that.

Table (7)

The Arithmetic Mean, SD, Theoretical mean, of T-Test in FLLAS

Variable	Sample	Arithmetic Mean	standard deviation	Theoretical Mean	degree of freedom	T-value		Sig. Level (0.05)
						Cal.	Tab.	
Listening anxiety	**165**	**102.182**	**16.517**	**99**	**164**	**2.475**	**1.96**	**Significant**

Discussion and Conclusion

The major findings of this study are the following:

Iraqi EFL students are found to have a high degree of listening anxiety that creating huge problems for the development and functioning of listening skills and speaking performance.

Some major causation may account for the above result:

1. Throughout the language learning-teaching cycle , Iraqi EFL teaching methods followed by the teachers :could not have exposed their students to language (speaking and listening) situations, in the near past, where they can grow the ability to successfully express agreement or disagreement with opinion in class discussions and give reason, join utterances on familiar topics, correctly use the parts of speech, use wide range of vocabulary or produce a well-organized, well-sequenced or coherent speech. It is the most significant source of listening anxiety; could not have supported their students with enough encouragement, guidance and positive suggestions when involved in listening comprehension. It could assist in correcting performance in areas in need of improvement, or producing unsuccessful results where they could learn and practice some of the most common strategies for reducing emotional and physiological arousal such as relaxation, breathing techniques, and meditation to overcome negative emotional arousals students sometimes face and often lead to fear, and cause them doubt about their competency. Reducing emotional arousal, especially anxiety during attempts to perform an EFL task increases speaking performance.
2. They cannot confidently express opinions with regard to topics of interests for them or express feelings such as surprise and empathy; nor can they efficiently vocalize their ideas under stressful situations within a limited time span.

3. Iraqi EFL students may not have been possibly encouraged in their language classes by the curriculum; it may not have met the students demand, for better performance in listening.
4. Listening may not have been considered too important a skill. In their lessons, the emphasis could be presumably placed on accuracy of linguistic forms. Accordingly, their idea of a language lesson may therefore comprise reading and doing written exercises that practice grammar.
5. It is also possible that the classes students attended may have been very large. As a consequence, the students' chance to speak or listen may have been very limited.
6. Personal traits may constitute another reason. A number of students are rather introverted in their nature; they are not used to expressing themselves in front of others. They do not enjoy being the center of attention. That is why listening may have been a problem for them.
7. There could be some linguistic factors such as difficulties in the phonetics and phonology of the target language , poor knowledge of grammatical patterns or low awareness of cultural background that are necessary for processing meaning in the TL.
8. Poor time management for doing the task can be another reason. The result is that the students do not have enough time to complete the assignment.

In the light of the study findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

1-Iraqi EFL preparatory school students have high level of listening anxiety.

Suggestions

The following studies can be suggested for further work:

1. Enhancing foreign language learning through listening strategies.
2. The relationship between language anxiety and writing performance.
3. The relationship between EFL student`s classroom anxiety and their reading comprehension.

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