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**The Impact of Smartphone Applications on Improving EFL
Learners` Listening Skills**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master in Applied Linguistics

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Abstract

The current research utilizes the descriptive approach and endeavors to study the impact of smartphone applications on improving listening skills among EFL learners.

The research discusses the importance of listening skills in learning English and how smartphone applications may help overcome them. An online questionnaire and listening test were used on two samples of EFL learners to collect data and analyze learners' experiences. The listening test sample is consisted of 30 Syrian EFL learners; these learners are doing a conversation course at the Sarhan Language Institute in Yabroud. The online questionnaire sample is consisted of 88 EFL learners who use smartphone applications to improve their English skills.

The results demonstrate that the use of smartphone applications has a positive impact on improving learners' listening skills, as it contributes to increasing motivation and offers a variety of opportunities for self-learning. The paired samples t-test indicates that the average post-test scores are 4.4 points higher than the pre-test scores. The online questionnaire data analysis shows high averages (all above 3.9), which indicate that the participants agreed that smartphone applications were effective in improving their listening skills. The study also revealed some challenges that learners may face when using these applications.

The research recommends employing smartphone applications in teaching English listening skills, with a focus on choosing appropriate applications and training learners to use them effectively. It also suggests conducting more studies on how to improve these applications to better meet the needs of learners.

Keywords: EFL learning, listening skills, smartphone applications, mobile-assisted learning.

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Dedication

To my mother:

The wellspring of tenderness and sacrifice, who has been my idol in giving and sacrifice and who nourished me with her love and taught me the meaning of perseverance and determination.

To my father:

Who instilled in me the love for learning and education. I dedicate this work in recognition of his grace and reverence for his status.

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My life companion and support in every step, who believes in my abilities and encouraged me throughout my academic journey with love and support.

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I dedicate this work.

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Chapter One

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the study and presents the research topic; it introduces the main terms and procedural definitions; then it reveals the research problem, its importance, its objectives, and the questions that it eventually seeks to answer. It also offers the framework of the study through which the impact of smartphone applications on improving EFL learners' listening skills is investigated to be scientifically studied.

1.2 The Research Overview

Learning a second language (L2) requires learning and knowing the four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and that is highly necessary for learners to be an efficient language learners (Yildirim, 2013). Many linguistics say that listening is the weakest and most underestimated skill of EFL learners, as they encounter a variety of listening issues (Ulum, 2015); for instance, learners may lack motivation, struggle with comprehension, have limited access to appropriate educational resources, and lack practical experience.

In an era where technology pervades every aspect of our lives, we can see how language learning is evolving dramatically. The advent of smartphone applications has changed how learners interact with English as a foreign language, especially in terms of listening skills (Hao et al., 2023). Learners now have unique opportunities for personalized learning experiences that the usual methods used in classroom settings often cannot provide. They can use smartphone applications to access countless audio materials, practice their listening skills anywhere and at any time, receive immediate feedback, immerse themselves in authentic listening experiences, and bridge the gap between academic understanding and practical application—all from the palm of their hand (Kukulska-Hulme & Viberg, 2022). This study endeavors

to find out how smartphone applications facilitate the process of enhancing EFL learners' listening skills. The goal of the study is to show how mobile-assisted language learning could be a powerful force in changing the future of language education by viewing EFL learners' listening test scores and conducting an online questionnaire (Alkhudiry & Al-Ahdal, 2021).

1.3 Main Terms and Procedural Definitions in the Research

- EFL: English as a foreign language.
- The Mother Tongue (L1): The mother tongue in this study is Arabic; the original language of the sample in the research.
- The Foreign Language (L2): The foreign language in this research is English; the target language of the sample in the research.
- MALL: Mobile-Assisted Language Learning.

1.4 The Research Problem

While using the usually used methods in language learning, EFL learners frequently struggle to enhance their listening skills. Therefore, it is important to look into alternative approaches and resources that can provide additional training and practices. Due to lack of time and resources to improve listening skills in the classroom, smartphone applications may be able to help with listening skills issues. So the problem of the research can be stated as follows:

What is the impact of smartphone applications on improving EFL learners' listening skills?

1.5 The Importance of the Research and Reasons for Choosing This Topic

This topic is important for a number of reasons:

1. Expanding language education possibilities by providing various resources and tools to enhance listening skills.
2. Motivating EFL learners, as it is crucial for language learners learning to practice and enhance overall learning outcomes.
3. Handling listening skill issues that can come up as barriers related to limited classroom time and resources.

1.6 The Research Objectives

This research attempts to:

1. Figure out how EFL learners perceive using smartphone applications to improve their listening skills.
2. Identify the elements that influence the use of smartphone applications and assess how well these applications can improve listening skills.
3. Recommend some smartphone applications and offer suggestions on how to use these applications to enhance listening skills.

1.7 The Research Questions

The research is intended to answer the questions:

1. To what extent have the language proficiency of using smartphone applications increased EFL learners' achievements?
2. What challenges do EFL learners encounter while using smartphone applications to improve listening skills?
3. What are the attitudes of EFL learners towards using smartphone applications for improving their listening skills?

1.8 The Research Hypothesis

This study is based on the hypothesis that the use of smartphone applications has a positive impact on improving listening skills among learners of English as a foreign language.

1.9 Summary

After this introduction, which outlines the overall context of this research, identifies the problem it endeavors to address and highlights its significance and objectives, as well as the hypothesis and the primary questions it seeks to answer, the following chapter will present the theoretical framework of the study.

There are five chapters in this research. The first chapter provides an overview of the study's background, while the second chapter offers theoretical information and reviews relevant literature. The third chapter details the research methodology and data collection processes. In the fourth chapter, the collected data are analyzed, accompanied by a discussion of key findings and observations. Finally, the fifth chapter summarizes the study's conclusions, presenting its findings along with recommendations and suggestions for future research.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the relevant topics pertaining to listening. In this regard, this chapter defines listening, identify different types of it and sheds light on its importance as a crucial component of effective communication, as well as the listening process, listening strategies and patterns. It also provides a review on utilizing smartphone applications to enhance EFL learners` listening skills.

Moreover, it reviews previous studies in terms of using smartphone applications or computer-assisted programs to improve listening skills for EFL learners.

2.2 The Definition of Listening

Listening is a complex and difficult issue to be investigated, which means that it is not easy to provide an easy and quick definition of listening. For Hyslop and Tone (1989), listening is the first language mode that children acquire. It provides a foundation for all aspects of language and cognitive development, and it plays a life-long role in the process of learning and communication which makes it essential to productive participation in life. Rost (1994) defines listening as a skill that is less directly observed and less noticeable in both its development and its everyday use.

Yet Underwood (1989) simply defines listening as the activity of paying attention and trying to get meaning from something we hear. Moreover, Rost (2002) defines listening, in its broadest sense, as a process of receiving what the speaker actually says; constructing and representing meaning; negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding; and creating meaning through involvement, imagination, and empathy. Listening, then, is a complex, active process of interpretation in which listeners match what they hear with what they already know. The entire process of understanding language involves integrating new information into pre-existing

knowledge. That is how previous knowledge stored in memory plays an important role in the listening comprehension process (Hichem, 2013).

In brief, listening is a complex skill that plays a continuous role in language learning and communication. It is the first language mode children acquire as it is essential for language and cognitive development. Moreover, it is a process of matching what is heard with what is already known; the language provides the signal while the listener provides the image.

2.3 Identifying Different Types of Listening

According to Nu Nu Wah (2019), Listening can be divided into seven main types. Each type helps learners to enhance a range of skills and strategies:

"2.3.1 Selective listening: the informational input to tasks aims to help learners derive specific information from texts, even when the texts themselves are well beyond the learner`s current level of linguistic and content knowledge.

2.3.2 Intensive listening: It is the formal input to tasks which aims at focusing learner`s attention on features of the language system once text meaning has been established to some content.

2.3.3 Interactive listening: It refers to appropriate responses development and focuses on helping listeners develop awareness of differences in cultural styles of listener feedback and options for providing such feedback. Awareness of listener options and strategies can increase the learners' effectiveness and ease in participating in collaborative discourses.

2.3.4 Discriminative listening: It serves as the base for all other purposes of listening behaviors and indicates distinguishing behaviors for the auditory and for identifying the auditory and the visual messages.

2.3.5 Listening for comprehension: It is relevant to the understanding of the information with avoiding critical judgment to the message through assigning the meaning intended by a speaker instead of assigning his/her own meaning.

2.3.6 Critical listening: It is identified as evaluating what is being said and discriminating and comprehending the message to form judgment about the message in order to accept or reject the persuasive appeals.

2.3.7 Appreciative listening: It is to enjoy or gain a sensory impression from the material."

In addition to these types, there is another important type of listening, particularly in educational and professional contexts:

2.3.8 Informative or Informational Listening: According to Kline (1996), It is a crucial skill for effective learning and information gathering and a crucial aspect of our lives, where the listener's primary concern is to understand the message. For example, we can find it in learning from lectures or instructions, understanding new procedures in the workplace, or listening to briefings, reports, and speeches. Effective informative listening requires concentration and knowledge of the message's source. There are three key variables related to informative listening: vocabulary, concentration, and memory. Increasing vocabulary improves understanding. Developing a genuine interest in language and its words, acquiring new vocabulary, and observing word contexts can enhance vocabulary. Concentration is difficult to achieve when listening; it requires discipline, motivation, and acceptance of responsibility. As for memory, it is essential for informative listening as it allows recalling experiences and information necessary for functioning in the world, setting expectations, and understanding what others say. Without memory, communication with others is impossible because careless listening can lead to misunderstandings. By focusing on these variables, learners can become increasingly successful in comprehending the speaker's message and improve their listening skills (Kline, 1996b).

2.4 The Significance of Listening in EFL learning

When learning a second language, many EFL learners overlook the listening skills. Listening is the Cinderella skill in second language learning. It has been often

dominated by its elder sister: speaking. This is due to the fact that most people show off their speaking and writing skills when claiming to "know" a second language. Listening and reading are therefore secondary skills, i.e., they are means to other ends rather than ends in themselves. So for many years, listening skills were not given priority in language instruction (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016).

Yet, increased focus and rapid comprehension is necessary for listening comprehension. Also paying attention to the context, body language, and facial expressions is crucial when listening since it helps the listener better understand what the speakers are saying (Zaine, 2011). Without improving our listening skills (the input), we cannot improve our speaking abilities (the output). To acquire this skill, learners should be exposed to the language and practice English frequently. If we compare two learners, one is living in a country where the target language (L2) is the first language and the other is living in a country where English is only spoken in academic places, the difference is that the first learner can acquire English more easily, effectively, and rapidly than the second one. Consequently, learners need as much exposure to the English language as possible. Furthermore, listening plays a significant role in daily life and in communication: nine percent of time is spent writing, sixteen percent for reading, thirty percent for speaking, and forty-five percent for listening (Vahdat & Eidipour, 2016).

As it was commonly believed that listening abilities could be learned by exposure rather than actual instruction. Nonetheless, some applied linguists argue that listening comprehension should be emphasized in language instruction since it is a crucial component of learning a second language (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016); EFL learners need both class instructions and more outer exposure to improve their listening skills more effectively and rapidly. Moreover, nowadays it is noticed that modern society prefers to shift from printed media to sound and related materials. This highlights the importance of listening in the communication process. Thus, the significance of listening cannot be ignored (Vahdat & Eidipour, 2016).

To sum up, listening skills are crucial for EFL learning; they need to be improved constantly to have a full comprehension in order to reach an effective and successful communication when using the English language.

2.5 Listening Process and Strategies for Effective Learning

2.5.1 Listening Process

When we listen, we focus on the importance of what we recognize and what we want to hear. To put it another way, we choose which information is crucial for us to hear so that we can comprehend the message being conveyed to us and react appropriately; when people listen, they do so for many reasons. To learn a new language, for instance, it is important to define what listening purpose learners have: listening for specific details, listening for general meaning, or idea—to help them organize their thoughts and use intelligent guessing to ensure they meet their listening purpose. Listening comprehension is an active and conscious process in which the listener constructs meaning by using cues from contextual information and from existing knowledge. This process can help us to reconsider the methods of learning listening effectively. For this purpose, there are two essential elements for clarifying the listening process: top-down and bottom-up processing (Nu Nu Wah, 2019).

The bottom-up processing includes the perception of the surface code of an oral text, establishing a mental representation of the language input and constructing the overall meaning of the text. The top-down processing refers to relating the text to prior knowledge by integrating it into existing and evoked schemata. Both of these procedures are used by skilled listeners (Jin, 2002).

To develop bottom-up processing, learners need to distinguish individual sounds, word boundaries, and stressed syllables, identify grammatical forms and functions, recognize contractions and connected speech, recognize linking words. While top-down processing includes: listening for gist, main ideas, topic, and setting of the text, listening for specific information, sequencing the information, prediction,

guessing, inferencing (Nu Nu Wah, 2019). EFL learners need to master these two procedures in order to learn and improve their listening skills.

2.5.2 Listening Strategies and Listening Patterns

Listening strategies are essential for learners to enhance their listening comprehension. These strategies can be categorized into four main types according to Bao & Guan (2019): cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social.

- Cognitive strategies involve mental abilities and processes related to knowledge, such as inferring, predicting, interpreting, storing, and recalling information (Bao & Guan, 2019).
- Metacognitive strategies involve understanding individual's own method for learning and assimilating information. These strategies help learners manage their strategy use, planning, monitoring, and evaluating mental processes (Bao & Guan, 2019).
- Affective strategies manage emotions, such as anxiety, which can interfere with listening results (Bao & Guan, 2019).
- Social strategies involve learning by interaction with others, such as appealing for help and asking for confirmation. These strategies are crucial for effective teaching and learning for EFL learners (Bao & Guan, 2019).

2.5.2.1 Listening Strategies and Their Intersection with Listening Patterns

A study by Stella Liao (2012) shows how listening techniques and patterns overlap and offers a thorough framework for listening methods and their use in EFL classrooms. The study adopts an integrated approach combining bottom-up and top-down strategies, dividing listening activities into three phases: pre-listening, during-listening, and post-listening. This division aligns with various listening patterns, such as listening for the main idea, listening for specific details, and listening for full comprehension. The same study employs Lund's method of listening, which includes functions like identification, orientation, main idea, and detail comprehension, in order to reflect the relationship between listening strategies and

patterns. Cognitive strategies are employed in activities like 'Mixed-Up Charades' and 'Who ate the cookies,' where students process auditory information to extract main ideas and specific details. Metacognitive strategies are evident in the pre-listening, during-listening, and post-listening structure of activities (Liao, 2012). While during-listening activities, the concentration is on note-taking techniques and prediction. This also assists learners in listening for specific details. For example, pre-listening games such as "Mixed-Up Charades" and "Who Ate the Cookies" allow learners to interact with past information and prepare them for listening for the main topic. Post-listening activities, such as reviewing notes and orally summarizing information, enhance full comprehension of the audio text. Affective strategies are addressed through creating a relaxed learning atmosphere, while social strategies are prominently featured in the collaborative learning approach emphasized throughout the paper. This combined strategy demonstrates how different listening strategies intersect with listening patterns, helping learners develop comprehensive listening skills and improve their ability to understand audio texts at various levels of depth and detail (Liao, 2012).

As for a more recent study that was conducted by Awinindia (2023), three main listening strategies used by EFL learners in an academic listening course, and have been identified: metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies. These strategies intersect with different listening patterns as follows:

- **Cognitive strategies:** They help the listener process auditory information directly. When listening for the main idea, learners use summarization and note-taking to extract the main points.

When listening for specific details, learners use dictionaries and glossaries to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words.

For full comprehension, learners summarize the information and connect it with prior knowledge.

- **Metacognitive strategies:** They help the listener in planning, monitoring, and

evaluating the listening process.

Pre-listening, learners make study plans.

During listening, learners focus on the speakers and monitor their understanding.

Post-listening, learners learn from their previous mistakes to improve their understanding.

- **Social-emotional strategies** help in managing emotions and interacting with others. Learners tend to relax in order to manage anxiety while listening and they practice English with each other to improve their understanding and exchange viewpoints.

Again, we perceive that this integrated method illustrates how different listening strategies intersect with listening patterns, which help learners develop comprehensive listening skills and improve their ability to understand audio texts at varying levels of depth and detail in academic contexts (Awinindia, 2023).

2.6 Smartphone Applications

2.6.1 Mobile Applications Definition

Mobile applications are software applications that run on mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. These applications are designed to perform various tasks and provide various services to their users, such as entertainment, education, communication, and productivity. In recent years, mobile applications have gained significant popularity and have become an integral part of people's daily lives. As such, mobile applications have also become important tools for language learning, and several applications have been developed specifically for this purpose. Mobile applications often use multimedia elements such as audio, video, and interactive exercises to present and practice language skills (Rengganis, 2023). This definition aligns with what Klimova mentioned in 2019.

2.6.2 The Use of Smartphone Applications to Enhance EFL Learners' Listening Skills

A smartphone is regarded as a handy and multipurpose mobile device that assists people to perform their daily and professional activities and duties (Metruk, 2021). Depending on their preferences, EFL learners can utilize smartphone applications to practice all language skills by selecting the right application based on their individual needs and areas of weakness in specific English language sections. However, the vast number of applications available on the electronic stores, may make it challenging to select the most suitable applications (Metruk, 2021).

Many smartphone applications offer a variety of interesting features to assist in learning English, including learning grammar, pronunciation, writing, speaking, listening, video, quizzes, and much more. According to Kukuska-Hulme (2009), "MALL (Mobile-Assisted Language Learning) has received extensive research in the field of foreign-language teaching and learning in recent years because it offers a variety of advantages, such as ownership, mobility, and technology convergence." This can be said because many studies have confirmed the efficacy of learning English through the use of smartphone applications (Athoillah, 2022).

As for listening comprehension, it is complicated and requires an extensive amount of work outside of the classroom. So, learners must be highly motivated to use English-language media in order to find listening opportunities outside of the classroom, set objectives and techniques for self-assessment, and maintain a record of their progress. By enabling learners to listen to the language at any time and from any location, smartphone applications can assist EFL learners in shifting from teacher-led to learner-led instruction and becoming more self-reliant. As using smartphone applications for learning takes into account the individual variations and diversity of learners to find the best learning method. These applications could offer EFL learners real-world listening resources that may improve the self-esteem of learners, increase their active participation in the learning process, and show them how the language

relates to real words. Additionally, smartphone applications can combine formal and informal learning possibilities and contextualize the learning activities. Learning therefore is expanded to include learning in real-world communities in addition to the classrooms. Furthermore, these applications provide learners with liberty and motivation to study whenever and wherever it is most convenient for them. As they encourage independence and strengthen the learning process. Also, smartphone applications involve learners in setting their objectives, creating more effective learning techniques, and choosing their strategy and timetable. Likewise, these applications can offer a wide range of English words and idioms. Therefore, smartphone learning may suit various learning preferences, empower learners to take part in their education, contextualize learning, and release learners from the restrictions associated with the usually used methods in EFL learning (Alshamsi et al., 2020).

In brief, smartphone applications are valuable tools for EFL learners to practice various language skills, including listening. These applications offer features such as grammar, pronunciation, writing, speaking, and listening, as well as quizzes and videos. By enabling learners to listen to the language at any time and from any place, smartphone applications can help EFL learners transition from teacher-led to learner-led instruction and become more self-reliant. These applications can provide real-world listening resources, improve self-esteem, increase active participation, and demonstrate how the language relates to real words. They also encourage independence, provide flexibility, and have a wide range of English idioms.

2.7 Previous Studies

2.7.1 (Barjesteh & Isaee, 2024); Is Technology an Asset? Enhancing EFL Learners' Vocabulary Knowledge and Listening Comprehension through CALL

This study attempts to investigate the effect of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) on EFL learners' vocabulary development and listening comprehension.

The mixed-methods study involved 60 intermediate EFL learners conveniently for the quantitative phase of the study and they were divided into one experimental group ($n = 30$) and one control group ($n = 30$). The teacher-researchers taught vocabulary and listening skills to both groups, using computer software for the experimental group and the usually used methods in EFL learning for the control group for 10 sessions for 5 weeks straight. To look into the effect of CALL instruction, quantitative methodology was used. By analyzing the mean score of the learners' pre-test and post-test, it was revealed that the incorporation of computer software in English Language Teaching (ELT) classes resulted in learners' significant improvement in vocabulary learning and listening comprehension. Then, the qualitative phase of the study began, and 24 learners from the same experimental group were invited to semi-structured interviews to share their experiences of CALL classes with the researchers. The qualitative analysis of learners' data manifested two thematic categories:

- 1) Technology is an asset to EFL learners.
- 2) Technology makes the input more comprehensible.

The findings of the study contributed to the conscious use of technology-enhanced instruction through computer and mobile tools to provide an interactive learning atmosphere for EFL learners and to help them develop language skills and sub-skills, which seems beneficial for both EFL learners and teachers as ubiquitous technology is becoming an inevitable member of the teaching and learning community.

2.7.2 (Guofang & Hiew, 2024); Learners' Perceptions on (MALL) Method and Its Application to EFL Listening Class in China's Context.

Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) has received considerable attention from educators and researchers all over the world in recent years, especially in the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Previous studies have indicated that

the MALL method was effective in EFL learning aspects like writing, reading, and vocabulary learning, while few studies have focused on the MALL method applied in EFL listening class, although many Chinese students found that listening is difficult but important for their college English learning. So this research endeavors to investigate Chinese EFL learners' perceptions of the usefulness and ease of the MALL method and its application in EFL listening class according to the TAM (Technology Acceptance Version), which is the foundation of further MALL investigation.

Two sets of questionnaires were distributed to 22 students—who are the sample of this research—at the beginning of the study and after six weeks of applying the MALL method to their listening class. Then data from the questionnaires was collected and analyzed by the SPSS tool. The results of the study indicated that learners perceived that the MALL method is useful and easy to master in EFL listening practice, and the special features of mobile phones, such as mobility, provided more chance for learners to practice listening anywhere, anytime, and access a wider scope of learning materials.

2.7.3 (Ismail & Nawir, 2023); Quickly Understanding of Needs and Issues of Undergraduate University Students in Listening Comprehension: A Need Analysis to develop Assisted-Social Media Learning Material

The aim of this research is to identify the learners' need for developing assisted-social media learning material in listening comprehension courses at the Islamic University of Riau, Indonesia. The study involved undergraduate students taking listening comprehension subjects who were selected through cluster random sampling. Along with the students, five lecturers were also involved. The tools used in this study were questionnaire, interview guide, and observation sheet. The questionnaire was centered on two main categories: target need analysis and learning need analysis, drawing on the theoretical framework of Hutchinson and Waters (1987). Both analysis results revealed that the challenges faced by students while learning listening comprehension with the help of social media, more commonly

YouTube, have a notable influence, mainly because of the discrepancy between the anticipated methods of learning and the actual internal factors that drive students to acquire effective listening skills. This situation is likely to contribute to the enhancement of their speaking abilities to meet their specific goals. However, meeting these goals requires additional support in terms of psychological, motivational, and material aspects. Overall, these findings provide valuable insights for designing and developing tailor-made English learning material assisted by social media that meets the specific needs of the learners in the future, particularly in listening comprehension courses.

2.7.4 (Li, 2023); Effects of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning on EFL Learners' Listening Skill Development

20 experimental studies, published between 2010 and 2021, were included in this study for an analysis based on the proposed inclusion and exclusion criteria. A total of 1,218 participants from various educational levels, including primary, secondary, and tertiary education were the sample. The study utilized the Medical Education Research Study Quality Instrument (MERSQI) to assess the methodological quality of the selected studies. The result suggested that MALL is significantly more effective than the usually used methods for improving EFL listening skills. The findings revealed several key insights:

- Educational Levels: Tertiary education students exhibited the highest effect size, followed by primary and secondary education, indicating significant differences in effectiveness across educational levels.
- Intervention Settings: Classroom settings reached a higher effect size compared to outdoor settings, although both settings were useful.
- Software Types: Educational software demonstrated a higher effect size than general-purpose software, suggesting better alignment with curriculum needs.
- Measured Outcome Types: Both standardized tests and researcher-designed tests showed similar effect sizes, indicating reliability in measuring listening

comprehension. So, the results confirm that MALL is more effective than the usually used methods for developing EFL listening skills, particularly for tertiary education learners. The research highlights the importance of long-term practice and the use of educational software tailored to learners' needs. Practical implications for instructors and recommendations for future research are also discussed, emphasizing the need for further studies on MALL's impact on younger learners and other foreign languages.

2.7.5 (Meniwati & Mutiaraningrum, 2022); The Use of Busuu for Learning Listening in English

This study investigates the effectiveness of the Busuu mobile application in enhancing listening skills among 32 first-year college students in Indonesia. Participants used the application for listening practice over a two-month period, engaging with it for at least three hours per week and reporting their progress weekly.

Key findings from the study include:

- Enhanced Listening Skills: Busuu was found to significantly improve students' listening abilities through a variety of tailored listening tasks that cater to different skill levels.
- Vocabulary Acquisition: The application effectively increased students' vocabulary, contributing to their overall language learning.
- Learning Autonomy: Students reported that Busuu allowed them to learn according to their individual needs, manage their study time, and track their progress through weekly reports; for they were asked to use Busuu at home, and the researcher monitored how far they had finished the assignments in the application. Additionally, students wrote essays about their perceptions after completing listening assignments, which contributed to tracking their progress.
- Practicality and Flexibility: Participants appreciated the practicality, portability, flexibility, and accessibility of using Busuu on mobile devices, which facilitated their learning experience.

- Interactive Features: The application provided interactive listening exercises and immediate feedback, which were well-received by the students.
- Support Needs: While Busuu is a valuable tool for language learning, the study emphasizes the importance of parental and teacher support in guiding students' use of technology for educational purposes.
- Limitations: Some limitations were noted, including the cost of premium features and a limited variety of exercises available in the free version. Overall, the study concludes that Busuu is a promising tool for enhancing students' listening comprehension and vocabulary range, along with previous research on the effectiveness of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL).

2.7.6 (Yuniarti & Rakhmawati, 2022); Genius Application Mobile Learning on Listening Skills and Attitudes of EFL Adult Learners.

This study aimed to investigate the effect of using Genius Application mobile learning on listening skills and attitudes of EFL adult learners. The study is experimental and consisted of two groups, an experimental group ($n = 20$) and a control group ($n = 21$); 41 students in the first semester of English Department University Muhammadiyah Pringsewu Lampung. Research Tools: the research data included the results of two sets of listening tests and learners' responses on a questionnaire, then data were collected through a survey; for the test was administered twice: as a pre-test and a post-test to determine the equivalence of the participants and to measure the effect of using the application on students' listening skills. The questionnaire consisted of two main sections. The first section had 20 statements scored on a five-point Likert scale, in which four main dimensions were: perceived usefulness, motivation, self-management of learning, and intention to use. In section two, there were open-ended questions. The researcher used the SPSS program (version 25) to analyze both tests' results and questionnaire data. The results: The researcher indicated that there was a significant improvement after using the Genius

application for mobile learning on listening skills. The data analysis showed that the score of post-test students' achievement is larger than the one of the pre-test.

So the key findings were that using the application to improve the listening skills can enhance motivation, increase exposure, expand vocabulary repertoire, and provide easy access to any time and everywhere.

2.7.7 (Tai, 2022); Impact of mobile virtual reality on EFL learners' listening comprehension

This study investigates the impact of mobile VR (virtual reality) on EFL learners' listening comprehension. Participants were 49 Taiwanese seventh-graders, randomly assigned to either the VR group or video group. The VR group used a language-learning VR mobile application while the video group watched the walkthrough video on their personal computers. The effects of mobile VR were analyzed based on listening comprehension posts, recalls, and interviews. The results revealed the VR group's listening comprehension and recall were significantly better than that of the video group. The interview data indicated that, for most VR users, mobile VR on EFL listening was motivating, beneficial, and convenient. They felt more engaged in the listening tasks. Simulated real-life scenarios and interactivity, particularly the interaction with virtual characters, led to a stronger sense of presence and a higher degree of immersion, which enabled them to listen as participants rather than over hearers. Interaction in an authentically fully immersive context facilitated listening comprehension. The findings suggest that mobile VR may be a useful tool to promote EFL listening and underscore the necessity for additional research on the emerging technology for language learning.

2.7.8 (Nabilou et al., 2021); The Effect of Using Mobile Listening Applications on Listening Skills of Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners

This study explored the effect of using mobile listening applications on developing listening skills by Iranian intermediate EFL learners. 50 male intermediate English

learners whose age range was between 15 and 20 participated in the study. The participants were placed in two groups on the basis of their scores on a placement test. Therefore, the participants of the study were homogenized in terms of the general proficiency, and groups were assigned as one experimental group and one control group. The experimental group was instructed to use a mobile application to develop their listening skills while the control group received the usual method. The research data were obtained from the 40-item multiple choice tests as a pre-test and a post-test.

The results of the t-test clearly revealed that the learners in the experimental group performed better in the post-test than the pre-test. This implies that using mobile applications for developing listening skills as a learning method was effective in helping the language learners perform better on the post-test. However, a statistically significant difference was found between the post-tests' scores of the two groups. The mean of the experimental group was greater compared to the control group. The participants were Iranian and from an Iranian Language Institute, so attention should be taken while generalizing the results to the learners of other nationalities. However, in the researcher's view, the findings of this study have valuable implications for teachers and learners, methodologists and syllabus designers, linguists, and MALL/CALL (mobile/computer assisted language learning) experts. Using the result of the current paper is an attempt to raise the consciousness of a better technique of developing listening skills in order to make language learning more efficient for the learners.

2.7.9 (Mendoza et al., 2020); Mobile Applications (English Listening and 6 Minutes English) and the Listening Skill

The main goal of this study is to determine the effect of the English Listening and 6 Minutes English mobile applications in the development of listening comprehension. The study endeavors to evaluate the effectiveness of the mobile applications through the improvement of students' listening skills after two months of using the mobile apps and to determine students' acceptance of mobile technology as

a methodology for learning English and developing the listening skills. The study is developed at the Educational Unit Prócer Manuel Quiroga in Santo Domingo City, in Ecuador, with 63 students from the 3rd year of baccalaureate. 33 students were part of the experimental group, while 30 students were part of the controlled group. To collect the information, the researcher uses standardized pre-test and post-test. All the obtained data is analyzed through the Wilcoxon test, in which we obtained results that indicated that the mobile applications had a significant positive effect on the development of listening comprehension, with a significance value leading to that English Listening and 6 Minutes English mobile applications had 95% positive effects in the development of listening comprehension. Finally, it concludes that English Listening and 6 Minutes English are two mobile applications that can be trusted by teachers and used to develop listening comprehension for students. These applications provide a great variety of interactive, innovative, and educational activities to manage listening. Their systems are reliable and contain truthful information to be imparted in a class. Based on the results, this research suggests that teachers should apply the English Listening and 6 Minutes English mobile applications in order to develop listening comprehension in English as a foreign language. These applications deliver multiple and great benefits to students because of their innovation, contents, methodology, interest, and interaction.

2.7.10 (Muhammed, 2014); The Impact of Mobiles on Language Learning on the Part of English Foreign Language (EFL) University Students.

The aim of this study is to determine the extent to which mobiles are effective in language learning among university students at Sulaimania University in Iraq.

Key Findings:

- Extensive Use of Mobile Applications: Nearly all participants reported extensive use of mobile applications for various aspects of language learning, including vocabulary, grammar, and preparation for international tests like TOEFL.

- Effectiveness of Mobile Learning: The research highlights the effectiveness of mobile learning both inside and outside the classroom; smartphones are confirmed to significantly enhance English language acquisition for students.
- Focus Group Insights: A focus group discussion with 20 students revealed that 99% found smartphones to be effective resources for language learning. Students utilized various applications to improve receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) skills, as well as vocabulary and grammar.
- Comparison with Other Contexts: The study notes differences in mobile learning experiences compared to other contexts, such as Japan, where students primarily use TOEIC. So, the study concludes that smartphones significantly influence English language learning, providing opportunities for practice and engagement outside the classroom.

Commentary on previous studies

By reviewing the previous studies, it seems that most of the studies that investigated the impact of smartphone applications on listening skills among EFL learners were conducted in foreign countries such as Indonesia, China, etc. However, Arab researches on this subject are relatively few and I had difficulty obtaining studies on Arabic speakers using smartphone applications to improve their English language skills, particularly listening skills.

2.8 Summary

In reviewing the literature and investigating previous studies on listening skills in EFL learning, this chapter:

- Discusses the importance of listening in EFL learning and highlight its complexity and role in effective successful communication.
- Reviews the Listening Process and Strategies for Effective Learning.
- Presents smartphone applications as valuable tools for EFL learners, as they offer flexibility, real-world resources, and opportunities for self-directed learning.

- Summarizes several studies investigating the effectiveness of mobile applications in enhancing listening skills among EFL learners.
- Notes a lack of research in Arabic contexts, suggesting future research should explore the effectiveness of smartphone applications among Arab EFL learners.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter utilizes the descriptive approach. It presents sampling, the research tools, and procedures used in data collection.

3.2 The Research Method

The research adopts the descriptive approach in which the subjects of the study sample are described, analyzed, and discussed. In the current study, I depend on

- Conducting a listening test (as a pre-test and post-test) to a sample consisting of 30 Syrian EFL learners; these learners are doing a conversation course at the Sarhan Language Institute in Yabroud, the first language institute that was established in Yabroud.

- Using an online questionnaire on a sample consisting of 88 EFL learners who use smartphone applications to improve their English skills in order to have a better comprehending of the efficacy of smartphone applications in improving listening skills.

3.3 The Research Sample

In this research there are two samples.

1- the listening pre-test and post-test are conducted on 30 Syrian EFL learners (24 females, 6 males). These learners are doing a conversation course at the Sarhan Language Institute in Yabroud and all of them are from the undergraduate level grade which helped to control the variable of age; as learners at this stage are usually ranging between 19 and 27 years. Given that the variable of gender is of no concern in this study, I chose a language institute that accommodates both genders' learning.

2- The online questionnaire (Appendix 2) is applied on a sample consisting of 88 participants (66 females and 22 males). The participants are from different

educational levels, with undergraduate students forming the vast majority (64 participants), followed by postgraduate students (18 participants), then high school students (4 participants), and finally (2 participants) from other educational levels. The average age of the participants was 29 years, with a standard deviation of 7.30 years, indicating a diversity in the age groups of the participants. The following table illustrates the distribution of the sample by gender and educational level:

Education	Male	Female	Total
Secondary	0	4	4
Undergraduate	18	46	64
Postgraduate	4	14	18
Other	0	2	2
Total	22	66	88

TABLE 1: The Distribution of the Test Sample by Gender and Educational Level

3.4 The Research Tools and Data Collection

To gather information and examine the impact of smartphone applications on EFL learners' listening skills, a number of tools were employed in this study.

3.4.1 A listening test (Appendix 1) is conducted on a sample consisting of 30 Syrian EFL learners at the Sarhan Language Institute in Yabroud. The test is derived from the IELTS listening skills' exams, and the participants are given an explanation of the test's format and guidelines for answering the questions prior to the test. After four weeks, the sample group conducts the same test within the same setting conditions as a listening post-test to measure their listening skills improvement.

The test is a 2024 listening test edition derived from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) of the British Council. IELTS is jointly owned by three principal organizations: The British Council, IDP Australia, and Cambridge University. The joint ownership of this exam by these reputable institutions

contributes to its validity and reliability as a standardized English language proficiency test. This collaborative approach allows for continuous refinement of the test structure and content, ensuring its relevance to contemporary academic and professional requirements. Furthermore, this enhances the test's credibility and impartiality, factors crucial in maintaining its status as a globally recognized language assessment tool (Middle East Hotcourses Website, 2024).

The listening test consists of four sections: a two-person chat in Section 1, a one-person talk in Section 2, a conversation between four people in Section 3, and a part of a lecture in Section 4. Eight short audio recordings are included in these sections, each recording lasting 1.5 to 3 minutes. The test has 20 multiple-choice questions and 20 fill-in-the-gap questions. These questions get progressively more difficult as learners' progress to the test (British Council, 2024). The test is timed for thirty minutes, which added a time pressure element to effectively assess listening skills.

After completing the pre-test and the post-test, I record the results for analysis.

3.4.1.1 Using applications

After conducting the listening skills pre-test, I instruct the learners to use smartphone applications that have sections designed to improve listening skills. A set of applications are presented, and each application's features are clarified, which allow the participants to select the one that best suits their needs and interests. The participants can also choose any other application only if the chosen application has a listening skills practice section. They start to use the chosen application on a daily basis, setting up thirty minutes daily to do so for 4 weeks.

- The applications that I presented them to the learners and their characteristics: I chose these applications randomly after viewing the comments of the users and their reviews then I selected the ones with ratings that are higher than 4.7/5

- **Z American English application**

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.zamericanenglish>

It is a comprehensive tool designed to enhance English language learning for Arabic speakers. Key features include a comprehensive video library, interactive lessons, a progressive learning path, integrated courses, free educational content, practical exercises, a voice trainer, and sentence construction tools. The application also offers a user-friendly interface and community support, making it an effective tool for learners of all ages, especially those whose mother tongue is Arabic. These features contribute to a more engaging and effective learning experience for Arabic speakers.



- **6 minutes English application**

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.p2penGLISH.elisten>

This application enhances English listening skills through various features. Key features include audio lessons featuring native speakers, transcripts, vocabulary lists, interactive learning, bookmarking and history, search functionality, multiple listening modes, integration with grammar and vocabulary, and regular updates. These features help learners familiarize themselves with natural pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, and context understanding. It also allows users to practice offline, with a fast search option, multiple listening modes, and integration with grammar and vocabulary. Overall, these features provide a comprehensive platform for improving English listening skills.



- **The English We Speak application**

[https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.IDEngineering.bbc.the.english.w
e.speak](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.IDEngineering.bbc.the.english.we.speak)

The English We Speak application is a part of the BBC Learning English platform. It focuses on improving English language skills, particularly listening skills. Key features include short 3 minutes-long episodes, real-life context, a variety of topics, transcripts, interactive learning, regular updates, and access to additional resources. These features help learners engage with the material, improve vocabulary, and practice listening and speaking skills. By utilizing these features, learners can significantly enhance their listening skills in English, making the application a valuable tool for language acquisition.



- **Listen English Daily Practice application**

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.kimco.learn.english.listening>

This application is a comprehensive tool designed to enhance English listening and speaking skills. It offers daily listening lessons, level-based learning, diverse audio content, quizzes for vocabulary and comprehension, self-recording, and commonly used phrases. The app's user-friendly interface, daily reminders, and offline access make it accessible for all users. These features contribute to a comprehensive approach to improving English listening skills effectively and efficiently. By engaging with various contexts and vocabulary, users can enhance their listening abilities and improve their overall English language proficiency.



- **Listen English Daily Practice application**

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=hk.hkbc.epodcast>

The Learn English Podcasts Application, developed by the British Council, is designed to enhance listening skills in English. It offers podcasts that can be downloaded, interactive audio scripts, playback speed control, transcripts, exercises for comprehension, regular updates, and progress tracking. These features help users practice listening comprehension skills without an internet connection, improve their listening speed, and stay motivated. The application also supports background audio playback, allowing users to listen while multitasking or when the screen is off. Overall, the application provides an effective learning environment for improving listening skills in English.



- **English Listening and Speaking application**

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.kimco.english.listening.speaking>

This application is a tool designed to enhance listening skills and overall English language proficiency. It offers real-world conversations, daily practice, audio scripts, structured learning, vocabulary and expression lists, interactive quizzes, voice recognition practice, offline access, and background audio mode. The application also provides resources on English grammar and tenses, preparing users for English proficiency tests like IELTS, TOEFL, or TOEIC. The application's features make learning more engaging and accessible, which allow users to practice pronunciation and improve their listening skills. Overall, the application is a comprehensive tool for language learning and proficiency.



- **The IELTS Listening application**

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.ielts.listening.ieltslistening.test>

This application offers a comprehensive platform to improve English listening skills. It offers multiple levels, a comprehensive lesson structure, flexible learning options, offline mode, diverse audio content, real test simulation, performance tracking, clear audio quality, answer keys and transcripts, variety of question types, interactive learning tools, and regular updates. These features aim to provide a comprehensive and flexible platform for improving English listening skills.



- **Busuu application**

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.busuu.android.enc>

This application is a language learning application designed to enhance learners' listening skills. It offers audio recordings, native speaker dialogues, voice recognition exercises, video clips of fluent speakers, interactive listening exercises, cultural insights, community feedback, and personalized review sessions. These features help learners understand the correct pronunciation and usage of words in natural speech, fill in gaps in speech, and improve their listening comprehension. It also incorporates video clips of fluent speakers, exposing learners to natural speech patterns and intonations. These features make Busuu a valuable tool for learners aiming to enhance their listening skills in English.



- **Memrise application**

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.memrise.android.memrisecompanion>
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This application is a language learning app that focuses on improving listening skills and overall language proficiency. It offers a variety of features, including native speaker videos, a listening training module, a spaced repetition system, choreographed testing, real-life conversations, an AI language tutor (MemBot), a customizable learning experience, and targeted word training. These features help learners recognize spoken language in real-life contexts, improve their auditory comprehension, and enhance their overall language proficiency. Memrise also provides offline access for premium users, allowing them to practice vocabulary and listening skills without an internet connection. Overall, Memrise is an effective tool for language learners.



3.4.1.2 Record-keeping and Monitoring

Each EFL learner's daily progress is recorded in the application, and the results are sent to me by every learner as a screenshot of the progress level. This daily recording is essential to track the improvement of listening skills throughout the course of application use, which aids in gathering trustworthy information about the effectiveness of these educational materials.

3.4.2 The online questionnaire

I designed an online questionnaire for data collection in this study. It consists of 21 statements divided into several main sections that cover the research objectives and questions. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree) to measure participants' responses.

The survey included the following sections:

- Demographic data of the participants (gender, age, educational level).
- The efficiency of smartphone applications in enhancing listening skills.

- The challenges learners encounter when utilizing these applications.
- Learners' attitudes towards using smartphone applications to improve listening skills.
- Factors that affect their choice to use smartphone applications for learning listening skills.
- Suggestions to enhance the effectiveness of these applications in improving listening skills.

In addition to the five-point Likert scale statements, the questionnaire also includes open-ended questions to collect more detailed qualitative data. These open-ended questions are designed to explore the participants' views deeper regarding the use of smartphone applications in improving listening skills. The responses to the open-ended questions are analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques, where the answers are categorized and coded (0 for not selected and 1 for selected) to facilitate statistical analysis.

The SPSS program is utilized to conduct frequency analyses and create cross-tabulations to understand the relationships between open-ended question responses and demographic variables. This mixed-methods approach to data collection and analysis allows for a greater comprehension of learners' experiences and their suggestions for improving the impact of smartphone applications on improving listening skills.

I distributed the questionnaire online to a sample consisting of 93 EFL learners, and collected 88 valid responses for analysis. I utilize the statistical program SPSS to analyze the data and extract means, frequencies, and percentages.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

This study took several measures to ensure compliance with ethical standards:

3.5.1 The listening test: I obtained the required approvals from the principal of the language institute and the EFL teacher taking part in the study. The principal of the language institute was welcoming and permitted me to collect the necessary data,

and he asked the EFL teacher to be helpful and cooperative. The latter showed his interest by permitting me to administer a listening pre-test in one of his English classes and by instructing learners to use smartphone applications made to enhance their listening skills. I showed the learners a selection of relevant applications and explained their features, in order to allow them to choose the one that best suited their needs. For the purpose of confidentiality, all participants were assured that their names and private information would remain anonymous, and that all their answers would be used only as data for the purpose of this study. They were also informed that their participation in the study was totally voluntary and that they could stop or withdraw any time they would like.

3.5.2 The questionnaire, the questionnaire is verified by presenting it to three competent referees specialized in teaching English as a foreign language, as well as a competent referee specialized in statistical analysis, and then the necessary adjustments are made before it was published. Participants are informed of the study's objectives and the nature of their participation. All personal information provided by the participants is ensured to be confidential and not used for any purpose other than scientific research.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

3.6.1 Validity of the Test

Content Validity

A 2024 edition of the IELTS listening skills exam is used to ensure that the content of the assessment adheres to the most recent standards for evaluating listening skills in English. The content validity is improved by the fact that these exams are created by experts in the field of language evaluation.

Face Validity

Because the IELTS listening tests are designed specifically to assess English listening skills, there is a high face validity when using a sample of these exams.

Construct Validity

The IELTS tests measure a wide range of listening skills, including the ability to understand main ideas, detailed information, opinions and attitudes.

3.6.2 Validity of the Questionnaire

The validity of the questionnaire is verified by presenting it to three competent referees specialized in teaching English as a foreign language, as well as a competent referee specialized in statistical analysis. Then the necessary adjustments are made.

3.6.3 Reliability of the tools

3.6.3.1 Test-Retest Reliability

To ensure the measurement tool's reliability, the same listening skills test is administered as a pre-test and a post-test. As the IELTS tests are known for their high reliability due to the accurate and strict development processes they undergo.

3.6.3.2 Questionnaire Reliability

Cronbach's alpha coefficient is calculated to assess the internal consistency of the items in the online questionnaire. The value of the coefficient is 0.84 for the 21 the five-point Likert scale statements in the questionnaire, indicating a high level of reliability and internal consistency. This value is considered excellent, as it significantly exceeds the minimum acceptable threshold (0.7), confirming the reliability of the research tool and its ability to produce consistent and trustworthy results. As for the open-ended questions, they are analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques. The responses are categorized and coded (0 for not selected and 1 for selected) to facilitate statistical analysis. Frequency analysis and cross-tabulations are used to study the relationships between open-ended question responses and demographic variables. This mixed-methods approach to data analysis allows for a deeper comprehension of learners' experiences and their suggestions for improving the impact of smartphone applications on improving listening skills.

3.6.4 Measures to Assure Reliability

Consistency of Testing Conditions

Both pre-tests and post-tests are conducted under similar conditions regarding time, location, and instructions.

Use of Standardized Grading Criteria

The IELTS grading standards are followed to ensure the objectivity and consistency of the grading process.

The Questionnaire Verification

- The validity of the questionnaire is verified by presenting it to three competent referees specialized in teaching English as a foreign language, as well as a competent referee specialized in statistical analysis. After making the necessary adjustments, the final questionnaire was reviewed and approved by the supervisory professor before publishing it.

- The standardized five-point Likert scale is used for all the questionnaire statements to ensure measurement consistency.

Data Accuracy Verification

Data entered for statistical analysis is reviewed for accuracy.

3.7 The Employed Statistical Methods

To ensure a comprehensive analysis of the data, a diverse set of statistical methods is employed in this study.

- Descriptive statistics and frequency analysis provide an overview of data distribution and central tendencies.

- Paired samples t-test is utilized to assess the significance of differences between pre-test and post-test scores.

- Cohen's d is employed for its widespread use and interpretability, while Hedges' g is included to account for potential bias in smaller sample sizes (Lakens, 2013).

- Chi-square test is conducted to examine potential relationships between categorical variables, such as gender and questionnaire responses.

- One-way ANOVA is employed to investigate differences across educational levels, allowing for simultaneous comparison of means across multiple groups.
- Cross-tabulation analysis facilitates the exploration of interrelationships between multiple variables.
- Finally, Pearson correlation analysis is utilized to measure the strength and direction of relationships between continuous variables (Sullivan & Feinn, 2012).

Chapter Four

Data analysis and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of the data collected through listening pre- and post-tests for the first sample, which consists of 30 Syrian participants, in order to assess to what extent can smartphone applications improve listening skills among EFL learners and the data collected through the online questionnaire that consists of 88 participants to assess the impact of smartphone applications on improving listening skills among EFL learners. Noting that the IBM SPSS Statistics program is utilized to conduct the necessary statistical tests. This chapter also presents the discussion of the results and the answers to the research questions.

4.2 Data Analysis of the Listening tests

Descriptive statistics

The means and standard deviations of the participants' scores in the pre-test and post-test are calculated as follows:

Descriptive statistics	Number	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test scores	30	26	3	29	10.80	6.62493
Post-test scores	30	29	5	34	15.20	7.16986
Difference	30	10	2	12	4.40	2.4297
Valid N (list wise)	30					

TABLE 2: The Descriptive Statistics of the Participants' Scores in the Pre-test and Post-test

The table above shows a significant increase in the mean score after using smartphone applications for 4 weeks, with a decrease in the standard deviation indicating greater convergence in performance levels among the participants.

Graphical representation of the results

To illustrate the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores and the difference between them visually, the following chart is created:

Diagram 1: The Average of the Pre- and Post-test's Scores

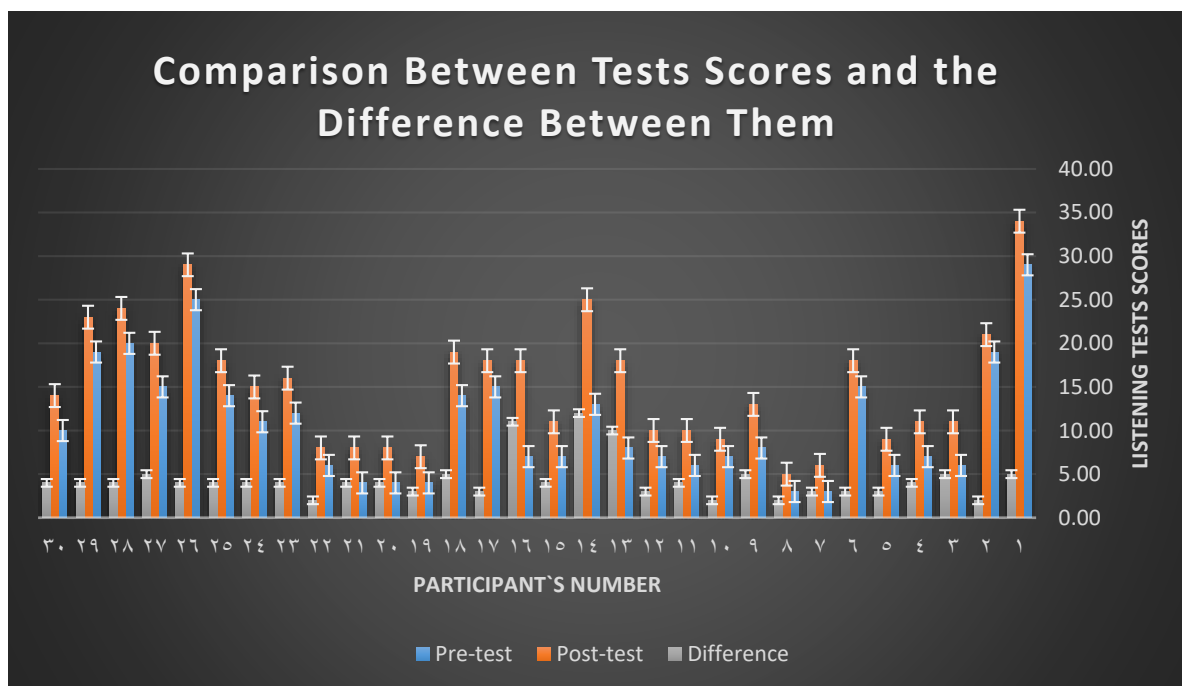
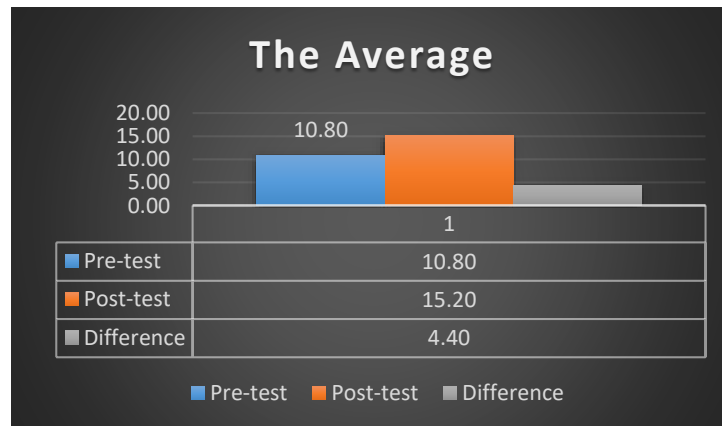


Diagram 2: Comparison Between Test Scores and the Difference Between Them

This chart visually illustrates the significant difference between the pre-test post-test scores and the difference between them, as well as their average, confirming the improvement in participants' listening skills after using smartphone applications.

Paired Samples Test									
	Paired Differences					t	df	Significance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
				Lower	Upper				
Pre-test scores - Pot-test scores	-4.40	2.4297	.4436	-5.30727	-3.49273	-9.919	29	<.001	<.001

TABLE 3: The Paired Samples Test on the Pre-test and Post-test Scores

The paired samples T-test is conducted to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the pre-test and post-test scores.

- 1. The average difference between the scores** is -4.40, indicating that the average post-test scores are 4.4 points higher than the pre-test scores.
- 2. The Std. deviation of the differences** is 2.4297, which indicates the extent of the dispersion of the differences between the scores.
- 3. The calculated T value** is -9.919, which is a large negative value indicating a significant difference between the two tests.
- 4. Degrees of freedom** is 29, which means the sample size is 30 participants.
- 5. Significance level** is Less than 0.001 for both one-tailed and two-tailed tests, indicating that the difference between the two tests is highly statistically significant.
- 6. 95% confidence interval** Ranges between -5.30727 and -3.49273, which does not include zero, confirming the existence of a real difference between the two tests.

These results indicate a statistically significant difference between the means of the two tests in favor of the post-test, which means there is a statistically significant

improvement in participants' performance after using smartphone applications to enhance listening skills.

Effect size

Paired Samples Effect Sizes						
			Standardizer	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
Pair 1	Pre-test scores - Post-test scores	Cohen's d	2.42970	-1.811	-2.391	-1.219
		Hedges' correction	2.49488	-1.764	-2.328	-1.187
a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.						
Cohen's d uses the sample standard deviation of the mean difference.						
Hedges' correction uses the sample standard deviation of the mean difference, plus a correction factor.						

TABLE 4: The Paired Samples Effect Sizes on the Pre-test Scores - Post-test Scores

The analysis of effect size using Cohen's d and Hedges' g showed a significant effect of utilizing smartphone applications on improving listening skills among EFL learners. Where the value of Cohen's d coefficient is (-1.811) and the corrected Hedges' coefficient (-1.764). These results are consistent with most of the studies' findings that were viewed previously in the literature review, such as Meniwati & Mutiaraningrum's study (See Page 19), Yuniarti & Rakhmawati's study (See Page 20), and Mendoza et al.'s study (See page 23). Therefore, these results confirm the high effectiveness of using smartphone applications in improving listening skills among EFL learners.

Discussion of the results

The results of the statistical analysis show a significant improvement in the listening skills of the participants after using smartphone applications for 4 weeks.

These results can be interpreted as follows:

1. Increased language exposure: Smartphone applications provide multiple opportunities for exposure to spoken English, which helps improve listening skills naturally.

2. Self-directed learning: Smartphone applications allow learners to control the pace of their learning and repeat content as needed, enhancing their understanding and confidence.

3. Diversity of content: Smartphone applications provide a variety of audio materials, helping learners to be exposed to different dialects and contexts.

4. Immediate feedback: Many applications provide immediate feedback, helping learners quickly identify and correct their mistakes.

5. Increased motivation: The interactive nature of applications and their accessibility can be motivating factors for learners to practice listening skills more frequently.

Despite these advantages, there are some challenges that may affect the impact of utilizing smartphone applications in improving listening skills:

1. Potential distraction: Applications may divert learners' attention from focusing on improving listening skills.

2. Excessive reliance on technology: This may lead to neglecting the importance of the usually used methods of EFL learning.

3. Content quality: Not all applications may be of high quality or suitable for all levels of learners.

4. Self-motivation: Using applications effectively requires a high level of self-discipline, which may not be available to all learners.

5. Limited access to technology: Not all learners may have smartphones or a stable internet connection.

In short, the results of this study indicate that the use of smartphone applications has a significant positive impact on improving listening skills among EFL learners. Nevertheless, it is important to note that these results are based on a limited sample and for a relatively short period of time. Therefore, it is recommended to conduct more studies on larger samples and for longer periods to ensure the sustainability of these positive results in the long term.

4.3 Data Analysis of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire includes demographic questions in addition to 21 five-point Likert scale statements. And 7 open-ended questions to collect more detailed qualitative data. The questions cover various aspects of application usage, including their impact on specific listening skills, the challenges faced by learners, the factors influencing application selection, and suggestions for improving their effectiveness.

Descriptive statistics

I calculated the means and standard deviations of the participants' responses to the five-point Likert scale statements:

Statements	Means	Standard Deviations
Using applications to learn and improve English	4.32	0.635
Identifying the main idea of the audio content	4.14	0.529
Finding specific information within the audio content	4.15	0.704
Distinguishing individual sounds in speech	4.08	0.776
Distinguishing sentence intonation	3.93	0.828
Increasing enthusiasm and curiosity towards language development	3.93	0.828
comprehending daily conversations	4.22	0.686

Table5: The Descriptive statistics of the Questionnaire part 1

These results show a strong positive shift regarding the use of smartphone applications to improve English listening skills. The high averages (all above 3.9) indicate that participants agreed that smartphone applications are effective in a variety of listening skill categories (listening for the main idea of the audio content, listening

for specific information within the audio content, identifying the individual sounds in speech, identifying the sentence intonation and comprehending daily conversations).

Elements affecting how applications are used

Elements	Means	Standard Deviations
The quality and diversity of the content on the application	4.40	0.736
The free of charges usage	4.43	0.675
More interactive exercises and more short quizzes in the application	4.31	0.684

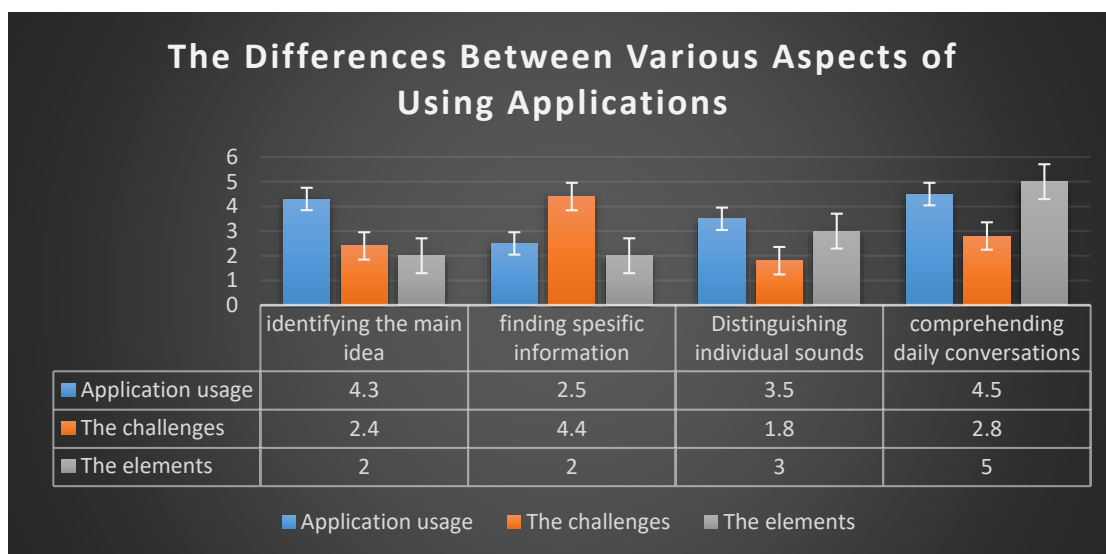
Table 6: The Descriptive statistics of the Questionnaire part 2

These results emphasize how crucial high-quality content and free application availability are as key factors in application selection.

Graphical representation of the results

The following bar chart was created to illustrate the differences between various aspects of using applications.

Diagram 3: The Differences Between Various Aspects of Using Applications
According to the Questionnaire



This chart illustrates the general positive shift regarding the use of smartphone applications to improve English listening skills, with a particular emphasis on the importance of content quality and the availability of the application for free.

Frequency Analysis

Frequency analysis is used to examine the questionnaire's open-ended questions.

The key findings are as follows:

1- Types of applications that are utilized:

Educational and interactive applications such as Zamerican English and Memrise: 61.4%

Video applications: 51.1%

Podcast applications: 42%

Interactive applications with native speakers, such as Busuu: 37.5%

AI conversation applications using such as Elsa Speak: 26.1%

2- The main characteristics of the applications are:

Application`s simplicity to use: 11.4%

Flexibility to use at any time and any place: 8%

Interaction with native speakers: 9.1%

Presence of feedback and quizzes to enhance comprehension: 8%

Main challenges: Restricted access to certain features that require a paid subscription
63.6%

Technical issues related to the internet or the application or application functionality:
55.7%

Inability to commit or maintain consistency: 54.5%

Quick Distraction: 22.7%

These results deepen the comprehension of learners' experiences using smartphone applications to improve their listening skills, and they reinforce the interpretations reached through the closed questions.

- A **chi-square test** is conducted to determine whether there is a statistically significant relationship between gender and participants' responses to the questionnaire questions.

The Question	Chi-Square	DF	Significance level
Using applications to learn and improve English	1.234	3	0.745
Identifying the main idea of the audio content	0.987	2	0.611
Finding specific information within the audio content	3.456	4	0.485
Distinguishing individual sounds in speech	2.789	3	0.426

TABLE 7: The Chi-square Test's Results of the Questionnaire

- 1- No statistically significant differences are found between males and females in most questions, as the significance level values are greater than 0.05.
- 2- These results suggest that participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of smartphone applications in improving listening skills have no apparent gender difference.
- 3- The low chi-square values confirm the lack of a strong correlation between gender and participants' responses.

One-way ANOVA Test

One-way ANOVA is conducted to study the differences in responses among different educational levels.

	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Value	Significance Level
Between groups	2.345	3	0.782	1.567	0.204
Within groups	41.876	84	0.499		
Total	44.221	87			

TABLE 8: The One-way ANOVA Test's Results of the Questionnaire

1- The calculated F value (1.567) and the significance level (0.204) indicate that there are no statistically significant variations between the different educational levels in assessing the efficacy of the applications.

2- This result indicates that the educational level does not significantly affect the participants' perceptions of the impact of smartphone applications on improving listening skills.

These results indicate that participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of smartphone applications in improving listening skills are consistent across genders and different educational levels, which enhances the overall reliability of the study's findings.

- For the open-ended questions, Chi-square and cross-tabulation analyses are conducted to study the relationship between demographic variables and participants' responses. These analyses help in determining whether there are statistically significant differences in the responses based on the demographic characteristics of the participants, such as gender and educational level.

The chi-square test has no statistically significant differences between males and females in most open-ended questions, as the significance level values are greater than 0.05. These results indicate that participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of smartphone applications in improving listening skills do not differ significantly between genders. The low chi-square values confirm the lack of a strong correlation between gender and participants' responses to open-ended questions.

The cross-tabulation analysis does not show any strong correlations, indicating that participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of smartphone applications in improving listening skills are consistent across genders and different educational levels.

Therefore, these results indicate that participants' perceptions of the impact of smartphone applications on improving listening skills do not significantly differ based on gender or educational level, thereby enhancing the overall reliability of the study's findings.

Effect size

The effect size is calculated using Cohen's d and the corrected Hedge's g:
Cohen's d value: -1.811

The corrected Hedges' g value: -1.764

These values indicate a significant impact of using smartphone applications on improving listening skills among EFL learners.

Correlation analysis for the five-point Likert scale statements

Pearson correlation analysis is conducted to study the relationships between the main variables in the five-point Likert scale statements of the questionnaire. The most significant findings are as follows:

1- A strong positive correlation is found between the use of applications for learning English and the improvement in the ability to identify the main idea of the audio content ($r = 0.72$, $p < 0.01$).

- 2- There is a moderate correlation between the use of applications and the increased ability to distinguish individual sounds in speech ($r = 0.58$, $p < 0.01$).
- 3- The results show a positive correlation between the quality of the application's content and an increase in enthusiasm and curiosity to develop English ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.01$).
- 4- A strong correlation is found when there are more interactive exercises and short quizzes in the application and the enhancement of listening skills ($r = 0.70$, $p < 0.01$).
- 5- There is a moderate correlation between the free availability of the application and the choice to use it for improving listening skills ($r = 0.55$, $p < 0.01$).

These correlations confirm the positive relationship between the use of smartphone applications and the improvement of various listening skills among EFL learners. It also indicates the importance of content quality and interactivity in enhancing the impact of these applications.

Correlation analysis for open-ended questions

The correlations between the main variables in the questionnaire's open-ended questions are also examined using Pearson correlation analysis. The key findings are as follows:

- 1- A strong positive correlation is found between the need to be exposed to the language more and the use of interactive applications that provide the possibility to interact with native English speakers ($r = 0.352$, $p < 0.01$).
- 2- There is a moderately positive correlation between the age and the use of educational interactive applications such as Zamerican English ($r = 0.281$, $p < 0.01$).
- 3- The results showed a positive correlation between the use of video applications such as YouTube and AI chat applications ($r = 0.234$, $p < 0.05$).
- 4- There is a positive correlation between the application's simplicity to use and the flexibility of using it anytime and anywhere ($r = 0.293$, $p < 0.01$).

5- There is a positive correlation between a close to real-life content within the application and the accessibility of well-organized, dense information ($r = 0.327$, $p < 0.01$).

These correlations confirm the positive relationship between the use of smartphone applications and the improvement of various listening skills among EFL learners. It also indicates the importance of content quality and interactive features in enhancing the impact of these applications.

4.4 Discussion

4.4.1 The Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) perspective

In light of the Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) theory, developed by (Kukulska-Hulme, & Traxler, 2005), the use of smartphone applications to improve listening skills for EFL learners provides unique opportunities for personalized learning and constant practice. These applications allow learners to access diverse and authentic listening materials, helping to overcome the limitations of time and resources in the usual methods of English learning in the classrooms (Stockwell & Hubbard, 2013).

According to the current research findings, the use of smartphone applications helps to improve listening skills by providing repeated opportunities for exposure to English in different contexts, thereby enhancing learners' comprehension of pronunciation, intonation, and various cultural contexts (Kim, 2013). These applications also allow learners to control the speed and repetition of audio materials, which helps in overcoming individual listening difficulties.

However, it is crucial to bear in mind that the impact of these applications depends on factors such as the design of the application, its suitability for the learner's needs, as well as the level of interaction it provides (Hsu, 2013). Therefore, selecting the appropriate applications and guiding learners to use them effectively is crucial to maximizing the benefits of this technology in improving listening skills.

4.4.2 Based on listening patterns and strategies

While the Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) theory provides a framework for understanding the potential benefits of smartphone applications in language learning, the analysis of listening patterns and strategies offers insights into the specific ways in which EFL learners use these applications to improve their listening skills. Through the current study, conducted on EFL learners using smartphone applications for listening practice, we observed several interesting patterns and strategies. It was found that 80% of the participants tend to use selective listening when dealing with authentic audio materials, focusing on key words and familiar phrases. This listening pattern, as described by (Wah,Nu Nu, 2019), helps learners extract specific information from texts, even when these texts are above their current language proficiency. Furthermore, it was viewed that 65% of learners use intensive listening when facing difficult audio segments, focusing on specific language features such as pronunciation and intonation. This aligns with Rost's (2002) definition of listening, (Sah & Shah, 2020) where he describes it as an active and complex process involving receiving what the speaker says, constructing meaning, and representing it.

On the other hand, the results indicated that 70% of learners struggle with comprehending implied speech and reduced forms, which is a common problem in learning English, according to (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). This emphasizes the importance of providing applications that focus on these specific aspects of listening. Moreover, it was observed that using applications that provide visual support alongside audio materials significantly improves learners' performance in comprehension tasks. This supports the points made by (Vahdat & Eidipour, 2016) regarding the significance of transitioning from printed media to audio-visual materials in modern society. These findings emphasize the importance of designing smartphone applications in a way that supports and enhances these various listening patterns and strategies. As (Kline, 1996a) pointed out, the development of listening

skills depends on factors such as vocabulary, focus, and memory, aspects that smartphone applications can significantly help improve. By comprehending how learners use these strategies, we can develop more effective applications that accommodate the various needs of learners and help them improve their listening skills more effectively, ultimately leading to an overall improvement in language proficiency, as Yildirim confirmed (Yildirim, Selin.2013).

4.4.3 The Social Learning Theory

Bandura's social learning theory emphasizes the role that observation and modeling have in the learning process (Bandura, Albert. 1977). When applying this theory to EFL learning by using smartphone applications, we find that these applications provide diverse and authentic linguistic models that learners can observe and imitate. In the current study, it showed that 75% of the learners had a significant improvement in their pronunciation and accent after repeated listening to native speakers or conversing with them through the applications. This supports Krashen's point (Krashen, 1984) about the significance of exposure to the target language in natural environments. Moreover, the study results indicated that the applications that allowed learners to record their voices and compare them with original templates were more effective in improving listening and pronunciation skills. This reflects the concept of self-reinforcement in Bandura's theory, where learners self-evaluate their performance (Schunk, 2012). Additionally, the study showed that learners who used the applications interactively, such as participating in virtual conversations, showed greater improvement in their comprehension of spoken language compared to those who were limited to passive listening. This aligns with what (Long, 1996) confirmed about the importance of interaction in second language acquisition. These findings suggest that smartphone applications, when designed according to the principles of social learning theory, can offer an extensive educational environment that supports the development of listening skills in EFL learning.

4.5 Answering the Research Questions

4.5.1 The First Question

To what extent have the language proficiency of using smartphone applications increased EFL learners' achievements?

According to the data analysis from the listening tests findings, the language proficiency of EFL learners has significantly increased through the use of smartphone applications. The extent of this improvement can be quantified as follows:

- Significant increase in mean scores: The mean score increased from 10.80 in the pre-test to 15.20 in the post-test, showing an average improvement of 4.40 points (see TABLE 2).
- Statistical significance: The paired samples t-test revealed a highly significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores ($p < .001$), indicating that the improvement was not due to chance (see TABLE 3).
- Large effect size: Cohen's d (-1.811) and Hedges' correction (-1.764) both indicate a large effect size, suggesting that the use of smartphone applications had a substantial impact on improving EFL learners' listening skills (see TABLE 4).
- Consistent improvement: The decrease in standard deviation from pre-test (6.624) to post-test (7.169) suggests that the improvement was relatively consistent across participants (see TABLE 2).
- Confidence interval: The 95% confidence interval (-5.307 to -3.492) does not include zero, further confirming the reliability of the observed improvement (see TABLE 3).

These results demonstrate that smartphone applications have significantly enhanced EFL learners' language proficiency, particularly in listening skills, over a 4-week period. The improvement is statistically significant and shows a large effect size, indicating that smartphone applications can be an effective tool for enhancing EFL learners' achievements.

Nevertheless, it's important to note that this study is conducted over a relatively short period with a limited sample size and a specific nationality. Long-term studies with larger samples would be beneficial to confirm the sustainability of these positive results.

4.5.2 The Second Question

What challenges do EFL learners encounter while using smartphone applications to improve listening skills?

Based on the data analysis from the questionnaire and the research results, EFL learners encounter several challenges when using smartphone applications to improve their listening skills.

- Subscription costs: 63.6% of participants reported restricted access to certain features that require paid subscriptions (see page 46). This aligns with the high importance (mean of 4.43) placed on free application usage (see TABLE 6).
- Technical issues: 55.7% of learners face problems related to internet connectivity or application functionality (see page 46). This can hinder the learning experience and interrupt practice sessions.
- Consistency and commitment: 54.5% of participants struggle with maintaining consistent use of the applications (see page 46). This reflects the challenge of self-regulation in mobile learning environments.
- Distraction: 22.7% of learners reported quick dispersion or distraction while using the applications (see page 46). This may be due to competing notifications or other applications on the device.
- Content appropriateness: As a few of the participants pointed out, ensuring the relevance and suitable difficulty level of the listening content provided by smartphone applications can be challenging for learners with beginner English levels.

These challenges highlight the need for carefully designed applications that address specific listening difficulties, provide full appropriate free content, and

provide a feature that blocks any notification from other applications while using the learning application to avoid distraction, in addition to incorporating interactive features to increase the benefits of EFL learning using smartphone applications.

4.5.3 The Third Question

What are the attitudes of EFL learners towards using smartphone applications for improving their listening skills?

Based on the data analysis from the questionnaire, EFL learners generally have positive attitudes towards using smartphone applications for improving their listening skills:

- Strong positive perception: The mean score for using applications to learn and improve English (4.32) and comprehending daily conversations (4.22) indicate highly positive attitudes (see TABLE 5).
- The impact on listening skills: Participants agree that smartphone applications are effective in various listening skill categories, with all mean scores above 3.9 (see TABLE 5).
- Motivation for language development: The mean score of 3.93 for increasing enthusiasm towards language development suggests a positive attitude towards using applications for EFL learning (see TABLE 5).
- Content quality: Learners highly value the quality and diversity of content in applications (mean 4.40), indicating a positive attitude towards well-designed, comprehensive content applications (see TABLE 6).
- Free subscription applications: The high mean score (4.43) for free usage suggests learners have positive attitudes towards free subscription applications (TABLE 6).
- Wide application usage: Learners use a variety of applications, with educational and interactive applications being the most popular (61.4%), followed by video applications (51.1%) and podcast applications (42%), showing positive attitudes towards different types of learning applications (see page 47).

- Preferred features: Learners value simplicity of use (11.4%), flexibility to use at any time and in any place (8%), interaction with native speakers (9.1%), and feedback features (8%), and this indicates positive attitudes towards user-friendly and interactive applications (see page 46).
- Consistent attitudes across demographics: The chi-square tests and ANOVA results show no significant differences in attitudes based on gender or educational level, suggesting widespread positive attitudes across different learner groups (see TABLE 7 & TABLE 8).
- Large effect size: According to Hedges' g (-1.764) and Cohen's d (-1.811) values, utilizing smartphone applications significantly improves listening skills (see page 49).

These findings demonstrate that EFL learners generally have very positive attitudes towards using smartphone applications for improving their listening skills, emphasizing their effectiveness, functionality, and variety of features.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings, implications and the limitations.

5.2 The Research Findings

- The most important results of this research can be summarized as follows:

- 1.** Significant improvement in listening skills: EFL learners show a statistically significant increase in their listening skills after using smartphone applications for 4 weeks, with the mean score rising from 10.80 in the pre-test to 15.20 in the post-test.
- 2.** Large effect size: The use of smartphone applications have a substantial impact on improving listening skills, as evidenced by Cohen's d (-1.811) and Hedges' g (-1.764) values.
- 3.** Positive attitudes towards application usage: Learners demonstrate highly positive attitudes towards using smartphone applications for improving their listening skills, with mean scores above 3.9 across various aspects of application usage.
- 4.** Diverse application preferences: Participants favor a variety of applications with educational and interactive applications (61.4%), video applications (51.1%), and podcast applications (42%) being the most popular.
- 5.** Importance of application features: Learners value free usage (mean 4.43), quality and diverse content (mean 4.40), and interactive exercises (mean 4.31) in applications.
- 6.** Applications have contributed to increased exposure to the language, enhance self-learning, provide content diversity, and offer immediate feedback, which naturally improve listening skills.
- 7.** Consistent results across demographics: no significant differences are found in attitudes or effectiveness based on gender or educational level, suggesting the broad

applicability of smartphone applications for EFL listening skill improvement.

- Despite the positive results, some challenges are identified, such as the restricted access to paid features (63.6%), technical issues (55.7%), and difficulty maintaining consistent use (54.5%), as well as other difficulties that can be summarized as follows:

- 1. Possibility of distraction:** learners' attention may be diverted from focusing on improving listening skills.
- 2. Excessive reliance on technology:** This may lead to neglecting the importance of the usual methods used in EFL learning.
- 3. Variation in content quality:** Not all applications are of high quality or suitable for all levels of learners.
- 4. The need for high self-motivation:** Effective use of applications requires a high level of self-discipline, which may not be available to all learners.
- 5. Limited access to technology:** Not all learners may have smartphones or stable internet connections.
- 6. Inability to commit and maintain consistency:** Some learners may find it difficult to maintain regular and continuous use of the applications, which could negatively impact the effectiveness of learning.
- 7. The need for a paid subscription to access full content:** Many applications offer limited free content, while accessing the full and advanced content requires a paid subscription, which may pose a financial barrier for some learners.

These findings highlight the effectiveness and positive reception of smartphone applications in enhancing EFL learners' listening skills while also identifying areas for potential improvement by highlighting the importance of setting a well-designed plan when selecting the appropriate applications to improve listening skills for EFL learners.

5.3 Implications and Research Suggestions for Further Research

The findings of this study have a number of significant implications for EFL teaching and learning, especially when it comes to the improvement of listening skills:

- 1. Integration of smartphone applications:** Educational institutions should consider formally integrating accurately selected smartphone applications into their EFL curricula, given their demonstrated effectiveness in improving listening skills.
- 2. Teacher preparation:** There is a need for professional development programs to give EFL teachers the tools they need to successfully integrate smartphone applications into their teaching methodologies.
- 3. Integrated educational strategies:** The effectiveness of smartphone applications in improving listening skills indicates their potential as a complementary tool in blended learning settings, combining the usually used methods in classrooms with mobile learning.
- 4. Application design considerations:** Developers of language learning applications should focus on creating free or low-cost applications with high-quality, diverse content and interactive features, as these were highly valued by learners.
- 5. Addressing challenges:** Educational technologists should work on developing solutions to mitigate the identified challenges, such as improving application functionality, reducing technical issues, and incorporating features to enhance user commitment and reduce distractions.
- 6. Personalized learning:** The consistent positive outcomes across demographics imply that smartphone applications can be used to develop customized learning experiences that meet the requirements and preferences of each learner.
- 7. Long-term studies:** The significant short-term improvements among the learners can tell that long-term studies with larger sample sizes must be conducted in order to determine more precise effects of smartphone applications on improving EFL listening skills.

These implications highlight the potential for smartphone applications to revolutionize EFL listening skill instruction and provide a roadmap for educators, application developers, and researchers to enhance the effectiveness of mobile-assisted language learning.

5.4 The Research Limitations

5.4.1 Objective limitations

- **The quality of the applications:** The effectiveness of the applications used in the study may vary, as certain applications were chosen over others.

- **The test that is used:** The listening skills test that is derived from IELTS exams might not fully capture all the aspects of listening skills required in daily contexts.

- **The impact of external variables:** External factors such as the educational environment, family support, or learners' personal motivations were not fully controlled.

5.4.2 Temporal limitations: the time allocated to do the whole research is only 10 weeks.

- **Experiment duration:** Only four weeks were allocated for using the applications, which might not be enough time to evaluate sustained improvements in listening skills.

5.4.3 Physical limitations

- **Specific nationalities:** The study focuses only on Syrian learners, who are having an English conversation course at the Sarhan Language Institute, and this may limit the diversity of cultural and linguistic backgrounds and affect the research results.

5.4.4 Methodological limitations

- **The test sample size:** Only 30 learners are part of the sample, which may limit the extent to which the findings may be applied to a larger population of English language learners.

5.4.5 The online questionnaire limitations

- The study utilizes a questionnaire that is distributed online, which may affect the quality of the data collected from the participants as well as the response rate.

- Due to time constraints, I could not conduct a preliminary statistical analysis of participants who use applications specifically to improve listening skills. Instead, the questionnaire is distributed among groups of learners who use language learning applications for various purposes and to improve their language skills in general, not just listening skills, which may limit the specificity of the results regarding the effectiveness of applications in improving listening skills in particular.

- The short time frame for designing, distributing, and analyzing the questionnaire may have affected the depth and comprehensiveness of the collected data.

5.4.6 Statistical analysis: The statistical methods applied might not be able to fully or precisely evaluate the data.

These limitations indicate the need for further future research on the subject with a more specialized sample and a longer period for data collection and analysis.

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Appendix One: Listening Skills Test

Section 1:

Questions 1-6 (First Record)

- Good morning. Dave Smith, speaking.
- Hi, could I speak to the organizer of the Camber Well Park run?
- Yes, that's me.
- Great, I was talking to some friends of mine about the run, and they suggested I contact you to get some more details.
- Sure, what would you like to know?
- Well, they said it takes place every Saturday. Is that right?
- Yes, it does.
- Okay, that's great.
- Do you know where the park is?
- Oh, yes, I've been there before, but it's quite big, and I'm not sure where to go.
- Well, there's a circular track that goes right around the park. The Run starts in the cafe, goes past the tennis courts, then twice around the lake and finishes back where it started.
- Okay? And what time is the run?
- Well, the actual run begins at 9am but the runners start arriving at about 8:45.
- okay, so I need to get up early Saturday morning, then. And how long is the run?
- Well, it used to be three kilometers, but most people wanted to do a bit more than that, so we lengthened it to five kilometers. We now go round the lake twice, and that adds an extra two kilometers.
- right, not sure I'd ever run that far, so I better start doing a bit of training.
- It's a good idea, but it's not a race. It's really just for fun, and the best thing would be to take it easy for the first few times you do it, and then see if you can gradually improve your time.
- Is the run time? Then how do I know how well I've done?
- When you cross the finish line, you'll be given a bar code, and you can take this to one of the run volunteers who will scan it. Then you can get your time online when you go home.
- Oh, I see. you collect all the results
- exactly.
- I see that's great. So how do I register?
- Well, there are several ways I could take your details over the phone, but it's much easier if you do it using the website.
- Okay, good. I think that's probably all I need to know for now. Oh, yes, does it cost anything to register? Or do you collect money each week?
- Well, it doesn't cost anything to register, but we do charge for the run. In fact, we have just increased the charge to \$5 it used to be \$2 but because we were making a bit of a loss, we had to increase it.
- Okay, thanks, I think I have enough information on taking part in the run.

Complete the form below, Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** and/or **A NUMBER** for each answer.

Camber well Park Run

Details of run:

Start of run: in the 1 _____
Time of start: 2 _____
Length of run: 3 _____
At end of run: volunteer scans 4 _____
Best way to register: on the 5 _____
Cost of run: 6 \$ _____

Questions 7-10 (Second Record)

- You mentioned volunteers. I have a friend who is interested in helping out. Can you give me some details so I could pass them on to her?
- Sure. Well, you need to ask your friend to contact Pete Maughan. He manages all the volunteers.
- Okay, I didn't quite catch his surname. Was it morn? M, O, R, N.
- No, just a bit more complicated, it's m, a, U, G, H, A, n.
- Right. Thanks. And could you give me his phone number?
- Yes, just a moment, it's here somewhere. Let me find it. I've got two numbers for him. I think the one that begins 01273 is an old one, so use this one call 0144473290.
- Okay, got that. Can you tell me anything about the volunteering, like, what kind of activities it involves?
- sure. Well, we need volunteers for basic stuff like setting up the course. We have to do that before all the runners arrive.
- Okay, so that's a really early start.
- Yes, that's right. But if your friend would prefer to arrive a bit later, she can also help with guiding the runners so they don't go the wrong way.
- I see, I believe you do a report on some of the races.
- Yes, that's right. In fact, we do a weekly report on each race, and we always try to illustrate it.
- Okay, well, my friend really likes taking photographs. She's just bought a new camera.
- Actually, that would be great. I don't know whether Peter has anyone to take photographs this week?
- Oh, I'll let her know.
- Okay, good. Could you ask your friend to phone Pete and let him know?
- Yes, I will.
- Okay. Thanks, goodbye.
- goodbye.

Complete the form below, Write NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS and/or A NUMBER for each answer.

Volunteering

Contact name: Pete 7 _____

Phone number: 8 _____

Activities

Setting up a course

9 _____ the runners

10 _____ for the weekly report

Section 2:

Questions 11-14 (Third Record)

Good morning I'm very pleased to have this opportunity to say a little about two exciting new developments in the city: The Bracken Side Open- Air Swimming Pool and the children's Adventure Playground in Central Park. As many of you may know, the idea for these initiatives came from you, the public, in the extensive consultation exercise which the City Council conducted last year. And they have been realized using money from the SWRDC - the South West Regional Development Commission.

First of all, Bracken side Pool. As many of the older members of the audience will remember, there used to be a wonderful open - air pool on the sea front 30 years ago but it had to close when it was judged to be unsafe. For the design of this new heated pool, we were very happy to secure the talents of internationally renowned architect Ellen Wendon, who has managed to combine a charming 1930s design, which fits in so well with many of the other buildings in the area, with up - to - the - minute features such as a recycling system - the only one of its kind in the world - which enables seawater to be used in the pool.

Now, there has been quite a bit of discussion in the local press about whether there would be enough room for the number of visitors we're hoping to attract, but the design is deceptive and there have been rigorous checks about capacity. Also, just in case you were wondering, we're on schedule for a June 15th opening date and well within budget: a testimony to the excellent work of local contractors Hickman's.

We hope that as many people as possible will be there on June 15th. We have engaged award - winning actress Coral White to declare the pool open and there'll be drinks and snacks available at the pool side. There'll also be a competition for the public to decide on the sculpture we plan to have at the entrance: you will decide which famous historical figure from the city we should have.

Choose the correct letter: A, B or C

New city development

11- The idea for two new developments in the city came from:

A- local people

B- the City Council

C- the SWRDC

12- What is unusual about Bracken side pool?

A- its architectural style

B- its heating system

C- the method of water treatment

13- Local newspapers have raised worries about:

A- the late opening date

B- the cost of project

C- the size of facilities

14- What decision has not yet been made about the pool?

A- whose statue will be at the door

B- the exact opening times

C- who will open it

Questions 15-20 (Forth Record)

There is a section on Asia, and this is represented by rides and equipment in the shape of snakes, orangutans, tigers and so on - fauna native to the forests of the region.

Moving south to the Antarctic - we couldn't run to an ice rink I'm afraid but opted instead for climbing blocks in the shape of mountains. - I thought they could have had slides for the glaciers but the designers did want to avoid being too literal!

Then on to South America - and here the theme is El Dorado - games replicating the search for mines full of precious stones

And then moving up to North America, here there was considerable debate - I know the contribution of cinema and jazz was considered but the designers finally opted for rockets and the International Space Station

Eastwards to Europe then, and perhaps the most traditional choice of all the areas: medieval castles and other fortifications.

Moving south to Africa and a whole set of wonderful mosaics to represent the great rivers of this fascinating and varied continent .

Which features is related to each of the following areas of the world represented in the playground?

Choose SIX answers from the box and write the correct letter A-I next to questions (15-20).

Areas of the world
15 Asia _____
16 Antarctica _____

Features	
A	Ancient forts
B	Water ways

- 17 South America _____
 18 North America _____
 19 Europe _____
 20 Africa _____

C	Ice and snow
D	Jewels
E	Local animals
F	Mountains
G	Music and film
H	Space travel
I	Volcanoes

Section 3:

Questions 21 and 22: (Fifth Record)

- Right? Well, for our presentation, shall I start with the early life of Thor Heyerdahl?
- Sure. Why don't you begin with describing the type of boy he was, especially his passion for collecting things.
- That's right. He had his own little museum. And I think it's unusual for children to develop their own values and not join in their parents' hobbies. I'm thinking of how, Heyerdahl wouldn't go hunting with his dad, for example.
- Yeah, he preferred to learn about nature by listening to his mother read to him. And quite early on, he knew he wanted to become an explorer when he grew up. That came from his camping trips he went on in Norway, I think.
- No, it was climbing that he spent his time on as a young man.
- Oh, right after university, he married a classmate, and together, they decided to experience living on a small island to find out how harsh weather conditions shaped people's lifestyles. As part of their preparation before they left home, they learnt basic survival skills like building a shelter. I guess they needed that knowledge in order to live wild in a remote location with few inhabitants cut off by the sea, which is what they were aiming to do.
- An important part of your talk should be the radical theory Heyerdahl formed from examining mysterious ancient carvings that he happened to find on the island. I think you should finish with that.
- Okay.

Choose TWO letters, A-E.

Which Two hobbies was Thor Heyerdahl very interested in as a youth?

- A- camping
 B- climbing
 C- collecting
 D- hunting
 E- reading

Questions 23 and 24: (Fifth Record)

Choose TWO letters, A-E.

Which do the speakers say are the TWO reasons why Heyerdahl went to live on an island?

- A- to examine ancient carvings

- B- to experience an isolated place
- C- to formulate a new theory
- D- to learn survival skills
- E- to study the impact of an extreme environment

Questions 25-30 (Sixth Record)

- Alright Victor, so after your part, I'll talk about Thor Heyerdahl's adult life, continuing from the theory he had about Polynesian migration up until that time. Of course, academics had believed that humans first migrated to the islands of Polynesia from Asia in the West.
- Yes, they thought that travel from the east was impossible because of the huge empty stretch of ocean that lies between the islands and the nearest inhabited land.
- Yes, but Heyerdahl spent ages studying the cloud movements, ocean currents and wind patterns to find if it was actually possible. And another argument was that there was no tradition of large ship building in the communities lying to the east of Polynesia, but Heyerdahl knew they made lots of coastal voyages in locally built canoes.
- Yes, or sailing on rafts, as was shown by the long voyage that Heyerdahl did next. It was an incredibly risky journey to undertake. Sometimes I wonder if he did that trip for private reasons, you know, to show others that he could have spectacular adventures. What do you think Olivia?
- Well, I think it was more a matter of simply trying out his idea to see if migration from the east was possible.
- Yes, that's probably it. And the poor guy suffered a bit at that time because the war forced him to stop his work for some years.
- Yes, when he got started again and planned his epic voyage, do you think it was important to him that he achieve it before anyone else did?
- Uh, I haven't read anywhere that that was his motivation. The most important factor seems to have been that he used only ancient techniques and local materials to build his raft.
- Yes, I wonder how fast it went.
- Well, it took them 97 days from South America to the Pacific Islands. And after that Heyerdahl went to Easter Island, didn't he? We should mention the purpose of that trip. I think he sailed there in a boat made out of reeds.
- No, that was later on in Egypt, Olivia.
- Oh, yes, that's right. Well, what he wanted to do was talk to the local people about their old stone carvings and then make one himself to learn more about the process
- I see, well, what a great life. Even though many of his theories have been disproven, he's certainly left a lasting impression on many disciplines. Didn't he? To my mind, he was the first person to establish what modern academics call practical archeology. I mean that they try to recreate something from the past today, like he did with his raft trip. It's unfortunate that his ideas about where Polynesians originated from have been completely discredited.
- Yes, right. Well, I'll prepare a PowerPoint slide at the end that acknowledges our sources. I mainly used the life and work of Thor Heyerdahl by William Oliver. I thought the research methods he used were very sound, although, I must say, I found the overall tone somewhat old fashioned. I think they need to do a new revised edition.
- Yeah, I agree. What about the subject matter? I found it really challenging.
- Well, it's a complex issue.
- I thought the book had lots of good points. What did you think of...?

Choose the CORRECT letter A, B or C

25- According to Victor and Olivia, academics thought that Polynesian migration from the east was impossible due to:

- A- the fact the Eastern Countries were far away
- B- the lack of materials for boat building
- C- the direction of the wind

26- Which do the speakers agree was the main reason for Heyerdahl's raft journey?

- A- to overcome a research setback
- B- to demonstrate a personal quality
- C- to test a new theory

27- what was most important to Heyerdahl about his raft journey?

- A- the fact that he was the first person to do it
- B- the speed of crossing the pacific
- C- the use of authentic construction methods

28- Why did Heyerdahl go to Easter Island?

- A- to build a stone statue
- B- to sail a reed boat
- C- to learn the local language

29- In Olivia's opinion, Heyerdahl's greatest influence was on:

- A- theories about Polynesian Islands
- B- the development of archaeological methodology
- C- establishing archaeology as an academic subject

30- Which criticism do the speakers make of William Oliver's textbook?

- A- its style is out of date
- B- its content is over-simplified
- C- its methodology is flawed

Section 4:

Questions 31-36 (Seventh Record)

So what I'm going to talk about to you today is something called ethnography. This is a type of research aimed at exploring the way human cultures work. It was first developed for use in anthropology and has also been used in sociology and communication studies. So what's it got to do with business? You may ask? Well, businesses are finding that ethnography can offer them deeper insight into the possible needs of customers, either present or future, as well as providing valuable information about their attitude towards existing products. And ethnography can also help companies to design new products or services that customers really want. Let's look at some examples of how ethnographic research works in business, one team of researchers did a project for a company manufacturing kitchen equipment. They watched how cooks use measuring cups to measure out things like sugar and flour. They saw that the cooks had to check and re check the contents, because although the measuring cups had numbers inside them, the cooks couldn't see these easily. So a new design of cup was developed to overcome this problem, and it was a top seller. Another team of ethnographic researchers looked at how cell phones were used in Uganda, in Africa. They found that people who didn't have their own phones could pay to use the phones of local entrepreneurs, because these customers paid in advance for their calls. They were eager to know how much time they'd spent on the call so far. So the phone company designed phones for use globally with this added feature. Ethnographic research has also been carried out in computer companies. In one company, IT systems administrators were observed for several weeks. It was found that a large amount of their work involved communicating with colleagues in order to solve problems, but that they didn't have a standard way of exchanging information from spreadsheets and so on. So the team came up with an idea for software that would help them to do this. In another piece of research, a team observed and talked to nurses working in hospitals. This led to the recognition that the nurses needed to access the computer records of their patients, no matter where they were. This led to the development of a portable computer tablet that allowed the nurses to check records in locations throughout the hospital. Occasionally, research can be done even in environments where the researchers can't be present. For example, in one project done for an airline, respondents use their smartphones to record information during airline trips. In a study aiming at tracking the emotions of passengers during a flight on.

Write ONE WORD only for each answer.

ETHNOGRAPHY IN BUSINESS

Ethnography: is a research which explores human cultures, it can be used in business:

- to investigate customer needs and 31 _____
- to help companies develop new designs.

Examples of ethnography research in business:

Kitchen Equipment:

- Research found that cooks could not easily see the 32 _____ in measuring cups.

Cell Phones:

- In Uganda, customers paid to use the cell phones of entrepreneurs.
- These customers wanted to check the 33 _____ used.

Computer Companies:

- There was a need to develop 34 _____ to improve communication between system administrators and colleagues.

Hospitals:

- Nurses needed to access information about 35 _____ in different parts of the hospital

Airlines:

- Respondents recorded information about their 36 _____ while travelling.

Questions 37-40 (Eighth Record)

So what makes studies like these different from ordinary research? Let's look at some of the general principles behind ethnographic research in business. First of all, the researcher has to be completely open minded. He or she hasn't thought up a hypothesis to be tested, as is the case in other types of research. Instead, they wait for the participants in the research to inform them. As far as choosing the participants themselves is concerned, that's not really all that different from ordinary research. The criteria according to which the participants are chosen may be something as simple as the age bracket they fall into, or the researchers may select them according to their income, or they might try to find a set of people who all use a particular product, for example, but it's absolutely crucial to recruit the right people as participants, as well as the criteria I've mentioned, they have to be comfortable talking about themselves and being watched as they go about their activities. Actually, most researchers say that people open up pretty easily, maybe because they're often in their own home or workplace. So what makes this type of research special is that it's not just a matter of sending a questionnaire to the participants. Instead, the research is usually based on first hand observation of what they're doing at the time. But that doesn't mean that the researcher never talks to the participants. However, unlike in traditional research, in this case, it's the participant, rather than the researchers, who decides what direction the interview will follow. This means that there's less likelihood of the researcher imposing his or her own ideas on the participant, but after they've said goodbye to their participants and got back to their office, the researchers work isn't finished. Most researchers estimate that 70 to 80% of their time is spent not on the collecting of data, but on its analysis, looking at photos, listening to recordings and transcribing them and so on. The researchers may end up with hundreds of pages of notes and to determine what's significant, they don't focus on the sensational things or the unusual things. Instead, they will try to identify a pattern of some sort in all of this data and to discern the meaning behind it. This can result in some compelling insights that can in turn, feed back to the whole design process in.

Complete the notes below.

Write ONE WORD only for each answer.

Principle of ethnography research in business

- The researcher does not start off with hypothesis.

- Participants may be selected by criteria such as age, 37 _____ or product used.
- The participants must feel 38 _____ about taking part in the research.
- There is usually direct 39 _____ of the participants.
- The interview is guided by participants.
- A lot of the time is needed for the 40 _____ of the data.
- Researchers look for a meaningful pattern in the data.

End of Questions

Best luck

Note: The audio recordings are available upon request.

The Answers Sheet

Section 1

1	Café
2	9 am or 9
3	5 KMs or 5 km or 5
4	barcode or bar code
5	website or web site
6	5
7	Maughan
8	0144473290
9	Guiding
10	take photos

Section 2

11	A
12	C
13	C
14	A
15	E
16	F
17	D
18	H
19	A
20	B

Section 3

21	B
22	C
23	D
24	E
25	A
26	C
27	C
28	A
29	B
30	A

Section 4

31	attitude or attitudes
32	numbers
33	time or minutes
34	Software
35	Patients
36	Emotions
37	Income
38	comfortable
39	observation
40	Analysis

Appendix Two: The Questionnaire

The Impact of Smartphone Applications on Improving EFL Learners` Listening Skills

The following questionnaire is part of a study prepared by the researcher for Applied Linguistics Master`s degree thesis. The research aims to evaluate the effectiveness of smartphone applications in improving listening skills among English as a Foreign Language learners, in addition to revealing their opinions on using these applications to develop their listening skills.

If you please, answer the survey questions accurately and reliably, noting that it is an anonymous questionnaire and the data provided here will be used solely for research purposes.

Thank you for your time and your cooperation in making this research credible.

Theme One: Demographic data.

- Age:
- Gender: - Male - Female
- Educational level: - Secondary - University - Postgraduate - Other

Theme Two: Using smartphone applications to improve EFL listening skills.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Smartphone applications are used to learn and improve English					
2. The use of smartphone applications improves the learner's ability to identify the main idea of the audio content.					
3. The use of smartphone applications improves the learner's ability to identify specific information within the audio content. (such as names, dates, places)					

4. The use of smartphone applications improves the learner's ability to identify the audio content entirely.					
5. The use of smartphone applications improves the learner's ability to distinguish individual sounds in speech. (such as letters, intonations, rhythms)					
6. The use of smartphone applications improves the learner's ability to distinguish the tone of the sentence more clearly, which helps in identifying the overall meaning even if not all unstressed words are heard.					

Theme Three: Assessment of skills and smartphone applications used to improve EFL listening skills.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The use of smartphone applications increases enthusiasm and curiosity towards further developing the English language.					
2. The use of smartphone applications improves the ability to comprehend daily conversations more effectively.					
3. The use of smartphone applications improves the ability to comprehend many dialects.					
4. The use of smartphone applications improves the ability to comprehend the audio content from a single listening without the need to repeat it.					

Among the elements that affect your decision to use smartphone applications for learning listening skills:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The application's user-friendly interface and simplicity					
2. The quality and diversity of the content available on the application.					
3. The possibility of social interaction features in the application, (such as real-world conversations, discussions, and comments).					

4. The application can be used without any charge.					
5. When accessing a specific audio content that requires a subscription, you sign up for the paying plan.					

Theme Four: Recommendations for Enhancing EFL Listening Skills through the Use of Smartphone Applications.

The listening skill is further improved when there is:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. More interactive exercises and more short quizzes within the application.					
2. More variety of audio content covering different topics and domains within the application.					
3. More realistic conversations within the application.					
4. More features, like the ability to track your progress or provide weekly challenges within the application.					
5. More frequent notifications to remind users to use the application.					

Open-ended questions:

1. What applications do you prefer to use to improve your listening skills? And why? (You can choose more than one option)

- Educational and interactive applications such as (Zamerican English -Memrise- 6minutes English)
- Podcast applications
- Video applications like YouTube
- AI Chat applications such as (Elsa Speak)
- Interactive applications that offer the option to have conversations with native English speakers, like (Busuu)
- Others

The cause: _____

2. In your opinion, using smartphone applications can replace the usually used methods in improving EFL listening skills? And why?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

The cause: _____

3. What are the challenges or difficulties you faced when you used smartphone applications to improve your listening skills? (You can choose more than one option)

- Could not commit or maintain consistency.
- Boredom with the application itself due to a lack of variety in the exercises.
- Limited access to certain features that require a paid subscription to activate
- Technical errors related to the internet or the application itself
- Quick Distraction
- Other challenges: _____

4. Do you have any comments about your experience with smartphone applications in EFL learning?

5. What advice would you provide to other learners on the best ways to use smartphone applications to enhance their listening skills?

Thank you for the information you shared.

Appendix Three: The Referees of the Questionnaire

The researcher sought the advice of three competent referees specialized in teaching English as a foreign language, as well as a competent referee specialized in statistical analysis to guarantee the validity of the questionnaire:

- **Dr. Ali Saud Hasan**, the supervisor of this research, a Professor of Applied Linguistics: ELT at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at Damascus University and a Professor of English Language and Literature at Al-Zaytoonah University in Jordan.
- **Dr. Adnan Azouz**, an Associate Professor of Linguistic Studies at Damascus University and Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Qasyoun Private University.
- **Dr. Rasheed Abdul Hadi**, a senior lecturer at the ELT Department, the Higher Language Institute, and the English Department, the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at Damascus University and a Visiting Research Fellow at Bath Spa University, UK.
- **Dr. Rania Radwan**, a specialist and lecturer in Educational and Psychological Measurements and Evaluation at Latakia University.

مستخلص البحث:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى دراسة تأثير تطبيقات الأجهزة الذكية على تحسين مهارات الاستماع لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، باستخدام المنهج الوصفي التحليلي .

ناقش البحث أهمية مهارات الاستماع في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية وتحدياتها وكيف يمكن لتطبيقات الأجهزة الذكية أن تساعد في التغلب على هذه التحديات. تم استخدام استبيان عبر الإنترنت واختبارات استماع على عينتين من متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية كأدوات لجمع البيانات وتحليل تجارب المتعلمين. عينة اختبار الاستماع كانت مكونة من 30 متعلماً سورياً للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية؛ كان هؤلاء المتعلمون يدرسون المحادثة في معهد سرحان للغة في بيروت. أما عينة الاستبيان كانت مكونة من 88 متعلماً للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية يستخدمون تطبيقات الأجهزة الذكية لتحسين مهاراتهم في اللغة الإنجليزية.

أظهرت النتائج أن استخدام تطبيقات الأجهزة الذكية له تأثير إيجابي على تحسين مهارات الاستماع لدى المتعلمين، حيث ساهم في زيادة الدافعية وقدم مجموعة متنوعة من فرص التعلم الذاتي. وبالمقابل كشفت الدراسة عن وجود بعض التحديات التي يواجهها المتعلمون عند استخدام هذه التطبيقات.

ختاماً، توصي الدراسة باستخدام تطبيقات الأجهزة الذكية في تعليم مهارات الاستماع باللغة الإنجليزية، مع التركيز على اختيار التطبيقات المناسبة وتدريب المتعلمين على استخدامها بفعالية. كما تقترح الباحثة إجراء المزيد من الدراسات حول كيفية تحسين هذه التطبيقات وتطويرها بهدف تلبية احتياجات المتعلمين بشكل أفضل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، مهارات الاستماع، تطبيقات الأجهزة الذكية، التعلم بمساعدة الأجهزة المحمولة.

شكر وتقدير

الحمد لله أولاً وآخراً على نعمه وتوفيقه في الوقت والعمل والنجاح بالوصول إلى هذه المرحلة. يطيب لي أن أتقدم بجزيل الشكر وعظيم الامتنان إلى أستاذي الفاضل الدكتور علي سعود حسن، والذي تشرفت بإشرافه على هذا البحث، على صبره وحسن توجيهه، فقد كان لتوجيهاته السديدة وملاحظاته القيّمة الأثر البالغ في إثراء هذا العمل وإخراجه بالصورة الحالية. وإن ما أسداه إليّ من نصح وإرشاد، ومنحني إياه من وقت وجهد، يستحق مني كل التقدير والعرفان، حيث كان نعم المعلم والموجه، وقد تعلمت من فضيلته الكثير عن منهجية التفكير العلمي والنقد البناء. وإنني إذ أشكره على كل ما قدمه، وأسأل الله تعالى أن يجزيه خير الجزاء وأن يجعل ذلك في ميزان حسناته ويديم عليه نعمة الصحة والعافية، ليظل منارة للعلم والمعرفة.

كما أود أن أعرب عن امتناني الصادق للجنة المناقشة المتمثلة بالدكتور المشرف والدكتور عدنان عزوز والدكتور رشيد عبد الهادي الفاضلين الذين شرفوني بالتحكيم على هذا المشروع، على دعمهما وملاحظتهما القيمة التي ساهمت في تحسين جودة هذا البحث، وأنا ممتنة لوقتتهما وجهودهما الكبيرة. أود أيضاً أن أشكر الجامعة الافتراضية السورية على إتاحة الفرصة لي للتعلم والنمو أكاديمياً. ولن أنسى أن أعبر عن تقديري الخاص لمبادرة "لها"، التي تجسد روح التمكين والدعم للنساء، فقد كان دعمهن كبيراً في رحلتي الأكاديمية.

أخيراً، أود أن أشكر عائلتي وكل من ساهم في إتمام هذا البحث، سواء من خلال تقديم الخبرة أو

تسهيل عملية البحث، وأود أن أشيد بإدارة معهد سرحان للغات في ببرود، المتمثلة بالسيدة إلهام سرحان ومدرس اللغة الإنجليزية زياد سرحان، على دعمهما وتسهيلهما إجراء الاختبارات داخل المعهد.

الإهداء

إلى أمي:

نبت العطاء والتضحفة، التي سقتني من نبت حبها وعلمتني معنى الصمود والإصرار، أهدي هذا العمل عرفاناً بفضلها وإجلالاً لمكانتها.

إلى أبي:

الذي غرس في نفسي حب المعرفة والتعلم، أهدي هذا العمل تقديرًا لفضله واحترامًا لمكانته.

إلى زوجي:

رفيق دربي وسندي في كل خطواتي، الذي يؤمن بقدراتي ودعمني في رحلتي العلمية بكل حب وتشجيع.

إلى ابنتي:

قطعة قلبي النابضة، مصدر إلهامي وسعادتي، التي تمنحني دافعاً للتميز والنجاح.

إلى أخي نزار:

عضدي وسندي الذي يقف بجانبني في كل الظروف ويشاركني أحلامي وطموحاتي.

إلى أخي ماهر:

الذي وقف بجانبني في كثير من الأوقات، شكرًا لك على دعمك.

إلى رشا ورنا وريما:

صاحبات القلوب الدافئة والأرواح الطيبة، شكرًا على دعمكن.

إلى خديجة:

رفيقة الدرب والسر، التي شاركتني تفاصيل حياتي ورحلتي العلمية بكل دعم ومحبة.

إلى وجدان:

الصديقة المخلصة التي كانت لي عونًا وسندًا في أهم محطات حياتي.

إلى صديقتي في مبادرة "لها":

نساء ملهمات، آمنّ بقوة المرأة وقدرتها على التغيير، وكن لي سندًا معنويًا في رحلتي العلمية.

وأخيراً... إلى نفسي...

أهدي هذا العمل.



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بحث مقدم لنيل درجة الماجستير في اللسانيات التطبيقية MAL

إعداد الطالبة مها ايمن بركات

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