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## **The Role of Collaboration in the Improvement of Foreign Language Learners' Listening Skill<sup>1</sup>**

Yabancı Dil Öğrenenlerin Dinleme Becerilerini Geliştirmede İş Birliğinin Rolü

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### **Abstract**

Listening skills have generally been approached as an individual activity, often treated as a passive, silent part of language classrooms where learners mostly sit and listen during listening exercises. This approach limits the effectiveness of listening skill development. In contrast, collaborative listening has emerged as a trending approach in recent years, and many educators support its use to create a more engaging learning experience. In that regard, this study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of collaborative listening activities in enhancing listening skills among Turkish EFL learners. A mixed-method research design was employed. The quantitative data was collected using pre- and post-tests to assess the impact of collaboration on listening improvement. The qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured interviews to explore participants' views toward collaborative listening activities. The data analysis showed significant improvement in the listening skills of those engaged in collaborative listening activities. Furthermore, interviews revealed the cognitive, affective, and social benefits of collaborative listening.

**Keywords:** Listening skill, Collaborative learning, Collaborative listening, Collaboration in listening, Peer-peer interaction

### **Öz**

Dinleme becerileri genellikle bireysel bir etkinlik olarak ele alınmış, dil sınıflarında öğrencilerin çoğunlukla oturup dinleme alıştırmaları yaptığı pasif, sessiz bir bölüm olarak görülmüştür. Bu yaklaşım, dinleme becerilerinin gelişimini sınırlamaktadır. Buna karşılık, işbirlikçi dinleme son yıllarda yükselen bir yaklaşım olarak ortaya çıkmış ve birçok eğitimci, daha ilgi çekici bir öğrenme deneyimi yaratmak için bu yöntemi desteklemektedir. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma, işbirlikçi dinleme etkinliklerinin Türkçe öğrenen yabancı dil

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öğrencilerinin dinleme becerilerini geliştirmedeki etkinliğini araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Karma yöntemli bir araştırma tasarımı kullanılmıştır. İşbirliğinin dinleme gelişimine etkisini değerlendirmek için nicel veriler ön ve son testler kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Katılımcıların işbirlikçi dinleme etkinliklerine yönelik görüşlerini keşfetmek için yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla nitel veriler toplanmıştır. Veri analizi, işbirlikçi dinleme etkinliklerine katılanların dinleme becerilerinde önemli bir iyileşme gösterdiğini ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, görüşmeler, işbirlikçi dinlemenin bilişsel, duyuşsal ve sosyal faydalarını da ortaya koymuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Dinleme Becerisi, İşbirlikli Öğrenme, İşbirlikli Dinleme, Dinlemede İşbirliği, Akran-akran etkileşimi

## Introduction

Scholars always see the listening achievement of language learners one of the biggest challenges of acquisition process. It is argued that listening skill is identified as the skill that the learners achieve the least when it is compared with the other skills according to the participants of his study (Graham, 2006). When it comes to the reasons, a substantial number of challenges were listed such as perception problems, speed of delivery, word recognition, clarification of the message, production of verbal or non-verbal feedback accent problems, etc. Due to the fact that most of the language learners face those sort of challenges, listening skill has been ignored for many years and been avoided by language teachers and learners. However, it is the basis of production of spoken language, and it should be noted that listening skill has been named as 'Cinderella Skill' because of the fact that it is specifically ignored by its big sister, speaking skill (Solak & Altay, 2014).

During practicing listening, language learners may face a series of challenges and difficulties. Until 1960s, because of the fact that listening had been ignored, it was harder for teachers and learners to handle the teaching and learning process of listening skill. However, during and after 60s, thanks to Direct Method, listening skill started to gain importance among scholars and was studied a lot. Krashen and Brown (1981 & 1982) paved the way for different and innovative approaches. Later years have shown the importance of collaboration in language teaching and listening has also started to be included but not in the sufficient way. Scholars have argued that it is not enough to decode any utterance for the listener since relating the utterance will potentially enhance comprehending (Marson & Emerson, 1990). Collaboration, namely including other listeners in the process, may be one of the ways to achieve this relation for listeners in a more meaningful way as sharing the burden of the process with another party may omit the passive state of the listening skill. Concisely, the basic problem is that treating listening as an alone processing skill since the opposite may be fostering when the mutual nature of language learning.

Compared to other skills, listening plays a significant role in meaningful communication, occupying more than half of a learner's class time (Nunan, 1998). Like other skills, it presents challenges, one being the need for willingness to listen for comprehension, enabling the listener to recognize, analyze, and process information to create utterances for effective communication—a primary goal of language learning. Achieving this may require additional assistance from teachers, coursebooks, or peers, as sociocultural theory asserts that learning occurs within and through social contexts (Packer & Gioioceocha, 2000). Thus, learners must engage actively with their environment and peers to achieve better outcomes.

However, listening practice often remains an individual endeavor, as it is considered a more internal cognitive process. Analysis of lesson plans reveals that interaction is primarily teacher-student or student-teacher during the while-listening phase. Coursebooks also reflect this, with pre- and post-listening activities designed for collaboration, while while-listening tasks are typically for individual performance. A literature review indicates that few studies have explored collaborative listening, particularly in our country. According to Cross (2010), collaborative work can help learners plan, monitor, compare, and justify their understanding, easing the process and enhancing comprehension.

In conducting this research study, all the participants have been assumed to participate fully and regularly in each lesson, to work collaboratively with classmates with no hesitation and with the clear understanding of given instructions. Additionally, they are assumed to give objective and honest answers during the interview that was administered at the end of the treatment with each participant. Lastly, the data collection instruments that were used by the researcher for the analysis are assumed to have a high reliability and validity with double checks by colleagues and superiors during the analysis process.

In order to be able to answer the stated research questions above within the scope of limitations, an eight-week collaborative listening treatment was applied to the learners and this research study is limited to 32 participants. Lastly, this study is limited to a specific proficiency level of English language learners within a unique class in a Preparatory Language School of a private university in Ankara, Turkey.

### **Review of Literature**

Listening is one of the four main domains of English language and in English Language Teaching (ELT) every domain has a pivotal role. Scholars have been studying every domain separately, and in an integrated way at the same time, in order to reach a more meaningful and useful way to teach English language. Unfortunately, scholars' attention was not equal for each skill until the 1970s. The listening skill was only accepted as one of the undistinguished pieces of acquisition of English language. More attention was paid to the other skills and subskills such as speaking and grammar, while listening was mostly used and dealt with during the instruction and explanation stages of language lessons. Even though, for scholars the speaking skill dominates the field to do research on since it seems to be the basis for communication, in reality, in order to communicate one must understand what is told in the first place (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2016). Within the knowledge of this, the listening skill has emerged as powerfully as the speaking skill and a great amount of research has been done to fulfill this communication aim.

According to Nunan (1998), more than half of language learners' class time consists of listening. This is a really considerable amount of duration. Learners listen and make an effort to comprehend the instructions, explanations, discussions and any other activities applied in the classroom. Hunsaker (1990) also agreed on the idea Nunan put forward, and found out that learners' achievement is correlated with the listening efficacy in the classroom. Since the success in listening has created a better and meaningful understanding for further tasks, learners could do better in other skills and fields, as well. This is also supported with another research Gilbert carried out in 2005. He conducted a study with English language learners to find the relationship between the listening effectiveness and performances of learners. The results have shown that improving learners' listening skill has led them to a better achievement in other language skills. Taking this research into consideration, it is an undeniable fact that learners may develop a positive attitude and motivation towards the target language with the help of improvement in the listening skill. Since motivation is accepted by many scholars and language teachers as one of the key features for the effective learner outcome, the idea of the fact that the listening skill should be prioritized first has naturally become important throughout the years in language teaching.

Gu (2018) has argued that language learning is based upon the ability to listen since it paves the way to acquiring the other skills and subskills. Without evaluating the meaning of what is heard and discussing it, learners cannot be involved in a constructive learning environment, which is one of the most vital requirements of language classrooms. When the nature of the language classrooms is taken into consideration, it is acknowledged by every teacher and scholar that there should be a constant negotiation among both the teacher and learners, and learners and learners. In order to be more effectively involved in these interactions, learners must first decode the meaning accurately.

According to Krashen, input plays a critical role in second language acquisition and the skills of listening and reading are the most natural ways to offer meaningful input for the learners (1982). He also states that when the input is presented in a comprehensible way, learning takes place easily and naturally. Based on this idea, Hulstijn (2003) argues that language learners mostly benefit from incidental learning through the medium of listening during the lessons. Learners may promote their learning by listening to an instruction from the teacher, an example from a peer, a song, a podcast or even a TV show. The list may effortlessly be extended thanks to the easier accessibility of listening materials.

The existing body of research suggests that the place of listening is incontrovertible in terms of both academic and daily life. It is on account of this fact that the sustenance of efficient interaction is based on the listening skill (Atxamovna & Shariyevna, 2020). It enhances the learners' perspectives for internalizing the culture of the target language and easing them into gaining new information because the listening skill dominates the classroom time in language learning classrooms.

### **Collaborative Learning**

A wide range of definitions can be made for collaborative learning. Panitz (1996) defined it by stating that collaborative learning is not only an application in the classroom but an individual philosophy to get together as pairs and groups and expose learners' capacities and contributions. Based on this definition, it can be said that everything that a learner brings forward and produces for a task in a group is valuable, and it creates a positive and fruitful learning environment, which may also change the attitude of the learners towards language learning to the better.

According to Dillenbourg (1999), collaborative learning is defined as social classroom context which has pair and group interactions for learners to achieve or attempt to achieve the given tasks together. Here, the interactions do not have to be only pair or group since a class or community-based interaction can also be prepared for learners to take part in during the learning process.

It is widely accepted that collaboration is one of the most efficient ways to facilitate a task or to overcome a difficult task by supporting one another or by simply putting ideas and efforts together. It is the same for education and learning like many other disciplines and fields. Accomplishing is higher when working together. It is an interactive process where attendees actively participate in the completion of the task taking the responsibility for their own learning as well as other attendees' learning. Many cognitive processes, or higher mental activities, such as decision making, problem solving or critical thinking are included in it, which provides a higher level of development for the learners.

According to Brown (2008), a more successful and stimulating learning environment can be achieved by working and learning collaboratively, and this learning environment can lead learners to a satisfactory academic performance. That is to say, lessons, tasks and activities designed with collaboration enhance the academic development of language learners.

Collaborative learning is an actively engaging process for language learners. In this process, learners take the control and responsibility of their own learning by exploring individually first and contributing and enhancing together later. Thus, they construct their own knowledge, which makes learning more permanent and powerful. As well as providing a higher quality learning, collaborative learning also fortifies learners' social skills while developing positive attitudes. Learners benefit from their peers' philosophies for learning and get the chance of exchanging perspectives, which creates a context for learners to encounter and try new learning styles (Farrah, 2011).

Wentzel and Watkins (2002) argue that language learners may have a better chance to perform more effectively and make use of higher-level thinking abilities with the help of collaborative learning. Learners

become selectively participative in the lessons and come up with more practical learning outcomes during the application of collaboration integrated with any kind of classroom activities in language classrooms.

It is an inevitable fact that collaborative learning has its affective and subjective advantages for the learners. In this actively engaging process, learners experience better explanations, they listen to others attentively, they tolerate different opinions, and they gain different perspectives through collaboration (Akbaş, 2017). As understood here, collaborative learning enhances social communication and develops better interactions among one another and teachers, too. Another contribution of collaborative learning is stated by Smith and MacGregor (1992, p.13) for an important awareness for further learning as follows: "Learners are not just recipients of truths from textbooks or faculty members, but responsible creators of their own knowledge and meanings - a change that is essential to life-long learning and true intellectual development."

According to Laal and Laal (2011), a collaborative learning environment compels learners to promote themselves in social and psychological ways while they argue on different perspectives by evaluating arguments and defending their opinions. As anticipated, this leads learners to construct their own one-and-only notional frameworks and they gain a critical perspective towards an expert's or text's framework. Laal and Laal support the intellectual development argument of Smith and MacGregor by alleging this idea. Srinivas (2011) also shares the same opinion with them by adding that collaborative learning settings allow learners to confer opinions with peers, deliver and defend arguments, discuss differing points of view, approach critically and become participative.

According to Johnson and Johnson (1986), during collaborative learning, learners experience learning actively by discussing and exploring by reconceptualization of prior knowledge, namely activating, and connecting to the schemata, in an anxiety-and-ambiguity free environment. Furthermore, collaboration is one of the implicit ways to encourage learners since peer reassurance has a positive impact in motivating learners. In this way, thanks to the positive experiences gained during the collaboration, learners tend to build a positive attitude towards language learning itself and become more eager learners for further tasks.

### **Collaborative Listening**

As stated above, listening has always been approached with its individualistic nature due to its being metacognitive. It is treated more like a silent part of the language classrooms, and learners mostly sit and listen during the listening activities, which reduces the effectiveness of learning for the listening skill. When an ordinary lesson is designed to practice the listening skill, most teachers come up with the plan of instructing learners to listen and answer the questions given. Undoubtedly, the pre and post stages of listening activities are easier to vary for learners in being more engaging, but the silent treatment of listening activities still continues. Ardi (2015) claims that learners come across with various challenges during "silent" listening activities, and the main problem for them is not understanding the listening audio to answer correctly. He states that learners may answer correctly when they communicate and discuss the ways to find the correct answer with their peers.

According to Cross (2018), collaborative listening supports language learners to perform the given task collectively in order to design and control their listening by getting help from peers to comprehend the oral texts. According to him, the collaboration must be applied to the whole listening process, namely to the pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening all together so that maximum efficiency from the collaboration could be obtained. Also, Cross (2018) specifies the process by stating that before listening, learners benefit from the collaboration by activating their prior knowledge better and on a broader sense with the help of discussions done by peers, by detecting whether to listen for gist or details together and

by analyzing structural formation and context of the text genre by communicating on it with peers. By doing so, learners ease the process for each other to get more prepared for the requirements of the task and this augments the task completion, which is the ultimate aim.

According to Cross again (2018), during while-listening, which has two steps mostly as the first listening and second listening, learners benefit from each other by basically exchanging and justifying their answers together, and in this way, they can achieve more in terms of meaningful outcomes compared to how much they can achieve when working alone. Furthermore, before the second listening, learners discuss and plan on what to pay more attention to with different perspectives, and present what is heard by each other to complete the missing parts of one another, which again increases the chance of finalizing the task effectively in the end. Cross here deals with while-listening and post-listening stages together by mentioning them as first and second listening and follow-up activities. However, it is better to have a more reflective separate post-listening activity in order to develop learners' higher level thinking skills.

Vandergrift and Goh (2012) have claimed that participating in meaningful communication with other peers facilitates to plan and monitor the process as well as upgrades the improvement of learners' potential as a whole and for the requirements of tasks to achieve better in listening practice. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) also have asserted that collaboration may be one of the most powerful ways to arrange the listening process for language learners in order to activate it efficiently, to make learners experience a conscious thinking process and to make learners take the responsibility for their own learning and direct it.

Although in theory collaboration for the development of listening is highly recommended, there is a limited body of research on this specific topic, and it should be studied in greater detail in order to become more knowledgeable about the application of it in the language classrooms since it definitely deserves more attention. Yet there is some research carried out to analyze the effects of collaborative listening. A 2017 Iranian study carried out in order to find out the effects of applications of peer scaffolding in listening development has revealed that scaffolding of peers has a positive correlation in listening comprehension and development. The researchers, Rozati and Safa (2017), carried out this study with the help of 90 EFL learners designed with an experimental research design. Implementation, which was peer scaffolding during listening activities, was applied during 15 treatment sessions to only the experimental group and the results have shown peer assistance is helpful for Iranian EFL learners in listening achievement.

Shabani and Malekdar conducted another study in order to investigate the collaboration in listening achievement in 2016. They carried out experimental research designed by gathering 33 elementary level EFL learners based on the Key English Test (KET) and implemented a 10-week treatment with peer scaffolding for the experiment group like in the first study explained above. Pre- and post-test measurements were applied to evaluate the overall achievement at the end of the treatment, and according to the results, it is stated that working collaboratively with peers during listening practice is practical and useful for the achievement of the listening skill since the experiment group's test results are a great deal better than the control group's results (Shabani & Malekdar, 2016).

As a more recent study, in 2021, another Iranian study was carried out with the purpose of finding out the effectiveness of collaborative listening for intermediate level EFL learners on listening comprehension and vocabulary learning. In this study, the learners' opinions were also evaluated to have a further insight on collaborative listening. As participants, 48 learners took part in the study in total from both the experiment and the control group. A 17-session treatment was implemented with the help of podcasts with follow-up activities for each group, group work for the experiment group and individual work for the control group, and it was found out that the group which studied listening collaboratively

outperformed the group which worked individually in both listening and vocabulary tests done after the implementation. Additionally, learners stated that they developed a positive attitude towards the listening skill after the collaboration (Saeedakhtar & Haqju & Rouhi, 2021).

As a further study for the effectiveness of collaborative listening, Safa and Motaghi have investigated and tried to figure out whether it is the cognitive or meta-cognitive scaffolding strategies that are more effective for listening development. Researchers selected 90 intermediate level EFL learners and designed an experimental study. There were three groups in the study, two experimental groups for collaborative working and one control group working individually without any peer scaffolding. One of the experimental groups was presented with cognitive scaffolding strategies in their group and the other experimental group was presented with meta-cognitive scaffolding strategies in their group. Pre- and post-tests and interviews were used as the measurement and together they have shown that meta-cognitive scaffolding strategies are better to use during collaborative listening such as orientation, planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reflection. In addition, meta-cognitive peer- scaffolding strategies helped language learners to develop more positive feelings towards the listening skill according to participants' opinions (Safa and Motaghi, 2021).

The studies revealed that collaboration significantly enhances EFL learners' listening skills by providing opportunities for peer support and interactive learning. However, there is a dearth of research on collaborative listening in the existing literature. Therefore, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of collaborative listening activities in developing listening skills among EFL learners in an English Preparatory Program. To achieve this aim, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Does collaboration affect the development of Turkish EFL learners' listening skills?
2. If so, to what extent does collaboration influence the development of Turkish EFL learners' listening skills?
3. How does collaboration contribute to the development of listening skills in terms of cognitive, affective, and social factors?

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a mixed method quasi-experimental research design carried out to scrutinize the effects of collaboration in the development of the listening skill of the participants namely EFL learners in two different classrooms in the preparatory program of a private university. It aims to explore the correlation between collaboration in listening practices and listening achievement, focusing on three research questions: the existence of a relationship between collaboration and listening development, the extent of this impact, and its contributions to listening on cognitive, affective, and social levels. These questions were investigated through a quasi-experimental design, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data. As Ross (2005) explains, "Experimental research is used in settings where variables defining one or more 'causes' can be manipulated in a systematic fashion to discern 'effects' on other variables." In Applied Linguistics, quasi-experimental designs are preferred, allowing for control over measurements with fewer random assignments, ensuring equivalence between control and experimental groups (Best & Kahn, 1993). This study adopted Dörnyei's model (2019), where the experimental group underwent a special implementation while the control group served as a baseline, enabling comparison to determine the intervention's effect on participants' listening comprehension development.

## **Participants**

The participants of the study were learners from the preparatory program of the Foreign Languages Department of a private university. There were 30 learners with Alpha (intermediate) proficiency levels in these classes. The age range was between 18-21. This level of classes had 25 hours of contact lessons each week. The learners needed to complete three terms successfully to be able to cover the preparatory program. Assessment was divided into two parts as exams and performance. In the examination assessment, learners performed Full Tests (FT) and Progress Tests (PT) regularly. Based on the length of the term, on average there were three to five PTs and two to four FTs. In the PTs, there was a listening skill section with ten multiple choice questions in total, and in FTs, there was a listening section with 20 multiple choice questions. In this case, the data was collected during the second term due to two reasons. Firstly, the researcher wanted to wait so that the learners could form a certain learning style in and accumulate some base knowledge about the listening skill. Furthermore, the researcher applied a purposive sampling by taking the average grades of FTs and PTs that the learners took in the first term, and accordingly, she formed the experimental and control groups in order to have more reliable results at the end of the implementation.

In total, there were 32 learners, 17 learners in the experimental group and 15 learners in the control group. The listening score averages taken from PTs and FTs belonging the first semester of the academic year were really close to each other, 71.5 for the experimental group and 69.8 for the control group, and this eliminated the variable of proficiency level difference to get more reliable results from the study.

## **Context**

In this preparatory program, the classes are classified into three levels as Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie. This categorization represents the proficiency level of the learners as follows: Alpha (elementary), Bravo (pre-intermediate & intermediate) and Charlie (intermediate & upper intermediate). These levels specify the proficiency levels of the learners at the very beginning of the term. However, as the semesters proceeds, the levels become higher, and this research study was applied during the last semester of the academic year so that the basis for listening skill could be grounded before the implementation and the research results could be stronger. The research was applied to two different Alpha classes in the last spring term so that the proficiency level could be more appropriate for the aim of the study. These two different Alpha classes were chosen according to the learners' previous listening achievements. The researcher compared the listening skill scores in the examinations of the previous term and chose two classes whose listening scores were the closest. Additionally, it was easier to carry out the research since the researcher taught Alpha classes.

There are 25 hours of lesson every week for Alpha level classes. This level has four different teacher partners whose distribution of lesson hours are different, too. The researcher has 4 hours of lesson each week in each class that has the participants of this study. It should also be mentioned that the researcher teaches both experimental and control groups during the first two lesson hours on different days. It can be said that their preparedness and motivation for the lessons are more or less the same.

The Curriculum Development and Testing Office designs the curriculum of the institution according to the specific needs of the learners every year with the adaptations, additions, and omissions. The Curriculum Development and Testing Office inform the teachers about the details of the curriculum before starting to the new term every year. Alpha level classes use LB (Language Hub) Beginner, Elementary, Pre-Intermediate and Intermediate books as the main coursebook. Moreover, Step-up booklet, Listening booklet, Writing booklet, and Reading booklet are used as workbooks in order to support extra practice



during the term. As stated, along with the main coursebook, learners are exposed to extra listening practices with strategy trainings as of the second term. Nevertheless, there is no collaboration in the instructions of the Listening booklet either, which supports the main problem for this study.

Before the study, the researcher has carried out an online survey to have an idea of the teacher stance towards collaborative listening and the results have shown that although the teachers think that collaboration might work well during each phase of listening practices only few of them fully apply collaboration to each phase. As stated before, the main course book does not include enough interaction patterns in listening skill practices, especially in the while-listening phase.

### **Implementation**

During the study, the listening skill was taught to two groups of learners, each using a different instructional approach. The experimental group engaged in collaborative listening activities for eight weeks, while the control group received individualistic instruction without collaboration. Both groups used the same main coursebook at the B1 level for their listening exercises, ensuring consistency in content and materials across groups. However, the experimental group's activities were specifically designed to incorporate collaborative tasks with the purpose of enhancing cognitive processing and fostering a deeper understanding of complex material through partner-based interactions. The main themes and activities from the B1 book are outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Collaborative Listening Activities for B1*

UNITS	ACTIVITIES
B1 U6 6.1-Health Myths	Pre-L: Vocabulary matching exercise with a partner & Giving examples for myths and facts with a partner While-L: Listening together and answering a multiple-choice exercise with a partner Post-L: Brainstorming about disadvantages of the health myths with a partner
B1 U7 7.3- Intelligence	Pre-L: A picture description activity with a partner & Vocabulary matching exercise with a partner While-L: Listening together and numbering the events exercise with a partner Post-L: Talking about the advantages and disadvantages of homeschooling with a partner
B1 U8 8.1- Musical Taste	Pre-L: Matching different types of music with a partner by discussing & Discussing the questions with a partner While-L: Listening together and answering a multiple-choice exercise with a partner Post-L: Discussing the relationship between mood and music with a partner
B1 U8 8.3- Telling Stories	Pre-L: Vocabulary matching exercise with a partner & Predicting activity with a partner While-L: Listening together and identifying contrasting ideas activity with a partner Post-L: Identifying the linking words and phrases in the extract with a partner

B1 U9 9.2- Getting and Giving	Pre-L: Brainstorming about benefitting society with a partner While-L: Listening together and doing categorization activities with a partner Post-L: Giving a summary practice with a partner
B1 U10 10.1- Devices	Pre-L: Identifying the devices in a given picture with a partner While-L: Listening together and matching the devices with the speakers activity with a partner Post-L: Reflecting on the context of the listening extract with a partner
B1 U11 11.1- Natural Wonders	Pre-L: Matching the seven wonders of the world with the names with a partner While-L: Listening together and ordering the information in it & answering comprehension questions with a partner Post-L: Stating reasons for the favorite wonders with a partner
B1 U12 12.3- Advertising	Pre-L: Guessing the product based on the advertise with a partner While-L: Listening together and identifying the opinions of the speakers with a partner Post-L: Defending the better campaign with a partner

For the B1+ coursebook, the collaborative listening activities for the experimental group can be seen below:

**Table 2**

*Collaborative Listening Activities for B1+*

B1+ U1 Communication Today	Pre-L: Predicting the topic based on pictures and clues with a partner While-L: Listening together and answering a multiple-choice exercise with a partner Post-L: Discussing reflective questions with a partner
B1+ U1 Who owns English?	Pre-L: Commenting on an infographic with a partner While-L: Listening together & Answering comprehension questions and identifying speakers with a partner Post-L: Agreeing or disagreeing on the opinions of the speakers with a partner
B1+ U2 Important Decisions	Pre-L: A vocabulary matching activity and sharing personal experiences with a partner While-L: Listening together and correcting the mistakes in the summary of the podcast with a partner Post-L: Finding pros and cons for the topic of the podcast with a partner
B1+ U2 You can do it!	Pre-L: Predicting the problems in the talks based on pictures and clues with a partner While-L: Listening together and completing the statements according to the talks with a partner Post-L: Answering personal follow up questions with a partner
B1+ U3 Travel Experiences	Pre-L: Brainstorming about transportation with a partner While-L: Listening together and performing a true-false activity with a partner

B1+ U3 Travel Smart	Post-L: Comparing the speakers based on questions with a partner
	Pre-L: Commenting on a poster with a partner
	While-L: Listening together & Answering comprehension questions and multiple choice questions with a partner
B1+ U4 Personal Change	Post-L: Discussing arguments and claims in the conversation with a partner
	Pre-L: Talking about resolutions with a partner
	While-L: Listening together & Answering comprehension questions and performing a true-false activity with a partner
B1+ U4 Personal Change	Post-L: Choosing top 10 New Year's resolutions with a partner
	Pre-L: Talking about favorite books and movies with a partner
	While-L: Listening together & Matching speakers with the given information and filling in the blanks in the statements with a partner
B1+ U4 Social Change	Post-L: Talking about the most interesting book and movie in the conversation with a partner
	Pre-L: Stating pros and cons about the topic with a partner
	While-L: Listening together & Choosing the best description of the talk and paraphrasing the information in it with a partner
B1+ U5 At work	Post-L: Creating more content for the talk with a partner
	Pre-L: Brainstorming about employment skills with a partner
	While-L: Listening together & Answering multiple choice questions and performing a true-false activity with a partner
B1+ U5 In Business	Post-L: Recommending a possible employee for the position in the conversation with a partner
	Pre-L: Creating an idea-map for shopping with a partner
	While-L: Listening together & performing a true-false activity and identifying the phrases to state examples with a partner
	Post-L: Coming up with different environmental business ideas with a partner

In the experimental group, a total of 19 listening practices were implemented, with each activity structured in three phases: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening. During the pre-listening phase, learners engaged in predictive exercises and vocabulary-building tasks with their partners. These initial tasks served to activate background knowledge, facilitate vocabulary acquisition, and foster discussion on the topic at hand. For example, in Unit 6, the "Health Myths" activity included a vocabulary matching exercise and an exchange of examples related to myths and facts, helping students familiarize themselves with key terminology and context. Working with partners was intended to allow students to build on each other's ideas, making the learning process more interactive and reinforcing vocabulary retention.

The while-listening phase involved students listening to audio segments together and collaboratively responding to comprehension exercises, such as multiple-choice or true-false questions. These exercises were designed to enhance students' ability to focus on key details and promote active listening. Collaboration at this stage enabled students to discuss and negotiate their understanding in real-time, aiding in comprehension by allowing them to compare interpretations and clarify doubts with their peers. For instance, in Unit 7's "Intelligence" activity, students worked together to order events in the listening audio reinforcing their sequencing and analytical skills. Engaging in these tasks as a pair aimed to

foster a higher level of comprehension, as students could pool their knowledge and correct each other's misunderstandings, leading to more accurate responses.

Finally, the post-listening phase focused on critical reflection and synthesis of information. Students were encouraged to discuss broader implications, express personal opinions, and relate the listening content to their own experiences. These discussions provided opportunities for learners to reinforce comprehension through elaboration and personal connection to the material. In Unit 8, the "Musical Taste" activity led students to examine the relationship between music and mood, fostering a deeper, reflective dialogue about the content. Structuring these insights collaboratively was meant to help students gain perspectives beyond their own, which often deepened their understanding and helped solidify the knowledge gained.

To further maximize the benefits of collaborative learning, the researcher rotated partners frequently within the experimental group. This rotation was implemented to encourage a diversity of interaction, enabling students to practice listening skills with different peers and adapt to various communication styles. Additionally, the consistent use of collaborative tasks was intended to build a supportive learning environment, encouraging active participation and mutual support among learners. Overall, the approach aimed to not only promote active engagement but also make the learning process more effective, as students could draw from each other's strengths and insights to achieve a more comprehensive grasp of the listening material.

In contrast, the control group followed the same coursebook and completed the same listening activities independently, focusing on individual comprehension and personal interpretation of the materials. This approach provided a clear comparison of outcomes between collaborative and individualistic listening practices, with each group's progress and engagement measured and analyzed at the end of the study.

### Data Collection Tools

The data was gathered with the help of the pre- and post-test, which were applied before and after the implementation to the participants in both groups in order to compare the effectiveness of collaboration on the development of listening skill. As the pre and post-tests, the researcher used the TOEFL Diagnostic Test since the institution applies TOEFL-based examination as the assessment during and at the end of each academic year. The reliability estimates for the listening section, which have been conducted basing on item response theory, have shown a high degree of consistency with the rate of 0.87. Thus, it can be claimed that the TOEFL Diagnostic Test of Listening has a sufficient amount of reliability to be administered to the participants of the study. The test of reliability for TOEFL Diagnostic Test of Listening reported in TOEFL Research Insight Series can be seen below (ETS, 2020):

**Table 3**

*Reliability Estimates and Standard Errors of Measurement*

Score	Scale	Reliability Estimate	SEM
Reading	0-30	0.87	2.34

Listening	0-30	0.87	2.38
Speaking	0-30	0.86	1.57
Writing	0-30	0.80	2.14
Total	0-120	0.95	4.26

The TOEFL Research Insight Series (2020) provides validity evidence for the TOEFL iBT® tests as a whole, and the Listening section is included in the broader validity framework. The validity arguments and the evidence can be seen in the table below:

**Table 4**

*Propositions and Related Evidence in the TOEFL Validity Argument*

<b>Proposition</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
The content of the test is relevant to and representative of the kinds of tasks and written and oral texts that students encounter in college and university settings.	Reviews of research and empirical studies of language use at English-medium institutions of higher education
Tasks and scoring criteria are appropriate for obtaining evidence of test takers' academic language abilities.	Pilot and field studies of task and test design; systematic development of rubrics for scoring written and spoken responses
Academic language proficiency is revealed by the linguistic knowledge, processes, and strategies test takers use to respond to test tasks.	Investigations of discourse characteristics of written and spoken responses and strategies used in answering reading comprehension questions
The structure of the test is consistent with theoretical views of the relationships among English language skills.	Factor analyses of field-study results for the test
Performance on the test is related to other indicators or criteria of academic language proficiency.	Relationships between test scores and self-assessments, academic placements, local assessments of international teaching assistants, performance on simulated academic tasks, grades, and other indicators of academic success
The test results are used appropriately and have positive consequences.	Development of materials to help test users prepare for the test and interpret test scores appropriately; long-term empirical study of test impact (washback)

The researcher spared total two lesson hours for both the pre- and post-tests before and after the implementation process. Also, the Shapiro-Wilk normality test have been applied by using SPSS to check whether the scores of the participants in the TOEFL Diagnostic Test of Listening have been distributed normally. The results of Shapiro-Wilk normality analysis performed at 95% confidence interval shown in Table 5, it was determined that the data showed normal distribution ( $p > .05$ ). Since ‘probability coefficient (p) values’ in table 5 were greater than 0.05, it has been interpreted as the normal distribution of the data. Namely, it can be said that whereas some of the scores are low, some high, the bulk of the scores centered around the mean. The details can be seen in the table 5 below:

**Table 5**

*The Shapiro-Wilk Normality Test Results for the TOEFL Diagnostic Test of Listening*

Variables	N	P
Experimental Group Pre-Test Scores	17	.388
Experimental Group Post-Test Scores	17	.716
Control Group Pre-Test Scores	15	.639
Control Group Post-Test Scores	15	.394

The participants’ views were analyzed by basing on individual semi-structured interviews right after the implementation was completed and categorized as the contributions of collaboration to the participants in only the experimental group regarding cognitive, affective, and social factors. The interview questions have been watched and analyzed on a question-based format one by one and the answers have been coded for each category by the researcher as positive, neutral, and negative responses firstly and the most common causes were categorized then. Moreover, the categorization was checked by an expert later. The questionnaire has been conducted in the participants native language, Turkish, so that they could answer without any confusion, Before carrying out the actual interview, the researcher double-checked the comprehensibility of the questions by implementing interviews with a few learners. The interview questions (see Appendix A) addressed cognitive, affective, and social factors, as well as the participants’ overall opinions about collaborative listening activities.

## Data Analysis

The study employed various data analysis techniques to examine the collected data. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS software. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS software to examine the impact of collaborative listening activities on participants' listening skill development. Pre- and post-test scores from the control and experimental groups were analyzed using paired-samples t-tests to assess within-group changes over time. Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to compare pre-test scores between the control and experimental groups to demonstrate the initial conditions and to compare post-test scores to evaluate differences in performance outcomes between the groups after the implementation. The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic content analysis and grounded method together. First, the interviews were transcribed verbatim. Participants' responses were categorized into three main groups: positive, neutral, and negative by using thematic content analysis.

Later, the most common themes were identified and categorized by using grounded method. Within each category, recurring details and patterns were identified to refine the codes. This process involved grouping similar responses, eliminating redundant or overly broad codes, and merging overlapping ones. Finally, these refined codes were used to derive meaningful themes that accurately represented the data. Throughout this process, categories and themes were checked for consistency and relevance, ensuring a systematic and robust analysis. The validity and reliability of the coding and themes were ensured through several steps. First, all responses were thoroughly reviewed, and the codes were derived directly from the data to ensure they reflected participants' answers accurately. Expert review was conducted to validate the coding process, and any discrepancies were resolved collaboratively. Additionally, the codes and themes were revisited multiple times to ensure consistency and alignment with the data. By transparently documenting each step of the coding and thematic analysis process, both validity and reliability were systematically reinforced.

## Findings

### The Paired-Samples t-Test for the Experimental Group

The paired-samples t-test was conducted in order to compare the scores of the experimental group pre- and post-test results. The appropriate type of t-test to carry out was the paired-samples one since there were two sets of scores obtained from the same group. The results of the test are shown in Table 6 below:

**Table 6**

*The Paired-Samples t-test Results for Pre- and Post-tests of the Experimental Group*

	Pre-test		Post-test		N	95% CI for Mean Difference	T	P
	M	SD	M	SD				
Experimental Group	21.18	7.94	28.47	8.81	17	-9.37, -5.22	-7.439	.000*

\*  $p > .05$ .

The findings presented in Table 6 indicate a significant difference between the pre- and post-tests of the experimental group with the numbers of (M=21.18, SD=7.94) for the pre-test scores and the numbers of (M=28.47, SD=8.81) for the post-test scores, resulting in the significance value of;  $t(16) = -7.439, p < .05$ . This reveals a high statistical significance between the scores of TOEFL Diagnostic Test of

Listening in the experimental group after the treatment of collaboration in the listening practices. Next, the same procedure was applied to the control group's pre- and the post-test results.

### The Paired-Samples t-test for the Control Group

Another paired-samples t-test was run for the pre- and post-tests of the control group in order to reveal whether there was a significant difference between the scores after the treatment of collaborative listening. The results of the test can be viewed in Table 7 below:

**Table 7**

*The Paired-Samples t-test Results for Pre- and Post-tests of the Control Group*

	Pre-test		Post-test		N	95% CI for Mean Difference	T	P
	M	SD	M	SD				
Control Group	21.13	6.59	22.40	5.11	15	-2.89, .36	-1.669	.117*

\*  $p > .05$ .

According to the findings given in Table 7 above, there is no significant difference regarding the comparison of the pre-test (M=21.13, SD=6.59) and the post-test (M=22.40, SD=5.11) scores in the control group of the study with the value of;  $t(14) = -1.669, p > .05$ . These results propose that the group, who were not exposed to the treatment of collaboration in the listening skill, did not show any significant development in this skill throughout this research study.

Consequently, the pre- and the post-test scores of the experimental group shows a significant difference, and the difference between the pre- and the post-test scores of the control group is insignificant. Based on this, it can easily be advocated that the treatment of collaborative listening most probably culminates with a development in the skill of listening comprehension. In order to demonstrate more insight on this argument, the researcher carried out the independent-samples t-tests for the pre- and the post-tests of both groups.

### The Independent-Samples t-test Results for the Pre-test

After the paired-samples t-tests were completed, the independent-samples t-tests were run in order to compare the scores of the pre-test in both experimental and the control group before the treatment. Independent-samples t-tests were chosen to be employed here due to the fact that they aim at comparing the results of one group that are independent of each other. The findings of the test are presented in Table 8 below:

**Table 8**

*The Independent-Samples t-test Results for the Pre-test for Both Groups*

Group	M	SD	N	95% CI for Mean Difference	T	P
Experimental	21.18	7.94	17	-5.20, 5.29	.017	.987*
Control	21.13	6.59	15			

\*  $p > .05$ .



According to the results in Table 8 above, an insignificant difference was observed when the pre-test scores of the experimental ( $M=21.18$ ,  $SD=7.94$ ) and the control ( $M=21.13$ ,  $SD=6.59$ ) groups were compared with the value of  $t(30) = 0.017$ ,  $p>.05$ . Within the knowledge of this, it is essential to state that both the experimental and the control group were approximately equal in terms of scores before the treatment in the very beginning of the research study. Next, the same procedure was applied to the post-test scores of both groups.

### **The Independent-Samples t-test Results for the Post-test**

Another independent-samples t-test was carried out for the post-test scores of the participants in both the experimental group and the control group in order to indicate the potential difference in the scores of both groups after the treatment of collaboration in the listening practices. Table 9 below shows the results of the test:

**Table 9**

*The Independent-Samples t-test Results for the Post-test for Both Groups*

Group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	95% CI for Mean Difference	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>
Experimental	28.47	8.81	17	.77, 11.37	2.341	.026*
Control	22.40	5.11	15			

\*  $p > .05$ .

Table 9 above illustrates the findings of the post-test scores obtained from both the experimental ( $M=28.47$ ,  $SD=8.81$ ) and the control ( $M=22.40$ ,  $SD=5.11$ ) group with a significant difference in the value of  $t(30) = 2.341$ ,  $p<.05$ . This significant difference between the scores proposes that there has been a development in the listening comprehension skill after the treatment of collaboration in the experimental group.

Consequently, the independent-samples t-test results also show that the post-test scores of both groups indicate a significant difference after the implementation during this research study. Hence, one can easily claim that collaboration in the listening practices help learners develop their listening skill.

Taken together, the analysis of the TOEFL Diagnostic Test of Listening as the pre- and post-tests was presented above in order to answer the first and the second research questions of this study, and accordingly, it can be concluded that the application of collaboration in the listening skill enhances the development in the listening skill.

### **The Semi-Structured Interview Questions and Results**

The most common response codes of the participants to the cognitive factors related interview questions are demonstrated below in Table 10:

**Table 10***The most common responses of the participants for cognitive factors related interview questions*

Factor	Theme	Category	f	Codes
Cognitive	Listening skill	Positive	14	Peer assistance, feeling of responsibility, self-confidence, exchange of ideas, justification of the answers
		Neutral	0	
		Negative	3	Already problematic
	Process of Listening	Positive	13	Effective planning, exchange of ideas, sharing the burden
		Neutral	2	Not sure
		Negative	2	Already easy
	Time Management	Positive	12	Effective planning, relaxation, peer-assistance,
		Neutral	0	
		Negative	5	No trouble in time management
Other Language Skills	Positive	17	Vocabulary- peer assistance, exchange of ideas Speaking- constant active participation, more opportunity to practice Pronunciation- peer correction, higher awareness	
		Neutral	0	
		Negative	0	

According to Table 10, the first question asked students whether collaboration in listening practices has developed their skill in listening? The majority of students responded positively, indicating that collaborative listening had enhanced their listening skills. Key themes that emerged from the responses included peer assistance, an increased sense of responsibility, increased self-confidence, exchange of ideas, and the need to justify answers. Working with peers seemed to allow students to actively engage with the material, taking responsibility not only for their own understanding but also for supporting their partner's comprehension. This exchange of ideas created an environment in which students could clarify and justify their responses, fostering deeper listening comprehension and stronger analytical skills. A few students, however, expressed negative opinions, describing collaboration as "already problematic." This minority may have faced personal or interpersonal challenges, which made the collaborative experience less effective for them.

The second question explored whether collaboration in listening practices eased the process of listening. Thirteen students found that collaboration indeed simplified the listening process, reporting that it encouraged effective planning, sharing of ideas, and division of responsibility. Collaboration appeared to facilitate better organization, as students could approach tasks with a structured plan and share the cognitive load with their peers. This allowed students to handle complex material more effectively, reducing cognitive strain and making the process smoother and more manageable. Two students felt uncertain about the impact of collaboration on the listening process, perhaps indicating that while they participated in the collaborative activities, they did not perceive a significant difference in their experience. A small number of students felt that collaboration was unnecessary, as they already found the listening process manageable on their own, indicating a level of confidence in their individual listening abilities.

The third question asked whether collaboration in listening practices has contributed to their time management in the listening process. Twelve students reported that collaboration positively affected their time management, highlighting that it led to better planning, a sense of relaxation, and peer assistance. The collaborative approach helped students approach tasks in a structured and timely manner, which likely reduced anxiety and improved efficiency. By working with peers, students seemed to feel less pressure regarding time constraints, allowing them to manage the listening tasks with greater ease. However, five students did not find collaboration beneficial in terms of time management, as they indicated that they had no initial issues in this area. These responses suggest that some students already had effective personal strategies for managing their time, so collaboration did not add a noticeable benefit in this regard.

Finally, the fourth question addressed whether collaboration in listening practices has helped students improve other language skills. Nearly all students reported improvements in other language skills, such as vocabulary, speaking, and pronunciation. They specifically noted that vocabulary was strengthened through peer assistance and the exchange of ideas, while speaking skill improved due to active participation and the increased opportunity to practice. Pronunciation also had positive changes, with students mentioning the benefits of peer correction and an increased awareness of pronunciation norms. These responses suggest that collaborative listening had a holistic effect, supporting students in developing a range of language skills beyond just listening. Through regular interaction, students gained exposure to language use in context, which reinforced their vocabulary acquisition, speaking fluency, and pronunciation accuracy. No students had a neutral or negative opinion on this question, indicating a consensus on the positive impact of collaboration on other language skills.

Overall, the data indicate that collaborative listening practices were seen as beneficial across multiple cognitive aspects related to listening skill development. The majority of students reported gains in listening skills, a smoother listening process, improved time management, and advancements in other language skills. These findings suggest that collaboration in listening practices can foster a supportive environment, where students benefit not only in listening comprehension but also in related language skills. However, it is worth noting that a small subset of students either did not perceive collaboration as beneficial or encountered difficulties, likely due to personal learning preferences or existing strengths in certain areas. This analysis highlights the potential of collaborative listening to support holistic language development while also recognizing the need for adaptability to accommodate individual student needs and preferences.

The most common response codes of the participants to the affective factors related interview questions are demonstrated below in Table 11:

**Table 11***The most common responses of the participants for affective factors related interview questions*

Factor	Theme	Category	f	Codes
Affective	Motivation	Positive	14	Constant focus, sharing the burden, compensation for each other's weak points
		Neutral	0	
		Negative	3	Already highly motivated
	Anxiety	Positive	12	Effective preparation, peer-assistance, relaxation
		Neutral	5	Knowledge of strategies, already anxiety-free
		Negative	0	
	Positive & Negative Feelings	Positive	17	Interactive process, no boredom, game-like process, constant attention
		Neutral	0	
		Negative	0	
Attitude	Positive	16	Self-confidence, increased comprehension level, enjoyable process	
	Neutral	0		
	Negative	1	Already positive	

The fifth question asked students whether collaboration in listening practices has increased their motivation for listening practices. The majority of students indicated a positive impact on their motivation, with themes such as constant focus, shared responsibility, and compensation for each other's weaknesses emerging from their responses. This suggests that collaboration not only sustained their engagement but also created a supportive environment where students could rely on their peers to cover areas of difficulty. By sharing the burden, students likely felt more motivated to stay attentive and contribute, as they saw collaboration as an opportunity to support and be supported. However, three students responded negatively, explaining that they were already highly motivated before the collaborative approach, indicating that while collaboration enhanced motivation for most, it did not significantly impact those who were intrinsically motivated from the beginning.

The sixth question addressed whether there was any change in students' anxiety for listening practices after experiencing collaboration. Twelve students expressed that collaboration had reduced their anxiety, attributing this change to effective preparation, peer assistance, and an increased sense of relaxation. These responses imply that the collaborative environment allowed students to feel more secure, as they could rely on peers for support and share the challenges of listening tasks. Knowing they were not alone in the process appeared to decrease stress and create a more comfortable atmosphere for listening activities. Five students, however, reported a neutral stance, stating that they were either already aware of strategies to manage anxiety or did not experience anxiety in listening tasks initially. This indicates that while collaboration can be a valuable tool for reducing anxiety, its impact may be less pronounced for those who already possess effective coping strategies or a naturally low level of anxiety.

In response to the seventh question, which asked whether collaboration made listening lessons more enjoyable or more boring, all students reported positive feelings. Themes such as an interactive

process, absence of boredom, game-like qualities, and sustained attention were frequently mentioned. These responses suggest that collaborative listening activities transformed the lessons into an engaging and enjoyable experience. The game-like aspects, likely stemming from the interactive and dynamic nature of group work, appeared to maintain students' attention and foster a sense of enjoyment. This positive response across the participants implies that collaboration played a significant role in making the listening lessons more enjoyable for all students, likely enhancing their overall learning experience.

The final question explored whether collaboration in listening practices had changed students' attitudes towards listening. Sixteen students indicated a positive shift in their attitude, mentioning increased self-confidence, improved comprehension, and an enjoyable learning process. These responses suggest that collaborative activities not only boosted students' confidence in their listening skills but also allowed them to experience listening in a supportive and pleasant context, enhancing their perception of the activity. The increase in comprehension may have stemmed from the collaborative support and shared problem-solving, which allowed students to approach listening tasks with greater assurance. Only one student responded negatively, stating that s/he already had a positive attitude towards listening.

In summary, the data reveal that collaborative listening practices had a largely positive effect on affective factors such as motivation, anxiety, enjoyment, and attitude. Most students reported increased motivation, reduced anxiety, greater enjoyment, and a more positive attitude towards listening as a result of collaboration. These findings highlight the potential of collaborative activities to create a supportive and enjoyable learning environment that can enhance affective factors, making listening practices more engaging and less anxiety-inducing. However, the responses also show that students who already possessed high motivation, low anxiety, or a positive attitude towards listening experienced a less impact, suggesting that the benefits of collaboration may be more pronounced for students who initially face affective challenges in these areas.

The most common response codes of the participants to the social factors related interview questions are demonstrated below in table 12:

**Table 12**

*The most common responses of the participants for social factors related interview questions*

Factor	Theme	Category	f	Codes
Social	Social Skills	Positive	15	More opportunity to communicate, self-confidence thanks to higher achievement, more social interactions
		Neutral	0	
		Negative	2	Already social enough

A big portion of the participants thought that collaboration in listening practices helped them to improve their social skills. According to them, this regular collaboration and interaction during listening activities made the process easier. The most common response codes of the participants to the overall evaluation interview questions are demonstrated below in Table 13:

**Table 13***The most common responses of the participants for overall evaluation interview questions*

Factor	Theme	Category	f	Codes	
Overall Evaluation	Task Completion	Positive	16	Exchange of ideas, different perspectives, peer-assistance, strategy learning	
		Neutral	0		
		Negative	1	More effective individual work	
	Further Listening Lessons	Positive	16	Being more alert, feeling of responsibility, better comprehension, higher task completion, enjoyable process	
		Neutral	0		
		Negative	1	Dislike of people	
	Phases Of Listening Lessons	Pre	Pre	3	Effective planning, feeling of readiness
			While	9	Justification of the answers, higher task completion, strategy learning
		Post	Post listening	2	Opportunity to reflect, different feedback and perspectives
			Pre&while	2	Getting prepared, higher achievement
		All	1	Justification on the discussions, reflection on the process	
	Advantages And Disadvantages	Positive	17	Higher task completion, no boredom, feeling of success, feeling of responsibility, more attention, more fun, improved critical thinking skills	
Neutral		0			
Negative		0			

Based on these views, it could be undoubtedly claimed that collaboration in the listening practices has had positive impacts on the learners, specifically in terms of the development of the listening skill and increased positive attitude towards it.

### Discussion

In this part there will be the exploration of some further remarks on the revealed answers of participants to the research questions.

#### Interpretation of the Findings Regarding Research Questions 1 and 2

The first two research questions of the study ask about the development of the listening skill after the treatment of collaborative listening over a period of time. Whereas the former asks whether or not there is a development in the listening skill owing to the collaboration, the latter aims at finding out the extent of the development. To be able to answer these questions, paired-samples t-tests and independent-samples t-tests were run with the idea of comparing the scores of the pre- and the post-tests in the experimental and the control groups. First of all, the comparison of the pre- and the post-test scores for both the experimental and the control group.

As presented above (in Table 6 and Table 7), whereas the scores of the participants in the experimental group before and after the treatment shows a significant difference, the scores of the

participants in the control group does not show any significant difference. Considering this difference in the scores, it can be claimed that the implementation of collaborative listening culminates with a noticeable development in the skill of listening. Obviously, more corroborative evidence is required for this argument. Hence, the independent-samples t-tests were run with the pre- and the post-test scores of both groups, again. Basing on the findings (in Table 8 and Table 9), it can be asserted that whereas the pre-test scores of both groups do not show a significant difference, the comparison of the post-test scores of the participants in both groups demonstrates a significant difference. This significant difference in the post-test scores reveals that there has been a development in the skill of listening after the treatment of collaborative listening.

Taken together, these findings presented above justify the claims of the supporters of collaborative listening. To exemplify, Cross (2018) believed and asserted that collaboration plays an important role between pairs or among small groups of language learners in fulfilling the purpose of facilitating and supporting one another's comprehension of L2 listening texts and L2 listening development. Moreover, according to Brown (2008), a more successful and stimulating learning environment can be achieved by working and learning collaboratively, and this learning environment can lead learners to a further satisfactory academic performance for each skill in language learning. As they put forward, the collaboration in the listening practices has paved the way for the participants of this study, too, according to their pre- and post-test scores.

The pre- and post-test findings of this research study have also been in parallel with the studies carried out on collaborative listening in the Iranian EFL context. A study conducted by Rozati and Safa (2017) has yielded similar results and also suggests that collaboration among peers during listening practices may create a positive correlation between collaborative listening and development of listening comprehension. Another Iranian study, such as the one above, has shown that working collaboratively with peers during listening practice is practical and useful for the achievement of the listening skill since the experiment group's test results are a great deal better than the control group's results (Shabani & Malekdar, 2016). Consequently, the interpretations of the analysis of the pre- and post-tests in the present research study support the higher achievement in the listening skill after the treatment of collaborative listening like the other studies discussed in the review of the literature section.

### **Interpretation of the Findings Regarding the Research Question 3**

The first four questions in the interview ask the participants about their reflections and the comments regarding the cognitive aspects whereas the next four questions deal with the points for affective factors. In the following section, only one question is asked for the social factors. Finally, last four questions ask about the reflections on the overall implementation in order to gain more insight on the process. The responses of the participants will be discussed basing on each section separately.

As provided above (in tables between 10 and 13), most of the learners' responses to the questions regarding the cognitive aspects of contributions on the collaboration in the listening practices were positive. That is to say, the majority of the learners who took part in the study thought that collaboration developed their listening skill, eased the process of listening, contributed to their time management during listening lessons and, helped them to improve their other language skills, especially speaking, vocabulary and pronunciation. These contributions stated above on collaborative listening support most of the arguments provided in the review of literature chapter. To illustrate, Cross (2018) claimed that there is a direct correlation between the effective use of collaboration and the development in the listening skill. The learners' views in this research also support this idea. Moreover, four research studies carried out in Iran proposed that collaboration has positive impacts on the development in the listening skill improvement, as explained before. The comments of the learners on the same subject reassure the

findings of these studies. Most participants had the belief that the listening lessons became easier due to the collaboration as Vandergrift and Goh (2012) have claimed by stating that participating in meaningful communication with other peers facilitates the process as well as upgrades the improvement of learners' potential in the listening skill. Lantolf and Thorne's (2006) observations also argue that an active engagement in the language learning environment economizes on the task time and learner energy, and provides efficiency for task completion, and the comments of the learners are likewise. Furthermore, Panitz (1996) puts forward that effective planning with different perspectives provided by the peers for the assigned listening task saves time in the completion duration. This is also supported by many of the participants who were exposed to collaborative listening. Last but not least, many of the learners' views show that working collaboratively during the listening practices also have improved their vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation, and speaking skill. These outcomes can be supported by the arguments of Nunan (1990) since he found out that learners' academic achievement is correlated with the listening efficacy in the classroom. According to the learners, as an outcome of collaboration, they had the chance of exchanging ideas and strategies, and by this way, they could improve their listening skill along with new words and their pronunciation. They could also have more opportunity to speak and discuss during collaborative listening, which results in a development in speaking, too. This is also supported with another research Gilbert carried out in 2005. He has conducted a study with English language learners to find the relationship between the effectiveness of listening and general performances of learners. The results have shown that improving learners' listening skill has led them to a better achievement in other language skills, such as observed in the responses of the participants in this study.

Moreover, many of the learners' responses to the questions regarding the affective aspects of contributions to the collaboration in the listening practices were positive, too. In other words, the majority of the learners who took part in the study thought that the use of collaboration increased their motivation whereas decreased the anxiety level in the listening skill, and it made the listening lessons more enjoyable and changed their attitude positively toward the skill of listening. As in the first category, these findings have also supported the arguments put forward by many scholars in the review of literature part. As Hawaider (2017) suggested, psychological barriers have a great deal of impact on the development in the listening skill. Hamouda (2013) commented on this argument and stated that specifically lack of motivation and interest generate problems in the listening comprehension of the language learners. Later Bevilacqua (2000) showed that collaboration can be used as a way to overcome these barriers for higher achievement and stated that having a collaborative learning environment in the classroom gathers the attention of the learners more easily and increases their enthusiasm in taking part in the tasks actively, which increases the motivation of the learners. The comments gathered by the participants during the interview supported all the arguments presented above. They compared the beginning and the end of the semester, namely before and after the treatment of the collaborative listening process, in terms of their motivation toward the skill of listening, and they brought forward that working with the help of a partner during the listening practices undoubtedly helped them substantially to feel more motivated since they realized they were able to complete the task and experience a feeling of achievement when they worked collaboratively. Additionally, the implementation of collaboration in the listening practices has decreased the anxiety levels of the participants according to the interview responses. This was also mentioned by various scholars before. For instance, Johnson and Johnson (1986) argued that during collaborative learning, learners experience learning actively by discussing and exploring by reconceptualization of prior knowledge, namely activating it, and connecting to the schemata, in an anxiety-and-ambiguity free environment. Almost all the participants confirmed this argument by stating that they experienced a change in their anxiety level with the advantages of collaborative listening in terms of getting support from the peer and sharing the burden of the process with their friends. Moving on to discuss the next question, it is vital to note that all of the participants who took part in the interview responded to it positively. Hence,



all of them thought that the use of collaboration during the listening practices made the lesson more enjoyable. This point was also argued by Bevilacqua (2000), who asserted that collaborative learning is a perfect opportunity for teachers to transfer a lesson into a fun, interesting, informative, and developing social gathering when applied appropriately. When the learners were asked to compare the listening lessons before and after the implementation of collaborative listening, they all stated that collaboration made the listening process even more enjoyable than any other lessons they had had since it created a fun environment to complete the task by turning the lesson into a kind of game. Lastly, the attitude of the learners should be discussed here. Nearly all the participants have been observed to agree on the fact that collaboration in the listening practices changed their attitude towards the listening skill in a positive way. The possible change in the attitude of the learners towards the target language and its components after collaboration was mentioned in the literature by Brown, who argued that as well as providing a higher quality learning, collaborative learning also fortifies learners' social skills while developing positive attitudes (2008). Johnson and Johnson (1986) also supported it by putting forward that collaboration is one of the implicit ways to encourage learners since peer reassurance has a positive impact on motivating learners. In this way, resulting from the positive experiences gained during the collaboration, learners tend to build a positive attitude toward language learning itself and become more eager learners for further tasks. As a last exemplification, in a more recent study carried out with Iranian EFL learners on collaborative listening, according to the researchers' observations, it has been observed that the participants developed a positive attitude towards the listening skill after the collaboration (Saeedakhtar & Haqju & Rouhi, 2021).

The next point to discuss should be the aspect of social factors within the scope of the contributions of the use of collaboration in the listening skill. In this category, there has been only one question which asks about the improvement of the social skills of the learners during and after the treatment. The analysis shows that the majority of the participants thought that the use of collaboration during the treatment helped them to improve their social skills. They asserted a great many causes for the improvement, but the most common one was the better chances of interaction and communication during the collaboration. These responses obtained from the participants reassured the arguments of Laal and Laal (2011) who claimed that a collaborative learning environment compels learners to promote themselves in social and psychological ways while they argue on different perspectives by evaluating arguments and defending their opinions. Bevilacqua (2000) also defended the claims of Laal and Laal by stating that collaboration creates a fun and informative social gathering for the learners and allows them to socialize while learning. Furthermore, according to Akbaş (2017), collaborative learning in language classrooms enhances social communication and develops better interaction among one another and teachers, too.

Moving on to the last part of the interview, which asks some general questions in order to be able to obtain more details about the process, the researcher asked about task completion, further listening practices, stages of the listening and the overall advantages and the disadvantages of the treatment in this category. To begin with, one can see that a big number of the participants thought that the use of collaboration in the listening practices has helped them to improve themselves in terms of task completion. It is an essential outcome since one of the basic arguments claimed by the biggest admirer of collaborative listening, Cross (2018), is the improvement in the task completion as a consequence of the collaboration in the listening skill. According to him, the collaborative listening process results in higher and easier task completion, which is the most advantageous point of it because learners make use of the other advantages of collaborative listening, such as self-confidence, motivation and the like, as well in completing their tasks. The participants' responses totally match with this argument since they referred to the task completion for the justification of each response they gave during the whole interview. They specified their answers by claiming that they achieved more, became more motivated, but less anxious, enjoyed it more, developed a more positive attitude and managed their time better all because of the

higher and easier task completion. In addition to the task completion, the researcher asked about their preferences for the further listening practices to work individually or collaboratively, and most of the learners said that working with a partner was better and they would like to perform future listening practices collaboratively. They justified this response by claiming that they enjoyed and benefited from the whole process thanks to their partners and they would like to continue to make use of it in the future. This situation can be supported with the ideas of Smith and MacGregor (1992), who stated that collaboration is helpful to enlighten and motivate learners for further life-learning process and true intellectual development.

For question 12, the researcher aimed at finding out which stage of the listening (pre-listening, while-listening or post-listening) was the one that the participants benefitted from collaboration the most. The responses suggest that the participants made the most effective use of collaboration in the listening practices during the while-listening phase the most. The majority of them chose the while-listening as their response, and justified it by stating that comparing and defending their answers after between the first and the second listening promoted their task completion, which resulted in various advantages for them such as having more self-confidence, higher achievement and improvement in the listening and speaking skills. They also stated that performing the listening practices with the help of a partner taught the learners some strategies, new vocabulary items, and better pronunciation. These findings reassure the claims of Cross (2018), who stated that during while-listening, which has two steps mostly as the first listening and second listening, learners benefit from each other by basically exchanging and justifying their answers together, and in this way, they can achieve more in terms of meaningful outcomes compared to how much they can achieve when working alone. He also argues that learners present what is heard by each other to complete the missing parts of one another, which again increases the chance of finalizing the task effectively in the end. As a result of mentioned outcomes, as also suggested by most of the participants, the while-listening stage of the listening practices appears to be the one where participants benefit most from collaboration.

Finally, the last question in the interview asked whether the whole collaborative listening process was advantageous or disadvantageous regarding the development of the listening skill along with other skills and components. The researcher also asked them to add the additional advantages and the disadvantages of the use of collaboration in the listening practices. Again, all of the participants responded positively. They referred to justifications of the previous questions in order to explain themselves by mostly stating that the whole process eased the completion of the assigned task and improved them in terms of the listening skill owing to the strategies that they learned with the help of their partners. These points support the arguments of Swain and Deters (2007), who claimed that learners may actually make use of every social and interactional opportunity for learning since social interaction facilitates and mediates the process of language acquisition for each skill. Furthermore, Ohta (2001) stated that the assistance of a peer may lead learners to go beyond their actual capacities and achieve better. Lastly, Farrah (2011) also supported the reasons of the participants and stated that learners benefit from their peers' philosophies for learning and get the chance of exchanging perspectives, which creates a context for learners to encounter and try new learning styles.

Taking into consideration all the facts, findings and comments voiced so far, it can be concluded that the responses to the interview questions taken from the participants who were exposed to the treatment of collaborative listening were positive, and the participants described the whole process as quite advantageous rather than disadvantageous. The comments they offered to justify their positive experience reassured most of the arguments and the studies presented in the review of literature chapter.

## **Conclusion**

The findings indicated a significant improvement in listening skills for the experimental group based on pre- and post-test scores. Interview responses from the experimental group showed positive effects of collaboration on task completion, motivation, attitudes, and vocabulary development. The study's results aligned with previous research, reinforcing the benefits of collaborative listening practices. Ultimately, the research addresses a gap in the Turkish EFL context, suggesting that incorporating collaboration in listening lessons can enhance learners' performance and comprehension.

This study highlights the benefits and implications of using collaboration in listening practices, providing insights for language course designers, teachers, and learners. The findings suggest that including collaborative activities during every phase of listening, especially the while-listening stage, can significantly enhance the development of listening skills. While many coursebooks and teachers typically focus on collaboration during pre- and post-listening activities, this research indicates that continuous collaboration helps learners exchange ideas and justify their answers, leading to higher achievement and better task completion. The results of the pre- and post-tests showed that learners who engaged in collaborative listening outperformed those who worked individually.

For language teachers, this study implies the need to raise awareness of the benefits of collaborative listening. Although collaborative activities can be challenging to monitor, the results show that learners prefer them over individual listening tasks. Interviews revealed that students enjoyed collaborative practices more than individual ones, developed positive attitudes towards listening, and improved their motivation. Thus, it is crucial for teachers to be informed about effective ways to implement collaborative listening in the classroom and encouraged to incorporate it consistently for optimal learning outcomes.

Finally, the study provides implications for learners, suggesting that they can benefit cognitively, affectively, and socially from collaborative listening practices. The participants expressed a preference for working with partners, highlighting the advantages of shared listening experiences. To maximize these benefits, an awareness should be developed in learners about the positive impacts of collaboration on their listening skills, both in class and out it while doing homework. As the findings support the integration of collaborative listening into the curriculum, further research is needed to deepen the understanding of its contributions to listening skill development. The researcher suggests expanding future studies on collaborative listening by involving a larger number of participants, various proficiency levels, and different educational settings other than universities, such as primary and secondary schools. Including more teachers and implementing longer durations, such as a full academic year, would provide more reliable results. Adding delayed post-tests and examining other language skills like speaking, vocabulary, and pronunciation could offer a deeper understanding of the treatment's effectiveness. The study's materials could be diversified with authentic listening resources, and a self-evaluation rubric could help participants reflections on the process. As a preliminary step, teachers could develop supplementary collaborative exercises tailored to their coursebooks, gradually creating their own comprehensive resources for collaborative listening.

## **NOTES**

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## Appendix

### Appendix A

Cognitive Factors	When you compare the beginning and the end of the semester,	1. Has collaboration in listening practices developed your skill in listening?
		2. Has collaboration in listening practices eased the process of listening?
		3. Has collaboration in listening practices contributed to your time management in the listening process?
		4. Has collaboration in listening practices helped you improve other language skills?
Affective Factors	When you compare the beginning and the end of the semester,	5. Has collaboration in listening practices increased your motivation for listening practices?
		6. Is there any change in your anxiety for listening practices after experiencing collaboration in listening practices?
		7. Has collaboration in listening practices made the listening lessons more enjoyable or more boring?

		8. Has collaboration in listening practices changed your attitude towards listening practices? Explain briefly, please.
Social Factors	When you compare the beginning and the end of the semester,	9. Has collaboration in listening practices improved your social skills?
		10. Do you think that collaboration in listening practices have helped you in terms of task completion in listening practices?
		11. Would you like to perform listening practices with your partner during further listening lessons?
	When you compare the beginning and the end of the semester,	12. During which phase of listening practices (pre-listening, while-listening or post-listening) does collaboration help you the most?
		13. Are there any other advantages or disadvantages of collaboration in listening practices regarding the development of listening skill along with other skills and components?