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## **Original Article**

# A Comparative Study of Explicit and Implicit Mediators at Iranian High Schools: Students' L2 Anxiety and Listening Comprehension

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Submission date: 26-11-2022

Acceptance date: 08-04-2023

## Abstract

As conceptualized in Vygotsky's (1978) theory of mediation, the present quantitative study scrutinized the impact of explicit and implicit mediators on high school students' L2 listening anxiety and listening comprehension. Over six months, two groups of 34 Iranian high school students were exposed to pronunciation instruction (explicit mediator-using phonetic rulesand implicit mediator-without phonetic rules), and a control group of 17 students received no pronunciation instruction. Pretests and posttests were used to measure learners' improvements in listening anxiety and comprehension. Small changes were observed in both variables for the control group, whereas significant progress was found for both experimental groups, especially the explicit group. The results revealed that pronunciation instruction is a meaningful mediator in developing listening comprehension and decreasing listening anxiety among high school students, even when instructional time is restricted. This study has some practical implications suggesting that Iranian school teachers and book designers should consider pronunciation instruction effects when teaching listening to school students.

**Keywords**: Explicit mediators, Implicit mediators, Listening Anxiety, Listening comprehension, Pronunciation instruction

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## 1. Introduction

Listening is a convoluted and demanding language component that requires different skills that are all necessary for communication and learning (Brown, 2013; Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). Listening comprehension constitutes a major problem for second language learners, and students from nations whose national language is not English, such as Iran, have more difficulties with listening comprehension than with other language-based skills. Due to the time restrictions on most courses for EFL learners, often the case of teaching for listening receives relatively the least attention. Iranian students often learn English as a second language. Typically, they spend six years learning English during guidance school and high school before entering university. These courses primarily focus on the structure of the English language, as well as reading comprehension, vocabulary, and translation. However, since listening is not emphasized, language learners often struggle when they must begin learning with audio material (Nowrouzi et al., 2015).

To make worthwhile prognostications regarding anything that learners may perceive, some listeners use content-related prior information. In other words, they use this knowledge to comprehend the whole message without necessarily recognizing each term. This technique is referred to as the top-down technique (Field, 2004). On the other hand, the bottom-up technique uses all of one's prior understanding of the second language's linguistic structure to parse and categorize speech. Both above-mentioned techniques let listeners shape the perception of the expected piece of information immediately from the oral expression that they are exposed to (Field, 2004). Nonetheless, hardly any second language listeners are accomplished enough at the bottom-up technique; they perceive it as being on a rocky road as they try to divide an utterance into meaningful parts, retaining ample information in their short-term memory to bring together the associated components, figuring out terms they are acquainted with, and removing ambiguities from words that are spelled differently but sound alike and have different meanings, with due attention to the instantaneous setting (Brown, 2013). Recent studies have shown that listening difficulties could be related to phonological problems in addition to syntactic and lexical knowledge (Sutrisno, 2018). One of the current views on second language listening is that listening should not be seen as an ability that can

simply be progressed independently from other variables; it is an ability that needs direct teaching (Ngo, 2019).

Pronunciation is commonly neglected within the school context despite the overall agreement among researchers and language experts concerning the significance of adequate pronunciation skills for second language learners (Peltekov, 2020). Niebisch (2011) listed three potential motives behind teachers' decisions not to include pronunciation instruction in their classrooms. First, the regular class time is considered insufficient for pronunciation instruction to be included; thus, sporadic focus on pronunciation is deemed satisfactory. Second, they may not have the required knowledge to teach pronunciation effectively. Third, it is generally challenging to instruct in pronunciation to disparate groups of students with varied mother tongues whose pronunciation problems are different. Moreover, according to Derwing and Munro (2014), some teachers hold the belief that pronunciation teaching is not helpful and, thus, neglect to teach it in their classrooms.

Although students may have the same scores when tested independently, those with the most developmental potential tend to benefit more than others when provided with some guidance. Measures of students' independent abilities indicate what they already know; measures of what they can do with help indicate what they will be able to accomplish soon. Vygotsky referred to the setting in which a student learns with the help of a mediator as the "zone of proximal development." This study intended to answer the following research questions to shed light on the effectiveness of explicit and implicit PI mediators among high school students:

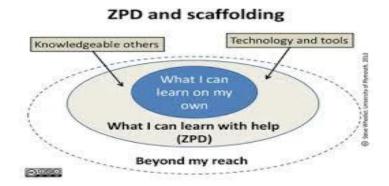
- 1. What is the effect of pronunciation instruction (explicit & implicit) on L2 listening anxiety among high school students?
- 2. What is the effect of pronunciation instruction (explicit & implicit) on L2 listening comprehension among high school students?

### 2. Literature Review

## 2.1. Vygotsky's Theory of Mediation

The theoretical framework of this study is based on Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) within SCT (socio-cultural theory). In terms of education in general and SLA in particular, Vygotsky opened a new window. Traditionally, language teachers instructed their students through the banking method, where they put input into the minds of the students and the students then produced a copy of the input received from the teacher. With the spread of ideas attributed to Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, this form of education started to change. This is because it introduced the concept that human activities are mediated by language and other symbolic systems and can be understood best when considered in their historical context. These elements are related and constitute mediation. The sociocultural theory proclaims that individuals do not establish direct relationships with the world; instead, they are mediated by a variety of tools through which they can interact (Lantolf, 2001). With the help of these tools, people control their surroundings according to their needs and goals. In this way, these tools act as mediators between the subject and the object. In this study, pronunciation instruction is considered the mediator that helps learners reach their goal (listening comprehension) through another mediation tool: explicit and implicit PI. Mediation (PI), then, relates to how high school students in the current study establish relationships between their mental representations and listening comprehension.

Figure 1. Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory



## 2.2. Listening Comprehension in Iran

Listening is often considered the most difficult language skill to develop in the Iranian EFL system. This is because students are faced with many difficulties when trying to fully

comprehend a message. Among the common difficulties encountered in listening tasks, Rahimirad and Zare-ee (2015) cited unfamiliar words, topics, and accents, as well as rapid speech, all of which students encounter every day in the classroom. Even when students listen closely, it can be difficult for them to discern differences in different speakers' pronunciations and accents. This is often the case when students listen to foreigners speak English, as their accents differ depending on their mother tongue, thus making it difficult for students to mimic or understand these speakers (Zohrabi & Shokrzadeh, 2017). Students may also stop engaging in a listening activity within the allotted time. Likewise, completing the listening activity is more difficult when students do not already know the topic, as they are unfamiliar with the information. This causes students to lose time. The fast rate of speech also affects EFL learners. Listening is essential to learning a foreign language since receiving input is the key to acquiring a language. Despite this, many EFL programs have neglected listening comprehension (Namaziandost et al., 2019), especially in Iran.

#### 2.3. Listening Anxiety in the Context of Iran

English language learning is mandatory in Iranian high schools. However, Iranian students have historically struggled with this subject because contact with native English speakers is rare in Iran, and thus, so are chances to practice speaking the target language regularly. Akbari and Sadeghi (2013) reported that most EFL students experience fear and anxiety when learning English. Thus, learning or using a second language can cause anxiety.

FLL anxiety has been researched from various perspectives, both in Iran and throughout the world. Atef-Vahid and Kashani (2011) studied a group of high school students and showed that one-third of them felt at least moderately anxious in the EFL classroom. Another study also revealed that EFL students were anxious about receiving negative evaluations, regardless of gender (Yamat & Bidabadi, 2012). In the same manner, Izadi and Atasheneh (2012) reported a direct relationship between anxiety and self-confidence. Meanwhile, Shabani (2012) indicated that language anxiety primarily arises from students' concerns about making bad impressions and failing. In other research, Mahmoodzadeh (2013) found that Iranian

students were especially prone to anxiety when EFL was taught in mixed-gender classrooms. A gender difference was also found regarding EFL speaking anxiety; specifically, females were more likely than males to experience this kind of anxiety. According to Nahavandi and Mukundan (2013), the most common form of anxiety experienced by English majors was communication anxiety. In brief, students' performance, achievement, proficiency, and other variables are associated with the level of anxiety (Moghadam et al., 2015).

## 2.4. Explicit and Implicit Modes of L2 Pronunciation Instruction

According to Ellis (2009), implicit teaching is the instructional mode by which learners extract the basic rules unconsciously. Thus, in an implicit instructional mode, specific forms are not instructed through rule presentations or guidance toward acquiring that specific form. In listening-only interferences and observation, an example of the implicit kind of instruction, learners reproduce the teacher's exact sayings (Derwing & Munro, 2014, p. 50). Re-forming is a conventional sort of indirect feedback by which one "correctly re-formulate[s] the whole or a part of a learner's incorrect expression, which is most often implicitly done by the teacher" (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 46). In addition, repetition is commonly used to highlight errors, as the teacher repeats an ill-formed sentence with a raised intonation.

On the other hand, in explicit instruction, learners receive direct linguistic rules, which develops their metalinguistic awareness (Ellis, 2009). The most frequent methods for modification of errors contain *explicit correction*, in which the correct form is provided directly by the teacher, and *metalinguistic feedback*, which is "the provision of the related facts, information, details, or questions regarding the correction of the learner's vocal expressions." (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 47). The fundamental distinction between the two kinds of instruction is that in the *implicit* type of teaching, the focus is mostly on communication, and there is no metalanguage use, while in *explicit* instruction, the focus is on form; therefore, the controlled practice of explicitly explained rules are evident in this kind of instruction.

Pronunciation is a critical part of oral communication, as the listener's understanding depends on whether the speaker has adequate pronunciation skills (Peltekov, 2020). According to previous research, owing to the importance of sounds, pronunciation instruction was found

to be fundamental to foreign language teaching (Hişmanoğlu, 2006). Therefore, pronunciation should be central to any language-learning course. Gebhard (1996) reported that pronunciation is strongly correlated with listening comprehension, as the production and perception of vocal communication depend on the organization of speech as well as the speaker's and listener's knowledge of sounds, intonation, and stress patterns (as cited in Khaghaninejad & Maleki, 2015). Learners receive sounds (e.g., phonemes, tone, stress patterns, and rhythm) in the classroom; thus, basing lessons on different features of sounds can enhance learners' listening comprehension. Research has also shown that students need to concentrate and utilize senses other than hearing to enhance their listening skills (Larsen Freeman, 2000). Therefore, people with low concentration tend to have low levels of listening comprehension.

Only a few studies have investigated the *indirect* and *direct* instruction effects on pronunciation development. For example, it was confirmed that L2 Spanish learners could take advantage of an explicit kind of phonetics instruction (Lord, 2005). Kissling (2013), on the other hand, was critical of Lord for not incorporating a control group. Thus, she carried out an analogous study in which a control group was also included. In this case, the pronunciation was taught to the participants through more implicit techniques. For advanced learners, Kissling suggests that overt pronunciation instruction is appropriate, while indirect instruction is more helpful to novice learners. Shamiri and Farvardin (2016) conducted interviews with 70 EFL learners and discovered that most of them preferred their errors to be corrected indirectly. However, Gorbani et al. (2016) have revealed that direct methods are superior to indirect ones in terms of improving pronunciation and listening comprehension.

Couper (2006) reported that concentrated/in-depth instruction on L2 phonological aspects can aid ESL students to limit some of their pronunciation errors, even when the so-called errors seem not to be changeable. According to Bailey and Brandl (2013), teaching pronunciation directly may not be very helpful to second language learners' perceptual improvement in comparison with more indirect instruction through which a meaning-focused input is provided. Ruellot (2011) examined the impacts of overt spectrogram-enhanced feedback on L2 French learners' pronunciation of specific French vowels. The outcomes indicated that learners who could see the spectrograms did not improve to a greater extent than those who were in contact with the listening-only exercise. This distinction in outcomes might

be the result of the different aspects of pronunciation being taught in addition to other items, such as the second language and the duration of the instruction. Thus, it is challenging to make abstractions concerning the dissimilar effects of indirect and direct pronunciation instruction.

Although the number of studies around pronunciation instruction (PI) is scarce, the effect of expanding knowledge of the L2 sound system on listening comprehension is undeniable. It is also inherent to note that scant attention has been paid to English pronunciation and no major effort has been made to perceive the enormous importance of this invaluable and significant skill (Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2018; Farhat & Dzakiria, 2017).

## 3. Method

## **3.1. Research Design**

According to the school system, it was not possible to randomly assign subjects to treatment groups, so that, this investigation enjoyed a quasi-experimental design to reach reasonable conclusions. Concerning the research objectives, the study design involved three similar learning conditions, with only one variable (pronunciation instruction) changing. The pronunciation instruction had two variants: (1) explicit pronunciation instruction and (2) implicit pronunciation instruction; there was also a control condition (no pronunciation instruction). Between the treatment sessions, the three groups followed the same inside and outside school-related activities, which involved no PI. In the current experimental study, the independent variable was pronunciation instruction (explicit & implicit) and the learners' listening anxiety and listening comprehension were the dependent variables.

## **3.2.** Participants

The current quantitative quasi-experimental study was done in a public high school in Kerman, Iran. Sixty students registered in a listening comprehension course were asked to participate during the 2021–2022 academic year. The study was conducted during normal school hours. After the goal of the study was explained, 51 elementary students were chosen based on their scores on the Oxford Placement Test. The participants were Farsi native speakers, and they were studying in the ninth grade at an Iranian high school. They were all female and 15 years old. Regarding the ethical issues, students participated voluntarily.

## **3.3. Materials and Instruments**

In all groups, Tactics for Listening (basic) written by Richards and Trew (2011) was used as the course material. Tactics for Listening is an activity-rich listening course with proven success in building skills in listening and conversation. It uses short chunks and practical, relevant activities to engage and motivate students. The book was taught in 48 sessions (6 months).

The first research instrument used in the present study was Oxford Placement Test (OPT). Syndicate (2001) developed the test, which consisted of sixty items in multiple-choice formats. The test was scheduled for 30 minutes. The second instrument was the Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Questionnaire (FLLAQ) designed by Kim (2005) (Appendix A). It was utilized to ascertain the foreign language listening anxiety levels of the participants. The questionnaire consists of 33 statements with a five-choice format, and the participants were asked to complete it in 30 min. The questionnaire was translated into the participants' mother tongue (Persian) to ensure the full comprehension of the items. The validity of the questionnaire was ensured by having it back-translated by a translation expert after it was translated and implementing the necessary changes. Cronbach's Alpha was used to check the questionnaire's reliability. The value obtained was .92, which was sufficiently high. The third research tool used in this study was the listening comprehension test (Appendix B). The listening tests were developed in matching and multiple-choice formats. The tests are designed by Oxford University Press based on the Tactics for Listening series and are available for assessment purposes of the students' listening comprehension. For both pre-and post-tests, the listening texts were designed in the same format and level but with different contents. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was 0.87 for the pretest and 0.89 for the posttest.

## **3.4. Procedure**

First, to guarantee the homogeneity of learners in terms of the level of English proficiency, OPT was applied to select the elementary participants. Both experimental groups acted as treated groups receiving 24 weeks of pronunciation training in the first 30 minutes of each listening class (but in different ways). This training was performed by one of the researchers (who was the students' teacher). To measure the listening comprehension and anxiety levels,

the listening comprehension test and the foreign language listening anxiety questionnaire were administered before and after the treatment.

There were three stages in all groups (control & two experimental groups) to practice listening comprehension: listening presentation, practice, and production in the control and two experimental groups. Firstly, the teacher presented the listening audio track. The speed was the normal English language speed. The students listened to the track. The teacher allowed students to listen to the audio track two or three times. Next, the teacher practiced the listening track through some controlled activities. For example, the teacher played and stopped the track periodically and asked students to describe the tracks. In addition, students were required to answer some questions, such as yes/no questions, or true/false statements. Lastly, the teacher wanted the students to use what they had been exposed to in a communicative activity such as a role-play, communication game, or discussions on the listening topic. The difference between the control and two experimental groups was that the two experimental groups received 30 minutes of pronunciation instruction (segmental aspects of pronunciation: vowels, diphthongs, triphthongs, or consonants) at the beginning of the listening class.

In the explicit group, there were formal explanations of the perception and production of vowels and consonants. After introducing L2 phonetics and pronunciation features, students were asked to explicitly compare Persian and English pronunciation. This was with an emphasis on phonetic features related to segmentation such as the place and manner of consonants and vowels' articulation. Further, explanations of the vowels' articulatory properties and their orthographic representations were deductively and explicitly provided to raise students' knowledge of how similar vowels in terms of their orthographic representations may differ in the way they are articulated or how the letters representing two sounds are articulated differently. After that, students were engaged in in-class activities to review and practice whatever they had learned. For example, minimal pairs were presented, and students were asked to recognize which word they heard. In case of errors, explicit correction with full explanations was provided by the teacher.

In the implicit group, there was no deductive teaching of pronunciation in terms of rules, features, or metalinguistic explanations. Authentic and enriched input in the form of native speakers' pronunciation was provided and students were asked to attentively listen to them

and try to pronounce as native-like as possible. There was no comparison or emphasis on pronunciation features. As opposed to the explicit group, class activities focused more on communication. Students were exposed to a range of films, songs, and stories including the pronunciation of the target language, and were asked to engage in those exchanges. Like the kind of instruction students received, error correction was implicit without any full and explicit explanation. Recasts were made without explicit feedback being provided.

## 4. Results

### Table 1.

Group	Variable	Time	Shapiro-Wilk Statistic	df	P-Value
-	Listening Comprehension	Pretest	0.907	17	0.704
Control	Listening Comprehension	Posttest	0.918	17	0.523
Control	Listoning Anvioty	Pretest	0.920	17	0.147
	Listening Anxiety		0.907	17	0.089
	Listening Comprehension	Pretest	0.921	17	0.311
Implicit	Listening Comprehension	Posttest	0.805	17	0.080
Implicit	Listoning Anvioty	Pretest	0.895	17	0.075
Listening Anxiety		Posttest	0.943	17	0.358
	Listening Comprehension	Pretest	0.910	17	0.809
Explicit	Listening Comprehension		0.904	17	0.107
Explicit	Listening Anxiety	Pretest	0.950	17	0.457
	Listening Allxiety	Posttest	0.910	17	0.101

Normality of Research Variables' Distribution

To examine the research hypothesis, the normality of the distribution of research variables was first examined; One way to do this is to test the Shapiro-Wilk test; The significance level was higher than 0.05 for all variables. Table 1 suggests that the distribution of variables in this study is normal and so parametric tests can be used to examine the research questions.

## Table 2.

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices

Box's M	F	df1	df2	P-Value
10.062	1.58	6	57422.769	0.15

## Table 3.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Variables	F	df1	df2	P-Value
Listening Comprehension	6.03	2	48	0.09
Listening Anxiety	1.84	2	48	0.17

Regarding the research null hypotheses, H01. Pronunciation instruction does not affect EFL learners' Listening Comprehension and Listening Anxiety, Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices and Levene's test were performed, and the assumptions were met (P-value >0.05) (Tables 2 & 3). Therefore, the One-Way MANOVA test was run.

## Table 4.

Multivariate Tests

	value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig	Partial Eta Squared
Wilks' Lambda	0.01	179.575	4.00	90.00	0.00	0.89

In Table 4, the value of Sig is equal to 0.000, which is less than the value of alpha (0.05) and therefore significant. So, it can be concluded that the pronunciation instruction in the 3 groups had a significant effect on listening comprehension and listening anxiety (F (4.00,

90.00 = 179.575 <0.01). Eta Square is 0.89 which means using pronunciation instruction had an 89% effect on listening variables.

## Table 5.

Result of Covariance Analysis

Source		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P-Value	partial $\eta^2$
Group	Listening Comprehension	648.462	2	324.231	482.968	0.00	0.96
	Listening Anxiety	9375.170	2	4687.585	379.842	0.00	0.94
Error	Listening Comprehension	30.881	46	0.671	-	-	-
	Listening Anxiety	567.681	46	12.341	-	-	-
Correct ed	Listening Comprehension	841.164	50	-	-	-	
Total	Listening Anxiety	10512.627	50				

According to Table 5, there is a meaningful difference between the mean scores of the 3 groups regarding the post-test of listening comprehension and listening anxiety. Therefore, pronunciation instruction had a significant effect on improving the participants' listening comprehension and listening anxiety (p<0.01). The estimated partial Eta Squared for listening comprehension was (partial  $\eta$  2 =0.96) and listening anxiety was (partial  $\eta$  2 =0.94), which shows a large effect. Accordingly, the null hypothesis is rejected.

## Table 6

Estimated Marginal Means

10.33 11.81	0.20
10.70	
18.70	0.20
72.87	0.86
57.79	0.86
	0.86
	39.00

According to the estimated marginal means, the explicit group performed better in listening comprehension and listening anxiety compared to the control group and implicit group (Table 6).

## 5. Discussion

As mentioned earlier, the present study examined the mediating effects of pronunciation instruction on Iranian high school students' English listening anxiety and English listening comprehension. By administering a questionnaire and conducting a test (pre and post), quantitative data were gathered. Drawing on quantitative analysis, regarding the first research question- RQ1: What is the effect of pronunciation instruction (explicit & implicit) on L2 listening anxiety among high school students? - the results indicated that both experimental groups (implicit & explicit) showed a reduction in listening anxiety from the pre-test to the post-test. But this was most evident in the explicit group. And there was no significant difference found between pretest and post-test listening anxiety scores obtained by learners of the control group.

In line with the current study's findings, some studies (e.g., Baran-Lucarz, 2017; Horwitz et al., 1986; Shams; 2005) have revealed that pronunciation can be considered a significant cause of language anxiety. The results confirm Baran-Lucarz (2017)'s report that pronunciation plays an important role in language anxiety, affecting the learners' ability to understand and to be understood by others, which, in turn, may determine the level of communication apprehension. The results also support Vygotsky's (1978) theory of mediation. Using PI mediators, we connected the high school students' present zone of development (prelistening comprehension and pre-listening anxiety control) to their ZPD (post-listening comprehension and post-listening anxiety control). Moreover, explicit PI seems to be a strong mediator in the present study. High school teachers can use tools as mediators to improve learners' performance. Such tools include activities, pictures, figures, objects, signs, and symbols. Mediation makes possible what would otherwise not be possible. Others (teachers) can mediate for students, and tools (PI) can be used to mediate activities (listening comprehension). Thus, teaching is the process by which different forms of mediation can be effectively carried out (Vygotsky, 1978).

Referring to the second research question- RQ2: What is the effect of pronunciation instruction (explicit & implicit) on L2 listening comprehension among high school students? - the results indicated that both experimental groups (implicit & explicit) showed improvement in listening comprehension from the pre-test to the post-test. But this was most evident in the explicit group. And there was no significant difference found between the pretest and posttest listening comprehension scores obtained by learners of the control group. The findings in the current study follow Gebhard (1996) and Ngo (2019) that there is a close link between pronunciation and listening comprehension since listening cannot be regarded as a natural skill to be progressed on its own; rather, it is an ability that needs some levels of awareness and instruction. Thus, with due attention to other previous studies, pronunciation training exhibits its impact on not only the perception of specific phonemes but also on general listening comprehension (Khaghaninejad & Maleki, 2015). Besides, the results are in line with some other studies (e.g., Abdi, 2010; Couper, 2003; Doan, 2013; Gorbani et al., 2016; Khaghaninejad & Maleki, 2015; Khanbeiki & Abdolmanafi-Rokni, 2015; Koike, 2014; Mohseni, 2011; Saito, 2013) who have taken side for explicit instruction by concluding that

explicit instruction of pronunciation is beneficial for L2 learners to improve their perception and production of L2 phonological features and results in a comprehensible speech. The outcomes obtained in the present study are also in line with the findings of Ammar and Spada (2006), who reported that direct correction is more beneficial than indirect modifications since modifications might be misinterpreted as a verification of the main idea of the students' message rather than a disconfirmation of the structure, especially if the students are not linguistically knowledgeable enough to perceive the differences between their productions and the target language structure.

Some studies (Bailey & Brandl, 2013; Gordon et al., 2013; Kissling, 2013; Shamiri & Farvardin, 2016) inconsistent with our results, have concluded that implicit pronunciation instruction is more effective in improving the learners' language features. The related studies carried out in a variety of EFL/ESL contexts, in general, have confirmed the existing controversy in that some (e.g., Minhong & Ailun, 2006; Papachristou, 2011) favored implicit instruction of pronunciation, taking it for granted that such a mode of instruction could help learners enhance their English pronunciation while getting involved in autonomous learning. The conflicting evidence about the putative benefits of instruction may be due to the different pronunciation features being taught in addition to other factors such as L2 and length of the instruction. Because of such variables, it is very difficult to generalize the differential effects of implicit and explicit pronunciation instruction.

Nevertheless, there are studies, like Kissling (2013), who found that both instructions, explicit and implicit, had equally significant effects on pronunciation learning. It was concluded that "it might be the input, practice, and feedback included in pronunciation instruction, rather than the explicit phonetics lessons, that are most facilitative of improvement in pronunciation" (p. 720). As the implicit group was not given any meta-linguistic elucidations, it was not clear to what degree their awareness of English language phonetic rules was at the understanding level, as it was for the explicit group. To put it simply, comprehending the rules of language is crucial for learning to be shaped. Several studies have reported that some listening difficulties are related to phonological problems as well as syntactic and lexical knowledge (Sutrisno, 2018).

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## 6. Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Studies

Regardless of the general opinion among Iranian language teachers about the significance of good pronunciation skills for L2 learners, pronunciation is frequently disregarded in Iranian high school classrooms and no serious attempt has been done to perceive the great value of this important skill (Farhat & Dzakiria, 2017; Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2018). This paper has some pedagogical implications for Iranian high school teachers. For instance, as far as explicit and implicit instructional methods are concerned, PI can benefit students in both so-called methods. To experience a kind of helpful listening instruction, teachers can take PI into account, though the instructional time allotted for doing so is limited. The current study had some limitations. First, the sample size of participants in each group was comparatively small. Another limitation was the limited list of phonological features, which was representative of only a small part of the English phonological system. Since the features adopted in this paper might not be the most significant ones for listening processing to take place, a greater range of segmental and suprasegmental features in PI can be examined in future studies. Furthermore, delayed post-tests were not used to measure learners' performance over time. Finally, learners' attitudes concerning indirect and direct PI could be investigated by components of qualitative research methods. Accordingly, as the study participants may be influenced by the context of the study, further studies can be conducted using pronunciation instruction in other contexts. Regarding the major differences between males and females, gender influence requires more study. In addition, future research should be conducted using qualitative research method or mixed methods to gain an in-depth understanding of the subject matter. Studies can also be conducted on the relationship between L1/L2 pronunciation and listening comprehension among language learners.

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## Appendices

## Appendix A

## Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS) designed by Kim (2005)

me: Family: Class number:
When listening to English, I tend to get stuck on one or two unknown words.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
I get nervous if a listening passage is read only once during English listening tests.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
When someone pronounces words differently from the way I pronounce them, I find it difficult to understand.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
When a person speaks English very fast, I worry that I might not understand all of it.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
I am nervous when I am listening to English if I am not familiar with the topic.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
It is easy to guess about the parts that I miss while listening to English.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
If I let my mind drift even a little bit while listening to English, I worry that I will miss important ideas.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
When I am listening to English, I am worried when I cannot watch the lips or facial expression of a person who is
speaking.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
During English listening tests, I get nervous and confused when I don't understand every word.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
When listening to English, it is difficult to differentiate the words from one another.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
I feel uncomfortable in class when listening to English without the written text.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
I have difficulty understanding oral instructions given to me in English.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
It is hard to concentrate on what English speakers are saying unless I know them well.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
I feel confident when I am listening in English.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
When I am listening to English, I often get so confused I cannot remember what I have heard.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
I fear I have inadequate background knowledge of some topics when listening to English.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
My thoughts become jumbled and confused when listening to important information in English.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
I get worried when I have little time to think about what I hear in English.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
When I am listening to English, I usually end up translating word by word without understanding the contents. Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
I would rather not have to listen to people speak English at all.

Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
21. I get worried when I cannot listen to English at my own pace.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
22. I keep thinking that everyone else except me understands very well what an English speaker is saying.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
23. I get upset when I am not sure whether I understand what I am listening in English.
Strongly disagree□ Disagree□ neutral□ Agree□ Strongly agree□
24. If a person speaks English very quietly, I am worried about understanding.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
25. I have no fear of listening to English as a member of an audience.
Strongly disagree□ Disagree□ neutral□ Agree□ Strongly agree□
26. I am nervous when listening to an English speaker on the phone or when imagining a situation where I listen to an
English speaker on the phone.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
27. I feel tense when listening to English as a member of a social gathering or when imagining a situation where I listen to
English as a member of a social gathering.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
28. It is difficult for me to listen to English when there is even a little bit of background noise.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
29. Listening to new information in English makes me uneasy.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
30. I get annoyed when I come across words that I do not understand while listening to English.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
31. English stress and intonation seem familiar to me.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
32. When listening to English, I often understand the words but still cannot quite understand what the speaker means.
Strongly disagree□ Disagree□ neutral□ Agree□ Strongly agree□
33. It frightens me when I cannot catch a key word of an English listening passage.
Strongly disagree Disagree neutral Agree Strongly agree
Thanks for your precious time

## **Appendix B**

Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (Translated from English into Persian)

شماره کلاس: نام خانوادگی: نام: .هنگامی که به زبان انگلیسی گوش میکنم، معمولا بر روی یک یا دو کلمه ای که معنای آنها را نمیدانم،گیر میکنم. مخالفم 🗆 نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم شدىدا مخالفم 🗆 □ بسيار موافقم□ ۲.در آزمون های تست شنیداری انگلیسی،اگر عبارت/قطعه مربوط به تست فقط یکبار خوانده/يخش شود ،مضطرب ميشوم. نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم مخالفم 🗆 شديدا مخالفم 🗆 □ بسيار موافقم□ ۳.اگر کسی کلمات را آنگونه که من تلفظ میکنم،تلفظ نکند، فهم آنها برایم دشوا ر مىشود. نظر خاصی ندارم 🗆 موافقم 🗆 مخالفم 🗆 شدیدا مخالفم 🗆 بسيار موافقم□ ۴.وقتی کسی انگلیسی را بصورت سریع و پیوسته صحبت میکند، نگران این هستم که ش اید بطور کامل متوجه صحبت های او نشوم. شدیدا مخالفم 🗆 مخالفم 🗆 نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم □ بسيار موافقم□ ۵.هنگام گوش دادن به انگلیسی،اگر با عنوان/موضوع مربوطه آشنایی نداشته باشم، دچار اضطراب خواهم شد. نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم مخالفم 🗆 شديدا مخالفم 🗆 □ بسيار موافقم□

دن قسمت هاب. که متمحه آنها	۰.در هنگام گوش دادن به محاورات انگلیسی،حدس ز
	نشده ام،برایم آسان است.
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	شديدا مخالفم 🗆 مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسیار موافقم□
	۷.در زمان گوش دادن به انگلیسی، اگرحتی یک ذره
دست خواهم داد.	شود،نگران این خواهم بود که مطالب مهم را از
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	شديدا مخالفم 🗆 مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسیار موافقم□
لتوانم حركات لب و حالات صورت مت	۸.زمانیکه به محاورات انگلیسی گوش میکنم،اگر ن
	کلم را ببینم، دچار استرس میشوم.
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	شديدا مخالفم 🗆 مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□
کلمات را متوجه نشوم/معنی آنه	۹.اگر در طول آزمون تست شنیداری انگلیسی، تمام
	ا را ندانم،دچار اضطراب و دستپاچگی میشوم.
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	شديدا مخالفم 🗆 مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسیار موافقم
یکدیگر، برایم دشوار میباشد.	۱۰.هنگام گوش دادن به انگلیسی، تشخیص کلمات از
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	شديدا مخالفم 🗆 مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□
متن نوشتاری مربوط به آن را در	۱.۱۱گر در هنگام گوش دادن به انگلیسی در کلاس،
ا شت.	اختيار نداشته باشم،احساس ناخوشايندی خواهم د
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	شديدا مخالفم 🗆 مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□

م میپذیرد، فهم آن برایم دشوار	انگلدسی،بصورت شفاهی انجا	۱۲.هنگامی که آموزش
- ,		ا ست.
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم 🗆	شديدا مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□	
ی(کسانی که انگلیسی صحبت میکنند)		
	يكنند،	، راجع بـه آن صحبت م
همم(معنی حرف هایشان را متوجه	ِ اینکه بخوبی آنها را بف	برایم دشوار است،مگر
		شوم).
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم 🗆	شديدا مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□	
اد به نفس دارم.	سی گوش میکنم، احساس اعتم	۱۴.وقتی که به انگلید
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم 🗆	شديدا مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□	
شم،غالبا گیج میشوم و نمیتوانم	گوش کردن به انگلیسی میبا	۱۵.هنگامیکه در حال ً
	، به خاطر بياورم.	آنچه را که شنیده ام
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم 🗆	شدیدا مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□	
ز این است که راجع به برخی از م	ـُكليسى گوش ميدهم، ترسم ا	۱ <sup>۹</sup> .در زمانی که به ان
	زمینه ای کافی،نداشته با	
نظر خاصی ندارم⊐ موافقم	مخالفم 🗆	شديدا مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□	,
عات مهم،افکارم دچار در هم آمیخ	… ، هنگاه گهش دادن به اطلا	۱۷.در محاهرات انگلب
		تگی میشوند و گیج می
		شديدا مخالفم □
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم 🗆	سديدا محانعم 🗆

	□ بسيار موافقم□	
آنچه که در انگلیسی میشنوم را، د		۱۸.هنگامیکه زمان کمی ر اختیار دارم،دچار
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم □	مخالفم □ بسیار موافقم□	شدیدا مخالفم 🗆
اشم،معمولا روش ترجمه ی کلمه بـه ک جه شوم.	وش کردن بـه انـگلیسی میب دون ایـنکه محتوا را متوج	
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم □ □ بسيار موافقم□	شدیدا مخالفم 🗆
یکنند، اصلا گوش نکنم.	رادی که انگلیسی صحبت م	۲۰.ترجیح میدهم،به اف
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم □ □ بسيار موافقم□	شدیدا مخالفم 🗆
واه خودم گوش دهم، دچار اضطراب م	به انگلیسی به شیوه دلخ	۲۱.زمانیکه نمیتوانم یشوم.
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم □ □ بسيار موافقم□	شدیدا مخالفم 🗆
ه جز من،بخوبی آنچه که متکلم انگ د.	میکنم که هر کس دیگری ب ت میکند را، متوجه میشود	
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم □ □ بسيار موافقم□	شدیدا مخالفم 🗆
وش میدکنم را،متوجه خواهم شد یا		۳۳.وقتی مطمئن نیستم خیر، دچار اضطراب میڈ
ر خاصی ندارم⊡ موافقم □ بسیار	مخالفم □ نظ موافقم□	شدیدا مخالفم □

ت کند، نگران میشوم که شاید نتوا	را بصورت خیلی آرام صحبن	۱.۲۴ شخصی انگلیسی
		نم متوجه آن شوم.
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم 🗆	شديدا مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□	
ی نسبت بـه گوش دادن بـه محاورات ا	نمناه)، هده تدس م اضطداد	۲۵ د عنه ان دی مستمع(ش
		نگلیسی ندارم.
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم 🗆	شدیدا مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□	
سحبت میکند،گوش میکنم، یا وقتی ک		
ـوش دادن بـه شخصی که درحال صحبت		
چار استرس/اضطراب میشوم.	پشت تلفن است ، میباشم،د	کردن به انگلیسی در
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم 🗆	شديدا مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□	
دهمایی اجتماعی،به انگلیسی گوش م	ب مستمع(شنمنیه)، در یک گرد	۲۷ مقتحه بعنمان دک
، در آن در حال گوش دادن به انگل		
	اجتماعی هستم، دچار اضطر	
		n - : 11 : - 1 ( (*
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم □	مخالفم □ بسیار موافقم□	شديدا مخالفم 🗆
نم باشد،گوش دادن به انگلیسی برا	، ای صدای مزاحم در اطراف	
		یم دشوار میشود.
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم 🗆	شديدا مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□	
،دچار ایجاد اضطراب در من میشود.	ات/مطالب جدید در انگلیسی	۲۹.گوش دادن به اطلاعا
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم 🗆	شديدا مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□	

رد کنم،اذیت میشوم(فهم مطلب برایم دشوار میگردد).		
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم 🗆	شديدا مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□	
۳۱.استرس و تکیه صدا در زبان انگلیسی، چیزی است که بنظر میرسد باآن آشنایی د		
		ارم.
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم 🗆	شدیدا مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□	
میفهمم،اما هنوز نمیتوانم به ط	ه انگلدسه،معنای کلمات را	
ور کامل متوجه منظور متکلم(شخصی که صحبت میکنم)بشوم.		
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم	مخالفم 🗆	شديدا مخالفم 🗆
	□ بسيار موافقم□	
ی را متوجه بشوم، دچار اضطراب /ترس میشوم.		
	ب ر ، سر، پ ، سری سیسوم،	
نظر خاصی ندارم□ موافقم □	مخالفم 🗆	شدیدا مخالفم 🗆
بسیار موافقم□		
با تشکر از شما زبان آموز عزیز		
پايندە باشيد		

## Appendix C

## **Listening Test**



## (04-6 )) Part 2

Listen to each question. Choose the correct response. Use your answer sheet.

- 7. A. Yes, it's still alive.
  - B. We got here on the 12th.
  - C. They just left.
- 8. A. Happy birthday!
  - B. It was a great party.
  - C. Actually, it was yesterday.
- 9. A. No, it's not working.
  - B. No, I quit last month.
  - C. It's in the middle of the city.

- 10. A. I just started in the fifth.
  - B. I don't like the gray one.
  - C. I get good grades.
- A. Yes, it was a nice change.
  B. There are lots of good jobs available.
  - C. I'm pretty happy where I am.
- 12. A. It's not one of my favorites.
  - B. Because the story is boring.
    - C. I love to watch movies.

## (D 4-7 )) Part 3

)

Listen to following conversation. Choose the correct answer for each question. Use your answer sheet.

- 13. How long has the woman been working at the aquarium?
  - A. since she came back from Australia
  - B. since she finished university
  - C. for six months
- 14. What did the woman do right after she graduated?
  - A. She worked with dolphins.
  - B. She studied oceanography.
  - C. She worked overseas.

- 15. What does the man think about the aquarium job?
  - A. He wouldn't like to work with animals.
  - B. He would love to do it.
  - C. He doesn't think she'll get it.