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**The Effectiveness of a Suggested CALL program of  
integrated skills on improving listening skills of EFL Prep  
students.**

**A Thesis**

**Submitted for an M.A. Degree in Education (TEFL)**

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# **Abstract**

## **ABSTRACT**

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**Abstract:** The present study aimed at improving the necessary listening skills for first- year- preparatory students through the use of a suggested CALL program of integrated skills. The four language skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing were integrated in the suggested program. The study utilized the one group pre/post test design. The participants (n=50) were randomly drawn from karnak preparatory school for boys ,one of the Luxor governmental preparatory schools, in the academic year 2016-2017. Students received training through a suggested CALL program based on integrated skills. The instruments of the study were the listening skills list and the pre /post test. The results of the study showed that using the suggested CALL program of integrated skills had a positive effect on improving the necessary listening skills among the students. Finally, recommendations and suggestions for further research are stated.

**Keywords:** Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Listening skills, Integrated skill approach

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# **Chapter one**

## **Background and Problem**

## **Chapter one**

### **Background and Problem**

#### **1.1. Introduction:**

Listening is an important skill of the person who is learning English because in verbal communication we cannot communicate with each other without listening to the speaker's utterances and understanding them (Nihei, 2002). Wallace et al. (2004) indicated that listening skills are essential for learning since they enable students to acquire insights and information and to achieve success in communicating with others. However, if these skills are not continually practiced, they will slowly diminish (Mulvany 1998). Petress (1999, p.14) agreed that "listening is a skill that can be learned and improved upon no matter what one's age, gender, education or previous skill levels are. Like any skill if it is allowed to go unused, it will atrophy".

The development of this skill is necessary for students to become successful in school and life (Fulk 1999; Hoag, 1996). The best way to improve students listening skills is through strategies and activities that provide success and enjoyment (Hoag, 1996). In an action research project, Barret et al. (2002) supported the mention idea by stating that students' academic performance could be linked to the quality of their listening skills. When students were provided direct input to strengthen their listening skills, they were able to improve their academic performance as well as make positive changes in their social interaction.

Despite the importance of listening, there are a lot of listening barriers which hold back the students from enhancing their listening skills. In classrooms, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for students to listen (Hoag,

1996; Jalongo, 1995). Ali and Linda (2002) indicated that listening has been less emphasized in the English instructional programs compared with the other skills such as reading and writing.

Hence, we should focus the light on the neglected field of listening.

Smith (2003) stated that listening is not being taught enough in the classroom. The listening skills are neglected during the classroom practice and hence, they are given insufficient and inadequate interest. He added that research shows that listening skills are nearly neglected and not well recognized by the most of EFL teachers.

Research also indicates that listening is more difficult than speaking. Sandall et al. (2003) asserted this by stating that listening is twice as hard as speaking. Perhaps that's why human have two ears and only one mouth. The ability to listen is the first language skill to develop in children. They listen before speaking, reading, and writing. "It's easier to speak than it's to listen because of how the mind works. Students listen in order to learn and retain information"(Fracaro, 2001) as cited in Armstrong & Rentz (2002).

According to Brent and Anderson (1994), active listening occurs when students understand what they hear and act upon the message. Students need to be given more exposure to activities such as music, conversation, family stories, poetry and rhymes, all of which encourage active listening.

Based on the previous studies, it can be concluded that the teacher needs a new innovative program for integrated skill, in which the English teacher understands the role of educational technology in learning multiple skills at the same time. Therefore, the current study aimed at improving

listening skills of EFL preparatory students through the use of a suggested CALL program of integrated skills.

Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is a form of computer-based assisted learning which carries two important features bi direction and individualized learning . Hanson-Smith (2004) suggested that computer technology can provide the student with the means to control his or her own learning, to construct meaning and to evaluate and to monitor his/her own performance. Bruce (1993) stated that the computer will change the nature of learning by placing the power of learning more in the hands of the learner and teachers should develop an effective pedagogy for using computers in the classroom. Mcdougall (1994) pointed out that teachers should be responsible for the selection of suitable education software packages. Teachers can modify a software packages to support a variety of activities in the classroom to fulfill their teaching goals.

The approach in this research includes the use of integrated skills. In the integrated skills approach, English becomes a real means of interaction and communication among people. This approach allows teachers to track students' progress in multiple skills at the same time. In order to integrate the language skills in EFL instruction, teachers should consider taking these steps:

- learn more about the various ways to integrate language skills in the classroom e.g. (content-based approach, task-based approach, or a combination).
- choose instructional materials, text-books and technologies that promote the integration of listening, reading, Speaking, and writing, as well as the associated skills of syntax, vocabulary and so on.

The importance of integrated skills in learning English language is highlighted. Hence, the purpose of this study was

to enhance the listening skills of karnak preparatory school students, through using a computer-based program of integrated language skills.

### **1.2. Context of the problem**

The problem of preparatory Students' poor listening skills was observed when the researcher was teaching English at Preparatory schools. The researcher observed that most students lacked the ability to listen to English correctly .That was clear in the remarkable numbers of errors of misunderstanding .They were able to read and write but their performance in English listening was low. The problem of poor listening was observed when students did not follow oral directions, especially in the case of cooperative learning activities and homework assignment.

### **The pilot study**

When the researcher tested the students' listening skills in English, their responses to oral directions and assessments indicated low listening performance. In the following test, the researcher asked the students to listen to the following conversations:

1- A: What does a secretary do?

B: She types letters and uses computers.

2- A: What do bakers do?

B: They make and sell cakes

3- A: What does a farmer do?

B: He keeps animals and grows plants.

4- A: what do mechanics do?

B: They fix cars.

5- A: What do sales assistants do?

B: They sell clothes and other things

The researcher asked the students:

-Which is the best job?

-When you finish school, what do you want to be?

-What do the words (use, sell, keep, fix and sales assistants) mean?

The researcher noticed an obvious weakness in their listening performance. For example:

- 70% of them could hardly identify the main idea and the supporting details of the listening text.
- 60% of them could hardly identify the specific information, including recall of important details.
- 60% of them could hardly use context clues to guess the meaning of the new words.
- 70% of them could hardly make inference and deductions based on information in the text.
- 90% of them could hardly recognize grammatical structures.

**This problem might be because of the following reasons**

- Listening has long been neglected in English coursebooks and teachers do not seem to pay attention to this skill while designing their lessons. English language teachers still consider the linguistic competence (vocabulary and grammar) as their ultimate goals in teaching, whereas, communicative competence including listening is completely neglected.
- Students have difficulties in listening skills; when listening to a foreign language, they have difficulty in concentration. They face problems on recognition of familiar words. So, they cannot understand the intended message.
- In listening activities, students seem to feel shy, embarrassed and worried about making mistakes.