CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0. Preliminaries:

It is not possible for a person to think that a student can give a sound or simple sentence which is not there in his mother tongue or that has not been known or learnt or heard by him. So English listening skill is very necessary for a learner of a foreign language, in addition to the other skills. The teacher should think should be a creative person in order to teach listening effectively and communicatively, because he has to train the student for how to recognize the phonic substance, how to follow the listening message, and how to be a skilful listener for understanding the listening topic. So generally, listening is the ability to identify and understand the speaker's saying, pronunciation, intonation patterns, vocabulary, grammar, grasping his meaning etc. On the other hand, listening plays a very important role, in the communication, learning and education operations, at the same time it is an art of many skills and it is a complex operation that needs training and care. Therefore, there are essential differences between hearing, listening and auding can
be explained as follows:

**Hearing**: The term hearing is used to refer to the listener’s ability to recognize the language elements in the stream and sound and through the knowledge of phonological and grammatical systems of the language in order to relate to each other and understand the meaning. In other words, the ear receives the sound waves without giving any attention or care for them, for example; the plane sound or the train sound…etc. Secondly, the term listening is used to refer to the ability to understand how a particular sentence relates to what else has been said and its function in the communication. So if hearing can be at the recognition level, listening can be at the selection level of the language activities. In addition, listening can be referred to an art, which includes complex operations, that makes the listener give a special attention and care for the sound waves, which are received by the ear. Therefore, listening may be regarded as the recognition, comprehension, analysis, interpretation, practice and evaluation of the message or the sound waves, which reach the listener’s ear. Finally auding refers to the concentration of the attention on the message to fulfil a certain purpose or objective and the difference between auding and listening in the range or the degree of
concentration, not in the nature of the performance, So auding is a continuous listening. As a conclusion to what it is said, the Holy Quran mentioned a number of verses about listening or hearing; consider one of them as an example; “It is he brought you forth from the Wombs of your mothers when you knew nothing; and he gave you hearing and sight and intelligence and affections; that you may give thanks to Allah” (the Holy Quran, the Bee Chapter, Verse No. 78, P.268). Other references are about listening are found in:


3. Widduson, Teaching Languages Communication, Oxford University press, 1978, P.57, “All these references were allotted in Dr. Ali Ahmd, Madkoor, Teaching the Arabic Language Arts, CAIRO University, 1991, P.69-76.

(The word Auding is not in the dictionary I read it in listening research was done in Cairo University)

Thus, this chapter introduces the langauge skills and English langauge teaching in Yemen. Also it describes English listening skill
and how to teach it. At the same time it throws light on the rationale and the significance, the objectives, the hypotheses, the limitation, the area, and the organization of the work.

1.1. **Language skills:**

**What does skill mean?**

According to Hassan Shahateh, skill is the performance that can be done in easy way and comprehension. Also Good, defined skill as, the performance that can be done by a person easily and in depth whether it was organic or mental performed. At the same time, Ahmed Zaki defined skill as the depth and easiness for performing any work that effect in learning developing. Therefore, the researcher's view about skill is the performance that can be performed easily, with experience and in an intelligent way.

1.1.1. **Relationship between language skills:**

In the English language, the main skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Any one of them goes parallel to the other skills in its performance and function, at the same time any one of them is not much enough for a learner by its own right, they are needed and connected with each other for making complete knowledge and
background in learning English as a foreign language. Therefore, the relationship between listening and the other skills may be described as follows:

**Listening and speaking:**

It is known that listening is passive skill, while speaking is an active one, but not really true, because listening skill calls for active participation in the communication between the participants, so the receptive skill is the understanding of the message. In other words, the speaker in any interaction is sure that his words are understood by signals of nods, glances, body movements and the non-verbal expressions of the hearer, also no one can speak directly or reply directly without listening, because first listen to the others saying, then reply them; for example, on a phone conversation, if the listener does not reply the speaker for a moment, the speaker will think that there is no one listening to him, that means a spoken word has to be listened to by a listener, meanwhile the listener has to reply with the same or other words, so the word is commonly shared, it has to be spoken by a speaker as well as it has to be listened by the mind and ear of the listener, in addition, listening may be preceding speaking because it is not possible to produce satisfactorily what one has not
heard and no one can produce a sound which does not exist in his mother tongue or which has not learnt. Therefore, there is a very strong relationship and connection between the two skills especially for the linguistic developing and continuing and towards the language you would like to learn.

**Listening and reading:**

According to what is mentioned above about listening, also reading provides the students opportunities to study language vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and the way to construct sentences, paragraphs and texts. There are some activities which have to be done in reading; the message of the text is just important and the teacher must give the students a chance to respond to that message and to express their feelings about the topic, at the same time in listening the students have to respond to the listening task if it is difficult, interesting, according to their needs and so on. Another example, in reading skill, the students have to predict what they are going to read and to predict what is coming. Therefore, in listening and reading the students need to reach the highest degree of skill because they will have no control over the complexity of the material they encounter at these two areas. Finally the deep relationship
between listening and reading is one thing that has to be well understood, is the sound; the sound represents the main item for the two skills. The sound is issued or spoken in the reader's mouth, at the same time, it is heard or entered into the listener's ear, so the ability for effective listening is directly connected with the success of correct reading, that means if listening is required auding and comprehension, reading also requires looking and comprehension.

**Listening and writing**: 

Writing skill is just as important as speaking, listening and reading. Students need to know how to write letters, how to put written reports together, how to reply to advertisements, how to write using electronic media and so on. Therefore, there is essential importance between listening and writing, for example; good and effective listening means correct writing. To explain this sentence we say that effective listening enables the listener to hear the correct pronunciations of the letters, of the words that will make him able to do correct writing. Another example can prove the relations between the two skills. The good writer is a good listener, that means, the good writer can be good listener by his desire to listen to other speakers’ ideas and opinions and write about them. So he practises
the two skills. He first listens and then writes. Finally, in order to support the relationship between the four skills, C. Paul Verghese, in Teaching English as second language, 1989, comments, “Learning a second language is in effect learning the four skills, viz., listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The first two skills are intimately related to each other, though one is recognition skill and the other is production skill. Also both skills depend almost entirely on the learners’ knowledge of the pronunciation of words and the articulation of sounds in the language”.

1.2. ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN YEMEN:

English language teaching especially in the Southern part of Yemen had to undergo many stages. The first stage started from the British colonization and the last one is at present. So it can be described as follows:

**Historical Survey:** Great Britain seized Aden in 1839, because some Yemenis is robbed wrecked British ship in Aden beach. So from that time Aden became a British colony and a refueling stop for the British ships going to India by way of the Suez Canal and Red Sea. Aden or South of Yemen was ruled by British from 1839-1967,
after that independence was obtained and it became free from British Colonization. Therefore, the modern education system was established during the British period. That means from 1900-1940 a few missionary schools were offered in different sides of the protectorate. Also many primary schools and a few private schools opened here and there.

After the Independence Day 30th November 1967, the southern Yemen was witnessed many changes in all aspects of life. Education has been given more consideration and the different education systems that were used in different parts of Yemen were united into one system. That means, the law of education was issued and the aims for education for the whole country were set so the education system. It was classified in the following stages; from level one to level six, was called a primary stage, from level seven to level nine, was called a preparatory stage, and from level ten to level twelve, was called a secondary school. Then, after the first and second educational congress that were held in 1975 and 1979, a new education system was introduced as follows, the primary and secondary schools were replaced by the unity schools, from level one to level eight (8 years) and the previous type of the secondary school
was replaced by the new secondary school system from level nine to level twelve (4 years).

Meanwhile, on the side of the higher education the first college was opened in 1970 in order to meet the need for qualified and trained teachers. Then Aden University was founded in 1975; at the same time a number of students were sent abroad every year for higher studies. Finally, the education system during the Yemen unification, the union of south and north parts of Yemen became one system and the curriculum was changed into one. Arabic language was the medium of instruction while English language was taught as a compulsory subject from level seven in the unity school up to the last level of the secondary school, but in the university English was taught according as the specialization required. In addition, this curriculum of English, it means for the unity schools and secondary schools, was designed in co-operation between the ministry of education in Yemen and the British Council and its title is crescent. Therefore the education system in the university now a days consists of bachelor, master and doctorate levels in different specializations. So as conclusion to the above mentioned education systems in Yemen, the foreign languages were taken in consideration, especially
English language was taught as a main subject in all the stages, and the next pages will include the important reasons of E.L.T. in Yemen in detail.

1.2.1. Status of English in Yemen: English has taken an important place in the Yemeni education system, and this is due to the following reasons; first, south of Yemen was one of the British colonies and English language was the main medium of instruction, especially in Aden region and it was and still is taught officially and is compulsory in the schools and the universities. Second, English is the language of technology, science, commerce, arts, and other aspects, not only in Yemen, but also throughout the world. Third, English language, now a days is studied in a large number of private schools, institutes and colleges in Yemen in order to meet the massive need for the present life requirements such as the jobs which need it. The last reason can be given to indicate the importance of teaching English language, as a compulsory subject at the Unity and Secondary schools is, the higher studies in different specializations at the university. Unity school is from standard 1 to 8. The faculties are medicine faculties, technology faculties, science studies, English departments and others. They are using English as the medium of
instruction, so it is very necessary for those studies. Therefore, we consider the following chart that shows the levels at which English is taught in the Yemeni education system.
Figure No. 1

1-2-3 the status of English in the Yemeni education system

- Doctorate
- Masters
  - Bachelor in Medical studies (English Medium) 7 years
  - Bachelor in Technological studies (English Medium) 5 years
  - Bachelor in Education, Arts, Economic…etc. studies (English depend on the study) 4 years
  - Higher technical education

- University Education

- Higher education
  - Secondary education (commercial, scientific, literary, technical, agricultural…etc.)
  - Middle institutions education (professional studies)

- Basic Education (Primary and preparatory stages)

- Nursery school, lower kinder garten and upper kinder garten

English

Age  School year

18  3
16  2
15  1
7
6  3
5  2
3  1
1.3. ENGLISH LISTENING SKILL:

1.3.1 What does listening mean?

MORE & CHERIQUINN, have defined listening as a process consisting of four related activities such as hearing, listening, and comprehension and memorizing. Also FREEDMAN, defines listening as a negative process including the listener performance in interpreting what is listened and gives a rule for it.

HARRIS, defines listening as a speech comprehension or the attention to something that has to be listened to; for example listening to a speaker with attention. Therefore, listening is an important skill which can be practiced and obtained by the listener, on the condition of the presence of the following sub-skills and activities during the listening period such as the listener analysis, interpretation, criticism and evaluation for the message. “Quoted in M.Zain-Al-Abeddeen thesis, 2003, p.11”.

1.3.2. Effective Listening Characteristics:

Effective listening must be composed of other elements such as settlement, auditing, quietness and deep concentration, on the other hand the listener has to look into the speaker’s face in order to realize
and understand the speaker’s signals, face-expressions, gestures…etc. That may help the listener for comprehending the speech. Also in order to listen effectively, listener has not to move hands, feet or any part of his body. It is only intelligent and conscious hearing with comprehension of the listening topic. Finally, the good listener’s characteristics are, the listener has to know why he is listening, to whom he will listen, and for what he is going to listen, at the same time he has to choose the best and interesting listening topics and he should avoid repetition of the same texts during his listening.

1.3.3. Factors Affecting the Listening Process:

There are a number of factors that may lack the listening process. They can will be explained as follows:

Factors that belong to the learner (listener): The factors that belong to the learner which may lack or prevent the listening process are personal distractions or sickness of the listener. That means the listener may suffer from psychological or physical or mental diseases and other body diseases that will cause weakness in listening and hearing as a whole. Secondly, other factors that may lack in the listening process are- first, the lack of concentration of mind of the
listener in which the listener may think about other things in his mind
so he is not concentrated. Secondly the listener is bored from the
long time of listening and the difficult topics. Thirdly, the limited ability
of the listener, so he has to listen with difficulty and to be patient with
a high capacity during the listening process. Fourthly the bad level of
the listener, so if the listener is very weak and can not follow the
speaker, at the same time cannot comprehend the speaker. This will
cause missing of information and misunderstanding the listening
topic. Therefore, all the above-mentioned factors that were related to
the learner may play an important role in confusing and disturbing the
listening process.

Factors that belong to the teacher (speaker): The factors that belong
to the speaker, which may lack the listening process, can be
described as follows; firstly the language ability of the speaker, the
speaker has to be skilful. Secondly perfection in the language of the
speaker, i.e, the speaker has to speak fluently. He must pronounce
the sounds correctly. He should perform with a good tone and
intonation and choose easy vocabulary, also construct familiar
sentences and paragraphs. Thirdly there must be suitable speed of
the speaker. The speaker’s speed must not be very quick or very
slow, it should fit the students’ level. Meanwhile, the speaker must control the organs of speech in the pronunciation of the sounds. The fourth is the quality of the ideas, vocabulary and meanings. The speaker should use the best ideas, vocabulary and meanings according to the students’ needs and interests.

Factors belonging to the listening course and its nature: The most significant factors that are related to the listening course and its nature which may lack the listening process are; the difficulties of the language context and ideas that may be unfamiliar for the students. For example political or scientific contents. At the same time if the task was not designed according to their needs, interests, desires and is far away from their experience this will cause difficulties and will be misunderstood. So by this way, it will make the listeners unable to comprehend and follow the listening process. Therefore, to solve this problem, the teacher has to give enough time for practising the task, activities and exercises; also he must attract the students’ attention by using exciting and attractive methods, and gradually take them from the simple to the compound, then to the difficult.
Factors that belong to the teaching methods of listening:

The important factors that belong to the teaching methods and may prevent the listening process are; first, if the teacher uses an ancient method instead of using the recent technology and techniques of teaching listening; second if there is a confusion in the plan; for example, some steps are replaced at the end by some steps at the beginning or teaching some important points quickly whereas, he must teach them slowly, third, if there is no connection or relation between the elements of the task and its objectives. Finally, if there is no use of the visual aids in the class-room which would help the students very much to comprehend any difficulties that may face them.

1.3.4. Objectives of Teaching Listening Skills:

The most important objectives of teaching listening skills can be described as follows:

1. Developing the students’ ability to comprehend the instructions.
2. Training the students on the politeness of speaking and listening.
3. Developing the students’ ability on the attention, concentration and comprehension.

4. Improving their ability to listen carefully and to follow the speech.

5. Developing their ability for obtaining knowledge during listening.

6. Training them to distinguish between the main ideas and the less important ideas.

7. Developing their ability to predict what the speaker is saying.

8. Developing their ability to draw conclusions from the speech.

9. Training them to guess the meaning, the ideas and the speaker’s purpose.

10. Developing their ability to connect between the recent listening (what they are listening to) and their experience of the previous listening.

Briefly, it can be concluded, the above pages have discussion about the definitions of skill and listening skills, then the relationship between listening skill and the other skills. Also the characteristics of effective listening were discussed. After that, the factors that may be lacking in listening process, and finally, the objectives of teaching listening were mentioned above. [Mohammed Z. Al-Abdeen, Thesis, 2003, AIN-SHAMS University].
1.4 HOW TO TEACH ENGLISH LISTENING SKILLS?

The answer for the question- how to teach English listening skills depends on the answers for the following questions such as:

1.4.1 Need for Teaching English Listening Skills:

There are many important reasons for teaching English listening. Firstly English is an international language and it can be used throughout the world, so the students have to be exposed to different varieties and accents such as British English, American English, Australian English, Indian English …etc. The second reason is that, in order to train the students to listen to spoken English by using taped materials which include number of topics such as broadcasts, advertisements, poems, plays, conversations and so on. Third reason is that, this teaching is needed. Listening skill can help the students for acquiring English as a foreign language. Therefore, any help that is given to the students in performing that skill will make them better listeners.

Harmer states “one of the main reasons for getting students to listen to spoken English is to let them hear different varieties and accents rather than just the voice of their teacher with its own idiosyncrasies”.

1.4.2 Type of listening:

As a matter of fact, students have to learn listening by using authentic listening materials, because that may help them to acquire and realize the correct pronunciations of the native speaker. On the other hand, listening to topics must be taught according to the students’ levels, needs, interest, choices and desires. For example if we play a tape of a political topic for beginners, it will be very difficult and very boring and they will not understand anything, but if they focus on a realistic tape of telephone conversation or short dialogue about shopping or asking for food in a restaurant, this will encourage them to learn more about the language and will increase their confidence for the language acquisition. The next question that comes to mind is;

What is Special in Listening?

There are many ways in which listening differs from the other language skills as follows. First, the same speed of the tapes for everybody. Unlike speaking and reading depends on the students’ own pace. Secondly the tape is continuous even the students lose a part of the topic, unlike reading, the reader can re-read or stop and look at the picture, then think for before continuing. The third opinion
is that listening differs from other skills because the informal spoken language has special features such as the incomplete utterances. For example- Dinner? This way of asking means- Is dinner ready? Repetitions- The example is Absolutely sure. Absolutely sure you know that she is right. Hesitations. The example is: yes, well ummmm, yes, possibly but er…. etc.

1.4.3. Teaching Listening Principles:

  Importance of the tape recorder and tapes:

It will not be useful if the speaker of the tape recorder is poor and the speed is changing from faster to slower or from weak voice to strong voice. So the teacher has to check and control these things before he starts teaching in the classroom.

Preparation is vital:

Procedures of preparation are very useful for teaching. They will give teacher confidence and make him active for facing any problems in the classroom. Therefore, the teacher has to listen to the tape before taking it into the classroom in order to be ready for any problems, noises, accents that may come up and check if the students can cope with the tape and the task that they will listen to.
Enough time for listening:

Listening for sufficient time is an important element in listening skills. Listening once is not enough for students, because they should listen many times in order to enable themselves to correct any mistakes that were there when listened at the first time and to make up for things they missed the first time. That means the first time of listening just gives the students an idea about the listening task, so the teacher has to repeat many times till the students are satisfied.

Listening tasks should fit the listening stages:

The listening task must be suitable for the student level, that means the teacher cannot focus on the beginners for difficult topics or ask them to listen for details. Therefore, the first stage listeners have to listen for general things, then gradually the middle stage listeners have to listen to topics of higher level than beginners, after that the advanced stage listeners have to listen for details or some difficulties such as pronunciations and so on.

Practising the listening texts to the full:

Good teachers have to invest time and energy by participating in the activities of the students for choosing and preparing the listening. In
other words, the tapes may be used for different purposes or applications. That means the teacher can play the part of listening many times for various kinds of study in order to practise different activities and exercises.

We have discussed the reasons for using listening in the classroom and also how to expose students to different varieties of English and different kinds of listening. Also the special characteristics of listening and the teaching listening principles are mentioned above [Harmer, how to teach English, 2001, Cambridge, P.97-100].

1.5 The Rationale and the Significance of the Study:

Listening skill is an important skill and goes parallel to the other skills such as speaking, reading and writing, so it is never enough for the learners by its own right. The learners need the knowledge of other skills or back ground. In this case, the topic of this research (Teaching Listening skills) has been chosen in order to investigate the right methodology of teaching Listening Skills for the students of the first year, college of education, Aden University. On the other hand, there are many reasons that should be taken into consideration. Firstly Listening Skill is a neglected device in contrast
to the other skills viz. speaking, reading and writing at Aden University. Secondly there are not competent teachers for teaching this skill. Thirdly, there is not sufficient and developing technology like language laboratory used in the class-room. Only a tape recorder is used. Fourthly the teacher is the centre of the process, whereas the learners' participation is rare and has passive positions. Fifthly the methods, the technology and the text books (syllabi) are not up to date and updated. Eventually the syllabus is designed by the teachers only.

Therefore, all these reasons make the researcher intend to study in order to look for the solutions for this problem and to provide the best methods, techniques, strategies, skills, activities, suggestions and recommendations for teaching, listening skill at Aden University, especially at College of Education Saber.

It is worthwhile to mention that, no previous work has been done in this area of teaching listening skills. It is neither at Aden University in Yemen nor at University of Pune in India, except one thesis submitted in Pune University. It is focused on developing, listening skills (the researcher works at Sana’a University) it is not about teaching, listening skills. Some other Indian students may be
working in this area but their context is Indian students. My context is Yemeni students. So my research is important here.

1.6 The Limitations of the Research:

- This study is limited to the learners of English as a foreign language.
- It investigates the needs of English Learners for practicing Listening Skills.
- It is limited to the learners of English Department, especially to the first year students at the College of Education Saber, Aden University.

1.7 The area of the work:

As it is mentioned earlier, the teaching of the English Listening skills at the College of Education, Aden University needs remedial and developing methods, and techniques. Therefore one of the colleges, Saber College of education at Aden University is selected as a sample for this study, because the researcher works as an instructor in this college.
1.8 **Objectives of the Study:**

The present study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- The study is intended so as to improve the best classroom methods and techniques for teaching the English Listening Skills.
- It aims to help the students to develop their ability for the English Listening Skill as is spoken by the native speaker.
- It will support the students with enough time for more practising of the skills, strategies and activities of the Listening Skill.
- It will provide the students with a wide background of Listening and make them skilful listeners.

1.9 **The Hypothesis of the Research:**

This study has hypothesis the following:

- Using developed materials will help the students to improve their ability of Listening Skills.
- Students have to participate in choosing the course, the materials and the syllabus designing according to their needs.
- Filling the gap between the previous teaching of Listening and
the recent technology and techniques of the modern teaching of listening skills.

1.10. The Organization of the work:

This thesis comprises five chapters:

- Chapter one focuses on the language skills and their relationship. It also gives brief ideas about English language teaching in Yemen; English listening skills and how to teach them. Eventually it sheds light on the rationale and the significance, the goals, the hypothesis, the limitations, the area of the work and the organization of the research.

- Chapter two describes the reviewed studies that are related to this study. It includes five main points, firstly the teaching, listening approaches such as oral approach, communicative approach and strategy based approach. Secondly comes the teaching, listening methods and goals. The third point is about the teaching of listening and class-room techniques. The fourth point focuses on the teaching-listening skills, strategies and activities that should be practised during the listening lessons. Finally, teaching listening exercises to evaluate the students’
comprehension and then comes summary and conclusion of the chapter.

- Chapter Three throws on the Research Methodology of the study, so it is divided into two parts. 1) The data description-The researcher will explain the scheme for the field work and the steps that the researcher will follow in the field work. 2) The field work itself- It expresses the teaching of the experimental group and the control group, the pre-test and post-test of these groups during the field work time.

- Chapter Four refers to the quantitative analyses of the work done by the researcher during his teaching in the field work, 1) It analyses the responses of the students for the new experiments or methods of teaching that he uses in the teaching period.

- Chapter Five focuses on the syllabus outline analysis, on showing sample units of the model course and on the analysis of the pre-test and post-test results and the final draft.

- Chapter Six describes 1) the recommendations 2) the conclusions of the study, 3) the suggestions for further studies, therefore, according to the analyses of the field work results the
researcher has to suggest and recommend solutions of the problems that are faced by the students. They will suggest points for further studies.

1.11. Conclusion:

In the present chapter we have introduced the concept of listening skills in English. We have talked about the status of English in Yemen and how the skill can be improvised as also about the general needs and methods, which could be applied in the teaching of listening skills. The chapter also specifies the aims, objectives, rationale and significance, hypotheses, limitations of the study, along with an organized chapter scheme. The chapter that follows will enable us further to survey and understand related studies in the area of teaching listening skills.