

## Examination of the Relationship between the Usage Frequency of Listening/Viewing Strategies of Middle School Students and their Listening Anxiety

Berna Karahan\*

Faculty of Education, Kafkas University Kars-Turkey

Corresponding author: Berna Karahan, E-mail: bernacan61@hotmail.com

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### ABSTRACT

Listening is one of the fundamental skills of language, and it is a skill that individuals will need throughout their lives, both in their educational years and in their social lives. From this point of view, the acquired skills for listening should be carefully examined. Because a problem to be experienced during the skill acquisition process can trigger anxiety. Increasing the frequency of use of listening/viewing strategies in order to reduce anxiety will have positive results. The proper acquisition and development of this skill, which has such an impact on a life of an individual, is an issue that needs to be emphasized. The aim of the present study is to determine the relationship between middle school students' use of listening strategies and their listening anxiety. The required permissions were obtained for the study and ethical rules were followed. The study group of the study included 265 middle school students who were randomly selected in the center of Kars. The data were collected with the "Frequency Usage of Listening/Viewing Strategies Scale" and the "Listening Anxiety Scale for Middle School Students". According to the results obtained, there were significant differences in terms of sex and age variables. It was determined that difference was in favor of female students. Furthermore, significantly positive relationships were found between the listening anxiety scale and the dimensions of the usage frequency scale of listening/viewing strategies. According to these relations, the use of listening/viewing strategies decreases as anxiety increases.

**Key words:** Listening anxiety, Frequency of listening/viewing, Strategy, Middle school

### INTRODUCTION

The basis of literacy is the skills of the language. The correct acquisition and use of these skills will contribute to the increase of literacy and the growth of successful generations. Listening, one of the four basic skills of language, is also an important element of understanding and communication. Because adaptation to society, communication, socialization, and success in the learning-teaching processes of an individual require mastery of language skills. From this point of view, it is seen that listening is one of the most effective elements of this process. Listening is the process of understanding and making sense of external stimuli by enhancing them with previous knowledge. The smoother and healthier this process, the better and more successful the communication. "It is the activity of smoothly understanding the message that the speaker wishes to convey and reacting to the stimulus in question" (Demirel & Şahinel, 2006, p. 72). Listening is also an instrument that enables communication. "Listening, defined as making sense of the sounds heard by the individual, is one of the basic elements of the communication process" On the other hand, in order to fully understand what is heard, the individual must listen correctly.

"Listening requires making an effort to receive and interpret the message rather than passively watching the other party to fully communication" (Melanlıoğlu, 2013, p. 852).

The effort to learn is the most important aspect of listening. Because while listening, comprehension and analysis skills emerge. However, as with any learning process, the individual's prior knowledge, the family and the society in which he grew up should be considered. Listening, in addition to these, is a process. The individual interprets the external stimuli he receives, associates them with his previous information, and analyzes and interprets this information. During this process, not only the family and the environment but also the school and the individual's emotional and psychological state have an impact on listening and understanding. "Listening is the process of understanding and interpreting verbal information. This process varies depending on the situation, the verbal input we perceive, and our own situation" (Tazebay & Çelenk, 2008, p. 30).

Listening/viewing is a common process in the development of all skills. In other words, it expresses the contribution of the individual's experiences to the learning processes besides the knowledge acquired. "One of the most important ways for students to learn and understand both during their

education and throughout their lives is through listening and viewing. "A lot of information is learned by listening and watching" (Doğan & Erdem, 2017, p. 65). These concepts should be considered together and should not be overlooked in the learning and skill acquisition processes of an individual.

Anxiety is the negative feelings and thoughts that an individual develops against a situation or event. "Anxiety is an emotional state that causes sadness" (Katrancı & Kuşdemir, 2015, p. 417). Several studies in the literature show that anxiety has negative consequences. Anxiety is known to damage learning and skill acquisition processes (Aşlıoğlu, & Özkan, 2013; Jalongo & Hirsh, 2010; Kahan, 2008; Donnelly, 2009). This condition becomes chronic in the individual as anxiety levels rise or fail to improve over time. As a result, a person becomes anxious, which may lead to negative management of all states and behaviors (Tekindal, 2009).

### Aim of the Study

Anxiety developed for listening negatively affects basic skill acquisition and harms other skill acquisition and learning processes of the individual. Because basic skills give rise to behaviors that will affect an individual's whole life. Early years are very important in the acquisition of these skills. At these ages, studies on skill acquisition should be carried out. For this and the other reasons stated above, the listening anxiety and the usage frequency scale of listening/viewing strategies are the issues that should be emphasized. Such studies are thought to contribute to the field in this way, especially because it will be easier to intervene in mistakes or incorrect learning processes in the acquisition of basic skills at a young age.

### METHOD

The study is structured in the screening model. The screening model is a study design where "the opinions, interests, skills, abilities, attitudes of the participants about an issue or event are determined and which is generally used in relatively larger samples compared to other studies" (Büyüköztürk et al., 2014, p. 177). The individual or object that is the subject of the study is tried to be expressed under its own conditions and as it is (Karasar, 2010). The data were analyzed using the SPSS 20 package program. When Skewness-Kurtosis values were examined, parametric tests were performed because the data showed normal distribution.

### Study Group

The study group of the study included middle school students who were randomly selected in the center of Kars, Turkey in the 2021-2022 academic year. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the participants.

### Data Collection Tools

**The Usage Frequency Scale of Listening/Viewing Strategies:** The scale developed by Doğan and Erdem (2017)

**Table 1.** Demographic characteristics of students in the study group

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Female	130	49.1
Male	135	50.9
Total	265	100.0
Age		
1 (11-12)	140	52.8
2 (13-14)	125	47.2
Total	265	100.0

consists of 19 items and 3 dimensions. These dimensions were labeled "critical listening/viewing", "comprehensive listening/viewing" and "distinctive listening/viewing", respectively. It is a scale with a five-point Likert-type scoring. Items in the scale explain the 47.9% of overall variance. The studies were made with the Cronbach's Alpha method and the internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found as  $\alpha=.891$ . It was determined that  $\alpha=.72$ ,  $\alpha=.83$  and  $\alpha=.76$  for the dimensions, respectively. According to the results of DFA, the scale was accepted as structurally valid ( $\chi^2/sd=2,2$ , RMSEA= 0.097, GFI= 0.88, AGFI= 0.085, CFI= 0.86, NFI= 0.93, RMR= 0.094). Cronbach's Alpha value calculated for this study was 0.92.

**The Listening Anxiety Scale for Middle School Students:** The scale developed by Melanlioğlu (2013) consists of 37 items and 5 dimensions. These dimensions were labeled "evaluation of listening", "monitoring the listening process", "individual differences in listening", "focus on post-listening" and "listening obstacles", respectively. Items in the scale explain the 45.13% of the overall variance. The studies were made with the Cronbach's Alpha method and the internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found as  $\alpha=.92$ . It was determined that  $\alpha=.81$ ,  $\alpha=.83$ ,  $\alpha=.78$ ,  $\alpha=.69$  and  $\alpha=.68$  for the dimensions, respectively. Cronbach's Alpha value calculated for this study was 0.90

### FINDINGS

Firstly, the averages of the students obtained from the scales were examined in the study. The results are presented in Table 2.

According to the table, it can be said that the students received average scores on the dimensions of the listening anxiety scale and good scores on the usage frequency scale of listening/viewing strategies.

In the study, a t-test was conducted to determine whether students' usage frequency of the listening/viewing strategies and their listening anxiety showed a significant difference in terms of sex variables. The results obtained are presented in Table 3.

The table shows that, aside from the evaluation of listening dimensions, listening/viewing strategies usage of students and their listening anxiety differ significantly by sex. Looking at the averages, it was determined that this result was in favor of female students for both scales.

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics results

Scale names	Dimensions	n	M	SD
The Listening Anxiety Scale For Middle School Students	Evaluation of Listening	265	23.9	2.94
	Monitoring the Listening Process	265	38.2	4.45
	Individual Differences in Listening	265	38.0	6.24
	Focus on Post-listening	265	21.6	4.10
	Listening Obstacles	265	18.9	2.90
The Usage Frequency Scale of Listening/Viewing Strategies	Critical Listening/Viewing	265	25.9	4.38
	Comprehensive Listening/Viewing	265	33.5	-5.97
	Distinctive Listening/Viewing	265	22.0	4.03

**Table 3.** T-test results according to the variable of sex

	Sex	n	M	S	SD	t	p
Evaluation of Listening	Female	130	24.1	2.73	2.60	1.085	.279
	Male	135	23.7	3.12			
Monitoring the Listening Process	Female	130	39.2	3.78	2.52	3.514	.001
	Male	135	37.3	4.85			
Individual Differences in Listening	Female	130	39.5	5.35	2.53	3.778	.000
	Male	135	36.6	6.73			
Focus on Post-listening	Female	130	22.2	3.55	2.53	2.583	0.010
	Male	135	21.0	4.50			
Listening Obstacles	Female	130	19.5	2.46	2.51	3.266	0.001
	Male	135	18.4	3.17			
Critical Listening/ Viewing	Female	130	27.0	3.53	2.45	4.060	0.000
	Male	135	24.9	4.85			
Comprehensive Listening/ Viewing	Female	130	34.6	5.19	2.47	3.177	0.002
	Male	135	32.4	6.46			
Distinctive Listening/ Viewing	Female	130	22.7	3.50	2.54	2.854	0.005
	Male	135	21.3	4.39			

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

In the study, a *t*-test was conducted to determine whether the usage frequency of the listening/viewing strategies students and their listening anxiety showed a significant difference in terms of age variables. The results obtained are presented in Table 4.

According to the table, it is seen that the usage frequency scale of listening/viewing strategies of students and the age variable of their listening anxiety show a significant difference only in terms of the dimensions of the listening anxiety scale “evaluation of listening” and the “critical listening/viewing” dimensions of the listening/viewing strategies scale. Based on the averages, this result favored students in the 2(13-14) age range in the “evaluation of listening” dimensions and students in the 1(11-12) age range in the “critical listening/viewing” dimensions.

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated in the study to examine the relationship between the usage frequency scale of listening/viewing strategies of the students and their listening anxiety. The results are presented in Table 5.

According to the table; weak, moderate, high, and very high positive correlations were found between listening

anxiety and the dimensions of the usage frequency scale of listening/viewing strategies.

When the table is examined, it can be said that students who frequently use distinctive listening/viewing strategies have low listening anxiety, except for the dimension of evaluating listening. Again, according to the table, it is seen that the anxiety levels of the students who frequently use comprehensive listening/viewing strategies are highly correlated with these strategies. Accordingly, it can be said that the anxiety levels of the students who do extensive listening are lower and they have self-confidence towards the skill. Finally, it can be said that students who frequently use critical listening/viewing strategies have low listening anxiety except for listening barriers and assessment of listening. It can be said that the assessment of listening requires experience and knowledge, while listening barriers can be caused by the environment or different situations, so they are not highly related.

Multiple linear regression analysis was performed to determine whether the variables predicted each other. The data show normal distribution. The results are presented in Table 6.

**Table 4.** T-test results according to the variable of sex

	Age	n	M	S	SD	t	p
Evaluation of Listening	1 (11-12)	140	23.3	2.68	2.48	-3.685	000*
	2 (13-14)	125	24.6	3.06			
Monitoring the Listening Process	1 (11-12)	140	38.7	3.91	2.35	1.818	067
	2 (13-14)	125	37.7	4.95			
Individual Differences in Listening	1 (11-12)	140	38.0	5.39	2.30	-0.001	999
	2 (13-14)	125	38.0	7.10			
Focus on Post-listening	1 (11-12)	140	22.0	3.67	2.39	1.567	114
	2 (13-14)	125	21.2	4.52			
Listening Obstacles	1 (11-12)	140	19.1	2.80	2.54	1.170	241
	2 (13-14)	125	18.7	3.00			
Critical Listening/ Viewing	1 (11-12)	140	26.4	3.98	2.43	2.021	042
	2 (13-14)	125	25.3	4.73			
Comprehensive Listening/ Viewing	1 (11-12)	140	33.4	5.03	2.24	-321	744
	2 (13-14)	125	33.6	6.89			
Distinctive Listening/ Viewing	1 (11-12)	140	22.3	3.65	2.40	1.159	242
	2 (13-14)	125	21.7	4.42			

\* $p < .01$ **Table 5.** Correlations

Variables	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Evaluation of Listening	473**	707**	610**	494**	468**	692**	590**
2. Monitoring the Listening Process		839**	836**	777**	827**	862**	911**
3. Individual Differences in Listening			831**	690**	896**	901**	834**
4. Focus on Post-listening				785**	737**	890**	893**
5. Listening obstacles					594**	833**	739**
6. Critical Listening/ Viewing						740**	747**
7. Comprehensive Listening/ Viewing							837**
8. Distinctive listening/ Viewing							1

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ **Table 6.** The results of multiple regression analysis

Variables	$\beta$	F	R	R <sup>2</sup>	p
- Evaluation of Listening	0.011	380.30	993	986	000
- Monitoring the Listening Process	0.335*				
- Individual Differences in Listening	0.459*				
- Focus on Post-listening	0.206*				
- Listening obstacles	0.050				

\* $p < .05$ 

According to the data obtained as a result of multiple linear regression analysis in Table 6, the  $p$ -value of .000 shows that the regression model is significant. According to the table, it was observed that the usage frequency scale of listening/viewing strategies of the middle school students was significantly predicted by listening anxiety. Looking at the  $R^2$  value, it is understood that 98% ( $R^2 = .98$ ) of the usage frequency scale of listening/viewing strategies is predicted by the dimension of listening anxiety. Looking at the

standardized regression coefficients, the “individual differences in listening” dimension ( $\beta = .459^*$ ) of the listening anxiety scale comes first as a predictor of the usage frequency scale of listening/viewing strategies. The predictors of the usage frequency scale of listening/viewing strategies are “monitoring the listening process” ( $\beta = .335^*$ ) and “focus on post-listening” ( $\beta = .206^*$ ), which are dimensions of the listening anxiety scale, respectively. Finally, it was found that the variables “evaluation of listening” ( $\beta = .011$ ) and “listening obstacles” ( $\beta = -.050$ ) were not significant predictors of the usage frequency scale of listening/viewing strategies.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The relationship between the usage frequency of listening/viewing strategies of middle school students and their listening anxiety was examined in the study. In the light of the data obtained, it was concluded that the usage frequency of listening/viewing strategies of students was high and their listening anxiety was moderate. Given that the learning processes for skill acquisition are healthier as the anxiety rate

decreases, it can be stated that, while the moderate level of listening anxiety obtained in this study is not a desired result, it is also not a concerning result. According to a study by Sarıkaya (2021), the usage frequency of listening/viewing strategies of middle school students is at a moderate level.

Another issue emphasized in the study is the sex variable. Aside from the evaluation of listening dimensions, listening/viewing strategies usage of students and their listening anxiety differ significantly by sex and this result was in favor of female students for both scales. When the literature was reviewed, it was found that female students surpassed male students on average in the majority of studies in this and similar fields. This result can be explained by structural differences, upbringing, and more disciplined behaviors during the skill acquisition process of the female students. According to a study conducted by Arslan (2017), it was concluded that female students have higher listening anxiety than male students. According to a study by Sarıkaya (2021), the usage frequency of listening/viewing strategies of female students is better than male students. A similar result was found by Fidan (2019), and these results were in favor of female students. Considering the literature, in which the results in favor of female students are in the majority, it is thought that there is a deficiency. Because male students must have achieved successful results in these studies. This is an area open to study.

In the study, a significant difference in one dimension of both scales in terms of age variable was found. These dimensions are "evaluation of listening" and "critical listening/viewing". Looking at the averages, it was found that the dimension of "evaluation of listening" was in favor of students aged 13-14. According to this result, the increase in the experience, knowledge, and understanding levels in the listening skills of students with the increase in age can be explained by the increase in listening evaluation skills. On the other hand, in the "critical listening/viewing" dimension, a result was obtained in favor of students aged 11-12. This result can be expressed as a result of the fact that critical vision, thinking and interpretation skills at younger ages are not yet mature enough compared to later ages.

It was found that there were various relationships between the variables in the study. According to the results, students who have comprehensive and distinctive listening skills are those who carry out the listening and monitoring processes in a healthy manner and possess this skill. In short, as the usage frequency of listening/viewing strategies increases, so does listening anxiety. Because acquiring skills on a sound basis provides the self-confidence to deal with negative situations.

According to the multiple linear regression analysis conducted by the data obtained in the study, the p-value of.000 shows that the regression model is significant. According to the results of the analysis, the dimension of individual differences comes first as a predictor of listening anxiety. It is a desired and expected result that individuals who have positive experiences with listening skills and have developed a positive perspective have low anxiety about this skill. Because the development of listening/viewing skills will improve the

perspective and evaluation of listening, it will be inevitable that the anxiety will decrease.

In the study, some variables related to the listening skills of secondary school students were emphasized. According to the findings, it was determined that the individuals who carried out the skill acquisition correctly used the frequency of listening/viewing strategies and their anxiety levels decreased accordingly. Especially secondary school, which is one of the important stages of the education process; it is a stage where skill acquisition must be ensured correctly. The positive processes to be experienced here are the basis for the training of healthy literate writers.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations can be made:

1. It is necessary to ensure the development of students' listening skills.
2. Students must be convinced that listening is a way of learning.
3. In order to reduce anxiety, the teacher should not interfere during listening.
4. More activities for listening skills should be included in the textbooks.

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