

Evaluation of Listening and Speaking Syllabus in EFL Situation at the Preparatory Year Program

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Abstract:

The present study aims to find out whether the syllabus of listening and speaking at Preparatory Year Program Najran University fulfils the desired learning outcomes or not. Despite immense efforts made by teachers, students are not able to acquire a desired level of competency (as stated in the objectives of the syllabus) in listening and speaking course/skills. This study attempts to analyse the contents of the syllabus with special reference to listening and speaking skills, to identify the gaps between the syllabus and students' performance in listening and speaking and suggest some remedies in order to fill the gaps between the syllabus and learning outcomes. A survey questionnaire with 10 statements focusing on the key elements of the syllabus (as outlined in the objectives of the present syllabus) was used as a tool to collect data from 20 EFL teachers. Their responses were analysed using a likert scale. In addition, an interview with 5 key statements on the current syllabus was also conducted with the same teachers in order to know their opinion and suggestions on the present syllabus. The interview included 5 key statements on the current syllabus. The analysis of data demonstrates that the present syllabus meets out its objectives to certain extent but not completely. As the result shows that most of the statements based on the key elements of the syllabus fall in the category of 'moderate', it is suggested that the syllabus should be revised so that it could fulfil the objectives of the course completely and fill the gaps between the syllabus and learning outcomes.

Keywords: content analysis, evaluation, listening and speaking skills, syllabus analysis

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Introduction

Proficiency in English language is the main target for both the learners and teachers of English language especially in ESL/EFL situations. Developing communicative competence in learners is an important task for the teachers. For an effective language program the responsible factors are learners, teachers, syllabus, methods, materials, settings and testing. Richards mentions, "listening skills are a core component of second-language proficiency, and also reflecting the assumption that if listening isn't tested, teachers won't teach it" (Richards, 2008, p. 01). The goal of English language program is to develop fluency and accuracy in language, aiming to provide the learners of English with a base to improve their communicative competence (Morozova, 2013; Kurniasih, 2011) where, the learners are expected to be able to use English language in different situations and contexts (Sevik, 2012). It is therefore important to evaluate the listening and speaking syllabus in the light of aims and objectives of language program based on the expectations and current innovative practices of language teaching.

The researchers find that students of PYP (Preparatory Year Program), Najran University (NU), Saudi Arabia face problems in listening and hesitate to speak. Students who attend PYP at Najran University are not required to appear in a placement test. That is why there is a variety of learners. It becomes a real challenge for the teachers to accommodate different level of students in the same classroom.

Students who successfully pass PYP program are assigned different courses like medical engineering and administrative courses according to their ranks.

To the surprise of the learners, students are not able to comprehend an audio text as they cannot understand the instructions in English. The students do not show an excellent improvement in listening and speaking skills though the objectives of the course of listening and Speaking are well-defined. The objectives of the syllabus taught at PYP, NU are to:

1. Hold short and meaningful conversations among themselves;
2. Express themselves at an intelligible and acceptable level of spoken English;
3. Identify the main ideas in a text (audio);
4. Identify fine details in a text;
5. Use the acquired vocabulary;
6. Eliminate the use of the first language (Arabic) inside the classroom.

The present study is based on the evaluation of syllabus of listening and speaking skills only as taught at NU in Saudi Arabia. The respondents are 20 EFL teachers whose experience of teaching listening and speaking varies from at least one semester to ten years.

Reviewing the present situation, a thorough analysis of the aims and objectives of the syllabus has been done. The syllabus is critically examined and modifications are recommended according to the set objectives of the course. The syllabus is analysed on the parameters based on course objectives. A thorough analysis of the aims and objectives of the syllabus has been done and modifications are recommended according to the set objectives of the course. An attempt has also been made to provide remedies to certain problems students face. Suggestions are offered on how to improve the syllabus so that it can be exploited to the best uses of the students.

Literature review

The growing needs for fluency in English around the world have given priority to find more effective ways to teach English. Speaking skills have been found to be fundamental skills necessary for success in life. Learners of English language often evaluate their success in language learning on the basis of how much they have improved spoken language proficiency. It is claimed that someone's fluency in speaking measures his/ her proficiency in that language (Matin, 2013). Students having ability to translate their thoughts and ideas into words are found to be more successful in school. Without developing good listening and speaking skills, students have to suffer lifelong consequences (Wilson (1997) cited in Smith, 2003, p. 03). Without proper knowledge of grammar, sentence structure and not knowing proper pronunciation one can write, read and listen to some extent; whereas, speaking depends on the total knowledge of a language i.e. vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, listening, etc. (Matin 2013). The ability to speak English also plays an important role in developing reading and writing skills. As River (1968, p. 20) says that when we read and write, we use what we know of the language orally. Speaking skill is required everywhere, from simple conversation to formal public speaking.

Listening is an active process by which people receive, make sense of, assess, remember and respond to what they hear. In the opinion of Smith (2003) students' development of skills and learning starts from listening and from having someone listen to them. In a study, Smith (2003) mentions that listening is a matter of choice, not ability, yet listening is something students should be taught to do well. According to Grognet & Van-Duzer (2002) listening is an attentive process where the listener selects and sums up by using the available aural and visual clues. Practice of good listening helps in better understanding, resolving problems, asking questions and responding in expected manner. It also results in learning. The classroom experience results frustrating for those who cannot or do not listen properly (Swanson (1997) cited in Smith, 2003, p. 02). Roberts and Sheraden (2002) determine students' academic performance could be improved by the quality listening skills as well as improvement in their social interaction.

Evaluation is the most important aspect of a language program. The purpose lies can be varying according to the different goals to achieve such as 'course improvement,' 'decisions about individuals,' or 'administrative regulation' (Cronbach, 1991, as cited in Tunc, 2010, p. 17). To identify and analyse the problems students encounter in target language will help a teacher in assisting learners through appropriate anticipation, remedial work and additional practice (Heaton, 1975).

Feeling a need for periodic evaluation of syllabus and redesigning and/change of classroom activities the present study has been designed. A time to time evaluation of syllabus is needed to test the effectiveness and to revise the contents of the syllabus if required. It 'is the formal determination of the quality, effectiveness or value of a program, product, process, objective or curriculum' (Tunc, 2010, p. 17). It has been found by the researchers that evaluation of contents is important to accomplish the idea of a systematic developing curriculum. Teaching requires fulfilling the needs of the learners, achieving the goals of the syllabus and fulfilling the course objectives.

Research Objectives:

1. To analyse the content of the syllabus with special reference to listening and speaking skills
2. To identify the gaps between the syllabus and student's performance in listening and speaking skills
3. To suggest some remedies in order to fill the gaps between the syllabus and learning outcomes
- 4.

Purpose of the Study

The study aims to identify the gaps between course objectives and learning outcomes. In order to understand the operational realities of the syllabus, the study envisages administering a survey questionnaire among teachers and considering their opinions and suggestions through a follow-up interview. The study also attempts to look into perceived breaches between the syllabus and learning outcomes and provide remedies to certain problem areas

Context of the study

This action research evaluates the syllabus of listening and speaking at PYP, Najran University. It tries to evaluate whether the prescribed syllabus for listening and speaking meets the course objectives or not. As Calhoun (2002) describes action research as studying what's happening in a school, deciding if improvement in instruction is needed, examining the effects of what was tried, and then beginning the process again. This process is utilized in the following study. At the core of this process was a sincere effort to improve the ability to teach speaking and listening skills. The study provides some suggestions in the form of recommendations on how to improve the syllabus through changes in practice.

Methodology*Tools*

A survey questionnaire (containing 10 statements) was developed to gather data from the participants. The aim of the questionnaire was to measure how teachers perceived and rated the current syllabus of listening and speaking at PYP. The contents of the questionnaire were based on both listening and speaking sections, using 5-Point Likert-scales of agreement. In addition, an interview session was also conducted with the teachers to have their expert opinion and suggestions. The interview included 5 key statements on the current syllabus.

Pilot Study

To ensure the validity of the survey questionnaire, it was first piloted by 10 EFL instructors; their feedback was useful for modifying some items. The survey was also given to four Asst. Professors to examine its validity. Some items were modified as per their suggestions so as to meet the content validity.

Participants

Twenty EFL teachers from PYP were selected for this study. Participants' age ranges 28-47. Their experience of teaching of English varies between 2-20 years. Most of the participants' experience of teaching listening and speaking ranges from four years to one semester.

Procedures

The data has been collected in two phases using questionnaires and interview. The researchers circulated the questionnaire to forty participants and thirty were returned. Finally, twenty questionnaires given serious attention were selected as a sample of this study. Twenty teachers teaching listening and speaking were also interviewed. Twenty samples were selected out of 30 which were filled in with complete information. Their suggestions and opinions were taken into consideration.

Analysis of Data

The study will be in two parts: the first will contain detailed analysis and discussion on the statements of the questionnaire and the second one will be a detailed analysis and discussion on the responses of interview.

Results*Questionnaire Analysis*Table-1 *Descriptive statistics of the survey's statements and result discussion*

S. No.↓	Scales → Statements ↓	5 Strongly agree	4 Agree	3 Can't say	2 Disagree	1 Strongly disagree	M	SD
1.	The syllabus enables students to express themselves in target language at an intelligible and acceptable level	0 0%	9 45%	9 45%	2 10%	0 0%	3.35	0.67082
2.	The syllabus enables students comprehend the main idea of the audio tracks after listening to questions	1 5%	11 55%	5 25%	3 15%	0 0%	3.5	0.82717
3.	The syllabus enables students enhance vocabulary acquired through the audio tracks	0 0%	6 30%	9 45%	5 25%	0 0%	3.05	0.759155
4.	The syllabus helps students use target language, as desired, in the classroom without taking much help of their mother tongue	1 5%	3 15%	5 25%	10 50%	1 5%	2.65	0.988087
5.	The syllabus helps students comprehend English materials	2 10%	11 55%	5 25%	2 10%	0 0%	3.6	0.812728
6.	The syllabus helps students distinguish between the British and/or American accents to understand instructions in a better way	3 15%	7 35%	5 25%	4 20%	1 5%	3.35	1.136708
7.	The syllabus facilitates students to work in groups to be exposed to the target language	3 15%	6 30%	5 25%	5 25%	1 5%	3.25	1.164158
8.	The syllabus helps students make inferences while listening to the audio tracks	1 5%	9 45%	6 30%	3 15%	1 5%	3.3	0.978721
9.	The syllabus helps students develop the linguistic capability to listen and then practice the same register as their <i>lingua franca</i>	0 0%	6 30%	11 55%	3 15%	0 0%	3.15	0.67082
10.	The prescribed textbook meets out the syllabus' objectives of Listening & Speaking	2 10%	9 45%	3 15%	3 15%	3 15%	3.2	1.281447

Reed (1989) is of the opinion that Likert-type rating scale should be used to generally gather data on student's listening and speaking behaviours. Jung, Osterwalder & Wipf (2000)

support the Likert scale: “this was the only assessment instrument I found that was practical for the classroom” (Jung, Osterwalder, & Witpf, 2000: p.2). To interpret the level of means, the authors applied Siti Rahaya & Salbiah’s (1996) model of explaining means. It is summarized in

Table 2. *Score category breakdown adopted from Siti Rahaya & Salbiah (1996)*

Means	Corresponding level
1.0 - 1.80	Very low
1.81 - 2.60	Low
2.61 - 3.40	Moderate
3.41 - 4.20	High
4.21 - 5.0	Very high

The first statement in the questionnaire *The syllabus enables students to express themselves in target language at an intelligible and acceptable level*, reveals that there is no participant who felt that the course enabled students to express themselves in target language at an intelligible and acceptable level. 45% of the participants admitted to it though the same percentage (45%) of the participants did not express their opinion. 10% of the participants disagreed. The mean of the statement is 3.35 that lies in the category of ‘Moderate’ as per the breakdown adopted from the scale of *Siti Rahaya & Salbiah (1996)*.

The second statement in the questionnaire *The syllabus enables students comprehend the main idea of the audio tracks after listening to questions* displays that there are 5% of the participants who opined that the syllabus enabled them to comprehend the main idea of the audio tracks after listening to question. 55% of the participants agreed though (25%) of the participants had no idea. 15% of the participants did not accept the statement. The mean is categorized as high.

The third statement in the questionnaire *The syllabus enables students enhance vocabulary acquired through the audio tracks*, shows that no participant is of the opinion that the course assisted students to use the vocabulary acquired through the audio tracks. 30% of the participants agreed to the statement though 45 % (a significant percentage) of the participants had no opinion. 25% of the participants dissented. The mean is moderate.

The fourth statement in the questionnaire *The syllabus helps student use target language, as desired, in the classroom without taking much help of their mother tongue* exhibits that there are 5% of the participant who strongly agreed that the course encouraged students to use target language, as desired, in the classroom without taking much help of their mother tongue. 15% of the participants also admitted to it that is very negligible in comparison to 50% of the participants who disagreed to the statement. 25% had no response while 5% of the participants strongly disagreed. The mean is ranked as moderate.

The fifth statement in the questionnaire *The syllabus helps students comprehend English materials* divulges that there are 10% of the participants who strongly agreed to the statement that the

course *helped students comprehend English materials*. 55% of the participants agreed with the statement though (25%) of the participants did not express their opinion. 10% of the participants disapproved. The mean is high.

The sixth statement in the questionnaire *The syllabus helps students distinguish between the British and/or American accents to understand instructions in a better way* discloses that there are 15% of the participants who concurred that the course *helped students distinguish between the British and/or American accents to understand instructions in a better way*. 35% of the participants agreed to the statement though 25% of the participants were not sure about it and the 20% of the participants state an opinion and 5% of the participants strongly dissented. The mean is moderate.

The seventh statement in the questionnaire *The syllabus facilitates students to work in groups to be exposed to the target language*, shows that 15% of the participants stated that the course *facilitated students to work in groups to be exposed to the target language*. 30% of the participants accepted the statement and 25% of the participants had no opinion. 25% of the participants did not accept the statement and 5% of the participants were in complete disagreement. The mean is categorized as moderate.

The eighth statement in the questionnaire *The syllabus helps students make inferences while listening to the audio tracks*, unveils that 5% of the participants were in absolute agreement to the statement that the *The syllabus helps students make inferences while listening to the audio tracks*, 45% of the participants agreed while 30% of the participants did not state an opinion. 15% of the participants did not agree with the statement and 5% were in absolute disagreement. The mean falls in the category of moderate.

The ninth statement in the questionnaire *The syllabus helps students develop the linguistic capability to listen and then practice the same register as their lingua franca* reveals no participant thought that the *The syllabus helps students develop the linguistic capability to listen and then practice the same register as their lingua franca* 30% of the participants agreed with the statement though 55% (a significant percentage) of the participants disagreed. 15% of the participants do not state an opinion. There was none with complete disagreement. The mean is placed as moderate.

The tenth statement in the questionnaire *The prescribed textbook meets out the syllabus' objectives of Listening & Speaking* reveals that 10% of the participants did not agree at all with the statement that *The prescribed textbook meets out the syllabus' objectives of Listening & Speaking*. 45% of the participants agreed to it while 15% of the participants did not express their opinion. 15% of the participants did not agree with the statement and the same 15% of the participants came up with wholly disagreement. The mean is ranked as moderate.

Interview analysis

The participants responded to the following questions in the interview:

1. Teachers rate (on a scale of 1-5) the students' proficiency in Listening and Speaking
2. Mention some common learning difficulties students face during Listening and Speaking
3. Mention some pedagogical (teaching) problems teachers face during teaching of listening and speaking

4. Suggestions for improving students' general language proficiency in listening and speaking
5. Is the course designed in accordance to the learner based approach? Comment briefly

Table 3 *Results of Interview Question no. 1*

Q. 1.	Number of teachers	Students' proficiency level on 5 point likert scale
	17	3
	1	4
	2	2

As shown in Table 1, in response to the first question, 17 teachers rated the proficiency of the students as 3 on a scale of 3-5 as mentioned earlier. 1 teacher rated students as 4 and 2 other teachers rated as 2. The majority of the teachers rated students as 3s.

Table 4 *Results of Interview Question no. 2*

Q.2.	Number of participants	Some common learning difficulties students face during Listening and Speaking
	5	Students lacked motivation. Impractical listening tracks.
	6	Most of the students had poor background in listening. Students were reticent to speak in target language. Limited vocabulary.
	5	Listening tracks were not as practical as they should be. Students were not exposed to listening at an early stage. Students were too shy to speak target language.
	4	Most of the students were unable to understand American accent. Students faced difficulties in understanding stress, intonations and reductions. Students lacked motivation.

As shown in Table 4, in response to question number 2, there were varied responses but some of the responses were common. Many teachers agreed on that students lacked motivation and they were reticent to speak target language.

Table 5 *Results of Interview Question no. 3*

Q.3.	Number of participants	Pedagogical (teaching) problems teachers face during teaching of listening and speaking:
	5	Some teachers had the task of finishing the syllabus at their earliest. Teachers had no liberty to use external resources. There is no language lab. Students do not participate actively. Technical problems in the classroom related to speakers and computers. No exposure of listening and speaking outside the classroom.
	8	Students are reluctant and that makes teachers feel dissatisfied. For teachers, it is difficult to explain some words, situations and expressions. There is no language lab.

7	Some students do not know English at all and teachers do not know Arabic at all. It often results into lack of communication. No exposure of listening and speaking outside the classroom.
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As shown in Table 5, in response to question number 3, there were some common difficulties faced by the teachers. 13 teachers stated that there was no language lab and there was no exposure of listening and speaking outside the classroom.

Table 6 *Results of Interview Question no. 4*

Q.4.	Number of participants	Suggestions for improving students' general language proficiency in listening and speaking:
	4	Students should be oriented to phonetics. They must be taught some parts of phonetics before jumping to listening tracks. A placement test must be conducted before admitting students. Mother tongue should not be allowed in the classroom.
	4	The listening track should not be only audio rather it should be audio visual so that students can visualise what they listen.
	3	There must be oral exercises, seminars, debates and storytelling in order to motivate students to speak up. Expose students to situations where they have to speak target language. Mother tongue should not be allowed in the classroom.
	5	Expose students to situations where they have to speak L2
	4	Listening and speaking should be formed Mother tongue should not be allowed in the classroom.

As shown in Table 6, in response to question number 4, there were some common suggestions by the teachers. 8 teachers agreed that a language lab should be established. 11 teachers suggested that mother tongue should be banned in the classroom.

Table 7 *Results of Interview Question no. 5*

Q.5.	Number of participants	Is the course designed in accordance to the learner based approach? Comment briefly
	15	The course is learner centred.
	05	To some extent, it is learner centred.

As shown in Table 7, in response to question number 15 teachers completely agreed that the course was learner centred while the rest of five teachers accepted that the course was learner centred to some extent. It shows that textbook needs to be reviewed in order to analyse all the activities to make sure that they are learner centred.

Findings and recommendations:

Questionnaire

The analysis of the syllabus shows that most of the key elements in the syllabus fall in moderate category. As a result, the prescribed syllabus for PYP is well designed although it does not meet its objectives completely. The responses of the teachers reveal that it is better if the

syllabus is updated. There is no need for an immediate revision though this need cannot be eliminated completely. The statements of the teachers based on the key elements of syllabus, course objectives, pedagogy, etc. show their non-satisfactory response. Only some of them agree with the statements. It shows that the syllabus is not very much perfect. In order to increase the performance of the students and meet course objectives completely the syllabus needs revision.

Despite the sincere efforts made by the teachers, most of the students are not able to express themselves at an intelligible and acceptable level. Students are not very much successful in picking up English vocabulary in the classroom and then practice the same in their day-to-day life. The teachers and students should develop a common understanding on what activities should be used in the classroom and what skills they have to develop respectively. As Jung, Osterwalder & Wipf (2000: 5) are of the opinion that 'We realized that students needed lessons and activities that would introduce them to the language and terminology associated with the skills they would be expected to learn. If our goal was to enable students to transfer their knowledge and apply it to everyday speaking and listening situations, teachers and students would need a solid base of common understanding regarding the skills they were working towards.'

In order to fill these particular gaps between learning outcomes and syllabus objectives, it is recommended that the syllabus should include more task-based exercises to encourage students develop communication skills. Textbook may include some exercises based on situational settings like at the supermarket, at the post office, flight booking offices, restaurant, hotels, hospitals, etc. Students can be peered and grouped to practice these real life situations while the teacher facilitates them. It will also discourage students to use mother tongue in the classroom. Students should be injected with some daily use vocabulary and encouraged to use them. Students can also be engaged in role play activities. Teachers can assign different roles to play like doctor, patient, vendor, receptionist, etc. in order to give them real feel of the situations. Teachers can record the conversation on a video recorder and upload them on the university website for the students to watch and write a feedback on the performance of their peers by following peer evaluation method. Feedback is an effective tool to engage students in identifying the flaws in their performance. This way, students will themselves take the charge of their learning. It will help them listen to any other audio track outside the textbook and comprehend it in a better way.

It is imperative for students to become responsible for their own learning. They have to play an active role in the learning process. They need to see themselves as active members of the learning process. Students must be assigned peer evaluation so that they can learn from the mistakes of each other. Through involvement in evaluation they can see their performance more clearly. They are not victims at the mercy of the teacher's red pen. Instead, they are encouraged to realistically assess their own skills and compare them with others (Jung, Osterwalder & Wipf, 2000).

In addition, the textbook should also include listening tracks on different academic topics like counselling a student, explaining the nature of different topics related to science, arts and commerce in a simple language. It will also help them listen and comprehend English study materials on various topics.

Jung, Osterwalder & Wipf (2000: 05) state 'After teaching the skills, teachers should be regularly applying the learning to all curricular areas. In order for students to dutifully apply these skills, they must be assessed.' The teachers must assess the students on what they taught. Assessment must be a continuous part of learning process. Therefore, it is recommended that summative and formative assessments should also be considered a part of learning process. As no grades are awarded in formative assessment, it will motivate students to be more open to their subject and learning process. It will help teachers to judge the performance of their students in a better way.

Interview

In response to question 1, 17 teachers rated the proficiency level 3 of students on a scale of 3-5 that lies in the moderate category. It shows that the syllabus is doing well. The responses of the most of the teachers do not lie in the category of 'high' and 'very high' that shows there is still room for improvement in the textbook, teaching pedagogy and learning strategies. Therefore, it is advisable to review the syllabus and make amendments wherever needed in order to meet the objectives completely.

In response to question 2, the most noteworthy difficulties were that the students lacked motivation and they were too hesitant to speak. The teachers must be more open to the students and bridge the gap between the teachers and students. It is possible only when teachers are more sympathetic and concerned about students. Teachers should also take other issues into concentration like educational background of the students, socio-cultural influences etc.

In response to question 3, the most common response was that there was no language lab and there was no exposure of listening and speaking outside the classroom. It is strongly recommended that a language lab should be constructed as soon as possible. The students must also be motivated to speak English outside the classroom. For this purpose, a speaking club should be formed and students must be motivated to speak English. The teachers must greet students in English outside the classroom. The teachers need to revisit their pedagogy.

In response to question 4, there were some valuable suggestions by the teachers. It is necessary that students should be discouraged to use mother tongue in the classroom. The teachers can divide students into groups in order to motivate them to speak target language. Students should also be given input in phonology to practice certain letters and words. A placement test should be conducted before admission so that students can be classified and assigned classes according to their proficiency level. Teachers should also create situations for the students to speak English. The teachers can rely on multiple intelligence theory to achieve it.

In response to question 5, 15 teachers agreed that the course was designed on learner centred approach though five of them agreed to some extent. The course, undoubtedly, follows learner centred approach though with an exception of a few activities. It is advisable that textbook needs a revision in order to assure that all the activities are based on learner centred approach. Moreover, the teacher needs to bring some changes to their pedagogy so that learners can be involved in the business of learning as much as possible. The teachers can give some mock test to practice it. Audio visual aids should be used in the classroom in order to sensitize students.

Conclusion

The listening and speaking syllabus at PYP needs attention though not immediately. The syllabus was examined keeping in mind its aims and objectives. There is no doubt in the fact that the syllabus fulfilled some of its aims and objectives, however there were many which were either not fulfilled or partially fulfilled as the responses of teachers fall in the category of 'moderate'. It is noticeable that they do not fall in the category of 'very high' that confirms the need to go over the syllabus. The interview with the teachers helped a lot in knowing the practical and present problems of the syllabus. The interview proved that they are just satisfied with the syllabus. However, they did not speak very high of the syllabus. Therefore, it is advisable to review the course content and revise the syllabus so that the desirable aims and objectives must be fulfilled completely.

There are other factors too which influence students' performance. For example, one cannot completely ignore the socio-cultural background of the students. Students come from a very poor educational background. Usually, English starts in class 6th here. Moreover, they are not very much motivated to perform well. Most of the parents are uneducated. As a result of all these unavoidable circumstance, students lack motivation and cannot increase the level of competency. They are accustomed to speak mother tongue in the classroom. It is the first time in their academic career when they formally attend English classes.

It is also a matter of serious concern that a significant percentage of the teachers was unable to comment that shows there were problems in the assessment method of the teachers. The teachers were not given aims and objectives of the course at the start of the course as accepted by them. Therefore, it is strongly recommend that the teachers must be provided with the aims and objective at the start of the course. The teachers must also improve their assessment method. They must conduct weekly tests and quizzes in order to continuously assess students on the parameters of aims and objectives. Teachers must also be trained through workshops on how they have to assess their students in order to bring a change in assessment methods.

Researchers found that syllabus meets certain course objectives, although, the students are not able to develop communicative competence to a desired level. It has been shown in most of the responses provided by the teachers lie in the category of 'moderate' yet they cannot be categorized as 'high' or 'very high'. Teachers' responses on the present syllabus were also taken into consideration through interview sessions which also lie in the category of 'moderate'

The Listening and speaking syllabus at the preparatory year of Najran University serves its purpose but the result shows that it has not been very successful in yielding the desired learning outcomes as per the present English communicative requirements of the students. The syllabus needs a periodic revision in order to make sure that it achieves desired goals and objectives of the course.

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S. No.	Scale → Statements ↓	5 Strongly agree	4 Agree	3 Can't say	2 Disagree	1 Strongly disagree
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1.	Did the course enable students to express themselves in L2 at an intelligible and acceptable level					
2.	Did the course enable students comprehend the main idea of the audio after listening to questions					
3.	Did the course enable students use the vocabulary in their daily life acquired through the listening audio tapes					
4.	Did the course help students use target language frequently in the classroom with each other without taking the help of their mother tongue					
5.	Did the course help students to understand and comprehend English materials					
6.	Did the course help students comprehend the British/ American accent to enable them to understand their native teachers in a better way					
7.	Did the course motivate students to speak in pair and groups in order to practice target language					
8.	Did the course enable students make educative guesses while listening to the audio					
9.	Did the course help students develop the linguistic capability to listen and then practice the same register as their lingua franca					
10.	Is the textbook fully equipped to meet out the course objectives of Listening & Speaking					

Appendix - A
Survey Questionnaire

Appendix - B

Interview Questionnaire

1. Rate (on a scale of 1-5) the students' proficiency in Listening and Speaking:
.....
2. Mention some common learning difficulties students face during Listening and Speaking:
.....
3. Mention some pedagogical (teaching) problems teachers face during teaching of listening and speaking:
.....
4. Suggestions for improving students' general language proficiency in listening and speaking:
.....
5. Was the course designed on learner based approach? Comment briefly:
.....