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HURIER Model and the Listening Comprehension of Iraqi EFL Preparatory School Students

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Abstract
Listening is an important language skill, essential for both effective communication and language learning. It involves the ability to receive and understand messages during communication. Listening requires active engagement, concentration, and interpreting both verbal and non-verbal cues. This study aims to explore the impact of the HURIER model (Hearing, Understanding, Remembering, Interpreting, Evaluating, and Responding) on the listening comprehension of Iraqi students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in preparatory schools. This topic has not been explored in the Iraqi context before. The research seeks to answer the following question: Does the HURIER model significantly enhance listening comprehension at the preparatory school level? The significance of this study comes from examining the role of exposing Iraqi EFL students to authentic native speakers' speech and evaluating their comprehension. The study sample consists 82 female students from an Iraqi EFL preparatory school in Baghdad. A pre-posttest experimental design is employed, using a researcher-designed listening comprehension test. After confirming the validity and reliability of the instrument, both the control group and the experimental group participated in a listening posttest at the end of the experiment. The results show that students in the experimental group, who were taught using the HURIER model, performed significantly better than those in the control group, who were taught using the conventional method. These results highlight the benefits of incorporating the HURIER model into EFL listening instruction. Accordingly, the study recommends its adoption by EFL teachers to enhance listening comprehension of EFL students and overall English language proficiency.
Keywords: HURIER (Hearing, Understanding, Remembering, Interpreting, Evaluating, and Responding) model, Iraqi English as a foreign language preparatory school students, listening comprehension
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Introduction

Listening is a vital skill in everyday life, especially for students who spend most of their time listening to various sources like TV, radio, friends, and others. While speaking, reading, and writing are also important in learning a foreign language, Tawfeeq (2017) suggests that listening is often the first skill acquired and plays a significant role in language acquisition.

Many EFL students struggle to distinguish individual words in spoken English, especially when native speakers pronounce words quickly or when there are reductions in pronunciation (e.g., 'gonna' instead of 'going to'). This can lead to difficulties in understanding and in accurately transcribing spoken language.

T he problem of the present study comes from the views that Iraqi EFL students face many difficulties in listening and verifies in levels of listening comprehension. Unfortunately, listening often ignored as an important skill in teaching English in Iraqi schools. As a result, Iraqi EFL students are unprepared to grasp the spoken English language. Furthermore, they lack opportunities to practice because many schools do not have laboratories or sound devices that allow students to listen and practice. As a result, teaching listening skills is the most challenging task (Tawfeeq, 2017).

As well as, many teachers engage the learners directly in listening without presenting the text or activity; in this case, learners will have an inadequate level of comprehension of the spoken text, even if there are studies deal with this skill, there is a misunderstanding of teaching listening skill and how to enable the learner to be an effective listener. This misunderstanding could happen because of a lack of knowledge of the strategies and activities that focus on this skill (Hameed, 2015).

Hence, the current study attempts to examine the effectiveness of the HURIER model in developing the listening comprehension of Iraqi EFL learners.

This study aims to examine the effect of the HURIER model on the listening comprehension of Iraqi EFL preparatory school students.

The research hypothesizes that there is no statistically significant difference in mean scores between the experimental group, which receives listening comprehension using the HURIER model, and the control group, which receives listening comprehension using the conventional method (recommended by the Teachers' Guide).

This study is limited to Iraqi fourth preparatory school students (female learners) at the Directorate of Education- Baghdad –Rusafah / three during the academic year (2023- 2024). The material is taught from the prescribed textbook, '*English for Iraq,*' for the fourth preparatory academic stage.

Literature Review

This section explores the theoretical background from two perspectives. The first refers to listening comprehension, while the second focuses on the HURIER model.

Listening Comprehension

In the 1960s, some FL teaching approaches emphasized the significance of listening. Researchers like Asher, Postovsky, Krashen, and Terrell have supported a language-teaching approach centered on listening comprehension. Their works highlight the importance of prioritizing listening skills and recognizing their central role in language education (Abdalhamid, 2012).

In (1969), Total Physical Response Method is the earliest language teaching method developed by James Asher. It emphasizes the importance of listening in second language acquisition. Total Physical Response (TPR) focuses on improving listening comprehension by instructing students to mimic the actions of the teacher. Asher verified that in the Total Physical Response (TPR) method, teachers serve as facilitators, providing support through listening materials and engaging with students by giving commands. The students then illustrate their understanding of the listed information by their bodily responses. This phase is called the silent stage, in which the students do not speak and instead express their comprehension via body movement.

In 1986, the TPR approach acquired more empirical validation when LeBlanc employed the method to teach language classes at engineering and scientific schools in Canada, with the TPR group outperforming the control groups in all language skills (Vandergrift as cited in Abdalhamid, 2012).

In 1978, Postovsky emphasized the need for a silent phase in the Delayed Oral Method before the production stage in language acquisition. After comparing two groups of Russian learners, Postovsky found evidence that supported his perspective. The first group got training focused on intense oral output, while the other group was provided with auditory material for an extended period. At the end of the study, the second group showed better performance in listening and speaking skills (Abdalhamid, 2012).

In 2021, Seftiana conducted another study to explore the effectiveness of the HURIER model. The main aim of the study was to examine the impact of the HURIER model on the listening skills of third-year students at IAIN Madura University in Indonesia. The study targets third-year students of IAIN Madura University. The researcher selected the participants as an experimental group and a control group. Seftiana includes pre-posttest to assess the effect of the HURIER model. The findings indicate a noticeable impact of the HURIER model on listening skills and its significance in facilitating learning listening.

In 2024, Mat Zaid et al. conducted another study aimed at assessing students' listening skills and perceptions using the HURIER Model. Primary school students were selected, and an experimental research design was employed. The findings demonstrated that the HURIER Model effectively improved students' listening skills, proving its suitability for primary education. The components of the model positively influenced students, indicating its potential for broader use. Overall, the study provides valuable insights into developing listening skills through the HURIER Model, offering practical suggestions for educators and researchers to enhance teaching and learning strategies.

The HURIER Model

Between the 1980s and 1990s, Brownell established the HURIER model. While the exact date of its development has not been clearly mentioned, it is clear that Brownell worked on developing the model based on her observations and experiences (Verderber & Verderber, 2013).

Brownell has hypothesized the behavioral model of listening, which includes six elements: hearing, understanding, remembering, interpreting, evaluating, and responding, making the HURIER model one of the most reliable listening models for communication researchers today. She investigated which elements needed to be incorporated in the process of listening (Miura, 2014).

Brownell (2024) explained that the HURIER model comprises six interrelated listening processes; this provides a framework for developing individuals' listening skills: hearing, understanding, remembering, interpreting, evaluating, and responding.

According to Brownell (1994), successful listeners focus on the speaker, receive communications accurately, examine both emotional and content components of a message, recall the information that has been said to them, and stay nonjudgmental while hearing the speakers' point of view. The elements of the model are summarized below:

Hearing: Wrench et al. (2020) explained hearing as an action in which a person senses sound by detecting vibrations in the ear. It is a physiological activity that occurs continually. Hearing comprises three stages: receiving sound waves, interpreting sounds in the brain, and forming auditory associations. The significance of this procedure is evident, as learners can only concentrate on understanding the speakers' message when they correctly perceive what the speakers said.

Understanding*:* It is the second phase in the listening process. According to Bourdeaud'hui et al. (2018), understanding is an active process in which listeners interpret the message depending on the literal facts supplied. Understanding is the ability to grasp or decode the message conveyed by another. Decoding is when listeners seek to break down the material they have received into understandable meanings (Wrench et al., 2020).

Remembering*:* According to Eromosele (2015), remembering plays a crucial role in offering solutions for the future. Students must be able to recollect the message delivered after decoding it, or they must honestly remember the message (Wrench et al., 2020).

Interpreting: The next phase in the HURIER model is interpretation. According to Berger and Brownell (2009), interpreting involves empathetic listening, a skill that is highly valuable for learners to develop. When learners listen with empathy, they evaluate the complete communication context to gain a greater understanding of what the other person is saying. This involves paying attention not just to the text of a message but also to nonverbal cues that convey emotional importance. Empathic learners show their partners that they have been understood by responding appropriately.

Evaluating*:* it is essential to recognize that everyone evaluates information —almost everything they hear —through their perspective, which is affected by previous knowledge and biases. To be good listeners, especially in varied situations, teachers need to acknowledge and minimize bias, stereotyping, and other influencing factors. Learners should prioritize understanding the speakers' ideas before applying their perspectives (Berger & Brownell, 2009).

Responding**:** Bourdeaud'hui et al. (2018) describe the final stage of listening as responding, which involves selecting an acceptable reaction to what has been heard. In educational settings, researchers often use the term 'interactive listening' instead of responding. Interactive listening occurs in a communicative situation where the listener actively engages by responding, such as indicating understanding, seeking clarification, and negotiating meanings. Through interactive

listening, learners solve communication problems, influence the flow of conversation, and achieve specific interaction goals.

Methods

Type of Experimental Design

The present study employs a quasi-experimental design known as the nonrandomized control group. The posttest design has been chosen to achieve the aim of the study. Quasi-experiments involve assigning participants to groups, but not at random. This is a result to the researchers' inability to construct false groups for the experiment (Creswell, 2012) .Table (1) shows the experimental design used in the present study:

Table 1. *The Experimental Design*

Group	Test	Treatment	Test
Experimental	Pre-test	HURIER model	**Posttest**
Control	Pre-test	Conventional method	**Posttest**

Population and Sample Selection

The population of the study is the fourth preparatory school students in the Baghdad Governorate. Al – Fadeelah Secondary School for Girls was selected for this study, with students from the scientific branch serving as the study sample. Section (A) was selected at random to represent the control group, while Section (B) was assigned as the experimental group. Section (A) includes (42) learners, and section (B) includes (42) learners.

Instrument of the Study

A listening comprehension test was constructed to gather data regarding the variables of the study. The researcher created an objective test to evaluate learners' listening comprehension, designing two versions: a pre-test and a posttest. Each version included a mix of multiple-choice questions, matching, and true-false questions. The posttest, comprising three questions, was administered to the experimental and the control groups. During the posttest, students listened to various conversations and then answered questions based on what they heard. These conversations were from the British Council and the TOEFL listening section. The posttest was conducted after the experiment to measure the effect of the HURIER model on listening comprehension of Iraqi EFL students.

Implementation of the Experiment

The researcher conducts the experiment five days a week. It began on February 18th, 2024, during the school year 2023-2024, and ended on April 28th, 2024. The researcher provides daily lessons to both groups. During this time, the experimental group got instruction to improve their listening skills using the HURIER model, while the control group did not receive any treatment and listening skills were taught to them using conventional methods. The researcher taught both groups equally during the week.

Validity of the Test

Validity is the first aspect to be verified when constructing any instrument. It refers to how correctly a method or instrument measures what it aims to measure (Verma, as cited in Musa, 2017). Therefore, it is crucial to gather evidence to ensure that a particular tool truly measures what it is supposed to measure (Musa, 2017). To determine the face validity of the study instrument bhand the appropriateness of the scoring system, the instrument was evaluated by 12 jury members, all experts in the field of ELT from various Iraqi institutions.

Pilot Administration of the Posttest

Creswell (2012) described pilot administration as a procedure where a researcher gives the instrument to a small group of participants and modifies depending on their response. This process helps ensure that the sample individuals can complete the test and understand the questions. Pilot studies assess the effectiveness and suitability of the instruments and research methodologies employed to investigate a specific issue (Kashkool & Krebt, 2023).

Thus, the researcher conducted the pilot administration on April 7th, 2024. The pilot administration was applied to a group of 100 Iraqi EFL fourth preparatory school students from the same school (sections C and D) who were excluded from the sample of the study.

Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability is the constancy of scores when measuring the same individuals over time or across different tests (Khalil, 2018). According to Brown & Abeywickrama (2021), a reliable test is consistent and dependable. If the same test is administered again to the same or a comparable group of students on two occasions, it should produce consistent results.

Items- Total Correlation of the Test

To identify the correlation between each test component and the total score, the researcher used the Point-Biserial correlation coefficient to measure the relationship between the score of each item and the total test score. The findings revealed that all test items were statistically significant when compared to the critical correlation value of (0.196) at a significance level of (0.05) and a degree of freedom of (98). Table (2) illustrates this:

Table 2. *Correlation Coefficient Values of all Components in the Test*

Item	Correlation Coefficient Values	Item	Correlation Coefficient Values	Item	Correlation Coefficient Values
1	0,374	6	0,425	11	0,453
2	0,529	7	0,324	12	0,355
3	0,356	8	0,526	13	0,510
4	0,3	9	0,438	14	0,486
5	0,49	10	0,322	15	0,465

Results

To achieve the aim of this study and to verify its hypothesis, appropriate statistical methods were employed, leading to the following results:

Results for the Null Hypothesis

The null hypothesis of the study states that 'there are no statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level between the mean scores of the experimental group students, instructed using the HURIER model, and the mean scores of the control group students, taught through conventional methods, on the listening comprehension posttest.' To verify this hypothesis, the researcher conducted specific procedures to test the hypothesis. To determine the difference between the groups, the researcher employed the t-test for two independent samples to examine the difference in listening comprehension between the research groups, as shown in Table (3).

Table 3. *Mean Score, Standard Deviation, and T-Test Results in the posttest.*

Group	No.	Mean	SD	Calculated T- value	Tabulated T -value	d.f.	Level of significance
Experimental	41	12.450	2.407	4.177	2.00	80	Not significant at the (0.05) level
Control	41	10.024	2.824				

As illustrated in Table (3), the t-test results show that the calculated t-value of (4.177) is greater than the tabulated value of (2.00) at the (0.05) significance level with (80) degrees of freedom. It indicates a statistically significant difference between the two groups (experimental and control) on the listening comprehension posttest, supporting the experimental group. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no difference between the two groups, is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis, which indicates a difference between the groups in listening comprehension, is accepted. The difference favors the experimental group students.

Effect Size

According to Creswell (2012), effect size is a technique used to evaluate the practical significance of the results in terms of group differences or the relationship between variables in the research. To determine the effect size using ETA-squared (N^2), the researcher applied the ETA-squared formula to assess how much the observed differences were attributed to the independent variable of the study. After calculating the ETA-squared value, the researcher compared it with the established standards as in Table (4)

Table 4. *The Established Standards for Determining the Effect Size.*

Method Used	Effect size		
	Small	Medium	Large
N2	0.01	0.06	0.14

The Eta-squared (N^2) value, which represents the effect size of the teaching model on the LC variable, has been calculated. Table (5) shows the N^2 value and the magnitude of the effect.

Table 5. *The N2 Value and the Effect Size of the Teaching Model on LC:*

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Computed T-Value	N^2 Value	Effect Size
HURIER Model	LC	4.177	0.18	Large

After applying the effect size formula, the results showed how the teaching model influenced the listening comprehension of the students in the experimental group. The effect size of the model was significant, as the N^2 value of (0.18) exceeded the established standard. This finding demonstrates the impact of the teaching model on the listening comprehension of the experimental group students.

Discussion

The data analysis indicated that the experimental group had higher listening comprehension than the control group in the post-test. This improvement is credited to the HURIER model, which helped students enhance their listening skills through systematically structured stages that required them to understand, recall, remember, interpret, evaluate, and respond in various ways. The findings of the current study support the findings of Seftiana (2021) and Mat Zaid et al. (2024). All these studies have similar results, highlighting the significant impact of the HURIER model on the listening comprehension of Iraqi EFL students.

Conclusion

The findings of the current study indicate that the HURIER model positively affects the listening performance of Iraqi EFL students. Additionally, the model enhances students' motivation by engaging them with supplementary audio materials relevant to their daily lives, such as discussions about favorite activities, trips to the cinema, and cultural events like Ramadan and the Eid festival. Furthermore, implementing this model transforms listening from a simple activity into a powerful and effective learning tool, making the process more engaging and beneficial for students.

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Appendix A

Listening Comprehension Posttest (15 marks)

Q1- Direction: You will hear brief conversations between two persons. After each conversation, you will listen to a question about the conversation. The teacher will not repeat the conversation and the question. After listening, read the four possible answers and select the correct one**.** (5 marks)

1- a. She will help fix the car.
b. She will take the car to a gas station
c. She will give the man a ride.
d. She will be interested in helping.

2- a. He is looking forward to spring.
b. He is excited about the lovely day.
c. He prefers cold weather.
d. He does not like the current weather.

3- a. He is always found at the library.
b. He is not a good student.
c. He does not like biology.
d. He is studying all the time

4- a. He does not need food
b. He prefers eating out to grocery shopping.
c. He does not mind going out with her later.
d. He wants her to go alone.

5- a. She does not want any help.
b. The piano is too heavy to move around alone
c. She can move the piano on her own.
d. It would be nice if someone could help with the move

Q2/ Directions: Listen to a teacher giving information about a new course. You will hear the audio twice, then choose the correct answer for questions 1 - 4 below. Mark your answers on the answer sheet provided. (4 marks)

1. The teacher's name is -------.
a. Lindsay White. b. Lindsay Black
c. Linda Black. d. Lindsay Bright

2. The class will be ------on the first floor.
a. Room 30 b. Room 33
c. Room 3 d. Room 13

3. The class will meet --------.
a. Twice a week. b. Three times.
c. Four times. d. Once a week.
4. The course will begin on ----------.
a. March 6th b. March 13th
c. March 20th d. May 20th

Q3/ Direction: Listen to the two speakers discussing their favorite things. You will hear the audio twice. Mark your answers on the answer sheet provided.

A- Match the following sentences from (1–3) to the next column (a–d) (3 marks)

1------ The boy's favorite thing is
2------ The boy describes his favorite thing.
3------ The girl describes her favorite thing.

a. being affectionate and noisy
b. the beautiful little cat.
c. as small and light
d. the new tablet

B - Circle the correct answer, whether it is **true** or **false.** (3 marks)

1- The boy's mum says he is addicted to his favorite thing. True False
2- The speaker has had the cat since it was four years old. True False
3- The cat makes a lot of noise for a tiny thing. True False