



ELT Students' Perceptions and Attitudes about the Online Listening Courses During the Covid-19 Period

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Article Info

ABSTRACT

Article Type:

Research Article

Received:

19/07/2022

Accepted:

19/09/2022

The outbreak of Covid-19 changed many aspects of people's lives all over the world, including the type of education and learning/teaching styles. Transferring from face-to-face education to distance education brought some difficulties and challenges for both teachers and students. Among those observed challenges and problems, one of the most important ones was related to distance listening courses at an ELT department of a state university in Turkey. In the literature, no related or similar studies to discover the perceptions and attitudes of ELT students in the Turkish context about online listening courses were found. Therefore, this research sought to discover the 2nd grade ELT students' perceptions about the distance listening courses carried out throughout the Covid-19 period focusing on whether students had encountered any challenges. To collect data, a 30-item Likert-type questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were used. Randomly selected students (12) and listening course teachers (4) were interviewed to reinforce the findings of the study. Findings put forward that a great majority of the participants and instructors had negative perceptions and attitudes about online listening courses. The results of this research will be of benefit to university instructors and syllabus designers in taking future urgent decisions and measures regarding the implementation of distance learning and teaching programs for students from different backgrounds.

Keywords: ELT Students, Perception, Attitude, Online Learning, Listening

Cite this article: Şenel, M. (2023). ELT Students' Perceptions and Attitudes about the Online Listening Courses During the Covid-19 Period. *Journal of Modern Research in English Language Studies*, 10(1), 133-159.

DOI: 10.30479/jmrels.2022.17575.2099

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Publisher: Imam Khomeini International University

1. Introduction

By spreading worldwide, Covid-19 caused striking changes affecting human beings' lifestyles, psychological moods, business lives, and educational systems. The Covid-19 pandemic forced countries to build up new opportunities to upgrade their educational mode and transfer their attention to emerging technologies (Bansal, 2020; Setiawan, 2020; Toquero, 2020). In line with this progress, the status of teaching and learning turned into a new form, namely online or distance learning (Lockee, 2021). Therefore, the rapid transition to remote learning in higher education forced institutions and governments to take immediate precautions. Education systems around the world found themselves setting goals for their teachers and students to adapt to distance teaching swiftly, safely, and successfully (Liguori & Winkler, 2020). Turkey was among one of the quickest countries to transfer distance learning. To mitigate the unwanted effects of Covid-19, an urgent plan was implemented by the Higher Educational Council and the Ministry of National Education to continue undisruptive education. Throughout this period, all students in Turkey participated in distance courses, followed their instructors' lectures and they had to use the materials available to them during distance learning.

As known, distance learning brought both positive and negative sides with it. Besides its flexibility for students and instructors (e.g., Ritonga et al., 2020), distance learning also caused some problems which made students demotivated, for instance, the lousy and unavailability of internet connection (e.g., Agung et al., 2020) feeling under stress, unable to follow their instructor's explanations and access or understand distance listening materials (e.g., Aldina et al., 2020; Efriana, 2021; Nurkhamidah, 2021), etc. Following the courses, the usability of the materials and the activities may not be so satisfactory for some courses, especially for listening and speaking skills. In this context, there is a relationship between the challenges and difficulties in speaking in the target language and the type of listening activities and the characteristics of hearers (Brunfaut & Révész, 2015). Furthermore, listening is a bit complex process and necessitates a stress-free environment because any kind of distortion or interruption may cause students to lose their comprehension and motivation. Some learning, including listening, may require direct interaction (Moorhouse, 2020).

Listening should be a prerequisite skill. It requires much more attention and concentration when it is compared to the other language skills (namely speaking, reading, and writing). As stated by Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011), listening is an important skill to provide interaction and communication with people. On the one hand, since listening is considered one of the difficult skills in English, especially for non-native speakers of

English, it may not be so easy to make such kind of distance learning for listening courses without making any preparation because it may bring lots of challenges and problems to be taken into consideration (Susilowati, 2020). Therefore, the listening courses should be done through some processes and in each process, students should be guided and directed by the teacher to manage well each difficulty they may face during the class. Unfortunately, this ideal condition cannot be obtained by the students since it is not possible to have face-to-face learning activities during the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, it is inevitable that some challenges appear in listening classes.

In the literature, there was scary research that could be found about ELT students' perceptions, attitudes and thoughts about distance listening courses during the pandemic, and the participants who took part in those research were generally students or teachers from either high schools or different departments of the universities, not from ELT departments, especially in the Turkish context. Therefore, the ELT students' perceptions about the distance listening courses should be determined to unearth whether they were satisfied or faced the challenges of this new learning system. The results of this research are expected to fill in the gap and enlighten students, instructors, curriculum designers, materials developers, administrators and coursebook publishers. In the light of these explanations, this study set out to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of the participants about lecturers?
2. What are the perceptions of the participants about online listening courses?
3. What problems (challenges) do the participants encounter during distance listening courses?
4. What are the attitudes of the participants toward online listening courses?

2. Literature Review

Although the history of distance learning dates back to the 19th century, it was officially presented in the 1960s at Tübingen University (Moore & Diehl, 2019) and in time it evolved into online learning (Siemens et al., 2015). When the first fully online courses started in 1981, it was considered a new model of education because of its potential to influence the delivery of education at all levels (Harasim, 2000). When the theoretical background of online (distance) learning and teaching were searched, several studies conducted to enlighten the influence and effect of online learning on EFL learners were found. For instance, reading skills (Bataineh & Mayyas, 2017; Ghazizadeh & Fatemipour, 2017; Shang & Chen, 2018; Tseng, 2010); writing skills (Ahmadi & Marandi, 2014; Ebadi & Rahimi, 2017; Fathi &

Rahimi, 2020; Ghahari & Ameri-Golestan, 2013; Hosseinpour et al., 2019; Marandi & Nami, 2012; Miyazoe & Anderson, 2010; Shams-Abadi et al., 2015); speaking skills (Baniabdelrahman, 2013; Hamouda, 2020; Jalaluddin, 2016; Wulandari, 2019); listening skills (Al-Qasim & Al-Fadda, 2013; Pei & Suwanthep, 2019; Roth & Suppasetsee, 2016).

On the one hand, when relevant literature was searched after the pandemic outbreak, it was observed that many studies were conducted on distance learning during the Covid-19 period. A great majority of those studies dealt with students' and teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward distance education (e.g. Erarslan & Topkaya, 2017; Rahmawati, 2016; Uzorka & Makeri, 2020), the use and benefits of technological tools (e.g. Al-Zumor et al., 2013; Holtman, 2009; Milonm & Hasanand Ipban, 2017; Naqvi & Zehra, 2021; Pozzobon, 2008) merits and demerits of distance education (e.g. Akcil & Baştaş, 2020; Deli Girik Allo, 2020; Hendrawaty et al., 2021), opportunities of distance education for students and teachers (e.g. Alhumaid et al., 2020; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020; Yılmaz İnce et al., 2020), common problems such as poor internet connection and financial problems (Agung et. al. 2020; Famularsih, 2020; Gómez & Uzín, 2022; Rahman, 2020; Slimi, 2020), during the pandemic period.

Yet, studies related to the EFL/ESL students' perceptions and thoughts about distance listening courses and the challenges they encountered were highly limited. For example, Nurani and Widiati (2021) found that English undergraduate students at a private university had generally positive attitudes toward distance listening courses but they also emphasized several difficulties. In line with this study, Aldina et al., (2020) revealed some problems with virtual learning and listening skills related to less understanding and less concentration. In another study, it was found that during the Covid-19 period, most EFL learners faced problems in distance listening classes because of some physical and other barriers and limited resources (Akhter, 2020). In Rifiyanti's study (2020), 36% of the EFL participants perceived that listening skill was the most difficult to learn in distance English classes. A similar study focused on the utilization of distance learning applications to clarify whether they will be effective or not. Results reported that students improved their skills except listening and speaking because of limited challenges in learning tasks (Famularsih, 2020). In their article, Astuti and Anjarwati (2021) revealed that in online listening classes, the type of materials was important because they can be used during online classes by considering both students' and instructors' internet access.

In order to assess the ESL students' distance listening proficiency, Esnara (2021) conducted a study and the findings illuminated that participants were disruptive and confused in some listening items. Susilowati

(2020) in her article, reported inappropriate technological devices, systems, methods and strategies among some challenges of distance listening courses. In one study, the participants found the quality of online learning ineffective, declaring the importance of direct guidance for both listening and speaking skills (Ritonga et al., 2021). One more research conveyed by Zebua (2020) elucidated that participants had positive, motivated and cooperative toward online listening. According to the findings of Rui'yah et al. (2021), it was revealed that ELT students found online listening enjoyable, practical and flexible. Tong's study (2022), as one more example to determine the challenges of listening skills amid Covid-19, showed that participants could not prove whether they had any difficulties or challenges with learning listening skills.

Most of the studies handled in this section generally discussed either the positive or negative effects of online learning and teaching on EFL or ESL students through the perspective of language skills. Among those language skills, perceptions and attitudes of ELT learners at the faculties of education about listening skills and courses in the Turkish context were not dealt with much. Another reason why online listening classes were handled as research in this article was that listening was generally applied in quiet classroom settings in Turkey since it required more attention and concentration than the other skills. Hence, it is hoped that this research will fill this gap in the learning and teaching of listening skills throughout the pandemic period depending on the view of learners and teachers.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

Seventy-four students (2nd grade) and 4 instructors teaching listening courses at an ELT department at a state university took part in this study. Students were mostly females ($n = 52, 70.3\%$; $m = 22, 29.7\%$) and between the ages of 20-22. Out of four teachers, three of them were female and one teacher was male. All teachers were over 35 years old. The reason for studying with only 2nd grade students was that the listening course took place in the 1st grade curriculum and those students who had fresh opinions about the distance listening course had experienced distance education the previous year before shifting to face-to-face education at the beginning of the 2021-2022 academic year.

3.2. Instruments

Data collection instruments were a 30-item Likert-type questionnaire and a semi-structured interview with three questions. The reason why a questionnaire was used for this research was its reliability and being a swift method to collect information from a large number of participants in an effective and timely manner (Bartram, 2019) and a widely used instrument

for gathering survey information and data (Wilson & McLean, 1994). A semi-structured interview was also administered to eliminate the subjectivity of the findings gathered from the questionnaire (Adams, 2005; Morse & Field, 1995) and it was thought as a suitable and relevant instrument to obtain data on students' experiences and challenges they encountered

3.2.1. Instrument 1

For gathering data, quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. Quantitative data were obtained by administering 30 items with a 5-point Likert type questionnaire (strongly disagree: 1, disagree: 2, undecided: 3, agree: 4, strongly agree: 5). The questionnaire had four subdomains: participants' perceptions about the lecturer(s) (1-8), participants' perceptions about the online listening courses (9-14), participants' perceptions about the problems (challenges) of the online listening courses (15-22), and participants' general perceptions (attitudes) about the online listening courses (23-30). The questionnaire implemented for this research was adapted from Al-Shamsi et al.'s (2020) study. A group of instructors with Ph.D. degrees from the "Foreign Languages Teaching", "Guiding and Psychological Counselling" and "Computer Education and Instructional Technologies" departments was invited to check the validity of the questionnaire and express their opinions on the clarity and appropriacy of each item. Regarding the experts' suggestions and comments, necessary adjustments were applied. The adapted, revised and modified form of the questionnaire was put into final form. The final form of the questionnaire was applied to 21 students having similarities to the target group to ensure its validity and reliability, make it more comprehensible and appropriate for the Turkish context, and clarify the use of online listening courses for ELT university students.

The Cronbach alpha coefficient was found as 0.82. The questionnaire was shared with participants at the faculty in their spare time with their instructors' permission. They were wanted to rate their answers on a 5-item questionnaire among five options (strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, or strongly agree). They were also explained that their answers would only be used for that research and would not be shared by anyone.

3.2.2. Instrument 2

To maximize the reliability of the data gathered by the questionnaire and certify the results, a semi-structured interview was applied for the twelve volunteer students and four listening course teachers. Participants were asked to express their thoughts and opinions freely and frankly by completing the three open-ended questions. They were all invited to meet at the faculty library in their spare time and given fifteen minutes to complete the interview

questions. Only the responses that directly and clearly reflected the appropriate views of the participants were listed and shared here.

3.3. Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed by the SPSS (version 26) statistical package program. Positive items were scored from 5 to 1, while negative items were scored from 1 to 5. For the analysis of the qualitative data, a semi-structured interview with three questions was asked for both students and instructors. Responses of the participants were transcribed, filtered and categorized under three headlines regarding the interview questions. The most remarkable and striking answers were chosen and listed by the researcher. Then, the list was asked to five instructors at the ELT department to finalize. Regarding the suggestions of the instructors, the final list of the questionnaire was given and commented in the results section.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

To check whether the data were distributed normally or not, the normality test was applied and the results put forward that the data were not distracted normally ($p < .05$).

Table 1

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	f	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
sum1	,130	74	,004	,958	74	,015
sum2	,203	74	,000	,906	74	,000
sum3	,164	74	,000	,951	74	,006
sum4	,160	74	,000	,932	74	,001

a Lilliefors Significance Correction

To understand and unearth the perceptions of the participants about online listening courses in terms of gender differences, the responses of the students given for four subdimensions of the questionnaire were tabulated here. In response to the first and the second research questions of the study, tables 2 and 3 were evaluated. As observed in table 2, participants' perceptions about the lecturers were generally negative (item 1: $f = 78\%$, $m = 22\%$; item 2: $f = 66\%$, $m = 34\%$; item 3: $f = 70.2\%$, $m = 29.8$; item 4: $f = 66\%$, $m = 34\%$; item 5: $f = 69.6\%$, $m = 30.4\%$; item 6: $f = 67.5\%$, $m = 32.5\%$; item 7: $f = 77.1\%$, $m = 22.9\%$; item 8: $f = 67.5\%$, $m = 32.5\%$). Some reasons for the dissatisfaction of the students with their listening course instructors may be explained as their instructors' having no prior experience with online teaching and not being aware of how they will manage online courses

effectively. That is to say, since Covid-19 suddenly outbreaked, most of the teachers were caught unprepared for online teaching.

Table 3 illuminates the perceptions of the participants towards online listening courses. In line with the findings in Table 2, it has been seen that a great majority of the participants were not satisfied with the functions and content of online listening courses (item 9: f = 69.8%, m = 30.2%; item 10: f = 70.9%, m = 29.1%; item 11: f = 73.5%, m = 26.5%; item 12: f = 83.3%, m = 16.7%; item 13: f = 74.4%, m = 25.6%; item 14: f = 66.7%, m = 33.3%). They either disagreed or were undecided about online listening courses, and none of the participants declared any satisfaction with online learning. Listening, as a receptive skill, requires more attention and concentration, and it may not be possible to create such an environment to improve students' listening skills through online courses.

Table2
Participants' Total Perceptions about the Lecturer(s)

Subdimension 1	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
During the online listening course(s), the instructor provided online discussion blogs, chats, etc.		55.4%	23%	21.6%	
The lecturer provided all materials related to the online listening		63.5%	27%	9.5%	
During the online listening course(s), the instructor always gave feedback about the materials in every lecture		63.5%		36.5%	
During the online listening course(s), the instructor explained the materials through an online platform or application before giving the tasks		67.6%		32.4%	
During the online listening course(s), the instructor was friendly and could easily be reached when any help was needed.		31.1%	39.2%	29.7%	
During the online listening course(s), the instructor always provided virtual meeting, which was easy to join.		54.1%	28.4%	17.6%	
During the online listening course(s), the instructor provided sufficient time to listen to the recordings.		47.3%	36.5%	16.2%	
During the online listening course(s), the instructor allowed us to download listening materials or recordings in every lecture.		54.1%		5.9%	

Table3*Participants' total perceptions about the online listening courses*

Subdimension 2		strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
	Online listening course(s) promoted my wish to learn.		71.6%	28.4%		
0	Online listening course(s) met my expectations to improve my listening skills.		74.3%	25.7%		
1	Online listening course(s) promoted my critical thinking skill		66.2%	33.8%		
2	During the online listening course(s), I could notify the subject or material of the day clearly		24.3%	75.7%		
3	During the online listening course(s), I could understand the listening material thoroughly.		58.1%	41.9%		
4	During the online listening course(s), I had lots of opportunities to contact other students and my classmates.		81.1%	18.9%		

For the third research question of the study, responses of the participants given to items between 15 and 22 (Table 4) reflected the problems (challenges) that they faced in online listening courses. Of course, those are not the whole challenges that occurred during online learning, but at least they might be accepted as prominent to give some idea to the readers. The most striking challenges reported by the participants were: not being able to focus on listening ($f = 76.7\%$, $m = 23.3\%$), having difficulties understanding the online listening materials ($f = 76.2\%$, $m = 23.8\%$), insufficient Internet quota ($f = 69.4\%$, $m = 30.6\%$), technical problems ($f = 74.5\%$, $m = 25.5\%$), and so on.

The last seven items of the questionnaire (Table 5), for the fourth research question of the study, were to unearth the participants' general and overall views about the online listening courses, and the findings showed that a great majority of the participants had negative attitudes and perceptions toward both online listening courses and the materials used. They preferred face-to-face education rather than online education ($f = 67.9\%$, $m = 32.1\%$). They generally disagreed on the benefits of online listening courses ($f = 64.7\%$, $m = 35.3\%$), joining online lessons without interruption ($f = 76.8\%$, $m = 23.2\%$), getting sufficient enough Internet quota from their university ($f = 80.4\%$, $m = 19.6\%$), etc.

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Table 4

Participants' Total Perceptions about the Problems (Challenges) of The Online Listening Courses

Subdimension 3	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
5 During the online listening course(s), I could not concentrate on learning or listening to the materials.	9.5%	32.4%	58.1%		
6 Internet quota for education from the government or my university could not be used optimally.	67.6%	32.4%			
7 During the online listening course(s), I often felt annoyed.		10.8%	59.5%	29.7%	
8 During the online listening course(s), I often had Internet connection problems.	54.1%		28.4%	17.6%	
9 I frequently perceived the challenges of online listening course(s).			58.1%	41.9%	
0 During the online listening course(s), I had more problems perceiving the online listening materials.	43.2%		56.8%		
1 During the online listening course(s), technical problems (e.g., power cut, running out of battery, etc.) occurred.	74.3%		25.7%		
2 Online listening course(s) spent much of my Internet quota.			66.2%	33.8%	

Table 5*Participants' Total General Attitudes About the Online Listening Courses*

	Subdimension 4	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
23	I could reopen or repeat the materials or recordings whenever I wanted.				73%	27%
24	Listening materials or recordings could be evaluated quickly.			37.8%	62.2%	
25	I perceived the merits of online listening course(s).	68.9%	31.1%			
26	I got the Internet quota from the government and my university.	62.2%	37.8%			
27	I preferred to attend online listening courses than offline (face-to-face).	75.7%	24.3%			
28	I felt more comfortable attending the online listening course(s) than offline (face-to-face).			55.4%	44.6%	
29	I could follow the online listening course(s) consistently without disconnection.	75.7%	24.3%			
30	I could comprehend better if I joined online listening course(s) than offline (face-to-face).	70.3%	29.7%			

In addition to the frequency analyses of the questionnaire, to test whether there is a statistically significant difference between female and male participants by looking at their sum scores of the questionnaire, independent samples t-test was applied. Table 6 elucidates the results of the analyses obtained from the sum scores of the subdimensions of the scale. It displays a statistically significant difference at SD 3 and SD 4 subdimensions in favor of female participants. SD-1 [t (72) = .156, p = .877, p > .05]; SD-2 [t (72) = -.911, p = .366, p > .05]; SD-3 [t (72) = -2.247, p = .017, p < .05]; SD-4 [t (72) = -2.340, p = .022, p < .05].

Table 6
Participants' Sum Scores

Sub dimensions	gender	<i>N</i>	\bar{x}	Std.m	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
SD 1	female	52	2.72	.407	72	.156	.877
	male	22	2.70	.445			
SD 2	female	52	2.36	.179	72	-.911	.366
	male	22	2.40	.142			
SD 3	female	52	3.35	.236	72	-2.247	.017
	male	22	3.51	.306			
SD 4	female	52	2.82	.172	72	-2.340	.022
	male	22	2.92	.147			

Moreover, to eliminate the subjectivity of the results, a qualitative method with a semi-structured interview was implemented. Randomly selected twelve students and four listening course instructors were invited and interviewed with their permission. The following questions were asked, and their responses were categorized.

1. Did you have any experience in online learning/teaching before the Covid-19 period? If yes, please explain.
2. Did you have any problems/challenges with online listening courses during the Covid-19 period? If yes, please give examples.
3. What were your general perceptions about online listening courses throughout the pandemic process?

Excerpts of the participants that directly and clearly reflected their perceptions and attitudes were selected as examples. Some are as follows:

1. Selected responses for the first interview question

S2(F): Yes, I had taken some online courses to improve my listening and pronunciation, but most of them required payment to complete the whole course, so I did not continue for a long time.

S4(F): Our teachers at the high school recommended us to follow some interactive vocabulary and speaking internet sites. I tried some of them approximately for two months, but I couldn't get any benefit.

S9(F): I sometimes tried to follow some speaking courses provided by some foreign universities, but because of the limited internet quota and fees, I had to give up.

T1(F): I experienced three-month online teaching with two elementary students and it was entertaining for me. But throughout the pandemic period, online teaching was not so entertaining and satisfactory for me..

T3(M): Unfortunately, I did not have any online teaching experience before.

T4(F): I did not give any online teaching, but I joined several online discussion programs and meetings.

2. Selected responses for the second interview question

S1(F): Because I did not have any previous online learning experience, I had really serious problems with my courses. I tried to manage my courses, but I frankly say that listening courses were really terrible for me. Slow speed internet connection and high fees, our instructors' lack of online teaching experiences and giving feedback, distortion of voice, lack of motivation...

S5(M): I also had problems with listening at my high school while we had face-to-face learning; therefore, I am not expected to be successful in online listening courses. Since I'm not too fond of listening courses, I become demotivated and frustrated. I do not understand, concentrate and follow the listening courses. Another problem for me was limited course hours because some listening texts were too long to listen to.

S7(F): The sound clarity was not so good, so I couldn't understand most of the listening recordings. This situation increased my stress and anxiety....at the same time some recordings were too long and complex. Sometimes I forgot the beginning parts of the listening texts...

S8(M): I tried to join online courses with my mobile phone. My internet quota ran out in a short while. As known, the listening course requires much more attention and concentration to comprehend the texts and do the activities. Still, it may not be possible to achieve those aims with online sessions because eye contact is essential for me to become motivated and be successful in listening. Additionally, I was not satisfied with the classroom management of my teacher...

T2(F): I have to reprimand students often because they sometimes talk when learning takes place, which reduces learning time, and I cannot measure student understanding...It was highly difficult for me to make online exams and evaluate my students' progress.

T1(F): The most important problem for me was to decide on a suitable teaching method...also preparing necessary technological devices and online materials were very difficult...

T3(M): Since I did not have any experience with online teaching, the pandemic period tired me. It was not so easy for me to adapt to online courses and conduct the lessons. I sometimes had problems with my internet connection and sharing the documents with my students.... Preparation was also very time consuming...

3. Selected responses for the third interview question

S3(M): Online listening classes were very artificial and not efficient. I often had interaction problems with my teacher...I found it very difficult to understand the listening texts...some included unfamiliar vocabulary...Furthermore, eye fatigue due to a long time staring at my computer...face-to-face learning was better than online listening classes.

S7(M): Since I had previous experience with online listening, I can say I did not have much difficulty in my online listening lesson...

S8(F): I thought I didn't learn anything and improve my listening because I did not concentrate on the courses; therefore, I couldn't follow the listening materials because most of them were full of difficult words and were uninteresting, ineffective and unpleasant...

T1(F): I experienced that online listening was not so effective for my students and me... Conducting the lessons and managing the students were highly difficult.... I think that online courses can only be applied to support face-to-face teaching and it could be more effective with the use of relevant listening content, teaching approaches and teaching aids.

T2(F): I thought I didn't provide sufficient guidance to my students when I compared it to face-to-face classes. Additionally, I often felt that I was speaking in vain because I wasn't sure whether my students were really online or not...

T4(F): I think we were caught unprepared for online lessons, so the online listening lessons were not very productive for me. I noticed that I had insufficient know-how about using technology. At the same time, similar complaints were made to us by my students.

To evaluate the general experiences of both students and instructors, the third interview question was asked to the interviewers. Students opined that online listening courses did not make any contribution to improving their listening skills. On the one hand, instructors revealed their problems as insufficient guidance, unproductive courses, and having been caught unprepared for online teaching.

5. Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the ELT students' attitudes, preferences and experiences about online listening courses at a state university in Turkey. Like other skills, listening was never experienced in online settings beforehand. Listening is a process that includes not only sounds and noises but also identifying, analyzing, comprehending, and interpreting spoken language. Learning to listen is a complex process and students need to feel at ease. Therefore, the students' perceptions about the online listening courses should be clarified whether they perceived the merits or the demerits of this new learning system.

The findings gathered as a result of the quantitative analysis revealed a general dissatisfaction of the participants with online listening courses and the average total of students' difficulties was higher than the students' perceived merits. Depending on the answers of the participants for the questionnaire, some of the leading difficulties of online listening courses were listed here: e.g., not having healthy interaction with their classmates and sometimes their instructors (e.g. Coman et al., 2020; Faize & Nawaz, 2020), inability to improve the listening abilities of the participants, not increasing their desire to learn and feeling comfort (e.g. Dhawan, 2020), limited internet quota, interruption in the internet connection (e.g. Almahasees et al., 2021; Zalat et al., 2021), lack of face-to-face learning (e.g. Aguilera-Hermida, 2020) , having negative attitudes and perceptions toward both online listening courses and the materials used (e.g. Alhamami, 2017; Hussein et al., 2020; etc).

When the responses of the participants and the instructors for the first interview question were examined, students (S2, S4, and S9) generally had online learning experiences (e.g., Mok et al., 2021; Yan et al., 2021). According to the perspectives of the teachers, while T3 had no previous online teaching experience, T2 reported that she had an enjoyable and positive online teaching experience and T4 stated that she only joined online conferences as an online experience. In line with the answers of the teachers, similarities were observed with the studies conducted by Marek et al. (2021) and Nikolopoulou (2022).

Regarding the answers given to the second interview question, it can be concluded that respondents generally had common challenges. From the point of view of the students, some striking challenges can be exemplified as slow internet connection and high fees, lack of concentration and feedback, length of the listening materials, unable to understand listening audios, etc. These findings reveal similarities with the findings of the research done by Aisyah and Wicaksono (2020), Marek et al. (2021), Naim Rahim and

Sandaran Chandran (2021), Niemi and Kousa (2020), Nurkhamidah (2021), and Suryaman et al. (2020).

For teachers, difficulty in adapting to online teaching, inability to conduct online exams, not giving successful assessments, deciding on the appropriate materials, problems with classroom management, time-consuming process, etc. were among the common problems. etc. The findings are consistent with the findings of the studies conducted by Abdou and Lahmer (2020), Abduh (2021), Almazova et al. (2020), Efriana (2021), Susilowati (2020), and Thuy (2021).

To evaluate the general experiences of both students and instructors, the third interview question was asked to the interviewers. Students opined that online listening courses did not make any contribution to improving their listening skills. Materials had unfamiliar or difficult words. Online listening courses caused them eye fatigue. They also found online listening classes were highly artificial and they preferred face-to-face learning. They had some interaction problems with their instructors as well. These findings show consistency with the findings of the studies of Esnara (2021), Laili and Nashir (2021), Mahyoob (2020), Rahman (2020), Saputra et al. (2021), and Zboun and Farrah (2021). On the one hand, instructors revealed their problems as insufficient guidance, unproductive courses, and having been caught unprepared for online teaching. These results corroborate the findings of the previous work in Abdou and Lahmer (2020), Al-Shamsi et al. (2020), Hazaymeh (2021), and Noor et al. (2020).

6. Conclusion and Implications

This study has some pedagogical implications for students, teachers, administrators, materials designers, and course book writers. For example, students may learn how to benefit from their teachers and adapt themselves to online courses. Regarding the challenges they experienced throughout the pandemic period, they will be ready for estimated future online classes. They will prepare themselves for online listening courses to make the best use of it. They will also get accustomed to utilizing the facilities provided by their teachers and practice listening skill independently outside listening class. The students will also learn how to use the materials efficiently provided by their teachers to practice outside of the classrooms.

Listening course teachers, on the other hand, can improve more effective online teaching methods, strategies and techniques which will be able to appropriate for online teaching. It is also essential to direct their students to access online listening materials to support and improve their listening skills during online teaching. It is expected that teachers should be resilient to their students and prepare themselves to learn how to teach online lessons, be ready for unexpected teaching environments, try to adopt new

technologies to manage online lessons, etc. On the one hand, materials designers and course book writers should review their current situations and update, modify and recreate their materials and books for teaching listening skills in future online classes because the materials and the activities are needed to be suitable for remote learning.

Undauntedly, some limitations of this research need to be acknowledged here as well. For instance, this study was piloted only at one state university in Turkey. Students and teachers were from only one department, ELT. Therefore, further studies need to be carried out with the contribution of students and teachers from other state universities and also from private universities. Additionally, not only students and teachers from the foreign languages department, participants from other disciplines may be added to further studies. In this current research, variables are not used. Future studies may be conducted to compare and contrast the perceptions and attitudes of the participants in online listening courses from the point of view of different variables such as gender, educational background, social status, academic success, etc.

Acknowledgments

The authors express their gratitude to all administrators, teachers, teacher instructors, and TPP designers who played a significant role in this study and contributed to accomplishing the purpose of the study.

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