

## The Effect of an Integration-Based Instructional Strategy on Developing EFL Students' Listening Skills at Al-Al Bayt University

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### Abstract

Listening is a language skill that people in general and students in specific may need it more than some of the other language skills such as reading and writing in their everyday life and communication. Yet, the integration of the four language skills should be always emphasized when learning any foreign language since this reinforces each other and represents the natural acquisition of the language. The current study aims to examine the effect of an instructional program based on integrating the four language skills on Jordanian undergraduate EFL students' listening comprehension skills and to find out their attitudes regarding the effectiveness of this program on improving their listening skills. In order to collect the data, the researchers used two instruments: pre-post test and an interview. The study is a quasi-experimental one, and the subjects of the study were 61 students from Al Al Bayt University in Jordan. The subjects were divided into two groups: the control one had 24 students while the experimental one had 37. The findings of the study reveal that there is a significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the means of the two groups at the listening post-test due to the program. In addition, the instructional program proves to be effective for the students of the experimental group who believe that the program improved their listening skills.

**keywords:**, listening comprehension, skills integration-based instructional program  
undergraduate university students

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## Introduction

Listening plays a major role in people's everyday communication and it is a basic skill among the other language skills, speaking, reading and writing. Its significance stems from the fact that it is the first skill that people learn or acquire, and it is the most frequently used skill in communication. In spite of its significance, the listening skill has been the neglected skill in foreign language studies, research and teaching. However, in the past few years, teaching foreign language research " has given a major boost to listening" (Nunan, 1998:1), since a learner's success in foreign language classrooms depends heavily on what he/she hears, and which, in turn, helps him/her to interact with others and be creative in communicating with the foreign language. In this regard, Brown (2001) has the same point of view and asserts that what necessitates to use Communication Language Teaching is the awareness that foreign language learners. He adds that although these learners are equipped with the knowledge of grammar, they cannot communicate with that language, i.e., they cannot express themselves or negotiate with others freely. Abbas (2012) also believes that one of the goals for teachers as well as learners is to be able to master the English language listening skill.

Accordingly, there has been a worldwide shift and interest toward the teaching of listening and developing the listening performance for learners as well as creating and designing strategies to develop foreign language learners' listening skills. Among these strategies is the skills integration in which learners use the four language skills in learning one skill, such as the listening skill, to communicate interactively with each other, in a way that is similar to their everyday communication. Tajzad and Ostovar-Namaghi (2014) believe that one of the first applied linguists who calls for skill integration is Widdowson (1978). Widdowson (1978) calls for the need for skill integration asserting that one of the advantages for implementing skill integration inside classrooms is that it closely associates linguistic and communicative abilities with each other, and this in turn leads to the development of learners' productive and receptive skills.

Skills integration according to Mekheimer & Aldosari (2013) is " a skill-based approach to teaching language skills all in one"(p.1265). Furthermore, a number of researchers (Brown, 2001; O'Malley & Chamot, 1994; Mekheimer & Aldosari, 2013; Sanchez, 2000; Tavit, 2010; Wu & Alrabah, 2014) highlight the importance of skills integration in foreign language classrooms. They confirm that among the advantages of skills integration is that it helps learners to use the language they learnt in the classes. Brown (2001) confirms that learning one skill by integrating the other ones motivates and reinforces the learning of the other skills, which in turn helps, according to Wu and Alrabah, (2014), learners to develop their "overall communicative skills" (p.121). Furthermore, Jing (2006) adds that skills integration fulfills and meets the different learners' styles. Extrovert learners participate a lot in the class, introverts like to listen or read, learners who prefer analytical or visual styles can also see the way words are written and the construction of sentences.

Recent research studies show that skills integration helps not only learners, but also teachers of the foreign language. Sanchez (2000) and Akram and Malik (2010) assert that skills integration motivates teachers to vary the activities in language classes and helps learners as well to use the language they learn freely, vividly and naturally; thus, it increases the dynamicity of the classes and the interaction among learners themselves. In this regard, Oxford (2001)

considers the teaching of English as a second or foreign language a tapestry and this tapestry "is woven from many strands, such as the characteristics of the teacher, the learner, the setting, and the relevant languages"(p.1). She also elaborates that another significant strand is the integrated-skill approach in which the four skills are "interwoven within instruction", which in turn, leads to an optimal communication efficiently and effectively.

### **Statement of the problem**

In almost all Jordanian universities, the English language department presents a course in the listening comprehension, but most of the time students face difficulties in such a course. Being instructors in the English Department at Al Al Bayt University for fourteen years, the researchers have noticed that their students suffer from many problems when communicating in English and their scores in the listening course are low compared with other scores in other language skills courses. A number of local research studies report this lack of listening proficiency by the Jordanian students (e.g. Al- Jamal 2009, and Al- Karain, 2011).

In order to be active in EFL classes, especially in the listening comprehension ones, students should be motivated and encouraged to use their four language skills in order to learn English communicatively, appropriately and authentically in a way that is similar to their mother language context. Therefore, the researchers designed a strategy that would improve their listening comprehension performance.

### **Questions of the study**

The study aims to answer these two questions:

- 1- Are there significant differences between the students' scores in the experimental group and control group on the listening test as a whole due to the teaching strategy (integration-based instructional strategy and the conventional strategy)?
- 2- What are the students' opinions concerning the effectiveness of the integration-based instructional strategy in developing their listening skills and their suggestions to enhance it and improve the teaching of this skill at the university level?

### **Significance of the study**

This study presents a strategy that is based on skills integration approach which highlights the use of the four language skills in learning each skill. Also, the instructional program in this study focuses on the importance of a number of activities inside the classroom which motivate students to work in groups and take notes while listening to the listening texts. These activities may be helpful for both learners and instructors since they can add vividness to the listening classes and learners would mimic the real life communication.

### **Participants of the study**

The participants of the study were 61 Jordanian undergraduate EFL freshmen who enrolled in the Listening Comprehension course in the English Department at Al Al Bayt University during the first semester of the academic year 2015/2016; they were enrolled in two sections. The two sections were chosen purposefully. The experimental group included 37 students, while the control group had 24 ones. The control group was taught the material in the textbook, *NorthStar*, whereas the experimental group was taught the same material after redesigning it according to the skills integration strategy. The researchers taught the two groups.

**Instruments of the study**

1- To collect the data, the researchers used two instruments:

pre -post listening test to measure the students' listening performance before and after the treatment with regard to their improvement in these four listening skills listening to support answers with information from the lecture, listening to compare and contrast points of view, listening to infer meaning from context, and listening to recognize personal assumptions about some topics. In each test, students had to answer two types of questions: response and true/false questions after they listened to the listening texts for three times, and after they were asked to write notes that would help them to write the correct answer. At the end of the two tests, the researchers corrected the students' papers and recorded their scores ( see appendix A for the test).

2- In order to investigate the effectiveness of the instructional program, the researchers held semi-structured interviews with the students of the experimental group at the end of the semester. The interviewees answered the questions individually and their answers were recorded and analyzed for frequent themes (see appendix B).

**The redesigned material**

The researchers redesigned the same listening material in the textbook which was taught to the control group and taught it during the first semester of the academic year 2015-2016. During the semester, students met in two 75-minute lectures a week. The material consists of six listening texts. They were taught interactively using different reading and writing activities.

**Validity and reliability of the instruments and the redesigned material**

In order to judge the validity of the listening tests, the redesigned material and the interview questions, a jury of seven professors from Yarmouk University, Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), and Al Al Bayt University were asked to provide their feedback and opinions with regard to their suitability to the purposes of the study; they looked into their language and their content. Their suggestions were taken into consideration in the final versions of the instruments and the material.

In order to establish the reliability of the listening test, it was given to 30 students of a pilot study group who did not participate in the study, two weeks later the same test was given to the same group. The researchers calculated the correlation coefficient between the students' scores on the two tests; it was (0.83) which is considered suitable for the study.

**Analysis of the results of the study**

To answer the first research question, means, standard deviations, and the ANCOVA of the repeated measures were calculated and used to find out whether there are any significant differences in the students' listening performance due to the instructional program. The students' responses to the interview questions were analyzed qualitatively where the common themes were detected.

**Findings of the study**

In order to answer the first question of the study, means and standard deviations of the students' scores on both the pre- and post- tests were calculated for the listening skills: pre-listening, supporting answers with information, comparing and contrasting points of view, inferring meaning from context, recognizing personal assumptions about some topics were calculated. In

addition, the adjusted means for the posttest, and the standard errors according to the listening skills and the teaching strategy were also calculated. The results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Means , standard deviations, adjusted means and standard errors of the students' scores on the pretest and posttest of the listening comprehension skills.**

Listening Skills	Teaching Strategy	N	Pretest		Posttest			
			Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Adj. Mean	Std. Error
<i>Pre-listening</i>	Conventional	24	0.67	0.34	0.23	0.36	0.21	0.07
	Integration	37	0.55	0.42	0.65	0.39	0.66	0.06
	<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>0.39</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>0.04</b>
<i>Supporting answers with information</i>	Conventional	24	0.42	0.19	0.48	0.22	0.51	0.03
	Integration	37	0.49	0.23	0.56	0.21	0.54	0.03
	<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>0.46</b>	<b>0.22</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>0.02</b>
<i>Comparing and contrast points of view</i>	Conventional	24	0.22	0.21	0.27	0.24	0.30	0.05
	Integration	37	0.26	0.29	0.40	0.29	0.38	0.04
	<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>0.24</b>	<b>0.26</b>	<b>0.35</b>	<b>0.27</b>	<b>0.34</b>	<b>0.03</b>
<i>Inferring meaning from context</i>	Conventional	24	0.17	0.15	0.27	0.28	0.29	0.05
	Integration	37	0.23	0.18	0.32	0.25	0.31	0.04
	<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>0.17</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b>0.26</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b>0.03</b>
<i>Recognizing personal assumptions about some topics</i>	Conventional	24	0.26	0.22	0.20	0.26	0.21	0.04
	Integration	37	0.25	0.27	0.34	0.31	0.34	0.03
	<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>0.26</b>	<b>0.25</b>	<b>0.29</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b>0.27</b>	<b>0.03</b>
<b>Whole</b>	<b>Conventional</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0.35</b>	<b>0.22</b>	<b>0.29</b>	<b>0.27</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b>0.03</b>
	<b>Integration</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>0.36</b>	<b>0.28</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>0.29</b>	<b>0.44</b>	<b>0.02</b>

Table 1 shows that there are observed differences between the means of the posttest for the listening skills. In order to investigate the observed differences, the researchers used the ANCOVA of repeated measures of the students' scores on the pretest and posttest of the listening comprehension skills due to the teaching strategy; the results are presented in Table 6.

**Table 2: Results of the ANCOVA of repeated measures of the students' scores on the pretest and posttest of the listening comprehension skills due to the teaching strategy and Listening skills.**

Tests of:	Source of variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial $\eta^2$
<i>Within-Subjects Effects</i> [Mauchly's W=0.53; Approx. $\chi^2=32.90$ ; df=9; $\epsilon$ (Greenhouse-Geisser)=0.75]							
	<i>Skills</i>	0.51	2.98	0.17	<b>2.76</b>	0.04	4.86 %
	<i>Skills</i> × <i>Teaching Strategy</i>	1.58	2.98	0.53	<b>8.50</b>	0.00	13.60 %

<i>Skills×Pre-Listening (Covariate)</i>	0.88	2.98	0.29	<b>4.73</b>	0.00	8.06 %
<i>Skills×Supporting answers with information (Covariate)</i>	0.66	2.98	0.22	<b>3.56</b>	0.02	6.19 %
<i>Skills×Comparing and contrast points of view (Covariate)</i>	0.11	2.98	0.04	0.59	0.62	1.08 %
<i>Skills×Inferring meaning from context (Covariate)</i>	0.30	2.98	0.10	1.63	0.19	2.93 %
<i>Skills×Recognizing personal assumptions about some topics (Covariate)</i>	0.14	2.98	0.05	0.75	0.52	1.37 %
<i>Error(Skills)</i>	10.01	160.98	0.06			
<i>Total</i>	14.18	181.85	0.08			
<b>Between-Subjects Effects</b>						
<i>Teaching Strategy</i>	1.23	1	1.23	<b>16.27</b>	0.00	23.15 %
<i>Pre-Listening (Covariate)</i>	1.17	1	1.17	<b>15.43</b>	0.00	22.23 %
<i>Supporting answers with information (Covariate)</i>	0.06	1	0.06	0.80	0.38	1.46 %
<i>and contrast points of view (Covariate)</i>	0.97	1	0.97	<b>12.72</b>	0.00	19.07 %
<i>Inferring meaning from context (Covariate)</i>	0.59	1	0.59	<b>7.74</b>	0.01	12.54 %
<i>Recognizing personal assumptions about some topics (Covariate)</i>	0.00	1	0.00	0.02	0.88	0.04 %
<i>Error</i>	4.10	54	0.08			
<i>Total</i>	8.12	60	0.14			
<b>Total</b>	22.30	241.85	0.09			

Table 2 shows that there is a statistically significant difference at ( $\alpha$  0.05) between the adjusted means of the students' posttest due to the teaching strategy. Because of the differences in the levels of the listening skills, Bonferroni test for multiple comparisons was used to verify the differences between the posttest adjusted means for the listening skills, the results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Results of Bonferroni Post-Hoc test of the students' scores on the posttest of the listening comprehension skills due to the Listening skills.**

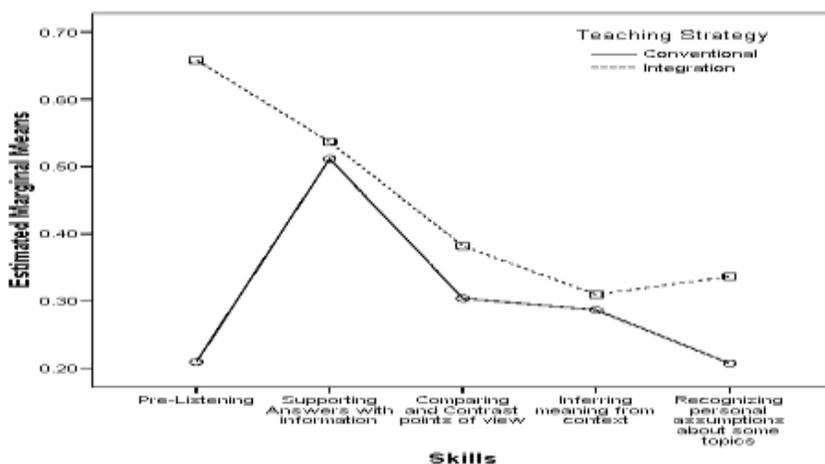
Listening Skills	Recognizing personal assumptions about some topics	Inferring meaning from context	Comparing and contrast points of view

	Adj. Mea n	0.27	0.30	0.34
Bonferroni				
Comparing and contrast points of view	0.34	0.07	0.04	
Pre-listening	0.43	<b>0.16</b>	0.14	0.09
Supporting answers with information	0.52	<b>0.25</b>	<b>0.23</b>	<b>0.18</b>

Table 3 shows that the results were in favor of the listening skill "supporting answers with information" in comparison with the skills of "recognizing personal assumptions about some topics, inferring meaning from context, and comparing and contrasting points of view". The Table also shows that the results were in favor of "pre-listening" in comparison with "recognizing personal assumptions about some topics". It should be pointed that the effect of the posttest explained 4.86% of the variance which is classified as very low according to the standards of Al-Sharbeeni, (2007).

Furthermore, Table 3 indicates that there is a significant statistical difference at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) between the two adjusted means of the skills; pre-listening , supporting answers with information, comparing and contrasting points of view, inferring meaning from context, and recognizing personal assumptions about some topics due to the teaching strategy in favor of the students of the experimental group in comparison with the students of the control group. It should be pointed out that the effect size of the teaching strategy explained 23.15% of the variance for the means of the listening comprehension posttest which is classified as less than the average according to the standards of Al-Sharbeeni (2007).

Table 3 as well shows that there is a statistically significant difference at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) between the adjusted means of the students' posttest due to the interaction between the listening skills and the teaching strategy. Chart 1 presents the 2-way ranked interaction between the adjusted means of the posttest according to the interaction between the listening skills and the teaching strategy.



**Figure 1: 2-way ranked interaction on the adjusted means of the of the students' scores on the posttest of the listening comprehension skills due to the listening skills and teaching strategy.**

Figure 1 indicates that the performance of the students who were taught by the integration-based strategy was better than the performance of those who were taught by the conventional way in the posttest for the listening skills: pre-listening, supporting answers with information, comparing and contrasting points of view, inferring meaning from context, recognizing personal assumptions about some topics. The effect of the interaction between the listening skills posttest and the teaching strategy explained 13.60% of the variance which is classified as low according to the standards of Al-Sharbeen, (2007).

To look deeply into the effects of the skills integration on the students' listening skills, means, standard deviations, adjusted means and the standard errors if the students' scores on the pre-post tests were calculated according to the listening stages and the teaching strategy. Table 4 presents the results.

**Table 4: Means, standard deviations, adjusted means and standard errors of the students' scores on the pretest and posttest of the listening comprehension stages due to the listening stages and teaching strategy.**

Stage	Teaching Strategy	N	Pretest		Posttest			
			Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Adj. Mean	Std. Error
<i>Warming-Up</i>	Conventional	24	0.67	0.34	0.23	0.36	0.20	0.07
	Integration	37	0.55	0.42	0.65	0.39	0.66	0.06
	<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>0.39</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>0.04</b>
<i>Pre-Listening</i>	Conventional	24	0.43	0.24	0.48	0.24	0.52	0.04
	Integration	37	0.52	0.22	0.58	0.20	0.56	0.03
	<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>0.23</b>	<b>0.54</b>	<b>0.22</b>	<b>0.54</b>	<b>0.02</b>
<i>While-Listening</i>	Conventional	24	0.26	0.17	0.34	0.21	0.37	0.03
	Integration	37	0.32	0.19	0.42	0.22	0.40	0.02
	<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b>0.18</b>	<b>0.39</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>0.02</b>
<i>Post-Listening</i>	Conventional	24	0.26	0.22	0.20	0.26	0.21	0.04
	Integration	37	0.25	0.27	0.34	0.31	0.34	0.03
	<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>0.26</b>	<b>0.25</b>	<b>0.29</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b>0.27</b>	<b>0.03</b>
<b>Whole</b>	<b>Conventional</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0.41</b>	<b>0.24</b>	<b>0.31</b>	<b>0.27</b>	<b>0.32</b>	<b>0.03</b>
	<b>Integration</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>0.41</b>	<b>0.28</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.28</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.02</b>

Table 4 indicates that there are observed differences between the posttest' means according to the listening stages and the teaching strategy. In order to test the observed differences, the ANCOVA of the repeated measures was used; the results are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Results of the ANCOVA of repeated measures of the students' scores on the pretest and posttest of the listening comprehension stages due to the teaching strategy and listening stages.**

Tests of:	Source variance	of	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial $\eta^2$
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<i>Within-Subjects Effects</i> [Mauchly's W=0.45; Approx. $\chi^2=42.40$ ; df=5; $\epsilon$ (Greenhouse-Geisser)=0.68]						
<i>Stage</i>	0.90	2.03	0.44	6.40	0.00	10.42 %
<i>Stage</i> × <i>Teaching Strategy</i>	1.57	2.03	0.77	11.13	0.00	16.83 %
<i>Stage</i> × <i>Warming-Up (Covariate)</i>	0.91	2.03	0.45	6.47	0.00	10.53 %
<i>Stage</i> × <i>Pre-Listening (Covariate)</i>	0.38	2.03	0.19	2.72	0.07	4.72%
<i>Stage</i> × <i>While-Listening (Covariate)</i>	0.06	2.03	0.03	0.40	0.67	0.72%
<i>Stage</i> × <i>Post-Listening (Covariate)</i>	0.12	2.03	0.06	0.84	0.44	1.50%
<i>Error (Stage)</i>	7.74	111.90	0.07			
<i>Total</i>	11.67	124.10	0.09			
<i>Between-Subjects Effects</i>						
<i>Teaching Strategy</i>	1.39	1	1.39	21.13	0.00	27.76 %
<i>Warming Up (Covariate)</i>	0.90	1	0.90	13.64	0.00	19.87 %
<i>Pre-Listening (Covariate)</i>	0.08	1	0.08	1.27	0.27	2.25%
<i>While-Listening (Covariate)</i>	0.66	1	0.66	10.04	0.00	15.44 %
<i>Post-Listening (Covariate)</i>	0.03	1	0.03	0.47	0.50	0.85%
<i>Error</i>	3.63	55	0.07			
<i>Total</i>	6.70	60.00	0.11			
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.37</b>	<b>184.10</b>	<b>0.10</b>			

Table 5 shows that there are statistically significant differences at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) between the adjusted means of the listening skills on the posttest in the two groups due to the listening stages. Bonferroni test for multiple comparisons was used to check the significance of these differences. Table 6 presents the results.

**Table 6: Results of Bonferroni Post-Hoc test of the students' scores on the posttest of the listening comprehension stages.**

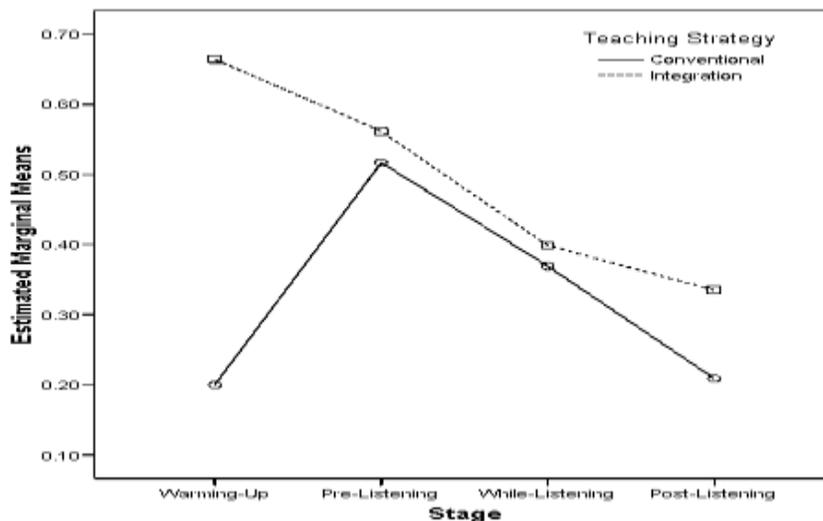
<b>Stage</b>		Post-Listening	While-Listening	Warming-Up
Bonferroni	Adj. Mean	0.27	0.38	0.43
While-Listening	0.38	0.11		
Warming-Up	0.43	0.16	0.05	
Pre-Listening	0.54	0.27	0.16	0.11

It is noted that the results were in favor of the pre-listening stage in comparison with the while-listening and post-listening stages. In addition, the results were in favor of the warming-up stage in comparison with the post-listening one. Table 6 also shows that the results were in favor of the while-listening stage in comparison with post-listening one. It should be known that the

effect size of the posttest for the listening stages explained 10.42% of the variance for the listening posttest classified as low according to the standards of Al-Sharbeeni (2007).

Furthermore, Table 6 shows that there is a statistically significant difference at ( $\alpha= 0.05$ ) between the two adjusted means of the posttest of the listening stages: warming up, pre-listening, while-listening and posttest in favor of the students of the experimental group. It should be taken into consideration that the effect size for the teaching strategy explained 27.76% of the variance of the posttest' means for the listening stages which is classified as below the average according to the standards of Al-Sharbeeni (2007).

In addition, Table 6 indicates that there are statistically significant differences at( $\alpha=0.05$ ) between the adjusted means on the pre-listening test for Warming-up, pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening stages due to the interaction between the listening levels and the teaching strategy. Chart 2 explains the 2-way ranked interaction between the adjusted means for the posttest for the listening stages due to the interaction between the listening stages and the teaching strategy.



**Figure2: 2-way ranked interaction on the adjusted means of the students' scores on the posttest of the listening comprehension stages due to the listening stages and teaching strategy.**

Chart 2 shows that the performance of students who were taught by the integration-based strategy was higher in the posttest than those who were taught by the conventional way. It should be noted that the effect size of the posttest interaction for the listening stages with the teaching strategy explained 16.83% of the explained variation for the posttest listening stages which is classified as low according to Al-Sharbeeni (2007).

To answer the second question, the researchers interviewed the participants in the experimental group at the end of the first semester of the academic year 2015/2016, and recorded their responses. The researchers listened to the answers and analyzed them qualitatively, then classified them into themes according to the similarities in the participants' responses.

As for the first interview question, concerning the participants' opinions about the effectiveness of the strategy, all of them reported that they liked the use of the four language skills in the listening comprehension course. Such integration alongside with group work improved their English language proficiency, self-confidence to speak in front of their colleagues, as well as their openness to make friendships. Furthermore, most of them mentioned that having the summary and the box of vocabulary before listening to the tape, helped them understand the topic of the Unit and to have a general idea about what they would listen to. A large number of participants clarified that note-taking through pre-, while and post-listening stages was of great use that helped them remember the content of the listening text.

With regard to group work, the majority of the students mentioned that it was of great benefit since it helped them to reach the true and best answer after they discuss the information and the notes they wrote together. A few students liked the use of writing because this could help them to spell the words correctly.

According to the second interview question which asks students to provide their suggestions to improve the teaching of listening comprehension, they gave a number of varied ones. Few students mentioned that the accent was difficult for them to understand everything, thus, they suggested that it would be of great benefit if speakers speak slower or use simpler language and simpler vocabulary. Some students preferred that the speakers in the cassette were British, not Americans, while some stated that it would be better to hear the texts from Arabic speakers. Furthermore, a great number of students assured that they would get much more benefit if they had headsets, or listen to the texts in the labs through computers or use data show while listening.

A considerable number of students suggested that dividing students into groups of four or five would be much better than groups of three in order to have better opportunities to converse and so develop their speaking abilities. Few students mentioned that being exposed to more listening texts would help them to better develop their listening comprehension skills.

Some mentioned that using technology applications would help them more. For example, one of them mentioned that they would benefit more if they had an application which is directly connected to Al Al Bayt University. Some suggested that they would learn more if the listening comprehension course was through a mobile application. However, a number of students had no comments and stated that this strategy was very good for them and they liked it as it is.

### **Discussions**

The findings of the present study show statistically significant differences in the overall listening performance and the listening sub-skills in favor of the participants in the experimental group. This, in fact, stresses the effectiveness of the integration-based strategy in developing students' listening skills.

This positive development could have resulted from a number of reasons. First, the number of activities that the students in the experimental group participated in throughout the different stages in the listening class could have developed their understanding of the listening text. Furthermore, the fact that they were asked to write some notes to help them answer the questions in each activity, may have helped them to execute these activities.

Also, one of the significant factors that may have contributed to the effectiveness of the strategy is the students' cooperation in the class. In groups, they discussed each question and each answer and exchanged their ideas and omitted unimportant information and added significant ones in order to reach out the right answers. In addition, they expressed their opinions about their classmates' answers and accepted points of view to them. This group work had a positive effect on the students' overall development since it mirrors the real life communication in which people, not only students, use the four language skills in their everyday life communication.

Moreover, they were exposed to the listening texts more than once, which enabled them to focus more on the questions and their answers. Besides, they had the opportunity to read the summary for each listening text and a box of vocabulary which contains the main words in each listening class. This way helped them direct their attention to the main idea in the listening text as well as the main words. Also, they were asked to share their information and experiences with their classmates about the listening topic, which in a way or another raised their self-confidence and helped them express themselves freely.

### **Conclusion**

The findings of the study warrants the following conclusions:

- 1- The instructional program resulted in the development of the students' listening skills and performance in the post-test which could indicate that there is a relation between the integration of the four language skills and improving the listening skills.
- 2- The students' answers to the interview questions signal their appreciation at the skill integration strategy, which enabled them to use the four skills in learning one skill. They also expressed their acknowledgement at the strategy which made learning easier for them since they could listen to the text for more than once and they could also write notes.
- 3- The interview questions indicated that it was a new experience to them to work in groups and conversate with their classmates during the class. That made them feel the freedom inside the class to express and accept opinions. Group work also helped them make new friendships.

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers present the following recommendations:

- 1- Integration of the four skills in teaching the listening skill should be introduced and enhanced. EFL teachers should be advised to design proper listening activities and introduce them to listening comprehension learners. These activities should be based on integrating the four skills in teaching the listening skill and they should focus on giving learners the opportunity to listen to the text more than once and should also encourage learners to work in groups.
- 2- Curriculum designers should take into consideration the significance of such integration in designing EFL textbooks.
- 3- More research needs to be carried out on the effect of integration-based instructional strategy on listening comprehension. In the future, research may involve a larger sample in other EFL contexts.

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Appendix (A)

The pre-post listening test

Pre- post Listening Comprehension Test

Name:.....

(Time:75minutes)

Dear student,

You are going to listen to a text twice. Please, read the summary and be prepared to answer the questions below.

Summary:

The listening text for this exam is a dialogue between a reporter and a number of people who discuss the issue of spanking children. In the dialogue, there are some people who are with spanking children as a form of discipline, while some others are against it. Both groups present their reasons that support their opinions.

Pre-listening Questions:

Before listening to the tape, answer the following questions:

- 1- What do most parents do when their children do something wrong?  
.....
- 2- How did your parents punish you when you were a child?  
.....
- 3- Are you with or against punishing children who do wrong? Why? Why not?  
.....

4- In the future, if you want to punish your children, what would you do?  
.....

**Objective: To support answers with information from the lecture**

**Activity One:**

**Listen to the beginning of the text then take notes with your partners to answer the questions below: (3 points)**

1- Why was the father arrested?  
.....

2- How old was the child who was spanked?  
.....

3- How did the police know that the Dale Clover spanked his child?  
.....

**Activity Two:**

**Decide whether each of the following statements is True or False, and write the answer in the provided place. (3 points)**

1- The man and his children were at a restaurant.....

2- Spanking has approximately the same meaning of corporal punishment.....

3- The report will be about the difference between spanking and child abuse.....

**Activity Three:**

**Listen to the whole report. While listening, take notes that would help you to write the correct answer. (3 points)**

1- According to the listening text, what happened to Dale Clover? Why?  
.....

2- In Taylor Robinson's point of view, what does spanking teach children?  
.....

3- According to the listening text, what makes people afraid to discipline their children according to Dr. John Oparah?  
.....

**Now, decide whether each of the following questions is True or False and write the correct answer: (3 points)**

1- Dale Clover is a father of six children.....

2- Rhonda Moore says that child abuse happens when a parent loses control.....

3- In Dr. Oparah's opinion, some parents may be treated like criminals because they abuse their children.....

**Activity Four:**

**Objective: To compare and contrast points of view**

**Listen to the tape for the second time and take notes to answer the following questions:  
(3 points)**

- 1- According to Rhonda Moore, what is the difference between spanking and child abuse?  
.....
- 2- What is the difference between Moore's and Robinson's opinions regarding spanking?  
.....
- 3- Dr. John Oparah and Taylor Robinson have contradictory views according to spanking.  
What are their views?  
.....

**Now, decide whether each of the following questions is True or False and write the answer  
in the provided place. (3 points)**

- 1- Dale Clover confessed that he hit his child.....
- 2- Rhonda Moore says that burning a child's hand is necessary to teach him that touching  
fire is wrong.....
- 3- Dr. Beverly Lau says that spanking is the best way to get a child's attention.....

**Activity Five:**

**Objective: To infer meaning from context**

**Answer the following questions: (3 points)**

- 1- How can you express the meaning of the word *punishment* according to the listening text  
?
- 2- How can you express the meaning of the word *arrest* according to the listening text?
- 3- How can you express meaning of the word *effective* according to the listening text?

**Circle the best answer: (3 points)**

**1- The word "debate" means:**

- a- a disagreement.
- b- a belief.
- c- a law.
- d- A system.

**2- The word "issue" means:**

- a- Problem.
- b- Subject or case.
- c- Conversation.
- d- Dialogue.

**3-The synonym for the word "spanking" is:**

- a- Hitting.
- b- Child abuse.
- c- Discipline.

d- Strong attention.

**Post-Listening Questions:**

**Activity Six:**

**Objective: To recognize personal assumptions about some topics**

**Answer the following questions:**

**(3 points)**

- 1- In Rhonda Moore's opinion, why is it O.K. to cause a little bit of pain to children?  
.....
- 2- Why does she spank her children?  
.....
- 3- Why does not Taylor Robinson spank his children?  
.....

**Now decide whether each of the following statement is True or False and write the answer in the provided place. (3 points)**

- 1- Dr. John Oparah says that some parents are afraid to discipline their children because their wives might call the police.....
- 2- Dr. Beverly Lau concludes from his own experience and studies that spanking can lead to more violent actions.....
- 3- Taylor Robinson is against spanking.....

**Appendix (B)**

**The interview questions**

- 1- What is your opinion about the effectiveness of the skills integration- based strategy that was used in teaching Listening Comprehension throughout the whole semester?
- 2- Do you have any suggestion for developing the teaching of the listening skills?