

L2 learners' difficulties in listening comprehension; Learners' perspectives among university undergraduate students

WKDO Walpita^{1#}

¹General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka

[#]40-bte-0014@kdu.ac.lk

Listening skill plays a crucial role in English language learning and it demands mandatory attention in language classrooms as listening comprehension plays an important role in communicating effectively in English. Learners who study English as a second language (L2 learners) in Sri Lanka always find that comprehending English by listening is difficult. Hence this study focuses on finding out the difficulties that L2 learners face in listening comprehension based on the learners' perspectives and what students suggest to overcome those difficulties. Forty-four second year undergraduate students who are reading for their BSc in Applied Data Science Communication and those who are attending lectures conducted in English medium were given a survey to discover the difficulties they face and some of them were interviewed for further clarifications. The major difficulties emphasized by learners were the speaker's accent, speaker's pace, lack of concentration, unfamiliar vocabulary, lengthy and complex input, monotonous concepts, unclear statement made by speaker, inadequacy in asking lectures to repeat in the classroom, shortage of previous knowledge on certain topics, and noisy environment in the classroom. The participants suggested practicing active listening, seeking clarification when needed, and engaging with a variety of English accents through multimedia resources to overcome listening comprehension difficulties. The findings imply that teachers should incorporate a variety of English accents in their teaching materials, listening exercises, and explicit vocabulary instruction also should be integrated into listening exercises focusing on both familiar and challenging words.

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