



**Title of Project:**

Teachers' and Learners' Beliefs about Listening in English  
as a Foreign Language: A Multiple Case Study  
in an Italian Secondary School

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**TIRF Research Topics Investigated:**

Language Policy and Planning  
Language Teacher Education  
Teaching English to Young Learners

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**Project Summary:**

For learners of English as a foreign language, learning to listen and understand oral messages can be among the most difficult skills to develop. Due to the ephemeral and unobservable nature of listening, teachers find it difficult to teach it and often lack the necessary knowledge to help learners develop the processes involved in successful listening. Rather than focusing on the listening process, they tend to focus on the product of listening by asking learners to simply listen to a spoken text and produce correct answers to questions that test their comprehension, without working to tackle learners' specific difficulties or developing their listening processes.

This study aims to generate data on how listening is taught in practice and the reasons behind this; thus, it investigates the beliefs about listening held by learners and teachers of English as a foreign language in a secondary state school in Italy. Through questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, this study seeks to shed light on listening, a neglected area in English language teaching, and Italian state schools, an under-researched educational context. The main purposes are thus to provide empirical data describing classroom practices, to elicit teachers' and learners' beliefs on various aspects of listening in English (e.g., materials, purposes, difficulties, anxiety) and to analyze the origins and impact of these beliefs and the mutual influences between learners' and teachers' beliefs in the language classroom.