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UNIVERSITY OF ABOU BAKR BELKAID , TLEMCEM
FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMAN AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

**DEVELOPING THE LISTENING SKILL THROUGH
COGNITIVE STRATEGIES : THE CASE OF EFL FIRST-YEAR
STUDENTS AT ABOU BAKR BELKAID UNIVERSITY**

THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN CANDIDACY FOR
THE DEGREE OF MAGISTER IN APPLIED
LINGUISTICS AND TEFL

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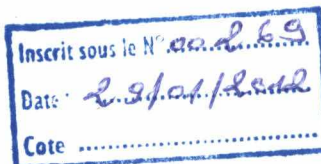
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Academic Year : 2006 - 2007

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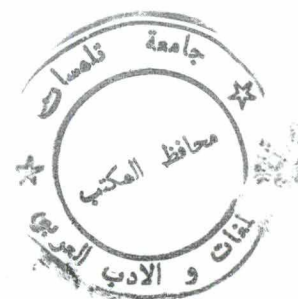
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Key to Abbreviations

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AF	Absolute Frequency
CALLA	Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach
EFL	English as a Foreign language
FD	Field Dependent
FI	Field Independent
FL	Foreign Language
L1	Mother Tongue
N	Number
RF	Relative Frequency
SSBI	Styles and Strategies-Based Instruction
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TL	Target Language

ABSTRACT

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study focuses on how to implement cognitive listening strategies practically within EFL classroom settings. The present work also suggests that targeted listening instruction should be part for the post-intermediate learners, who need strong oral/aural comprehension skills for access to information in their academic classes. Unfortunately, listening instruction in effective listening strategies is often not part of their daily practice. The current study is based on an interactive model which focuses on developing the listener's top-down and bottom-up listening skills. A practical way to develop the listener's sub-skills is through an instructional model adopted from Chamot's model.

The introductory chapter describes the learning situation in the English Department. It also considers two variables of instruction from a theoretical background. A full description of research tools is presented. Finally, a background for this study is given.

Chapter two defines listening and describes the listening process or how listening is achieved. Additionally, little is known regarding the interactive processing. This chapter presents several learning theories which support listening strategy instruction and adopts a two phase model for instructing the learners.

Chapter three looks, in particular, at the use of the cognitive listening strategies and analyses data from the research tools.

Finally, Chapter four presents more practical suggestions for teaching and practising the listening strategies.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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Language has been rightly cited as the principal tool for learning. Basically, one of the four basic skills which is a key to learning is listening. No wonder listening represents a real challenge to most language learners because for listening to develop, the listeners should focus on listening as a process rather than as a mere product. Research suggests that listening is an important skill, but the crucial point is how to teach it. Yet, it has often come to teachers' notice that most learners, reading for a degree in English as a FL (foreign language) at Abou-Bakr-Belkaïd University of Tlemcen, find themselves with the undesirability of not understanding well listening passages. The fact is that the way listening is taught at the secondary schools denotes many listening comprehension difficulties.

For these reasons, it is important that instructing the listeners in listening strategies seems to be relevant in the English Department. Thus, the aim of the present study is an investigation into the listening strategies. The theoretical framework for this study was based on cognitive theory and strategy research. Cognitive theory focuses on the listener as an active participant who can contribute to the construction of meaning. Strategy research shows that less effective listeners can benefit from listening strategy instruction. Positive results have been found in studies of listening strategy instruction for EFL listeners. Consequently, the research question guiding this study is: Does listening strategy instruction in an academic setting lead to the maintenance of the cognitive listening strategies by the post-intermediate listeners? The following subsequent questions derive from this fundamental question

- 1- Do the listeners have any existing cognitive listening strategies?*
- 2- What are the listening comprehension difficulties felt by the listeners?*
- 3- Does the teaching of listening focus on the listening strategy instruction? The hypotheses of this research work can be formulated as follows:*
 - 1- The listeners may be equipped with a small repertoire of the cognitive listening strategies.*
 - 2- The listening text, the speaker's speech, the listening tasks and the listeners' attitudes may affect the listeners' listening comprehension.*

3-If the listeners are aware of how to make use of the cognitive listening strategies they may be more successful in listening.

The informants, randomly selected for this study, were fifty learners at the English Department, University of Abou Bakr Belkaid, Tlemcen, who participated voluntarily in this research. Ten questionnaires were not taken seriously in this study and thus excluded. The research tools used for this study are two questionnaires and listening proficiency tests for data collection. The first questionnaire (See Appendix A) was administered to the first-year students and used to identify their existing cognitive listening strategies use and the nature of their listening comprehension difficulties. The second questionnaire (See Appendix B) was used to collect information about the listeners' listening comprehension difficulties as perceived by their secondary school teachers who teach at different levels. Forty copies were given to them in order to be completed. This was necessary to check the validity of hypothesis two: the listening text, the speaker's speech, the listening task and the listeners' attitudes may affect the listeners' listening comprehension. A pretest was used, at the start of the study before listening strategy instruction, to measure the listeners' top-down and bottom-up cognitive listening strategies use and to check the validity of hypothesis one: the listeners may be equipped with a small repertoire of the cognitive listening strategies. In the instruction phase, the group of the listeners which consisted of forty learners was divided into two groups: the experimental group composed of twenty listeners, and the control group which was also composed of twenty listeners. The experimental group received listening strategy instruction. Whereas, the control group did not receive any listening strategy instruction. This was necessary to check the effectiveness of listening strategy use in the post-instruction phase. In this phase, two posttests were administered to both the control and experimental groups. They were intended to remeasure the top-down and bottom-up listening strategies of the experimental group and check which group was more effective in using the cognitive listening strategies. They were also meant to check the validity of hypothesis three: if the listeners are aware of how to make use of the cognitive listening strategies, they may be more successful in listening.

CHAPTER ONE

CHAPTER ONE

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND METHODS

OF INVESTIGATION

1.1. Introduction

1.2. Teachers' Assumptions about ELT in the English Department

1.3. English Language in Higher Education and the Listening Skill

1.4. Learners' Profile, Learning Styles and Needs

1.4.1. Learners' Profile

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CHAPTER ONE

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND

METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

1.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will be looking at a set of variables and giving grounds for an overall prioritisation of these areas to get a sound understanding of assumptions about the teaching of English, the learners' profile, their different learning styles and needs. The study will randomly select fifty learners out of a hundred and forty learners representing the total number of the first-year students. The choice of this number is to make as reliable and valid our research findings as possible. The instruments outlined in 1.5 will be presented and fully described subsequently in due time.

1.2. Teachers' Assumptions about ELT in the English Department

Teaching is a very complex process which cannot be easily described. In trying to understand how teachers deal with the cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects, it is worthy to explore the source of the teachers' assumptions about teaching and learning in general. It is generally a common held view that the teachers' assumptions influence their way of teaching and thinking. Occurrences of change are characterised by feeling less comfortable which are quite normal. Shifting from one model of teaching to another is not that easy whilst struggling for innovations. It has been stated that, '*all innovations increase the complexity of teacher work life by expecting them to use different instructional materials, teach in new ways or learn new content*' (Chapman and Snyder Cited in Marape and Chapman 1997: 90). Understandably, the activities that characterise English language classrooms in the English Department are informed by the teacher's view of second language teaching and learning. Quite often, the teacher reproduces these views more from his or her own English learning experience. These teaching practices are also found in the secondary schools where the teaching of

listening is still perceived as an end-product to reach, not a process to focus on. Thus, reaching a certain linguistic competence in English through the four basic skills is suggested, but should not be detrimental to skill awareness or how to listen. This process does not mean developing the thinking skills of the listeners whose background knowledge may be limited. Rather, this process should only focus on the cognitive listening strategies use. What happens in the secondary schools is that the teaching of the listening skill is still the weak link in the language teaching process. Although the learners have mastered some grammatical rules and vocabulary, their listening comprehension is often weak. This may be due to the fact that many teachers are still influenced by methods¹ of teaching the listening skill. This is not to say that these methods are inadequate. It has been stated that: *'changing winds and shifting sands [are seen] as a cyclical pattern in which a new paradigm of teaching methodology emerged about every quarter of a century, with each new method breaking from the old but at the same time taking with it some of the positive aspects of the previous paradigm'*. (Backward, Cited in Brown 1994: 14). Therefore, no method is 'flawless' but criticising the teachers that they are using the 'default method' is by no means helpful in an EFL context. By summarising what (Prator and Celce-Murcia, cited in Brown: 1994: 7) said about the Audio-Lingual-Method, we have following points:

- Teachers organise drills, present grammar patterns and correct errors.
- Cassette tapes, language laboratories and charts support the learning process.
- The class focuses on pattern drills and pronunciation exercise.
- Students learn by memorising patterns-Correctness is more important than communication and exercises are often decontextualised.
- Grammar is taught inductively.

For the sake of simplicity, the Natural Method's characteristics are as follows:

- Learner's L1 is not used in the class
- The teacher provides "comprehensible input", or the language that the learner understands because of the context.
- Teachers do not correct learners' errors unless they interfere with understanding.
- Communication is more important than the production of correct language.
- The class is organised according to what learners need and want to learn.

Another widely accepted method is the Communicative Language Teaching. It argues that:

- Teachers help learners develop communication skills by giving them tasks which require them to communicate in a way that copies real life use.
- Learning is a process of trial and error. Learners should understand their personal learning preferences and develop strategies that will help them learn more effectively.
- The content of the class is determined by learners' communication needs, not by grammar.
- Learners should interact in group or pair work.

In the light of what has been said, no one would say that the default is in the method. Anyway, a method is a method, though not perfect. The real problem is that many teachers may not mix elements of different methods and approaches according to the teaching context. On the other hand, lack of resources may stand as a barrier for most teachers. Accordingly, which method is the best? In an EFL context, eclecticism and a mixture of different elements may be the most appropriate choice. For example, in listening comprehension, the teacher may focus too much on comprehension rather than grammar. This characteristic is taken from the Communicative Language Teaching. Consequently, teaching the listening process is taken from the Communicative Language Teaching where communication is encouraged, rather than analysing errors. It needs to be stressed that it is helpful to focus on teacher training because development implies no terminal point, a point of departure from which teachers see themselves involved in a process of life-long learning.

In today's world, strict criteria are imposed on teachers to face the challenges ahead, perceive newness and break down resistance in themselves to successfully become good teachers. A number of reasons may account for this lingering situation: teacher's experience as a learner, experience of what is seen as a prescribed orthodoxy in teaching and the belief in the influence of a given model. All in all, these held assumptions do, nevertheless, influence directly on classroom practices. That is why; teachers should not lock themselves in one model of teaching.

1.3. English Language in Higher Education and the Listening Skill

All learners are 'Baccalaureate holders' and required to acquire a body of content knowledge in the courses of their studies. The courses are all structured around a free choice of subject matters due to the lack of prescribed curriculum syllabuses. Teachers are supposed to teach what seems to work best for their learners. In general, their teaching focuses on academic subjects: literature, civilisation, linguistics, phonetics and some pedagogic notions alongside the four skills. The academic training is spread over a four-year period of English, where the aim is to help learners become the would-be teachers. Most courses aim at building up prospective teachers' own language skills and linguistic competence. This academic knowledge will ease them into teaching English at middle and secondary schools. As regards the listening skill, it should be of equal weight as compared with the three other skills due to its complexity and inherent features. To that end, teachers should devote much more time to teaching listening comprehension. The final outcome is to reach some communicative competence in English by integrating the four skills and implementing learning strategies by teaching them explicitly in order to help the listeners learn better.

On the basis of what has been said, it is crystal clear that listening does not make a clear focus of classrooms inasmuch as the time allocated to it is only one hour and a half per week which is more of a hindrance than a help, since the listeners can, by no means, be exposed to a wide range of oral/aural input. What is more, our learners are taught listening comprehension only for three years during their University education and though the coefficient is completed with that of the speaking skill, the listening skill is still perceived of as a 'stepchild' in many instances. It must be clearly stated, right from the beginning, that listening is a basic skill that goes faster which accounts for the feeling of not understanding well the speaker's speech with which many listeners are faced, since they cannot listen at their own pace. The real challenge is, then, how to develop the listening skills in the listeners. As it is stated: *'we still need research that documents empirically the relationship between what theory says and what learners actually know and more importantly do'*. (Vogely 1995: 41). Consequently, there is still a gap between research theory and classroom practice. Moreover, listening cannot be developed if taught as a separate strand. The underlying assumption behind that is

that listening develops after the learning of the basic rules of grammar and a consistent lexicon in other language skills. This may be true to a certain extent but after being able to understand these basic rules and vocabulary, should we focus on the listening skill as a mere product or as a process? For the post-Intermediate listeners who have been learning English for about seven years, focusing on the process may be a fundamental requirement. The question of process and product will be discussed in Chapter Two.

The teaching of listening is carried out through the use of listening material and though the laboratory is equipped with computers, the teaching of listening is not computer-based. This gives rise to an in-depth inquiry and a rather gloomy picture of the teaching of the listening skill in our Department. Another aspect of the problem is the lack of video-equipment. Consequently, this lack of providing the listeners with visual material may decrease their involvement with the topic and tasks all the way through. Briefly put, listening requires much more time, sound teaching material and ample opportunities to be developed. The task of the teachers is, then, to focus on listening as a process and set up skill-based listening tasks which develop their listening skills. Having defined the status of the English language and the way the listening skill is taught, it is important to turn now to the following section.

1.4 . Learners' Profile, Learning Styles and Needs

Learners' profile, learning styles and needs are a successful key to learning. However, the learners' styles and needs are beyond the scope of this research. Having said that, these two variables- listeners' learning styles and needs- are considered from a rather theoretical perspective, because there is a growing literature on the connection between the styles, needs and the listening strategies. Perceived of in this way, the learners' needs and styles should be clearly pronounced in the English Department. Consequently, teachers should be aware of these variables and other variables of instruction in order to develop a better instruction and set up motivating tasks, since identifying the learners' learning styles and assessing their needs can result in many lesson objectives.

1.4.1. Learners' Profile

The subjects of this study are fifty learners enrolled in the English Department of the Faculty of Arts and Human and Social Sciences, University of Tlemcen. They are post-intermediate learners coming from different secondary schools. They are nearly all female learners and only ten of them are male learners. Their age is not quite wide and most of them are between about eighteen and twenty one year old. They have been learning English for about seven years. Most of them were in the literature and foreign languages sections, whose coefficient for English is three. Nevertheless, only three of them have a mathematics and biology background and their choice was computer-oriented rather than a reorientation from other Departments. This does not mean that a literary background gives too much importance to English, because the way English is taught in the middle and secondary schools does not really show that these learners will have a good proficiency level. It has been noticed (See questionnaire A) that the listening skill does not make a clear focus in the secondary schools. Only two hours per month are devoted to teaching listening comprehension. That is say, the total number of hours per year is about fourteen to sixteen hours which are not that sufficient for even effective listeners. The reason for this lingering situation is that English enjoys the status of a foreign language where it lacks a stimulating environment outside schools. Whereas, Arabic and French are widely used for different communicative purposes.

The learners have been accepted to study English for the mark they obtained in the 'Baccalaureate exam' which is a fundamental requirement for any learner who wants to enter the university. Most learners' choice was computer-oriented according to their wish and results. Therefore, they may show an eager interest and high motivation in learning English. However, interest and motivation are not the only factors for learning. Many other variables teachers need to consider in order to reinforce instruction. These variables, as the name implies, change, and thus, a good teacher should be aware of the nature of change of these variables. Some of these variables of instruction are: the listeners' characteristics, listening material to be learned and listening strategies (goal directed tasks in which the listeners take an active role).

Learning styles have been seriously considered by many researchers because they really influence the way the listeners get information. The following section will be devoted to defining the listeners learning styles from a theoretical perspective.

1.4.2. Learners' Learning Styles

Research shows that, '*learners learn a subject at different rates and with strikingly different levels of completeness*'. (Lowman, Cited in Davis et al. 1994: 268). All learners have preferences for learning styles. Since each learner prefers ways of getting and processing information, his learning preference influences the way he makes decisions about what the listening tasks will be comfortable or uncomfortable for him. It has been stated that:

the way we learn things in general and the particular attack we make on a problem seem to hinge on a rather amorphous link between personality and cognition; this link is referred to as cognitive style. When cognitive styles are specifically related to an educational context, where affective and physiological factors are intermingled, they are usually more generally referred to as learning styles.

(Brown 1994: 104-5).

On the basis of this definition, there exists a great number of learning preferences. In our present work, only some learning preferences are considered, which may have an impact on learning. These learning styles or preferences are as follows:

- 1-Sociological styles;
- 2-Field dependence or independence styles;
- 3-Impulsive and reflective styles;
- 4-Cognitive styles;
- 5-Right-and left-brain learning styles;
- 6-Ambiguity Tolerance;
- 7-Perceptual styles.

In sociological styles, the listeners may prefer to learn independently or from their teachers. They may prefer to work alone or with a group. As regards the FI (field independent) style, it:

enables you to distinguish parts from a whole; to concentrate on something to analyze separate variables without the contamination of neighbouring variables(field dependence) can backfire: cognitive 'tunnel vision' forces you to see only the parts and fail to see their relationship to a while.

(Brown 1994: 106).

By simplifying this definition, the following are the characteristics of dependent and independent listener:

FD Styles	FI Styles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Prefers to see information in its context. -Likes to look at t-he whole idea or process (Listening for the main idea and some inferential questions are good tasks for these learners). -Will have difficulty with details. -Likes to learn in pairs or groups. -Will like to work with themes that have some social content (Literature, psychology and so on). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Can process information out of context. -Can easily see the parts or steps of an idea (Listening for specific information or key words are good tasks for these learners). -Can easily identify details. -Likes to work individually. -Will have difficulty to deal with social themes.

Table 1.1. FD/FI styles

The third learning style is reflectivity and impulsivity. These are two styles that: *are closely related to the reflectivity-impulsivity dimension: systematic and intuitive styles. An intuitive style implies an approach in which a person makes a number of different gambles on the basis of 'hunches', with possibly several successive gambles before a solution is achieved. Systematic thinkers tend to weigh all the considerations in a problem, work out all the loopholes, then, after extensive reflection, carefully venture a solution.*

(Ewing, Cited in Brown 1994: 112).

Characteristics of impulsive and reflective styles are as follows:

Impulsive styles	Reflective styles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Works quickly -Makes decisions immediately. -May not read or follow instructions. -Not persistent, may not complete the task. -Does poorly at tasks that require attention to detail or careful analysis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Works slowly -Thinks before making decisions. -Considers different possibilities before speaking. -Concerned about accuracy instead of speed. -May not participate very much because he is still thinking

Table 1.2. Impulsive and Reflective styles

As we can see, impulsive listeners like to act immediately, while reflective listeners prefer to think before acting. In the classrooms, impulsive listeners will respond immediately, but reflective listeners will stop and think before answering. There are advantages to both styles: impulsive listeners are quicker to take advantage of opportunities, but tend to make more mistakes. Basically, the listeners should not be held responsible for making mistakes. If the teachers become error-analysts, the listeners may not respond positively. Reflective listeners think before acting or answering and are more likely to answer correctly, but they may miss opportunities because they may act too late. Teachers can use the strategy of asking a question, then asking the listeners to think silently for a minute before answering. The thinking time is very important for the listeners. This will give reflective listeners a limited time to think and prepare, and will make impulsive listeners stop and think before answering.

The fourth learning styles are cognitive styles or being global or analytical. A global listener is better at understanding the whole problem. Whereas, an analytical listener is just the opposite. Being global means '*viewing the big picture*' [and being analytical] means '*performing logical analysis and contrast tasks*'. (Cohen 2003:280). It is argued that, '*students who have stronger verbal/analytical faculties may have easier access to the traditional teaching model-listening to lectures*'. (Kinsella 1996: 25).

Their characteristics are as follows:

Global Style	Analytical Style
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Prefers to look at the whole idea. -Can easily find similarities. -Makes decisions based on feelings. -Likes to take breaks while working. -Has weak sense of time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Likes to look at the parts of an idea. -Best at identifying differences. -Makes decisions based on logic. -Prefers to work without interruption. -Has strong sense of time.

Table 1.3. Cognitive Styles

The fifth learning styles are the right-and left-brain learning styles. Brain theory research indicates that, *'the two hemispheres of the brain process information differently'*. (Williams; Reiff; Cited in Kang 1999:230). As it is known, *'left-and right-brain dominance is an important issue in developing a theory of second language acquisition. As the child matures, various functions become satirized to the left or right hemisphere'*. (Brown 1994: 109).

As we can see, the brain has two hemispheres or halves and each hemisphere has different functions. If a listener *'has a dominant left hemisphere, he/she will be good at math, science, written and spoken language. If he/she has a dominant right hemisphere, he/she will be good at creative tasks like poetry'*. (Stevick, 1982; Seliger and Hartnett, 1974, cited in Brown 1994: 109).

By summarising what these researchers have found, we have the following characteristics:

Left Hemisphere	Right Hemisphere
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Process information in a linear way. -Likes to understand the order in which things happen. -Interested in parts and steps. -Logical: makes conclusions based on reasons. -Benefit from narrow examples, from trial and error and from learning from rules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Process information in a global way. -Likes to understand how things are related to each other and how the parts make the whole. -Interested in wholes. -Intuitive: makes conclusions based on feelings. -Does not learn by specific rules and error correction; requires long exposure to contextualised information.

Table 1.4. Right-and Left-Brain learning styles

The sixth learning style is ambiguity tolerance. The listener who is:

tolerant of ambiguity is free to entertain a number of innovative and creative possibilities and not be cognitively or affectively disturbed by ambiguity and uncertainty. This style concerns the degree to which you are cognitively willing to tolerate ideas and propositions that run counter to your own belief system or structure of knowledge.

(Brown 1994: 111).

Characteristics of high tolerance for ambiguity and low tolerance for ambiguity are as follows:

High Tolerance for Ambiguity	Low Tolerance for Ambiguity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Is not bothered by new situations or tasks. -Can process information that is incomplete or unclear. -Wants to have a general understanding. -Is good at guessing words from context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -New situations or tasks may seem uncomfortable or frightening. -Does not like information that is incomplete, disorganised or unclear. -Wants to understand every word. -Wants to speak or write using precise meaning, words or grammar structure.

Table 1.5. High and Low Tolerance for Ambiguity

Finally, perceptual styles are defined as *'a general predisposition, voluntary or not, toward processing information in a particular way'*. (Skehan 1991: 288). Perceptual styles include being visual, auditory or kinaesthetic. They are *'general approaches to language learning, while strategies are specific behaviours that learners select in their language'*. (Cohen 1998: 279). It is, then, a well-established fact that any teaching that does not consider these perceptual styles may be more a hindrance than a help to listeners. The field of empirical research has mainly considered three main perceptual styles: visual, auditory and kinaesthetic. Visual listeners like to get new information by seeing it. The visual style is divided into two sections: visual-verbal, and visual non-verbal. A visual verbal listener prefers to see information in the form of language: words, sentences, texts and so on. Visual non-verbal learner likes to transform the visual input in the form of pictures, charts, T lists and diagrams. Whereas, an auditory learner likes to learn new information by hearing it. These two styles are defined as follows:

'visual learners tend to prefer reading and studying charts, drawings, and other graphic information; while auditory style is characterised by a preference for listening to lectures and audiotapes'. (Brown 1994: 113).

Finally, kinaesthetic learners prefer to learn things by doing. They like to work in pairs/groups, write things on the board and so on.

In the light of what has been said, teachers should bear in mind that these perceptual styles are determined by the brain structure and cannot be changed. Consequently, teachers who only set up auditory tasks, for instance, in listening just care a little bit about the visual and kinaesthetic listeners. These two types of learners may get confused or bored because the tasks and the way they are instructed will not actually motivate them. For these reasons, when a teacher plans a lesson (See 4.3.1), he should check whether the tasks are good for all the learners or not. Teachers should also know about the teaching strategies to help the listeners process information more efficiently. By a way of an example, in a listening comprehension session, teachers can do the following

1-Visual- verbal teaching strategy:

- Write instructions, questions on the board.
- Write the main idea, key words the listeners have written down while listening.

2-Visual non-verbal teaching strategies:

- Use T lists, pictures, tables, maps to transform the aural input.
- Present new words using a semantic mapping.

3-Auditory teaching strategies:

- Read instructions for tasks.
- Describe the information on T lists, charts and so on.

Experiences with learners have suggested that, *'If there is an initial focus on style... there is less need to do so subsequently. Learners get the message and then are more "at choice" for the remainder of the course'*. (Cohen, 2003:289). Therefore, the listeners' perceptual styles, needs and listening strategies should make a clear focus, right from the beginning, rather than assuming that the listeners are not responsible for their own learning. Teachers should avoid using the 'one approach fits all' because the listeners will teach them a lot of things if the teachers see themselves as imperfect.

To conclude, matching instruction to every listener style is very difficult in terms of available teachers, resources, rooms and administrative considerations. Rather, a teacher should try to provide a variety of learning experiences to accommodate the various learning styles that exist in the classroom. Then, all the listeners will have, at least, some tasks based on their learning styles. Teachers should help the listeners identify their learning preferences and learn listening strategies to better process the

oral/aural information that is in their preferred mode. As a way of an example, the listeners with a low tolerance for ambiguity can learn to ask questions to clarify the instructions for tasks. Another example: the listeners identify the main idea in a listening passage (global) and, then, listen for key words (analytical). When possible, teachers should give the listeners a choice: make a cluster (See 4.5.1), which is a good task for the right- brain style, or write a list of the steps in a process, which is a good task for the left- brain style. Impulsive listeners can be encouraged to pause and make notes before answering. All in all, teachers should assign tasks that support different learning styles to help the listeners come to a better understanding of information.

1.4.3. Learners' Needs

Theoretically speaking, for listeners to be more effective in listening, teachers should know what each listener needs and wants to learn. This is carried out through needs analysis. The assessment uses interviews with listeners, group discussion with other teachers, standardised tests, or through the listener observation. The objective is, then, to find what is necessary or merely desirable. The most common form of needs analysis is *'devoted to establishing the learners' language requirements in the occupational or academic situation they are being prepared for'*. (Chambers, Cited in West 1993: 08). In other words, what needs analysts are interested in is mainly the gap between the target proficiency level and the present proficiency level of the listeners. Consequently, the identification of the listeners' lacks will help the teachers set specific objectives for their listeners. A distinction is made between: *'goals which are generally stated from the teacher's perspective and provide direction for the teaching and learning, and objectives which spell out what learners will actually be able to do'*. (Vale et al. 1996: 32). Obviously, we understand that the objectives of any lesson should be derived from an analysis of the listeners' needs. Moreover, the listeners are often seen as the best judges of their own needs and want because they know what they can and cannot do with the TL (Target Language) and what language skills are most essential. In practice, this is still true. However, no curriculum or syllabus designers exist to cater for the listeners' needs from the middle schools to the university. In other words, the responsibility placed on textbook designers and experienced teachers should

steer toward designing programmes to accommodate the different language needs of learners at different levels of study.

1.5. . Data Collection Tools

The present work was designed to ascertain the extent to which the first-year listeners would use the cognitive listening strategies. These listeners were followed and observed from the very beginning for a twelve-week period. Due to the nature of situational analysis, it was decided that the most appropriate instruments for this study were two questionnaires, a pretest and two posttests. The aforementioned insights were helpful in the option of these research tools our study requires.

1.5.1. Questionnaires

The literature study that we embarked upon in this research consisted of a number of books, articles, as well as thesis closely related to the listening skill. Theoretically speaking, a questionnaire is used as a research tool which is usually '*retrospective in that students have time to reflect on what they usually do in a situation*'. (Chamot et al. 1998: 71). In our present study, the first questionnaire (See Appendix A) was designed in the form of closed questions because the listeners might not give a broad response range to open questions due to their proficiency level. Only question number "J" was open-ended but the listeners were asked to give short answers. In order to identify the listeners' existing listening strategies, the listeners were asked to give a response in the form of a likert scale² (Almost Never, Sometimes, and Almost Every Time). This scale was used on the relative frequency distribution of the listeners' answers. It was used to distribute the listeners' responses between three options, relating to how often they practised the listening strategy. For items (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13), the more often the listening strategy was used, the more likely the listeners would benefit. As regards the listening comprehension difficulties felt by the listeners, the same likert scale was used for items (A-B-C-D-E-F-G-H-I-J). The more often the listeners have the listening comprehension difficulties, the less likely they will understand the listening text. Frequencies and percentages were calculated. The second questionnaire (See Appendix B) was used to collect information about the listeners' listening

comprehension difficulties as perceived by their secondary school teachers. A three-likert scale was also used (Almost Never/Sometimes/Almost Every Time) in order to compare the listeners' responses with those of their teachers. Forty copies of the questionnaire were given to the teachers, which consisted of the same close-ended questions.

Other research tools, though equally important, were not used in this study :think-aloud, classroom observations and interviews were omitted for several reasons : we were not interested in getting the listeners to revealing how they processed the oral/ aural input while working on a task or upon finishing it. Though this technique has a '*high degree of validity in connection with the task*'. (Chamot et al. 1990: 68), it was avoided for the EFL listeners. The same can be applied to classroom observations and interviews. These data collection tools were not necessary because we did not focus on the thinking processes of the listeners. The objective was, rather, to teach them a few cognitive listening strategies selected for this study.

It is worth noting that since the questionnaire is a self-report technique, the listeners may lie or think that the information will be unclear or irrelevant. In order to avoid such problems and to ensure the validity of the questionnaire, the same questionnaire was given to a pilot sample of fifty learners, ten university teachers and fifty secondary school teachers. The insights gained from the pilot study and the comments of the teachers were very helpful when modifying the initial draft. Certain questions were reformulated so as to be clearly understood by the listeners. Only forty questionnaires were accepted for this study. The other ten questionnaires were not taken seriously by the listeners and were excluded from the study. Items (A-J) in questionnaire B remained the same as in questionnaire A -Items (A-J) - for comparison of the results. Explanations were given to the listeners to avoid any misunderstanding.

1.5.2. Tests

A test is defined as '*a method of measuring a person's ability or knowledge in a given area*'. (Brown 1994: 252). In general, a test is overall proficiency in a language. In the listening skill, we are mainly concerned with two major questions: the validity and reliability of the listening test. Validity is '*the degree to which a test*

measures what it claims... to be measuring'. (Brown 1996: 231). Reliability means if the test is repeated with the same group, the results will be the same. It is then quite difficult to claim that a reliable test is necessarily valid. We can set up several tests and though we get similar results, but maybe the test does not really show or measure what it says to show. As regards our research work, the listening proficiency test was intended to measure the experimental group and the control group's use of top-down and bottom-up cognitive listening strategies before listening strategy instruction. In the listening strategy instruction phase, only the experimental group received listening strategy instruction.

Following the listening strategy instruction, two posttests were assigned to the listeners to remeasure and check the experimental group's use of the listening strategies against the control group's use of the listening strategies which did not receive any listening instruction. This was necessary to check the effectiveness of the listening strategy use. Thus, the aim of the diagnosis test was to '*check on students' progress in learning particular elements of the course... the diagnosis test tries to answer the question: how well have the students learnt this particular material*'. (Harrison 1989: 6). In our present research, the diagnosis test expanded on Harrison's definition and went beyond that. The diagnosis test was meant to answer the question: how well have the listeners used the listening strategies to process the listening input. Although observing the listeners as they attempted to use listening strategies on listening tasks was not that easy, it was still necessary to give them tasks to complete in order to know whether the listeners maintain the listening strategy use in their academic classrooms.

1.5.3. Listening Strategy Instruction

After the pretest, the listeners participated in seven class sessions of targeted listening strategy instruction conducted by the researcher over a nine-week period. This kind of listening instruction is supported by a number a researchers. Although listening strategy instruction does not give one hundred per cent validity and reliability, significant results have been obtained in second language listening. Thus, listening strategy instruction is: '*an essential part of language education ... Strategy training is most effective when students learn why and when specific strategies are important,*

how to use these strategies and how to transfer them to new situations'. (Oxford 1990: 12).

The sessions focused on listening strategies for developing top-down and bottom-up skills. The material for the seven strategy instruction sessions was taken from different listening instruction texts, in order to find topics of high interest to the listeners and also because no single text covered all of the listening strategies taught during this study. The listening strategy instruction sessions were conducted in the EFL classroom during the participants' regularly scheduled EFL class and were one hour and a half long. The method of listening strategy instruction was made explicit following an adapted instructional model but consists of only two phases: presentation and practice. This was necessary because in many instances, the teachers '*guide their students through the use of strategies but fail to name them, define them, or provide opportunities for students to practice them*'. (Carrier 397: 2003). At the beginning of each of the instruction sessions, the listening strategies taught previously were explained and discussed again as the listening strategies that the experimental group could use for effective listening. The participants were given opportunities to practise the listening strategy on different kinds of listening texts. The lessons could be classified as interactive processing because the listeners use top-down and bottom-up strategies to understand the listening passages. Sometimes, the listeners did not understand well the listening strategy and the researcher had to explain it again. In order to make it easier for the listeners, the researcher used and included explanations of concepts. For example, in note-taking strategy, the listeners were asked to listen and make abbreviations and symbols to help them make ongoing marginal notes that could be grouped into a summary. If these sub-skills are not developed effectively, the teaching of note-taking strategy or other listening strategies would not be beneficial and helpful.

The listening strategy instruction in the present study focused on:

- Explaining the listening strategy and how, when and why to use it.
- Helping the listeners to use mainly the top-down processing to draw the meaning out of a listening input.

1.6. . Listening Strategy Research

There have been a number of studies investigating the use of listening strategies (Fujita, 1985; Laviosa, 1992; Murphy, 1987; O'Malley; Chamot and Kupper, 1989; Peters, 1999; Vandevgrift, 1998). Research on language listening strategies '*has been descriptive, as researchers have sought to discover what learning strategies is different e reported by learners of languages*'. (Chamot 2004: 15). Applied research focuses on helping the listeners become better language listeners by teaching them some of the listening strategies that descriptive studies have identified as characteristics of the "good language learner" (Rubin, 1975 ;1981 ; stern, 1975). The issues that seem highly focused on are: '*Identification procedures of learning strategies... the effect of learner characteristics on strategy use and the effects of culture and context on strategy use*'. (Chamot, 2004: Opcit). Listening strategy research has also considered important issues related to instruction such as explicit and integrated listening strategy instruction, transfer of listening strategies to new tasks and instructional models for language listening strategy instruction. While the research has deepened our understanding of the listening strategies that the listeners use, its limitation on the teaching of the listening strategies has been limited because the listening process itself is too complex to describe since we do not know exactly how the listeners process the information. It has been aptly stated that, '*it is not easy to get inside the 'black box' of the human brain and find out what is going on here. We work with what we can get, which, despite the limitations, provides food for thought*'. (Grenfell and Harris 1999: 54). Nevertheless, the few studies that have been carried out provide some evidence that the listeners can learn to use the listening strategies if better instruction is given and the use of listening strategies can improve listening comprehension.

These studies, while very important, have showed the effectiveness of listening strategy instruction in an EFL setting. Equally important is that the teacher's instruction is critical in helping the listeners how to use their top-down strategies. In practice, the teachers need to be aware that teaching these "broad" listening strategies is not sufficient. Rather, the teachers should focus on developing the sub-skills of the listeners. However, the researchers have concluded that for listening strategy instruction to be effective, a more period of time is required.

1.7. Conclusion

The first chapter has been devoted to explaining the teachers' assumptions about ELT in the English Department university of Abou-Bakr-Belkaid and focusing on the way English has been taught, and more specifically on the way the listening skill has been taught till now in an academic setting. It has also considered two main variables which correlate with listening strategy use based upon some research. The data collection tools used for this study were also introduced and the results obtained will be fully analysed in Chapter Three. Having explored the learning situation analysis, the next chapter will provide a theoretical background research on listening strategies and identify the learning theories supporting listening strategy instruction. It will also describe how listening comprehension is achieved and the factors affecting the listening process. Finally, it will provide a theoretical framework of listening strategies and models influencing the teaching and learning of the cognitive listening strategies.

Notes to Chapter One

1-See Anthony, E.M. (1963). For more understanding of approach, method and Technique. See also Bowen et al. (1985) about techniques and procedures and Coffey, M.P. about a Functional/Notional text. Their work provides sound understanding of different approaches and methods.

2-A three point likert scale was used in this study rather than a five-point scale-this scale is used by Chamot et al. (See The Learning Strategy Handbook, 1999)-for the sake of simplicity. Many listeners might have not understood if a five-point likert scale had been used.

CHAPTER TWO

CHAPTER TWO

LISTENING: AN INTERACTIVE PROCESSING

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CHAPTER TWO

LISTENING: AN INTERACTIVE PROCESSING

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will be looking closely at the listening process. First, the interactive processing or how listening is achieved will be fully described. Equally important are the learning theories supporting listening strategy instruction, which will be considered from a theoretical background. We will also be talking exhaustively about listening strategies and the problem of classifying them by many researchers. Moreover, characteristics of effective listeners will be identified because they are seen as essential for listening achievement. Finally, different instructional models will be presented to reinforce the teaching of listening strategies.

2.2. Importance of Listening

We know that listening is requisite to language learning. It provides the aural input which forms the basics for learning and it enables us to interact in spoken communication. In our first language, we do not focus much on listening. After all, listening is listening: we do it effortlessly and take it for granted. It is not until we attempt another language that listening demands conscious effort and at times overwhelms us. EFL listeners may receive much information through listening mainly from their teachers. Therefore, listening is used far more than any other language skill. Given the importance of listening, which is an active process in language learning, it becomes essential that the teachers focus on how to help the listeners become effective.

A good place to start learning about listening is to find out how it works¹. It is, then, essential to define listening to get an overall understanding. Listening has been defined as: *'the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, his grammar and his vocabulary, and grasping his meaning. An able listener is capable of doing these four things simultaneously'*. (Howat and Dakin 1974:20). English has two words that describe this receiving activity: hearing and listening. Hearing happens every time

sound waves strike your ear drum and nerves transmit the vibrations to the brain. It is an automatic thing that you cannot really control. These vibrations, then, make the tiny bones in your ear vibrate too. Having said that, ***'hearing is the basis of language perception, and perception is the basis for listening'***. (Rost 1994: 9). Consequently, you cannot stop hearing something, but you can, and often do, stop listening. Listening happens after hearing and refers to the decoding of sound waves in your brain into meaningful words and messages. Yet, listening is ***'a vital mental capacity-one of the principal means by which we understand and take part in the world around us'***. (Rost 1994: 1). In order to fully understand the listening process, we should focus on its stages. These are as follows: Attending, understanding, and remembering.

The listening process begins with attending. This simply means telling your brain to make a commitment to listen and pay attention to what you hear. Thus, paying attention helps us ***'organize and use what we see and hear. We tend to organize language in terms of topics (what the language is about) and information values (what the language signals that is relevant to us)'***. (Rost, 1994: 2). For example, if you are really hungry, you may not pay close attention to the teacher's lesson, but you will definitely hear the bell. You can choose which sounds you will attend to, so with practice you can teach your brain to attend 'on command'. Because speakers use body language, gestures, and facial expressions as well as words to make their meaning clear, a large part of attending involves paying attention to these as well.

The next step in the listening process is understanding. It depends on a lot of interacting variables, among which are the following: understanding the message in a language, understanding the utterances (vocabulary), a need for the information you are hearing, a want to know what the speaker is saying, agreement with the speaker and having the same values as the speaker.

Generally speaking, understanding happens when the message your brain creates is very similar to the message that the speaker intended to send. Because communication is a two-way street between the sender and the receiver, your response to the speaker is also part of listening. Speakers use a listener's response (feedback) to judge how accurately his/her message is being received. Feedback includes smiling,

nodding, gesturing as well as asking questions for clarification to show your interest and understanding. Sometimes a good speaker will repeat or rephrase the message when listeners get confused. If the listeners get bored, this means that they are not paying attention to the speaker. When this occurs, speakers, too often, give up because this will lead to a communication breakdown and misunderstanding. In our present work, we should encourage our students that they must “work” to understand the message until understanding reaches its potential.

Finally, the listening process has to do with remembering the message so that it will remain useful to you over time. In general, people *‘remember only about half of what they have heard; even right after the message has been received. Within eight hours of receiving a message, only about 35% of it is remembered’*. (Adler and Rodman 1997:115).

On the basis of this definition, we can say that remembering has something to do with tasks which focus on mere listening or recall tasks. Consequently, listeners should do something to transfer information into long-term memory if they want it available later. For listeners to be good at remembering, their learning styles and specific needs should be catered for. (See 1.4.2 and 1.4.3).

2.3. Factors Affecting the Listening Process

The evidence that shows why listening is difficult comes mainly from four sources: the message to be listened to, the speaker, the listener and the physical setting. The first source of difficulty comes from the content of the message and its linguistic features. As regard the content, many listeners find it more difficult to listen to a taped message than to read the same message on a piece of paper, since the listening passage comes into the ear very quickly. Whereas, reading material can be read as long as the reader likes. The listening material may deal with almost any area of life. It might, then, include situations unfamiliar to the listener. Moreover, in listening to authentic material, listeners may get confused because the content is not well organised and, too often, speakers change the topics. In many instances, listeners cannot predict the outcomes of a listening passage or what will happen next. On top of that, messages on the radio cannot be listened to at the listener’s pace. Even in conversations, the speaker cannot

repeat the information as many times as the listener likes. The linguistic features of the message may also stand as a barrier to comprehension. In spoken language, native speakers use simple syntax, redundant phrases, unfinished sentences, false starts, hesitations and repetitions which are less dense than in the written language. In addition, spoken language tends to be non-standard: dialectal, slangish and colloquial, with less formality. For example, colloquial words and expressions such as stuff for material, guy for man, etc. These listening difficulties extend to the prosodic features of the spoken language: stress and intonation, assimilation, elision, liaison and different accents are common phenomena that make it difficult for the listeners to distinguish or recognise individual words in rapid speech.... That is why, the listeners get bored and may lose interest in listening.

The second source of difficulty comes from the speaker's speech which goes faster and dominates the interaction. Therefore, the speaker uses many redundant phrases which makes it more difficult for the listeners to understand what the speaker is saying. The reason is that:

in ordinary conversation or even in much extempore speech-making or lecturing we actually say a good deal more than would appear to be necessary in order to convey our message. Redundant utterances may take the form of repetitions, false starts, re-phrasings self-corrections, elaborations, tautologies, and apparently meaningless additions such as I mean or you know.

(Ur cited in Fan 1993: 16).

This redundancy is actually a natural feature of speech and may be a hindrance to the post-intermediate listeners to 'tune in' to the speaker's voice. The third source for not understanding well a listening passage is about the listener himself. The lack of socio-cultural, factual and contextual knowledge of the target language can be a major problem to listening comprehension, because language and culture go hand in hand. That is to say, language is used to express its culture. As a way of an example, the listeners are not so familiar with the English idioms and collocations. They cannot be expected to know that 'towering' often correlates with 'rage'. The American linguist Sapir maintains that, *'language cannot exist without culture... language is the*

expression of ideas of the society'. (Sapir 1921: 60). Consequently, language is the carrier of culture² that holds a way of thinking, carries knowledge and cultural information. This culture is embedded in even the simplest act of language.

This idea is also supported in that, *'the effective listener was the one who was able to draw on knowledge of the world, on personal experiences and by asking questions of themselves'*. (O'Malley and Chamot 1989: 420). Therefore, the listeners with no background knowledge of culture in English are unlikely to understand the English modes of thinking.

Finally, the physical setting which includes both background noises on the tapes and environmental noises can distract the listeners from the context of the listening passage. It is a well-known fact that listening material on tapes does not include any visual and aural environmental clues. Not being able to see the speaker may not help the visual listeners to draw the meaning out of a listening passage. What is more, unclear sounds can interfere with the listener's comprehension if the listening equipment is of poor quality.

2.4. How Listening is Achieved: Interactive Processing

The teaching of listening comprehension has undergone significant changes throughout the previous years, with a view to extending information collected from the body of research based on cognitive psychology. Although listening is a receptive skill, the listener is active since she/he pays attention to what is said(content) and how it is said(feelings). Most of what is known about the listening process is only the result of research of first language development. Research on second language listening comprehension is not really sufficient to know how listening happens as it has been stated that, *'there are fewer insights about the process of listening and the way it is learnt'*. (Goh 1997: 361). Since the cognitive domain has received much more attention, many theoretical models have tried to explain how listening is achieved. The most influential model studied thoroughly under schema theory (See 2.5.1.2) is the interactive model. This theoretical framework focuses on the listener as an active participant who can contribute to the construction of meaning i.e. the speaker's intended meaning. While listening, the listener interprets the oral/aural input in light of his

previous knowledge and simultaneously modifies his schemata as new information is learned. It has been noted that, *'the essence of the cognitive approach is that the individual is viewed as being active, constructive, and planful'*. (Howard Cited in Carrier, 2003: 384). Therefore, the listening strategy instruction in the present work is based on the interactive model (Vandergrift, 1999; El Koumy, 2000) which involves bottom-up and top-down processing. In other words, *'neither instruction in bottom-up nor in top-down listening processing was effective when used alone'*. (El-Koumy cited in Carrier, 2003: 390). In bottom-up processing, the listener relies on the language to recognise elements such as letters, words and sentences to draw the meaning out of a listening text. In top-down processing, the listener uses his background knowledge to process the incoming information. That is to say, the listener moves from general to specific. As a way of an example, the listener may listen for the main idea in a listening passage, using his background knowledge and, then, focuses on specific information in the listening passage. In practice, effective listeners continually use the two processes. A bottom-up processing is *'triggered by the sounds, words, and phrases which listeners hear as they attempt to decode speech and assign meaning'*. (Peterson 1991: 109) and a top-down processing is *'driven by listeners' expectations and understanding of the nature of text and the nature of world'*. (Ibid, 109). Clearly, these two processes do not act independently. The relationship between the two is not fully understood but there may be *'some sort of compensatory relationship, that is, when one process does not work effectively, the other assists to fill any gaps'*. (Stanovich, 1980: 39). These insights cannot account for thorough explanation of these listening comprehension difficulties. As clearly stated: *'theories, ideas and research are as good as teachers and textbook writers make them. Interesting and unexpected things happen in the classroom, and in the final analysis, principles and ideas need to be tested in practice'*. (Nunan 1991: 38). In other words, we need to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Consequently, carrying out a classroom-based research which focuses on what the listeners actually do is a key to further understanding of what theory says and what the teachers may find. Nevertheless, these theoretical frameworks still provide us with clues about the listening process. To better understand the top-down and bottom-up processing, we need to discuss the transactional and interactional

functions of language (See 2.1). Richards (1990) presents a version of how these two functions relate to the two types of listening comprehension processes.

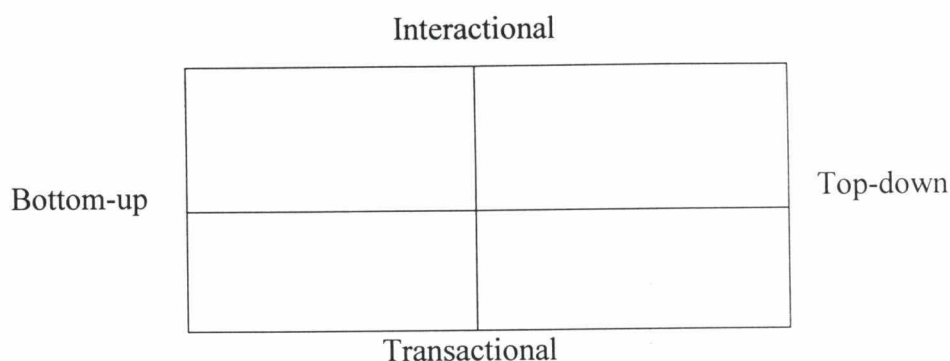


Figure 2.1. Richards (1990: 57): Four part classification of Listening processes and listening purposes.

Richards's representation shows an important point. Teachers need to be aware that different functions are processed differently and that the level of bottom-up processing needed by a learner is determined by the amount of top-down processing that a listener can bring to his listening. That is to say, the listeners are able to engage top-down processing more in a text dominated by interactional functions than they would in a text dominated by transactional functions. To set an example, in a situation where there is a speaker and listener and the topic of the conversation is known, understanding the oral input does not necessarily mean paying attention to all the linguistic form in that input. In other words, the top-down processing is highly activated to infer meaning and since listening comprehension has been defined as '*essentially an inferential process based on the perception of cues rather than straightforward matching of sound to meaning*'. (Rost Cited in Cadiedo 1999:12), top-down processing is used more than bottom-up processing. Whereas, in a situation where a text is dominated by transactional functions, the listeners cannot interact with the speaker and the topic is beyond the listeners' understanding. Bottom-up processing is highly activated rather than top-down processing in an attempt to decode the direct oral/aural input clearly stated in order to understand the speaker's intended meaning.

All what has been said earlier can be applied to an EFL situation but in a different way. Richards considers the interactional listening as having a social function.

In our present work, English is taught for academic purposes, where it is not practiced outside the classrooms. Nevertheless, in transactional listening, we can reverse Richards's representation and thus the implications for teaching listening are enormous. Teachers need to be aware that, for example, if the listeners are going to listen to a conversation between people talking about "eating out", top-down processing will be highly activated. Therefore, prediction in the pre-listening and while listening phase is useful. However, if they are going to listen to someone talk about his holiday in Japan, a place the learners have never been, then, bottom-up processing is used more. In this situation, prediction is useless in the pre-listening and while listening phases for the post-intermediate listeners. What teachers should do in the pre-listening phase to activate the listeners' background knowledge will be described in Chapter Four. The following section provides a rationale for listening strategies instruction, where the learning theories are fully described.

2.5. Theoretical Background and Learning Theories Supporting Listening Strategy Instruction

The cognitive learning theories consider listening as a dynamic process, in which the listeners try to encode information into long-term memory and retrieve it. whereas, the social learning theories focus not only on the listeners' thought, but also on the social nature of listening by promoting cooperative learning.

2.5.1. Cognitive Theories of Learning

Cognition is the process of knowing. Cognitive theories³ define '*language learning as the acquisition of a complex cognitive skill*'. (Me Laughlin Cited in Schwartz 1998: 4). From this perspective, the acquisition of language entails such skills as organising, transferring, and integrating information.

2.5.1.1. Information Processing

This theory suggests that listening is a sequential process where the listener should process the oral/aural input accurately. Processing new information means

'organizing it, elaborating on it, and connecting it with existing knowledge'. (Chamot 1999: 157).

This definition can be simplified by saying that processing new information is usually an inferential process in that the listener tries to infer what is not being stated explicitly in the listening passage. The information processing theory is based on the work on the structure of memory. The following model (See 2.1) represents listening comprehension in terms of a cognitive model.

Sensory Memory	Short-Term Memory	Long-Term Memory
-Temporary: 1 second or less. -Sounds may be noticed and recognized as words	-Temporary Up to 60 seconds. -Up to seven items. Rehearsal keeps items longer in short-term memory. Elaboration-relates items in short term memory to information already known. Semantic meaning is retained; actual words are lost.	Permanent-unlimited Number of items held. Extracted meanings become part of existing schemata or scripts, or create a new schema. Procedural knowledge: knowing how. Declarative knowledge: knowing what.

Table 2.1. (Schwartz 1998:28): Information processing model of listening comprehension.

The above table shows that in information processing:
memory is represented by three separate stores: sensory or echoic memory, short term or working memory, and long-term memory. In the first and two basic stages of processing, the listener perceives sounds and retains them in sensory memory for perhaps one second or less.

(Gass Cited in Schwartz 1998: 4).

These bits of language are recognised as sound patterns. That is why, we feel the listener's dilemma: sound passes on to the short-term memory with no boundaries. The

short-term memory has a capacity of about 20 to 60 seconds. In order to *'hold more information in short-term memory, groups of items are chunked into syntactic, semantic, or phonological units of meaning'*. (O'Malley and Chamot 1990:20). Background knowledge also helps organise the information into chunks. Rehearsal and elaboration are two other processes: *which occur in short-term memory to increase processing capacity. Rehearsal, or actively repeating items, allows information to be maintained longer in short-term memory. Elaboration consists of relating information to things we already know (For example, mnemonic devices for vocabulary learning). Not all the information which reaches short-term memory passes on to long-term memory.*

(Schwartz 1998: 5).

Semantic meanings are stored in the long-term memory, where many items are held for a long time. This begs the question: how is the oral/aural input accessed in the long-term memory? This is mainly concerned with how we listen. It has been hypothesised that, *'extracted meanings are stored as either procedural knowledge... or as declarative knowledge'*. (Anderson 1985: 8). Procedural knowledge is a step beyond declarative knowledge. An example of procedural knowledge would be to recognise irregular verbs in the past tense; an example of declarative knowledge would be the meanings of those verbs. Basically, this is not enough. We would say that procedural knowledge is a bit detrimental to grammar⁴. That is to say, I can speak English without relying heavily too much on grammatical rules. i.e. am I supposed to learn all the grammatical rules (declarative knowledge) to convey a message?! What is more, declarative knowledge does not lead inevitably to use procedural knowledge. Many learners who have mastered the grammatical rules could not apply them when they handle communication situations. This is not to say that grammar is useless but teaching decontextualised grammar may not be helpful for many learners, particularly for FD styles. Consequently, in listening comprehension, if the listener relies heavily on bottom-up processing, his listening comprehension may not develop appropriately. Though it is quite difficult to give a good definition of the learning strategies, we would say a strategy is a combination of knowledge to achieve a certain goal.

2.5.1.2. Schema Theory

This theory strives to explain how listeners understand the listening input according to their previous knowledge. Life experiences or knowledge about the world accumulated through years are mental maps or “scripts”. These scripts are called schemata. As new information is learned, the listener modifies his original schemata. Thus, listening is an interaction between the listener’s prior knowledge and the listening input itself. This interaction is achieved through bottom-up and top-down processing. As regards our present work, tests should reflect the theoretical assumptions under which the teachers operate. In other words, the teachers should teach the listeners the listening strategies such predicting, drawing inferences and summarising, because the listeners *‘use their background knowledge of the world as an initial frame for relating to new information. They then use cognitive strategies as tools to help build meaning from the new information and from their background knowledge’*. (Chamot et al. 1999: 159). This definition also distinguishes between *‘formal schemata (knowledge about the structural configuration of texts) and content schemata (knowledge about the subject matter of texts)’*. (Carrell Cited in Sequera, 1995: 49). Briefly put, the listener may fail to process the oral/aural input if it does not have a coherent organisation (formal schema) or if content schema, too often culture-specific is lacking. Based upon this theory, we suggest the following guidelines for setting up listening tasks:

- 1-Listening tasks should include topics which allow the listeners to activate their background knowledge (content schemata).
- 2-Listening passages should be organised (formal schemata). Listening texts with high redundancies should be avoided for the post-intermediate listeners.
- 3-Not understanding the culture of the text is a major difficulty for the listeners. The listener may understand the listening passage but not the culture. A well known example is “After a salad, he felt better”. In the American culture, this means that there is nothing after a salad. All the meal is included. In our culture, if we test our listeners and say, for instance, “what did Mr. John have after salad?” the listeners may not answer correctly. In such cases, the teacher should clear any cultural misunderstanding right from the beginning. After all, we believe that a link should be made between English and its culture. Therefore, texts should, also, include some cultural notions.

2.5.2. Social-Cognitive Theories of Learning

These theories consider that factors, other than the listener's processes, can affect listening comprehension. Their main concern is the social nature of learning. Such theories strive to explain how listening strategies can be taught.

2.5.2.1. Bandura's Social-Cognitive Theory

According to Bandura's social-cognitive theory, listening is a matter of personal factors especially motivation, environment and complex behaviours. This theory focuses on self-efficacy of the listener when he succeeds in tasks which give him a certain confidence in handling problems in hand. Having said that, it has been defined that:

a listener experiences success at a valued task, he or she develops a sense of self-efficacy- a belief that one has the capability to succeed at that kind of task. Self-efficacy can, in turn, affect whether the student is willing to try a task, as well as the student's persistence at the task, thoughts during the task and eventual performance.

(Bandura cited in Chamot et al. 1999: 259).

In the light of this definition, it is understood that motivation is a key factor to success and listeners with high self-efficacy do better than listeners with low self-efficacy. This is true to a certain extent, but if the teacher is faced with learners who do not prefer the listening skill, will he teach them or let them to their "own devices". Even if the learners are demotivated, a better and explicit listening strategy instruction may positively affect their listening comprehension.

2.5.2.2. Vygotsky's Social-Cognitive Theory

Vygotsky's theory is, also, very important in that it is intended to expand the listener's role by operating in '*their zone of proximal development when teachers...provide the support needed for completing the learning tasks*'. (Chamot et al. 1999: 160). In other words, for development in listening comprehension to occur, interaction with teachers who are more knowledgeable is needed. In this view of things and under the assumption of Vygotsky's theory, listening instruction should be guided

and supported by the teacher, since the listeners still need to observe the way their teacher approaches the listening tasks and by doing much practice, the use of the listening strategies will become automatic and thus less support is given. The teachers should bear in mind that the listening strategies are not innate or at least success is not only the cause of innate ability alone. Listening strategies can be learned and taught. Consequently, this leads us to talk more exhaustively about the listening strategies in the following section.

2.6. Listening Strategies

Listening strategies have been defined as metacognitive, cognitive and social-affective strategies. Metacognitive and social affective strategies are not included in our present work due to the difficulty of teaching them in an EFL setting. Moreover, metacognitive listening strategies encourage the thinking processes of the listeners through think-aloud techniques which focus on the listener's immediate responses upon finishing the task. The listeners may not respond positively to this technique due to cultural differences and the listeners' proficiency level. In the following section, we will discuss and define the cognitive listening strategies used by the post-intermediate listeners, since they make a clear focus in our study.

2.6.1. Definition of Cognitive Listening Strategies

Cognitive listening strategies are '*specific techniques or activities which contribute directly to the comprehension and recall of the listening input*'. (Rubin cited in Schwartz 1998: 6). They are, in fact, observable, task-specific and applied to specific situations. In this research, though exploratory in nature, the focus was on the cognitive listening strategies because they require direct analysis of the listening input. They are exemplified by inferencing, listening for the main idea, prediction and so on. It has often been stated that, '*students without metacognitive approaches are essentially learners without direction and ability to review their progress, accomplishments, and future learning direction*'. (O'Malley and Chamot 1990: 99). As we can see, metacognitive strategies are most of the time unobservable and a test should measure what is observable. Therefore, how can it measure what it is not measurable? In terms

of validity, this is quite difficult to answer. Clearly, this definition distinguishes between metacognitive and cognitive listening strategies, but once again this begs the question: what constitutes a metacognitive listening strategy or a cognitive listening strategy? This is quite difficult to answer when it comes to practice. Basically, we would say that a strategy is a combination of knowledge (See 2.2).

Indicators	Criteria	Knowledge of listeners	Combination of knowledge
-Key words	-Content words which are stressed: nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs	-Stress, -Content words -Background knowledge	-Indicators plus the knowledge of the listener

Table 2.2. Listening strategy evaluation.

This table, though very simplistic, shows that to teach the listening strategies, the teacher should first develop the sub-skills which are the indicators. These sub-skills are used by the effective listeners. In order to help less effective listeners, whose background knowledge is limited, the teacher should first help them develop these sub-skills. If the listeners do not know what stress means, the teacher should use bottom-up processing and give some practice. This will help them to select the key words from the listening input. In down to earth terms, less effective listeners cannot use this strategy- listening for key words- if they are not instructed in these sub-skills. Consequently, scanning for key words demands that the listener should selectively attend to specific information. This is a metacognitive strategy which is not observable. The distinction between metacognitive strategy and cognitive strategy is rather confusing because when the listener scans for key words, he automatically attends selectively. Therefore, attributing the failure to combine metacognitive listening strategies to cognitive listening is not measurable, because it is not observable. In other words, it is better to focus on what is observable and what gives direct results, since the EFL listeners may use some metacognitive strategies without being aware of them as in “attends selectively” listening strategy.

2.6.2. Characteristics of Effective Listeners

Research on listening strategies investigates the feasibility of helping listeners become more effective by teaching them some of the listening strategies that are identified as characteristic of effective listeners. Proficient listeners have been defined as following four basic steps to extract meaning from a listening text:

- They figure out the purpose of listening, predict and anticipate some of what they will hear, and assess their background knowledge of the topic.
- They decide how much of what they are learning is relevant to the purpose they have already identified, and selectively ignore or attend to parts of the listening input.
- As they listen, they use top-down and bottom-up strategies flexibly and interactively depending on the purpose, the difficulty of the input, and their background knowledge.
- They check their comprehension while they are listening and when the Listening is over.

(Rixon Cited in Schwartz, 1998: 7-8).

To sum up, listening comprehension is analogous to information processing. It has a lot to do with psycholinguistics. When the listener decodes the message, he/she not only needs linguistic knowledge but also ability to use mental power. There is a lot to be done to understand the function of our brain in listening to a FL.

2. 6. 3. Terminology and Classification of Listening Strategies

Different classification schemes of listening strategies have been developed to describe the information derived from descriptive studies which, too often, give broad and imprecise definitions of listeners' self-report strategies. This could be interpreted by:

a degree of uncertainty about what learning strategies are, in part a reliance upon traditional modes of research in the field, and in part a certain hesitancy about moving too quickly toward training students to use the strategies since their effects with some students might prove to be detrimental to learning.

(O'Malley and Chamot 1990: 220).

Earlier researchers relied on their own observations to describe the listening strategies, or grouped the listening strategies into categories. These categories, which were proposed by (Rubin 1981; Naiman et al. 1978 Cited in O'Malley and Chamot 1990:4-5), were considered as 'admonitions'. Rubin's primary category includes strategies such as clarification/verification; monitoring; memorisation; guessing/inductive reasoning; deductive reasoning and practice. These strategies were task-specific. A second category includes creating practice opportunities and using production tricks such as communication strategies. Rubin's research was mainly based on classroom observations which were not very helpful in identifying the strategies. Another classification scheme proposed by Naiman et al. includes primary strategies which were broad. These were: active task approach; realisation of language as a system; realisation of language as a means of communication and interaction, management of affective demands and monitoring of second language performance. The major problem with these classifications was that they did not make a distinction between strategies which are specific to tasks. These techniques identified by Naiman et al. are: Listening to the radio, records, TV, movies, tapes and so on and exposing oneself to different accents and registers. As can be seen, the Rubin and Naiman et al., classification schemes do not have any grounding in cognition, because what these researchers did was to instruct the learners in a natural classroom instructional setting. That is why, it is quite difficult to define what a strategy is. The Chamot et al., classification (See 2.3) is rather helpful and manageable since they organise the strategies in four metacognitive processes: planning; monitoring; problem solving and evaluating. Individual strategies are presented according to the four processes. Learners work through these processes for any challenging task

Listening Strategies: A Metacognitive Model

Listening strategies	Definition	Metacognitive Processes
Activate background knowledge	Think about and use what you already know to help you do the task. Elaborate on prior knowledge.	Planning, Monitoring and Problem solving
Predict	Anticipate information to prepare and give direction to the task.	Planning
Inference	Make guesses based on previous knowledge. Use contextual clues.	Problem-solving
Selectively attend	Focus on key words, phrases. Find specific information.	Planning Monitoring
Take notes	Write down important words and concepts. Make a T List	Planning, Monitoring Problem-solving and Evaluating
Verify prediction	Check whether your predictions are correct.	Evaluating
Summarise	Create a written summary of information	Evaluating

Table 2.3. *Individual Listening Strategies in the Metacognitive Model.* (Chamot et al. 1999:17)

This classification of the listening strategies is also a problem for EFL listeners. As a way of an example, selecting key words is a cognitive listening strategy. That is to say, it is observable. Selectively attend is a strategy which is unobservable. This means that even cognitive strategies are controlled by metacognitive strategies. According to Chamot, we cannot separate them as if they are 'interwoven'. It should be made clear that, *'language learning strategy classification schemes have generally been developed for research purposes'*. (Chamot 2004:17). Therefore, for listening to be effective, the teachers should strive to develop the listeners' cognitive strategies in an instructional model. As regards our present work, the cognitive listening strategies (See 2.4.) are classified as follows:

Cognitive listening strategies	Definition
Pre-listening strategies	-Write down all the words you know about the topic, make a semantic mapping to make inferences while you listen.
Activate background knowledge	
Predict	-Anticipate the information or the words the speakers are going to say. Will these words occur in the listening passage? Make a semantic mapping.
While-listening strategies.	-Check whether my predictions (words and lexical items) are correct. Have I anticipated well the information?
Verify predictions.	
Inference	-Use contextual clues, follow the speaker's idea, and use also your background knowledge to make logical guesses (strategy combination). Distinguish between fact and opinion.
Listen for the main idea	-Skim the listening passage, consider the whole passage, and listen for key words to find the main idea, write the main idea. (Strategy combination).
Listen for key words	-Write down only content words (adjectives, adverbs nouns) which carry the most important information. Listen for stressed words to find the main idea (strategy combination).
Post-listening strategies	
Summarise	-Make a brief summary of the listening passage, take notes of what you think is important. Convert these important words and phrases into more general ones (strategy combination).

Table 2.4. Cognitive listening strategies

This classification, though very simplistic seems to be a bit clear. In order not to get confused, listening strategies '*in action are complex behaviors that rarely occur as single instances. Normally we use strategies in combinations to complete a task*'. (Chamot et al. 1999: 31). These cognitive listening strategies may enhance listening comprehension if taught explicitly.

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2.6.4. Models in Listening Strategy Instruction

A number of instructional models (See 2.5) for teaching listening strategies in EFL contexts have been developed (Chamot; 2005, Cohen; 1998, Grenfell and Harris; 1999 Cited in Chamot 2004: 2).

SSBI Model (cohen, 1998).	CALLA Model (chamot,2004)	Grenfell and Harris (1999)
Teacher as diagnostician: helps students identify current strategies and learning styles.	Preparation: teacher identifies students' current learning strategies for familiar tasks.	Awareness raising: students complete a task, and then identify the strategies they used.
Teacher as language learner: shares his own learning experiences.	Presentation: teacher names, explains a new strategy.	Modeling: teacher models, discusses value of new strategy.
Teacher as learner trainer: trains students how to use learning strategies.	Practice: students practise the new strategy.	General practice: students practise new strategies with different tasks.
Teacher as coordinator: supervises students' study plans& monitors difficulties.	Self-evaluation: students evaluate their own strategy use after practice.	Action planning: students set goals and choose strategies to attain those goals.
Teacher as coach: provides ongoing guidance on students' progress.	Expansion: students transfer strategies to new tasks, develop a repertoire of preferred strategies.	Focused practice: students carry out plan using selected strategies.
	Assessment: teacher assesses students' use of strategies and impact on performance.	Evaluation: teacher and students evaluate success of action plan; set new goals; cycle begins again.

Table 2 .5. (Chamot 2004:2): Models for language learning strategy instruction.

Due to the complexity of these instructional models, which are based on developing the thinking processes of the learners, we have adapted the CALLA model to our context. It includes only the two phases with some changes: presentation and practice. In the presentation phase, the teacher should help the listeners activate their background knowledge or predict, depending on the task. Teachers can use graphic organisers (semantic maps, clusters) to help the listeners think about and visually record relationships between ideas. These graphic organisers are a “picture” of information and organise facts, ideas or information in a logical way. They are used to activate the listeners’ background knowledge to help them process the new information. This phase builds a foundation to reinforce these two strategies in order to prepare the listeners for the while listening phase. Then, the teacher names the new listening strategy, explains its importance and tells how and when to use it. For example, the teacher names the strategy “inferencing”, by writing it on the board, shows the usefulness of the listening strategy by giving an example, and tells that inferencing is used when we do not understand every word in a listening passage.

In the practice phase, the listeners practise the new listening strategy with regular class tasks. The teacher should select appropriate levels of listening tasks with moderate difficulties and give feedback to prompt the use of the cognitive listening strategies. Though these phases differ remarkably from the CALLA model, since they do not really focus on the real construction of autonomous learners, where the thinking processes are encouraged, they, nevertheless, equip the listeners with a repertoire of the cognitive listening strategies which help them use an interactive processing while listening. Listening strategy instruction is, then, intended to reinforce the use of these listening strategies so as they become “proceduralised” and part of regular classroom tasks.

2.7. Conclusion

This chapter has tried to shed light on some key concepts of the listening process. First, it defined listening from a theoretical background and the factors affecting the listening process. It, also, underlined the importance of the interactive processing, showing its weaknesses and strengths. However, some researchers claim that for listening to develop appropriately, the top-down processing should take over the bottom-up processing. Moreover, learning theories supporting strategy instruction have been considered. Research in EFL contexts has found that listening strategies are not innate and can be taught to less effective listeners. Finally, different models for teaching listening strategies have been presented with a view to reinforcing the cognitive listening strategies. Therefore, there is a need to know whether or not we obtain similar results in this study. This question will be answered in the following chapter.

Notes to Chapter Two

1-For further reading, see Lieberman, P. and Blumstein, S. (1988) where their work provides a clear outline of speech reception. It also describes the physiology of speech production and sound waves. See also Moore, B (1982) whose work covers key concepts related to speech perception. A detailed analysis of sound and processes involved in hearing speech is given.

2-Sapir, E. (1921) states that language and culture are inseparable. This is true to a certain extent. However, the knowledge of the language and the background knowledge of the listeners are not well developed because some listeners may not understand the culture of the text itself, because what is significant in one culture may not be significant in another. Therefore, the teachers need to be aware that the fact of non understanding the culture of the text may not be helpful for many listeners. However, the text should include notions of foreign culture and the teacher should clear, right from the beginning, any mismatch between the two cultures.

3-Many theories of Second Language Acquisition (Mc Laughlin et al. 1983; Mc Leod and Mc Laughlin, 1987 a, b; Faerch and kasper 1985) suggest that language acquisition can be placed at the inductive end, with the exception of Krashen's Monitor Model (1983), whose theory was deductive. Whereas, cognitive theory predicts awareness. Without awareness, learners would never be able to describe how they learn. This depends on the familiarity of the skill (O'Malley & Chamot 1990) being applied and the nature of the information that is processed not whether the information is learned in a classroom (academic setting) or in a supposedly natural language environment (natural setting), as krashen suggests.

4-In teaching grammar, the teacher should focus on the structure's communicative use or what the learners can do with the structure in real life. For example, the teacher may present the use of the grammar structure by saying: "today we'll learn how to talk about professional experience: a job interview", not the name of the structure or the rules for

using the structure ('As you know the English language has fifteen tenses. Today we'll focus on one of them, passive tense'). A context is the text, speech or situation or even a picture that connects words or phrases. The context should be connected by a single theme or idea where more information about a structure is given. Examples are:

- What have these people done today? (Picture cue).
- Make a dialogue telling your friend what you have done for the last two days (situation).
- Please write a paragraph in the present perfect tense (free practice).

CHAPTER THREE

CHAPTER THREE
LISTENING STRATEGY PRE- INSTRUCTION
AND POST-INSTRUCTION RESULTS

3.1. Introduction

3.2. Data Collection Procedure

3.3. Pre-Instruction Phase Results

3.3.1. Listeners' Questionnaire Results for Strategy Identification.

3.3.2. Pretest Results

3.3.3. Teachers and listeners' Questionnaires Results for Identifying
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3.7. Conclusion

CHAPTER THREE

LISTENING STRATEGY PRE-INSTRUCTION AND POST-INSTRUCTION RESULTS

3.1. Introduction

This chapter attempts to obtain empirical evidence about the research question through the research tools. First, the listeners' existing cognitive listening strategies will be identified through the listeners' questionnaire and the pretest results to check hypothesis one. Next, an analysis of the listeners' listening comprehension difficulties, from both the listeners' and teachers' viewpoints, will be provided to check hypothesis two. Finally, an examination of the cognitive listening strategy use, by the experimental and the control groups, in the post instruction phase will provide data to confirm or infirm hypothesis three. Therefore, the findings from the research work are used to check whether the teaching of the cognitive listening strategies through an explicit model, results in an improvement of the listener's ability to use the top-down and bottom-up listening strategies in an academic context.

3.2. Data Collection Procedure

The research tools outlined in chapter one (See 1.5) were used to collect data during three distinct phases:

- Pre-instruction phase to identify the listeners' existing cognitive listening strategies use.
- Instruction phase to teach and reinforce the cognitive listening strategies use.
- Post-instruction phase to check the effectiveness of the cognitive listening strategies use.

3.3. Pre-Instruction Phase Results

This diagnostic phase tried to identify the listeners' existing cognitive listening strategies through the questionnaire and the pretest administered to the listeners before the instruction phase. The first step consisted in analysing rubric one of the questionnaire which included ten items(7-13) on a three-point Likert scale (Almost

Never/Sometimes/Almost Every time). All the questions were closed-ended. The second step consisted in testing the listeners' ability to use the seven cognitive listening strategies selected for this study. Rubric one of the questionnaire and the pretest were meant to check the validity of hypothesis one. Two listening texts: "Ads" and "Weather" were used with the forty listeners. The two listening texts were selected according to the listeners' level (See Appendix E). Basically, the texts were not very long and required around a two-minute listening. These two listening texts can be classified as transactional or non-collaborative ones because the listeners could not actually talk to the speakers, but required the listeners to be active while listening. Text one is informative and text two is persuasive. This selection was intended to get the listeners involved in purposeful listening. The pretest comprised pre-listening, while listening and post-listening tasks.

In the task of text one "Ads", the listeners were asked to activate their background knowledge about the topic by brainstorming as many words as they could before listening. Activating background knowledge was meant to help the listeners in the while listening phase. The listeners were asked to select the main idea. They were, then, asked to choose the best answer in three multiple choice items¹ (each item comprised three options). They were tested to use inferences².

The pre-listening task of text two: "Weather" tested the listeners' use of "prediction" which called for the listeners to anticipate topical lexis from the title by brainstorming ideas closely related to the topic. In the while listening phase, the listeners were asked to verify whether their predictions were correct or not. Following these questions, the listeners were asked to select keywords by listening to the tape again. In the post-listening phase, they were asked to convert the detailed points (keywords and other phrases) into a summary of the listening passage.

In this section, the results from the two questionnaires, the pretest and posttests will be used to check the validity of the three hypotheses. The results of each step will be given and fully described. Therefore, the goal of these findings is to see whether or not the listeners use and maintain the cognitive listening strategies in an academic setting.

3.3.1. Listeners' Questionnaire Results for Strategy Identification

Rubric one of the questionnaire was aiming to collect data on the frequency of usage of a range of cognitive listening strategies for first- year university learners of English. Overall, the results show that over half (72,85%) of all items (See 3.1) of the group fell into the 'Almost never' category, whereas some items fell into the 'Almost Every Time' category and taking into account the 'Sometimes' category, this figure rose to 27,15%.

N = 40

<i>Item N°</i>	<i>Almost never</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Almost Every Time</i>
7	32	07	01
8	34	04	02
9	35	05	-
10	20	08	12
11	25	08	07
12	30	02	08
13	28	06	06
Total	204	40	36
%	≈ 72,85	≈ 14,29	≈ 12,86

Table 3.1. Identifying listeners existing cognitive listening strategies.

Table 3.1 shows that the cognitive listening strategies were not widely used by the whole group before they entered the university. Nevertheless, a few cognitive listening strategies that some listeners indicated were 'Sometimes' and 'Almost Every time' used only by a small number of them.

In particular, the cognitive listening strategies that a few listeners practised were those, were the frequency of 'Sometimes' and 'Almost Every Time' in items 10, 11 and 13 were respectively 20/40, 15/40 and 12/40. These were the listening strategies of 'Listening for the main idea', 'note taking' and 'summarizing'. Strategies with very low

frequencies that the listeners indicated were 'Almost Never' practised included mainly items 7, 8, 9 and 12 where frequencies were 32/40, 34/40, 35/40 and 30/40 respectively. These listening strategies were 'activate background knowledge', 'predict', 'verify predictions' and 'inferencing' and were the least practised.

Having said that, items, where frequencies were 20/70, 15/40 and 12/40 offer an opportunity for the teacher to promote those listening strategies, in particular the strategy indicated by item 10. In general, results showed that the listeners did not use the cognitive listening strategies conscientiously and widely. In addition, the data presented here, provided an example of a few listeners who applied a small repertoire of cognitive listening strategies but not that sufficient because they lacked and still lack the '*orchestration of second language strategies*'. (Oxford, 1993: 181). In other words, these few listeners did not combine all the listening strategies but still they are effective listeners. This begs the question: how come did a few listeners find the main idea, for example? The answer is that listeners selected individual cognitive listening strategies and may be metacognitive listening strategies- though metacognitive listening strategies are not included in our study – without explaining how they did. While there are indicators for teacher of English of other under-utilised cognitive listening strategies, they should provide the listeners with listening instruction to help them develop the listening skills.

Given those results, the researcher hypothesised that the listeners might be equipped with a few cognitive listening strategies but not sufficient to develop their listening skills. Therefore, hypothesis one is partially supported and needs to be substantiated by empirical evidence from the pretest results.

3.3.2. Pretest Results

The researcher analysed the pretest data and read all the answers. They were used as a measure of the listeners' top-down and bottom-up listening strategies. It is worth noting that the top-down listening strategies used by the listeners were:

- Activate background knowledge.
- Predict.

- Listen for the main ideas.
- Infer
- Summarise.

These are listener-based. Whereas the bottom-up listening strategies were:

- Select key words and phrases.
- Verify predictions.

These are text-based.

In order to measure the top-down and bottom-up skills of the listeners, we did the following:

- Points scored in 'Activate background knowledge' equalled forty. For an answer to be correct, each listener had to brainstorm at least four words. Brainstorming less than four words was considered as an incorrect answer.
- For 'listening for the main idea', the points scored equalled forty. A very short or specific answer was considered as incorrect.
- For 'inferencing', the score equalled one hundred and twenty points in three multiple choice items. Each item comprised three options. Therefore, for forty listeners, the total score was one hundred and twenty points.
- For 'predicting' and 'verify predictions', the same procedure was followed as in 'activate background knowledge'
- For key words, selecting more than four words was considered as a correct answer. Selecting four or less than four words or phrases was considered as a wrong answer. The score equalled forty points.
- Finally, for 'summarising', a good summary was given a point for its quality rather than its quantity. The listeners were tested on their comprehension of the listening text rather than their grammar. A separate analysis was conducted about the listeners' ability to use the cognitive listening strategies (See 3.2) selected for this study.

Total score = 360 points

$$AF_n = \Sigma_{AF}$$

$$RF_n = \frac{\sum RF}{7} = \frac{195,83}{7} = 27,97\%$$

N= 40

		<i>Cognitive listening strategies</i>	<i>Pretest score</i>
T A S K O N E	Activate background knowledge	AF	17/40
		RF	42,50 %
	Main idea	AF	09/40
		RF	22,50 %
	Inferencing	AF	40/120
		RF	33,33 %
T A S K T W O	Predicting	AF	11/40
		RF	27,50 %
	Verify predictions	AF	07/40
		RF	17,50 %
Note taking (Key words)	AF	10/40	
	RF	25 %	
Summarising	AF	11/40	
	RF	27,50 %	
Total		AF _n	105/360
		RF _n	27,97%

Table 3.2. Cognitive listening strategies used by the listeners.

As illustrated in table 3.2, the RF_n was 27, 97% which revealed that most listeners were equipped with a small repertoire of cognitive listening strategies. This may be interpreted by the fact that only effective listeners used these cognitive listening strategies, though without prior instruction. The only top-down listening strategy which was used nearly by the half of the group was 'Activate background knowledge'.

However, previous results (See 3.3.1) showed that this strategy was 'Almost Never' used by the listeners for item 7. This may be due to the fact that the listeners were never asked to brainstorm ideas on their own in the secondary schools.

They were, probably, provided with a list of vocabulary items as a kind of pre-information elicitation which might have discouraged them to come up with topical lexis. In the pre-listening phase, we can assume that the familiarity of the topic might have helped the seventeen listeners to jot down lexical items. Whereas, the other listeners could not do brainstorming because their knowledge of the world and schemata may be limited. It should be noted that variables of instruction and the affective side of the listeners were not considered in our study and might have affected some listeners.

Table 3.2 shows, also, that the RF was only 22, 50% in 'listening for the main idea'. Most listeners could not find the main idea easily. They got confused between the title and the main idea. That is why, they came up with very short and specific answers. Others did not write anything. This may be attributed to the fact that most listeners might have processed all the words of the text; they could not, probably, skim parts of the message and focus on relevant details or key words. Moreover, they might not have considered the whole passage to make sense of its internal organisation. We can assume, then, that the listeners listened to every detail to get the main idea. They probably did because they thought that every word they decoded was important and must have been understood. They were, then, under the false assumption that they could understand every word. Following every word might have partly distracted them to focus on key information which might have given a clue for global understanding. This way of processing information revealed the listeners' use of bottom-up processing, and hence, their preferences for rote-memorisation of learning in general. This can be explained by the fact that most listeners might have suffered from information overload in the passage, making them unable to get an overall comprehension of the text.

It should be noted that lexis is an important factor in listening comprehension, but words are not sufficient on their own. Sentences should not be processed word by word because when the information is not explicitly stated, the meaning is placed behind these sentences. Therefore, *'this focus on their underlying meaning of utterances can help learners overcome their problem of focusing on individual*

words'. (Mc Neill, 1997: 86). It helps them direct their listening efforts through using contextual clues and background knowledge to focus on the passage as a whole.

For 'inferencing', the RF was 33, 33%, which showed that some listeners could infer the implied meaning, but over the half could not do that. They, probably, did not use the contextual clues and their background knowledge to assign meaning to the listening passage. They were, in fact, unable to assign appropriate meaning to the words with regard to how they were used in context. They were found to have lacked sense of logical relationships between the sentences because meaning, for them, would, perhaps, reside in lexical and grammatical meaning. Therefore, they could not perceive the listening passage as a semantic unit but just as lexical chunks bound into a grammatical unit. In other words, the meaning existed in the head of the listeners. That is, they were, simply, not able to use their background knowledge because for them, it might have been directly encoded in words, though essential as a complementary procedure encoded in words to the bottom-up strategy to focus on words and structures.

As far as 'predicting' is concerned, table 3.2 indicates that the RF was 27, 50%. This shows that most listeners could not set up correct predictions. This may be attributed to the fact that most listeners did not, perhaps, differentiate, between the 'activities background knowledge' and 'predict' strategies. Basically, they did know how to predict or anticipate the incoming information. Moreover, the listeners' limited knowledge of the world might be a major problem for them to brainstorm words and phrases they thought would be in the listening passage. One should be inclined to think that even without prior instruction, a few listeners were found to have predicted and hence, their expectations were met.

For 'verify predictions', the RF was very low because most listeners did not, probably, know how to predict. Therefore, their expectations were not met. This does not, really, show that the listeners were not able to use the top-down processing to focus on the listening passage or phrases but, rather, the listeners might not have understood what it was primarily meant by the word predict.

For 'key words', it was noticed that the RF was only 25% and the score was poor (AF = 10/40). This shows that most listeners could not select key words from the listening passage, though they had to rely heavily on the bottom-up processing. From

the listeners' answers, we knew that the listeners selected mainly function words which might have struck their ears. These were no more than grammatical words with very restricted usefulness. However, not having been able to select key words does not mean that the listeners fell behind in terms of comprehension, but simply they did not, probably, discriminate between the key words and function words.

Finally the listeners were found to have failed in their attempts to write a brief summary. More than a half was not able to convert his notes into a summary. This may be due to the fact that they did not understand well the listening passage. That is why; two listeners wrote illogical things not linked to the text. These two listeners might have gone beyond the text and their summaries might have been based exclusively on their world knowledge. If their listening comprehension had been based upon both world knowledge and the listening text, they might have written good summaries. This finding pointed out that listening comprehension was poorly linked with mainly speaking and writing. Thus, skills integration may reinforce the listeners' understanding of the spoken text.

On the whole, the results of the pretest supported those of the questionnaire. Comparison between these results showed that the listeners were equipped with a small repertoire of the cognitive listening strategies but not sufficient to develop the listening skill. Effective listeners used these few strategies, though not instructed how to use them. Certainly, these listeners use both top-down and bottom-up processing to draw the meaning out of the spoken text. Ineffective listeners relied heavily on bottom-up processing and used listening strategies which were only text-based. Consequently, hypothesis one is confirmed but cannot be generalised for all EFL learners.

3.3.3. Teachers and listeners' Questionnaires Results for Identifying listening Comprehension Difficulties

In this section, we will first present the results of both the questionnaires and, then, analyse the data in an attempt to identify the listening comprehension difficulties. Rubric two of the listeners' questionnaire was aiming to collect data on the frequency of the listening comprehension difficulties as felt by them before listening strategy instruction. On the whole, the results show that 78, 08% of all the items (See 3.3) of the

group fell into the 'Almost Every Time' category. Whereas, some listeners have not experienced these difficulties but their percentage are only 9, 44%. 'Sometimes' falls between the two categories. If added to the 'Almost Every time' strategy, this figure rises to 90, 55%. If added to the 'Almost Never' category, it rises to 21, 94%

N = 40 (Listeners)

<i>Items</i>	<i>Almost never</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Almost Every Time</i>
a	02	04	34
b	05	07	28
c	04	08	28
d	01	03	36
e	01	02	37
f	06	07	27
g	03	04	33
h	04	06	30
i	08	04	28
TOTAL	34	45	281
%	9,44 %	12,50 %	78,05 %

Table 3.3. Listening comprehension difficulties as felt by the listeners.

Table 3.3 indicates that most listeners experience different sorts of listening comprehension difficulties. Statistically, there is a big difference between the 'Almost Every Time' category and the 'Sometimes' and 'Almost Never' categories. In order to get the clarity of the listeners' questionnaire (rubric two), we need to cross-check these results by another questionnaire administered to the teachers (See Appendix B).

N = 40 (Teachers)

<i>Items</i>	<i>Almost never</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Almost Every Time</i>
a	02	04	34
b	04	06	30
c	03	04	33
d	03	04	33
e	02	03	35
f	05	08	27
g	04	04	32
h	05	06	29
i	07	07	26
TOTAL	35	46	279
%	9,72 %	12,77 %	77,5 %

Table 3.4. Listening comprehension difficulties as perceived by the teachers.

Statistically, results from table 3.4 correlated with those from table 3.3. Therefore, the questionnaires unveiled some listening comprehension difficulties from the listeners' and teachers' viewpoints. Given those figures in terms of percentage, it is, then, logical to separate each item and analyse it.

Item A: Difficult words and grammatical structures.

This refers to the difficulty of understanding a listening text. Thirty two teachers reported that this was a lingering problem for their listeners who found it difficult to understand words and difficult grammatical structures. This shows that difficult grammatical structures have always been a challenge as listening poses particular demands, because there are many sentences types that are complex and very different from the listener's standard language. A close analysis showed that these listeners were instructed in using only their bottom-up listening strategies in which grammar knowledge has been the focal point. That is why, they usually found themselves in a painstaking attempt to unlock only the meaning of these sentences without relying on the context. It should be made clear that due to the structural component of English

which may cause listening comprehension difficulties for these listeners, a middle solution would be, perhaps, to set up tasks in developing both the top-down and bottom-up listening strategies of the listeners.

Item B: Difficulty in understanding a long listening text.

Table 3.3 and 3.4 indicate that the listeners also find it difficult to understand a long spoken text. The reason for that is that some listening passages contain larger lexical chunks with subordinate clauses. The listeners reported they are not able to stay focused on a long spoken text because heavy processing requirements imposed by the spoken text might caused the listeners to lose concentration rather quickly due to the short memory span for these listeners. Their limited grammatical knowledge and topical knowledge might be a hindrance for them.

Item C: Difficulty in not understanding the meaning of words which are not pronounced clearly.

Table 3.3 and 3.4 indicate listening comprehension difficulties related to pronunciation. The listeners reported that they cannot focus on words which are not clearly pronounced. Do they imply that they cannot discriminate speech sounds even at the phonemic level? We think that these listeners were, simply, exposed to texts which were beyond their level. That is why, they could not understand the speaker well. Nevertheless, the teachers may instruct the listeners in an extremely bottom-up activities which focus on sounds discrimination, because if the listeners are weak in discriminating sounds, their ability will even weaken and this will affect their listening comprehension.

Item D: Speakers speak too fast.

The listeners encounter listening comprehension difficulties when the speakers speak too fast and produce words at a rapid speed because fast speech is mainly distinguished by hesitations, false starts, meaningless grammar and so on. This may be attributed to the lack of sound pedagogical listening passages. We may, then, hypothesise that these listeners were exposed to any listening passages! Authentic, semi-authentic, or of any type. This may lead, inevitably, to many comprehension errors for non-native listeners and perceptual problems.

Item E: Difficulty in understanding the spoken text if the listeners are not provided with tape scripts before listening.

The listeners have also indicated that providing them with tape scripts before listening help them understand the listening passage. This shows that these listeners find it difficult to make an initial attempt to listen to a tape without written support. Unfortunately, this view is also expressed by their teachers who acknowledge the fact that many books provide them with scripts at the end of each unit, maybe to learn them by heart or to follow the speaker's pronunciation.

Item F: Difficulty in listening to a recorded text other than their teachers.

This problem stems from the middle schools where the listeners are used to listening to their teachers in listening sessions, though very few. This seems a bit odd and even illogical. Learning a language when still young is better than learning it when growing older. If the listeners were exposed to a 'comprehensible input', they might not be teacher dependent and thus spoon-fed. Moreover, lack of sound teaching material makes it even harder to develop the listening skills.

Item G: Poor quality of tapes makes it difficult for the listeners to understand well a listening text.

It can be seen that both the teachers and listeners realise that poor resources have resulted in presenting listening exercises through very poor tapes. Usually, these tapes are not clear and unclear sounds may interfere with the listeners' comprehension, as revealed in this research by most listeners and teachers. This may distract the listeners from the content of the listening passage because the speakers cannot be interrupted to ask them for clarification as we normally do in real life.

Item H: Difficulty in getting a general understanding from the first listening.

Table 3.3 and 3.4 indicate that the listeners have reported a consistent need to hear a message more than once to fully grasp its meaning. For the post-intermediate listeners, there are almost no occasions when the tape is played only once. In general, EFL listeners cannot grasp the meaning from the first listening and, normally, the listeners are supposed to do many sub-tasks. Thus playing the tape once may not be beneficial for many listeners. Subsequent listening – two or three times – motivates the

listeners to respond positively to the content of the text. Consequently, the teachers should first focus on global understanding and then move to specific information.

Item I: Difficulty in understanding the message without seeing the speaker.

The listeners and their teachers have also shown the importance of the visual stimuli which act as a memory aid, especially, for visual listeners. Visual clues help the listeners visualise the importance of details. A videotape, for example, presents a more realistic version of a conversational interchange. The listeners are able to take advantage of non-verbal cues and visible cultural intricacies which are not present on an audio-cassette tape. In particular, using video may develop the listeners' cognitive strategies.

For 'item J', the listeners have revealed some pertinent problems related to psychological factor which may influence on the cognitive processes. The listeners have reported that they feel, most of the time, worried when they fail to understand the listening passage.. It is, then, the teacher's role to diagnosis these difficulties and set up remedial tasks to motivate them. As regards the teachers, they have raised a very important point related to matters of topical interest and learning emotions. Fifteen out of forty have claimed that any skill is emotionally based and cannot be imposed upon the learners.. After having compared results from table 3.3 with those from table 3.4, and given the evidence that questionnaires items have indicated that the majority of the listeners and teachers have confirmed these listening difficulties. Hypothesis two is valid but cannot be generalised for all EFL listeners due to the small number involved in this study.

3.4. Instruction Phase

After having identified the listeners' cognitive listening strategies and their listening comprehension difficulties, the forty listeners were divided into two homogeneous groups. The experimental group participated in seven class sessions of target listening strategy instruction. Whereas, the control group did not receive any instruction. The sessions focused on the seven listening strategies for developing top-down and bottom-up listening skills. The researcher instructed the listeners in an explicit CALLA model. In particular, the instruction was made explicit, explaining specifically how it would help them understand the oral/aural input (See 3.1)

- 1) Strategies for listening for the main idea: use background knowledge, consider the passage as a whole to get a sense of the listening text and select key words: nouns, adjectives, adverbs and some important verbs.
- 2) Strategies for activating background knowledge: make a semantic mapping.
- 3) Strategies for predictions: think of the kinds of words, phrases and information you can expect to encounter based on your background knowledge.

	Key words		Notes
	-		-
	-		-
	-		-
	-		-
	-		-

Keyword column

Note column

Figure 3.1. An example of using the cognitive listening Strategies in combination in the instruction phase.

- 4) Strategies for verifying predictions: focus on the predicted words in the listening passage
- 5) Strategies for the key words: identify stressed words and focus on content words.
- 6) Strategies for making inferences from the text: listen to linguistic information in the text, listen to contextual clues (eg: prefixes), separate fact from opinion (interpret) and reply on your own schemata
- 7) Strategies for summarising: convert detailed points from note-taking into a brief summary (add facts, explanations) and rewrite your notes immediately.

At the beginning of each of the instruction sessions, the cognitive listening strategies were taught separately, and, then, in combination from session three. It should be noticed that during this phase, a few listeners showed some improvement while practising these cognitive listening strategies, whereas others still needed explanations and strategy modelling. After this instruction phase, the control and the experimental groups were given two posttests to see the effect of listening strategy use and compare results of the two groups.

3.5. Post Instruction Phase Results

In this section, the results of the two posttests administered to the listeners after listening strategy instruction will be given and analysed. Following the instruction phase, the listeners were tested on each sub-skill. A separate analysis was conducted

about the listeners' listening ability to use the seven cognitive listening strategies (See 3.5 and 3.6).

3.5.1. Posttest One Results

Total score 180 points

$$AF_n = \Sigma_{AF}$$

$$RF_n = \frac{\sum RF}{7} = \frac{350}{7} = 50\%$$

N= 20 (experimental group)

		<i>Cognitive listening strategies</i>		<i>Posttest score</i>
T A S K O N E	Activate background knowledge	AF	10/20	
		RF	50 %	
	Main idea	AF	08/20	
		RF	40 %	
	Inferencing	AF	30/60	
		RF	50 %	
T A S K T W O	Predicting	AF	10/20	
		RF	50 %	
	Verify predictions	AF	09/20	
		RF	45 %	
Note taking(Key words)	AF	12/20		
	RF	60 %		
Summarising	AF	11/20		
	RF	55 %		
Total		AF _n	90/180	
		RF _n	50%	

Table 3.5. Cognitive listening strategies used by the experimental group.

The other table is about the cognitive strategies used by the control group.

N= 20 (control group)

		<i>Cognitive listening strategies</i>		<i>Posttest score</i>
T A S K O N E	Activate background knowledge	AF	08/20	
		RF	40 %	
	Main idea	AF	04/20	
		RF	20 %	
	Inferencing	AF	10/60	
		RF	16,66 %	
T A S K T W O	Predicting	AF	05/20	
		RF	25 %	
	Verify predictions	AF	03/20	
		RF	15 %	
Note taking(Key words)	AF	06/20		
	RF	30 %		
Summarising	AF	05/20		
	RF	25 %		
Total		AF _n	41/180	
		RF _n	24,5%	

Table 3.6. Cognitive listening strategies used by the control group.

Tables 3.5 and 3.6 show that the experimental group performed the control group except for 'Activate Background Knowledge' in which the relative frequencies were 50% and 40%. This may be due to the content familiarity of the topic. There was statistically a slight difference between two groups. This reveals that some listeners were effective in the control group without prior instruction. However, explicit listening strategy instruction helped the experimental to get an average score. That is, ninety out of one hundred and eighty (90/180) were scored, where RF_n was 50%. This finding implies that the difference in listening ability seems to be primarily related to the

listening strategy instruction. Each cognitive listening strategy represents the listener's ability of actively listening to oral/aural information. The experimental group was involved in 'learning' by doing'. Such attitudes are the necessary qualities that a successful listener should have. Nevertheless, there is a need to check whether the control group's progress is due to the cognitive listening strategies. Therefore, the results of the posttest two would, perhaps, shed light on the strategy use (See 3.7 and 3.8).

3.5.2. Posttest Two Results

N= 20

T A S K	<i>Cognitive listening strategies</i>		<i>Posttest score</i>
	O N E	Activate background knowledge	AF
RF			70 %
Main idea		AF	09/20
		RF	45 %
Inferencing		AF	36/60
		RF	60 %
T A S K	Predicting	AF	12/20
		RF	60 %
	Verify predictions	AF	10/20
		RF	50 %
T W O	Note taking(Key words)	AF	11/20
		RF	55 %
O	Summarising	AF	12/20
		RF	60 %
Total		AF _n	104/180
		RF _n	57,14%

Table 3.7. Cognitive listening strategies used by the experimental group.

n = 20

T A S K	<i>Cognitive listening strategies</i>		<i>Posttest score</i>
	O N E	Activate background knowledge	AF
RF			45 %
Main idea		AF	03/20
		RF	15 %
Inferencing		AF	12/60
		RF	20 %
T A S K	Predicting	AF	05/20
		RF	25 %
	Verify predictions	AF	02/20
		RF	10 %
T W O	Note taking(Key words)	AF	07/20
		RF	35 %
O	Summarising	AF	06/20
		RF	30 %
Total		AF _n	44/180
		RF _n	25,71%

*Table 3.8. Cognitive listening strategies used by
The control group.*

As illustrated above, table 3.7 reveals that the experimental group still maintained the use of the cognitive listening strategies. Overall, the RF_n rose to 57, 14% which showed a noticeable progress in using the listening strategies. Whereas, the control group's score (See 3.8) was only 44 points out of 180 which was low as compared to that of the experimental group. The RF_n in the control group remained nearly the same in the two posttests. Therefore, the results from the two posttests show that applying cognitive listening strategies in the language classrooms should be treated as a long-term instruction. Though there was a steady progress in using the cognitive listening strategies by the experimental group, this does not mean that positive results

can be reached in a short period of treatment. Cognitive listening strategy instruction may improve the listeners' ability, providing the teachers help the post-intermediate listeners use the listening strategies patiently and continuously. Given the sample was small, as is often the case in classroom based research, it is difficult to generalise hypothesis three in this study. Therefore, hypothesis is partially supported.

3.6. General Commentary

The previous results of this study showed that explicit listening strategy instruction through an adapted CALLA model helped the experimental group improve their listening ability by using top-down and bottom-up processing. Top-down processing was used to 'activate background knowledge', 'predict' listen for the 'main idea' 'infer' and summarise. These are listener-based. Bottom-up processing was used to 'listen for key words by taking notes' and 'verify predictions'. These are text-based. This study, though exploratory in nature, suggests a promising direction for research on the potential for explicit listening strategy instruction to help the post-intermediate listeners maintain the use of cognitive listening strategies over time, and hence, improve their academic listening ability. Hypothesis one and two, though confirmed, they cannot be generalised for all EFL listeners, hypothesis three was partially supported due to the small number of the listeners involved in this study and because variables of instruction may have been activated.

Therefore, the results obtained from the research tools and discussed in the previous sections seem to answer the research question to a certain extent. That is say, the post-intermediate listeners need ample opportunities to use the cognitive listening strategies in a procedural way to maintain them.

3.7. Conclusion

This chapter tried to shed light on the cognitive listening strategies used by post-intermediate listeners in an EFL setting. All along the analysis of data, the researcher attempted to present empirical evidence to show that listening strategy instruction may contribute positively to improve the listeners ability to understand oral/aural academic listening content material that they will be probably encounter in an academic context. The findings of this study serve as a starting point for further research which should focus on helping the listeners and preparing them for higher academic achievement.

Notes to Chapter Three

1-It should be noted that multiple choice items have been severely criticised by many language testes. For example, Royer (1990) claims that multiple choice items do not test comprehension. In order to avoid the 'guessing game's there searcher gave the same items, but option one, for example for listener one was option three for listener three. The listeners were told, right from the beginning, that they had the same items but the options were scrambled.

2-The difficulty with this strategy is that it is at the heart of the listening process. If for example, the teacher asks the listeners the following questions: 'where are the speakers?' or 'what is the relationship between the speakers?', the learners may not consider the passage as a whole. That is to say, inferencing does not only mean guessing unfamiliar words from a listening passage. It goes beyond that. Even listening for the main idea not clearly stated is an inferential process.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHAPTER FOUR

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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CHAPTER FOUR

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Introduction

This concluding chapter looks closely at ELT at the English Department at Abou-Bakr University and at both the teacher's and listener's roles. This chapter also describes the three phases of sequencing exhaustively: pre-listening, while listening and post-listening phases. Moreover, some sample lessons of how to teach listening are presented in detail, mainly, songs, conversations, stories and news. Some tasks are proposed striking a balance between the top-down and bottom-up strategies for the first-year students. Finally, Chapter four suggests practical suggestions for developing listening strategy instruction as an add-on. The goal is to focus on the maintenance of the cognitive listening strategies.

4.2. ELT at University Level

It should be noted, right from the beginning, that some weaknesses have been highlighted by teachers of English. As it is lucidly stated by a female teacher:

There seems to be no link between what is actually happening at the secondary schools and the English Department. It has been found that learners coming from the secondary schools have a poor background in English. Whose fault is it, then? We think that big steps should be taken to reform the educational system which is sick. What about the social function of English? Basically, the lack of 'social conscience' and the difficulty of the current economic situation are issues which should be handled straightforwardly. There should be closer links between studying English and its social utility within the Algerian society.

Another male teacher reports, sorrowfully, that:

I have been teaching English for about twenty years and I would say that most of our learners-and I am pretty sure- are a bit reluctant and demotivated because they are fully aware that our society is 'drowning in its own cup'. Unfortunately, some learners

are just studying English to get their "licence d'Anglais" since a handful of learners will have a steady job.

These two viewpoints show clearly that the political aim of teaching English is, rather, academic than social. However, in today's world, English is widely used as a means of an international language and it should not be confined and narrowed down to a specific sector: to train the would-be teachers. If this situation lingers, we may fall behind the world. In a world of globalisation, English should have a prominent place even if the setting is academic. Maybe, the fundamental question is: is the Algerian government willing to implement the social utility of English or not? The question is, rather, addressed to decision-makers who are highly ranked and may clear the situation.

As regards the listening skill, the lingering situation is that listening is not given equal importance as if it is untaught. The main difficulties are the time devoted to teaching it, the learners' lack of knowledge of the world and the non-understanding of the target culture. As a result, the four basic skills should be taught till the fourth year with at least six hours per week for each skill. These skills are the cornerstone for any learner entering upon specialism in English. It is, often, said that "practice makes perfect" and that is true because in this Department, learning English is mostly based on memorisation activities: a kind of "talk and chalk" which means largely teacher-centredness. Maybe, what is needed is providing the first-year students with ample opportunities of practice in the basic skills alongside the other modules. Concerns are also about the heavy workload of many university teachers of English who are faced with a challenge to improve the teaching situation. A permanent teacher reports:

After the mandated teaching hours to maintain my position at the English Department, I use the rest of my time for additional teaching at other departments: Economics and Finance, where the work is paid by the hour. Consequently, most teachers are working like a 'teaching machine' with an overload of teaching hours. Given such harsh conditions and with the passing of time, the situation may even worsen because what a teacher earns per month does not, really, ease his mind and sort his social problems out. Some teachers are 'fed up' because they suffer from 'administrative bureaucracy' just to get their rights. We think that this situation is not helpful. Instead, strategic bureau should be created to study all the teachers' cases and the present government's policy on education at all levels should be tangible in terms of its application pragmatically.

This view is clearly expressed by a female teacher:

As for me, I would say that I do not want to change inasmuch as the government has not invested more in education. Do you know what once Margerett Thatcher said? She said “education, education, education”. So, there is an urgent need for greater transparency. Most problems stem from social and economic crises we face as well as learners.

All in all, no education will be effective if these real problems are put aside and avoided politely. We have to ‘call a spade a spade’ and call the authorities to investigate these problems seriously. Otherwise, education may go down by its head.

4.2.1. Teacher’s Role

In general, most teachers in the English Department at Abou-Bakr University are shaped by the context in which they teach. They use their own teaching strategies to achieve their instructional goals since: “different teaching settings involve teachers in different kinds of roles” (Richards and Lockhart 1996:97). In our specific context, the teaching of English is largely teacher-fronted. It has been defined that: *‘teachers in particular have a responsibility to make sure ideas and proposals are evaluated on their merits and passively accepted on grounds of authority real or presumed...It is the language teacher himself who must validate or refute any specific proposal’*. (Chomsky cited in Benmoussat 2003:157). Therefore, the five teachers of oral expression in the English Department are free to make their own decisions about their classes: they can select and grade the teaching materials, create motivating tasks and evaluate their first-year students by giving them marks based on scheduled exams, participation, role-plays, prepared and impromptu speeches. Theoretically speaking, the teachers may assume different roles. However, in teaching the listening skill, the teachers should assume the following roles:

-*Grammar assessor*, i.e. In this Department, the teachers focus mainly on the product. In other words, teaching about the language is of primary importance. Being pedantic is the main characteristic of most teachers. However, listening should also be

assessed the day of the exam to put it on an equal footing with the other skills. Most tests, for example, the TOEFL tests are based on listening. So, how come listening is

not evaluated the day of the exam? Is the mark, really, integrated with that of the speaking skill?

-*Facilitator*, i.e. The teachers do their best to ease the learners into learning better.

-*Evaluator*, i.e. The teachers assess their first-year students by giving them marks. Normally, ten marks to listening and ten marks to speaking.

-*Team member*, i.e. From time to time and depending on the listening task, the teachers should work cooperatively with his learners by putting them into groups. This may create a kind of social environment and a friendly atmosphere.

-*Sequencer*, i.e. This role is not that easy to stick to every time a teacher has to teach listening. When listening to conversations, for instance, some tasks can be, easily, sequenced. However, when teaching announcements or news, it does not sound easy to follow the required steps).

4.2.2. Listener's Role

Our first-year learners, in the English Department, tend to expect teacher-centred learning. In fact, this is the learning culture these learners have adopted from the middle schools. Too often, it has been noticed that our learners rely heavily on their teachers and avoid initiating topics directly. Since learning is, most of the time, based on rote memorisation, the teachers are a bit strict with their learners. Teachers do that because they know that these first-year students have a limited stock of vocabulary and their knowledge of the world may also be limited. It is, then, the teacher's role to decide what and how to teach. Nevertheless, our learners should assume some roles in this Department. The first role which these learners may assume is the use of the cognitive listening strategies since they are memory-based, observable and measurable in terms of evaluation. Consequently, all the four basic skills should be given equal importance. The first thing to do, in this Department, is to devote, at least, six hours to each skill

instead of three hours and these basic skills should be taught throughout the four years. If these learners are to be good teachers, the teachers should, first and foremost, help their students have a thorough grounding in all the basic skills alongside the other modules, but the four skills should take the "lion's share". However, this role may not be easily assumed by these learners if they find themselves not having all the facilities and not easily getting a job in our society. Put simply, the social and economic crises have influenced negatively upon education which is "sick". So, when the educational system gets stuck in such matters, the Algerian government has to invest more in education and to create more job opportunities by seeking effective strategies for change. This is the primary source of demotivation for most learners, as a male student said:

Though I love to study English, I am afraid of being jobless once I have finished my "Licence d'Anglais". The future is not clear enough for me. Just look back at what happened to former students. They are just diploma holders and may think of themselves as "good for nothing".

Another female student expressed herself in this way:

A four-year study of English is a bit strenuous and I understand that but do we have to think always to become simply the "would-be-teachers"? Is English drowning in its own cup? What about other social uses of English? So, nothing is obvious for me. I would like to be a tourist guide but I feel that I am anxious about my future.

In general, these two viewpoints show that learners are aware of what is actually happening in our society and seem to worry a lot about their future. This is a, rather, gloomy picture because the political aim remains ambiguous though English has become the language of communication and nearly all the information is provided in English. Some learners have complained that their scholarships have remained unchanged after twelve years and are obliged to do other jobs to "survive" and even sell their valuable things because money is tight. It should be noted that this Department lacks sound teaching materials. How can these learners learn better if they are equipped with a handful of rusty old books and paid about three thousand Dinars in a semester? We have to take into account that these learners do not feel at ease. It is, then, high time to stop courting the problem and handle these problems in a straightforward way. Even with the implementation of the LMD (Licence-Master-Doctorat) system, things may not

improve a lot because there seems to be no link between the teaching of English at the English Departments and the social utility of English in our society, pragmatically speaking. It [LMD] is a kind of "Let's Me Dream" as defined by an experienced teacher in an international seminar held at Dijllali El Liabbes University, Sidi Belabes in December, 2006.

The second role our first-year students should assume is to take part in "Global Classes". This idea has been introduced since 2003 and the goal behind setting up global classes is to develop the learners' cultural awareness through the British and American cultures. Topics centre around the American customs, history, culture as well as the British ones in order to implement the idea of a global world. Some learners may develop a negative attitude, especially, towards the American culture and may not respond positively because they hate the American ruling and hegemony over the Arab countries. These learners should be always reminded that the objective is not to behave the way the British or American people do, which is a myth in itself, but rather to achieve instructional objectives. In other words, there is a difference between teaching culture and teaching through culture. Teachers do their best to help the learners communicate effectively in English and try hard to get them to know a bit of the British and American cultures simply because language and culture go hand in hand. Consequently, knowing about these two cultures is a must in today's world.

As regards the global classes, they are characterised by small chattings with native speakers. This is a great opportunity for our learners to develop their listening and speaking skills. However, there are some weaknesses in global classes. Firstly, it is not scheduled and practised on a regular basis, maybe because it is difficult to get connected with other universities. The main problem is that the English Department lacks sound technological material. Hopefully, there are two teachers who can use this technology if they have the means. Secondly, a small number of about fifty learners have this possibility to talk to native speakers. It is, then, the teachers' role to expand on the idea and get all the first-year students involved in the programme to have equal and ample opportunities to listen and talk exhaustively to native speakers. This is a good opportunity for our learners to develop their social skills and build up their confidence when they are in a face-to-face interaction. To this end, the teachers should make their

learners take the utmost advantage of these global classes by taking the idea more seriously and devoting, at least, two hours per week to each group. To achieve this goal, the following points should be reconsidered:

- Teachers should be granted their legal status which is still in debate.
- They should have their own faculty and research laboratory: writing articles, attending seminars and conferences is a must for every teacher.
- The English Department should be equipped with sound teaching materials and up-to-date technologies for both teachers and learners.
- The English Department should have its own library under the control of the head of the English Department.
- Learners should have all the facilities at their disposal to ease their burden.
- Our government should raise the learners' scholarships.
- The use of English should have a social function and not confined only to the educational sector.

All in all, education is the key for success for any society and should be prioritised and given much importance. Otherwise, the situation may linger and no one can tell what might happen next.

4.3. Types of Listening Materials

It is often assumed that authentic listening materials help the learners develop the listening skills. In our specific context, teachers use millasceounous texts, authentic¹ and semi-authentic. The listening passages focus on a one-way communication in which the first-year students respond and do the activities. No real communication takes place between the students and the native speakers because the teaching of English does not accommodate larger social concerns. Most listening materials cover daily conversations, instructions -as teachers try to meet different needs because teachers are faced with different learning styles. However, teachers rely on the listening materials which are used for commerce and aimed at a larger audience. It is, then, the teacher's responsibility to select and look for texts that are within reach to the first-year students in terms of readability² and interest. As a way of an example, our learners may find some difficulties in understanding the following text:

Motorcaravanners are known as 'luggers' in the caravan world-people who lug their living quarters around with them. They don't mind that. In fact, they're happy to be recognised as a different breed! They have a word for the caravan lot as well: 'tuggers'. The luggers are well in the minority, with about 100,000 registered vehicles in the UK compared with well over half a million caravans. Both camps are officially on good terms, but there is a trace of unease in the alliance. In the early days of motorcaravanning, back in the 60s, the caravan club wouldn't allow luggers to join in, and banned them from sites. Hostilities have officially ceased now. Motorcaravans are welcome, provided in the words of the Caravan Club code, their appearance is appropriate and does not offend public opinion. However, before getting carried away, buyers are advised to ask themselves some questions about how they are going to use their motorcaravans before making their choice. Then they should hire one for an experimental weekend.

(Advanced Listening and Speaking, Oxford 1999)

This listening passage has the following characteristics:

- dull or heavy: the topic is not interesting.
- demotivating: it does not get the learners involved.
- not at the desired level of the learners in terms of readability (difficult to process).
- presents empirical difficulty of the listening items on the basis of background knowledge, memory, and inference questions. Examples are: lug, living quarters, tuggers, luggers and so on.
- not culturally appropriate: not rich enough to develop the cultural awareness of the learners.

Our first-year learners are not supposed to listen to topics which are also too scientific. For instance, topics such as cloning, genes, solar system and so on are difficult to process because most learners come from a literary stream and are not familiar with these texts which are heavily loaded with technical terms (metalanguage). Furthermore, taboo topics which are regarded as offensive or embarrassing should also be avoided because some learners learn English for a religious drive. Teachers should, then, avoid such sensitive topics which constitute great taboos. For example, these learners may develop a negative attitude towards the following conversation:

Bobby: Dr, Chadwick, all my life I've planned to marry Emily. I was waiting for the right moment. But when Skipper Wallace came into her life, I panicked. She really seemed to be in love with him. I had to do something to make her realize it's me she loves; that we were meant for each other.

Doctor: I understand why you did it, but do you really think it's fair to Emily?

Bobby: No. I suppose seen from the outside, it's not. What am I going to do?

Doctor: Talk to her, Bobby. She deserves to know the truth

(Tell Me More, CD ROM, 1995).

This dialogue contains some strong language and some learners, especially, girls may be shaken up. The same thing applies to songs and films. Thus, they should be carefully selected to avoid any “mishap” or cultural shock.

The following song contains some offensive words and should be avoided:

My heart will go on by Celine Dione

Every night in my dreams
I see you, I feel you
That is how I know you go on
Far across the distance
And spaces between us
You have come to show. You go on
Near, far, wherever you are
I believe that the heart does go on
Once more you open the door
And you're here in my heart and my heart will go on
Love can touch us one time
And last for a lifetime
And never let go till we're one
Love was when I loved you
One true time I hold to
In my life we'll always go on
There is some love that will not go away
You're here, there's nothing I can fear
And I know that my heart will go on
We'll stay forever this way
You're safe in my heart and my heart will go on and on.

4.4. Sequencing listening lessons

Sequencing refers to the way a teacher presents information and is defined as:

[Having] to do with the format of the lesson itself. Most lessons do not consist of a single activity, rather, the teacher analyzes the overall goal of a lesson and the content to be taught [cognitive listening skills are also included] and then plans a sequence of activities to attain those goals. This sequence of sub-activities for a lesson establishes a kind of format or script for a lesson...This forma represents the sequence of activities which make up the lesson.

(Richards and Lackhart, 1996: 118)

It should be pointed out that sequencing is not something dogmatic to be followed blindly and slavishly by the teachers. Determining an effective structure of lessons depends primarily on the teacher's view of the listening skill itself. That is to say, is listening seen as a process, in which top-down and bottom-up listening skills should be developed – comprehension comes first – or simply a mere product. In other words, should grammar accuracy be prioritised over comprehension? Therefore, sequencing is deeply ground into what the teacher believes that works best for his listeners. There may be no typical lesson sequencing in that many researchers (Wong, Fillmore, Hubbardetal, Littlewood, Nuttal, all cited in Richards and Lockhart, 1996: 118 -20) have tried to sequence lessons on the basis of different learning theories of second language acquisition. As regards our study, and in line with our attempts to make classroom listening experiences as close to real-life listening as possible, there should be three phases: pre-listening phase, while listening phase and post-listening phase. Classroom activities should be sequenced following the required steps: pre-listening, while listening and post-listening tasks. In the pre-listening stage the teacher can do the following: activate the learners' background knowledge or help them predict topical lexis by making a semantic mapping. In the listening phase, learners should focus on completing the tasks. The purpose of these tasks is to help the listeners develop the cognitive listening strategies (listening for the main idea, infer, verify predictions) .Teachers can strike a balance between top-down and bottom-up processing. In the post-listening phase, the teacher should check to see if the listeners have completed the task. Learners can be asked to make a brief summary from key words they have selected in the while listening or expand the information in the listening passage by relating it to their own experiences (elaborate and personalize).

4.5. How to Teach Listening

The skill of listening is usually taught by getting the learners to listen and then complete written tasks to test their listening ability of the spoken English. In an academic setting, listening is not part of social interaction and it is not easy to create truly authentic listening tasks. That is why, listening should be based on situations that the first-year students are going to meet in real life. This may help them 'live' the

situation because of the shared experience with the speakers. To make listening more effective, the learners should be exposed to a variety of different types of listening: short and long conversations, stories, news, announcements, songs and so on. This is what is intended in the following sections.

4.5.1. Teaching Songs

Songs are used for the first-year students of English to develop their listening skills and motivate them to learn the target culture. Songs make learning more enjoyable, reduce the stress and break the routine. They can provide our learners with information about the British and American history and culture. Furthermore, songs are easily used to remember grammar structures, vocabulary, phrasal verbs and idioms. They can be taught separately or serve as a starting point for conversations. In this Department, every teacher is free to teach in the way he thinks things will work for his learners. The following song is a sample lesson of how to teach songs:

Sample Lesson

Money, money, money by ABBA

I work all night, I work all day
To pay the bills I have to pay
Ain't it sad?
And still there never seems to be
A single penny left for me
That's too bad!
In my dreams, I have a plan
If I got me a wealthy man
I wouldn't have to work at all
I'd fool around and have a ball
Money, money, money, must be funny
In the rich man's world
All the things I could do
If I had a little money
It's a rich man's world
A man like that is hard to find
But I can't get him off my mind
Ain't it sad?
And if he happens to be free
I bet he wouldn't fancy me
That's too bad!
So I must leave, I'll have to go

To Las Vegas or Monaco
And win a fortune in a game
My life would never be the same
Money, money, money, must be funny
In the rich man's world
All the things I could do
If I had a little money
It's a rich man's world

I-Pre- listening phase

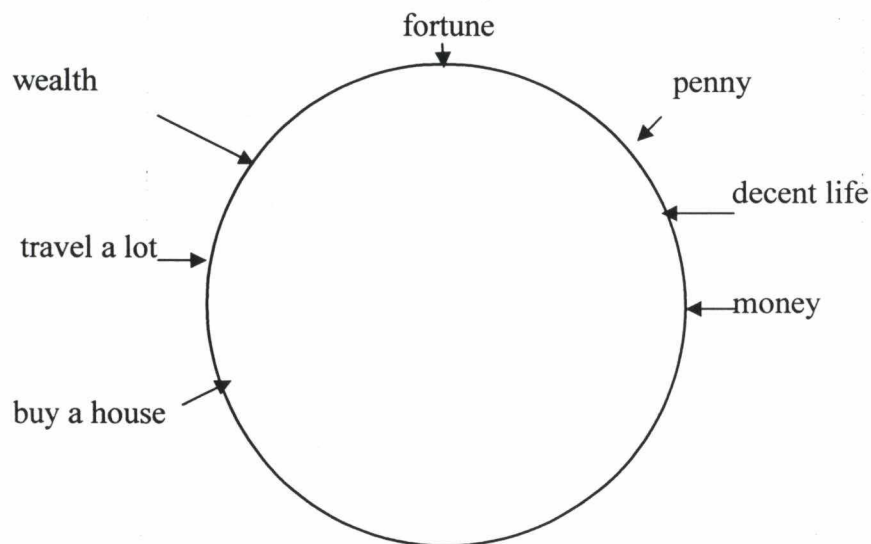
1- Start with a tongue twister. Though tongue twisters are sometimes difficult, but they are lots of fun and make learning more enjoyable. For example, the following tongue twister can be used:

-Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.

2-Activate background knowledge.

-Put the learners into small groups and ask them to jot down as many words as they can about "Money". Tell them to use, for instance, a semantic mapping for recall. They can also use their dictionaries.

An example of a semantic mapping can be as follows:



An example of a semantic mapping: Activate background knowledge strategy.

3-Language focus

The teacher may explain some difficult words which present major comprehension difficulties. In this song, there is some informal language which is not easy for these post-intermediate learners to understand. The word "Ain't" and the idiomatic expression "have the ball" should be explained to get these learners focused on the song.

II-While listening phase

Many tasks can be used to check listening comprehension and linguistic competence.

-Task 1: Main idea

-Listen to the following song and say what it is about (oral).

or

-Listen to the following song and write the main idea (written).

-Task 2: appreciative listening (tasks 2, 3 and 4)

-Listen again to the song and determine the mood it evokes. Use the following adjectives: calm, restful, happy, dreamy, mysterious, self-pitying, sad, sombre, joyful. More than one adjective can be used.

-Task 3: using the words below, describe the voice of the singer(s):

Deep, gentle, soft, fresh, clear, expressive, quiet, harsh, weak, raucous.

-Task 4: can you suggest other titles?

-Task 5: gap-filling

-Listen to the song and fill in the gaps.

I work all....., I work all day
To pay theI have to pay
Ain't it sad?
And still there neverto be
A single..... left for me
That's too bad!
In my dreams, I have a
If I got me a wealthy man
Ihave to work at all
I'd.....around and have a ball
Money, money, money, must be funny
In theman's.....
All the things I could do
If I had a little money

It's aman's
A man like that is hard to find
But I can'thim ...my mind
Ain't it sad?
And if he happens to be.....
Ihe wouldn't..... me
That's too bad!
So I must....., I'll have to go
Toor
And win ain a game
My life would never be the.....
Money, money, money, must be funny
In the..... man's
All the things I could do
If I had amoney
It's a rich man's world
Money, money, money, must be funny
In theman's.....
-Task 6: correcting mistakes

-Listen to the cassette, find the mistakes and then correct them.

I walk all night, I work all day
To pay the peas I have to pay
Ain't it mad?
And still there never seems to be
A single penny given to me
That's too bad!
In my dreams, I have a plan
If I got me a wealthy man
I wouldn't have to walk all day
I'd hang around and have a ball
Money, money, money, must be funny
In the rich man's world
All the things I should do
If I had small change
It's a rich man's world
A man like that is easy to find
But I can't get him off my head
Ain't it mad?
And if he happens to be free
I bet he would fancy me
That's too bad!
So I must live, I'll have to go
To Las Vegas or Munich
And win a fortune in a game

My life would never be the same
Money, money, money, must be funny
In the rich man's world
All the things I should do
If I had small change
-Task 7: ordering

-Listen to the first six lines of the song and decide which one comes first.

-I wouldn't have to work at all
-Money, money, money, must be funny
-In my dreams I have a plan
-That's too bad!
-I work all night, I work all day
-A single penny left for me
-To pay the bills I have to pay.

-III-Post listening phase: skills integration

-Task 8: summarising

-Make a short summary of the song

-Task 9: Do you agree with the singer that money is everything? Give the learners some common expressions of agreement and disagreement to help them come up with sentences (See 4.5.2).

The following two songs are also a good way to teach listening in that they involve our students in the 'rustic' and country life of American people. Our students should be exposed to repeated listening in order to learn these songs, since they [Songs] are rich in vocabulary and are easy to learn.

Coat of Many Colors by Dolly Parton

Back through the years
I go wonderin once again
Back to the seasons of my youth
I recall a box of rags that someone gave us
And how my momma put the rags to use
There were rags of many colors
Every piece was small
And I didn't have a coat
And it was way down in the fall
Momma sewed the rags together
Sewin every piece with love

She made my coat of many colors
That I was so proud of
As she sewed, she told a story
From the bible, she had read

About a coat of many colors
Joseph wore and then she said
Perhaps this coat will bring you
Good luck and happiness
And I just couldn't wait to wear it
And momma blessed it with a kiss

Chorus:

My coat of many coats
That my momma made for me
Made only from rags
But I wore it so proudly
Although we had no money
I was rich as I could be
In my coat of many colors
My momma made for me
So with patches on my britches
Holes in both my shoes
In my coat of many colors
I hurried off to school
Just to find the others laughing
And making fun of me
In my coat of many colors
My momma made for me
And oh I couldn't understand it
For I felt I was rich
And I told them of the love
My momma sewed in every stitch
And I told em all the story
Momma told me while she sewed
And how my coat of many colors
Was worth more than all their clothes
But they didn't understand it
And I tried to make them see
That one is only poor
Only if they choose to be
Now I know we had no money

But I was rich as I could be
In my coat of many colors
My momma made for me
Made just for me

Dolly Parton: To Daddy

Momma never seemed to miss the finer things in life
If she did, she never did say so to daddy
She never wanted to be more than mother and a wife
If she did, she never did say so to daddy
The only things that seemed to be important in her life
Was to make our house a home and make us happy
Momma never wanted anymore than what she had
If she did, she never did say so to daddy
He often left her all alone
She didn't mind the stayin' home
If she did, she never did say so to daddy
And she never missed the flowers
And the gifts he never gave her
If she did, she never did say so to daddy
Being took for granted was a thing that she accepted
And she didn't need those things to make her happy
She didn't even seem to notice
That he didn't kiss and hold her
If she did, she never did say so to daddy

Chorus:

One morning we awoke
Just to find the note
That momma carefully wrote
And left to daddy
And as he began to read it
Our ears could not believe it
The words that she had written there to daddy
She said our kids are old enough
And they don't need me very much
So I've gone in search for love I need so badly
I have needed you so long
But I just can't keep holdin' on
She never meant to come back home
If she did, she never did say so to daddy
Tag:
Momma's gone
Good-bye to daddy

4.5.2. Teaching Situational Dialogues

Conversations are mainly characterised by the use of informal and everyday English. They are varieties of the English language worth studying in themselves (See Appendix F). It should be bore in mind that some conversations are even characterised by regional dialects which may mislead our learners. However, there are conversations which do not have a great degree of informality. They are good in that they help our learners build up their linguistic competence and focus on the correct use of the English language. The following conversation is shows many features of written grammar:

A lonely job

Jane: Wherever have you been, Patrick? I haven't seen you for months. Someone said you'd emigrated.

Patrick: Whoever told you that? I've been working weather research station on the Isle of Collett.

Jane: Where on earth is that?

Patrick: It's a lump of rock about 100 miles north-west of Ireland.

Jane: Whatever did you do to pass the time?

Patrick: Fortunately, I had my university thesis to work on. If I hadn't had a pile of work to do, I'd have gone off my head.

Jane: Was there anything else to do?

Patrick: well, if you were a bird watcher, it would be a paradise; but whenever I got tired of studying, I could only around the island-and that took me less than twenty minutes.

Jane: How ever did you stand it? If I'd been in your shoes, I'd have taken the first boat back to civilisation.

Patrick: Well, I needed some information from my research there, and they paid me, so I saved some money. Now I can have a short holiday before I start looking for a job.

Jane: Have you finished your PhD already? I thought you had another year to do.

Patrick: No, times flies, you know. As long as they don't reject my thesis, I'll be leaving for London next week.

Jane: If I were you, I'd go off to the Mediterranean or somewhere before starting work.

Patrick: No, thanks, I'll stay in London. I've had enough of the sea for a while.

This conversation, though characterised by some informal English-underlined words- it is well structured. These learners should be taught when to use formal and informal English. Otherwise, they may not use the language appropriately, especially, in writing. Though grammar is not tailored to real time construction-not authentic-it is at

the desired level to our learners. The first-year students should know a bit of informal English but conversations should be organised in a way that are understood by our learners. A very informal conversation should be avoided. The following is an extract of a conversation representative of a typical too informal setting:

Male1: Anyway

Female1: So anyway

Male1: So anyway

Male2: So anyway erm my cousin Mervin that was in the REME er got me a 38

Male1: Gun

Female1: Wesson, Smith and Wesson special and Benny's, no it wasn't it was Rick Holman's shed and Benny, Brian Beddingfields knew his dad had some ammunition from the war and he found it and they were 38s so erm took it over the marshes and shot a couple of rounds off that was great and then one day we were in, up Prospect Road near the scout hut in a shed in a pre, erm Rick Holfman's shed so there was four of us in this sort of eight by six shed...and we were playing about with the thing and we messed about with it and did the usu, you know and sort of said oh we'll put a cross in it in the shed at the bit of wood and this bullet went round the shed about three times and we all just froze this bullet went round and round and round was absolutely outrageous we had no concept of what could have happened

Male3: Yeah

Male1: God

Female1: Dear God

Male1: Remember that kid

Male2: And then the other one right the other one

Male3: You said he was in the REME

Male2: Yeah

Male3: What's that?

Male2; Royal Engin, oh

Male1: Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Male2: Engineers

I'm sorry, the other thing that we used to do that Bernard mentioned when I was a little kid, before erm the sea-front was all different it was just open we used to cycle down especially on foggy days was the best cycle straight down Canute Road and straight down off the prom into the sea because we erm we'd make sure the tide was sort of in and, but you had to get rid of your bike in mid-air

Female1: But didn't you do that dreadful thing to that boy?

Male2: Oh yeah

Female1: Where you were all kneeling down as if to say come in

Male 2: It's about an eight or ten dive in and you could dive at high tide and Guss Hughes came along one day and we were always taking the Mickey out of him he was you know he was one of these the lads that always got taken, so we all knelt down Pasty with the water up to about there he stood on the top and said is it okay to dive we said yes but of course it was only knee- deep and he dived and he stuck and he just went crunch.

As noticed above, this conversation is, rather, spontaneous and the language is very informal. It lacks organisation: grammar is adapted to real-time construction for simplicity but for the native speakers, incomplete sentences, repetitions, slang words (Pasty) ellipsis through omission (remember), discourse markers (right, anyway, you know) response forms (yes, yeah, no), phrasal verbs (mess about, play about), idioms (take the mickey of someone), hesitations (erm, er), swear words (God, Dear God), informal clipping (prom for promenade and usu for usual), the use of the verbs 'to be and get' in conversations with different meanings and so on.

Therefore, this conversation is beyond the level of the first-year student whose background knowledge may be very limited to understand a very informal conversation. Now that some empirical difficulties, which may impede our learners to understand very informal language, have been shown, we suggest some tasks in the pre-listening, while listening and post-listening phases.

I-Pre-listening phase

A-Start with a tongue twister or a joke because variety is the 'spice' of vivid and good teaching and removes the shackles of routine.

Examples are:

a- tongue twister: Flee from fog to fight flu fast.

B-Task1: Activate background knowledge or prediction.

The following conversation is about a plane crash. Ask the learners to work in a group to brainstorm topical lexis from the title or predict topical lexis from the title. For example by making a semantic mapping:

A plane crash

Mary: We're in trouble Pete... The engine's breaking up!

Pete: Oh, God we're going to crash!

Mary: There goes the engine...

Pete: We're gonna hit those rocks!

Mary: No, we're not Pete... We're OK. I'm gonna get us down, all right?

Pete: What are you doing? The plane's turning over...

Mary: Relax, Pete. I know what I'm doing, right?

Pete: Relax? Relax? What d'you mean relax? We're both gonna die! I don't wanna die! I'm too young to die!

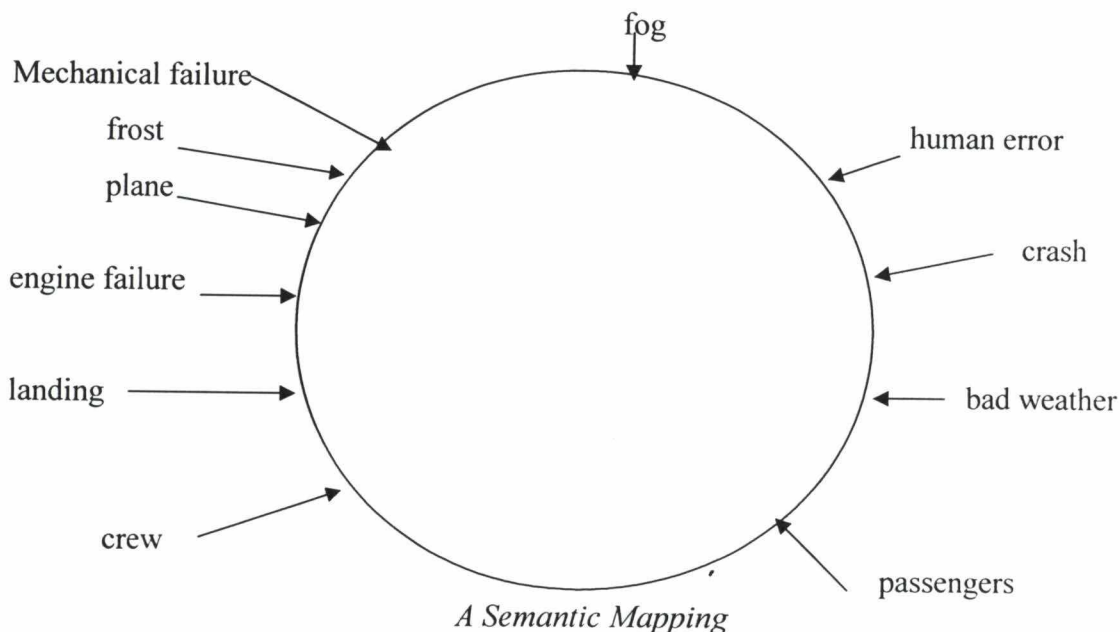
Mary: Nobody's going to die, Pete! You've got to keep calm. Now, listen! I'm going to try to put the plane down over there...

Pete: Over where?

Mary: On that flat patch of hard sand, just ahead. But, it's going to be a rough landing. So, put your head down...and put your arms over your head...Landing in ten seconds!

Pete: Oh, God! We're gonna crash...I'm not gonna look...

Mary: Landing now, Pete...Pete: Ooooooohhhh...(Baaang).



II-While listening phase

Task2: Main idea.

-listen to this conversation and say/write what the main idea is

Task3: Key words.

-As you listen, select key words.

Task3: Ordering sentences

-Listen again to this conversation and order the following eight sentences:

- No, we're not Pete... We're OK. I'm gonna get us down, all right?

- There goes the engine...

-Pete: Relax? Relax? What d'you mean relax? We're both gonna die! I don't wanna die! I'm too young to die!

-We're in trouble Pete...The engine's breaking up!

- What are you doing? The plane's turning over...
- Oh, God we're going to crash!
- Relax, Pete. I know what I'm doing, right?
- We're gonna hit those rocks!

Task4: Blank-filling.

-Listen and fill in the blanks according to the following *conversation*:

Mary: We're in trouble Pete. The engine'sup!
 Pete: Oh, God we're going to.....!
 Mary: There goes the engine
 Pete: We're gonna hit those.....!
 Mary: No, we're not Pete. We're OK. I'm gonna get us....., all right?
 Pete: What are you doing? The plane'sover
 Mary: Relax, Pete. I know what I'm doing,?
 Pete: Relax? Relax? What d'you mean relax? We'regonna die! I don't wanna die! I'm too..... to die!
 Mary: Nobody's going to die, Pete! You've got to keep..... Now, listen! I'm going toto put the plane downthere.
 Pete: Over.....?
 Mary: On that flatof hard sand, just..... But, it's going to be alanding. So, put your head down...and put your arms over your head. Landing inseconds!
 Pete: Oh, God!gonna crash. I'm not gonna look...
 Mary: Landing now, Pete...Pete: Oooooooooohhhh... (Baaang).

Task4: Correcting mistakes.

-Listen to this conversation and correct the mistakes.

A plane crash

Mary: We're in trouble Pete...The engine's breaking up!
 Pete: Oh, Gosh you're going to crash!
 Mary: turn the engine...
 Pete: We're gonna hit those tops!
 Mary: No, we're not Pete...We're OK. I'm going to get us down, all right?
 Pete: What are we doing? The plane's turning over...
 Mary: Relax, Pete. I know what I'm doing, right?
 Pete: Relax? Relax? What d'you mean relax? We're both gonna live! I don't wanna leave! I'm too young to quit!
 Mary: Nobody's going to survive, Pete! You've got to be calm. Now, listen! I'm going to try to put the plane down over there...
 Pete: Over there?
 Mary: On this flat patch of yellow sand, just ahead. But, it's going to be a tough landing. So, put your head down...and put your arms over your head...Landing in twelve seconds!
 Pete: Oh, God! We're gonna crash...I'm not gonna look...

Mary: Landing now, Pete...Pete: Oooooohhhh... (Baaang).

III-Post listening phase

-Language focus:-Formal/informal English.

The teacher can show the learners some informal English used in this conversation. For instance, the underlined words are typical examples of informality: gonna, wanna, OK, put something down, right, get someone down and so on.

Task5: Integrate with other skills: speaking or writing

-Is it safe to travel by plane nowadays? (speaking). The first-year students should be given some prompts to keep the conversation going on. For example, they should know how to express an opinion with the following expressions:

-Opinions, Preferences:

I think..., In my opinion..., I'd like to..., I'd prefer..., The way I see it..., As far as I'm concerned..., If it were up to me..., I suspect that..., It is fairly certain that..., Without a doubt...,

-Disagreeing:

I don't think that..., Don't you think it would be better..., I don't agree..., Shouldn't we consider..., But what about..., The truth of the matter is ..., The problem with your point of view...,

-Giving reasons and offering explanations:

-Why..., For this reason..., That the reason why..., To start with..., Many people think that..., Considering..., Allowing for the fact that..., When you consider that..., That's why...,

Another way to teach conversations is to give these learners, from time to time, some short conversations to test their inference ability without following the required steps. For instance, the teacher may do the following:

-Conversation1:

Man: My house needs painting, and something has to be done about that deck
Woman: Mrs. Johnson at the hardware store gave excellent advice about my house.

Question1: What is this man looking for?

-Conversation 2:

Man: Henry is the best buddy a guy could ask for
Woman: You could say that again!

Question 2: Does the woman agree with the man?

-Conversation 3:

Man: Did you hear the news? Gregorio has been accepted into medical school.

Woman: Nothing could surprise me more!

Question 3: Is the woman surprised by the news?

4.5.3. Teaching Stories

Stories are also motivating for the first-year students alongside news and announcements if they are more real life. Connecting stories, news and announcements to the learners' experience would set up the context familiarity of the topic to listen to and talk about it. Thus, personalisation is a helpful strategy to motivate the learners and get them involved in the listening passage. Announcements are, generally, short, formal and may not follow the pre-listening, while listening and post listening phases. They can be used to focus on very specific and explicit information: numbers of telephones, costs, a correct spelling in which the bottom-up processing is required. Unlike announcements, stories are characterised by both formal and informal English. The following extract is an example of how to teach stories which contain informal English:

When everything goes wrong

Yeah, well...This all happened about three years ago, I suppose. I had to go to Zurich for a conference. Now to get to the airport from where I live, it's a bit complicated. I have to drive to the nearest station, that's at Dideot, about five miles away, get a train from Dideot to Reading, and then get a ...bus-coach from Reading to Heathrow Airport. Well, on this particular trip, my train from Dideot was at 9 o'clock. And by half past eight, I'd already packed everything...I'd got everything ready, I was very calm and relaxed. I felt fine. So, we went out to the car. My girl-friend was coming with me because she had to bring my car back from the station where I caught my train. So, we went out to the car, and as I was getting into the car, I banged my head on the roof rack. It's quite a small car and I'm quite a big man, and...there I banged my head, and it's started bleeding...I got into the car, got a Kleenex and started mopping my head from the bleed, and drove off. As we were driving along to the station, mopping my head as I did so, I suddenly realised that I'd forgotten my anorak, which I was going to need in Zurich in December. So, I turned round and drove back home as fast as I could.

still mopping the blood from my head, jumped out the car, rushed into the house, picked up my anorak, back into the car, drove back at enormous speed to Dideot, still mopping the blood from my head, arrived at the station just about a minute before the train was due to leave. Wasn't feeling quite so calm and well-organised now. I jumped out of the car, picked up my luggage, kissed my girl-friend goodbye, rushed over to the ticket office, bought a ticket, rushed up the steps, still mopping the blood from my head. There was the train, just beginning to pull out. So, I rushed over to it, pulled the door open, dropped my ticket on the platform, picked my ticket up, threw my luggage into the train, jumped into the train, shut the door...hhh...breathed a sigh of relief, and went and found a seat and sat down. I then realised ...that I was still holding the car keys.

I -Pre-listening phase

-Give necessary vocabulary to help the learners understand better the story. For example: roof rank, Kleenex, moppe, drive off, anorak, pull out, rush up, rush over.

II -While listening phase

-Task1: Main idea.

-Write down the main idea

Task2: Key words.

-Select the key words.

Task3: Gap-filling text

Task4: Correcting mistakes

III -Post-listening phase.

-Task5: Summarising/Prediction.

-Make a short summary of the story or:

-Predict an end to the story.

-Task6: Personalising: integrate with speaking

-Do you remember a story that happened to you in your childhood?

4.5.4. Teaching News

Today, the most influential and accessible resources to learn English are the BBC and CNN TV channels. They cover a different range of topics: news, political speeches, reports on science, weather forecasts, advertising, stock exchange, foreign trade and so on. Nowadays, with the availability of video cassettes, it is easy to record the news on tapes as well as on disks. There are six main kinds of news vocabulary. Certain words are frequently used and repeated in six broad categories:

Man: Henry is the best buddy a guy could ask for

Woman: You could say that again!

Question 2: Does the woman agree with the man?

-Conversation 3:

Man: Did you hear the news? Gregorio has been accepted into medical school.

Woman: Nothing could surprise me more!

Question 3: Is the woman surprised by the news?

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Yeah, well...This all happened about three years ago, I suppose. I had to go to Zurich for a conference. Now to get to the airport from where I live, it's a bit complicated. I have to drive to the nearest station, that's at Dideot, about five miles away, get a train from Dideot to Reading, and then get a ...bus-coach from Reading to Heathrow Airport. Well, on this particular trip, my train from Dideot was at 9 o'clock. And by half past eight, I'd already packed everything...I'd got everything ready, I was very calm and relaxed. I felt fine. So, we went out to the car. My girl-friend was coming with me because she had to bring my car back from the station where I caught my train. So, we went out to the car, and as I was getting into the car, I banged my head on the roof rack. It's quite a small car and I'm quite a big man, and...there I banged my head, and it's started bleeding...I got into the car, got a Kleenex and started mopping my head from the bleed, and drove off. As we were driving along to the station, mopping my head as I did so, I suddenly realised that I'd forgotten my anorak, which I was going to need in Zurich in December. So, I turned round and drove back home as fast as I could.

-*Politics*: cold war, hot line, withdraw, presidential election, referendum, forum, summit; refugee, sanction, parliament and so on.

-*Economy*: finance, import, export, stock exchange, balanced trade, embargo, deficit trade, etc.

-*Science and Technology*: space shuttle, laser technology, robot, automation, acid rain, electronics, manufacturing, internet, etc.

-*Military matters*: space war, guided missile, nuclear facilities, siege, cease-fire, limited war, logistic supply, coup, etc.

-*Proper nouns*: U.S President Bill Clinton, President of France Jacques Chirac, Prime Minister of Great Britain Tony Blair, etc.

-*Acronyms*: organisational names, frequently, appear in news broadcasts. Examples are: UN, WHO, IMF, PLO, FBI, EEC, NATO, UNESCO, OPEC, NAFTA, and so on.

Therefore, a list of these items should be given to these learners before they listen to a piece of news or watch a segment of a video cassette. This kind of preparation in advance may motivate the learners because they will set a purpose for listening. Tasks should follow the required steps previously mentioned (See 4.5.1 and 4.5.2).

4.6. Sample Models for Developing Cognitive listening Strategies

In the following section, some practical suggestions are provided and dealt with exhaustively. Sample lessons for listening strategies are presented as an add-on to how to teach listening using both the top-down and bottom-up strategies. It should be noticed, right from the outset, that listening strategy instruction does not form an integral part in teaching listening comprehension. They are just perceived as an add-on to listening tasks. That is to say, cognitive listening strategies should be taught separately, following the two phases: presentation -define and exemplify-and practice. The teacher can give a reminder of the cognitive listening strategies during a listening task if not understood in the listening strategy instruction. The reason for that resides in the fact that the learners may find listening strategy instruction a burden if it is woven into endless lessons. However, teachers should set up a series of cognitive listening

tasks to help the listeners develop the listening skills. The cognitive listening strategies used mainly in the pre-listening phase are:

1-Activate background knowledge

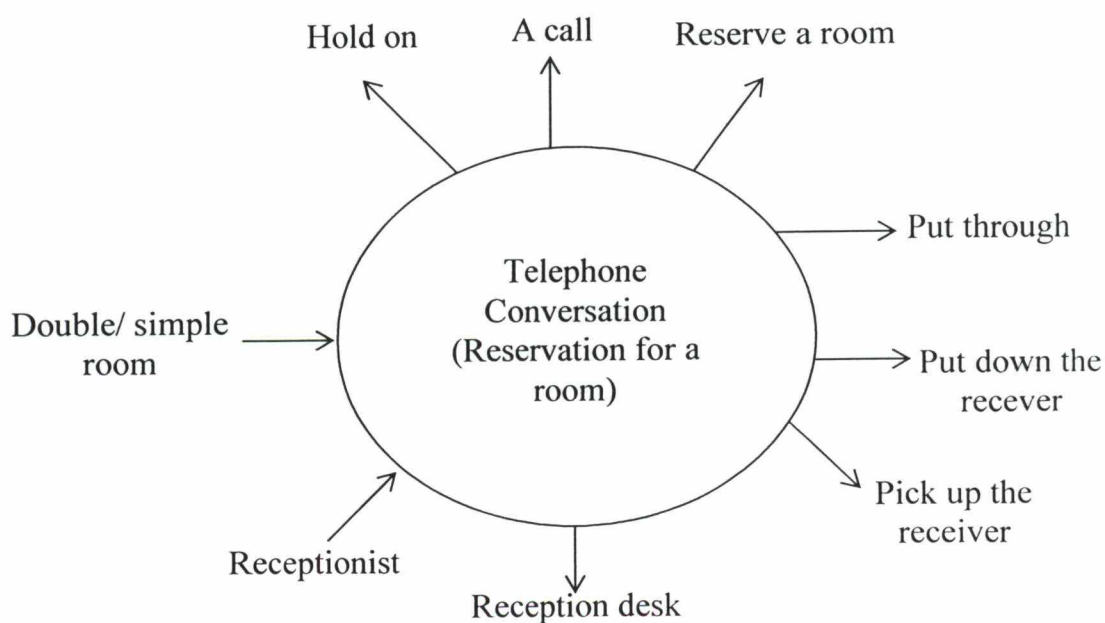
Strategy Rationale: use background knowledge to prepare the listeners for the incoming tasks in while listening phase.

-Procedure:

1/ Presentation:

a-Definition: Define the strategy. For example, activating background knowledge is a cognitive strategy used before you listen to a listening passage, to help you familiarise yourselves with the topic by generating as many ideas as you can. Such information will help you activate relevant schema -what you know-for the listening passage.

b-Exemplification: "Today, you are going to listen to a dialogue between two people talking about a telephone conversation, but first we are going to review what you already know about this topic. This is a strategy to prepare you before you listen. It is called using background knowledge. The teacher can show the listeners how to brainstorm topical lexis from the title by using a semantic mapping which helps the learners organise facts or information in a logical way. The learners can work in pairs or groups and may use the dictionaries. An example of a cluster can be:



2/ Prediction

Strategy Rationale: Prediction helps the listeners think about what might happen in a listening passage and guess what some of the words, phrases and information will be before listening.

-Procedure:

1/ presentation:

a-Definition: Prediction means to tell something is going to happen before it happens. It involves thinking of the information that you expect to hear based on knowledge of the world. Use it when you have knowledge of the topic.

b-Exemplification: "Today, we are going to listen to a text about 'Ordering a Meal'.

Ordering a meal

Jean: Where shall we sit? Look! There are some free seats in the corner.

Jill: The seats by the window are better. It'll be cooler there.

Jean: Okay. What would you like to eat?

Jill: I'm really hungry. I think I'll have chicken and chips with baked beans.

Why don't you have chicken too?

Jean: I don't eat meat. It makes me ill. I'll have a cheese sandwich instead.

Jill: And what about drinks? I think I'll have some mint tea.

Jean: No that's really expensive! It's three dollars sixty cents! I'll have a coffee; it's much cheaper.

Waiter: Good evening.

Jill: Good evening. We'll have one chicken and chips with baked beans and one cheese sandwich please.

Waiter: No problem! What would you like to drink?

Jean: A mint tea and a coffee please. Oh - and please bring me some cream for the coffee.

Waiter: Okay. let me repeat your order. One chicken and chips with beans, one cheese sandwich, a mint tea and a coffee with cream.

(British Council 2006)

Before you listen, try to guess what the listening passage will be about from the title. If you want to order a meal in a restaurant, think about how to ask about the menu, bill, food and vegetables, etc.,. The speakers are likely to ask questions such as "May I have the menu, please?", "Do you have any good dishes?", "I'd like some dessert", "I'd like some mineral water", "What do you recommend?", "I'd like some soup, some chips.

some fish, some salad, some meat", " What do you have for dessert ?", etc.,. The teacher may write the questions, words and phrases the listeners have predicted.

2/ Practice:

From time to time, the teacher should give the learners some practice with other situational dialogues, stories, news, texts and so on to reinforce the use of the cognitive strategies.

3-Verify predictions: on words, phrases to check their predictions, relying on their bottom-up processing.

Strategy Rationale: Use verify predictions to help the listeners reinforce their understanding of the listening passage. This strategy is used in the while listening phase, in which the listeners check off the words or phrases they have predicted.

-Procédure:

1/ Presentation:

a-Definition: This strategy means checking to see whether your predictions were correct and expectations met while listening.

b-Exemplification: "It is not enough to set up predictions. You also need to check the accuracy of your predictions. This strategy helps you think about how well your knowledge matches the information in the listening passage. If your predictions are correct, checking them helps reinforce the information. On the contrary, if your predictions are incorrect, checking them helps you think why your predictions are incorrect so that you can make better predictions next time. If, then, you predicted that you might hear words for "phone, air steward, terminal, X-ray scanner, flight number, information desk, passport, check-in desk", etc.,. Think about which of these words you actually heard.

2/ Practice:

The teacher can give the first-year students some practice by completing the task and providing feedback after the learners have completed the task.

4/Main idea:

Strategy Rationale: Listening for the main idea helps the listeners get global understanding from a listening passage. Sometimes, we skip unnecessary or irrelevant

information and focus only on the gist or the purpose of what is being said. This depends, primarily, on what you want to listen: general understanding of the passage or listening for specific information.

-Procédure:

1/ Presentation :

a-Definition: A main idea is what the whole passage is about. It is expressed by "main purpose", "best title", "main topic". Whereas, specific details are key words or phrases supporting the main idea.

b-Exemplification: "Do not confuse the general idea of a conversation with the details supporting it. A general idea is what the conversation is about. Specific details are the facts or particular details that support the main idea. To set an example, read the following dialogue:

Man: Have Bill and Mary finally chosen a colour for the new baby's room.

Woman: no, Mary said that last weekend, they tried pink, blue, light green and tangerine and still couldn't make up their minds.

Man: I don't see what's difficult about choosing a colour to paint the room.

Woman: well, it is their first child, and they want everything to be perfect.

So, in this conversation, the main point discussed is that "a couple can't decide on a colour to paint their new baby's room". Specific details or key words, which support the main idea, are "the variety of colours discussed: blue pink, light green and tangerine". Therefore, when you listen to a passage, consider it as a whole and even if you mishear some words, don't worry! Just go along and at the end you will probably catch the main idea.

2/ Practice:

Have the listeners practise this strategy and provide feedback whenever necessary.

5/ Selecting key words (take notes)

Strategy Rationale: Selecting key words helps the listeners focus on special information. In this way, the listeners limit irrelevant information and the number of things they write down. It helps the listeners make a brief summary in the post-listening phase.

Procedure :

1/ Presentation :

a-Definition: Selecting key words is a strategy used to focus on the most important words, phrases in the listening passage. These words are mainly content words- nouns, adjectives, adverbs and some important verbs-which are generally stressed.

b-Exemplification: the following passage is about 'flight information':

we've had this information card printed to help make your flight arrival quick and easy.

It would be helpful if you read these instructions before landing.

Remain in your seat until the plane stops moving. To avoid delays, have your passport and other necessary documents available for customs inspection. Upon leaving the plane .All duty- free items must be declared. It is illogical to hide these items.

Although we always make an attempt to be efficient, unexpected complications do happen. So, if your suitcase doesn't appear at the baggage reclaim, be patient and try not to get frustrated.

Key words
- Nouns: inf ; flight arrival, landing, seat, passt, doc, c insp, items, complication , delays, bag reclaim.
- Adjectives: illogical, declared, patient, frust.
- Adverbs :
- Verbs : remain, hide, avoid.
- Dates :
- Nombres :
-Etc ...

So, 'inf' means information ; 'passt' means passport ; etc.,.

2/ Practice: Have the listeners practise this strategy by developing faster notes.

6-Inferencing:

Strategy Rationale: All too often this strategy is not well understood. It should be noted that there are many types of inferences, from guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words to "Where are the speakers?" or "Where did this talk probably take place?". This

strategy requires the listeners to use the context and their background knowledge to infer the intended meaning and to interpret oral/ aural information by separating facts from opinions. The teaching of this strategy takes a lot of time because it depends on the learners' background knowledge which may be limited. It would be better not to teach it and the teacher can, simply, ask some inference questions about a listening passage.

7-Summarising

Strategy Rationale: Summarising helps the listeners evaluate themselves or how well they understood the listening passage.

1/ Presentation :

a-Definition: Summarising is a strategy which involves making a written summary of the oral / aural information. It also reinforces your learning. This strategy is not easily taught and it may be useless to spend too much time on teaching it. The teacher should, simply, strike a balance between grammar and comprehension.

As can see, listening strategy instruction should be explicit to teach some strategies and not easy for inferencing and summarising. Therefore, the instruction aims at raising the skill awareness which may lead to the maintenance of the cognitive listening strategies and strategy transfer to other skills.

4.7. Conclusion

This concluding chapter has shed light on ELT at University level, teacher's and learner's roles. That is to say, the teacher can assume a number of roles in order to help the learners develop the listening sub-skills, who, in turn, have to take an active role in doing extensive listening to improve their achievement. This chapter has, also, provided the teachers with sample lessons which we hope would be helpful to teach listening strategies and eventually in terms of raising the skill awareness. Some lesson samples have been proposed which centre around authentic and semi-authentic listening. Moreover, some listening tasks have been suggested for the first-year University EFL students that may be used to reinforce listening strategy instruction and develop the listeners' cognitive powers to better process the oral/aural information.

Notes to the chapter Four

1-Arguments against authenticity were stated by Penny Ur (1984) who showed that certain difficulties may get the listeners frustrated and even demoralised when they hear authentic tapes which expose the listeners to improper grammar usage. Therefore, it is suggested that at a post-intermediate level, the listeners cannot cope with different accents and detangle the thread of discourse. Thus, teachers should be careful of using authentic materials.

2-Readability describes the ease with which a listening text can be read. Webster's defines "readable" as "fit to read, interesting, agreeable and attractive in style and enjoyable". Readability is whether the text is understood by its reader which leads to its 'comprehensibility'. Therefore, texts should be suitable for particular listeners' needs.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

General Conclusion

The present work has focused on listening strategy instruction as an add-on to listening tasks to improve the listeners' comprehensive competence. An outcome of this study is that listening skills need conscious development throughout time. They can be best developed with much more practice when the listeners reflect on the process of listening or 'how to listen' without the 'threat of marks'. However, in an EFL context, when the listeners are not resourceful, focusing too much on the process may take time. A middle solution is to raise the skill awareness of the use of the cognitive listening strategies and to help the listeners use and maintain them over time by setting up motivating tasks.

The posttests results show that the treatment group performed better than the control group. The listeners did apply the cognitive listening strategies, but did not show an out-performance as compared to the control group. These findings imply that teachers should spend much more time in developing the listeners' cognitive skills.

This study has also investigated the listeners' perceptions of the listening comprehension difficulties and identified their prior listening strategies. The evidence presented shows that the post-intermediate listeners experience different kinds of listening comprehension difficulties. Moreover, it was found that the listeners were, in some respects, equipped with a limited repertoire of listening strategies and, rarely, practised listening in the middle and secondary schools. Therefore, suggestions would be to design motivating listening courses and textbooks. In addition, future research on listening comprehension should investigate different types of listening tasks and define their goals. Questions should be designed to investigate the relationship between listening and learning styles in order to find out more why listeners prefer to use a particular listening strategy and a certain listening task. A more in-depth research should also study the influence of listening on the development of other basic skills as well as to incorporate listening with these skills. Consequently, continuing research in this area will help teachers, more appropriately, prepare the listeners for high academic achievement.

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APPENDICES

APPENDICES

Appendix A Questionnaire for the listeners

Appendix B Questionnaire for the teachers

Appendix C Pretest

Appendix D Posttests

Appendix E Texts used in the pre- and posttests.

Appendix A

Listening strategies

Questionnaire

The following questionnaire aims at gathering information about you to make listening easier for you. Will you, please, complete it?

- General Information about the Student:

- 1- Age: _____ 2- Sex _____ 3- Nationality _____
4- Branch of secondary school studies _____
5- For how long have you been learning English? _____

- 6- Is studying English at the university your first choice or is it computer-oriented?

-Identifying the Learner's Previous Listening Strategies

Suppose you are going to listen to a dialogue between two people who are taking about: "Buying new clothes for their children". How often do you do each of the following before you listen (N°7 and 8), when you listen (9, 10, 11, 12) and after you listen (13). Please tick the appropriate box .

7- Before I listen, I write down all the words I know about "Buying clothes for children", for example (tie, trousers, belt, jacket, shirt, etc).

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

8- Before I listen, I try to tell before that the words I have written down (tie, trousers, belt, etc) may be heard and said by the two people.

Almost never Sometimes Almost Every Time

9- When I listen, I check to see if I can hear the words (tie, belt, jacket, etc) I have already written down.

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

10- When I listen, I concentrate on the most important idea of the two people (for example, are they giving to buy new clothes for their children to go to school, to go to a marriage or simply because their children's clothes are old and need to be changed).

Almost Never Sometimes Almost every time

11- When I listen, I use a paper to write down only important words in the dialogue (for example, shops, customers, expensive colours, sizes, cheap are very important words).

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

12- When I listen, and I do not understand a difficult word in the dialogue, for example, the word "braces", I try to use all what I know to understand it (for example, the two people are talking about clothes, so may be "braces" mean something which hold trousers).

Almost never Sometimes Almost every time

13- After I listen, I make a brief summary of the dialogue to judge myself if I have really understood.

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

-Listening Comprehension Difficulties as Felt by the Listeners

How often do you feel these listening comprehension difficulties? Please tick the appropriate case

A-Difficult words and grammatical structures

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

B-Difficulty in understanding a long listening text

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

C-Difficulty in not understanding the meaning of words which are not pronounced clearly

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

D-Speakers speak too fast

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

E-Tapescripts before listening exercises help me understand the text. I find it difficult to listen without these tapescripts

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

F-Difficulty in listening to a recorded spoken text other than my teacher

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

G-Poor quality of tapes makes it difficult for me to understand a text well

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

H-Difficulty in getting a general understanding from the first listening

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

I-Difficulty in understanding the message without seeing the speaker

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

J-Others: _____ . Which ones: _____

Appendix B

Listening Questionnaire

The following questionnaire aims at collecting information about the perceived listening comprehension difficulties. Please tick the appropriate box.

How often are these listening comprehension difficulties perceived as major problems for your learners?

A-Difficult words and grammatical structures

Almost Never	Sometimes	Almost Every Time
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B-Difficulty in understanding a long listening text

Almost Never	Sometimes	Almost Every Time
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C-Difficulty in not understanding the meaning of words which are not pronounced clearly

Almost Never	Sometimes	Almost Every Time
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D-Speakers speak too fast

Almost Never	Sometimes	Almost Every Time
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

E-Difficulty in understanding the spoken text if the listeners are not provided with transcripts before listening

Almost Never	Sometimes	Almost Every Time
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

F-Difficulty in listening to a recorded spoken text other than their teachers

Almost never	Sometimes	Almost Every Time
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

G-Poor quality of tapes makes it difficult for the listeners to understand well a listening text

Almost Never	Sometimes	Almost Every Time
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

H-Difficulty in getting a general understanding from the first listening

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

I-Difficulty in understanding the message without seeing the speaker

Almost Never Sometimes Almost Every Time

J- Others: _____ . Which ones: _____

TEXT ONE: ADS

-Part I

-Pre-listening phase

Task 1: Activate background knowledge

-Write down as many words as you can about:

- a- Cars
- b- Different types of cars
- c- Features you look for when buying a car
- d- Words which persuade you to buy a car.

-While listening phase

Task 2: Listening for the main idea

- Write down the main idea

Task 3: Inferencing

- Listen to the following conversation and choose the correct answer.

2- What does the announcer assume about Ron?

- a- He does not like luxury cars.
- b- His new car does not work.
- c- He does not have enough money to buy a car.
- d- He paid too much money for a used car.

3- Why did the announcer say; “we guarantee you won’t find a better deal any where”?

- a- Because all the cars will have been sold.
- b- Because the sale will be over.
- c- Because the cars are cheap.
- d- Because there will be only used cars.

4- What is the relationship between Ron and Lora?

- a- We do not know.
- b- Friends.
- c- Sister and brother.
- d- Employer and employee.

Appendix D

TEXT THREE: SPORTS

PART I

1- Pre-listening phase

Task 1: Activate background knowledge

- Generate as many ideas as you can by making a semantic mapping.

2- While listening phase

Task 2: Listening for the main idea

- What is the passage mainly discussing? Choose the best option:
 - a- A major sporting event in Jefferson High School
 - b- Talent spotters who look for talented youngsters
 - c- Motivation to win
 - d- History of famous athletes

Task 3: Inferencing

- What can be inferred about the word, 'Hank the tank'?
 - a- Hank was a weak person.
 - b- Hank had many talents.
 - c- Hank was very motivated.
 - d- Hank was very strong.
- Where did this conversation take place?
 - a- In Jefferson High School.
 - b- In Joe's house
 - c- We do not know
 - d- Broadcast on TV or radio
- What will Joe probably do?
 - a- Travel around the world in search of fortune.
 - b- Start a career as a teacher.
 - c- Stop studying and playing football.
 - d- Finish his higher studies and continue his career as a football player.

TEXT FOUR: INTERVIEW

PART II

1-Pre-listening phase

Task 1: Prediction

- Predict topical lexical from the title.

2-While listening

Task 1: Verify predictions

- Listen to the following conversation. As you listen, check your predictions.

Task 2: Note-taking

- Select key words from the listening passage.

3-Post-listening phase

Task 3: Summarising

- Choose the best summary.

- a- Karen is talking about different jobs she has taken by giving details about them. She, no longer, wants to do jobs which last only for a short time.
- b- Karen is applying for a new job in advertising agencies to make a career. She tries to be more persuasive by giving details about her previous experience.
- c- Karen has been involved in doing only temporary jobs which do not help her start a lifelong career. Though she has some experience, she feels that it is hard to find a good job.

TEXT FIVE: ORAL SURGEY

PART I

1-Pre-listening phase

Task 1: Activate background knowledge

-Brainstorm topical lexis related to today's topic. Make a semantic map.

2-While listening phase

Task 1: Main idea

-In this conversation, what is the main point discussed?

- a- Taking pain medication.
- b- Cleaning teeth.
- c-Extracting wisdom teeth.
- d-Recovering from an accident.

Task 2: Inferencing

- According to the doctor, what will the surgery involve?
 - a - A lot of pain.
 - b- Putting the patient to sleep.
 - c- Staying in the in the hospital.
 - d- Making three or four appointments with the nurse.
- How does the man feel about the surgery?
 - a- He looks forward to feeling relief.
 - b - He is fearful of pain.
 - c - He does not trust the doctor.
 - d- He is concerned about his roommate's driving him home.

What should the doctor prescribe for her patient?

- a-Toothpaste.
- b-Sedative drugs.
- c-Syrup for sleeping.
- d-Medicine to take the pain away.

TEXT SIX: QUIZ

PART II

-Pre-listening phase

Task 1: Prediction

-Predict topical lexis from the title (the teacher writes some of the words on the blackboard the listeners have predicted).

-While-listening phase

Task 1: Verify predictions

-listen to the following conversation and tick off the items you have predicted.

Task 2: Listening for key words

-listen again to this conversation and select the key words.

-Post-listening phase

Task 1: Summarising

-Make a brief summary of this conversation.

Appendix E

TEXT ONE: ADS

Announcer: It's the end-of-the year sale, and here at Car City you'll find fantastic bargains! We have brand-new and used cars, economy-sized cars, and luxury models, all at reasonable prices! Don't make the same mistake that Ron Gardner made. He bought a used luxury car somewhere else and isn't satisfied with it. Ron, tell us about it.

Ron: That's right: My name's Ron and I just bought a used car about a week ago. If I had come to Car City first, I could've bought the latest model of the same car at the same price! And with extra features, too.

Announcer: Lara Davids, tell us about the wonderful deal you got at Car City.

Lara: Hi: I'm Lara! I just bought a brand-new Beamer Coyote. It's so beautiful! It's automatic and has all the latest features! The best part is the price. I paid ten per cent as a down payment, and I'm paying the rest off in monthly payments. When I told my sister about it, she said that she had bought a car here, too, and had got a really great deal. Everybody's coming here. So if you don't come now, there won't be any cars left!

Announcer: You heard it, folks. Car City is the place to buy cars. We guarantee you won't find a better deal anywhere!

(From English Plus: Tests Texts CD-Rom 1995)

TEXT TWO: WEATHER

Announcer: And here's Will Tide with the weather report.

Will: Good morning, Listeners: Wrap yourselves up warmly today, because the weather will continue to be cold and frosty with a chance of fog in low areas. According to national weather reports, the storm which was expected later today is travelling at fifty miles an hour, and should reach this area around midnight tonight. Strong winds and heavy rains are expected along with thunder and lightening. There is a chance of flooding, and light ships have been warned of the danger. Temperatures will be below average for this time of year, with an expected low of forty degrees Fahrenheit.

Tomorrow will be cool and dry, with cloudy skies and normal temperatures.

Tomorrow evening, temperatures will continue to go up, and bright sunshine and above-average temperatures are expected for the weekend. Well, I'm sure we'll all be glad to have a break from the rain. That's all from the weather room. So for now, stay warm and keep dry.

**(From interactive English: Practice
Tests. 1995 CD-Rom).**

TEXT FIVE: ORAL SURGERY

Doctor: Mr. Novak, I believe it would be best to extract all four of your molars.

Patient: Oh, can all four be taken out at the same time?

Doctor: yes, if that's the way you'd like it.

Patient: How long will it take?

Doctor: we'll need to anesthetise you, of course. The procedure will take around an hour, but then you'll need some time to wake up in the recovery room. Two or three hours all together.

Patient: Oh!

Doctor: You'll be sleepy for several hours afterwards and you'll need someone to drive you home.

Patient: I guess my roommate can do that.

Doctor: Good. Do you have any more questions?

Patient: Um, will there be any pain?

Doctor: Not much: I'll write a prescription and you can have it filled on the way home after the surgery.

Patient: That's good to know. It will be a relief to have these wisdom teeth out.

Doctor: That's what people usually say. now, if you'll just make an appointment with the nurse, we'll be able to take care of those teeth.

Patient: thank you, doctor.

(From TOEFL Practice Tests. 1997 CD-ROM).

TEXT FOUR: INTERVIEW

Bob: Karen, I'm Bob Johnson. I'm sorry you had to wait so long. Can I offer you some coffee?

Karen: No. No, thank you.

Bob: Please, have a seat Karen, I've read over your application. I thought it was very good. I see you have had some experience working with advertising agencies. Is that right?

Karen: Yes, it is. Actually, I've worked for three advertising agencies. But kery on -Barnett is the most important. The other two were only temporary positions for about six months each.

Bob: So, tell me about it.

Karen: Well, I've been in the advertising field for almost three years now. Last year I worked as a receptionist, then as a secretary but this year, I've done a lot more. I've been to planning meetings. I've written some copy for a new client who has a small sweet factory. And I've taken some classes in copy writing at Fordham University. I put that in my resume. Have you received it yet?

Bob: I'm sorry. I've seen so many people today, it's hard to keep everything straight.

(From Interactive English: Practice
Tests. 1995 CD-ROM).

TEXT SIX: QUIZ

Mrs Smith: Hello.

Announcer: This is Bob Clarke calling from "Lucky Phone Call". Have you ever played on our programme before?

Mrs. Smith: No.

Announcer: Well, today is your lucky day! You've been chosen by our radio team to participate in this morning's quiz. Let me give you some instructions about how it's played.

Mrs. Smith: I hope it's not too complicated.

Announcer: Not at all. I have a piece of paper in front of me on which three items are listed. You are going to be asked three questions. The answers are the items on the list. If you answer two of the questions correctly, you will win the CD of your choice. Are you ready?

Mrs. Smith: I, sure am, Bob.

Announcer: Here's your first question: where are pineapples imported from? Alaska or Hawaii?

Mrs. Smith: Hawaii.

Announcer: You're right! Ok here's the next question: which of the following animals eats cotton? Is it a cow, an elephant or a snake?

Mrs. Smith: Ummm, an elephant.

Announcer: Sorry, Mrs. Smith. The correct answer is a cow. In fact, on many dairy farms cows are fed cotton as part of their daily diet. But don't be disappointed. You have already answered one question correctly and still have one more question left. And here it is: what are mirrors made of, plastic or glass?

Mrs. Smith: Oh, that's easy. The answer is glass.

Announcer: Congratulations! You're our lucky winner! You've just won the CD of your choice.

(From English Plus: 1995 CDR-OM).

Résumé en Anglais:

The present work focuses on the listening strategy instruction and a set of variables, among which are mainly the learning preferences and needs. It also tries to lay stress on the learning process based on the research on cognitive psychology: the process of knowing, organizing, transferring and integrating the oral / aural information. All in all, this very modest work tries to seek new ways to implement strategic teaching / learning within an E.F.L. Setting.

Résumé en Français:

Le présent travail est dévoué à l'enseignement d'Anglais par stratégies dans un contexte académique. L'accent est mis principalement sur le processus d'apprentissage. En d'autres termes, est-ce-que l'enseignement devrait se baser sur le produit-compétence linguistique -ou sur apprendre à apprendre. L'autonomie s'avère un choix impératif afin d'encourager les apprenants à être plus créatifs et stratégiques

ملخص

ينصب هذا البحث حول التعليم الاستراتيجي الأكاديمي لتحسين مستوى طلاب السنة الأولى بجامعة أبو بكر بلقايد، تلمسان. الموضوع الحالي يبحث عن أساليب وطرق جديدة لتشجيع حرية التعليم أو كيف يتعلم الطالب وليس فقط ماذا يتعلم. بعبارة أدق أصبح التعليم الاستراتيجي يهتم اهتماما كبيرا بتطوير القدرات العقلية للطلاب حتى يصبحون واعين ومسؤولين في أن واحد على تحسين مستواهم الأكاديمي.

Mots clés:

Listening strategies - variables of instruction - learning as a process or product
- Authenticity - Topic familiarity -- Autonomy.