

UNIVERSITY OF ALGIERS 2  
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



The Impact of Listening Comprehension Strategy Training on  
First Year English Students' Listening Ability.

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Magister in English- Linguistics and Didactics

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The Impact of Listening Comprehension Strategy Training on  
First Year English Students' Listening Ability.

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## DECLARATION

I, hereby declare that the substance of the dissertation is entirely the result of my investigation and that due reference or acknowledgement is made, whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers.

Date: October 2012

Signed: .....

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## ABSTRACT

This study was motivated by the weak results the students of English in the University of Blida have achieved over the last fifteen years. Teachers and administrators alike believe students' weaknesses are mainly due to their non-effective listening strategies in the listening module, which is key to understanding Academic English needed for their university studies. It was important to understand the students' listening difficulties and to see if a Training Programme involving Strategy-Based Listening Tasks can improve the students' listening ability.

Therefore, a pre-test (Oxford Placement Listening Test) was administered to a sample class of sixty-four first year students to determine their proficiency level. When it was corrected, only thirty students were singled out and divided into an experimental group and a control group of 15 students each. Both groups were administered a 22 item-questionnaire to identify their listening comprehension problems and their listening strategies.

The Experimental Group received Listening Comprehension Strategy Training for twelve weeks. The Programme consisted of strategy-based teaching which developed strategies centred on a framework suggested by Brown (1990: 148). During this time, the control group attended the regular listening sessions with no treatment. To triangulate the results, a semi structured-interview was carried out with the teachers of the module. After the Training Programme, both groups were given a post-test based on IELTS format. The results revealed that the scores of the Experimental Group were higher than those of the Control Group. They had a significantly higher level of listening proficiency and used more strategies, e.g., listening for key words, inferring and listening for gist than they did before Listening Comprehension Strategy Training. However, no significant difference was found in the use of non-verbal cues and asking for clarification strategies. On the other hand, the Control Group used listening comprehension strategies equally before and after the training, except for predicting and note-taking strategies.

Based on these findings, it was suggested that listening teachers should be made aware of strategy-based listening tasks and develop materials based on these results.

## DEDICATION

In fondest memory of my parents, whose sacrifice for the country has allowed me and thousands of Algerians to enter University,

To my wife and children,

To my two grandchildren, Ines and Zakaria,

To my brothers and sisters,

To my parents in- law

To my friend A. Seman...

I dedicate this modest research.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CG:</b>	Control group
<b>EG:</b>	Experimental group
<b>FYS</b>	First Year Student
<b>IELTS</b>	International English Language Testing System
<b>L2</b>	Second Language
<b>L3</b>	Language Three
<b>LC</b>	Listening Comprehension
<b>LSs</b>	Listening Strategies
<b>MCQ</b>	Multiple Choice Questions
<b>NNS</b>	Non- Native Speakers
<b>SS</b>	Students
<b>TP</b>	Training Programme
<b>TEFL</b>	Teaching English as a Foreign Language.
<b>TESL</b>	Teaching English as a second language
<b>UB</b>	University of Blida

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## **Introduction**

For many years, teachers in the English Department of the University of Blida have complained in staff meetings about their students' observably low academic achievement, a situation which has prevailed since the department opened in 1989 and started to prepare students for the English degree course. The department record of the students' performance in English official examinations, after four years of English studies, is the following. For example, since 2007 the number of students who passed from one year to another has been below 50%, and these results are a matter of great concern to both teachers and administrators. These falling standards affect all subjects / modules and, according to many teachers, one of the reasons relates to the students' poor listening ability. On the one hand, teachers complain that students are unable to understand a lecture and / or take notes in class, or even understand simple classroom interactions. On the other hand, not being informed about listening comprehension or trained to teach it, many teachers would rely on their own intuition to teach this course, adjust their rate of speech and slow it down to enable students to take notes. However, these practices do not seem to help students as many have enormous listening comprehension problems, essentially due to the strategies they use to understand messages as this study will demonstrate. Both the first year students' low listening ability which the National Baccalaureat Examination does not assess as well as the status of listening comprehension teachers, and their lack of training, constitute a matter of concern in this study.

These students in the English Department of Blida University have an Arabic language and cultural background, and are studying English in minimal language

learning conditions. As Goh (2000) remarked about Arabic learners of English, the students at Blida University seem to have cognitive processing problems that need to be explored urgently. Their general low achievements and weak listening ability of English when graduating from Saad DAHLEB University of Blida appear in the table below. The figures reflects the results covering the two years when this study was carried out.

Academic Year	Number of Final Year Students	Students graduating with an average mark	Graduation after first re-sit exam	Graduation after second re-sit exam
2007 / 2008	227	42 (18 %)	59 (25 %)	99 (43 %)
2008 / 2009	195	84 (43 %)	28 (14 %)	46 (23 %)

*Table1. Forth Year Students' Results in English.* (Source: Department of English Studies- University of Blida)

### **1. Context of the Study.**

Judging from the difficulties the first year students experience at university, it seems that the teaching of listening in the English studies has been neglected in all the educational levels, starting from middle and secondary school stages, where it not given sufficient importance in the National Syllabus relating to English. Observed lessons show that most classroom listening activities are based on a pre-listening task, then a listening task involving a text read by the teacher, followed by a post listening task where the students are asked to answer two or three comprehension questions. The ensuing teacher's feedback or assessment consists merely of students comparing

their answers with a 'correct' one given by the teacher. Consequently, his/ her listening comprehension objectives are to teach only what he/ she can test. For example if the activities are meant to check the students' grasp of a set of vocabulary items, then in their teaching, they will focus mainly on these. What is more, an analysis of the different English activities of the National Baccalaureat Examination (NBE) reveals that unlike listening, other language skills like reading, writing, including pronunciation are tested in this examination. Referring to both content and format of this examination, it is well appropriate to include a brief description of the activities used to test pronunciation. They involve; a) discriminating between the final 's' and 'd' sounds, b) spotting silent letters of a word, c) recognizing the number of syllables in words, as well as, d) putting the correct word stress, but without relating it to any oral skill, listening or speaking. Thus, when they succeed in the NBE and enter university, the students at Blida University, like the other thousands laureates entering the universities nationwide, are for the first time confronted to the reality of listening taught as a skill on its own, by teachers who in their large majority have a rather limited knowledge of the English language and culture. In the second year, these students can hardly reach the objectives of the English degree course stated in the degree programme, which are as follows:

- Identify the type and characteristics of an oral message, and understand its meaning,
- Grasp large stretches of speech at normal speed,
- Comprehend the structural arrangement of oral discourse,
- Recognise and comprehend terminologies, idioms and contextual meaning,
- Recognise style as indicated by stress and intonation patterns,

- Understand the news broadcasts of BBC programmes and plays, American and British radio and television programmes (e.g., Voice of America) at normal speed.

(Source: Department of English Studies- University of Blida).

However, if the objectives are clear, the curriculum in use does not give any instruction on how to reach them or how to train students, let alone being strategy-based. Secondary school Baccalaureat holders are registered in the English degree course on the basis of the score obtained in the English paper, but this score is general and does not specify the students' listening ability which the NBE does not address at all. In fact the Baccalaureat English paper includes written tasks only that do not assess listening comprehension. Otherwise, if taught in the middle and secondary school levels, it would have helped the learners develop their listening ability. Therefore, it is not a surprise that the students' listening competence is often below average when they enter University, as they need to learn how to listen effectively, maximise their comprehension of aural input, identify relevant and non-relevant information, and develop more than word-by-word comprehension.

The following table indicates the first year students- both classic and Licence Master Doctorate (LMD) systems- and second year students' overall results in the Listening Comprehension module during the two Academic years 2007/2008 and 2008 / 2009.

First year students' results in the Listening Comprehension Module.

Academic year 2007/2008			
	After 2nd exam in June	After first re-sit exam in July	After 2nd re-sit exam in Sept.
Number of students: 394	253 (64.21%)	14 (0.3%)	11 (0.2%)

Academic year 2008- 2009			
Number of students:	After 2nd exam in June	After first re-sit exam in July	After 2nd re-sit exam in Sept.
411	157(38%)	106 (25)%	12 (0.29%)

Second year students' results in Listening Comprehension.

Academic year 2007/2008			
Number of students:	After 2nd exam in June	After first re-sit exam in July	After 2nd re-sit exam in Sept.
456	326 (71%)	40 (1.5%)	36 (1%)

Academic year: 2008- 2009			
Number of students: 323	112 (35%)	36 (1%)	25(0.8%)

First year results in Listening Comprehension module (LMD).

Academic year 2007/2008		
Number of students:	304	246 (81%)

Academic year 2008- 2009		
Number of students:	388	333 (86%)

*Table 2. First and second year students' results in Listening Comprehension (Classic and LMD).*

As far as teachers are concerned, a survey based on open- ended questions answered informally by teachers in charge of the listening module in the English Department,

revealed that three out of four teachers (new graduates), had no teaching experience and had received no training prior to their teaching. They confessed that they are unaware that listening strategies can be taught, and acknowledged that they teach this module using the ‘traditional’ methods of their former teachers, i.e., teach some new words occurring in the text for the first few minutes, then, let the students listen to the materials two or three times, answer questions on the text/ dialogue, and last check and provide the correct answers to the exercises.

## **2. Aim of the Study and Statement of Problem.**

The students’ low achievements in English, demonstrated through their apparent difficulties in comprehending lectures, are a matter of concern for many teachers in the department. They point to the module of listening comprehension which they say, does not equip the learners with the necessary listening strategies essential for academic learning.

Then, why do many students have difficulties in listening comprehension despite their ‘good’ results in this module? According to the teachers, these difficulties seem to relate to a number of factors.

First, the learners’ comprehension of aural input is often hampered by their lack of background knowledge.

Second, being unfamiliar with different accents, they do not seem to have acquired any successful strategy for listening efficiently, something they had never been trained to in their early studies.

Third, evidence from their responses to the questionnaire and their teachers’ views confirm that their motivation and concentration in the course are not very high. It has

been academically observed, and even written by scholars that a big proportion of learners frequently day-dream or get extremely tired in listening classes, and thus, they lose focus on what the interlocutor is saying. This situation may result from the status of the listening skill in middle and secondary school where it tends to be considered as 'a taken for granted skill' deserving little research and pedagogical attention.

In Listening classes, students are usually given practice in listening but they are not actually taught listening. Practice is not enough. Scarcella and Oxford (1992: 139) regard this skill as

'a significant and essential area of development in the native language and in a second language, having the same importance as the three other skills, speaking, reading and writing'.

Moreover, the teachers' role should be to help students become active and effective listeners, by training them to use appropriate and effective listening strategies. Nunan (2002: 239) emphasizes this idea and urges teachers to 'focus more on training learners to utilize effective strategies for listening to spoken messages.' At this level, the dichotomy 'teaching' and 'training' needs clarification.

When referring to 'Teaching Listening', the focus is on the process, that is to say; the phases, the motivation of the listeners, making their covert mental activity an overt one that could be measured and evaluated it through a given task.

Then, when talking about 'Training Learners' to the listening skill, this is related to making learners focus on the many strategies used to understand oral messages.

In the light of these considerations, it is felt important to examine the listening comprehension processes of Non Native Speakers of English, i.e.; Algerian first year

students and investigate the strategies they use to do specific listening tasks. The assumption behind this research is that despite their 'good' marks in the listening comprehension module, these students are inefficient listeners, with little or no previous training in listening strategies before they enter university.

This first hypothesis should be demonstrated in the present study which seeks to inquire into the issue of listening ability and addresses the following research questions.

Research Question 1: What strategies do the students use to complete a listening task?

Consequently, the focus of this research is mainly on the listening strategies used by the students to understand aural messages. If any, their listening strategies will be examined before and after being trained for a period of 12 weeks to determine the overall progression. The findings obtained from the tests, the students' questionnaire and the teachers' answers to the interview will help to confirm or infirm a second hypothesis, which states that the use of appropriate listening strategies by first year students of English in the University of Blida can enhance their abilities to understand aural messages. The related research question will be the following:

Research Question 2: Can a Training Programme based on Listening Strategy Training improve these students' listening ability?

This introductory part of the research, states that the work was motivated by the fourth year students' unsatisfactory results at the University of Blida which are, according to their teachers, due to their ineffective listening strategies. It gives information about the learners mentioned in the present study, who are first year English students of Arabic cultural and social background. It also examines the extent

to which they will develop effective listening strategies after the treatment they will benefit from in the Listening Comprehension Strategy Training Programme. In addition to this, there were two research questions to be answered and two expressed hypotheses to be confirmed or infirmed later in the study.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Overview of Research in Listening in Second Foreign Language**

This chapter is devoted to an overview of research undertaken by scholars on listening comprehension in the second foreign language. It also looks at the two processes involved in listening comprehension; Top- down and Bottom- up processes, and examines some aspects of the listening procedure with a close look at the effective and ineffective listening strategies.

### **1.1. Research in Listening**

Studies reveal that most people spend as much as 90% of their working life in one of the four modes of communication: speaking, reading, writing, and listening, (refer to paragraph 2 page 21, and paragraph 1 page 22) . Of these four modes, half of this time is devoted to listening. Clearly then, listening is a critically important skill which mastery is essential, especially for non- native learners.

As seen by Hedge (2002) it is the most widely used language skill, often used in conjunction with other skills. At university, students spend a high proportion of their time attending listening comprehension as the ‘primary skill’ in the sequence: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, in classrooms and lecture halls where the dominant medium of instruction is the lecture.

In the following section, there will be a mentioning of two types of listening: Reciprocal and Non- reciprocal listening, according to data collected from readings of literature related to the topic.

In Reciprocal listening, also called *interactive listening*, the listener is required to take part in the interaction and alternately listens and speaks. Interactive listening situations include; face-to-face conversations and telephone calls in which the listener has a chance to ask for clarification, repetition, or slower speech from the conversation

partner.

In Non-reciprocal listening, also called *non-interactive*, the listener is engaged in listening passively to a monologue or speech or even a conversation. Examples of non-interactive listening situations are listening to the radio, television, films, CDs, lectures, and so on. Here the listener usually does not have the opportunity to ask for clarification, slower speech or repetition.

However, when referring to the pedagogical aspect, this type of listening is not totally non- interactive, as the interaction which takes place in this situation is a ‘cognitive’ one where students respond through understanding and creating meaning. Conversely, according to Hedge’s view, this might be turned to semi- reciprocal if the teacher makes students respond while checking their understanding through question- answer or discussion and clarification in the class or the language lab.

In order to become good learners, students need to be good listeners, able to understand what happens during the complex process of listening, in both participatory (as in face- to- face conversations, seminars and meetings), and non- participatory processes (as in listening to lectures, and radio programmes). Finally, listening in general, and as a skill to be developed in practice for training purposes, can be interactive or non- interactive.

The dichotomy; interactive and non- interactive addresses both situations concerned with this skill: real life and classroom reality.

Another aspect of this skill was mentioned by Ridgway (2000:181) more recently, when he described listening to a second language as a skill area that is often ‘tested but rarely taught’. While many classes are based on the idea of giving students (SS) a lot of practice with a language, research indicates that there is also a need to

teach listening. The necessity rises because this skill is treated as a purely passive activity, where the teacher prepares everything for the students, leaving them no opportunity to act as participants in class. Additionally, there is a tendency to consider listening more as a product than a process as expressed by Field (2002: 245) who asserts that ‘teachers tend to concentrate on the product of listening when they should be interested primarily in the process’. He claims that listening is more a process than a product, instantly shaping the understanding and utterances of the learners. More accurately, Rost (1991: 81) wonders

whether the students are helped by their teachers to shift their focus from passive to active listening tasks and if the changes in the teaching of listening are well perceived by the SS to make them no longer see it as a passive skill, but an active one, demanding their active involvement.

When they get to know how the listening process works and that it is not as passive as hearing, the learners will keep the challenge and overcome the difficulties.

The difference between these two functions, hearing and listening and the processes comprised in the listening skill will be dealt with in the following section. The study will examine the contrast between listening and hearing through the presentation of some literature gathered during the collection of data then compiled and paraphrased.

## **1.2. Listening Versus Hearing**

It is said that good hearing is the foundation of good listening, which is the specialised form of hearing, and also the primary function of the ear. Hearing is a passive process, an involuntary physical act that happens automatically. It takes place when something disturbs the atmosphere and that disturbance takes the form of pressure waves that strike our ear drums as sound. It is the way we perceive sound.

Listening is different. It expands on hearing when we pay attention to the meaning of what we hear. Listening is following and understanding the sound- it is hearing with a purpose. The process from the phase of hearing to that of listening consists of five stages. First, the listener hears the sound, and then he focuses, decodes, evaluates, and finally responds. Listening is the absorption of the meanings of words and sentences by the brain, thus leading to the understanding of facts and ideas. Listening takes attention and keeping to the task at hand in spite of distractions. It requires concentration, which is the focusing of the listener's thoughts upon one particular problem. A person who incorporates listening with concentration is actively listening. Active listening is a method of responding to another, which encourages communication. It merely involves the detection of sounds around. Listening is an active process of receiving and interpreting the spoken words. As such, it involves the conscious desire to determine the content of what is heard. Listening requires an opening to the meaning of the other person's words. When we listen we pay conscious attention to what is being said, as we must respond in a way or another. This quotation from King (1984: 177) sums up the distinction between listening and hearing, specifying that:

the act of listening requires not just hearing but thinking, as well as a good deal of interest and information which both speaker and listener must have in common. [Speaking and listening entail three components: the speaker, the listener, and the meaning to be shared].

Listening is also identified as conversational listening and academic listening (Richards, 1985: 198-9). Conversational listening, according to him, refers to listening to casual speech while academic listening means listening to lectures, and other presentations in academic contexts. This form of listening is thus the subject of interest in this study. The two aspects implicate the listener in two listening processes (the Bottom-Up Processing view and the Top-Down Processing view) that he uses rather

unconsciously to understand what he hears. These two views will be dealt with separately in the following section.

### **1.3. Listening Processes**

Listening comprehension is characterized by how the listener processes the input, and this involves two distinct views; the Bottom-Up Processing view and the Top-Down Processing view. These views, according to (Hedge, 2000: 232; Celce-Murcia 2000: 103, and Nunan 1993: 78) have dominated language pedagogy over the last twenty years. Anderson and Lynch quoting Nunan (1988) in their introduction, describe the listening process as: ‘the listener as tape-recorder’. According to their interpretation, it is assumed that the listener takes in and stores messages sequentially, in much the same way as a tape-recorder, one sound, word, phrase, and utterance at a time. From another insight, Goh (2000) identified three processing phases in listening comprehension, which were also proposed by Anderson (1983:24); a) Perceptual processing, b) Parsing processing and c) Utilization processing. Goh claims that in Perceptual processing, the listener maintains attention to spoken input. In Parsing processing, the listener encodes the input to establish a meaningful representation in short-term memory, and in Utilization processing, the listener uses background knowledge to interpret the input for storage. In her study, Goh (2000) conducted an investigation into the observations held by English students aged 16–18 years, regarding listening comprehension in French. The learners were asked how they viewed the reasons behind their success or lack of it in this skill. In her reports on the findings of the study, she suggested that listening comprehension is the skill in which students in the post-compulsory phase of education feel they have achieved the least

success. The main problems underlined by learners were; a) dealing adequately with the speed of delivery of texts, b) making out individual words in a stream of spoken French, c) and making sense of any words identified. Furthermore, most learners attributed their difficulties in listening to their own supposed low ability in the skill and to the difficulty of the listening tasks and texts set, with little awareness shown regarding the role played by ineffective listening strategies or skill application. Ultimately, Goh (2000) concluded that phoneme and word recognition are indeed a major source of difficulty for low level second language listeners.

Besides these issues, problems originating from social and cultural practices have also been cited by Goh (1997) and suggested by Lynch (1996: 58) in his study of two-way listening. He cites Swain (1985) who had observed the performance in French of English-speaking pupils in immersion programmes in Canadian secondary schools. Swain argued that their competence was limited not by any lack of input, but by the absence of any need to produce French more accurately. They studied all their subjects through French for seven years. Even after that amount of exposure to comprehensible input, students achieved relatively poor results in production tests (writing and grammar), compared with their French speaking counterparts.

The conclusions Goh reached in her study about learners' difficulties in the three stages; perception, parsing and utilization, in which she adopted the framework proposed by Anderson (1995) on listening problems, are compiled by the researcher in the following table.

<b>Perception Problems</b>	<b>Parsing Problems</b>	<b>Utilisation Problems</b>
Do not recognise words they know	Quickly forget what is heard	Understand words but not the intended message
Neglect the next part when thinking about meaning	Unable to form a mental representation from words heard	Confused about the key ideas in the message
Cannot chunk streams of speech	Do not understand subsequent parts of input because of earlier problems	
Miss the beginning of texts		
Concentrate too hard or unable to concentrate		

*Table 3. Problems Related to the Three Phases of Listening Comprehension*

The relevance of these findings to the topic of this study could be explained by the lack of interest demonstrated by the learners of a second foreign language, namely English, studied as a third language. Their demotivation is due mainly to the absence of a real need in this language. This seems to be the case of learners of English in Algeria where it is taught to SS from the age of eleven as a third language after Arabic and French. Unlike this latter which is used regularly as a heritage language by many families at home and in most administrations, there is very little exposure to spoken English in the streets, which results in difficulties SS meet to build themselves enough background knowledge needed in the Bottom- up processing in listening comprehension; a view that will be clarified in what is to come.

### **1.3.1. Bottom-Up Processing**

As mentioned earlier in section 1.3. Page 15, Bottom-Up Processing in listening is activated by learners when they utilise their knowledge of the language to identify elements in an order from the smallest linguistic unit like phonemes (bottom) to the largest one, like complete texts (top). They link the smaller units of the language

together to form the larger parts. Bottom-Up Processing is a linear process where meaning is derived automatically at the last stage. It is a text based process where learners rely on the sounds, words and grammar in the message in order to create meaning. Thus, phonemic units are decoded and linked together to form words, words are linked together to form phrases, phrases are linked together to form utterances, and utterances are linked together to form complete meaningful texts. From a pedagogical view point, some of the listening strategies that characterise the Bottom- up skills are listed below:

- listening for word endings
- discriminating between intonation contours in sentences
- discriminating between phonemes
- recognizing syllable patterns
- being aware of sentence fillers in informal speech
- differentiating between content and function words by stress pattern
- finding the stressed syllable using features of stress, intonation and prominence to help identify important information.

The next issue to be attempted in the coming section is the Top- down view.

### **1.3.2. Top-Down Processing and Schema Theory**

Top- down Processing, on the other hand, requires learners to go to listening with their prior knowledge of topic, context, and type of text as well as knowledge of language to reconstruct meaning using the sounds as clues. The Top- down process is listener- based: the listener ‘digs’ into background knowledge of the topic (schema), the situation or context, the type of text, and the language.

Nunan (1999:201) reports that the term schema was first used by the British psychologist Bartlett (1932), and defines it as:

a mental structure, consisting of relevant individual knowledge, memory and experience, which allow us to incorporate what we learn into what we know. It is certainly the most adequate explanation yet available for the relatively complex mental operation that listening requires us to carry out.

Schema activates a set of expectations that help the listener to interpret what is heard and anticipate what will come next. To sum up what researchers such as Hedge, Celce-Murcia and Nunan, working on Listening Processes have come up with, one can say that Top-down listening involves:

- listening for the main idea
- predicting
- drawing inferences
- discriminating between emotions
- identifying the speaker
- getting the gist
- recognizing the topic

In this kind of processing, the listeners try to understand spoken language by focussing on selected aspects of a passage to construct meaning, and relating what they hear to their existing background knowledge (schemata), i.e., using their knowledge based on prior experiences which predispose them to construct expectations in relation to who the speaker and listener are, the place, the time, the genre, and the topic. For Brown and Yule (1983: 248) schemata are described as ‘organized background knowledge which leads us to expect or predict aspects in our interpretation of discourse’. Many researchers consider the role of schematic knowledge as one of the

factors affecting comprehension. Devine (1982: 22), for example, considers that 'comprehension is enormously improved when the speaker's schema or organizational pattern is perceived by the listener'. This is regarded as one of the objectives targeted by the training programme, which consists in helping the listeners recognise the speaker's schema.

As for the way the processes operate, it is assumed from what the previously cited scholars, (Hedge, Celce-Murcia and Nunan) wrote, that Bottom- up Processing is used while:

- practising minimal pairs,
- taking pronunciation tests,
- listening for specific details, and
- recognizing cognates and word-order pattern.

Conversely, Top-down interpretation is used in activities like:

- listening for the main idea,
- predicting,
- drawing inferences, and
- summarising.

Therefore, it becomes obvious that in listening comprehension learners relate what they hear to what they know. In this reconstruction process, they use prior knowledge of the context and situation within which the listening takes place to make sense of what they hear. The context of situation includes knowledge of the topic at hand, the speaker or speakers, and their relationship to the situation as well as to each other and prior events.

Today, it is generally recognised that both bottom-up and top-down processes are necessary for comprehension. In developing course materials and lessons, it is important, not only to teach Bottom-up processing skills, but to help learners use what they already know to understand what they hear (Top- down process). If teachers suspect that there are gaps in their learners' knowledge, the listening itself can be preceded by schema building activities to prepare learners for the listening task to come. Teachers can also prepare their students from the start to the importance of listening, e.g. pointing at the same letters in the two words; 'listen' and 'silent'. They can also reinforce its significance by explaining the meaning of the following Verset from the Qur'an: *'And when the Qur'an is recited, give ear to it and pay attention, that ye may obtain mercy.'*

The Qur'an, Surat Al Aaraf, Verset: 204.

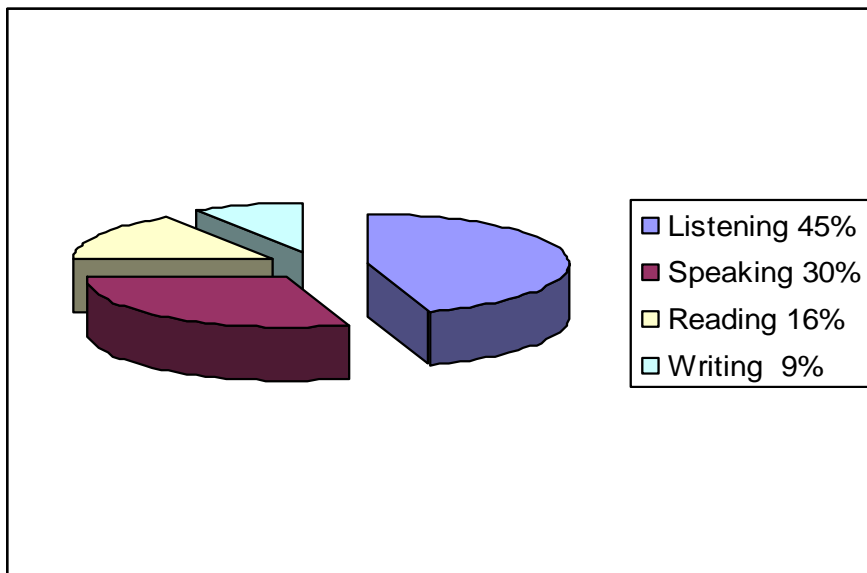
Therefore, not only 'giving ear' but also 'paying attention' is very important for effective listening.

#### **1.4. Why Listening Comprehension is Important**

Listening is one of the four skills used by human beings to communicate; we listen, speak, read, and write. Out of the four skills in language learning, listening is undeniably the most important as we have to listen to many utterances in our everyday life, knowing that conversations will take place only when we can understand what the interlocutor says. Given its role in everyday life, listening is one of the four fundamental skills in any language, as well as the language modality that is used most frequently. It has been estimated that adults spend almost half their communication

time listening, and students may receive as much as 90% of their in-school information through listening to instructors and to one another.

According to Morley (1991: 82), ‘we can expect to listen twice as much as we speak, four times more than we read, and five times more than we write’; listening is no doubt the most shared communicative activity in daily life. In this respect, it has been frequently stated that a person engaged in communication devotes 45% of his/ her time to listening, 30% to speaking, 16% to reading, and 9% to writing (Hedge, 2002: 228; Celce- Murcia, 2000:102). The following graphic representation sums up these figures.



*Figure 1. Rate of a Person's Communication Activities*

Listening is also the most widely used academic skill in university studies. Considering that a person remembers 25 to 50% of what he hears, this means that when they are receiving information from teachers, students may not hear the whole message. Thus, it is hoped the important parts are captured in these sequences, but what if they are not? Clearly, listening is a skill that SS can benefit from its improvement. By becoming better listeners, they can improve their ability to converse

with their teachers (as well as other people), persuade and negotiate with them and their fellow students, while avoiding divergence and misunderstandings. Once they are effective listeners they become able to recognise the speaker's main points or ideas and identify the supporting details and examples.

Listening comprehension can also be defined as 'the ability to recall and understand information which is presented orally'. This information might be presented through a book, filmstrip, video, or blackboard. Listening comprehension is a complex communication process which requires instant thought and individual ability to construct the meaning. It is an invisible mental process, making it difficult to describe. The development of listening comprehension varies depending on the personal, social, and cultural experiences of the student. Comprehensive listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This involves understanding a speaker's accent, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and meaning (Howatt and Dakin 1974). Listening comprehension is influenced by the listener's world knowledge, linguistic knowledge, text structure knowledge, and metacognitive knowledge. Consequently, it can be stated that listening as a skill is assuming more and more weight in second language or foreign language classrooms than ever before. Similarly, Rost (1994: 141), points out that "listening is vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learner. Without understanding input at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin. Listening is thus fundamental to speaking". In addition, Rost (2002: 52) sees listening as a complex, active process of receiving what the speaker actually says; constructing and representing meaning;

negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding, and creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy.<sup>1</sup>

Further down, Rost (2002) adds that “Linguistic knowledge and world knowledge interact as listeners create a mental representation of what they hear. Bottom- up and Top- down processes are applied to get to this mental representation and achieve comprehension”. For Nunan (1998: 198) “listening is the fundamental skill in language learning, and without it, learners will never learn to communicate effectively”.

This importance of second language listening comprehension according to (Nunan, 1998; Oxford, 1993; Celce-Murcia, 2001) has only been recognised relatively recently, despite the status of listening as “a complex process and crucial in the development of second language competence” (Vandergrift, 2002). This new dimension has led to a perceptible interest in the listening skills by recent publications, not only in learners’ styles and strategies, but also in the new ways of both teaching and learning it. Jordan (2002) cites studies “which empirically conclude that the initial difficulties students encounter in language 2 academic environment are primarily in the domains of listening and speaking”. Part of these difficulties, i.e.; listening problems will be dealt with in the next section.

### **1.5. Listening Comprehension Problems**

Most literature about language learning relates to learning strategies and learning styles in English as a second language. However, only a little is devoted to

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<sup>1</sup> Working definition adopted in this study

strategies that would help learners of English as a Second Foreign Language, as it is the case of Algerian students. In general, learners of a second foreign language have listening problems which Underwood (1989: 30) depicts as:

- lack of control over the speed at which speakers speak ,
- not being able to get things repeated,
- the listener's limited vocabulary,
- failure to recognize the 'signals,'
- problems of interpretation,
- inability to concentrate, and establish learning habits.

These problems generally relate to learners' different cultural and educational backgrounds. Nevertheless, Underwood points out that students whose culture and education include a strong storytelling and oral communication tradition are generally 'better' at listening comprehension than those from a reading and book-based cultural and educational background. Furthermore, Underwood (1989: 10) mentioned that learners, mainly of a second foreign language, experience a feeling of frustration when trying to comprehend spoken language. Several reasons have been put forward to explain the frustration of non- native students, four of which are listed below.

a) The students do not perceive certain English sounds with accuracy because they do not exist in their language. The case seems to be that of Algerian SS who have difficulties with the sounds /e/, /p/, /v/, /g/ which do not exist in Standard Arabic.

b) The students learning English are not used to the stress and intonation patterns of English which are different from their own. However, learners whose native language possesses stress and intonation features similar to those of English are

likely to have less trouble than the learners whose language is based on different rhythms and tones. This difference may cause learning and listening difficulties.

c) There is an apparent need on the part of the students to perceive and comprehend every sound they hear. Many students do not recognise a word because they cannot distinguish between different sounds in English, e.g. /l/ and /r/ in 'led' and 'red' for Japanese SS, or that words like 'there', 'their' and 'they're' are homophones but are spelt differently.

d) Reduced forms that occur in informal speech are usually an incomprehensible stream of sounds to the students, making them unable to distinguish where word boundaries lie within the stream of sounds. Brown (1990: 66) uses the term 'reduced forms' to refer collectively to the processes of contraction, elision, assimilation, and reduction. These are all characteristics of informal spoken English. The most common contracted forms in English include the auxiliary verb forms of 'be,' 'have,' 'will,' and 'would.' Some examples of these forms are 'I'm happy,' 'She's a nurse,' 'They're in the house,' 'He's lost ten pounds,' 'They've already left,' 'I'll go,' and 'I'd like to be rich'. Weinstein, C.E. & Mayer, R.E. (1985: 81) cited by Norris (1993), state that reduced forms 'constitute one of the most neglected areas of listening comprehension'. Furthermore, learners must be able to understand the main idea of what is said as well as specific details. They may also have to check any predictions they have made, and understand the speaker's meaning, emotions, and opinions. They may have to infer relationships between speakers, or identify the context in which the speakers are operating. Learners may have to use several of these skills in the course of one single listening activity. However, despite the fact that we use the listening skill, listening strategies are 'rarely taught'.

To conclude, it is worth pointing out that in this chapter the reader was provided with a brief account of some work undertaken by researchers on listening comprehension in a second foreign language. Definitions of some of the language learning strategies as used by speakers of other languages were also made available and categorized. Then, the two processes involved in listening comprehension: Bottom-Up and Top-Down views were clarified and exemplified. Finally, the chapter was ended with;

a) a look at the importance of listening comprehension, one of which relates to the situation when students go to university to study, (not only taking English as a subject, all the other subjects matters have a module in English), or when people travel to any country around the world, and not especially to an English- speaking country, they will have to interact with many different people in a number of situations.

b) the nature of problems that learners of a second foreign language encounter and which relate to: the perception of certain sounds in English, the stress and intonation patterns,

c) word recognition, and the reduced forms.

The following chapter will examine some definitions of Learning Strategies in general, and clarify their meaning in the light of studies made by some researchers about the subject. It will refer to Brown's classification of listening strategies which served as the basis to plan a listening comprehension sample lesson.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Learning and Teaching Listening Strategies**

This chapter will deal with the Learning Strategies in general; first clarifying their meaning, and then examining some definitions given by researchers, for example Oxford, and a presentation of her classification of learning strategies. Detailed characteristics of effective and non-effective listeners will be talked about and summed up in a table, followed by the role of both the teacher and the learner. The chapter will be ended by a suggested listening comprehension lesson sample.

## **2.1. Learning Strategies**

It is worth noting that the concept 'strategy' is used by many writers such as Rubin, (1975); O'Malley et al, (1985); Oxford, (1990) without a reached consensus. Oxford (1990: 1) defined learning strategies as 'steps taken by students to enhance their own learning'. O'Malley et al (1989: 23) defined learning strategies as being: 'operations or steps used by a learner that will facilitate the acquisition, storage, retrieval or use of information'. Oxford (1990:8) classified learning strategies into six categories: *memory* strategies, *cognitive* strategies, *metacognitive* strategies, *compensation* strategies, *affective* strategies and *social* strategies. A detailed explanation of each category is given in the next table.

Ellis (1994: 539) considered Oxford's taxonomy as 'perhaps the most comprehensive classification of learning strategies to date, which can provide a useful base for understanding language learning strategies'. As for White (1998: 37), he defined strategies as 'efforts to compensate for uncertainties in understanding, and could include making inferences, realizing where misunderstandings have occurred, and asking for clarification'.

Type of strategies	Characteristics
memory strategies	Are approaches which relate to how students remember language and relate new materials to existing knowledge
cognitive strategies	Relate to how SS think about their learning by manipulation or transformation of the target language.
metacognitive strategies	Relate to how students manage their own learning. It is a conscious overview of the learning process and decision making about planning, monitoring or evaluating.
compensation strategies	Are used to enable SS to make up for limited knowledge when faced with discovering a new word's meaning without recourse to another's person expertise
affective strategies	Relate to students' feelings
social strategies	Involve learning by interaction with others, to understand a word "by asking someone who knows it"

Table 4. Oxford's Classification of Learning Strategies

There is however, an inconsistent use of the terminology employed by key researchers and writers in the language learning strategy. Thus, *learning behaviours* used by Politzer and McGroarty (1985), *tactics* used by Seliger (1984) and *techniques*, by Stern (1992: 261) are not always exactly synonymous with the term strategy. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991: 199) opt for the term *strategy* and point out that Rubin (1975: 45) used it 'in perhaps the earliest study in this area and it enjoys the widest currency today'.

It is clear that there is no general consensus on the concept of “strategy”. Therefore, the terms *behaviours*, *techniques* and *tactics* will be used interchangeably with the cover word *strategy*.

## **2.2. Listening Strategies**

Researchers such as Færch and Kasper (1983:41) undertook studies to help practitioners with their task dividing listening strategies into two types: Psycholinguistic and behavioural. They consider that *Psycholinguistic* strategies are unseen actions that are ‘in the head’, and involve the listeners’ conscious use of their personal ‘comprehension resources’. For example, the listener might exploit contextual clues and background knowledge, or guess at meaning on the basis of a word’s structure. These are also referred to as *internal* strategies. Behavioural strategies, on the other hand, are visible actions ‘in the world’. They include negotiation with the speaker - making general requests: ‘I don’t understand’, specific requests: ‘What does X mean?’ and admitting ignorance: ‘I don’t know the word’. These are called *interactive* strategies, as they depend on collaboration with another person or a group of people. To sum up, one can state that listening strategies are some techniques used by listeners consciously while listening to help understanding. When listeners need the strategies less and less or can use them unconsciously, they become listening skills. As noted above, effective listening strategies improve the chance of students’ becoming good learners, Brown (2001: 231).

In second language learning, listening comprehension strategies are according to Brown (1990: 148) based on the same principle as what is known about successful native speaker listening. Seven strategies from his framework were adapted and used

as a reference work for the Training Programme. They were gradually introduced to the trainees for practice.

- 1 - listening for key words (key-word strategy)
- 2 - predicting a speaker's purpose by the context of the spoken discourse,
- 3- activating students' background knowledge
- 4 - looking for non- verbal cues to meaning,
- 5 - making inferences, guessing at meaning,
- 6 - seeking clarification,
- 7 - listening for gist (grasping the main idea).

When these strategies are implemented, listening comprehension which has often been regarded as a passive activity becomes quite the opposite, an active process in which the listener must discriminate among sounds, understand words and grammar, interpret intonation and other prosodic clues. The listener has to retain information gathered long enough to interpret it in the context or setting in which the exchange takes place. In short, listening is a complex activity which requires substantial mental effort. When this condition is not met, the quality of listening becomes ineffective. The characteristics of effective and non- effective listeners will be the issue of the subsequent section.

## **2.2. Effective and Ineffective Listeners**

In this part of the study starting with a quotation by Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961) which says: '*I like to listen. I have learned a great deal from listening carefully. Most people never listen*', there will be an attempt to clarify the importance of good and effective listening, contrasting it to non- effective listening. The last part of the quote illustrates our legendary reluctance as human beings to listen, and there are

many physical and psychological explanations why that is so. There are many reasons of ineffective listening, and all of us are guilty of some of them at some time. The most important reason why we so often fail to listen is that we do not have the courage to do it. In fact, it is almost impossible to maintain a high involvement in listening all the time. We need to 'tune out' to give our minds a chance to rest. To listen effectively requires that one maintains a considerable amount of self-control and concentration. The following table which is a compilation by the researcher of notions about the topic depicts the behaviour of effective and non-effective listeners during the three phases: pre, while and after-listening.

<b>Pre-listening</b>	
<b>Effective Listeners</b>	<b>Ineffective Listeners</b>
Build their background knowledge on subject before listening.	Start listening without thinking about subject
- Have a specific purpose for listening - Tune in and attend	Have no specific purpose and do not attempt to ascertain speaker's purpose
Minimize distractions	Do not focus attention / Create or are influenced by distractions
<b>While Listening</b>	
Give complete attention to listening task and demonstrate interest	Do not give necessary attention to listening task
Search for meaning	Tune out that which they find uninteresting
make and confirm predictions, make connections and inferences to check their understanding of message by evaluating, and reflecting	Do not monitor understanding or use comprehension strategies
adjust their listening behaviour to close or superficial listening	Are rigid note takers with few note making strategies
Are flexible note takers-outlining, mapping, categorizing- who sift and sort, often adding information of their own	Try to get every word down or do not take notes at all
Take fewer, but meaningful notes	Judge the message by the speaker's appearance or delivery
-Consider the context -Form mental pictures to remember while listening	

<b>After Listening</b>	
Withhold judgement until comprehension of message is complete	Jump to conclusions without reflection
Will follow up on presentation by reviewing notes, categorizing ideas, clarifying, reflecting, and acting upon the message	Are content just to receive message without reflection or action

*Table 5. Effective and Ineffective Listening Strategies*

A given strategy is neither good nor bad; it is essentially neutral until the context of its use is thoroughly considered. What makes a strategy positive and helpful for a given learner? A strategy is useful if the following conditions are present:

- a) the strategy relates well to the L2 task at hand,
- b) the strategy fits the particular student's learning style preferences to one degree or another, and
- c) the student employs the strategy effectively and links it with other relevant strategies. Strategies that fulfill these conditions 'make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations' (Oxford, 1990: 8).

#### **2.4. Teaching Effective Listening Strategies**

Teaching listening comprehension is undoubtedly a challenging task for teachers who tend to slip into testing the learners' listening comprehension rather than teaching them how to listen effectively. Sheerin (1987) asserts that "listening comprehension lessons are all too often a series of listening tests in which tapes are played, comprehension exercises are attempted by the learners, and feedback is given in the form of the 'right' answer". Field (2002:212) points out that the teachers tend to concentrate on the product of listening when they should be interested in the process.

The teachability of listening strategies has been established by researchers such as Vandergrift (1997), Dörnyei (1995), Rost, M. & Ross, S. (1991). They have come to recognize that language learning will be facilitated if learners are more aware of the range of possible strategies they can select during language learning and language use. Consequently, if we assume that university students have learned enough words, phrases and grammar in the middle and secondary school, what they need most at university are effective listening strategies. In addition to the fact that listening ability is linked to many factors such as exposure to the target language, intelligence, feeling, learning style, motivation, and concentration, the teacher's role remains essential in the listening class.

#### **2.4.1. Role of the Teacher**

Mendelsohn (1998) notes a gap between the interests of listening researchers and classroom practitioners in that classroom materials do very little to develop metacognitive knowledge through raising learners' consciousness of listening processes. To bridge this 'gap', Scarcella and Oxford consider that the teachers have an important role to play in helping SS. By training them to use more appropriate and more effective listening strategies, they can help them become active and effective listeners. This training should be constant, gradually introduced and well established, and also covering the following teachers' characteristics.

a) According to Wilson (2008: 63), the teacher is a doctor. He needs to be expert at diagnosis, able to identify listening problems and to put them right. For him, wrong answers are considered as more informative than right ones.

b) The teacher is also a designer who is able to select or design suitable texts and tasks for his students. (Field, 1998) suggests that pieces of authentic listening can be introduced at the early stage of listening, alongside scripted texts, to help the learners get familiar with the target language. Lynch, (1996: 17) suggests that teachers can design suitable tasks by adjusting the complexity of the task to match the students' level.

c) A listening teacher is considered as a motivator who can try his best to get his SS more involved in their listening classes and learn more listening skills. Hedge (2002) makes the following suggestions for teachers to enhance their students' motivation:

- Give a purpose for listening, as in reading comprehension, there should always be a 'purpose' in listening.

- Make sure there is sufficient variety of listening materials, of pace and intensity, and of activity to allow their students to work in their style and with their own strategies.

- Acknowledge that listening is quite difficult to non-native speakers, and be sure to give reassurance.

Therefore, it becomes imperative for the teachers to train SS how to listen effectively, hence, shifting the emphasis of listening practice from product to process and the responsibility of learning from the teacher to the student, thereby helping students become self-regulated learners.

### **2.4.2. Role of the Learner**

As Nyikos and Oxford (1993: 11) put it ‘learning begins with the learner. Even with the best teachers and methods, students are the only ones who can actually do the learning’. As listeners, SS often must process messages as they come, having to cope with the sender's choice of vocabulary, structure, and rate of delivery. Because of the speed at which native speakers usually speak, SS think that they cannot keep up with the speaker’s speed and they are lost. Speed creates a problem for the learners mainly because they cannot hear the pronunciation clearly; therefore, in order to understand what is being heard, learners need to make up the sounds and to put them into groups to form certain words that they can recognize.

According to Wenden (1998), when listeners know how to analyse the requirements of a listening task, activate the appropriate listening processes required, make appropriate predictions, monitor their comprehension, and evaluate the success of their approach, they are using metacognitive knowledge for successful listening comprehension. In the section to come, the different views, theories and research findings about the listening comprehension strategies will be implemented into a sample lesson on listening.

### **2.5. A Listening Comprehension Sample Lesson**

Devising a listening comprehension lesson was thought appropriate at this level to show how the literature related to this topic could be applied pedagogically and made relevant to the content of this section at this phase of the study. Field, (1998: 112) suggests that the listening session would include a short pre-listening period which is to create motivation and establish context, and a lengthy listening session, with several

replays for learners to re-listen and check their answer. Therefore, in a typical listening comprehension lesson there are ‘pre’ activities, ‘while’ activities, and ‘post’ activities. As mentioned earlier, teachers dealing with listening are aware that it is a complex skill, as the language comes rushing in at learners. Listening must be done in real time and there is no second chance, unless the listener specifically asks for repetition. In a listening comprehension lesson, and before listening, students need assistance to activate what they already know about the ideas they are going to hear. During the listening activity itself (while listening), SS should be encouraged to monitor their level of comprehension and make decisions about appropriate strategy use. Post-listening activities provide an opportunity for learners to evaluate their level of comprehension, compare and discuss strategies, and reflect on alternative approaches to the task. Pair, small groups or class discussions, in the students’ first language where necessary, are the simplest way to encourage this.

### **2.5.1. Pre-listening Activities**

Pre-listening activities are required to establish what is already known about the topic, to build necessary background, and to set purpose(s) for listening. They are concerned with activities to be done before SS listen to the text to help the trained students prepare for the comprehension of the aural text. These act as warm-up for listening in several ways. They include the following features;

- a- introducing the topic to the SS through commenting on a picture or a photograph.

b- activating the students' existing knowledge through discussions, providing comprehension questions in advance, working out the SS' own opinion on a topic, and predicting content from the title.

c- clarifying necessary contextual information and vocabulary to comprehend the text.

d- informing the trainees of the type of text, the purposes of the listening and the students' role in listening. At this stage, short passages on similar topics are presented to the SS to indicate how much their background knowledge can affect the aural messages they receive.

Being aware that SS bring different background knowledge to the listening experience during the pre-listening phase is a fact to keep constantly in mind as the beliefs, attitudes, and biases of the listeners can affect their understanding. As Anderson and Lynch (1988: 42) remarked 'Gaps in our knowledge of the Language 2 culture, of the associations and references available to native users can present obstacles to comprehension'. Therefore, during pre-listening, the training focussed on the following strategies:

- Setting a purpose or deciding in advance what to listen for,
- Deciding if more linguistic or background knowledge is needed,
- Deciding whether to attend to the overall meaning (enter the text from the top down) or to focus on the words and phrases (from the bottom up),
- Providing opportunities for group background reading or class discussion activities.

### 2.5.2. While-Listening Activities

While-listening activities relate directly to engagement with the text. These activities vary according to purpose, objective, learners' specific needs, instructional goal, and proficiency level. The students were asked to do them during or immediately after listening. While-listening activities include:

- listening with visuals
- filling in graphs and charts
- following a route on a map
- checking off items in a list
- completing tables
- searching for specific clues to meaning
- completing cloze (fill-in) exercises
- distinguishing between formal and informal registers

Firstly, when the students were asked to give written information after listening, they were given a chance to listen to the text more than once, which made it easier for them to keep concentration while listening with specific purposes. Secondly, as comprehension is the prime target, writing would make the listening more demanding; therefore, writing activities were kept to a minimum. Thirdly, global activities like getting the main idea, topic, setting, summary that focus on the content and forms of the text were given to the students to guide them through the text. For example, listening for the gist was such an activity. Fourthly, students' attention to the crucial elements of the text was kept high by asking them questions or to follow the route on a

map, or to describe pictures. Lastly, immediate feedback was given to encourage students to examine how or why their responses were incorrect.

### **2.5.3. Post Listening Activities**

Post listening activities were used in order to check comprehension, evaluate the use of listening strategies and the knowledge gained. This is also referred to as 'follow-up work'. Post- listening activities involve:

- Predicting.
- Creating a real life situation where students can be asked to use knowledge gained through listening.
- Extending the topic and helping the SS remember new vocabulary.
- Using notes made while listening in order to write a summary,
- Reading a related text,
- Doing a role play,
- Writing on the same theme,
- Studying new grammatical structures,
- Practicing pronunciation, discussion group, craft project etc.

On this point, Hook and Evans (1982) remarked that 'the post-mortem is a very useful device' as students need to act upon what they have heard to clarify meaning and extend their thinking. When designing post- listening activities, the following aspects were considered:

- Grading: the teacher wrote simple questions related to what they heard on the board and asked the students to answer them. They were stimulated to talk and to participate actively in the task.

- Evaluating: the SS were encouraged to evaluate comprehension in a particular task or area about what the speaker said, question statements of opinion, amplify certain remarks, and identify parallel incidents from life and literature. They also had

to analyse and evaluate critically what they had heard, and were encouraged to respond to the question, 'Do you agree?' to encourage the debate.

- Summarising: learners were then asked to summarize a speaker's presentation orally, in writing, or as an outline. In addition to the traditional outline format (for example, topic sentence, supporting sentences, conclusion), students were asked to use time- lines, flow charts, circles, diagrams, or maps.

- Reviewing: the trainees had to review their notes, compare them and discuss what they understood in pairs or in small groups. They could then add information which they did not have an opportunity to record during the speech.

- Follow- up: the students were given opportunities to engage in activities that build on and develop concepts acquired during an oral presentation. These included writing (e.g., writing a summary of the main points, or a composition), or reading (e.g., further research on a topic or a contradictory viewpoint). It was left to the trainer to decide if the strategies used were appropriate for the purpose and for the task, or modify them when not appropriate.

To close this chapter, it is well appropriate to bring to mind that some definitions of Learning Strategies in general were presented in this part, and their meaning clarified according to what some researchers have written about the subject. The study included Oxford's definition of Learning Strategies and the Taxonomy she gives, as well as the classification of Listening Strategies provided by Brown, which served as basis, to design a sample listening comprehension lesson, implementing the strategy- based approach. Before that, in section (2.3.), the study examined what characterises effective and non- effective listeners and provided an account of the role of the teacher and that of the learner in a classroom teaching- learning situation.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Research Design and Methodology**

In this Chapter there will be an attempt to clarify the procedure of subject selection and the tools used to collect data.

The subjects were students of one entire first year class of English who participated in varying numbers in the four operations of data collection.

- 64 of them took the pre- test and answered the listening strategy questionnaire,
- 15 experimental group (EG) students and 15 making control group (CG),

selected out of the entire cohort of 64 students, were asked to complete the learning styles questionnaire and to do the post- test.

As for the tools, there were two tests and two questionnaires, and then to triangulate with the results of the first questionnaire about the SS' use or misuse of listening strategies, the teachers in charge of the listening module were requested to answer on paper the questions completing the semi-structured interviews.

### **3.1. Procedure of Subjects Selection**

At the beginning of this study, the research population involved sixty- four students from one entire first year class at the University of Blida. First, they participated in the pre- test (Placement test), and then, on the basis of the results they obtained, only thirty SS were kept to form two equal groups. For the questionnaire following this test, the number of subjects was fifty- two. They had to answer the questionnaire by filling the forms handed to them. As for the final post- test operation, it implicated both EG and CG students.

The participants involved in data collection aged 18 to 20 were from one entire classroom, enrolled in the first- year of the LMD English Degree course leading them to the 'English Licence'. The students were all native speakers of Arabic- the official

language of Algeria. A few of them use Berber as their mother tongue. They came mainly from the areas of Blida, Médéa, Djelfa, and Laghouat, about 50 km, 80 km, 300 km and 450 km south of Algiers respectively, and had different cultural backgrounds (urban and rural). They had been learning French as the first foreign language since the age of seven and English as a second foreign language since the age of ten. These students had met the academic requirements for enrolment at University by a Baccalaureat degree, but their level of English in listening and speaking was not determined by any objective test, since the National Baccalaureat Exam tests mainly reading and writing skills, grammar, and vocabulary. Although they had learnt English for seven years in middle and secondary education, they had hardly been exposed to authentic English speaking and listening. At the time of the pre- test (Placement test) during the second week of January, these SS had been using audio and video materials in a language lab for a period of time not exceeding two months. The courses started late October and were interrupted by the end of December for the winter holidays.

### 3.2. Research Instruments: Description and Administration

The five research instruments; a pre- test, two questionnaires, semi- structured interviews and a post- test used to collect data for this study appear in the following table.

Listening tests to students	Questionnaires	Interview to teachers
Oxford Placement Test (Pre-Test)	Learning Strategies 5-point- Likert scale	Semi-structured - Written answers
IELTS (Post-test)	Learning styles 4-point Likert scale	

*Table 6. Description of Instruments Used in the Research*

### **3.2.1. The Listening Tests**

Two tests were used in this research; a pre – test administered to 64 students from one entire class, and a post- test answered by the SS of both experimental and control groups.

#### **3.2.1.1. The Pre – test**

The pre- test (Appendix 1, page 104) was a listening test, entitled the *Oxford Placement Test* and developed by Cambridge University, consisting of only one test format which the students were familiar with: a discrimination test. It was conducted at the beginning of the second term with a sample of 64 students newly enrolled in the English Degree course at Blida University. This test is an audio recorded tape of 100 items lasting 15 minutes and delivered at normal speed by native speakers. The listeners had to choose between two suggested heard answers and underline the correct one. To ensure its validity, the test took place in a language laboratory during a regular class session. Students were assigned an overall score of 100 points as well as a proficiency level on the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) scale 3 to assess their listening ability.

- Elementary; between 40-49 points,
- Intermediate; 60 to 69 points
- Advanced; between 80 and 100 points.

The objective of the pre-test was to identify the SS' listening proficiency, and to split them into EG and CG, making sure that each group would contain elementary, intermediate and advanced students equally.

When analysing the results of the questionnaire, it was found out that many questions were left unanswered by several students, which implies that some of them had a minimal knowledge of English and listening ability. Subsequently, 34 subjects were discarded from the study because less than half of the items were answered. Thirty students who answered all the 100 items were retained and divided into two groups of 15 learners each. This number is explained by the practical reasons relating to the strategy training programme to be undertaken later; management of the group, ease of use of the seats in the language lab, etc.

### 3.2.1.2. The Post – test

This listening Post- test (Appendix 3, page 123) is an adaptation of the IELTS format. It consists of an audio featuring an interview (a journalist interviewing Mr. John Faircastle), as well as five (5) types of tasks which test the strategies presented in the training programme as it appears in the following table.

<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Strategies</b>
1) Guessing at meaning of a word. (Answering a trainer’s question)	1: Previewing and predicting
2) Answering comprehension questions (short answers),	2: Listening for key words
3) Selecting topics (MCQ),	3: Activating students’ background knowledge
4) Answering comprehension questions (long answers),	4: listening for gist
5) Sentence completion (MCQ)	5: making inference
6) Form- Filling activity (Labelling)	6: Practising note- taking skills
7) Classification	7: Matching pairs

*Table 7. Tasks and Strategies Used in Post- test*

The content of the audio tape was transcribed into a script and the activities were devised by the researcher. The post- test was meant to test the experimental subjects who had been exposed to the independent variable, (The Strategy Training Programme) and the control subjects who received no treatment, then compare their results in order to see the impact of the Training and the degree of success. The test took 40 minutes, during which the students listened to the recorded material only once, and wrote their answers on the worksheets. This information about the 2 tests and the types of the participants are summarized in the following diagram.

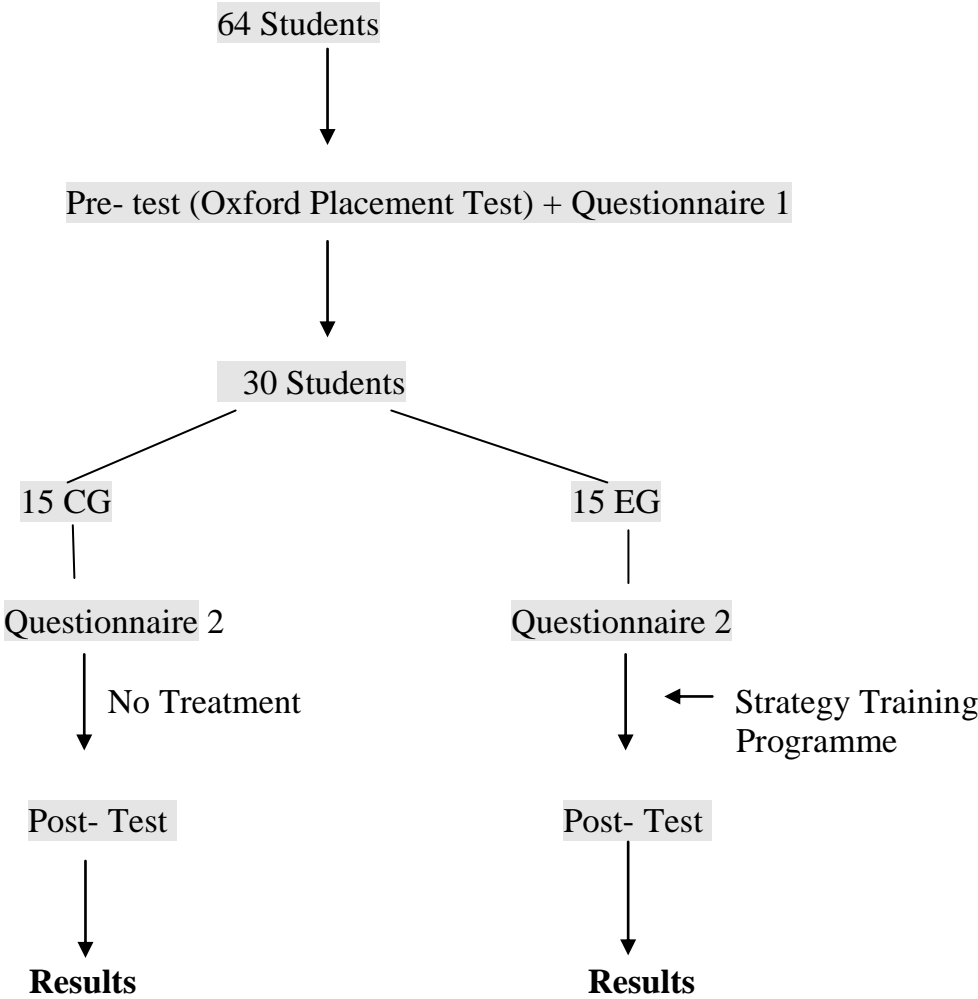


Figure 2. Experimental- Description of Task and Participants.

### **3.3. Questionnaires**

A first questionnaire was administered to students from the same first year group, questioning them about the strategies they use to understand lessons in their studies. However, before it was administered, a pilot questionnaire was tried on a reduced sample of participants. When the EG and CG were formed, they were asked to complete a second questionnaire about their preferred learning styles. This will be looked at in the following sections.

#### **3.3.1. Pilot Questionnaire on Listening Strategies**

A Pilot Questionnaire on listening strategies was designed prior to the Listening Strategies Questionnaire. This was reviewed by colleagues in the department for errors and clarity, and to make sure that the items would be understood by the students. Then, it was tried out with a group of 10 first year SS from another class to check if the respondents could understand the questions and answer them. The insights gained from the pilot study and the comments of the teachers were taken into consideration when designing the Listening Strategy Questionnaire which consisted of 35 items initially before being reduced to 22, with the re-wording of some questions to be clearly understood by the respondents. Eventually, the items were made to meet the characteristics essential for a questionnaire and listed below. It must:

1. be clear, simple, and easy to understand,
2. contain only one idea,
3. be relevant to the respondents,
4. not show any preconceived notion, and / or biases,
5. and be positive in structure.

Additionally, a questionnaire on students' preferred learning styles was handed out to both EG and CG for completion.

### **3.3.2. Questionnaire on Listening Strategies**

The Listening Strategies Questionnaire which was designed on results reached after trying the Pilot Questionnaire mentioned above, was meant to identify the types of strategies students use for listening comprehension tasks in different phases (Appendix 4-A page 131). It consisted of 22 Likert-type items with a standard five-point response scale (Strongly Agree / Agree / Undecided / Strongly Disagree / Disagree), and was handed out to a population of 52 students from the same first year group.

The 22 questions of the questionnaire focused on what the SS did in the listening class, for example, how often they used various strategies for a number of activities involving listening tasks such as: note-taking, gap-filling, ticking the true answer, or simply answering comprehension question.

In order to yield more responses to the questionnaire, an open-ended question was added at the end, where the respondents would write their comments in the language of their choice.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, a second questionnaire on the Preferred Perceptual Learning Styles was administered to the students of both groups.

### **3.3.3. Questionnaire on Preferred Perceptual Learning Style**

To be aware of students' learning styles as these might affect the training, a second questionnaire, adapted from the C.I.T.E. Learning Styles Instrument was

administered to both Experimental and Control subjects in order to identify their learning styles (see Appendix 4- B page 135). It also aimed at learning about each individual's natural, habitual and preferred ways of absorbing, processing, and retaining new information and skills which persist regardless of teaching methods. Everyone has a learning style, but each person's is as unique as a finger print. Learning styles have more influence than one may realize. They are the general approaches –for example, global or analytic, auditory or visual –that students use in acquiring a new language or in learning any other subject. These styles are regarded by Cornett, (1983: 9) as ‘the overall patterns that give general direction to learning behaviour’. Preferred styles guide the way one learns. They also change the way one internally represents experiences, the way one recalls information, and even the words one chooses. People in general learn in many different ways, some of which are:

- Visual learners: some people learn primarily with their eyes.
- Auditory learners: those who learn with the “ears”.
- Kinesthetic or tactile learners: some people prefer to learn by experience and/or by ‘hands-on’ tasks.
- Individual learners: some people learn better when they work alone.
- Group learners: those who prefer to learn in groups.

According to Felder (2007), in an article on Learning Styles,

students learn in different ways, they take in and process information preferentially: by seeing and hearing, reflecting and acting, reasoning logically and intuitively, analyzing and visualizing. Some teachers lecture, others demonstrate or lead students to self-discovery; some focus on principles and others on applications; some emphasize memory and others understanding.

Additionally, this questionnaire was also meant to help the researcher point at some of the teachers' performing style, and by the same token identify the mismatches that may exist between teachers' styles and learners' styles. There are for example cases when the students may become bored and inattentive in class, do poorly on tests, and get discouraged about the courses. When the teachers are confronted to low test grades, unresponsive or hostile classes, poor attendance and dropouts, they know something is not working. They can do their best for a balance of instructional methods trying to attend to as many students' preferences as possible. When the balance is achieved, SS may be taught in a manner they prefer, which can lead to an increased comfort level and willingness to learn.

### **3.4. Teachers' Semi-Structured Interviews**

In order to obtain qualitative data from teachers and to compare them with the students' results, a semi-structured interview consisting of an informal discussion with questions to be answered on paper was carried out with the three listening teachers. This practice (the semi-structured interview) is regarded by McDonough and McDonough (1997: 184) as 'being closer to the qualitative paradigm because it allows richer interaction and more personalised responses'. It is also considered as a method of triangulation, an extra to check out the consistency of the data obtained from the students' questionnaire responses. In the discussion, the participant teachers responded to questions about their views of listening, their professional and educational background, and most importantly, how they teach listening. Below is the list of questions asked to the teachers of the listening module.

Q 1. Do you know what strategies your listeners are using in class?

Q 2. How do you help your students improve listening comprehension?

Q 3. Why do your students find it more difficult to listen to a recorded spoken text than to you?

Q 4. Why do they find it difficult to understand the meaning of the spoken text without seeing the speaker's body language?

Q 5. How do you help your students use their experience and background knowledge of the topic to understand the spoken text?

Q 6. What are the problems that hinder the process of listening?

The provided answers will be examined in chapter 5, section 4, page 78, as will be presented the results of the tests and the questionnaires earlier in the same chapter. But before coming to it, chapter four will go through the presentation one by one of the seven strategies developed in the training programme.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

**The Listening Strategies Training Programme.**

This chapter emphasizes the necessity for supporting students' learning in listening comprehension through a Training Programme and features 7 Strategy- based tasks in listening adapted from Brown's classification. It describes the procedure undertaken in the training and provides the reader with related details.

#### **4.1. Description of the Training Programme.**

Before going into the core of the content about listening comprehension strategy training, it is worth pointing at what some scholars wrote about the topic. For example, Oxford (1990) suggests a strategy training model with the following steps.

1. Determine learners' needs and the resources available for training.
2. Select the strategies to be taught.
3. Consider the benefits of integrated strategy training.
4. Consider motivational issues.
5. Prepare the materials and activities.
6. Conduct explicit strategy training.
7. Evaluate and revise the strategy training

Ur (1984:25), also writes that 'listening exercises are most effective if they are constructed around a task, that is to say, the students are required to do something in response to what they hear that will demonstrate their understanding'. This principle led the trainer to design listening tasks which put the emphasis on the listening strategies that would work best for specific listening purposes. By raising students' awareness of listening as a skill that requires active engagement, and by explicitly teaching listening strategies, the training programme was meant to help the SS develop

both the ability and the confidence to handle communication situations they may encounter beyond the classroom. In this respect, the students would be given the foundation for communicative competence in English as a second foreign language.

The strategy training session concerned the commonly used listening strategies. All seven strategies adapted from Brown's framework (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2. page 32) were gradually introduced to the trainees for practice. The Training Programme of the experimental group consisted of 12 sessions of 30 minutes each weekly and was conducted in regular listening comprehension classes. The listening strategies were introduced, explained, demonstrated, and practised. Each time, the strategies were presented in a direct, explicit, and informed way. The listening texts used in class covered a variety of authentic materials, consisting of:

- a) Conversations selected to practise pauses, hesitations and false starts
- b) Interviews of people (friends, a job- seeker and a factory manager) by their friends, employers and journalists.
- c) A Chinese short story narrated by the trainer.

The interviews and the conversations were performed by native speakers of English with a natural speed of delivery and intonation. Listening to the stories as a recreational activity was used in nearly every lesson as a warm-up. The SS enjoyed them and listened attentively for relaxation and pleasure. They were asked to listen and enjoy the story, and react to it. The training developed for this research was meant to teach students successful listening strategies bearing in mind that 'integrated, long-term training is more effective than separate, one-time training' as suggested by Su Yuan-Lian (2002: 59).

In the course of the experiment, it was noticed that some listeners met serious problems with syntax and semantics of English. They also had difficulties to connect, synthesize some ideas or relate them. Accordingly, students were reminded of some organisational patterns like: cause/effect, compare/contrast, logical, chronological as suggested by Devine (1982: 24), some transitional devices of the spoken discourse, as well as some key signal expressions such as the following:

Example words:	for example, for instance, thus, in other words, as an illustration
Time words:	first, second, third, meanwhile, next, finally, at last, today, tomorrow, soon
Addition words:	in addition, also, furthermore, moreover, another example
Result words:	as a result, so, accordingly, therefore, thus
Contrast words:	however, but, in contrast, on the other hand, nevertheless.

*Table 8. Key Signal Expressions suggested by Devine*

Furthermore, when designing the training programme, the trainer tried to keep the students highly motivated. Sometimes the listeners would “switch off” (consciously or unconsciously) and the incoming speech from the speaker just flew past them as a stream of sound which they made no attempt to process. They would suddenly remember that they had only ten minutes before the next lesson started. Therefore, in order to overcome these difficulties and to enhance the trainees’ motivation, the following aspects were taken into consideration:

- 1) Actively implicate the learners in the experiment in order to increase their motivation to enhance their achievement.

2) Give them a purpose for listening.

3) Expose them to sufficient and varied listening materials, and to enough activities to allow them to work using their own style and the newly introduced strategies.

#### **4.2. Relevance of the Training Programme Material**

In general the selected listening comprehension materials of the training programme were relevant to the students' life and long-term learning goals as some of them would become teachers, either in middle or secondary schools, or even at university. The content of the oral material (interviews, conversations and stories) was made appealing to the SS so as to maintain their interest and motivation levels high. For example, material like listening to a radio commentary about a game of cricket was avoided, because, in addition to not understanding the vocabulary involved, the SS would not be motivated to understand something they cannot relate to, and their listening performance would suffer thus, their capacity of listening would be reduced. Consequently, their wrong answers would reflect their lack of knowledge of specific vocabulary on this sport rather than their actual listening ability. Conversely, the listening material was well thought-out to suit the students' proficiency level. Therefore, when evaluating the listening materials to include into the training programme, the proficiency level of the students was carefully considered in terms of appropriacy. The experimental group of students were given listening activities that required them to give short answers to the questions of listening activities. Some of them were gap-filling activities appropriate to their level of English, and requiring them to transfer information from oral to written messages.

Furthermore, when designing the listening comprehension tasks, the use of authentic materials was kept in mind in respect of Brown's remark (2001: 231) that 'the use of authentic texts helps students to further develop their communicative skills' and thus, gives learners a chance to develop skills needed in real-life situations. The materials used were authentic listening texts relating to everyday situations or activities. These included listening to directions, announcements, weather forecasts, airport information, tourist guides, and telephone messages. The trainees had to learn to comprehend challenging language elements such as a natural rate of delivery and intonation, false starts, reduced forms, abbreviations, and other characteristics of spoken language needed to understand everyday language and how language is actually used beyond the classroom.

#### **4.3. Strategies-based Tasks used for the Training Programme**

Before describing the strategies-based tasks used for the training programme, and assessed in the post- test, it is worth pointing out that the term 'task' was preferred to 'activity' because a task is usually an activity with a purpose, and this is precisely what the trainer's intention was: make the students work with a 'strategic' objective in mind.

Following Brown's classification of strategies described in Chapter 2, section 2.2, the training adopted the basic rule which insists on *grading the task, not the text*.

Subsequently, the trainer felt it better not to oversimplify the language of the texts or to 'water' the scripts but to simplify the tasks set for the students.

The seven strategies as well as the texts (mainly interviews) used in the training programme and assessed later in the post- test are summed up in this table.

The Listening Comprehension Strategy Inventory		
Strategy	Description	Listening Passage
<i>1. Listening for Key Words.</i>	Focussing on important words which open up meaning	1. Weather Forecast a) Scripted b) Authentic
<i>2. Predicting a speaker's purpose</i>	A way that arouses students' interest and gives them at least some of the information they will need to understand the text.	2 How Healthy are You?
<i>3. Activating Ss' background knowledge</i>	Use of pre- existing knowledge which provides motivation and allows to anticipate content.	3. Removing a Mountain
<i>4. Looking for non- verbal cues to meaning</i>	Understanding Natural Speech / hesitations and pauses	4. A Friend in Need
<i>5. Inferring, guessing at meaning</i>	associating information with one's existing cognitive structure	5. 1) The Lost Keys 2) When I am 65
<i>6. Seeking clarification</i>	Asking for explanation, verification, rephrasing, or posing questions to the self	6. It's Terrible!
<i>7. Listening for Gist</i>	Grasping the overall communicative intention of the speaker	7. The Happy Chicken

*Table 9: Strategies and Texts Used in the Training Programme.*

The training sessions started in the first week of February with the first strategy 'Listening for Key Words' and lasted until mid- May. Throughout this period of 12 weeks, all the seven strategies were practised by the students. In the sections to come, each strategy will be dealt with in detail.

#### **4.3.1. Strategy 1: Listening for Key Words.**

The researcher trainer explained the meaning and the importance of key words to the students. He made it clear that 'Key word' strategy is the process of remembering a new word in the target language by identifying a familiar word in the first language that sounds like or otherwise resembles the new word or generating easily recalled images of some relationship with the new word. To exemplify this, he provided them

with a chart about the National Weather Forecast (Text 1- a, Appended page 111), picturing many different areas of Algeria, asking them to focus on the temperatures described in the text. He made it clear to them that it was selective listening, where they should ignore a lot of information and focus only on the information needed. The learners listened to the trainer reading a weather forecast bulletin, then they reported their answers, giving the words cold, sunny, warm, hot, etc. 12°C, 18°C, 20°C, 35°C. They were also asked to explain in the language of their choice the strategies they used to accomplish the listening task. Most of them answered in Arabic that they focused on the weather forecast of their areas (the key words) and discarded the rest of the figures of areas they were not concerned with, worksheet 1 page 112.

#### **4.3.2. Strategy 2: Predicting a Speaker's Purpose by the Context of the Spoken Discourse.**

Working on the statement which says that for the listeners, predicting is like making an 'educated guess' about what they think is going to happen next in a story, relying on specific information and their prior knowledge, the trainer explained what can be used to make predictions. He also insisted that the ability to predict the next event in a story helps to stay focused and to anticipate what a person is going to say.

In the second stage, the learners were instructed to listen to the recorded material, *How Healthy Are You?* (Text 2, Appended page 112). They also had to try to guess the interviewee's answers to the questions of the interviewer, worksheet 2 page 123.

Similarly, they were asked to compare and discuss their answers with their partners', connecting the knowledge they have acquired with the listening content. Discussions between the trainer and the students went on about what type of text it was, and what

events they would expect. Consequently, the students became sensitive to the different voices of the actors, able to establish the main characters and then to get a mental picture of who is who (interviewer - interviewee) early in the listening.

For the while- listening task, the learners listened to the whole interview to see whether their predictions were right or wrong, focusing on the interviewer's comments upon the interviewee's answers. During the first listening, the students were encouraged to confirm the prediction they made, while in the second listening, they were asked to listen for detailed information.

In the post listening stage, the learners' answers were checked and attempts to diagnose their strengths and weakness were made. Some students were not able to get the meaning of such expressions as 'pretty like a chimney' or 'shame is not working' in the interview, even through the context. This made the trainer decide to give some micro-listening strategies training later.

#### **4.3.3. Strategy 3: Activating Students' Background Knowledge.**

Faerch and Kasper (1986) believe that 'comprehension takes place when input and knowledge are matched against each other'. Thus, effective listeners use background knowledge and relate their prior knowledge or schemata to the new information contained in the spoken text which will help them comprehend the text as they process it. Yet, this might not be the case for the students in the department whose lack of 'shared cultural knowledge' is often a source of difficulty, especially because the listening texts provided for class work are culturally biased. It is for this reason that they often cannot make appropriate guesses based on key words and contextual situations.

To develop this strategy (Activating Students' Background Knowledge), the trainer used a short passage entitled: *Removing a Mountain*, (Text N° 3, Appended page 113) and designed tasks to help his students focus on schemata. The listening passage is about an old Chinese farmer *Yu Gong* who wanted to remove a mountain to have a view on the sea. In the listening stage, they were told the story of *Yu Gong* and were asked to complete the table, focusing on the old man's hard work, sense of collaborative (family) work, and determination, (Worksheet 3, Appended page 123).

#### **4.3.4. Strategy 4: Looking for non- verbal cues to meaning.**

The training session started with a pre- listening phase which focussed on non-verbal cues such as hesitations and pauses. Speech contains nonverbal elements known as paralinguistics, including voice quality, rate, pitch, volume, and speaking style, as well as prosodic features such as rhythm, intonation and stress.

The trainer explained how non- verbal cues such as; 'Ooh, well... it's just... you know' can be used to convey a 'certain' meaning. Before they listened to the tape, *A Friend in Need* (Text 4, Appended page 113), they were asked to notice the two speakers' styles; whether the language was formal or casual, and how each of the two speakers sounded. He also wanted them to notice whether the two speakers' voices were calm or emotional, and if the tone of their voices indicated something about their intentions. The students had to pay careful attention to the way stress and intonation patterns were used to convey meaning.

In the while- listening phase they were instructed to listen to the conversation between the two characters Elaine and Sophie, and to tick the appropriate box in the hand- out (Worksheet 4, Appended page 124).

After the task correction in the post- listening phase, the conversation was played a second time for the students to focus on the non- verbal cues used by Sophie to express her disapproval of Elaine's inviting herself to stay with them in Paris. As it was an audio tape, the listeners had to imagine the two speakers and the expressions on their faces while they were conversing on the phone.

#### **4.3.5. Strategy 5: Inferring / guessing at meaning**

In this thinking skill, listeners make deductions by going beyond what is stated, making analogies to situations that they recognise. Wilson (2008:84) believes that 'inferring is close to schema theory in that it requires a "model" in our heads of how the situation might unfold'. Inferring is using available information to guess meanings of new items, predict outcomes, or fill in missing information.

Most students need practice in making inferences while listening. They also need to become aware that there is meaning between the lines. The trainer chose a simple way to help them by reading a passage from the Arab Literature which describes a character's actions, words, and surroundings. A short text about Nasredin Hodja (*The Lost Key*, text 5 a, Appended page 115) was selected and narrated to the students for the cultural backgrounds it conveys. They were then asked to make inferences about the character's personality. Keeping in mind that the purpose of an exercise such as this is not to elicit the exact answer but to provide opportunities for students to make various inferences, the researcher listened to the students and guided their answers. In the while- listening phase, the trainees were instructed to listen to a conversation entitled *When I am Sixty- five*, (Text 5 b, Appended page 115) and to complete the table with who says what? (Worksheet 5, Appended page 124).

#### **4.3.6. Strategy 6: Seeking Clarification/ Listening to Check their Answers**

There are social strategies like asking for clarification of a confusing point, asking for help in doing a language task, talking with a native-speaker, etc. which help the learner work with others and understand the target culture as well as the language. The listeners were trained to check whether the answers they give to the activities are correct, by asking for clarification of unclear notions. In the first phase, they were asked while they listened to an interview entitled; *It's Terrible*, (Text N° 6, Appended page 117) to decide whether the statements were **true** or **false**, then to tick the right box in the table, (Worksheet 6, Appended page 124).

#### **4.3.7. Strategy 7: Listening for Gist, Grasping the Main Idea:**

In order to develop gist understanding and getting the general idea of the text or key pieces of information rather than to aim for more complete understanding, the SS were asked to listen to an interview entitled *The Happy Chicken* (Text N° 7, Appended page 118) and to do a related task; (Worksheet 7, Appended page 125).

In the pre- listening phase the trainer introduced the setting in order to provide the listeners with the opportunity to focus on the most important idea. The conversation in the listening text was meant for gist understanding only. However, it was possible to look more closely at the language by playing the recording again, and asking the students, as a post listening task, to talk about similar situations, using some of the vocabulary they heard.

To conclude, one may say that the training programme described in this chapter was prompted by the difficulties encountered by the language 2 learners in their perception and acquisition of the listening skill. EG students underwent a training

programme for twelve weeks. They could then capitalize on the knowledge and interests they already possessed, activate their prior knowledge, and organize their learning by thinking about their purposes for listening. What the SS needed was to be guided in using that knowledge to become effective listeners. This is well explicated in Brownell's words (1996: 6-7),

listening affects our ability to make good decisions, our appreciation of the world around us, and our personal relationships. Whether at home, in school, or in the workplace, effective listening is important for the development and maintenance of healthy relationships.

This chapter also examined closely the 7 Listening Comprehension Strategies adapted from Brown's classification, emphasizing the necessity for supporting students' learning in listening comprehension, and featuring 7 Strategy- based listening tasks designed by the researcher trainer and developed in the Training Programme. It also described the procedure undertaken and gave details related to the procedure followed in the TP.

The next chapter will shed light on the results obtained from the different instruments used in the research, analyse them and discuss the findings.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Presentation of the Results, Analysis and Discussion**

Before presenting the data, it is worth recalling the instruments used to gather information on the strategies the students use to understand oral information. They will be reviewed in this section in the order of their implementation.

1. A test of listening (Oxford Placement Listening Pre-Test) of 100 items was administered to 64 first year students of the same class. After marking the papers, 30 subjects were selected to form the EG and CG. The details of subject selection are provided in Chapter 3, page 46.

2. Closing the twelve- week training session during which a TP of Listening Strategies was taught to the experimental students, a post- test based on the IELTS format was administered to both CG and EG.

3. A first questionnaire of 22 items was used with 52 subjects from the same class to collect information about their listening strategies to comprehend university lectures. The purpose was to confirm or reject the hypothesis about the students' misuse of listening strategies to understand aural messages. One open-ended question ended the questionnaire. It stated: *According to you, what are the sources of your listening comprehension difficulties?* The students were asked to answer it in the language of their choice, Arabic, French or English. The intent was to give them a chance to clarify their views and to gain some insights into their understanding of and attitude towards the listening skill.

4. A second questionnaire was administered to the subjects in both EG and CG (30 students) to determine their learning styles.

5. An informal interview with open- ended questions was carried out with the teachers in charge of the listening comprehension module. Because of the reduced number of those who took part in the study (three only), the idea of using a

questionnaire was dropped in favour of an interview. After a general discussion relating to the students' listening problems, the teachers were requested to provide answers to six questions (Chapter 3 / Section 4). They were left with enough time to think and to give their answers later. The coming section will deal with the presentation of the results obtained from these instruments.

### 5.1. Results of the Pre-test

The scores of the pre- test (Oxford Placement Test in Listening) which appears in Appendix 1 page 104, revealed significant differences between the 64 subjects who took part in the test initially. Only four participants scored above the 70th percentile of the entire cohort (scored > 70) and were ranked as 'advanced', 4 others obtained scores between the 50th and 70th percentile of the entire cohort and were positioned as 'high-intermediate', while the rest of the participants scored between the 30th and 50th percentile of the entire cohort and were considered as low-intermediate. For reasons explained in Chapter 3, page 46, only 30 students' papers were considered to be worth marking. The keys are appended in page 110 and the scores are displayed in the following table.

	<b>Pre- test Results marked out of 20 (100points/ 5)</b>														
Students' N°	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Marks out of 20 points	8.5	11	10.5	9	7.5	10.5	6	8	11	8	10	10.5	5	6	9
Students' N°	16	17	18	19	20	21	2	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Marks out of 20 points	8	12	6	7	10.5	8	9	8	11	12.5	9	5	7	10	9.5

*Table 10. Scores of the Pre-test*

The marks for the pre- test range from 05/ 20 to 12.5, (19 of which are below 10, and 11 are average or above). This indicates that the scores are to some extent homogeneous, reflecting more or less similar students' listening abilities.

## **5.2. Results of the Questionnaire on the Learning Styles Preferences**

Given that learners will use listening strategies best suited to their own learning styles, both EG and CG students were submitted to a second questionnaire called: Perceptual Learning-Style Preference Questionnaire. The objective was to help them 'discover' the way they learn. The students were enthusiastic about knowing their styles and completed the questionnaire in class, which gave credit to the results. After 45 minutes, they came to know their preferred learning styles. The results showed that the large majority of students (22 / 30) are visual learners, which means that they are dependent on visual aids, learning primarily with their eyes. The use of pictures, diagrams, flow charts, time lines, films, and real objects helps them remember best what they have heard and process information better when presented visually. This observation concerns a large proportion of students implies that the listening teachers should use visual presentations in class to meet their requirements, and to increase their listening performance. These results have guided the trainer for the choice of tasks to be practised during the Training Programme. The auditory learning style which concerns only a few students (3/30) is characterised by learning from hearing words spoken and from oral explanations, and learners may remember information by reading aloud or moving their lips as they read, especially when they are learning new material. They benefit from listening to audio tapes, lectures, and class discussions and gain listening competence from discussions with other SS, and by conversing with the

teacher. They do not need as much oral explanation as visual learners. They can take notes from lectures and oral directions if they want to remember the information. The third category are the Kinaesthetic- Tactile learners (5/30) who learn best by experience, by being involved physically in classroom experiences, through ‘hands-on’ experience with the material. They remember information well when they actively participate in tasks, such as role-play in the classroom. A combination of stimuli (for example, an audiotape combined with an activity) can help them understand new material. As reported by one of the teachers interviewed, the SS’ learning styles persist regardless of the new teaching techniques they are exposed to at university.

### **5.3. Results of the Questionnaire on Listening Strategies**

Initially, this questionnaire (Appended page 132) was handed to fifty-two students to complete, but when their answers were collected, only 39 were tallied. The rest, i.e., 13 participants were discarded for reasons clarified in the previous page.

Before proceeding to analysis, the results collected through the questionnaire on Listening Strategies were entered into a spread sheet to determine the number of respondents and their proportion for each item.

Questions 1 through 22 were put in a first row under the term “item”, and the 5 rating Likert scale; (*Strongly Agree / Agree / Undecided / Strongly Disagree / Disagree*) across the top. Each student's answer was entered into a new row. Then, the students’ answers were counted, and averages calculated to determine the most prevalent responses. The tallied answers concerning the three phases of listening gave the following detailed scores.

<b>Pre- Listening</b>					
Items	SA	A	Un	SD	D
<i>1. Students start listening without thinking about the subject matter (even when the teacher gives it)</i>	10	15	2	3	9
<i>2. ... activate their background knowledge on subject matter before listening.</i>	00	7	2	17	13
<i>3. ... try to determine the speaker's purpose.</i>	2	4	3	15	15
<i>4. ... I am a little diverted (away) from the subject matter</i>	6	14	4	8	7
<i>5. ... do not focus attention on the subject matter</i>	14	15	3	3	4
<i>6. ... are distracted by background noise or by their classmates.</i>	13	15	3	4	4
<b>While- listening</b>					
<i>1. SS give full attention to the listening and demonstrate interest.</i>	00	2	2	19	16
<i>2. ... search for meaning.</i>	2	1	00	14	22
<i>3. ... do not pay attention to what they find uninteresting.</i>	14	15	00	6	4
<i>4. ... constantly check their understanding of the message by making connections, making and confirming predictions, making inferences, evaluating, and reflecting.</i>	1	1	4	14	19
<i>5. ... do not try to understand</i>	27	7	3	1	1
<i>6. ... When they know that careful listening is required, students adjust their listening behaviour accordingly.</i>	00	2	6	9	22
<i>7. ... are rigid note taker and want to take every word down</i>	6	4	3	2	24
<i>8. ... are flexible note taker and often add information of their own.</i>	2	3	2	8	24
<i>9. ... take fewer, more meaningful notes.</i>	1	5	1	13	19
<i>10. ... judge the message by the speaker's appearance or delivery.</i>	3	9	6	5	16
<i>11. ... consider the context to understand some words</i>	3	9	7	3	17

12. ... form a mental picture to help them remember while listening	1	5	3	12	18
<b>Post- listening</b>					
1. SS keep their judgement until comprehension of the message is complete.	1	8	4	10	16
2. ... jump to conclusions without reflection.	13	18	2	1	5
3. ... answer the questions by review of their notes	2	4	4	13	16
4. ... are content just to receive message without reflection or action.	9	24	00	3	3

Table 11: Students' Responses to Questionnaire on Listening Strategies.

A look at the descriptive statistics of the questionnaire results reveals that 55.59% of the students agree or strongly agree that their listening abilities are unsatisfactory. The rest (36.39 %) categorise their listening ability as good. Therefore, the results obtained and reflected through the figures (number of respondents for each item and the percentage) seem to be consistent with the concerns expressed earlier in the study; that the SS did not have much training in strategy acquisition.

Phases	Str. Agree		Agree		Undecided		Str Disagree		Disagree	
	Resp.	%	Resp	%	resp	%	resp	%	resp	%
Pre-listening	45	34.61	70	39.54	17	26.98	50	27.32	52	17.74
While-listening:	60	46.15	63	35.59	37	51.14	106	57.92	202	69.17
Post-listening:	25	19.23	44	24.85	10	15.87	27	14.75	40	13.65
overall results	Σ 130		Σ 177		Σ 64		Σ 183		Σ 292	

Table 12: Respondents' Scores to Questionnaire on Listening Strategies

### **5.3.1. Results of the Pre-listening Phase.**

The questionnaire on LS completed by the EG students showed that the majority; 25/ 39, i.e., 64.1% agree or strongly agree that they start listening without thinking about the subject even when the teacher gives it to them. In the same line of thought, only 07/39, i.e., 17.94% seem to activate their background knowledge on the subject at the pre-listening stage, and do focus attention. Furthermore, only 04/ 39 students, i.e. 10.25% ‘have a specific purpose for listening and try to determine the speaker's purpose’.

29/ 39 students’ do not focus their attention on what they will be listening to. Only 1/39 tries to determine the speaker’s purpose.

Therefore, 28/ 39 SS agree or strongly agree that they are distracted by background noise or by classmates, which reveals that listening in noisy conditions is very difficult to perform.

### **5.3.2. Results of the While- listening Phase.**

Concerning this phase, only 02/39 students, i.e. 0.51% seem to give complete attention to the listening and demonstrate interest, while 33/39, i.e. 84.61% do not. A majority 36/39, i.e., 92.30% declared that they ‘do not search for the meaning of what they listen to, while 29/39, i.e. 74.35% showed no concern to what they find ‘uninteresting’. There were only a few respondents; 09/39, i.e. 02.3 % who confessed that they listen to every detail in order to get the main idea and memorize the text. However, 31/39 students, representing a large percentage of 79.48 claimed that they

do not care about understanding and do not use comprehension strategies, while only 02/39, i.e. 0.51% stated that they constantly check their understanding of message by making connections, making and confirming predictions, making inferences, evaluating, and reflecting. Those who believe that they are rigid note takers, with few note- making strategies rarely adding information of their own, represent a good 82%, i.e., 32 /39 respondents. Conversely, students who guess incomprehensible sections by using known words, caring about the context and ‘colour of words’, are only 08/39, i.e. 20%. In this category, they confess that they form no mental pictures to help them remember while listening.

To sum it up, one can say that the highest scores; (agree: 15, and strongly agree: 18) in the survey form indicate that the SS neither show interest in listening nor give necessary attention to the listening tasks, which lessens their capacity to do them.

On the other hand, the lowest rated item (Agree 1, and Strongly Agree 1) clearly state that the students make use of no listening strategy whatsoever to comprehend aural messages.

### **5.3.3. Results of the Post- listening Phase.**

The majority of the participants, 31/39 students, i.e. 79.48%, stated that they ‘jump to conclusions without reflection, and are comfortable just to receive a message without reflection or action’, while those who ‘answer the questions by reviewing notes’ are a minority; 06/39, i.e. 15.38%.

The scores (agree 18, and strongly agree 13) for the item: ‘*students jump to conclusions without reflection,*’ suggests that many SS make no efforts to go beyond the surface structure of what they listen to.

#### **5.3.4. Content Analysis of the Students’ Responses on Listening**

##### **Comprehension difficulties**

To the single open- ended question: *According to you, what are the sources of your listening comprehension difficulties?* The students reacted in a similar way, relating their weaknesses to lack of linguistic knowledge as the main source of their problems. Their answers were classified into the following trends;

(a) Difficulty to recognise individual words and to chunk a stream of speech.

One student commented; *sometimes there are two or three words together and the pronunciation sounds like another word, and I get confused.*<sup>2</sup> This shows that the student has trouble recognising individual words in a stream of speech.

(b) Lack of listening strategies

Some respondents blamed themselves for their saying that they do not work seriously to overcome their problems, while others blamed the teachers who do not “provide” them with adequate teaching for strategy acquisition. However, there were

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<sup>2</sup> The translation of the students’ answers from Arabic and French to English is by the author.

good performers who pointed out that they try to lessen their listening deficiencies by seeking more contacts with native speakers, mainly through chatting on the Internet, arguing that it enabled them to see and hear how authentic language is spoken, (mainly outside the classroom). As non- native speakers (NNS), they tend to focus on linguistic cues rather than use non-linguistic cues to understand texts, as Carrell (1983: 200) rightly remarks; ‘NNS tend to be linguistically bound to the text’. Non- native students tend to focus on the kind of knowledge they lack most. Indeed, Algerian EFL learners have an Arabic language background and their culture and education are different from those of native speakers of English for example, and this may result in a number of listening problems relating to misunderstanding of foreign language and foreign culture.

(c) Difficulty with English Intonation Patterns.

The students’ mother tongue, Arabic, does not possess the same stress and intonation patterns as English. Therefore, students are likely to have more difficulty learning those features than learners whose L1 is based on similar rhythm and intonation patterns, e.g., German. Consequently, one can say that the participants of the present study are operating in minimal learning circumstances. Nevertheless, up to 16/ 39 students coming from areas where education and culture are strongly based on oral transmission, like Djelfa, Laghouat and Médéa, gave the impression to be more successful, which seems to support Underwood’s view (1989) that :

students whose culture and education include a strong storytelling and oral communication tradition would be better at listening comprehension than those from a reading and book-based cultural and educational background.

As a typical example, a student from Médéa reported in her answers that when her teacher tells them a story related to the text content in the pre-listening stage, this helps her focus on what she would hear, because every time she hears a new word in the listening lesson, she connects it to the story she has just heard. These reported difficulties also partially reflect Goh's (2000) views on the listening comprehension problems of EFL learners with Arabic language backgrounds.

#### **5.4. Examining the Teachers' Semi- structured Interviews**

The following section analyses the content of the teachers' answers to the interview followed by six questions which appear in page 52.

The teachers' responses to the questions were analysed and the following patterns have emerged from the data.

a) The students lack of background knowledge. They need more knowledge on American and English culture, or any Anglophone culture (Australian, African, Canadian, etc.).

On this point, the three teachers reported that they are good observers during the listening session, making sure that their SS concentrate on the text, and take notes. They believe that background knowledge has an important role in facilitating SS' listening comprehension. One teacher commented: "If students are familiar with the context and content of the linguistic text they might predict subsequent ideas, and this is what listening comprehension is all about. The linguistic aspect of the language is but a means to that end."

b) The students lack listening strategies but they have their own learning style.

The most experienced teacher of the three believes that the SS' learning styles are important factors to consider in order to determine their learning strategies. He emphasized that his learners' preferred ways of learning acquired in the secondary and even primary level of schooling, (they were not taught any listening technique) still persist at the tertiary level, regardless of the teaching methods used at university.

c) Students face problems with speed of delivery, speaker's accents, limited vocabulary knowledge, perception of some sounds, lack of visuals, and absence of gestures. Teachers mentioned that insufficient training in phonetics at the secondary school may lead to listening difficulties at university. Thus, SS may get puzzled by the pronunciation of some words, phrases and even sentences, speed, intonation and accent of the speaker in the recorded text. They lack control over the speed at which speakers speak, and are unable to get things repeated. One teacher reported that most of his SS in the group experienced problems at the *perception* stage, at recognising sounds as distinct words or groups of words. For example, they would hear and write 'legs' when the correct word is 'lungs', and 'heads' instead of 'hearts'.

All three teachers believe that students' problems relate to the speed of delivery, new terminology and concepts, difficulties in concentrating on the topic, and problems related to the physical environment. In addition to the speaker's pronunciation, accent and limited vocabulary, the SS do not use appropriate listening strategies. They have deeply rooted 'wrong' learning habits which are difficult to get rid of.

In the interviews, the teachers expressed a real need of their students for an EFL support. In order to increase their learners' background knowledge, they suggested designing listening tasks with schema building activities.

These suspected gaps in the learners' skills helped the researcher in the choice of strategies to coach the students from the experimental group in the listening strategy acquisition programme, and prepare them for the post- test.

d) Teachers teach successful listening strategies such as predicting, vocabulary guessing, dealing with authentic material, etc.

All three teachers reported that in the pre-listening phase, they try to motivate their students by introducing a strategy to help them focus their attention on the content of the text. They introduce information about the text, the title, proper nouns and the vocabulary used in the text to help them predict content before listening. They also help their students understand the spoken text by using relevant visual aids; (pictures, diagrams, charts, video, etc.) which can illustrate the content. They also train SS to understand unfamiliar words from the context and to get the main idea, not the details.

They all agreed that when designing listening one should:

- avoid giving the students a long spoken text whose meaning they may find too difficult to interpret,

- provide the SS with more than one listening, as it is difficult to get a general understanding of the spoken text from one listening only,

- avoid giving their SS a text which is not of interest to them. However, they insist on the focus on authentic discourse to train their SS to understand natural speech, full of hesitation and pauses, and therefore to understand when speakers speak fast and when they speak with varied accents.

(e) Teachers use follow- up productive activities like discussion and summary writing.

The teachers encourage their students to use their background knowledge of the topic in a discussion after listening to the spoken text, in pair or group work, or to write a summary of the spoken text.

### **5.5. Analysis and Discussion of the Results**

Before commenting on the findings and triangulating on the results obtained from the different sources of data collection, (i.e., the pre and post- tests, the questionnaire to students, and the teachers' interviews), it is worth reminding the reader of the two research questions.

RQ1: What strategies do the students use to complete a listening task?

RQ2: Can a Training Programme based on Listening Strategy Training improve these students' listening ability?

As the students in this research have had no previous training in LS before they came to university, for that reason, the hypothesis stated that they were going to improve this skill by developing effective strategies after a treatment they would receive in the most commonly used ones.

The last instrument used in this research was the Post- test and its Mean score for Experimental Group is 12.15/ 20. If compared with the Mean score of the pre- test for the same group and which is 08.07/20, there seems to be a confirmation of the assumption that when effective listening strategies are developed, this results in improving the listening skill. Evidence that the EG trainees have benefited from the listening practice, which has also raised their confidence in using successfully appropriate strategies, and enabled them to answer successfully, is quite clear,.

The questionnaire is the second tool where most students expressed their ineffective strategies in listening which confirmed that they needed to be trained to some effective strategies.

As for the teachers' interviews, most responses expressed a real need for their students of an EFL support, especially in the form of training into good listening strategies.

### **5.6. Comparing the Results of Pre- test and Post- test.**

In the training sessions, the experimental group received a treatment in the form of listening activities which applied the following strategies:

- Listening for Key Words
- Predicting a Speaker's Purpose; Previewing
- Background Knowledge Activation.
- Looking for non- verbal cues to meaning,
- Making inferences while listening / guessing at meaning
- Listening to check their answers: Seeking Clarification
- Listening for Gist: grasping the main idea.

At the end of the training, a post- test was administered to both EG and CG.

This implicated an IELTS format test of listening comprehension performing the following five strategies.

- Listening for Key Words
- Predicting a Speaker's Purpose
- Background Knowledge Activation.

- Making Inferences While Listening

- Listening for Gist.

The scores of students in the control and experimental groups were compared in pre and post- tests within and between groups to see their progress before and after treatment, and if any group had a significant achievement.

A statistical analysis of the results provided evidence in support of the effect of strategy training on listening ability. A comparison of the mean scores obtained in the post- test, (12.15 for the EG and 8.13 for the CG, the correlation being 4.02) indicates that the EG students achieved significantly higher after the treatment than the CG.

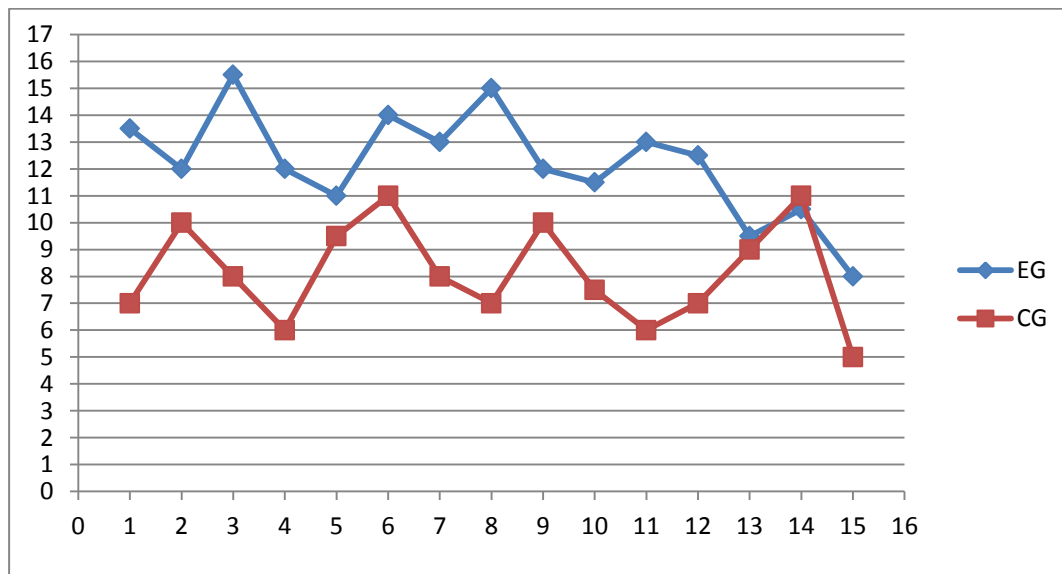


Figure 3: Post- test EG and CG students' scores.

Based on the means of the five categories, *Listening for Key Words* strategy had the highest score. Its mean frequency for the EG was 3.4 against 2.26 for CG, with a mean difference of 1.14. This also shows that EG students used this strategy (M=3.4) more frequently than all the other types of strategy. *Activating Background Knowledge* (M= 3.06) comes next, followed by *Previewing and Predicting* (M=2.2). *Making*

*Inferences, Guessing at Meaning* (M= 1.96) comes in the fourth position before *Listening for Gist* (= 1.53). The frequencies for the first three strategies were in the medium range of 2.2 - 3.4, except for *Making inferences* and *Listening for Gist* which were under that range, as illustrated in the table below.

POST TEST Results													
Experimental Group							Control Group						
N	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	Mark	N	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	Mark
1.	4	2	3.5	2	2	13.5	1.	1	1	2	0.5	2.5	7
2.	3.5	1.5	3.5	2	1.5	12	2.	2	2.5	2	1.5	2	10
3.	4	3	4	2.5	2	15.5	3.	1.5	1	2.5	1	2	8
4.	3	2.5	3	2	1.5	12	4.	1	1	1	1.5	1.5	6
5.	3	2	2.5	2	1.5	11	5.	1	2	2.5	2	2	9.5
6.	4	3	4	2	1	14	6.	1.5	2	3	1.5	3	11
7.	4	3	3	1.5	1.5	13	7.	1.5	2	1.5	1	2	8
8.	4	2.5	4	2.5	2	15	8.	1	1	1.5	1.5	2	7
9.	3.5	2.5	3	2	1	12	9.	1.5	2.5	2	1.5	2.5	10
10.	2.5	3	2.5	2	1.5	11.5	10.	1	2	1.5	1	2	7.5
11.	3.5	2.5	3	1.5	2	13	11.	0.5	1	1	1	2.5	6
12.	4	2	3	2	1.5	12.5	12.	1	1	1.5	1	2.5	7
13.	3	1	2	2	1.5	9.5	13.	1	1.5	2	1.5	3	9
14.	3	1.5	3	2	1	10.5	14.	1.5	2.5	2.5	1.5	3	11
15.	2	1	2	1.5	1.5	8	15.	0.5	1	1	1	1.5	5
Mea	<b>3.4</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>1.53</b>	<b>12.15</b>	Mea	<b>1.16</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.83</b>	<b>1.26</b>	<b>2.26</b>	<b>8.13</b>
Grand Mean 12.15 /STDV $\sigma$ : 0.644							Grand Mean 8.18 / STDV $\sigma$ =0.446						
N= number / T1,T2 ... = Task N°, marked out of 4 points													

Table 13: Experimental Group and Control Group Post-test Scores

The steps undertaken to calculate Standard Deviations = ( $\sigma$ ) are developed below.

- 1) Experimental Group scores.

Variance= Mean 12.15 is subtracted from each mark.

List of deviations: 1.35, -0.15, 3.35, -0.15, -1.15, 1.85, 0.85, 2.85, -0.15, -0.65, 0.85, 0.35, -2.65, -1.65, - 4.15

Sum of deviations:  $1.82 + 0.02 + 11.22 + 0.02 + 1.32 + 4.42 + 0.72 + 8.12 + 0.0 + 0.42 + 0.72 + 0.12 + 7.02 + 2.72 + 17.22 = 55.9$  divided by the number of items in the list:  
 $55.9 / 15 = 3.99$

Average of squared results:  $55.9 / 14 = 3.72$

Square root of average =  $\sqrt{3.72} =$  Standard deviation:  $\sigma = 1.93$

2) Control Group scores

Variance= Mean 8.13 is subtracted from each mark.

List of deviations: 1.13 + 1.87+ 0.13+ 2.13+ 1.37+ 2.87+ 0.13 +1.13 + 1.87+ 0.63+ 0.87 + 2.13+ 1.13+ 2.87+ 3.13

Sum of deviations:  $1.27 + 3.49 + 0.01 + 4.53 + 1.87 + 8.23 + 0.01 + 1.27 + 3.49 + 0.39 + 0.75 + 4.53 + 1.27 + 8.23 + 9.79 = 43.13$  divided by the number of items in the list:

Average of squared results:  $43.13 / 15 = 2.87$

Square root of average =  $\sqrt{2.87} = 1.69$

Standard deviation,  $\sigma = 1.69$

When comparing the test scores for the two groups, the standard deviation shows how diverse the test scores are for each group. EG has a higher Mean test score (12.15) with a bigger standard deviation  $\sigma = 1.93$  than CG (8.13/  $\sigma = 1.69$ ), which indicates that there are relatively more students in this group (EG) scoring toward one extreme or the other.

This performance of EG seems to be the result of their training and strategy acquisition in listening comprehension. The significant differences are clearly reflected by the students' marks in table 13, page 84.

The standard deviation for the EG is 0.644 and that of the CG is 0.446. The range of the scores of the EG is the difference between the highest and lowest mark, that is,  $15.5 - 8 = 7.5$ , whereas that of the CG is  $11 - 5 = 6$ . Both range and standard deviation indicate that there is more variation among the subjects' scores of the CG as compared with the EG. This shows that the scores of the EG are closer to each other than those of the CG. Considering the obtained data, one can claim that the subjects in the EG performed more homogeneously than those of the CG and conclude that this homogeneity is due to the treatment given to the EG. However, if we consider the corresponding level of frequency for the mean score of 1.53 relating to *Listening for Gist*, we can see that the students answered only as they used to do previously with their LC teachers. This result seems to prove commonly accepted accounts of the learning strategies of learners as reported by their teachers.

In this section were mentioned the efforts which the listeners in a second foreign language have to make to understand the processes involved in listening strategies, giving close attention to the perspective to enhance the teaching of listening strategies. Finally, it gave details of the Training Programme carried out with an experimental group and a control group of 15 first year students each.

To conclude this section, one may say that the results of the EG students' responses to the tasks revealed that most of the overall objectives targeted by the training of the students were met. The students were able and confident in handling an

active engagement in the tasks, and by the same token, they were able to acquire basic communication strategies much needed in teaching languages. Thus, in contrast with the CG students, they showed that they developed some mental, unconscious mechanisms as required for the Top- down and Bottom- up processes to become effective listeners, able to use several listening strategies.

## **CONCLUSION**

### **Limitations of the Study and Implications**

Before concluding this study, a brief recall of the reasons guiding this work, as well as the research question, the hypothesis, the training programme, the subjects and instruments used, along the findings is needed. The research has also as an objective, that developing listening ability is an essential learning tool.

First, the Research Question formulated as follows; ‘What strategies do the students use to understand a listening task?’ It was triggered by the noticed lack of strategy use initiated by the first year students’ weak listening ability, leading to the need for supporting their learning in listening comprehension through a Training Programme featuring 7 Strategy- based listening tasks adapted from Brown’s classification.

The related hypothesis stated that these learners were going to improve this skill by developing effective listening techniques after the treatment they would receive in the most commonly used strategies.

As a second step in chapter 1, the reader was provided with a brief account of works undertaken by researchers on listening comprehension in a second foreign language. The research examined and categorized definitions of some of the language learning strategies as used by speakers of other languages. Then, it looked at the two processes involved in listening comprehension; (Bottom-Up and Top-Down views) clarifying and exemplifying them. Finally, the first part of the study was ended up with;

a) a look at the importance of listening comprehension, one of which relates to the situation when students go to university to study, (not only taking English as a subject, all the other subjects matters have a module in English), or when people travel

to any country around the world, and not especially to an English- speaking country, they will have to interact with many different people in a number of situations.

b) the nature of problems that learners of a second foreign language encounter and which relate to: the perception of certain sounds in English, the stress and intonation patterns, word recognition, and the reduced forms.

The second part of this research (chapter two) highlighted some definitions of Learning Strategies (LS) in general and shed light on their meaning according to what some researchers have written about the subject. This included Oxford's definition of LS and the Taxonomy she gives, as well as their classification provided by Brown.

The study then focused on what characterises effective and non- effective listeners and provided an account of the role of the teacher and that of the learner in a classroom teaching- learning situation.

Brown's classification served as a basis to design a sample listening comprehension lesson implementing the strategy- based approach and featuring the three phases; pre, while and post- listening.

Concerning the procedure of subject selection and the tools used to collect data, it was stated that the subjects were students of one entire first year class of English who took part in varying numbers in the four operations of data collection. The dispatching of the number of students and the types of operations were like this:

a) - 64 students took the pre- test and later completed the listening strategy questionnaire,

b) - both groups (EG and CG of 15 students each) filled the students' learning styles questionnaire and answered the post- test.

c) - the teachers in charge of the listening module answered on paper the questions completing the semi-structured interviews.

As for the instruments used in this work for data collection which are dealt with in chapter 3, there were: the Oxford Placement Test for the Pre- test and the IELTS format activities of European Standard for the Post- test, both aiming at ensuring a high validity to the results.

There were also two questionnaires, chosen for the advantages they offer. Accordingly, the information needed was elicited by the questions and the data was gathered all at once in class. Furthermore, there were informal interviews with the listening teachers who took their time to answer the questions and handed their papers after that. The issues they raised were paralleled with the students' answers with the first questionnaire and the pre- test results.

In chapter 4, the reader was given details of the Training Programme (TP) that was carried out with an experimental group and a control group of 15 first year students each. It was made explicit that the listening comprehension strategy TP helped the learners practise and reflect on the process of listening, without experiencing the threat of evaluation. They didn't know the anxiety of being tested on comprehension when they had to do the listening activities.

The findings reached after the statistical analysis of the results in Chapter 5 provided evidence in support of the effect of strategy training on listening ability. A comparison of the mean scores obtained in the post- test, (12.15 for the EG and 8.13 for the CG, the correlation being 4.02) indicates that the EG students achieved significantly higher after the treatment they received than the CG.

The results of the EG students' responses to the tasks revealed that most of the overall objectives targeted by the training of the students were met. The students were able and confident in handling the active engagement in the tasks, and by the same token, they were able to acquire basic communication strategies much needed in teaching languages. Thus, in contrast with the CG students, they showed that they developed some mental mechanisms to become effective listeners able to use several listening strategies.

The results obtained by the EG students clearly show that they have benefited from the listening practice, and developed mental mechanisms to become effective listeners able to use several listening strategies, raising their confidence in using the appropriate strategies, which enabled them to answer successfully.

Based on the previous discussion the following points emerge:

a) The strategies developed by the learners during the TP are not only to be used by language learners in order to succeed in doing listening tasks inside the classroom, but they are as well strategies that they can carry out of the classroom context to help them be better listeners of the language they learn in 'real life' situations.

b) In order to help learners discover, manipulate and develop their own 'effective' listening strategies, the learners needed to be exposed to a variety of 'authentic' listening materials as well as examples of 'real- life' situations.

However, as it will be developed in the coming section, the strategies that work best for some learners may not work for others because the type of strategies they use are influenced by factors such as their cognitive abilities, their learning cultural and social backgrounds and their general learning styles.

## **1. Limitations of the Study.**

In the perspective of limiting the listening framework to the situations which the treated group is exposed to, it is worth mentioning that the context of study focuses mainly on the “interview” as a language discourse regarding the characteristics it presents; natural speech, its authenticity, and interaction of the characters. Beside this, some shortcomings were noticed when the subjects involved in the study had to do the different activities. These limitations relate to the following facts:

- a) The respondents may not be familiar with the questionnaires, not having had to fill one before, and this resulted in handing back a few messy ones.
- b) The tapes are not authentic radio broadcasts, but simulated tapes designed for particular situations of studying English.
- c) After the post- test, most students came out not feeling very confident of their answers after listening to the recording only once.

Therefore, the objective of this research is to some extent limited because of the reduced number of targeted subjects in both groups- only 15 each. Then, the outcomes of this study do not allow any generalisation to all the students in the English Department, being a survey study of 30 students who were used as a sample out of a large population of 400 students approximately. The findings regarding the sample group of learners will be limited as will be the generalisation of texts, if it is assumed that aural passages differing in content may elicit different findings.

As a second point, this research does not focus on every aspect of teaching or learning listening, but on the listening strategies used by Algerian learners of English as FL2. A

large scale study involving students from different universities nationwide would probably have yielded different results.

Thirdly, this study focused on listening strategies in general, but strategies used for learning other language skills such as reading, writing, or communication would be worth investigating and their relationships with listening worth exploring.

Additionally, teachers as well as students in their responses have recognised that the listening levels of each learner are different, particularly because English listening is affected by a range of factors. Important among these factors is the necessity to underline to teachers and students the importance of listening, to encourage the study of listening/ teaching theory and to explore listening teaching methods, by adopting a skills/strategies approach to L2 learner/listener training.

However, there are opponents such as Reese-Miller (1993) who argues:

My own criticisms come from a different angle and are directed at learner training generally. I am less concerned with the effectiveness of learner training than with what it trains the 'learner' to be. I want to argue that, however open-ended it aims to be, learner training inevitably involves an implicit moulding of the learner to approved patterns of behaviour - a process I call the 'ideological construction of the learner.' In this process learners are 'positioned' by learner training, in as much as they are encouraged to conform to certain expectations if they are to profit from it. If they do not conform to these expectations, they may be left with the feeling that they are either 'poor' language learners or not even language learners at all!

Ridgway (2000a, 2000b) also overemphasises that strategies (including listening strategies) are not easily reportable and remained unconvinced that learner training is possible. They both posit that listeners do not have enough memory capacity for reporting their use of listening strategies while listening. As a matter of fact, this research shows that listeners are able to report their use of listening strategies while

engaged in a listening task, and this means that listeners are using listening strategies (Vandergrift, 2004). So, the fact remains that as one listens, one employs strategies for comprehension. The use of listening strategies can take place before listening (pre-listening), during listening, and even after the listening task is finished in the extension activities that the teacher has designed. This is particularly the case for good listeners.

However, even though listening strategies are teachable to students, important and necessary to successful LC, they are not acquired spontaneously. They can be learned more effectively with the help of the listening teachers, who should not teach too many strategies at a time, but select strategies and teach them gradually to the students. Teachers can help students become effective listeners by making them aware of the different kinds of listening, the different purposes for listening, and the qualities of good listeners.

Therefore, reviewing the strategies learned before from time to time is of great importance for students to internalize them, therefore making the listening strategies training systematic. Despite students having mastered the basic elements of English grammar and vocabulary, their LC is often weak.

## **2. Implications**

Because students' poor listening ability is a problem, it has been suggested in this research that Listening Comprehension Strategies should be taught earlier in middle and secondary school. For instance;

a) Including exercises related to LC in the Algerian School Curriculum. Indeed, it has been observed that teaching listening skills in middle and secondary is a weak link in the language curriculum.

b) Teaching sound patterns and how to recognize them.

c) Using visual- aids to improve listening comprehension, much needed for visual learners.

d) Teaching students some important and vital socio- affective strategies such as asking for clarification.

The study has also sought new ways of cultivating listening comprehension (LC) competence in TEFL in the Algerian context. It shows that among current problems, and their causes in English teaching practice, the most frequent is that of cultural difference and its effect on LC. According to the practice of TEFL in the University, the research addresses LC strategies such as; distinguishing different stages of teaching listening, matching instruction to students' individual differences, developing students' LC micro skills, and especially focusing on cultural learning in language teaching.

Having background knowledge is a key feature of any kinds of listening materials, so language learners wanting to improve their listening comprehension should have greater exposure to two kinds of listening materials: target culture materials and international target culture materials. Accordingly, through having greater exposure to specific culturally-oriented materials, (for example English culture materials) language learners can improve their listening comprehension.

The results of the research may be of significant importance and may prove beneficial to English language teaching in Algerian tertiary institutions under the following recommendations and avenues to consider for future studies.

1. The relationship between learning barriers and other learning factors needs to be further inspected.
2. The optimal combination of the learning factors can be explored in order to elicit the best learning outcomes of listening strategies.
3. A standardised inventory of learning difficulties could be created to provide instructors and learners with an efficient way to diagnose strategy difficulties.
4. Learners with different language proficiencies could be studied to compare their strategy learning difficulties.

To sum it up, one can say that Listening Comprehension has been neglected in research until quite recently. This is a reason why some researchers call listening “Cinderella skill in second language learning” (Nunan, 1997, P. 47). However, it is true that listening is vital in language learning in that it provides input for the learner. Without understanding input, students cannot learn anything.

This study has argued that a strategy-based approach remains one out of many possible and effective ways that can be used to help learners of a second foreign language improve their listening skills if classroom teachers implement it, based on a good understanding of its cognitive as well as pedagogical strengthening.

Ultimately, this research remains a modest contribution to research in LC in a second language -namely English and by the same token, to suggest an improvement in matters of teaching this skill at Saad DAHLEB University.

Hopefully, this operation might consequently end up in enhancing the students' listening capacities in English, provided that the pressing need for human resources, i.e., qualified teachers who master the listening strategies as well as material means (enough language laboratories) to permit the students more time exposure to aural input are solved.

Regarding the implications of this study for classroom teaching, it is advisable for school practitioners to guide the students through the process of listening. This not only provides them with the knowledge by which they can successfully complete a listening task; but it also motivates them and puts them in control of their learning.

If adopted, at a larger scale, these techniques of strategy use to comprehend second foreign language oral texts (and messages) will undoubtedly bring qualitative changes in teaching in Algeria.

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## APPENDIX 1

### A: The Pre- test: Based on Oxford Placement Test in Listening.

Name .....
Total Score ..... / 100 points

Read the example below. Listen to the tape. You will hear the example *once* only.

Decide which word you hear, 'soap', or 'soup'.

Will you get me some *soap* / *soup* at the supermarket?

The word was 'soup', so 'soup' is underlined.

Now the test will begin. Listen to the tape and underline the words you hear.

1. I gather you've been having trouble with your *earring* / *hearing*.
2. A number of students are expected to join the advanced *composition* / *conversation* class.
3. This beard of mine is awfully itchy. I'll be glad when it *goes* / *grows*.
4. I doubt if he's very comfortable in his *present* / *prison* bed.
5. Have you played *Dennis* / *tennis* very much recently?
6. Look at that woman! What a *size* / *sight* she is?
7. Do you have any idea how long ago it was *found* / *founded*?
8. Your letter must have crossed with *my own* / *mine*.
9. One thing I really *loved* / *loathed* in the late seventies was the style of the clothes.
10. My sister says *he's* / *she's* a very nice person.
11. That Dutch friend of mine you met yesterday is a very good *chess* / *jazz* player.
12. The tube from Liverpool St. to Holborn costs *30p* / *40p*.
13. Can I have 20 *No.6* / *Embassy*, please?

14. Today's a *holiday / horrid day*, isn't it?
15. Well, I wonder what *joys / choice* they have in store for us this time.
16. Only 30% of those sampled *can / can't* tell the difference between margarine and butter.
17. I can't really say if I like jazz or not; *sometimes / some kinds* I do.
18. She's been quite *tearful / cheerful* the last couple of weeks.
19. Graf now seems unlikely to *regain / retain* her title.
20. I think it's *Dave / Steve* on the phone.
21. *Why / Where* are you going to live in London?
22. It is recommended that dyslexic students follow a remedial *reading / writing* option.
23. Do you have any idea where my *class / glass* is?
24. The court heard that Polanski had had a very *depraved / deprived* childhood
25. I *can see / consent to* it has to be done.
26. I see the *peaches / pictures* are starting to go yellow.
27. If it hadn't been for him they *couldn't / wouldn't* have done it.
28. Have you got any more of this *blended / splendid* butter?
29. I don't think the management side took any *notes / notice*.
30. At the end of this test the papers will be *corrected / collected* by the invigilators.
31. The early trans-continental trains were often delayed by *engine / Indian* trouble.
32. During his holidays he spends most of his time at the Lotus test track *watching / washing* cars.
33. Liverpool were *really / rarely* dangerous in the first half.
34. Mind you don't tread on the *glass / grass*.
35. You've got a *lash / rash* just under your eye.
36. Do you think you could *take / talk* us through the next bit of the film?
37. How Many *tests / texts* are we going to need to get all the data we want?

38. There's a fishery somewhere round here where they *hatch / catch* trout by the thousand.
39. Are you going to *Penny's / Benny's* tonight?
40. Do you think we could have *two minibuses / too many buses* for the summer courses?
41. Do you think Rick's place is still *buyable / viable*?
42. One of the lectures in the sociology department is writing a book on the old *Board School / Borstal* system.
43. *I reckon / Eric and* I need a good holiday.
44. This horse will have to be *shod / shot* immediately.
45. Can you get me some *sealing tape / ceiling paint* when you're in town?
46. Even if he leaves the country he won't be safe from *persecution / prosecution*.
47. Since the accident the only thing he can do is *menial / manual* work.
48. She's very much the '*committee*' / '*committed*' type.
49. You can get quite a *view / few* from up here.
50. What can we do with this *lot / slot* to make the time table work?
51. Platt was *cheered / chaired* off at the end of the match.
52. The future of the party now seems to depend on *delegate / delicate* decisions to be worked out at local level.
53. Have you done much *riding / writing* recently?
54. *Who starts / whose darts* for double top?
55. What we have here is essentially a *fiscal / physical* problem.
56. Make sure you keep the ropes *tied / tight*.
57. I think they *set / sat* the exam last week.
58. You'll need a *mass of / massive* cheese to make a fondue for that many people.
59. I can 't really advise you without knowing the type of *context / contacts* you're presupposing

60. If the *gods / guards* are with us, we should make it.
61. I thought his behaviour was *unexceptional / unexceptionable*.
62. Look at the *clouds / crowds* over there.
63. Her ambition is to become a *belly / ballet* dancer.
64. Did you get a chance to *try / dry*?
65. If you look carefully you can see there used to be a *cabinet / cabin up* there.
66. Recent EC regulations have been disastrous for British fish *stocks / docks*.
67. Pollution is a real threat to the North American *basin / bison*.
68. Have you had an invitation to the *lunch / launch*?
69. Do you know if she's *Finnish / finished*?
70. Yorkshire and Wales are both famous for their pony *trials / trails*.
71. The police found traces of *ash / hash* in the back of the car.
72. I'm not feeling so *ill / well* today.
73. They are *old / all* things they've grown out of, so you can take them for the jumble sale.
74. My brother-in-law left *Euston / Houston* early this morning, so he should get here tonight.
75. The profitability of North Sea oil rigs is very dependent on the quality of the *crude / crew* they find.
76. You can buy logs by the *barrow / barrel* load at the local timber works.
77. I hear you've got a new *rival / arrival*.
78. Who was responsible for sending the *infantry / inventory*?
79. We'll be letting them have a *newer system / new assistant* if they want one.
80. He works for a company called *JMB / J&B*.
81. Have you read the latest book on Watergate by *HA / AJ* Haldeman?
82. Some motels now have *hair-dryers / air-dryers* in the cloakrooms.

83. Recent legislation makes it imperative that *we men / women* work together to help each other.
84. The Social Services try to ensure that children who need them get *free / three* meals every day.
85. It's Richard's *birthday / bath day* on Sunday, so he'll have to do it on Monday.
86. I gather their child is *autistic / artistic*.
87. She was terribly *scared / scarred* as a result of the accident.
88. This year Britain's top *oarsman rowed / horseman rode* to his third world title.
89. He's an *eternal / internal* student.
90. At Silverstone Wildlife Park they've got an *Andean / Indian* buffalo.
91. In England all *rod / road* users must have a licence.
92. I'd like you to be responsible for the *personal / personnel* side of the deal.
93. *He and / Ian* Woodsman could well turn the tables next week.
94. Who's going to propose the *loyal / royal* toast?
95. England would never have scored if it hadn't been for that *free / freak* kick by Gascoigne.
96. Such measures have never previously been taken in the absence of a *president / precedent*.
97. When I saw the *train / terrain* I realized I would never catch him.
98. We haven't had any more news *today / to date*.
99. "You're *obese! / a beast*" she said, looking at him in disgust.
100. I've just heard that these tests have been *pirated / piloted* in Japan.

## B. Answer Key to the Pre- test.

1. <i>Hearing</i>	26. <i>pictures</i>	51. <i>chaired</i>	76. <i>barrel</i>
2. <i>composition</i>	27. <i>wouldn't</i>	52. <i>delicate</i>	77. <i>arrival</i>
3. <i>grows</i>	28. <i>blended</i>	53. <i>riding</i>	78. <i>inventory</i>
4. <i>present</i>	29. <i>notice</i>	54. <i>whose darts</i>	79. <i>newer system</i>
5. <i>Dennis</i>	30. <i>collected</i>	55. <i>fiscal</i>	80. <i>J&amp;B</i>
6. <i>size</i>	31. <i>Indian</i>	56. <i>tight</i>	81. <i>HA</i>
7. <i>founded</i>	32. <i>washing</i>	57. <i>set</i>	82. <i>hair- dryer</i>
8. <i>mine</i>	33. <i>really</i>	58. <i>mass of</i>	83. <i>women</i>
9. <i>loathed</i>	34. <i>glass</i>	59. <i>context</i>	84. <i>free</i>
10. <i>she's</i>	35. <i>rash</i>	60. <i>gods</i>	85. <i>bath day</i>
11. <i>chess</i>	36. <i>talk</i>	61. <i>unexceptionable</i>	86. <i>autistic</i>
12. <i>40p</i>	37. <i>texts</i>	62. <i>clouds</i>	87. <i>scarred</i>
13. <i>No.6</i>	38. <i>hatch</i>	63. <i>belly</i>	88. <i>oarsman rowed</i>
14. <i>horrid day</i>	39. <i>Penny's</i>	64. <i>dry</i>	89. <i>internal</i>
15. <i>joys</i>	40. <i>2 minibuses</i>	65. <i>cabin up</i>	90. <i>Andean</i>
16. <i>can</i>	41. <i>buyable</i>	66. <i>stocks</i>	91. <i>rod</i>
17. <i>some kinds</i>	42. <i>Board School</i>	67. <i>bison</i>	92. <i>personnel</i>
18. <i>tearful</i>	43. <i>reckon</i>	68. <i>launch</i>	93. <i>He and</i>
19. <i>regain</i>	44. <i>shod</i>	69. <i>Finnish</i>	94. <i>loyal</i>
20. <i>Steve</i>	45. <i>sealing tape</i>	70. <i>trials</i>	95. <i>freak</i>
21. <i>Why</i>	46. <i>persecution</i>	71. <i>Ash</i>	96. <i>precedent</i>
22. <i>reading</i>	47. <i>menial</i>	72. <i>ill</i>	97. <i>terrain</i>
23. <i>glass</i>	48. <i>committee'</i>	73. <i>old</i>	98. <i>to date</i>
24. <i>deprived</i>	49. <i>view</i>	74. <i>Euston</i>	99. <i>obese</i>
25. <i>can see</i>	50. <i>slot</i>	75. <i>crude</i>	100. <i>pirated</i>

## APPENDIX 2 (A).

### Texts used for Strategy Training Programme.

#### N°1: a) Algeria National Weather Report.1. (Scripted)<sup>3</sup>

Good morning. I am Sheikh FERHAT from Radio El Bahdja in Algiers, reporting on the weather for today January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009.

This morning it is mainly sunny all over the country, except for the North West where dark clouds cover the sky over Tlemcen, Oran and Saida. In the afternoon, the clouds will be spreading north, reaching the eastern parts of the country in the evening, where scattered heavy showers are expected to fall in Constantine, Annaba, Guelma and Batna. There will 20% chance of snow falling on the Aurés Mountains, (the cold spots). Areas of North and Central Sahara (Djelfa, Tiaret, Saida) will remain sunny and warm till the evening when cold winds will start blowing, lowering the temperatures. The rest of the country, that is the hot spots in the Sahara, they will remain sunny, dry and warm.

The temperatures will stay low for today, reflecting the season. Oran 16°, Tlemcen 15°, Algiers 15°, Setif 8°, Constantine 10°, Annaba 12°, Laghouat 8°, Ghardaia 9°, Bechar 18°, Timimoun 25°, Tindouf 32 , In Salah 34, Tamanrasset 25°, and In Guezzam 35°. As the roads will be slippery, we recommend the drivers to be very careful. Have a nice day!

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<sup>3</sup> The passage was translated and presented to the trainees by the researcher

## **b) Weather Report 2. (Authentic)**

Hi, I'm Jesse Williams. This is your weekend weather report. This morning we're seeing sun with cloudy periods as well as a few flurries. Right now I am at the top of Mount Raven where it is plus two and expected to rise to about six degrees by noon. Overnight temperatures will probably drop to at least minus seven. Tomorrow's forecast calls for more flurries with a high of zero and a low of minus twelve. With the wind chill factor, that could put us at a record low of minus twenty. Conditions are perfect for skiing this weekend, but if you're heading out to the slopes tomorrow, please remember to bundle up to avoid frostbite. We'll go back to the newsroom now for a look at what's in sports.

## **N°2: How Healthy Are You?**

Interviewer: Ok. Bob. There is "The Health and Fitness" quiz in this magazine. Do you fancy having a go?

Bob: no, there is this programme on T.V. I want to watch.

Interviewer: Oh go on. It won't take long.

Bob: No!

Interviewer: Q1. Do you eat at least 5 portions of fruit or vegetables every day?

Bob: yes!

Interviewer: You're a big liar. I'll put "rarely" for that.

Q2. Do you smoke?

Bob: Smoke? Pretty much all the time!

Interviewer: Yes, like a chimney.

Q3. Do you exercise at least 3 times a week?

Interviewer: That's easy. Never!

Q4. Do you take time to relax each day?

Bob: a chance will be a fine thing!

Interviewer: I'll put "Rarely".

Q5: Do you eat fast food?

Bob: I can't stand that rubbish.

Interviewer: Ok. Never!

Q6: Do you eat something healthy for breakfast?

Bob: Well, I always have cereal and toast.

Interviewer: Ok.

Q7: Do you sleep 7 to 8 hours a night?

Bob: Oh, yes. "Always". I've got to get my beauty slim.

Interviewer: Shame is not working!

Bob: Ha-ha.

Q8: Do you drink at least a litre of water a day?

Bob: A litre? No way. Unless I have had a carry.

Interviewer: Ok. I'll put "rarely".

Last few questions. Do you enjoy your hobbies and have a good social life?

Bob: No hobbies really. But I go out three or four times a week. So ...

Interviewer: Hum. I'll put "sometimes" for that.

Next question. Do you feel stressed?

Bob: Stressed? All the time!

Interviewer: Ok. Now let's see what your score is!

### **N° 3: Removing a Mountain. (Chinese Story)**

**Yu Gong** was a poor farmer. His house lay at the foot of a high mountain. On the other side of the mountain was the sea. Yu Gong very much wanted to have a view of the sea. So he began to remove the mountain by digging out rocks and carrying them away in his wheelbarrow to the far end of the valley, where he dumped them into a deep lake. He had been doing this for a year or two, when an old man saw him on the road.

‘What are you doing?’ He asked Yu Gong.

‘I am removing the mountain so that I can have a view of the sea,’ he replied.

‘But you will never finish in your lifetime,’ said the old man.

‘It doesn’t matter,’ said Yu Gong, ‘After all, my sons will carry on the work after me, and then their sons, and their sons after them. We’ll have our view of the sea in the end.’

### **N° 4: A friend in Need**

**Sophie** : Allo!

**Elaine**: Hi Sophie. It’s Elaine, how’re you?

**Sophie**: Elaine, Hi. I’m fine. I’m just preparing Tom’s milk. He is hungry.

**Elaine**: Oh, how is he?

**Sophie**: Oh he is fine, you know, growing all the time.

**Elaine**: And Philip is he okay too?

**Sophie**: Yes, Philip is fine. He is out at work just now. So any way, what’s up?

**Elaine**: I’ve got some news.

**Sophie**: Oh yes, what?

**Elaine:** I've left my job.

**Sophie:** Oh really? So suddenly?

**Elaine:** Yeah, I had a row with the boss and he wouldn't change his mind, so I decided to quit, there and then.

**Sophie:** Wow, how do you feel about it?

**Elaine:** Relieved, it's a real weight off my mind. I wasn't enjoying it at all.

**Sophie:** Good for you, so what will you do now?

**Elaine:** That's what I'm phoning you about actually. I'm coming to Paris.

**Sophie:** Oh Elaine, that's great!

**Elaine:** Yes! I'm leaving next week. Actually I have a favour to ask.

**Sophie:** Yes!

**Elaine:** Is it all right if I stay with you for a while. I don't have anywhere to stay and a hotel would be so expensive.

**Sophie:** Ooh, well... it's just... You know..., we only have one bedroom here.

**Elaine:** That's okay. I can sleep on the couch.

**Sophie:** But little Tom..., he doesn't sleep much. We are awake most of the night right now.

**Elaine:** That's okay. Maybe I can even help out. I can look after him if you like

**Sophie:** Humm ...

**Elaine:** Oh, go on Sophie, it wouldn't be for long. Just until I find a job and then I can get something to live on my own.

**Sophie:** It may not be easy to find a job here you know, Elaine. There's a lot of unemployment now.

**Elaine:** Oooh. I'm sure I'll find something. Go on, it will be fun.

**Sophie:** Well, I'll have to ask Philip.

**Elaine:** Oh great! Thanks so much Sophie. You don't know how much you mean to me.

**Sophie:** But ...

**Elaine:** Listen, I have to go now, but I'll call you before I leave.

**Sophie:** Humm...

**Elaine:** Thanks so much Sophie. See you at the airport. Bye.

**N° 5:**

**a) The Lost Keys.**

One night, Nasruddin Hodja's, (known as "Djoha") neighbour found him on his knees, in the yard in front of his house, looking for his keys which he said he had dropped in his bedroom. When the neighbour asked him why he was looking for them there; he answered that there was more light out there, so it should be easier to spot them.

**b) When I am 65 - The Redefinition of Old.**

**Interviewer:** Simon, how does it feel to be retired?

**Simon:** Well, you know, not so bad ...

**Interviewer:** How have you been spending your time?

**Simon:** Like everyone. I've been spending more time with my family, I've also travelled a bit, you know, off-season when every where's less crowded and hotels cost less ...

**Interviewer:** Great!

**Simon:** You know, I haven't stopped work completely.

**Interviewer:** Yes, could you tell us more about this?

**Simon:** I'm on a scheme that's called 'phased retirement'. I had a 6 months break from work, after that I could apply for project work with the company I used to work for.

**Interviewer:** How does the scheme work?

**Simon:** Well, it's a trial at the moment. Instead of hiring temporary staff, the company advertises posts on its website that retired employees like myself can access.

**Interviewer:** What sort of work's advertised?

**Simon:** Well, all sorts of things really. Admin work – there's lots of that, then, there's more specialised work, the sort of thing I can do.

**Interviewer:** Hum

**Simon:** Some of the projects can be long term, say for 5 or 6 months, others can just be a couple of days or weeks. Again, the number of hours included in a project can vary. I can decide, more or less, when to work. You know, I manage my own time – it's great, it's very flexible and I do it all from home.

**Interviewer:** I can see it's good for you. What does your company get out of this?

**Simon:** Well, I still have all my old contacts at work, so I know who to contact to get something done – a "temp" brought in from outside doesn't have this knowledge so it takes them longer to get a job done. The company gets flexibility too. Once the job's over that's it, I'm not on their books any more. No training's required either, not yet anyway, so there are savings there too.

**Interviewer:** Do you have to commit yourself to a certain number of hours a week?

**Simon:** Not at all. I can do as much or as little as I like.

**Interviewer:** How about keeping your skills up to date?

**Simon:** I've got access to a lot of online courses, you know, e- learning – if I'm not sure of something I have a look there.

**Interviewer:** Do you pay tax?

**Simon:** Sure. The tax situation's a bit complicated at the moment with this being a trial, but I pay tax on what I earn, yes, unfortunately.

**Interviewer:** And those holidays?

**Simon:** Well you know, I work in the summer when most people are on holiday – then it's time for my holiday. Holidays, sure we go to Europe three or four times a year...

## **N° 6. It's Terrible!**

**Girl:** Hi Brian. What are you doing?

**Brian:** I'm just trying to work out how much I spend a month.

**Girl:** Hoo! That's why he looks so sad.

**Brian:** It's terrible! I spend about £30 a month just on books.

**Girl:** Oof! That's a lot!

**Brian:** and my rent! It's £50 a week, so that's another 200 a month.

**Girl:** Yeh! Rent's a killer.

**Brian:** Then there's food, about £30 a week on that. So that's 120 just to eat, every month.

**Girl:** Yes! So what about going out and stuff? That cost me a fortune.

**Brian:** me too. I think about £150 a month and another 50 on eating out.

**Girl:** Humm. Ough! And guess what, I heard the bus fares are going up.

**Brian:** Great! It already cost me £7 a week, just to get to college and back. That's £28 on transport already.

**Girl:** What's that in the bag?

**Brian:** CDs. I bought 2 this morning in town.

**Girl:** Laughter. So don't complain to me about having no money, then.

Brian: Hey hey, I like music. Anyway, I only buy about two a month. So it doesn't cost more than say, £20.

**Girl:** Humm. Still.

Brian: It is not easy making ends meet, you know. Look at these jeans. Look! I need a new pair.

**Girl:** So, buy some.

Brian: I've already spent £50 on clothes this month. That's my limit.

**Girl:** Well. My parents sent me some money this morning. So, I'm off shopping. I need a new dress.

Brian: Parents, say! There is an idea!

**N° 7: Welcome to “*The Happy Chicken*”.**

**Mr. Bird:** Come in!

**Tom:** Hello ! Yes.

**Mr. Bird:** Take a seat. Now, you are ...

**Tom:** Tom, Tom Baker

**Mr. Bird:** TOM BAKER. Okay, my name is Kevin Bird, Tom and I am going to interview you today.

**Tom:** Hi.

**\*Mr. Bird:** Now then, how old are you Tom?

**Tom:** 19.

**Mr. Bird:** Okay, and... what job are you applying for?

**Tom:** Waiter, just a normal waiter.

**Mr. Bird:** Okay, now we have two shifts, that seven to three or three to eleven in the evening, do you have any preference?

**Tom:** No, I don't mind! But I can only work Saturday and Sunday.

**Mr. Bird:** That's okay Tom, Saturday and Sunday are our busiest days. Are you available from next Saturday?

**Tom:** Sure! That's the 18<sup>th</sup>, right?

**Mr. Bird:** Yes! Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup> ... great! But first can you tell me if you have any experience? Our standards are pretty high in here at *The happy chicken*.

**Tom:** Well, last summer I worked for McDonald's for three months.

**Mr. Bird:** Right! How about as a waiter then?

**Tom:** Ooh. I worked over New Year in a local restaurant near my parents' home.

**Mr. Bird:** Oh yes! And did you enjoy it?

**Tom:** Sure! It was okay, I speak Spanish and there were a lot of Spanish tourists, so I got good tips

**Mr. Bird:** Great! So you speak Spanish, excellent! Well, there are still some other candidates, so can you just give me your phone number and I'll be in touch.

**Tom:** Yes, it is 559304

**Mr. Bird:** 559304. Okay! Oh, when is it the best time to contact you?

**Tom:** Evenings, between five and eight, I think.

**Mr. Bird:** Fine, well thanks so much for coming Tom. See you again

**Tom:** Thank you Mr. Bird.

**Mr. Bird:** Call me Kevin.

**Tom:** Oh thanks. Bye then.

## APPENDIX 2 (B)

**Worksheet 1 / Text:** The Weather Forecast.

**Strategy:** *Listening for Key Words.*

**Task 1.** Listen to a weather forecast about Algeria and complete the table related to the towns on the map, using the adjectives representing the symbols from the box and the temperatures you hear.

cloudy foggy sunny rainy windy snowy



Towns	Adjectives	Temperatures
Oran		
Tlemcen		
Algiers		
Setif		
Constantine		
Annaba		
Laghouat		
Ghardaia		
Bechar		
Timimoun		
Tindouf		
In Salah		
In Amenas		
Djanet		
Tamanrasset		
In Guezzam		

**Task 2.** Listen to an authentic weather report and circle the letter corresponding to the correct answer.

1. Which season would this weather report most likely take place in?
  - a) Summer
  - b) spring
  - c) winter / fall
  
2. Where is the weather report taking place?
  - a) In the Newsroom
  - b) At the weather office
  - c) On Mount Raven
  - d) In a ski chalet

3. Which of the following is mentioned as part of tomorrow's forecast?  
 a) A blizzard    b) Heavy rain    c) Light snow    d) Mild temperatures
4. It will feel so cold tomorrow because of the ...  
 a) Humidity    b) wind    c) Freezing rain    d) Coming winter
5. The weather reporter suggests that skiers should...  
 a) Stay indoors    b) Beware of frost    c) Dress warmly    d) Go skiing

**Worksheet 2 / Text: How Healthy Are You?**

**Strategy:** *Predicting*

Listen to the tape about Bob's habits and put *yes*, *no* or *never* in the right box.

Eat fruit every day	smoke	Do exercise	Eat fast food	Sleep 7 to 8 hours	Drink a litre of water	Enjoy hobbies	Feel stressed

**Worksheet 3 / Text: Removing the Mountain.**

**Strategy :** *Activating Ss' Background Knowledge*

**Complete the two columns in note form with ideas which reflect the determination expressed in the first column.**

Determination	Hard work	Collective work
Yu Gong, a poor farmer, very much wanted to have his view of the sea, so he decided to ...		

**Worksheet 4 / Text: A Friend in Need**

**Strategy:** *Looking for non- verbal cues to meaning*

	Elaine is	Sophie is	Elaine's voice is	Sophie's voice is
Apologizing				
Complaining				
Insisting in order to convince				
Making suggestions				
Emotional				
Calm				

**Worksheet 5 / Text: When I am 65 - The Redefinition of Old.**

**Strategy:** *Inferring, guessing at meaning*

	True	False
1. Simon stopped full-time employment last year.		
2. Simon still works occasionally.		
3. Simon is on a scheme called 'phased retirement'.		
4. The work Simon does is not very flexible.		
5. The company uses outside temporary workers too.		
6. Simon is able to use his old work contacts to get things done.		
7. Simon doesn't need any training.		
8. Simon doesn't pay tax on his earnings.		

**Worksheet 6 / Text: It's Terrible!**

**Strategy:** *Seeking clarification*

	Girl	Brian
That's why he looks so sad!		
Rent's a killer!		
Laughter.		
It is not easy making ends meet.		
That's my limit.		

**Worksheet 7 / Text: The Happy Chicken.**

**Strategy:** *Listening for Gist*

Listen to the tape and complete the table with the correct information.

Name of restaurant	Job applied for	Name of interviewer	Number of shifts	Busiest days	Phone number

## APPENDIX 3: Listening Post- Test.

### A. The Listening Text

**Journalist:** Well, I'm standing on the shop floor here at Manchester Grundig Electronics, one of Manchester's most advanced component manufacturers. Well, I am here because, well, the managers here have come out with a rather novel way to boost productivity. I'm joined by John Faircastle who's Head of Human Resources.

**Journalist:** John, can you tell the viewers exactly what this extraordinary plan is?

**John Faircastle:** Of course. Well, we recently had a "Feng Shui" expert to come to the factory and basically redesign everything from the managing director's office to the factory floor where we are now.

**Journalist:** Wow! Can you explain to viewers what a Feng Shui expert is? Or does?

**John Faircastle:** Well, Feng Shui is the ancient art of balancing different energies and forces to make a more harmonious environment. We believe that by positing certain things in certain ways, using Feng shui, we can create certain positive working conditions.

**Journalist:** sounds confusing.

**John Faircastle:** not really. It simply means balancing the five essential elements, of water, wood, fire, earth and metal.

**Journalist:** so, how does that work in a place like this, John?

**John Faircastle:** well, water helps with relaxation, and fights stress. So we placed water dispensers throughout the building and outside, you may have noticed the pond we installed in the centre of the car park.

**Journalist:** with the fountain in?

**John Faircastle:** that's right. Then there is wood. Wood helps with creativity and flexibility. So, we put all wooden furniture in the offices and wooden flooring too.

**Journalist:** right, but what about fire? You can't have fire in an office, can you? That will be dangerous.

**John Faircastle:** well, the fire element will be good for originality, and enthusiasm. The colour red represents the fire element. So, we have red walls everywhere, and all pictures have red picture frames too.

**Journalist:** I see! And earth? What's that good for?

**John Faircastle:** the earth element helps organisation and stability. We use bricks to channel this energy. So, that's why you see so many brick walls. Plus of course the earth coloured tiles in the bath rooms.

**Journalist:** OK. That's clever. There's one more element to balance, isn't there? What's that again?

**John Faircastle:** metal. Metal helps strength and determination.

**Journalist:** ha-ha!

**John Faircastle:** we have metal filing cabinets and metal blinds in every office.

**Journalist:** wow! And have any of these changes made a difference?

**John Faircastle:** well, in the three months since the changes were made, we have lost 20% fewer days through sickness.

**Journalist:** so, your employees are healthier?

**John Faircastle:** that seems to be the case. Certainly, they come to work more often.

**Journalist:** (laughter) so, there you have it. Proof if anyone needed, that the 5000 year old art of Feng Shui is alive and well here in Manchester. Now, back to the studio.

## **B: QUESTIONS**

The trainer greets the students and reminds them that the listening test takes 30 minutes, and that a variety of question types is used to test a wide range of listening skills, such as their ability to understand main ideas and factual detailed (supporting) information, ability to understand the opinions and attitudes of speakers, the purpose of an utterance, to follow the development of ideas, as well as their ability to identify and understand the relationship between ideas, such as: ‘comparisons’, ‘examples’, ‘facts’, ‘opinions’, ‘cause’ and ‘effect’.

**The test starts with Task N° 1 that assesses Strategy 1: *Listening for Key Words.***

**Teacher’s instructions.**

Give short answers to the following questions:

1. What is the text about? .....
2. Who are speaking?” .....
3. Where are they? .....
4. Why is the first man there? .....

**Task N° 2 assesses Strategy 2: *Previewing and Predicting.***

**Task description.**

This will help students learn as much as possible before they listen, to know what they will be listening to, what they will be listening for.

The teacher gives the title, *Feng Shui*. and asks the students to guess what they think the listening passage might be about.

**The following task (N° 3) assesses Strategy 3: *Activating Students’ Background Knowledge.***

**Task description.**

Students are provided with topics which summarise parts of the listening text. Their task is to decide which three topics are discussed.

**Teacher's instructions.**

Which three items are discussed in the interview.

- A. How to create positive working conditions?
- B. Balancing between four natural elements.
- C. An ancient art that has been practised in China
- D. Interviewing the Managing Director of Grundig Electronics
- E. Feng Shui is about a way of arranging furniture in a room
- F. Water helps with flexibility, and fight tiredness

**Task N° 4 assesses Strategy 5: *Making Inferences, Guessing at Meaning.***

**Task description**

In this question type students are given a 'stem' which is an incomplete sentence. The stem is followed by three options - one is correct (the answer) and two may seem possible but are in fact incorrect in some way (Sentence completion/ Multiple choice questions).

**Teacher's instructions.**

In tackling this type of question, it is very important to read the stem carefully.

Circle the appropriate letters A – B – or C

1. The journalist is in the factory shop to ...
  - A. Write an article
  - B. Interview the managing director
  - C. Interview the Head of Human Resources.

2. Feng Shui is ..... old.

- A. 500 years
- B. 50 centuries
- C. 5 million years.

3. Wood helps with ...

- A. creativity and flexibility
- B. relaxation, and fights stress.
- C. originality, and enthusiasm

**The last task (N° 5) assesses Strategy 7: *Listening for Gist***

The aim of this activity is to improve the students' ability to use contextual and lexical clues to work out the situation.

**Task description**

Students are provided with an incomplete form which covers information from the listening text. Their task is to complete the gaps with one word.

**Teacher's instructions.**

Complete the summary and the notes. Write no more than 2 words for each answer.

Water	Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal
helps with .....	helps with .....	originality	helps .....	helps strength
fights stress	and .....	and .....	and	and .....

**C. Answer key to Post- Test tasks.**

**Task 1: Strategy N° 1 *Listening for Key Words.***

1. Feng Shui / Chinese ancient art.

2. A journalist and the Head of Human Resources
3. In a factory (of electronics / Manchester).
4. To interview the Head of Human Resources.

**Task 2: Strategy N° 2 *Previewing and Predicting.***

**China / Chinese culture / Chinese hard work**

**Task 3: Strategy N° 3 *Activating Students' Background Knowledge***

- A. How to create positive working conditions?
- C. An ancient art that has been practised in China
- E. Feng Shui is about a way of arranging furniture in a room

**Task 4: Strategy N° 5. *Making Inferences, Guessing at Meaning***

1. C. Interview the Head of Human Resources
2. **B.** 50 centuries
3. 3. A. Creativity and flexibility

**Task 5 : Strategy N° 7. *Listening for Gist***

- **Water helps with** with relaxation, and fights stress
- **Wood helps with** with creativity and flexibility.
- **Fire helps with** for originality, and enthusiasm
- **Earth helps with** organisation and stability
- **Metal helps with** strength and determination1

## APPENDIX 4 (A): Questionnaire on Listening Strategies

*This questionnaire was designed to help you identify the way(s) you listen in order to understand an English text.*

*Please respond to the statements AS THEY APPLY TO YOUR STRATEGIES OF LISTENING TO ENGLISH. Tick the box which you think corresponds to your choice to rate the way you practise your listening skill.*

*Decide whether you agree or disagree with each statement. For example, if you strongly agree, mark:*

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
X				

*Please respond to each statement quickly, without too much thought. Try not to change your responses after you choose them. Please answer all the questions and use a pen to mark your choices.*

<b>Pre-listening Phase</b>					
<b>Statements</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
1. I start listening without thinking about the subject matter even when the teacher gives it to us					
2. I activate my background knowledge on subject matter before listening.					
3. I try to determine the speaker's purpose					
4. I am a little diverted (away) from the subject matter					
5. I do not focus attention on the subject matter					
6. I am distracted by background noise or by my classmates					

### While- listening Phase

1. I give full attention to the listening task and demonstrate interest					
2. I search for meaning					
3. I don't pay attention to what I find uninteresting					
4. I constantly check my understanding of the message by making connections, making and confirming predictions, making inferences, evaluating, and reflecting					
5. I do not try to understand					
6. When I know that careful listening is required, I adjust my listening behaviour accordingly					
7. I am a rigid note taker and I want to take every word down					
8. I am a flexible note taker and I often add information of my own					
9. I take fewer, more meaningful notes					
10. I judge the message by the speaker's appearance or delivery					
11. I consider the context to understand some words					
12. I 13. form a mental picture of the story to help me remember					

while listening					
<b>Post- listening Phase</b>					
1. I keep my judgement until comprehension of the message is complete					
2. I jump to conclusions without reflection					
3. I answer the questions by review of my notes					
4. I am content just to receive messages without reflection or action					

Add any comment you think is important in the listening module. WRITE IN ARABIC IF YOU FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE IN IT. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

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## Appendix 4 (B):

### Questionnaire to students on Perceptual Learning-Style Preferences

This questionnaire has been designed to help you identify the way(s) you learn best- the way(s) you *prefer* to learn.

Please respond to the statements AS THEY APPLY TO YOUR STUDY OF ENGLISH.

Decide whether you agree or disagree with each statement. For example, if you strongly agree, mark:

<b>SA</b> (Strongly agree)	<b>A</b> (Agree)	<b>SD</b> (Strongly Disagree)	<b>D</b> (Disagree)
X			

Please respond to each statement quickly, without too much thought. Try not to change your responses after you choose them. Please answer all the questions. Please use a pen to mark your choices.

Items	SA	A	SD	D
1. When the teacher tells me the instructions I understand better.				
2. I prefer to learn by doing something in class.				
3. I get more work done when I work with others.				
4. I learn more when I study with a group.				
5. In class, I learn best when I work with others.				
6. I learn better by reading what the teacher writes on the chalkboard.				
7. When someone tells me how to do something in class, I learn it better.				
8. When I do things in class, I learn better.				

9. I remember things I have heard in class better than things I have read.				
10. When I read instructions, I remember them better.				
11. I learn more when I can make a model of something.				
12. I understand better when I read instructions.				
13. When I study alone, I remember things better.				
14. I learn more when I make something for a class project.				
15. I enjoy learning in class by doing experiments.				
16. I learn better when I make drawings as I study.				
17. I learn better in class when the teacher gives a lecture.				
18. When I work alone, I learn better.				
19. I understand things better in class when I participate in role-playing.				
20. I learn better in class when I listen to someone.				
21. I enjoy working on an assignment with two or three classmates.				
22. When I build something, I remember what I have learned better.				
23. I prefer to study with others.				
24. I learn better by reading than by listening to someone.				

25. I enjoy making something for a class project.				
26. I learn best in class when I can participate in related activities.				
27. In class, I work better when I work alone.				
28. I prefer working on projects by myself.				
29. I learn more by reading textbooks than by listening to lectures.				
30. I prefer to work by myself				

## APPENDIX 5: Tracks.

Passage 1 **Algeria National Weather Report**, 3 **Removing a Mountain** and 5:

**The Lost Keys**, have no recording and were therefore read by the researcher.

N°1: a) Algeria National Weather Report.1. (Scripted)

b) Weather Report 2. (Authentic)

N°2: How Healthy Are You?

N° 3: Removing a Mountain. (Chinese Story)

N° 4: A friend in Need

N° 5: a) The Lost Keys.

b) When I am 65 - The Redefinition of Old.

N° 6. It's Terrible!

N° 7: Welcome to "*The Happy Chicken*".

### **The Audio Tracks include the following:**

Listening Pre-test.  
(Oxford Placement Test)

Listening Post- Test.  
It Really Works

1. Weather Report

2. How Healthy are you

3. A friend in Need

4. When I am 65

5. It's Terrible

6. Welcome to *The Happy chicken*

**العنوان :** تدريب طلاب السنة الأولى انكليزية على استراتيجيات الفهم السمعي و البحث في مدي تأثيره على قدراتهم للاستماع إلي الدروس.

الدافع وراء هذه الدراسة هو ضعف النتائج التي حققها طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة البليدة على مدى السنوات الخمس عشرة الماضية. الأساتذة والإداريون على حد سواء يعتقدون أن ضعف الطلاب يرجع أساسا إلى استراتيجياتهم للفهم السمعي الغير الفعالة في الوحدة و التي هي المفتاح لفهم اللغة الإنجليزية الأكاديمية اللازمة لدراساتهم الجامعية. كان من المهم أن نتفهم صعوبات الطلاب في هذه الوحدة و كذا معرفة ما إذا كان برنامج تدريب يشمل الاستراتيجيات سيكون له تأثيرا على الطلاب و بالتالي على استخدامها لقدرات الاستماع. بدأ البحث باختبار مسبق مبني على (Oxford Placement Listening Test) شمل عينة من 64 طالبا من السنة الأولى لتحديد مستوى كفاءتهم. و اختصت النتائج ثلاثين طالبا فقط قسمت إلى مجموعة تجريبية EG ومجموعة التحكم CG تتكون من 15 طالبا لكل منهما.

بعد ذلك تم استخدام استبياننا من 22 بندا لمعرفة مشاكلهم في الفهم السمعي والحصول على الأنماط الكامنة وراء الصعوبات التي تواجه استراتيجيات الفهم السمعي. و عليه تلقى طلاب المجموعة التجريبية تدريبا لمدة اثني عشر أسبوعا تم فيها تدريس استراتيجيات تقوم على الإطار الذي اقترحه Brown (1990 : 148). في غضون ذلك لم يحضر فريق التحكم إلا الدورات العادية للدروس. و من أجل تثليث النتائج، أجريت مقابلة شبه منظمة مع أساتذة الفهم السمعي من الوحدة. وفي نهاية التدريب أجري اختبارا على كلا الفريقين مبني على نمط IELTS يتضمن نشاطات لتقييم الاستراتيجيات التي تضمنها التدريب. وكشفت مقارنة النتائج أن طلاب المجموعة التجريبية كانوا على مستوى أعلى بكثير و استخدموا استراتيجيات أكثر من فريق التحكم. على سبيل المثال، الاستماع للكلمات الرئيسية، والاستدلال، والاستماع لجوهر الكلام أحسن مما كانت عليه قبل التدريب. من ناحية أخرى ، استخدم طلاب مجموعة التحكم استراتيجيات الاستماع والفهم على حد سواء قبل وبعد التدريب، ما عدا استراتيجيات للتنبؤ وأخذ رؤوس الأقلام لما يستمعون إليه.

استنادا إلى هذه النتائج ، اقترح أنه ينبغي على أساتذة الفهم السمعي الاطلاع على المهام المبنية على الاستراتيجيات الممارسة في هذه الدراسة و العمل بها معا تطوير الوسائل التربوية المتعلقة بهذه النتائج .