ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

A STUDY ON PROBLEMS STUDENTS ENCOUNTER IN LISTENING TO LECTURES AND NOTE-TAKING WITH REFERENCE TO WRO. SIHEEN COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

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BY

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ABSTRACT

College students need strong oral comprehension skills for access to oral content in their academic classes. The researcher's increasing involvement with the students at Wro. Siheen College of Business and Management revealed their overall difficulty in comprehending and recalling information from oral content lectures. In this study, problems students encounter in listening to lectures and note-taking was examined.

The required data for the study were collected using content analysis, questionnaires and interviews. The content of all the fourteen listening section of the course books were analyzed using a checklist. Seven English language instructors and seventy-one students of the college responded the items of the questionnaires fully. Among the seven instructors, three of them were willing to be interviewed and put forward some additional information regarding the content of the listening texts, teaching strategies and the problems they observed in their students when they presented listening comprehension lessons.

Then, using frequency percentages, descriptive analysis was employed to analyze the responses given to each item in the questionnaire, and the findings of the interview was analyzed qualitatively. The analysis revealed that the students partly used ineffective strategies in listening comprehension. Besides, they had considerable problems in comprehending lectures and note-taking. Although the listening texts lack distinctive features of spoken language, most of them are intended to help students practice note-taking skills.

Finally, it has been recommended that training should be given to students in skill areas such as listening comprehension strategies, for example, paying attention to overall message rather than listening to every single word to come to better understanding to the text. Moreover, instructors need to ensure that they speak at a normal speech rate in order to enhance effective listening comprehension in students. Likewise, instructors should be trained to insert many more overt discourse markers that highlight the overall structure of their lectures.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Listening in a foreign language is a complex process. Students have to be able to understand the main idea of what is said as well as specific details. They may need to check any predictions they have made, and understand the speaker's meaning emotions and opinions. Therefore, it is essential that students have opportunities to practice the behaviors of effective listeners.

Listening is more than hearing and comprehending spoken language involves process-oriented thinking skills. Because listening involves the use of language and thought, the ability to listen effectively develops as students' language abilities develop and mature. Developing effective listening abilities cannot be left to chance. Active listening experiences should be structured into daily English language activities. Students learn to value listening when it is given a prominent role in the English language classroom and when it is meaningfully integrated with their speaking, writing, and reading experiences.

In Ethiopia, at present, English language plays a prominent role in the field of education. It is a medium of instruction from high school to graduate studies. College students are expected to listen to, comprehend and take notes from lectures.

Local research findings (Seime, 1989 and Mulgeta, 1997) reveal that this aural skill is highly needed by Ethiopian students. In spite of the fact that the teaching of listening was least emphasized in the previous ENE (English for New Ethiopia) syllabuses and textbooks, in the current English language syllabuses courses that include listening components are designed. So, the

teaching/learning of listening comprehension as a separate and essential component of English language can be seen as a new practice for the students.

In college, students are expected to work with a material, to be challenged by its difficulty and to understand it at a faster pace than in high school. This is a demanding task depending upon their past study habit in listening and note-taking. Learning and using listening and note-taking skills help to keep students up-to-date in their classes, ensure that they understand the content of lectures, and help them show all they really know on examinations.

The materials that used for English language courses for Wro. Shiheen College of Business and Management students are the English course for preparatory (Grade 11 and 12) students. The courses employ a text-based, integrated approach for English language teaching. They are claimed to be more student-oriented and communicative than their predecessors. That is, in the present English language course materials, every opportunity has been taken to involve the students in meaningful and realistic communicative activities. The courses mainly aim at consolidating the work done so far in developing the students' English language skills required for successful learning.

In a foreign language-teaching context, particularly in contexts like Ethiopia where English is a medium of instruction, the listening abilities of learners could influence their achievement in other course they study. It is important, at college level of education, where learners are expected to comprehend and take note from lectures. As a result, to be outstanding language learners, students should have good note-taking skills.

Besides, listening in general (and especially in second/foreign language environment) could be extremely challenging. It requires considerable effort in coordinating one's knowledge of linguistic, socio-cultural and contextual elements in order to understand and interpret the meaning conveyed

(Underwood, 1989). This seems to hold truth for college students in Ethiopia. Students are bewildered in their first experience of college/university education, as they are required to extract most out of lectures; and this is quite different from the high school experience (Seime, 1989). Lecture comprehension or academic listening requires learners' ability to distinguish relevant issues from irrelevant ones; ability to follow up long speeches which are usually unidirectional and transactional.

Nevertheless, what is commonly observed on the part of some college students is that they cannot understand their subject lectures in English. In other words, in an academic lecture students are expected to assimilate the information they receive orally. They are further expected to process it into intake to be recalled at later stage for examination purpose. However, it appears that students' listening skills are not developed to the extent that they can productively extract content information from spoken lectures. As a result, it is inevitable that they would show poor academic performance. It is important, therefore, that students get not merely practicing listening skills but also training in listening so that they develop the sort of strategies that would be useful to get the important ideas out of spoken texts.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this research is to study the problems students encounter in listening to lectures and note-taking. It tries to find out as to how the listening activities in their English classes help the learners enhance their academic skills needed for their study.

In light of the above mentioned objectives, the research attempts to answer the following specific questions:

1. Do the roles of the listening tasks and the teachers play part in developing students' listening skills in general and academic listening in particular?
2. Do students perceive the need and the goals of the listening classes and do they enjoy practicing listening?
3. What are the specific challenges students encounters in their academic lectures?
4. Do teachers make the necessary preparation to teaching listening skills so that the students improve their lecture comprehension and note-taking abilities?

3. Significance of the Study

Ethiopian students are learning English language as a second/foreign language. They hardly have the opportunity to interact with the native speech community. In other words, they do not have environmental support. Hence, studying how language development can be promoted during the actual classroom practices becomes worthy. This means, what is going on in the classroom in teaching listening comprehension and the methodology the teachers employ needs to be looked into. Besides, the syllabus and the teaching materials should also be examined so as to check their relevance to the students' immediate need.

Therefore, the study is hoped to generate theoretical and pedagogical insights into the teaching of effective listening. It potentially contributes to the following groups:

1. It would generate information on the listening problems of the students to be used by teachers/instructors for improving their teaching methods on listening. In other words, the research will have its own contribution for the instructors to reconsider their approach of teaching listening skills.
2. Material writers can use the information to develop supplementary materials for teaching listening.
3. Syllabus designers and course book writers might use it for further improvement in the teaching materials that enhance learners' listening skills.
4. It will trigger further research to learn about the teaching and learning of listening.

1.4. The Scope of the Study

Listening skill encompasses various language elements such as recognition of similar-sounding words, intonation, stress, etc. The focus of this research is studying the problems students encounter in lecture comprehension.

1.5. Plan of the Study

The plan of the study is designed as follows:

1. In chapter two, the meaning of listening, the strategies involved in efficient listening for study purpose are discussed. In addition, teaching listening comprehension and academic listening which includes listening to lectures and note-taking are examined.
2. The methodology is discussed in chapter three.
3. In chapter four, the results of the questionnaires, content analysis of the students' book and the teacher's guide, and the interview are analyzed.
4. Finally, conclusions and recommendations are given in chapter five.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

There are aspects of this study that limit its generalizability, but they also provide focus for future study needs. In regard to the sample, the subjects of the study were limited only to seven instructors and eighty students at Wro. Siheen College of Business and Management. This is because of time and financial constraints. Larger and cumulative groups of students especially those from different colleges in the region might make the findings more robust.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Theoretical Basis of Listening Comprehension

Beginning in the early 70's, works by Asher (1973), Postovsky (1973) and, later, Krashen (1976) in Feyten (1991) brought attention to the role of listening as a tool for understanding and emphasized it as a key factor in facilitating language learning. Thus, listening has emerged as an important component in the process of second language acquisition.

2.2. Definition of Listening

According to Howatt and Dakin (1974), listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This process involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, the speaker's grammar and vocabulary, and comprehension of meaning. An able listener is capable of doing these four things simultaneously.

Tomlinson's (1984) definition of listening includes "active listening", which goes beyond comprehending as understanding the message content, to comprehension as an act of empathetic understanding of the speaker. Furthermore, Gordon (1985) argues that empathy is essential to listening and contends that it is more than a polite attempt to identify a speaker's perspectives. Rather more importantly, empathetic understanding expands to "egocentric pro social behavior". Thus, the listener altruistically acknowledges concern for the speaker's welfare and interests.

Ronald and Roskelly (1985) define listening as an active process requiring the same skills of prediction, hypothesizing, checking, revising, and generalizing that writing and reading demand; and these authors present specific exercises to make students active listeners who are aware of the "inner voice" one hears

when writing. In light of this, Willis (1981) lists a series of micro-skills of listening, which she calls enabling skills.

They are:

- predicting what people are going to talk about;
- guessing at unknown words or phrases without panicking;
- using one's own knowledge of the subject to help one understand;
- identifying relevant points; rejecting irrelevant information;
- retaining relevant points (note-taking, summarizing);
- recognizing discourse markers, e.g., **such as** and **which**, including link words, pronouns, reference, etc.;
- understanding different intonation patterns and uses of stress, etc., which give clues to meaning and social setting;
- understanding inferred information, e.g. speaker's attitude or intentions

2.3 Significance of Listening

Language learning depends on listening since it provides the bases for language acquisition and enables learners to interact in spoken communication.

Listening is the first language mode that children acquire. It provides the foundation for all aspects of language and cognitive development, and it plays a life long role in the process of communication. Rivers (1981) states listening is used much more than any other single language skill in normal daily life. On average, we can expect to listen twice as much as we speak, four times more than we read and five times more than we write.

Moreover, listening is the fundamental language skill. It is the medium through which people gain a large portion of their education, their information, their understanding of the world and of human affairs, their ideals, sense of values and their appreciation. In this day of mass communication, much of it oral, it is of vital importance that students are taught to listen effectively and

critically. Tresnadwi (1994) explains the importance of listening by saying "mastery of listening ability is crucial for EFL students because they need to take part in lessons and listen to lectures which is in English and which require note-taking."

Listening plays an important role in second-language instruction for several reasons (Rost, 1994). First, listening provides comprehensible input for the learner which is essential for any learning to occur. Second, listeners need to interact with speakers to achieve understanding. Third, listening exercises help learners draw their attention to new forms (vocabulary, grammar, interaction patterns) in the language. Thus, listening comprehension provide the right conditions for language acquisition and development of other language skills (Krashen, 1985). Listening exercises, therefore, should be geared to develop learners' effective strategies and to overcome their listening problems.

According to second language acquisition theory, language input is the most essential condition of language acquisition. As an input skill, listening plays a crucial role in students' language development. Krashen (1985) argues that people acquire language by understanding the linguistic information they hear. Thus language acquisition is achieved mainly through receiving understandable input and listening ability is the critical component in achieving understandable language input. Given the importance of listening in language learning and teaching it is essential for language teachers to help students become effective listeners.

2.4 The Process and Strategies of Listening Comprehension

Listening is an invisible mental process, making it difficult to describe. An English teacher can investigate a learner's writing or speaking difficulties to some extent, and observe how s/he reads, but what goes on inside each listener's head is more of a mystery (Rixon, 1986). On the other hand, it is

recognized by Wipf (1984) that listeners must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation, understand intention and retain and interpret this within the immediate as well as the larger socio-cultural context of the utterance. Rost (2002) defines listening in its broadest sense, as a process of receiving what the speaker actually says (receiving orientation); constructing and representing meaning (constructive orientation); negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding (collaborative orientation); and, creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy (transformative orientation). Listening then is a complex, active processes of interpretation in which listeners match what they hear with what they already know.

Listening strategies are techniques or activities that contribute directly to the comprehension and recall of listening input. Listening strategies can be classified by how the listener processes the input.

Top-down strategies are listeners based: the listener taps into background knowledge of the topic, the situation or context, the type of text, and the language. This background knowledge activates a set of expectations that help the listener to interpret what is heard and anticipate what will come next. Top-down strategies include:

- listening for the main idea
- predicting
- drawing inferences
- summarizing

Bottom-up strategies are text based in which the listener relies on the language in the message, that is, the combination of sounds, words and grammar that creates meaning.

Bottom-up strategies include:

- listening for specific details
- recognizing cognates
- recognizing word-order patterns

Listening comprehension tends to be an interactive, interpretive process in which listeners use prior knowledge and linguistic knowledge in understanding messages. Listeners use metacognitive, cognitive and socio-affective strategies to facilitate comprehension and to make their learning more effective. Metacongnitive strategies are important because they regulate and direct the language learning process. Research shows that skilled listeners use more metacognitive strategies than their less-skilled counterparts (O' Malley & Chamot, 1990; Vandergrift 1999 a). The use of cognitive strategies helps students to manipulate learning materials and apply specific techniques to a listening task. Socio-affective strategies describe the techniques listeners use to collaborate with others, to verify understanding or to lower anxiety.

2.5 The Concept of Listening as a Skill

Listening along with reading had a traditional label as a passive skill and this was simply taken for granted. This is attributed to the belief of the audio-lingual approach in which learners were expected to actively produce language forms in order to learn them. Since producing language forms was considered an active skill, listening comprehension requiring no production was considered a passive skill. Morley(1991) points out that audio-lingual methodology accorded little attention to listening beyond its role in the learners imitation of dialogue. And in the language learning theory of the items, little importance was attributed to listening beyond sound recognition/discrimination and the prosodic patterning of spoken language as involved in memorization and habit formation.

However, we now recognize that listening is a very active language skill. Anderson and Lynch (1988) justify that by taking account of the interpretations listeners make as they hear the spoken text according to their purposes for listening, expectations, and their own store of background. In connection with this, McDonough and Shaw (1993) have the following to say:

> *We have seen that the traditional labeling of reading as a "passive" skill is both misleading and incorrect: this is now well recognized as being equally so for listening. Like the reader, the listener is involved, for instance in guessing, anticipating, checking, interpreting, interacting and organizing. McDonough and Shaw (1993:128)*

2.6 What are Some Listening Problems a Foreign Language Learner Encounters?

The evidence that shows why listening is difficult comes mainly from four sources: the messages to be listened to, the speaker, the listener, and the physical setting (Yagang, 1993).

The Message – According to Yagang (1993), messages on the radio or recorded on tape cannot be listened to at a slower speed. Even in conversation it is impossible to ask the speaker to repeat something as many times as the interlocutor might like. In addition, if listening materials are made up of everyday conversation, they may contain a lot of colloquial word and expressions, such as **stuff** for **material, guy** for **man**, etc., as well as slang. Students who have been exposed mainly to formal or bookish English may not be familiar with these expressions. Here, what is worth mentioning is that in spontaneous conversations people sometimes use ungrammatical sentences because of nervousness hesitation. They may omit elements of sentences or add something redundant. This may make it difficult for the listener to understand the meaning.

In connection with the above mentioned difficulties, Yagang (1993) suggests that grading listening materials according to the students' level, and providing authentic materials rather than idealized, filtered samples facilitate comprehension. It is true that natural speech is hard to grade and it is difficult for students to identify the different voices and cope with frequent overlaps. Nevertheless, the materials should progress step by step from semi-authenticity that displays most of the linguistic features of natural speech to total authenticity, because the final aim is to understand natural speech in real life. Besides, designing task-based exercises to engage the students' interest help them learn listening skills subconsciously. Ur (1984) states that compared with the traditional multiple-choice questions, task-based exercises have an obvious advantage: they not only test the students' listening comprehension but also encourage them to use different kinds of listening skills and strategies to reach their destination in an active way.

Brown and Yule (1983) categorize spoken texts into three broad types: static, dynamic, and abstract. Texts that describe objects or give instructions are static texts; those that tell a story or recount an incident are dynamic texts; those that focus on someone's ideas and beliefs rather than on concrete objects are abstract texts. Brown and Yule suggest that the three types of input should be provided according to the difficulties they present and the students' level.

The Speaker – Ur (1984) points out that in ordinary conversation or even in much extempore speech-making or lecturing we actually say a good deal more than would appear to be necessary in order to convey our message. Redundant utterances may take the form of repetitions, false starts, rephrasing, self-corrections, elaborations, tautologies, and apparently meaningless additions such as **I mean** or **you know**. This redundancy is a natural feature of speech and may be either a help or hindrance, depending on the students' level. It may make it more difficult for beginners to understand what the speaker is saying;

on the other hand, it may give advanced students more time to 'tune in' to the speaker's voice and speech style.

Besides, learners tend to be used to their teacher's accent or to the standard variety of British or American English. They find it hard to understand speakers with other accents. Also, spoken prose, as in news broadcasting and reading aloud written texts, is characterized by an even pace, volume, pitch, and intonation. On the other hand, natural dialogues are full of hesitations, pauses, and uneven intonation. Students used to the former kinds of listening materials may sometimes find the latter difficult to understand.

Chaudron (1983) suggests as to how the above mentioned difficulties can be alleviated. He points out that teachers should select short, simple listening texts with little redundancy for lower-level students and complicated authentic materials with more redundancy for advanced learners. Elementary-level students are not capable of interpreting extra information in the redundant messages, whereas advanced listeners may benefit from messages being expanded, paraphrased, etc.

The Listener – According to Anderson and Lynch (1988), lack of sociocultural, factual and contextual knowledge of the target language can present an obstacle to comprehension because language is used to express the culture. In addition, foreign-language learners usually devote more time to reading than to listening, and so lack exposure to different kinds of listening materials.

Yagang (1993) considers the following points so as to minimize the difficulties which are seen from the learners' perspectives:

- Provide background knowledge and linguistic knowledge, such as complex sentence structure and colloquial words and expressions, as needed

- Give and try to get as much feedback as possible. Throughout the course the teacher should bridge the gap between input and students' response and between the teacher's feedback and students' reaction in order to keep activities purposeful. It is important for the listening class teacher to give students immediate feedback on their performance. This not only promotes error correction but also provides encouragement. It can help students develop confidence in their ability to deal with listening problems.
- Help students develop the skills of listening with anticipation, listening for specific information, listening for intended meaning, listening for attitude, etc., by providing varied tasks and exercises at different levels with different focuses.

2.7 Teaching Listening Comprehension

For too long listening has been relegated to a secondary position in the English language teaching classroom. This stems, in part, from the fact that whereas a considerable amount of research has been conducted into reading, writing and speaking – research which has influenced our approaches to teaching language and has also influenced how textbooks have been written. However, there has been a lack of research interest into listening. Trying to explain the reason for this, Brown and Yule (1983) guess that there seems to be an assumption that students just pick it up somehow in the general process of learning the foreign language. Brown (1990) states:

> *Teaching listening comprehension as a part of teaching a foreign or second language is a relatively recent development whose history lies mostly in the last thirty years. In the early days of teaching the spoken language it was assumed that students would simply acquire the ability to understand the spoken form of the language if they occasionally heard their teacher speak it or listened to a tape of it being spoken. (Brown, 1990:144)*

Even though many research studies indicate that second language listening comprehension is complex and difficult to describe, it has not always been approached as a language skill in its own right. More recently there appears to be a movement towards regarding listening comprehension, and particularly listening in academic contexts, as a skills area that specifically needs investigation (Allison and Tauroza, 1995).

Being able to listen well is an important part of communication for everyone. For our students, guided practice by a teacher is one of the best ways to improve this skill. A student with good listening comprehension skills will be able to participate more effectively in communicative situations. What follows is an exploration of areas that language teachers may find useful in their classroom and when preparing listening materials. For second language learners, developing the skill of listening comprehension skills enables them to participate effectively in class (Brown, 2001).

2.7.1 Teaching Methodology Considerations

The traditional way of teaching such as, introducing some new difficult words, listening to the live listening or the tape again and again and giving correct answers still prevails. It is not difficult for us to see how detrimental such a listening class is to learners. Such an approach to teaching listening is more like testing listening, because listeners are simply exposed to a succession of listening texts on a tape, and then are tested how much they have understood in terms of a lot of comprehension exercise rather than being taught how to listen and how to cope with their listening problems in the class (Brown, 1990; Anderson and Lynch, 1988; Field, 1998).

Listening to and understanding speech involves a number of basic processes, some depending upon linguistic competence, some depending upon previous knowledge that is not necessarily of purely linguistic nature, and some

depending upon psychological variables that affect the mobilization of these competence and knowledge in the particular task situation.

Listening is a receptive skill, and receptive skills give way to productive skills. If we have our students produce something, the teaching will be more communicative. This brings us to the must of integrating language skills. There are two reasons for using integrating activities in language classrooms:

- to practice and extend the learners' use of a certain language structure or function.
- to develop the learners' ability in the use of two or more of the skills within real contexts and communicative framework .

Integrated activities, on the other hand, provide a variety in the classroom and thus maintain motivation and allow the recycling and revision of language which has already been taught separately in each skill.

2.7.2 Purposefulness

In real life, as Ur (1984) explains, when we listen to someone talking, we have a definite non-linguistic reason for doing so. In strengthening this idea, Harmer (1991) has stated that in real life people generally read or listen to something because they want to and because they have a purpose in doing so. Consequently, in our listening lesson, it is important to set purpose. That is to say it is not enough to let students listen a certain text and leave them alone without giving them an exercise to be done regarding what they have listened which can increase their cognitive ability like interpretation. Atkins et al. (1996) on their part emphasize the importance of setting purpose by saying, "effective listening involves listening for a purpose i.e., we do not listen merely to practice language skills. We listen for social purposes or to transfer or exchange information." This can be attained, according to Ur (1984) by giving tasks. As she further states "in the classroom the genuine reason for listening is purely

linguistic (to improve the students' listening skills), and a non-linguistic purpose has to be consciously imposed in the form of a task".

When an English teacher sets a purpose for a listening comprehension lesson, he should not aim at complete comprehension of the listening text. In light of this, George and Yule (1983) point out that we should not train our students to expect that they ought to be achieving 100 per cent correct comprehension and that they are failing if they fail to achieve 100 per cent correct comprehension. A student trained in such expectations constantly experience panic as he practices listening.

To conclude, there is an association between expectation, purpose and comprehension, therefore a purpose should be given to the students. Teachers should train students to understand what is being said in conversation to get them disregard redundancy, hesitation, ungrammaticality. The major problem is the actual way listening material is presented to the students. Teachers should give a clear lead in what the students are going to hear; they should use some visual back up for the students to understand; give questions and tasks in order to clarify the things in their minds; and be sure that these tasks help in learning, not confusing.

2.7.3 Activities

Listening should be accompanied by some activity through which students can demonstrate their comprehension and experience the pleasure of success. If they can do this through some form of personal expression in speech or writing, they learn at the same time that comprehension of a message is part of a communicative act. In her book on listening comprehension, Ur (1984) points out:

> *As a general rule, listening exercises are most effective if they are constructed round a task. That is to say, the students are required to do something in response to what they hear that will demonstrate their understanding. Examples of such tasks are: expressing agreement or disagreement, taking notes, marking a picture or diagram according to instruction, answering questions. (Ur. 1984:24)*

One of the main advancements to come out of research into listening strategies is the understanding that listening exercises can be divided into three main parts: pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening activities. Let us now see each part in some details.

Pre-listening activity – as its name implies, it is characterized by its preparatory nature. Its purpose is according to Underwood (1989) helping learners to focus their minds on the topic by narrowing down the things that the students expect to hear and activating relevant prior knowledge of the topic. She further mentions that some of the activities in pre-listening stage include:

- the teacher giving background information
- the students reading something relevant
- the students looking at pictures
- discussion on the topic/situation

While-listening activities – are what students are supposed to do while they are listening to the text. The purpose of this stage is to help learners develop the skill of eliciting messages from spoken language. A number of activities can also be used in this stage. Some of them are: marking or checking items in pictures, choosing the right picture, putting pictures in order, carrying out actions, true/false statements, completing form and so on.

Post-listening activities – are to be done after the students have listened to the text. The purposes of the activities are:

- to check whether the students have understood what they are required to understand, and whether they have successfully completed the while listening activities.
- to expand on the topic or language of the listening text and transfer things learned to another context.

In meeting this purpose, as Underwood (1989) states the teacher can give the answers orally, students can check their answers each other, the teacher can show the answers on the blackboard, group discussion, etc.

To conclude, listening comprehension is a complex activity involving a large number of different skills and activities. No small set of exercise can possibly satisfy the needs of most students. No one correct learning strategy will work for all students at all time. So, English language teachers should have a large battery of different exercises designed to give practice in most of these various skills. Moreover, listening should be taught with motivation, interest and variation so students can make good progress in listening comprehension.

2.8 Academic Listening

Listening purposes vary according to whether learners are involved in listening as a component of social interaction or not. Brown and Yule (1983) classified listening functions or purposes as interactional and transactional. The purpose of interactional listening is to engage in social interaction. Participations usually make these interactions "comfortable and non-threatening" and their purpose is to communicate "good will" (Richards, 1994).

In contrast, the purpose of transactional listening is primarily to communicate information. Accurate and coherent communication of the message is required. It is important for the listener to get the direct and exact meaning of the message in transactional listening. For example, news broadcasts, lectures, descriptions, and instructions are all transactional uses of language

(Richards, 1994). "Speakers typically go to considerable trouble to make what they are saying clear when a transaction is involved, and may contradict the listener if he appears to have misunderstood" (Brown & Yule, 1983).

Transactional listening is common in academic listening. Academic listening involves listening and speaking tasks in higher education classes. According to Flowerdew (1995), it has its own characteristics and places special demands upon listeners. To be a successful academic listener, a student needs relevant background knowledge, the ability to distinguish between important and unimportant information, and appropriate skills like note-taking. Richards (1983) also suggests many micro-skills are required for academic listening: the ability to identify the purpose and scope of a lecture, the ability to identify the topic of a lecture and follow topic development, the ability to identify the role of discourse markers in signaling the structure of a lecture.

Academic listening has distinct characteristics and places high demands upon listeners (Flowerdew, 1995). It requires listeners to have relevant background information on the lecture delivered. It also requires listeners to be able to distinguish between what is relevant and what is not relevant because an academic lecture contains both relevant and irrelevant information on the topic discussed. Academic listening contains long stretches of talk when listeners do not have the opportunity to engage in the facilitating functions of interactive discourse, so it places high demands upon listeners.

Flowerdew and Miller (1997) described some additional features that differentiate authentic lecture discourse from written text or scripted lectures. An authentic lecture is often structured according to "tone groups" and in the form of incomplete clauses. It is often signaled by "micro-level discourse markers" such as **"and", "so", "but", "now", "okay".** What is more, in an authentic lecture, speakers use many false starts, hesitations, corrections, and repetitions. Speakers often organize their thoughts poorly and present their

ideas in complete grammatical sentences. This makes it difficult for the listeners to understand the information delivered in the lecture.

Finally, Ferris and Tagg (1996) comment that there is frequent "give" and "take" between teacher and students in an academic classroom situation. This includes formal, planned lecture materials, informal questions or comments from the students, and unplanned responses to students by the lecturer. During these give-and-take activities, students become more involved. On the one hand, they have to actively participate in these activities; on the other hand, they have to comprehend what is going on in class and try to get the important points of the lecture. So understanding lectures poses formidable challenges for EFL students, even those highly proficient in English.

2.8.1 Listening to Lectures

Lecturing is the most common method of instruction in higher education. Griffin and Cashin (1989) estimate that seventy-five per cent of college course include lectures as a method of instruction.

Listening is a thinking activity. If we are hearing without thinking, it may be the case that we are not listening well. And one may know from personal experience that it is not always easy to listen. Perhaps the lecturer is speaking too softly. May be the way the lecturer speaks makes it hard to understand what is being discussed. Lecturers sometimes speak too slowly or too quickly or end up talking on tangents that may or may not have anything to do with the theme of lecture, however, it is often up to them to take responsibility for improving the situation. One very powerful way is to learn to listen more effectively. That is to say the more students think about what they hear, the more likely it is that they will understand and remember the ideas of the lecture. That is, the purpose of attending lectures is to understand and record this understanding for future use in essay writing, thinking and preparing for exams.

Besides, listening is defined as, according to Barker (1971), "the selective process of attending to, hearing, understanding and remembering aural symbols. It involves the comprehension of both verbal and non-verbal messages. Nonverbal messages include paralinguistic information such as tone, volume, rate and pauses; visual information such as dress and hairstyle; and kinetic information such as posture, expressions, and movement (Alley & Deshler, 1979). If students hear but cannot see the lecturer, they may comprehend the paralinguistic information, but not the visual or kinetic information. Only when students can both hear and see the lecturer can they comprehend all three types of nonverbal information.

In light of this, scholars suggest the following guidelines to effective listening:

- sit where the instructor will always see you, preferably in the front;
- pay attention to content, not the lecturer's appearance or distracting habits. Judge the material not the delivery;
- intend to get down a good written record of the lecturer material; be a flexible note taker;
- work at listening instead of pretending to listen;
- resist external distractions such as someone coming in late to class, or other students talking.

Richards (1983) has put forward 18 skills for lecture comprehension. His list includes the following:

- ability to identify purpose and scope of lecture
- ability to identify topic of lecture and follow topic development
- ability to recognize role of discourse markers of signaling structure of a lecture
- ability to recognize key lexical items related to subject/topic
- ability to deduce meanings of words from context
- ability to recognize function of intonation to signal information (e.g. pitch, volume, pace, key)

2.8.2 Characteristics of Authentic Lectures

When preparing learners for academic listening, English language teachers often choose to use a textbook with little like academic listening: preparing students to lectures. Such textbooks are widely used, and many students and their teachers diligently work their way through the textbook in the belief that they are preparing for the real thing. However, Flowerdew and Miller (1977) have found that what academic listening textbooks prepare learners for is very different form the "real thing".

Having analyzed a lecture discourse and then compared it to a selection of academic listening textbooks, they come up with the following important points:

1. The authentic lecture is structured at the micro-level discourse. There are lots of uses of "**and**", "**so**", "**but**", many pauses, and filled pauses with the use of "**ah**" and "**er**". On the other hand, academic listening textbooks have complete clauses and fewer pauses.
2. The authentic lecture discourse contained many false starts, redundancies and repetitions. None of these show up in English language teaching (ELT) textbooks.
3. The lecturer makes use of a variety of extra linguistic features such as body movements and kinesics. Textbooks are usually only audio recorded, so such cues are missing.
4. In the real lecture, the lecturer makes an attempt to establish a rapport with the students; he **(a)** tries to make the lecture non-threatening and empathizes with the students, **(b)** personalizes many of his references, and **(c)** checks that the students are following the lecture as s/he delivers it. The impersonal nature of an audio text cannot simulate any of these features.
5. The lecturer makes use of macro-markers to signpost his way through the talk and to refer to future lecture, for example, "***Last week we saw how...***", "***In next week's lecture I am going to move on to...***". In this

way he structures the lecture around the series of talks he is gong to give the students. Textbooks cannot do this as most of their texts are stand-alone lectures.

In a lecture situation communication can be described as monologic, presenting few opportunities to review the exact wording of what has been said. The principal characteristic of the monologue is that turn-taking mechanisms are suspended (Thompson, 1994). The primary responsibility for creating coherent discourse lies with the speaker who must predict the likely interpretation made by the listeners. Therefore, the speaker needs to make greater use of semantic cohesive devices in monologue than in conversation. In a monologue, cohesive devices such as discourse markers signal explicitly the coherence of what may be complex and densely-argued text (Thompson, 1994).

2.8.3 Recognizing Lecture Structure

Diamond, Sharp and Ory (1983) suggest that effective lecture preparation and delivery can be arranged under the following three stages: 1) the beginning 2) the body; 3) the closing. In the beginning stage, the lecturer usually relates lecture content to previous class material, mentions the background of the current lecture, or gives students a brief introduction, of the content of the current lecture. In the body of the lecture, there is some flexibility for the lecturer to present the content. The lecturer can either decide the main points and explain them clearly to the listeners or organize the material in some logical order such as "cause-effect" "time-sequential"; etc. During the lecture the lecturer may ask questions to check on students' understanding of the lecture or ask them to make them comments. In the last stage of the lecture, the lecturer may briefly summarize the content of the lecture or reemphasize what he or she expects students to learn from the lecture.

According to Lynch (1983) there is also a need for students to be aware of the way lectures are organized, the particular kind of language that is used in

lectures and making sure he knows the language, particularly the pronunciation of familiar words, of their own subjects.

Therefore, if students have some knowledge about the organization of an academic lecture and they are familiar with different stages of a lecture, they may be better able to infer relationships between different sections and gain a solid understanding of the content. In line with this issue, Chaudron & Richards (1986) have suggested that explicit signals of text structure are important in lecture comprehension. Listening for these signals can therefore help students understand the lecture. The following are some of the most common signals used in lecture to indicate structure:

Introducing – At the beginning of a lecture, or a section of a lecture, the lecturer will give some idea about the structure of the lecture. Students need to listen for these signals, as it will help them understand what the lecturer is saying.

What I intend to say is What I'd like to do is to discuss In my talk today Today I want to consider I am going to talk to you about In this talk, I would like to concentrate on, etc.	...

Giving background information – Before the new information is given, the lecturer will often summarize what the students are expected to know about the subject to be covered. This could refer back to a previous lecture or to some background reading the students should have done.

As we know As we have already seen As we have all read It is understood You'll remember etc.	...

Defining – In lecture, it is often necessary to define the terms that will be used. This is important as familiar words can have specific meanings in different subjects.

X	is is called is known as may be defined as	...
By **X**, I mean		
etc		

Enumerating/Listing – The lecturer will often be explicit about the order in which new points will be mentioned. To make the order clear, various links and connectives will be used.

Firstly Secondly Next First of all To begin with In the first place etc.	...

Giving examples – In lectures, it is common to make generalizations. These generalizations are often supported with examples. These signals can help students understand which generalizations the examples refer to.

For example For instance This is shown by the following examples Let me give you a couple of examples	...

Clarifying/Explaining/Putting it in other words – The lecturer will try to explain the meaning of difficult concepts. To do this he or she may repeat the information using different words. It is important for the students to recognize that this is the same information expressed differently and not new information.

In other words That is to say To put it in other way Or you could say By which I mean, etc.	...

Moving on/Changing direction – The lecture will be organized around several different points. It is important to notice when the lecturer moves from one point to the next. The students should listen for these signals.

Let's now look at If we could now move on to I'd like now to move on to The next point is etc.	...

Giving further information – These signals show that the lecturer is proceeding in the same direction and giving more information.

Furthermore An additional point Similarly Not only..., but etc.	...

Giving contrasting information – These signals show that the lecturer is proceeding in a different direction and giving unexpected or contrasting information.

Although However On the other hand Whereas Despite	...

2.8.4 Listening and Note-taking

Lecture note-taking influences the academic success of all college students. Scholars point out students will increasingly have to depend on their ability to take notes in order to be successful in the classroom. Consequently, students would benefit if teachers deliberately trained their students in note-taking

techniques. That is, note-taking should be taught to students in the same manner that they are taught writing or reading skills.

Studies about the effect of note-taking on achievement recognize that there are two distinct categories of note-taking. The first category suggests that the notes themselves are valuable because they:

1. help the learner rehearse the lecture content; and
2. can serve as a memory device that can help the students to remember parts of the content that were not included in the notes themselves.

The second category suggests that the act of note-taking is important because it:

1. increases attention and concentration,
2. encourages students to process the material at deeper level, and
3. provides a means of connecting new learning with prior knowledge.

These two categories imply that note-taking can boost achievement by acting as a product (the first category) or as a process (the second category). Berman (2003) points out that there are four important components to successful note-taking:

A) Language – if a student is in a class where he will be tested in English or he will need to discuss the information in English, he should take notes in English. This will help him remember and practice language in context in note-taking situations. In addition, it will help develop his English skills.

B) Speed – Effective note-taking requires that a student should record information quickly. To do this, good note takers do not write down every word or try to take notes in neat sentences; instead, they write only key words and phrases. In addition, good note takers use shorthand when they take notes. In other words, they use symbols to represent words or ideas. Berman (2003) lists the following examples:

>	is more than	**w/**	with
<	is less than	**w/o**	without
=	is equal to	**b/c**	because
≈	is approximately	**K**	thousand (40K =4000)
≠	isn't equal to	/	per, out of (1/25=1 per 25)
Δ	to change to, a change	+,&	and
→	leading to, causing	∴	therefore,
←	to be caused by,		consequently as a result of
		♂	man, men
↑	to go up, increases	♀	woman, women
↓	to go down	**i.e.**	that is
		@	each, at

Moreover, abbreviating the spoken words increases the attention and concentration span, and provides more time for the students to comprehend class material. They can process spoken information into written form faster and it enhances retention of the information and can lead to improvement in overall organization of their notes.

Hence, when students take notes, they should try using some of the above listed symbols as well as any others they can think of. Everyone has a different system of note-taking short hand, so feel free to be creative.

C) Organization – A student's notes should reflect which of the lecturer's main points are and which details are. Sometimes the details are also broken down into smaller categories or sub-details, and the student's notes must show this as well. Berman (2003) states that there are many effective ways to represent lectures organization in one's notes. One common technique is to write the main ideas close to the left margin of

the page, the details below the main ideas and a little bit to the right, smaller details below and to the right of the larger ones, and so on.

- MAIN IDEA 1

- Details 1 of main idea 1
    - Supporting information for Details 1
    - Supporting information for Details 1
- Detail 2 of main idea 1
    - Supporting information for Detail 2
- MAIN IDEA 2

... and so on

Clear, organized note-taking requires practice. Furthermore, one's opportunities for practice do not have to end when the lecture ends: the best note takers often rewrite their notes to show the ideas and organization more clearly.

D) Accuracy – Berman (2003) advises that a student should ask himself/herself the following questions:

- "Are my facts correct?"
- "Did I write down all the main points and a sufficient number of details?"
- "Can I read my notes and understand what I wrote?"

These skills take time and practice but one can achieve a lot of success through good pre-listening preparation, efficient note-taking using shorthand, and a clear pattern of organization. In addition, accurate note-taking requires stamina. That is, students must be able to concentrate for long period of time. The more one practices, the more his/her note-taking stamina will develop (Berman, 2003). Finally, there will be times when one misses information. If a student misses information, he/she needs to make a guess about what has been missed and he/she should try to maintain his/her focus. Fortunately,

lecturers often repeat important information, so if one misses something, there is a good chance he/she will hear it again.

Taking notes while listening to a lecture is widely accepted as a useful strategy for augmenting student's attention and retention of academic discourse. Clerehan (1995) explains that note-taking is intuitively appealing to the lecture listener and is generally viewed as an activity that facilitates the process of learning and remembering lecture material. Supporting this point Kiewra (1987) notes that most college students take note in most classes because note-taking is the primary means of creating "a record of information" that is presented in lectures.

The facilitative effect of note-taking is thought to drive from one or both of its two postulated functions:

- the encoding function
- the external storage function

Encoding, the process (or act) of note-taking, supposedly aids lecturing learning by activating attentional mechanisms and engaging the learner's cognitive processes of coding, integrating, synthesizing, and transforming aurally received input into a personally meaningful form. The external storage function of note-taking is seen as important because the notes taken serve as an external repository of information that permits later revision and review to stimulate recall of the information heard. As Cohn, Cohn, and Bradley (1995) argue, the encoding function involves a process of transforming and reorganizing material heard as a way of learning from the act of note-taking itself, whereas the external storage function involves the use of notes for the purpose of review as a means of learning.

The storage (or product) function of note-taking is thought to drive when listeners have their notes for later review and study for tests on the lecture

information. This function has been probed experimentally, according to Kiewra (1987), by comparing the performance of note takers who have access to (and review) their notes before taking a recognition or recall test of lecture information, and note takers who do not review their notes. Listeners who reviewed their notes performed higher on post lecture achievements test than did those who did not review their notes, thereby demonstrating support for the product function.

The purpose of taking notes during a lecture is to help students concentrate on what the speaker is saying and to provide them with a summary in note form so that they can write up their notes in full later. Hence, taking ones own note will promote a deeper understanding of the content of the lecture.

To sum up, not only does note taking help students stay focused, but it also will provide them best reference to what has been said. In academic and other listening situations that require the understanding and recall of large number of details, it is absolutely necessary to take the best notes one can. Studies have found that efficient, detailed note-taking is a key predictor of academic success.

The focus of this paper is a study on the problems students encounter in academic listening (lecture comprehension and note-taking). Hence, employing appropriate research methods, the challenges of academic listening that demand students to write down the main points of lecture (note-taking) and comprehending lectures are examined.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter discusses the research methods that were employed to collect the desired data to attain the objectives of the study. It deals with the respondents, data collection instruments, data collection procedures and the method of data analysis used in carrying out the research.

3.1 The Respondents

The respondents of the study (n=80) were all law second year students of Wro. Siheen College of Business and Management. In the college there are four departments: Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Law, Accounting and Management. In these four fields of study there were three hundred and seven (307) second year students of whom two hundred and twenty-nine (229) were male and seventy- eight (78) of them are female. The research was conducted on eighty (62 male and 18 female) second year law students. Law students were selected to participate in the research because, relatively speaking, they have more exposure to listening to lectures and note - taking experiences than students in the other fields of study in the college. As a result, they were in a better position to provide the necessary information about the difficulty they encounter when they were listening to lectures and note-taking.

Besides, the study also included all the seven English language instructors (all of them are male) of the college. Except one of them with only four-year teaching experience, the rest had more than ten years of teaching experience. Concerning their qualifications all of them had Bachelor of Arts in teaching English and in-service training certificates. Besides, all of them had four years of experience in teaching English at college level.

In addition to their long experience, all of the instructors underwent English Language Improvement Programme (ELIP) which was conducted by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the British Council. The programme aimed at improving the instructors' English language proficiency and developing their teaching methodology skills.

3.2. Instruments

3.2.1. Questionnaires

To elicit the necessary data from the respondents two types of questionnaires (one for the instructors and a similar one for the students) were designed and administered (see appendices D and E).

The instructors' questionnaire comprised twenty-eight items in three sections. The sixteen items in the first section focused on teaching methods and techniques. The second section contained five items dealt with tasks and activities. In the last section there were seven items. They were about the content of the listening texts. The twenty-eight items in all of the sections were of five point Likert Scale ranging from 'Always' to 'Never'.

The questionnaire for the students contained thirty-nine items in five sections. The first eight items (1-8) were about listening skill strategies. The second section consisting of seven items (9-15) dealt with listening problems related to the message. Five items (16-20) were concerned with listening tasks and activities made the third section. The fourth section which contained ten items (21-30) devised to elicit information about listening to lectures in English. The last section consisting of nine items (31-39) were focused on note-taking.

To draw further information from the respondents, in addition to the close ended questionnaire, they were requested to write any more comments they had at the end of each section.

3.2.2. Content Analysis

As indicated earlier the main objective of the study was to identify problems students encounter in listening to lectures and note-taking. Consequently, it was found out to be worthwhile to examine the course books (both the teacher's guide and the students' text) so that it would be possible to check whether the listening texts and activities were suitable enough to enable the students to develop listening to lectures and note-taking skills. A content analysis checklist consisting of ten items was adapted from Richards (1985), Rost (1990) and Cunningsworth (1995). The Focus of the items in the checklist was on the nature and characteristics of the listening texts and activities. The checklist consists of questions such as "What kind of listening material is contained in the course?", "Are there listening texts set in meaningful contexts?" and so on. (See Appendix A) With the help of the checklist and a content map, descriptive analysis of the context of the listening components was made (see Appendices B_1 and B_2).

3.2.3. Interview

An interview guide was used to conduct semi-structured interviews with three of the instructors who were willing to be asked and share their experience in light of listening strategies students should adopt (see Appendix C). They also pointed out as to how they had overcome the difficulties their students encounter in listening comprehension lessons. Besides, they had put forward their beliefs about the need for explicit listening strategy instruction.

3.3. Data Collection Procedure

On the basis of the objectives of the study and the existing ELT literature, the researcher constructed the items. The drafted items were given to two prospective graduate students of TEFL to comment on. Taking their comments and suggestions into account and with the consultation of his advisor, the researcher reshaped the tools. Then the questionnaire was pre-tested in Wro. Siheen College of Business and Management using students from sections

other than those selected for the study. Moreover, three instructors from Dessie Teacher's Education College were asked to respond to the questions that were designed for instructors. Based on the feedback from the pre-test, revisions were made and more clarifications included (See Appendix F).

Before the questionnaire was given out to the selected students, a twenty-minute orientation about the content of the questionnaire was given. By doing so, some terms and words that were supposed to be unfamiliar to the students were discussed. This helped to avoid confusion when the students gave responses to the items in the questionnaire.

Of the eighty students who took the questionnaires four students did not return them. In addition, five questionnaires were not properly answered by the respondents, and were excluded from the study. Consequently, only seventy-one questionnaires were accepted for the study. Responses were then computed and frequencies and percentages were calculated.

3.4. Method of Data Analysis

The basic analysis of the collected data involved the following procedure:

- The instructors' and the students' responses to the items in the questionnaires were tallied. Then the frequency and the percentage were summarized to discuss how each item was responded.
- On the basis of descriptive statistical analysis, i.e. using frequency and percentages, the data were interpreted.
- To support, the results of the statistical analysis, a qualitative analysis was done from the information given by both the instructors and the students in the spaces left for any more comments under each section of the questionnaires.
- The information given by the instructors who were interviewed was also analysed qualitatively.
- Finally, from the findings, conclusions and possible recommendations were drawn.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

This chapter deals with the presentation and interpretation of the data obtained through descriptive analysis of the contents of the listening sections, questionnaires and interviews.

4.1. Learner strategies

Effective listening strategies improve the quality of listening comprehension. If this is the case, it becomes important to know what strategies proficient listeners use, and which strategies affect the quality of listening comprehension adversely and lead to students' problems.

Table 4.1: Students' Responses about Listening Skill Strategies

No.	Questionnaire Item	Response									
		Always		Usually		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1.	I listen for key words which seem to carry most of the meaning.	21	29.57	34	47.88	13	18.30	3	4.22	-	-
2.	I predict what the teacher will say next based on context, background knowledge or what has been said so far.	24	33.8	23	32.39	13	18.30	11	15.49	-	-
3.	I avoid translating what I hear word for word.	14	19.71	26	36.61	21	29.57	8	11.26	2	2.81
4.	I use the speaker's tone of voice, gestures, pauses or body language as a clue to meaning.	16	22.53	34	47.88	12	16.9	9	12.67	-	-
5.	If I am unsure about meaning I guess.	11	15.49	10	14.08	29	40.84	13	18.30	8	16.26
6.	I find it difficult to get a general understanding of the spoken text from the first listening.	7	9.85	22	30.98	32	45.07	9	12.67	1	1.40
7.	I use my experience and background knowledge of the topic to understand the spoken text.	26	36.61	21	29.57	17	23.94	6	8.45	1	1.40
8.	I listen to every detail to get the main idea of the spoken text.	24	33.8	19	26.76	19	26.76	9	12.67	-	-

Table 4.1 shows that the strategies which students use in listening comprehension tasks are partly effective and partly ineffective. On the one hand, students use effective listening comprehension strategies such as the use of pre-listening information and background knowledge of the topic to help them understand the text. Clearly, these are considered to be effective strategies of listening comprehension which would help learners to overcome their listening problems (O'Malley & Chamot, 1989).

Besides, Table 4.1 shows that students partly use ineffective strategies in listening comprehension. In real-life situations, effective listeners do not normally process all words of the discourse; they skim parts of the message which are not related to their purposes and pay attention to relevant details. Contrary to what effective listeners do, students do not focus their attention on the message selectively. They listen to every detail to get the main idea of the spoken text (87.32% do that sometimes, usually, and always). They probably do so because they think that every word or detail is important and must be understood. They are thus under the false impression that they must understand every word they heard and this exacerbates their anxiety as they panic when they are not able to listen to or understand every single word. This would, in turn, undermine their ability to become good listeners. Furthermore, when learners try to follow every word they do not know which is the key word or most important word that gives them a clue for understanding the text. This way of processing information might be due to learners' preference for rote-memorization of learning in general. If this is so, it might be the case that students suffer from information overload in the passage which hinders their ability to monitor the message and get an overall comprehension of the text.

Similarly, some of the respondents (34.56% rarely and never) reported that when they were unsure about meaning, they hardly guess. Nevertheless, based on the context, learners are required to guess since it is almost impossible to know the exact meaning of every word in a text.

It should be noted that lexis is an important factor in listening comprehension, but words are not the whole story. Brown (1992) indicates that we do not process discourse as though all of it were equally interesting or equally worthy of being remembered. In our first language, we skim over parts of the message and pay attention to relevant parts only. Thus sentences are not processed word by word and the focus is placed on the ideas behind these words and how these ideas are linked together to draw conclusions.

Strategies and the ability to use them effectively are particularly important in second/foreign language listening. Canole and Swain (1980) note in their model of communicative competence for language learners that one must be strategically competent; that is, the learner must know how and when to use strategies to engage in, carry out, and repair communication. In the light of this point, for the interview question which says "Do you believe it is necessary to teach explicitly the listening strategies students should employ to understand a listening text? The instructors indicated the following:

Instructor A:

So long as we make the students carry out different activities using different listening strategies, they develop and internalize them subconsciously. Hence, I don't think it is necessary to tell the students to use this or that strategy.

Instructor B:

I think ... since English, having a foreign language status, the students should consciously learn the language using appropriate strategies. In addition, in the teacher's guide it is pointed out that teachers should teach the students general listening techniques.

Instructor C:

Yes, if we directly teach students, they will be able to use the strategies under different circumstances.

According to Thompson and Rubin (1996), systematic listening strategy instruction improves the learner's ability to comprehend oral input. Similarly, Chamot (1990) refers to the methodological issue of whether strategy instruction should be embedded or direct. In embedded instruction, the teacher guides the students through activities that require the use of particular strategy, but does not inform the students that they are utilizing the strategy to practice it and generalize it to other outside the particular lesson. In direct instruction, however, the teacher informs the students about the anticipated benefits of using the strategy and gives explicit instruction on how to apply and also transfer the strategy. Chamot notes "research indicates that embedded strategy instruction does not lead to transfer, but that direct instruction is linked to the maintenance of strategies overtime and their transfer to new tasks". He further points out that blind training procedures do not result in the maintenance and transfer of strategies. When students are given strategy instruction that includes information on the usefulness of the strategy for accomplishing the task or moving toward their goal, they are more likely to maintain the strategy than students who are simply told to use the strategy without specific information about the value.

4.2. The Listening Text

The message itself may be the main source of listening comprehension problems. In particular, unfamiliar words, difficult grammatical structures, and the length of the spoken text may present students with listening problems (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Students' Response about Listening Problems Related to the Message

No.	Questionnaire Item	Response									
		Always		Usually		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
9.	Unfamiliar words interfere with my listening comprehension	9	12.67	22	30.98	22	30.98	13	18.3	5	7.04
10.	Difficult grammatical structure interfere with my listening comprehension	11	15.49	14	19.71	21	29.57	19	26.76	6	8.45
11.	I find it difficult to interpret the meaning of long spoken text	16	22.53	15	21.12	18	25.35	14	19.71	8	11.26
12.	I find it difficult to predict what speakers are going to say from the title of the spoken text	8	11.26	28	39.43	17	23.94	10	14.08	8	11.26
13.	I find if difficult to get a general understanding of the spoken text from the first listening.	8	11.26	19	26.76	22	30.98	15	21.12	7	9.85
14.	I find it difficult to understand texts which are not of interest to me.	10	14.08	13	18.3	20	28.16	16	22.53	12	16.9
15.	I feel nervous and worried when I don't understand the spoken text	17	23.94	18	25.35	15	21.12	17	23.94	4	5.63

Students showed awareness of listening comprehension problems related to the kind of spoken text they listen to. Unfamiliar words interfere with their listening comprehension (74.65 sometimes, usually or always). Difficult grammatical structures have almost the same effect (64.77 % sometimes, usually or always). This conforms to Vogely's study (1998) which shows that the difficulty in listening comprehension is partly due to the structural component of the text. This might be due to the inadequacy of the bottom-up processing strategy in which learners make use of the analysis of words and sentence structure to enhance their understanding of the spoken text. Some listeners might believe that meaning resides exclusively within those unfamiliar words and structures so they need massive amounts of vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. When these listeners find themselves unable to understand them, they find it difficult to comprehend the meaning of the text. They become engaged in painstaking attempt to unlock the meaning of these structures, rather than infer their meaning from the context, and consequently miss key words and other information integral to the understanding of the text. This would perhaps lead them to give up and respond negatively to the text. Moreover, as the students reported they feel nervous and worried when they don't understand the spoken text (70.41% sometimes, usually or always). These feelings of nervousness may result in developing negative attitude towards listening comprehension lessons.

The solution to this problem would perhaps be to ask learners to relate the text they hear to their background knowledge of the text and to store the meaning and not the linguistic forms of language in memory. This means that meaning exists in the head of the listener besides that which is represented by words and structures. A top-down processing strategy in which learners make use of their previous knowledge that is not directly encoded in words is, therefore, essential as a complementary procedure to the bottom-up strategy of examining words and structures. When topic schemata are activated, listeners construct a

meaningful interpretation of the text during the listening comprehension process. In other words, effective listeners use background knowledge and relate their prior knowledge or schemata to the new information contained in the spoken text, and this will help them to comprehend the text as they process it.

Students also find it difficult to interpret the meaning of a long spoken text (69% sometimes, usually or always). As a long spoken text contains longer utterances with subordinate clauses, students usually find it hard to understand such utterances owing to limitations on short-term memory load. Those intermediate learners will not be able to retain a long text as their knowledge of the language is limited and their knowledge of the topic is limited too. Besides, a long text requires much time for listening. The length of time students listen may cause memory problems or even fatigue and this would distract listeners' attention from grasping the meaning of the text, and learners may miss the rest of the text when there is a lapse in concentration. This may be attributed to the short memory span for the target language. This is in line with the findings of previous research that indicate the memory span for target language input is shorter than for native language input (Call, 1985).

For the interview question which says, "What are some of the problems your students encounter during listening comprehension lessons?" The instructors indicated different problems. The following points, however, are common:

- *The students want to hear the listening text many times in order to do the exercises.*
- *They want the teacher to read the listening text very slowly.*
- *Whenever the students hear word, phrase or expression which they do not know they panic.*

Nevertheless, the interviewees pointed out that it is not an effective method to repeat a listening text more than necessary. First, in real communication a speaker hardly repeats his message many times. The students need to practice the natural listening experience. Secondly, in the teacher's guide, in the pedagogical procedure section, it is stated that a text should be read twice or three times at a normal speed.

Therefore, in order to alleviate the problems, before the students do listening practices, they should be provided with preparation that allows them to use anticipation. Although the amount of preparation largely depends on the level of difficulty of the material and the students' language level, two elements should be included – first, some kind of general, thematic introduction – the students should be told "what it is about", secondly, they should be given some kind of guidance on the structure of what they are going to hear (Ur, 1984).

It may also be helpful to do vocabulary exercises, for example, asking students to call to mind words which are suggested by a particular topic; or even to provide examples of vocabulary or rhetorical devices which occur in the listening material.

4.3. Listening Task

Several interesting tasks and activities encourage listeners to develop their listening comprehension. Activities, which are more interactive in nature, such as listening activities that are done either in pairs or in groups, students, show only minor problems. Table 4.3 illustrates students' response about listening tasks and activities.

Table4.3: Students' Response about Listening Tasks and Activities

No.	Questionnaire Item	Response									
		Always		Usually		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
16.	When I succeed in doing listening tasks, it encourages me to do more.	50	70.42	19	26.76	2	2.81	-	-	-	-
17.	I enjoy doing the pre-listening activities (activities we do before listening to the passages) as they prepare me for the listening	25	35.21	38	53.52	5	7.04	3	4.22	-	-
18.	I think the while-listening activities (activities we do while listening to the passages) help me develop good listening strategies.	29	40.84	24	33.80	13	18.30	3	4.22	2	2.81
19.	The listening activities provide opportunities of real communication	29	40.84	32	45.07	8	11.26	1	1.40	1	1.40
20.	I think the listening task /activities are relevant and applicable to the practice of lecture listening and note taking.	38	53.52	19	26.76	13	18.30	1	1.40	-	-

Almost all the respondents (98% always, usually or sometimes) reported that when they succeed in doing listening tasks, it encourages them to do more. In light of this, Harmer (1991) suggests that the teacher should set tasks that should be neither of very high or very low challenge because both complete failure and complete success may be de-motivating. According to what he terms "Resultative Hypothesis", Skehan (1989) also argues that those learners who do well experience reward and are encouraged to try harder while learners who do not do so well are discouraged by their lack of success and, as a result, lack persistence. Ur (1984), with particular reference to listening tasks, emphasizes that tasks that are success-oriented not only improve motivation but also ensure the effectiveness of the listening practice given.

The students seem to recognize the purposes and benefits of the activities which are done before the listening. Of the respondents 95.77% (always, usually or sometimes) of them reported that the pre-listening activities prepare them for the listening. Likewise, the students (92.94 always, usually or sometimes) perceive the while-listening activities as an opportunity to develop good listening strategies. This indicates that the students are aware of the objectives of the pre-listening and the while-listening tasks. According to Nunan (1989), in order to ensure the maximum participation of the learners, task designers should make the objectives of the tasks clear both to the learners and the teachers. The more students are aware of the goals of the tasks, the more likely they will embark on the activities with a strong interest.

Furthermore, 97% (always, usually, sometimes) of the students agreed that the listening activities provide opportunities of real communication. In connection with this issue, Nunan (1989) points out that good task should consist of activities promoting genuine communicative interaction among students and encouraging learners to negotiate meaning. Finally, the students (65.28% always, usually or sometimes) are aware that the listening tasks and activities

have relevance and applicable to the practice of lecture listening and note-taking. This awareness helps the students implement the experience when they attend lectures in their field of study. Consequently, in order to aid students in developing good note-taking skills in the classroom, it is important to provide them with a working knowledge about the subject. Therefore, it is critical to have them actually engage in the art of taking notes during class.

4.4. Students' Perceptions of Lecture Experience

When students enter college/university, they are expected to be able to take responsibility for their own learning. This implies not only studying existing material, but also creating their own sources of information such as reliable notes taken during lectures. Much of the subject information that students receive at college/university is provided in the form of lectures. It is, therefore, essential that they be able to relate to the spoken lecture as a source of cognitive input. The following table reveals the students' experience in attending to lectures.

Table4. 4. Students' Response about Listening to Lectures in English

No.	Questionnaire Item	Response									
		Always		Usually		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
21.	I don't understand a lecture given in English.	2	2.81	1	1.40	7	9.85	35	47.88	26	36.61
22.	I understand very little of a lecture in English. I cannot identify the main points or supporting details. The parts I do understand are usually not related to the lecture, e.g. greetings, reference to page numbers etc.	6	8.45	3	4.22	11	15.49	26	36.61	26	36.61
23.	I often get confused with a lecture in English. I am unable to identify most of the main and supporting details.	6	8.45	19	26.76	16	22.53	13	18.30	17	23.94
24.	I am able to understand at least half of the main points and some of the supporting details of a lecture in English.	23	32.39	29	40.84	11	15.49	6	8.45	2	2.81
25.	Although I understand most of the main points of lecture in English, I occasionally get confused. I usually do not understand all the supporting details.	8	11.26	21	29.57	19	26.76	18	25.35	5	7.04
26.	I have no real problems in listening to lectures in English. I understand all the main points and most of the supporting details. There are usually only a few items of vocabulary or expressions I do not understand.	5	7.04	10	14.08	13	18.3	23	32.39	20	28.16
27.	I understand almost everything. A few items of vocabulary confuse me, but I can usually guess their meaning.	2	2.81	7	9.85	15	21.12	29	40.84	18	25.35
28.	I understand everything. I am able to follow the lecture from beginning to end with no listening problems at all.	2	2.81	5	7.04	12	16.9	29	40.84	23	32.39
29.	I will understand lectures better if the lecturer repeats what he says.	35	49.29	20	28.16	5	7.04	4	5.63	7	9.85
30.	I will understand lectures better if they are summarized.	32	45.07	20	28.16	12	16.9	6	8.45	1	1.40

As indicated in the Table 4.4, for the statement "I don't understand a lecture given in English.", 84.49% of the respondents reported that they rarely or never had such a problem. Nevertheless, when we come to item twenty-three, 57.74% (always, usually or sometimes) of the respondents indicated that they got confused or unable to identify most of the main points. The students' inability to comprehend spoken lectures and correctly recall content information may be because of the fact that they tend to concentrate on the lexico-grammatical level of the oral presentation. In other words, they only listen to the words and concentrate on understanding the grammar of the language used, rather than focusing on the message conveyed by the speaker. In so doing, they miss important semantic cues which could enable them to synthesis the content of the lecture. As students focus their attention at word level, much working memory capacity is occupied; thus preventing them from building words into higher-level meaning (Field, 2004).

In addition to new vocabulary, students (60.55%) also reported difficulty with new terminology and concepts. Failure to comprehend certain concepts could have the commutative effect of a total break down in comprehension from that point on. In other cases, the problems posed by new ideas could de-motivate the students from even wanting to listen. The instructors, therefore, should keep this in mind and take remedial action so that the students can comprehend the lecture.

In order to comprehend spoken language especially that which is academic in content, the listener has a crucial part to play in the process. The listener not only activates various types of knowledge but also applies what is already known to what is heard in order to understand what the speaker means. Effective listeners engage in the process of comprehension: they apply the relevant internal information available to them in order to construct their own

interpretation of what has been said. They do not "passively receive and record" (Anderson and Lynch; 1988).

Furthermore, for item 27 which says "I understand everything. A few items of vocabulary confuse me, but I can usually guess their meaning.", only 33.78% (always, usually or sometimes) of the respondents reported in agreement that they did not have any problems in listening to lectures; likewise, for item 28 only 26.75% (always, usually, sometimes) of the respondents indicated that they understood everything and they were able to follow lectures from the beginning to end with no listening problems at all. Nevertheless, the majority of the respondents reported that, in one way or another, they encountered problems when they listened to lectures. In light of this, Oxford (1993) points out deficient listening skills are a stronger factor in college failure than are poor reading skills and poor academic aptitude. Hence, students' academic progress can be endangered because they lack the skills which would ensure successful listening comprehension in academic lectures.

According to Diamond, Sharp and Ory (1983), lecture summary is an essential component of an academic lecture. For item 29, 84.49% (always, usually, sometimes) of the respondents reported that they would understand lectures better if the lecturer repeated what he said. Although it is tiresome and time taking to repeat every point of the lecture, scholars state that lecture summaries enhance comprehension.

4.5. Students' Views about Note-taking

Students will have to do a lot of note-taking at college/university, much more than they have ever had to at school. Note-taking is a skill which students will need in order to be successful in their academic performance. It is also a skill which their future employers want them to have: to be able to summarize what has been said in a clear, concise form, with no important facts left out. That is, note-taking does not mean writing down everything students hear. Their notes should be a clear summary of essential points in a lecture. The following table shows the students' views about note-taking.

Table 4.5: Students' Responses about Note-taking

No.	Questionnaire Item	Response									
		Always		Usually		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
31.	Taking notes is important for me to get a better score on tests	40	56.33	16	22.53	10	14.08	5	7.04	-	-
32.	Taking notes makes it easier to remember the lecture information.	38	53.52	21	29.57	7	9.85	5	7. 04	-	-
33.	Taking notes helps me listen carefully to lectures.	23	32.39	23	32.39	18	25.35	5	7.04	2	2.81
34.	Taking notes helps me to understand lectures	34	47.88	23	32.39	11	15.49	3	4.22	-	-
35.	I review my notes before examinations	37	52.11	22	30.98	5	7.04	6	8.45	1	1.40
36.	It helps to take notes if the lecturer writes some points on the blackboard when he gives lecture.	37	52.11	15	21.12	9	12.67	9	12.67	1	1.40
37.	When I take notes, I use abbreviations to cope up with the speed of the lecturer	31	43.66	22	30.98	11	15.49	7	9.85	-	-
38.	I rewrite my notes after the lecture (within 24 hours).	13	18.30	25	35.21	15	21.12	15	21.12	3	4.22
39.	When the lectures are very long, I find it difficult to take notes.	28	39.43	22	30.98	12	16.90	4	5.63	5	7.04

Concerning the importance of note-taking during lectures, most of the respondents (92.94% always, usually or sometimes) reported that it helped them to score better on tests. In connection to this, various studies have compared the relative usefulness of encoding (taking notes), encoding plus storage (taking and reviewing notes) and storage alone (reviewing notes taken by someone else). In most studies students who performed both the encoding and storage functions performed best in examination (Kiewra 1985). From this, one can deduce that taking notes is better than not taking notes, that reviewing notes is a key to their impact, and that organizing notes effectively contributes to improved performance on tests.

There is growing evidence that note-taking combined with critical thinking facilitates retention and applications of the information. In agreement to this, 92.94% of the respondents indicated that taking notes makes it easier to remember the lecture information. Besides, students become active and careful listeners when they deliberately attend to the lecturer's message with intention of immediately applying or assessing the ideas or information. Note-taking is one of the ways of improving students' concentration. Of the students, 90.03% (always, usually, sometimes) respondents reported that taking note helped them listen carefully to lectures.

Kiewra (1985) argues that the benefit of note-taking appears to be derived from the review rather than from the act of note-taking itself. He even goes so far as to suggest that reviewing notes may actually cue the student to reconstruct parts of the lecture not initially recorded in the notes. In connection with this issue, 90.13% (always, usually, sometimes) respondents showed that they reviewed their notes before examination. Scholars recommend that students need to go through their notes while the lecture is still fresh in their mind, within 24 hours, and make sure they tidy them up and summarize them.

In the space left for additional comments, 21.12% of the respondents wrote that sometimes they couldn't cope up with the speed of the lectures despite they tried to use abbreviations. As a result, the note they took became incomplete and even confusing. Besides, some respondents, 16.90%, reported that if their instructors could provide them full lecture transcripts, they would attend lectures better without worrying about taking notes.

Concerning this point, Kiewra (1985) states a number of studies have shown that the best student performance can be achieved when students are provided with partial notes, rather than full lecture transcripts. Several formats for partial notes have been examined, from lecture outlines, to matrices, to skeletal guides. The skeletal format has been found out to be the most successful of these. In this format the main ideas of the lecture are provided, usually including the hierarchical relationships between them and spaces are left for students to fill in information as they listen to the lecture (Kiewra, 1985).

To sum up, note-taking is an important skill that students will use through out their college/university career and beyond. If we want student to develop note-taking skills, we must give them the opportunity to acquire them; if we provide them with full lecture transcripts then we may be denying them that opportunity.

4.6. Teaching Methods and Techniques

The sixteen items in the first section of the instructors questionnaire were devised to elicit information about the methods and techniques the instructors employed. Table 4.6 illustrates the instructors' responses about teaching methods and techniques.

Table 4.6. The Instructors' Response about Teaching Methods and Techniques

No.	Questionnaire Item	Response				
		Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
		No	No	No	No	No
1.	I introduce the listening text and activity briefly.	5	2	-	-	-
2.	I set purpose (s) for each listening activity.	4	2	1	-	-
3.	I make the instructions clear to the students	6	1	-	-	-
4.	I ask students to pay attention to the text's titles, subtitles, or other visual support in/or around the text for predicting the context before they listen to the text.	4	2	1	-	-
5.	I ask students to pay attention to some key lexical items used in the listening text.	3	2	1	-	-
6.	I ask students to read through the comprehension questions before they listen to the text.	6	1	-	-	-
7.	I tell students to copy the questions, tables and note outlines.	-	6	1	-	-
8.	I remind the students to take special note of sentence connectors and repetitions.	1	2	3	-	1
9.	I advise the students as to how to use different listening and note-taking techniques.	-	2	5	-	-
10.	I read the text aloud, and make students listen and write the answers for the comprehension questions.	6	1	-	-	-
11.	I ask students to listen for the general idea of the text.	-	4	2	-	-
12.	I ask students to listen to the text and identify the main points.	-	3	3	-	1
13.	I ask students to listen for detailed information given in the text.	-	3	2	1	1
14.	I ask students to guess the meaning of new words based on the text.	-	4	2	1	-
15.	I ask students to do some /listening and follow up activities, such as completing tables, diagrams, and summary outlines.	3	4	-	-	-
16.	I ask students to take notes to write summaries and report later.	-	-	3	2	2

Item **1** was used to find out if instructors introduced the listening text and activities in order to provide background information to their students. As can be seen from Table 4.6, all of the instructors reported that they always or usually introduced the listening text and activities to their students. ELT scholars point out that effective listening requires that students be prepared for what they are about to hear so that their listening goes beyond the literal level. Similarly, the teachers were also asked whether they set purposes for each listening activity so as to help the learners relate what they are doing in the lesson to things that happen in real life-outside the classroom. The response for the item which deals with setting purposes almost all of the instructors reported that they always or usually set purposes for each listening activity. When students recognize purposes for listening, they become active listeners who listen for something, not to it. This enhances their comprehension and retention. Teachers' guidance may be required at first to help students identify purposes for listening. Hence, students who have identified a purpose for listening are more willing participants, secure in knowing what is expected of them. Moreover, providing purposes for listening assists the teacher in making a meaningful assessment of student participation and comprehension following the listening experience.

Rost (1990) states providing clear instruction enables students to handle the listening tasks easily. In connection with this issue, all of the respondents claimed that they always or usually made the instructions clear to their students.

Concerning item 8 which is about taking special note of sentence connectors and repetitions, the instructors reported that they usually or sometimes reminded the students to do this. Developing this skill is very important for the students to take notes in a lecture situation. That is, students should know discourse markers such as sentence connectors and other cohesive devices. Thompson (1994) points out that it is imperative that students are encouraged

to develop skills which will equip them to assimilate oral information more effectively and to process it into intake, if the success rate of students is to be improved. Encouraging students to become aware of the role discourse markers play in denoting the structural turns in spoken lectures may improve the quality of their listening comprehension in the academic situation.

Being communicatively competent in a language must, of course, include the ability to comprehend oral input. Consequently, students need to effectively choose, use and continually evaluate the effectiveness of their listening strategies in order to successfully construct meaning from second/ foreign language oral input. In light of this, for items 11, 12 and 13 which are about listening for the general idea, listening for the main points and guessing meaning based on context respectively, the instructors reported that they usually or sometimes made their students practice.

4.7. Tasks and Activities

Listening is a complex process in which listeners interact with a speaker to construct meaning, within the context of their experience and knowledge. Understanding oral language is essential to the learning process, so students require strategies for becoming accurate, effective listeners. When students are made aware of the factors that affect accurate listening, the levels of listening, and the components of the listening process, they are more likely to recognize their own listening abilities and engage in activities that prepare them to be effective listeners. The following table displays the instructors' response regarding the tasks and activities which are in the students' text and the teacher's guide.

Table 4.7. The Instructors' Response about Tasks and Activities

No.	Questionnaire Item	Response				
		Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
		No	No	No	No	No
17.	The listening tasks/activities are quite meaningful to students.	-	4	2	1	-
18.	The listening tasks are relevant and applicable to the practice of listening to lectures and note-taking.	-	3	2	1	1
19.	The pre-listening activities help the students predict the content of the text.	-	3	2	1	1
20.	The while-listening activities help students develop good listening skill.	3	3	1	-	-
21.	The pair and group activities during the pre and post listening sessions involve students more actively in the listening process.	-	5	1	1	-

Item 18, in table 4.7, which says, "The listening tasks are relevant and applicable to the practice of listening to lectures and note-taking". 3 and 2 of the respondents reported that it was applicable usually and sometimes respectively. Since the students are required to listen to lectures and take note in their field of study, it is important to equip them with such skills.

In the space provided for any more comments, 2 instructors indicated that although most of the listening activities require the students to take notes, the listening texts lack spoken language features. In connection with this issue Rost (1994) indicates that many teachers prefer prepared materials with controlled vocabulary usage and speed in order to allow learners to comprehend more easily. Others prefer authentic material in order to acquaint learners with "real" input which has the characteristics of spoken language and which is not found in written text to which students are usually accustomed. Berne (1998) reports on the findings of a study by Herron and Seay (1991) which indicates that the use of authentic as opposed to pedagogical listening passage leads to greater improvement in listening comprehension and performance. A middle position is the use of simulated materials that keep many authentic features with shorter presentation. It could be the case that the presentation of simulated input to EFL learners may reduce their difficulty in listening to natural spoken texts.

Besides, items 19 and 20 deal with the pre-listening and while-listening activities. Five of the respondents (usually and sometimes) reported that the pre-listening activities help the students predict the content of the texts, and the while-listening activities enabled the students to develop good listening skills. Nevertheless, 2 of the respondents indicated that the mentioned activities rarely or never help the students to predict content and develop good listening skills. Likewise, in the space left for additional comments, 2 of the respondents wrote that there were no enough pre-listening activities which help the students

activate or build their prior topical knowledge. They further pointed out that the classroom teachers were supposed to design their own pre-listening activities.

4.8. Content of the Listening Texts

Effective listening requires the listener's participation. The effective listener wants to understand what is said and actively tries to assign meaning to the speaker's verbal and nonverbal language. The meaning generated depends upon the listener's desire and ability to engage in thinking and listening, as well as on prior knowledge of the speaker's language use and topic. Consequently, the content of a listening text should never be unfamiliar to the background experience and knowledge of the students. The instructors' views about the content of the listening texts in the students' book and the teacher's guide are illustrated in the following table.

Table 4.8. The Instructors' Response about the Content of the Listening Texts

No.	Questionnaire Item	Response				
		Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
		No	No	No	No	No
22.	The listening texts contain things students want to know, quite apart the language itself.	1	2	4	-	-
23.	The listening texts are important for students to widen their experience and knowledge.	1	4	2	-	-
24.	The length of the listening texts is quite right.		3	3	1	-
25.	The use of discourse markers in the listening texts is of much help to students as an aid in understanding real lectures in other subjects.	-	-	3	2	2
26.	The organization of ideas in the listening texts helps students practice listening to lectures and note taking.	-	-	3	2	2
27.	The listening texts are presented in class somewhat like real lectures.	-	-	2	4	1
28.	The listening texts contain new vocabulary items that are useful for students to know.	1	4	2	-	-

Item 25 states the use of discourse markers in the listening texts is of much help to the students as an aid in understanding real lectures in other subjects. To this statement, 3 of the respondents reported that it sometimes helped as an aid to comprehend real lectures. However, 4 of the respondents indicated that it rarely or never helped students. In the open space provided for any more comments 2 respondents wrote that most of the listening texts lack "oral features" such as pauses, hesitancies, etc. Furthermore, the listening texts, according to the respondents, do not have adequate cohesive devices which help the learners to follow the ideas in the text easily. According to Allison and Tauroza (1995) markers function as cohesive devices in relationships of addition, opposition, casualty as well as organizing, ordering and reformulating operation that control the communication. Furthermore, discourse markers contain valuable information about the text which makes comprehension easier. It is thus a logical assumption that if students are not able to recognize and interpret specific markers in a lecture they will listen less effectively. Consequently, students need to be trained in the recognition and interpretation of discourse markers to enhance their listening comprehension.

Item 26 points out the organization of ideas in the listening texts help students practice listening to lectures and note-taking. The instructors' responses to this item indicated that 3 of them reported the organization of ideas in the texts were suitable enough to practice listening to lectures and note-taking. Nevertheless, 4 respondents stated the listening texts rarely or never organized in the way it helped the students practice listening to lectures and note-taking.

Concerning item 27 which says the listening texts are presented in class some what like real lectures, 5 of the respondents stated that listening texts were presented rarely or never like real lectures.

On the other hand, for the interview question which says, "Do you think the materials you are using for teaching listening comprehension help the students develop their listening to lectures and note-taking skills?' The instructors have responded the following:

Instructor A: *Yes, I do. Most of the listening comprehension lessons require the students to take note as they are listening to the texts.*

Instructor B: *Yes, some of the listening exercises are note-taking. However, the listening texts do not have the distinctive features of academic lectures.*

Instructor C: *Yes, if the students attend the listening lessons and accomplish the exercises, they will be able to listen to lectures and take notes in other courses effectively.*

4.9 Content Analysis of the Listening Comprehension Lessons

The two course books incorporate fourteen listening sections. These listening sections are organized based on topic-related texts. In the fourteen listening sections, twelve listening comprehension and seven dictation, altogether nineteen exercises are stated. Moreover, for each of these exercises, a separate text, which is related to the unit topic, is provided in the Teacher's Book.

Example

Unit one	Listening Exercises
Reading Passage	i) "The Fire Walking Ceremony"
"People and Customs"	ii) "Jumping the Bulls"

Morley (1991) points out listening texts on such related topics will help the students to become more familiar with the content of the unit. Besides, they also provide opportunity to recycle and reinforce the assimilation of vocabulary items and grammatical structures. In addition, such specific texts would allow the teacher to handle listening as an important and separate component of the course. This in turn increases the learners' awareness of the important role of listening in their learning (Vandergrift, 1999).

In the listening comprehension activities, students are required to understand and respond to the presentation as a whole and/or to extract information. Each listening comprehension activity contains questions on the listening text, either to be asked by the teacher orally or written in the students' books. The written question formats include multiple-choice, blank-filling, table and diagram completion, free response and sentence completion. Controlled and guided note-taking practices are also from part of the listening activities.

The listening activities are intended to train the learners to employ various meta-cognitive and cognitive listening strategies, such as making predictions, guessing words from the context, inferring, asking for clarification and repetition, utilizing their prior knowledge, and so on. In order to make the listening activities less difficult, visual supports such as tables and pictures are included in five of the listening sections.

Besides, there are seven dictation activities which are also topic-based. They involve listening and writing, and they can be taken as good examples of how two important skills can be developed in an integrated way. The dictation activities aim to provide opportunities for the students to practice and develop a range of sub-skills, like transposing speech into writing, handwriting, punctuation, layout, paragraphing, spelling and capitalization.

4.9.1 Pedagogical Procedures for Teaching the Listening Lessons

In the Teacher's Book, for both the listening comprehension and dictation activities, teaching procedures are suggested. Some of the suggestions are:

- Study the text and practice to read it aloud.
- Introduce the activity and give explanation as necessary.
- Ask the students to read through and copy the questions, tables, etc.
- Draw the students' attention to 'key' words and textual features.
- Make the instructions clear.
- Read the text twice or three times at a normal speed and make the students carry out the listening activity.
- Mark the students' answers, or make the students discuss their answers in pairs/groups to remind them the value of learning from their mistakes.
- Discuss the answers with the class, by referring to and quoting the text as necessary.

Furthermore, the course writers have pointed out that teachers should teach the students general listening techniques such as taking special note of 'key' terms and opening statements, identifying sentence connectors, time and sequence indicators, repetitions, the speaker's use of stress and intonation to convey meaning and to emphasis important points.

The course writers have also encouraged the teachers to use additional and alternative materials taken from other books as well as materials they have produced themselves. Likewise, they have advised teachers to employ other alternative teaching techniques that appear to be more effective for their particular classes than the suggested techniques.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter deals with the conclusions drawn from the findings of the study. It also presents possible recommendations forwarded by the researcher based on the conclusions.

5.1. Conclusions

In the past, listening was often treated like a 'neglected stepchild' and was an overlooked dimension in language acquisition. Although other language skills often received direct instructional attention, teachers used to expect students to develop their listening skills without help. Nowadays, however, the significance of listening in both an academic environment and a casual conversation has been recognized by ELT scholars, curriculum developers and English language teachers. Moreover, the results of different research works indicate that listening comprehension is a foundation in learning a foreign language, and listening comprehension levels do influence the capacity for improvement in other language skills such as speaking, reading and writing.

As a result, in the current teaching materials – in both the Students' Book and the Teacher's Guide–sections for listening comprehension have been devoted. These will help students to acquire listening strategies that enable them to achieve success in their language learning and academic career where English language functions as a medium of instruction. Nevertheless, enabling learners to develop these essential language skills demand not only revising syllabuses and designing new courses but also implementing suitable teaching techniques in the actual listening classes. Listening skills need effective teaching that involves adequate pre-teaching

preparation and provision of all the necessary supports during the actual lesson presentation.

Thus, this research was conducted with the aim of examining the problems students face in listening to lectures and note-taking. It was attempted to explore the students' perceptions of listening problems in terms of strategies of listening comprehension, problems related to the message, tasks and activities, listening to lectures and note-taking. Besides, from the instructors' perspective, the teaching techniques, and the content of the listening text were examined. To find out how the listening comprehension sections enhance academic listening skills the students' book and the teacher's guide were looked into.

On the basis of the results obtained from the content analysis, responses to the questionnaires and interview the following conclusions have been drawn.

From the content analysis of the listening lessons, one can notice that the listening texts and activities are designed within the framework of communicative language teaching. Almost all of the listening texts are passage designed for loud reading (i.e. live listening). Moreover, the listening exercises mainly focus on listening and eliciting the main points, listening for details and note-taking and summary. These skills are, of course, needed by the students for successful learning at college and university.

In addition, procedures are suggested as to how the instructors present the listening comprehension lessons.

The procedures which are in the Teachers' Guide show the three stages of presenting a listening comprehension lesson_pre-, while- and post-

listening activities. These stages are recommended by many recent ELT scholars. According to the pedagogical procedures suggested in the Teacher's Guide, the instructors are advised to make any changes or adaptations whenever they find it necessary for a particular teaching situation.

In spite of the fact that the above mentioned materials which are used for teaching listening comprehension have their own positive value, there are some drawbacks.

They are:

- The listening texts lack spoken language features which help students develop real-life listening skills.
- Since almost all of the texts are designed for loud reading, they become incapable of arousing interest. There should have been variety such as dialogue, drama, etc.
- Being live listening, the teacher always reads out the listening texts aloud. This limits the students' exposure to different accents which can enrich their listening skills.

Concerning the students' responses to the questionnaires the students use ineffective strategies to comprehend listening texts (Table 4.1), for example, they tend to listen every detail of the text; and when they come across unfamiliar words or expression, they do not guess based on the context.

On the other hand, the students reported that when they succeeded in doing listening activities, they were encouraged to do more (Table 4.3). From this, we can deduce that the listening activities are meant to train not to test, and the best practice is obtained be having learners do the activities more or less successfully.

When we come to listening to lectures, the majority of the students reported that they, on one way or another had considerable problems in comprehending lectures (Table 4.4). Likewise, the students indicated the difficulties they encountered in note-taking when thy listen to lectures. They pointed out that the speed of the instructors and the length of lectures was causes of the difficulty. This finding seems to correspond to those of Khuwaleih (1999). She found that students' failure was due to a lack of understanding academic lectures rather than to an inability to comprehend the subject content conveyed in the lecture.

The instructors, on their part, reported that the listening texts were not well designed to help the students develop skills which enable them to become effective in listening to lectures and taking notes.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the above findings the researcher would like to forward the following recommendations.

1. The students at Wro. Siheen College of Business and Management are assumed to have the necessary cognitive abilities to attend an institution of higher learning. They are, however, hampered by the fact that the working English they bring to college such as the ability to effectively drive meaning from listening to oral texts appears to be inadequate for successful academic performance. Therefore, it can be deuced that providing them with training in skills areas such as listening comprehension could assist them in developing the requisite skills to achieve academic success.

2. Instructors should design listening activities which train their students to pay attention to the overall message rather than listen to every single word in order to come to better understanding to the text. Students need also to be aware of the factors which contribute to their difficulties in listening, such as the unfamiliar or difficult items in a long spoken text. Therefore, the instructors should introduce intelligent guesswork as an important strategy to help their students infer unfamiliar vocabulary from the context, encouraging them to use their background knowledge to arrive at better interpretation of the unfamiliar items. Similarly, difficult grammatical structure must be unlocked through a process of inference, explanation and practice.

3. Understanding spoken language is essentially an inferential process based on a perception of cues rather than on a straightforward matching of sound to meaning (Rost, 1990). If the aim is to provide opportunities for the students to acquire micro-skills in listening comprehension, the students should be provided with comprehensible input and purposeful listening tasks that develop comprehension.

   Besides, listening exercises should be as natural as the situations from which they grow. In other words, an exercise in listening comprehension must be as close as possible to a 'slice of life' – neither a contrived situation nor an artificially delivered discourse. By means of this, an instructor or a teacher has a great work to do, and he/she has to be a very creative person in order to teach listening communicatively.

4 From the findings of the study we can also deduce that listening proficiency is very important for effective college/university studies. It would thus be productive if a paradigm shift in listening comprehension lessons could be effected towards lecture listening instruction. Listening as a construct, as well as the demands made on the listener in lecture listening, needs specific attention in English language curriculums.

5 In order to enhance effective listening comprehension in students when they attend academic content lectures, instructors need first of all to ensure that they speak at a normal speech rate. Lectures should be well organized, either with outlines on the board or in the form of handouts. Instructors should be trained to insert many more overt discourse markers that highlight the overall structure of their lectures. They could further increase the amount of redundancy by means of discourse markers indicating consecutive numbers such as 'firstly', 'secondly'. It seems clear that pedagogic texts and course curriculums should be revisited in order for lectures of EAP courses to use materials that contain appropriate types of discourse markers. Besides, the instructors of other subject courses are advised to do the following:

a. modify the language of presentation and keep new terms and concepts to a reasonable load for each lecture.
b. provide a glossary of the new terms and concepts for each lecture.
c. modify the speed of the lecture.
d. reduce the lecture time or chunk the lecture into several sections and provide a break between each chunk.

6 Future research on listening comprehension should investigate different types of listening activities and define their goals. Questions should be designed to investigate the relationship between listening and different styles of learning in order to find out why learners prefer to use a particular listening strategy and a certain listening activity. Moreover, future research on listening comprehension should also be focused on possible supporting programmes that will allow students to become selective, effective and active listeners in academic situations. Syllabus designers, then, would make use of this knowledge and integrate it within the curriculum.

7 In addition, future research designs need to include opportunities to observe participants as they attempt to use listening strategies on authentic listening tasks in their academic content classrooms. Although determining when students are engaging in internal cognitive processing is difficult, it is still necessary to practice these activities in order to know whether students maintain and transfer their strategy instruction to authentic listening tasks in their academic content classrooms.

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APPENDIX A

Checklist for Analyzing the Content of the Listening Texts and Activities

1. What kind of listening material is contained in the course?
   Does listening form part of general oral work (eg. dialogues, role plays, Conversation, etc), or is listening handled in its own right with listening texts for comprehension?
2. If there are specific texts, what are the input sources, live, recorded, authentic or specially constructed passage for loud reading?
3. Are the listening texts set in meaningful contexts?
4. If there are audio-recorded materials, what do they look like in terms of sound quality, speed of delivery, accent and authenticity?
5. What kinds of activities are based on the listening texts, comprehension questions, extracting information, writing summaries, completing tables, etc?
6. Do the activities reflect purposes for listening that approximate authentic real life listening?
7. How closely do the input and tasks relate to the micro-skills that listening comprehension involves?
8. What kinds of visual support are provided to make texts/tasks less difficult?
9. Are there suggested procedures for teaching the listening materials? Are there pre-, while-, post-listing stages?
10. Are the material selected and designed by considering the needs of the students?

(Adapted from Richards 1985, Rost 1990, Cunnings worth 1995)

Appendix B_1

Content Map for the Listening Sections in the Course book

	Unit	Unit Topic	Listening Text Topic/Theme	Text type	Input source	Listening Activity Type	Listening Skills Practiced	No. of Exercise	Page
BOOK ONE	One	People and Customs	The Fire-walking Ceremony Jumping the bulls	Passage Passage	Loud reading Loud reading	Multiple-choice questions Dictations	Listening for specific Information	2	17-18
	Two	Food for Thought	Nutrition: Food for Energy and Growth	Passage	Loud reading	Dictation	Understanding and respond	1	41
	Three	Animal Behavior	Lung-fish: Fish that can live without water	Passage	Loud reading	Blank-filling questions	Listening for specific information	1	66
	Four	Animals on the Move	Animal Records How long can a camel go without water	Passage Passage	Loud reading Loud reading	Completing a table outline Dictation	Listening and note-taking	2	84
	Five	Clothes and Fashion	The Clothing Industry	Passage	Loud reading	Blank-filling questions	Listening for specific information	1	103
	Six	Inventors and Inventions	Henry Ford Thomas Edison	Passage Passage	Loud reading Loud reading	Multiple-choice questions Dictation	Listening for specific information	2	123-24
	Seven	Organizations	Building a Life in the Desert	Passage	Loud reading	Producing lists	Listening for specific information Listening and note taking	1	142

Appendix B_2

Content Map for the Listening Sections in the Course book

	Unit	Unit Topic	Listening Text Topic/Theme	Text type	Input source	Listening Activity Type	Listening Skills Practiced	No. of Exercise	Page
Book TWO	One	Farmers and Farming	The Importance of Compost	Radio broadcast	Loud reading	Completing a note summary outline	- Listening for specific information - guided note taking	1	11-12
	Two	People on the Move	How to Make a Compost Pit The San (The Bushmen)	Radio broadcast Passage	Loud reading Loud reading	Completing a note-summary Dictation	Listening for specific information. Listening and note taking	2	26
	Three	Crafts and craftsmen	The Most Dangerous Jobs in the World	Passage	Loud reading	Answering WH questions in note form	Listening for specific information. Inference	1	38
	Four	The Human Body	Body Systems The Strange Cases of Rhineas Gage	Passage Passage	Loud reading Loud reading	Complete a table outline Dictation	Listening for specific information Guided note taking	2	55-56
	Five	Images of Africa	Uwungelema (A magic tree)	Story	Loud reading	Re-telling a story	Listening and understanding. Listening and Note-taking	1	69
	Six	Families and Groups	The Treatment of Strangers	Passage	Loud reading	Dictation	Listening and identifying	1	84
	Seven	Journey into space	Living Abroad a Space Station	Passage	Loud reading	Answering comprehension questions	Listening for specific information Listening and note taking	1	98-99

Appendix C

The Interview Items and The interviewees' Response

1. What are some of the problems your students encounter during listening comprehension lessons?

Instructor A

I think listening comprehension lessons have not been given as much attention as they deserve in high schools. The students join the college with little experience of listening skills. Therefore, for me the listening lessons are very tiresome. It is because the students want to hear the listening text many times in order to do the exercises.

Instructor B

Having finished the pre-listening activities, I will instruct them what they are going to do while the listening text is read out. The problem is when I read it at a natural speed many students do not finish the while listening exercises. They want me to read the listening text very slowly.

Instructor C

The listening texts are not linguistically difficult. That is, the words in the texts are familiar. Moreover, some of the key words are discussed before the students listen to the text. In spite of all these, whenever they hear a word, phrase, or an expression which they do not know they panic. Many students are unable to guess meaning in context. They also ask me to read the text very slowly.

2. Do you think the materials you are using for teaching listening comprehension help the students develop their listening to lectures and note-taking skills?

Instructor A:

Yes, I do. Most of the listening comprehension lessons require the students to take note as they are listening to the texts. I think this can be taken as an opportunity for the students to develop their listening to lectures and note-taking skills.

Instructor B:

Yes, some of the listening exercises are note taking. Therefore, the students take note in order to do the exercises. This will help them develop the skills of note-taking. However, the listening texts do not have the distinctive features of academic lectures.

Instructor C:

Yes, if the students attend the listening lessons and accomplish the exercise successfully; they will be able to listen to lectures and take notes in other courses effectively. The listening comprehension lessons will enable the students to become active listeners and to adopt different listening strategies.

3 Do you believe it is necessary to teach explicitly the listening strategies students should employ to understand a listening text?

Instructor A:

In my opinion, we should let our students practice the different skills of the language. So long as we make the students carry out different activities using different strategies, they develop and internalize them subconsciously. Hence, I don't think it is necessary to tell the students to use this or that strategy.

Instructor B:

I think ...since English, having a foreign language status, the students should consciously learn the language using appropriate strategies. I believe if the students are aware of the techniques needed to acquire the skills of the language, it will enhance learning. In addition, in the teacher's guide it is pointed out teachers should teach the students general listening techniques.

Instructor C:

Yes, if we directly teach students, they will be able to use the strategies under different circumstances.

Appendix D

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

Department of Foreign Languages Literature

Questionnaire for Instructors

Dear Respondent,

I am conducting research on Problems Students Encounter in Listening to Lectures and Note taking. The following questionnaire is designed to collect data for the study. Hence, your response will have much contribution to the success of the research work.

You are, therefore, kindly requested to read each item carefully and give your genuine responses. Concerning the information, you give me, I would like to assure you that all would be kept confidential and used only for the research purpose.

You are not required to write your name.

Tank you.

Direction I: Write about yourself

1. Sex _____ Qualification _____ Major _____ Minor _____
2. Teaching experience:
   a) Teaching experience in general _____ years.
   b) English language teaching experience at college level _____ years.

Direction II: Read each of the following statements and show the extent to which you perform each of the following statement.

[A] The following statements are about teaching methods and techniques.

Key – Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Usually = 3; Always = 4

No	Statements	Rating scale				
		0	1	2	3	4
1	I introduce the listening text and activity briefly					
2	I set purpose(s) for each listening activity					
3	I make the instructions clear to the students					
4	I ask students to pay attention to the text's title, subtitles, or other visual support in/or around the text for predicting the context before they listen to the text.					
5	I ask students to pay attention to some key lexical items used in the listening text.					
6	I ask students to read through the comprehension questions before they listen the text.					
7	I tell the students to copy the questions, tables and note outlines					
8	I remind the students to take special note of sentence connectors and repetitions					

9	I advise the students as to how to use different listening and note taking techniques					
10	I read the text aloud, and make students listen and write the answers for the comprehensions questions					
11	I ask students to listen for the general idea of the text.					
12	I ask students to listen the text and identify the main points					
13	I ask students to listen for detailed information given in the text.					
14	I ask students to guess the meaning of new words based on the context					
15	I ask students to do some listening and follow up activities, such as completing tables, diagrams, and summary outlines.					
16	I ask students to take notes to write summaries and reports later					

If you have some more comments about teaching methods and techniques, write here.

_____

_____

_____

_____

[B] The following statements are about tasks and activities

Key – Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Usually = 3; Always = 4

No	Statements	Rating scale				
		0	1	2	3	4
17	The listening tasks/activities are quite meaningful to students.					
18	The listening tasks are relevant and applicable to the practice of lecture listening and note making					
19	The pre-listening activities help the students predict the content of the text.					
20	The while listening activities help students develop good listening skill.					
21	The pair and group activities during the pre and post listening sessions involve students more actively in the listening process.					

If you have some more comments about the tasks and activities, write here.

_____

_____

_____

[C] The following statements are about the content of the listening texts.

Key – Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Usually = 3; Always = 4

No	Statements	Rating scale				
		0	1	2	3	4
22	The listening texts contain things students want to know, quite apart the language itself.					
23	The listening texts are important for students to widen their experience and knowledge					
24	The length of the listening texts are quite right					
25	The use of discourse markers in the listening texts is of much help to students as an aid in understanding real lectures in other subjects.					
26	The organization of ideas in the listening texts help students practice listening to lecture and note taking					
27	The listening texts are presented in class somewhat like real lectures					
28	The listening texts contain new vocabulary items that are useful for students to know.					

If you have some more comments about the content of the listening texts, write here.

_____

_____

_____

Appendix E

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

Department of Foreign Languages Literature

Questionnaire for Students

I am conducting research on Problems Students Encounter in Listening to Lectures and Note taking. The following questionnaire is designed to collect data for the study. Hence, your response will have much contribution to the success of the research work.

You are, therefore, kindly requested to read each item carefully and give your genuine responses. Concerning the information you give me, I would like to assure you that all would be kept confidential and used only for the research purpose.

You are not required to write your name.

Thank you

Direction I: Write about yourself

Sex _____ Dept _____

Direction II: Read each of the following statements and show the extent to which you perform each of the following statement. They are about listening skill strategies .

Key - Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Usually = 3; Always = 4

Indicate your response by putting a tick (✓) in the appropriate box against each statement.

No	Statements	Rating scale				
		0	1	2	3	4
1	I listen for key words which seem to carry most of the meaning.					
2	I predict what the teacher will say next based on context, background knowledge or what has been said so far.					
3	I avoid translating what I hear word-for-word.					
4	I use the speaker's tone of voice, gestures. pauses or body language as a clue to meaning.					
5	If I am unsure about meaning I guess.					
6	I find it difficult to get a general understanding of the spoken text from the first listening.					
7	I use my experience and background knowledge of the topic to understand the spoken text.					
8	I listen to every detail to get the main idea of the spoken text.					

If you have some more comments about listening strategies, write here.

_____

_____

_____

Direction III: Read the following statements about listening problems related to the message.

Key – Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Usually = ; Always = 4

Indicate your response by putting a tick (✓) in the appropriate box against each statement

No	Statements	Rating scale				
		0	1	2	3	4
9	Unfamiliar words interfere with my listening comprehension					
10	Difficult grammatical structure interfere with my listening comprehension					
11	I find it difficult to interpret the meaning of long spoken text					
12	I find it difficult to predict what speakers are going to say from the title of the spoken text					
13	I find it difficult to get a general understanding of the spoken text from the first listening					
14	I find it difficult to understand texts which are not of interest to me					
15	I feel nervous and worried when I don't understand the spoken text					

If you have some more comments about listening problems related to the message, write here.

_____

_____

_____

Direction IV: Read the following statements about listening tasks and activities.

Key - Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Usually = ; Always = 4

Indicate your response by putting a tick (✓) in the appropriate box against each statement

No	Statements	Rating scale				
		0	1	2	3	4
16	When I succeed in doing listening tasks, it encourages me to do more.					
17	I enjoy doing the pre-listening activities (activities we do before listening to the passages) as they prepare me for the listening					
18	I think the while-listening activities (activities we do while listening to the passages) help me develop good listening strategies					
19	The listening activities provide opportunities of real communication					
20	I think the listening task/ activities are relevant and applicable to the practice of lecture listening and note taking					

If you have some more comments about listening tasks and activities, write here.

_____

_____

_____

Direction V: Read the following statements about listening to lectures in English

Key – Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Usually = ; Always = 4

Indicate your response by putting a tick (✓) in the appropriate box against each statement

No	Statements	Rating scale				
		0	1	2	3	4
21	I don't understand a lecture given in English					
22	I understand very little of a lecture in English. I can not identify the main points or supporting details. The parts I do understand are usually not related to the lecture, e.g. greetings, reference to page numbers etc.					
23	I often get confused with a lecture in English. I am unable to identify most of the main and supporting details.					
24	I am able to understand at least half of the main points and some of the supporting details of a lecture in English					
25	Although I understand most of the main points of a lecture in English, I occasionally get confused. I usually do not understand all the supporting details.					
26	I have no real problems in listening to lectures in English. I understand all the main points and most of the supporting details. There are usually only a few items of vocabulary or expressions I do not understand.					
27	I understand almost everything. A few items of vocabulary confuse me, but I can usually guess their meaning.					

28	I understand everything. I am able to follow the lecture from beginning to end with no listening problems at all.					
29	I will understand lectures better if the lecturer repeats everything he says.					
30	I will understand lectures better if they are summarized.					

If you have some more comments about listening to lectures in English, write here.

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Direction VI: Read the following statements about Note taking

Key – Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Usually = ; Always = 4

No	Statements	Rating scale				
		0	1	2	3	4
31	Taking notes is important for me to get a better score on tests					
32	Taking notes makes it easier to remember the lecture information					
33	Taking notes helps me listen carefully to the lectures.					
34	Taking notes helps me to understand lectures					
35	I review my notes before examinations					
36	It helps to take notes if the lecturer writes some points on the blackboard when he gives lecture					
37	When I take notes, I use abbreviations to cope up with the speed of the lecturer.					
38	I rewrite my notes after the lecture (within 24 hours).					
39	When the lectures are very long, I find it difficult to take notes.					

If you have some more comments about note taking, write here.

_____

_____

_____

Appendix F

Omitted or Revised Questionnaire

Instructors' Questionnaire

A) Omitted

1 Students like the listening activities very much.

2. I engage the students in extensive writing exercise based on the listening text. Example

Writing composition

B) Refined

1. The pre-listening activities are enjoyable enough for students to set a purpose for listening.

Revised (item 19)

The pre-listening activities help the students predict the content of the text.

2.The listening texts seem real lectures

Revised (item 27)

The listening texts are presented in class somewhat like real lectures.

Students' Questionnaire

A) Omitted

1. I attend out-of-class events where I can listen to the new language being spoken.
2. I listen carefully to how native speakers pronounce the the language I am trying to learn.

B) Refined

When I take note, I use shorthand to cope up with the the speed of the lecturer.

Revised (item 37)

When I take notes, I use abbreviations to cope up with the speed of the lecturer.

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all the sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name Fantaye Getahun

Signature 

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