



THE INFLUENCE OF NOTE-TAKING ON LISTENING COMPREHENSION IN AN ACADEMIC CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

This small-scale research is intended to investigate the influence of note-taking on overall listening comprehension and memorization of main points of the content longer in academic context. The study was conducted with 28 third-year students of Translation Theory and Practice faculty, TSUULL. Data was collected using quantitative method and the results were analyzed statistically. The research findings indicate that there is an advantage in favor of the students who took notes while listening to lectures. Therefore, it is recommended to teach students how to take effective notes for increasing listening comprehension.

KEYWORDS

Note-taking, listening comprehension, academic context, memorization.

INTRODUCTION

Listening is an ability to receive and interpret messages accurately in the process of communication. Being one of the most important language skills, listening is considered as an active process of getting information and ideas from spoken discourse. Good listening skill

plays an important role in effective communication and it can lead to success in job market as well. In academic context, listening is mostly associated with listening to lectures, presentations and taking effective notes.



People listen to audio language to acquire knowledge and interpret, criticize or enjoy the material (1, p. 5-9). Listening activities at schools are mainly, intended to gain knowledge and they involve storing information by using cognitive mechanisms and recalling the stored information later. In academic settings, it is obvious that the most common way of sharing knowledge is lecturing. Therefore, students are highly recommended to develop academic listening skills that are essential to be successful in higher education. According to Ozbay (2005), to prevent forgetting nearly 80% of the content of a listening material, students should take notes while listening. In reality, no one can keep all the content of a lecture in their memory without taking notes. Students usually take notes so that they can recall important points later on. Effective note taking can contribute to overall comprehension of listening to a lecture. It is not just merely writing down key points shortening them in certain ways rather it involves broader process which includes cognitive processing such as evaluation, interpretation, decision-making and summarizing. Ozbay (2005) states that it is composed of several steps; that is, listening, comprehension, analysis, selection and writing in the form of notes.

II. Literature Review

Note-taking is a technique that has beneficial effect on comprehension. Some researchers promote note-taking, and many even encourage note-taking teaching to both L1 and L2 learners. Siegel (2015) indicates that students benefit from note-taking because it can give an external recording of information for review and later tasks. Note-taking develops learner's comprehension skills because it increases their attention to the materials which are listened or read [6, p. 278].

So far, a number of studies have investigated the relationship between note-taking and listening comprehension of lectures. Most of them were carried out in higher education contexts. The review of literatures devoted to the effect of note taking in listening comprehension reveals that generally, taking notes during lectures can improve students' overall comprehension of input and help to remember later.

One of the earliest studies conducted to present the impact of note taking on the retention and recall of lecture content was by Rickards, Fajen and Sullivan (1997). The participants who, were allowed to take notes while listening to lectures recalled nearly everything later related to the organization or the content while the others who were not allowed to do so could not remember even some main points [8, p.581]. Moreover, another study results show that taking notes during lessons can help students feel comfortable and relieved making the content easier to remember afterwards [10, p. 42]. It should be noted that note taking improves learning and facilitates recalling as well as contributing to students' performance.

Recent study by Ferit Kilickaya and Derya Çokal-karadas (2009) also investigated the effect of note taking on comprehension of lectures. The participants were divided into two groups; first being allowed to take notes. Statistically analysed results of the two groups showed that participants who were allowed to take notes significantly did better than those who were not [2, p. 54]. Similarly, another research in Turkey (2013) was interested in revealing that whether there is any connection between lecture types, taking notes and students' overall listening comprehension. According to the results of the study, there were higher levels of comprehension for all three lecture types in favour of the participants who took notes while listening to lectures [7, p. 96].



The purpose of the present study is to investigate the effect of note-taking while listening on comprehension skills. This small scale research seeks an answer to the following research question:

- 1) How does note-taking while listening affect listening comprehension?
- 2) Can it help learners store information longer in their memory?

III. Participants

Participants of the study were 28 third-year students of Translation Theory and Practice Faculty of Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature. Their major is translation studies, and every week they take Academic lectures in English three or four times on average related to their field. Their language level is upper intermediate at the time research being conducted. The students were divided into two groups: 14 of these students were assigned to the experimental group, and 14 of them were assigned to the control group. It was made sure that both of these groups consisted of an equal number of students.

IV. Method

This experimental study includes pre-test and post-test. Firstly, the chosen academic lecture content was analysed in terms of length and vocabulary level. The lecture was intended to be delivered at a normal speech rate and tone during 40 minutes. Next, the lecture was read by the lecturer on the predetermined day. Then, a twenty-item gap filling test was prepared for the lecture to test listening comprehension. Each correct answer was given 2 points- overall 40 points.

The tests were administered to students as a pre-test on the next day during 30 minutes. To make results more reliable and reduce recalling effect of test items, the designed test was given again as the post-test after one month. The experimental group was trained on how to take effective notes while listening to lectures during a week after classes [15; 17, pp. 26-28; 19, pp. 73-75]. They were asked to take notes of important points of the lecture content using techniques they were taught beforehand. However, the control group listened to the lecture without taking notes and they were given the test after the lecture. The results of the two groups were then analysed using t-test.

Table 1. Research design

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Group 1 (control)	20 item questions about the lecture	Listening to the lecture without note taking	Listening comprehension test
Group 2 (experimental)	20 item questions about the lecture	Note-taking while listening to the lecture	Listening comprehension test



DATA COLLECTION AND FINDINGS

Once the tests were administered, the results were collected and to analyse the data -statistical method was used. The below table shows pre-test results of both groups. According to scores, the highest score is 34 in experimental group while in control group it is 30.

The lowest score, on the other hand, is 14 and 22 in control and experimental groups respectively. It means that the group who were trained to take notes and asked to take notes during the lecture scored higher than the results of the group who directly listened to the lecture without taking notes.

Table 2. Pre-test results of the two groups

Participants (28 students)	Control group	Experimental group
Highest score	30	36
Lowest score	14	24
Mean	22	30

After one month, post-test was administered to both groups. The results of participants can be seen from the table below. It is obvious that the second group scores are higher than the one of the first group in all categories.

Table 3. Post-test results of the two groups

Participants (28 students)	Control group	Experimental group
Highest score	22	34
Lowest score	12	22
Mean	17	28

It could be seen from the tables (2 and 3) above that there is a considerably significant difference between the results of pre-test and post-test in the experimental group. The mean score of pre-test is only 30, but in post-test it decreased to 28 because of one-month period compared to the results of control group. The mean score of control group members in pre-test is 22 and it decreased to 17 in post-test. The findings reveal note-taking technique has a positive influence on students' listening comprehension levels.

According to Umaadevi and Sasi (2019), note-taking develops learner's comprehension skills because it increases their attention to the materials which are listened. Moreover, taking notes while listening to lectures helps learners store the main points they learnt longer time in their memory and prevent from missing the details taught during the lessons.

CONCLUSION



In conclusion, it can be said that the study results have answered the research questions set at the beginning. Firstly, it is important to mention that taking notes while listening to lectures is generally an important strategy for the retention of information longer especially in academic settings. Because students should bear in mind a number of significant information and points of the content which then can be useful for recalling. Secondly, note-taking improves students' overall listening comprehension. Therefore, it is highly recommended to teach students how to take notes effectively while listening as it is of great importance in classrooms. This study aims to investigate the effect of note taking while listening to lectures in academic settings. The current research is small as the participants are only third-year students of Translation Theory and Practice faculty of TSUULL, so the findings may not be stable in terms of validity and reliability. It gives further way to other researches.

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