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An Investigation into Factors that Affect Students' Listening Comprehension: The Case of Jimma CTE English Major Students

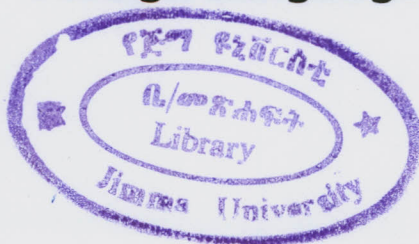
By

Seid Mohammed

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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**An Investigation into Factors that Affect students' Listening
Comprehension: The Case of Jimma CTE English Major Students**

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to describe and explore factors affecting students' listening comprehension. The study assessed both linguistic and non-linguistic factors. It was a descriptive study in which data were obtained through both quantitative and qualitative methods. The participants of the study were first year English major students of Jimma College of Teachers Education (Jimma CTE); 46 students who were taking the course 'listening skills' were selected to take part in the study. Data were collected using closed-ended questionnaire, semi-structured interview, observation and content analysis. The data obtained through the questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively. The data gathered through interview and observation were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Content analysis was analyzed qualitatively. The study identified linguistics related factors such as pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar to have influence on students' listening comprehension. Therefore, it is recommended that the listening teacher and /or material developers are required to select listening texts composed of appropriate level linguistic elements such as pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. It is also found out that non –linguistics factors in relation to the listener, speaker, listening texts and tasks, listening practice and timing to have impact on the learners' listening comprehension. Thus, the instructor is needed to make aware and encourage students to use listening strategies during their practice of listening and should advise them not to feel worried and to keep on practicing even if they face difficulties in their listening. The instructor should read aloud or present audio tapes having appropriate speed and should not expose students to native accents until they become acquainted enough with the target language pronunciation. The listening instructor and /or material developers are required to select listening texts that are interesting and with appropriate length and conceptual difficulty and are recommended to design appropriate listening tasks with respect to length and level of difficulty and different types of tasks and pre-listening activities need to be incorporated in the listening materials and finally, the listening instructor is required to provide sufficient opportunities and time for the students to practice their listening comprehension.

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Chapter One

Introduction



1.1 Background of the study

Listening is one of the four language skills and of the two receptive skills. It is an essential skill that we use in our day to day lives. Listening also has a major role in the academic circumstances. Carrier (1999) puts the role of listening as “Listening comprehension is important for everyday survival, ranging from understanding a salesclerk’s directions on how to find the shoe department to understanding a teacher’s classroom lecture and homework assignment”. Similarly, in second language learning, several writers and researchers in the early 1980s suggested that listening had a very important role (Winitz, 1981, as cited in Nation and Newton, 2009). Beard (2005) indicated that listening is a fundamental language skill, and 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, listening is of vital importance and students should be taught to listen effectively and critically and thus, listening has emerged as an important component in the process of second language acquisition (Feyten, 1991).

Listening involves a complex process that allows us to understand and interpret spoken messages in real time by making use of a variety of sources such as phonetic, phonological, prosodic, lexical, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic (Alderson and Lynch, 1988) it has been acknowledged that listening is a complex, social and interactive process in which the listener is actively engaged in constructing meaning from a variety of contexts and input sources (Vandergrift, 2006).” Listening can be a stressful activity for language learners, who are often unable to process information quickly enough to make sense of what is said. This problem could occur due to different factors including cognition and affect” (Goh and Taib, 2006).

Until recently it was claimed that listening did not get the status it deserves in the teaching of language. The reasons for this are partly historical. There was a time when listening in the language classroom was almost entirely subordinated to the presentation of new items of language. Short dialogues on tape provided examples of structures to be learned (see, for example, Alexander, 1967), and this was the only type of listening practice that most learners received. It was not until the late 1960s that enlightened teachers began to practice listening as a skill in its own right – and even then the idea persisted for a while that an important function of the listening lesson was to reinforce recently taught grammar by exemplifying it in use (Field, 2009).

Another reason for downgrading listening is the difficulty of teaching it. It is widely seen as a ‘passive’ skill, one that takes place in the hidden reaches of the learner’s mind. It is not tangible in the way that speaking and writing are, and a listening text is not easily manipulated like a reading one. Demonstrable results are difficult to achieve. Even after extensive practice, there may be little evidence of any improvement in performance (Field, 2009).

In the past two decades, as ideas about L2 learning and teaching have changed, listening in language learning has received more attention than ever before (Morley, 1991). It has been acknowledged that not all language learners are equally proficient at listening, (Chamot and Kupper, 1989; Murphy, 1987; Vandergrift, 1997a, as cited in Carrier, 1999) nor are they equally proficient in the different types of listening.

As far as the students’ listening performance is concerned even if listening was formerly neglected from the language curriculum of all levels, particularly at the level of higher education, it has now got its own part in the language teaching curriculum. It is given as a course in colleges on its own right. Student teachers in colleges take listening course to qualify as good listeners and listening teachers. However, the English students’ capability to cope with the challenges that they face in listening comprehension is questionable as is the case in other colleges in the country. Teachers complain about their students’ low

performance in listening comprehension. Therefore, the students are not to the expected standard to qualify as effective listeners in English.

As a teacher, the researcher has come across such difficulties that students encounter in listening and comprehending a text from spoken sources of various kinds and shares the English instructors' complaints about their students' low performance in listening comprehension. In schools, listening is not properly taught but in colleges it has got its own part and also offered integrated with other language skills in different English courses, yet when we consider the nature of the 'listening course', in the course, both theoretical aspects of listening and the practical listening comprehension practice are offered in one course.

1.2 Statement of the problem

There are studies conducted in the area of listening. A research was conducted by Tewelde (1998) on comparison of the listening abilities of government junior secondary school students with the listening level required of them in their subject areas. The purpose of the study was to find out the actual listening ability of the elementary school second cycle students in comparison with the listening level required of them in understanding their subject areas. The study revealed that the actual listening ability of the students was below the level expected of them by their teachers. Another researcher, Seime (1989) carried out a study on the topic "An investigation of the listening abilities of Bahr Dar teachers' college students. The study was aimed at investigating the listening ability of students. The result showed that students were low in their ability to listen and understand in English. A study was also conducted by Malkawi (2010) and it was found out that EFL learners are not interested to learn listening because it is difficult and the researcher came to conclude that listening comprehension is a complex process that needs to develop gradually.

A research entitled "Assessing factors that affect the development of listening skills of EFL learners: Dejazmach Geresu Dhuki preparatory school grade 11 in focus" was conducted by Endalew (2012) for partial fulfillment of MA in TEFL. Another study was done on the topic "The Social Environment of Second Language Listening: "Does Status

Play a Role in Comprehension?” In this study, Carrier (1999) investigated factors that are involved in the process of listening comprehension the focus being the social factors such as status and rate of speech.

Therefore, from the researches carried out in listening, the researcher could not observe researches conducted on linguistic features and thus, this study investigated both the linguistic aspects and the non-linguistic factors affecting students’ listening comprehension.

1.3 Research questions

This research study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the linguistic and non-linguistic challenges that hinder students’ listening comprehension?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General objective

The general objective of this study is:

- to investigate linguistic and non-linguistic problems that students encountered in relation to listening comprehension in English and to suggest possible solutions that could contribute to the improvement of the listening ability of English students

1.4.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

- to identify factors that affect students’ listening comprehension ,and
- to describe linguistic and non-linguistic-related listening comprehension problems faced by Jimma TTC English major students

1.5 Delimitation of the study

Although listening is thought to be taught at all levels of the education system, the study is limited to only Jimma TTC. This is because at schools, from the researcher’s experience, listening is not properly taught or most of the time it is neglected and teachers use the time allotted for listening to teach other skills whereas at colleges listening is given as a course in its own right and also incorporated and practiced in other language courses. The title is also limited to factors that hinder listening comprehension.

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1.6 The Limitation of the Study

In this study, the researcher believed he should have allowed more participants to take part in the study so that it could be possible to increase the credibility of the data to be gathered, but unfortunately there were only a limited number of student participants who were taking the listening course in the time frame planned to conduct the research. The student participants may not recall the problems they encountered during listening when they were made to give the interview and fill in the questionnaire.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This research has the following importance in terms of responding to the listening comprehension problems encountered by English major students at Jimma TTC: The research will enable to take corrective measures to alleviate the factors that negatively affect listening comprehension of students. The study will allow curriculum designers, educational experts and professionals to take actions and improve the current conditions of poor listening comprehension performance. This research study will also help English curriculum designers to address the factors that affect listening comprehension performance of students by way of selecting and designing appropriate listening materials to assist learners' areas of difficulty. Students can benefit a lot out of the study in terms of alleviating the challenges they experience in listening comprehension. In other words, all actions taken by stakeholders to minimize the problems in the light of the findings of the study will benefit students. It can also serve as a spring board for other researchers who may be interested in doing research in this area.



Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

This chapter comprises factors that are considered to be determinant in the students' listening comprehension. These factors are both linguistic and non-linguistic in nature. The non-linguistic factors being listener –related, speaker-related, practice and time related, listening text and task-related, noise related.

2.1 Why teaching listening?

It has been claimed that over 50 percent of the time that students spend functioning in a foreign language will be devoted to listening (Nunan, 1998). Despite this, we often take the importance of listening for granted, and it is arguably the least understood and most overlooked of the four skills listening, speaking, reading and writing in the language classroom. Although listening has such significant roles in communication and second language acquisition, it has long been the neglected skill in research, teaching, and classroom assessment (Rubin, 1994; Richards and Renandaya, 2002). Long (1989) and Dunkel (1991) say that the detailed explanations of listening comprehension, as well as theoretical models and pedagogical activities, have largely been derived from insights gained as a result of classroom experience and reading of the native language listening literature.

Listening is the natural precursor to speaking; the early stages of language development in a person's first language (and in naturalistic acquisition of other languages) are dependent on listening. Indeed, Gillian Brown and others (for example, Brown, 1978; Brown, Anderson, Shillcock and Yule, 1984, as cited in Nation and Newton, 2009) showed that both oracy and literacy development needed ongoing attention in first language education. Prior to this, it was taken for granted that first language speakers needed instruction in how to read and write, but not how to listen and speak because these skills were automatically acquired by native speakers.

We cannot develop speaking skills unless we also develop listening skills; to have a successful conversation, students must understand what is said to them. Later, the ability

to understand spoken English may become very important (for listening to the radio, understanding foreign visitors, studying etc.). To develop this ability students need plenty of practice in listening to English spoken at normal speed (Doff, 1988).

2.2 The Role of Listening in Language Learning

Language acquisition depends on listening since it provides the aural input that serves as the basis for acquisition, and listening is the first language mode that children acquire. At birth we know nothing about language, and yet we will complete much of the first language acquisition process within our first five years, depending almost exclusively on listening. As it is indicated in second language acquisition theory, language input is the most essential condition of language acquisition.

Listening comprehension in a L2 is the process of receiving, attending to, and assigning meaning to aural stimuli. It involves a listener, who brings prior knowledge of the topic, linguistic knowledge, and cognitive processes to the listening task, the aural text, and the interaction between the two (Coakley and Wolvin, 1986, as cited in Jones and Plass, 2002). Fischer and Farris (1995, as cited in Jones and Plass, 2002) viewed listening comprehension as a process whereby students actively construct a mental representation of an aural text based on prior knowledge of the topic and information found within. Hoven (1999, as cited in Jones and Plass, 2002), extended this definition by arguing that constructive learning from aural materials can also depend on the students' interaction with the characteristics of the text, the interlocutor, the task, and the process.

In L2 education, teachers assign audio-based activities in order to develop students' listening skills. Typically, listening comprehension activities provided with language textbooks have presented only the aural component of the language with little to no pictorial or written supportive information. Therefore, students' preferences or needs have often been ignored, potentially leading to poor comprehension (Jones and Plass, 2002).

Rubin points out that listening plays a very important role in a Student's academic success and it is a key component to successful learning. In this day of mass communication, much of it oral, listening is of vital importance and students should be

taught to listen effectively and critically. Although listening has such significant roles in communication and second language acquisition, it has long been the neglected skill in research, teaching, and classroom assessment (Rubin, 1994). In recent years, however, there has been an increased focus on developing foreign language listening ability because of its perceived importance in language learning and acquisition. Especially these days, there has been increasing emphasis on listening comprehension in second language pedagogy, and this is also reflected in several methodologies and in the development of numerous listening materials such as textbooks, audiotapes, videotapes, and CD-ROMs (as cited in Jones and Plass, 2002).

Assuming its great importance in foreign language classrooms and in language acquisition, scholars have started giving greater attention to second/foreign language listening comprehension (Ur, 1991).

2.3 Potential Factors in Listening

Listening comprehension is a process in which the listener constructs meaning out of the information provided by the speaker. This involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, his grammar and his vocabulary, and grasping his meaning (Howatt and Dakin, 1974, as cited in Carrier, 1999). Morely (1972) provides a broader definition of listening comprehension which includes the process of reauditorizing, extracting vital information, remembering it, and relating it to constructing meaning, besides the basic auditory discrimination and aural grammar. Considering various aspects of listening comprehension, Underwood (1989) organizes the major listening problems as follows: (1) lack of control over the speed at which speakers speak, (2) not being able to get things repeated, (3) the listener's limited vocabulary, (4) failure to recognize the "signals," (5) problems of interpretation, (6) inability to concentrate, and (7) established learning habits. Underwood sees these problems as being related to learners' different backgrounds, such as their culture and education. Further research points out that the differences between the spoken features of the learners' mother-tongue and the target language can be another factor that hinders the students listening performance. He further points out that sometimes the target language differs enough from the listener's language in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, and the existence of such differences places

additional demands on the listener's processing which can severely interfere with comprehension(as cited in Hayes-Harb and Watzinger-Tharp, 2012)

In addition, there are other scholars who forwarded factors that are thought to affect foreign language listening comprehension. Rubin (1994) identified five factors which affect listening comprehension: text characteristics, interlocutor characteristics, task characteristics, listener characteristics, and process characteristics.

2.4 Linguistics Related Factors

This particular section comprises linguistics –related factors that affect students' listening comprehension. Thus, in this regard listening factors in relation to pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, discourse cues and sentential structure are discussed.

2.4.1 Language proficiency level

In the review of this literature, we have seen that listening is a process in which the listener constructs meaning from the language that he/she hears. At this point, however, failure to comprehend the message may result from low proficiency level on the part of the listener. If a student is having trouble with listening comprehension, one of the first questions generally asked is whether the student's level of intellectual functioning is sufficient for the task in spite of the fact that most students have the necessary level of functioning to make sense of what the speaker is saying, except for a very small percentage of the population. For such learners at low proficiency level, it may be difficult to understand not only the L2 listening tasks but also the other learning tasks, too. Ur (1991) describes the challenges that the low proficiency learners face when they come across authentic spoken features of the language as follows: “in ordinary conversation, redundant utterances of the speaker may take the form of repetitions, false starts, re-phrasings, self-corrections, elaborations, tautologies, and apparently meaningless additions such as “I mean” or “you know.” These redundancies, repetitions and other elaborations are natural features of speech and may be either a help or a hindrance to the comprehension process, depending on the students' proficiency level (Ur, 1991). Ur claims that while these redundancies and repetitions are helpful for students at higher proficiency levels, they may make it more difficult for students at lower proficiency levels to understand what the speaker is saying.

Rost (1994) asserts that more advanced learners, with a greater store of linguistic knowledge, and a more sophisticated control over this knowledge, achieve greater understanding of speech. But those students at low English proficiency level, with a lesser store of linguistic knowledge, and less sophisticated control over this knowledge may encounter problems in understanding speech.

2.4.2 The ability to comprehend aural input

Listening is relevant for both language learning and language performance in a L2. From one viewpoint, listening comprehension is important in the L2 learning process in terms of access to comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982, as cited in Carrier, 1999).

Consequently, research in L2 listening has focused on identifying what factors are involved in the process of listening and how variation in these factors affects the product of listening, that is, comprehension. In the field of sociolinguistics where the focus is on the interconnection between social and language systems, there have been a number of studies that demonstrate the effect of social relationships on language behavior. These include areas such as (a) phonological variation that depends on the listener's ethnicity (b) phonological variation that depends on the perceived social and economic status of people in their workplaces, and (c) morphophonemic variation that depends on the speaker's perceived social status relative to others in a factory workplace. In addition, the influence of one's perception of self in relation to others in a social interaction has been shown to affect pronoun choice (Carrier, 1999).

2.4.3 Familiarity with natural feature of spoken English

The spoken features of native speaker English can be difficult for EFL learners who do not have previous exposure. Regarding this Ur (1991) describes that non-native learners who are unfamiliar with authentic features will have difficulty in perceiving aspects of listening such as hearing the sounds, understanding intonation and stress, and redundancy under colloquial vocabulary and understanding different accents. It is apparent that the beginning task of L2 listener is, first of all, to perceive and to break out the important sounds from the ongoing stream, and to differentiate units. In this process the students may face problems. The problems the students face may be partly due to the strange

sounds that are unusual to the L2 listeners. In English (just as in other languages), there are sounds which are unusual for foreign listeners, and which they may therefore fail to distinguish from other similar sound or even fail to hear at all.

Learners who have been left to acquire intuitively more detailed knowledge through exposure to plenty of native speech are aware of such problems, and therefore are efficient listeners. From this we can infer that the learners who maintained familiarity with the spoken features of the target language are efficient listeners while those students who are not familiar with such features may fail to understand an oral text.

The other listener factor which causes failure to understand listening may be the inability of the students to recognize the discrepancy between the spoken and the written English, which is part of the natural feature of the language. Students have considerable experience of reading and writing. However, if the students have only little or no experience in listening, they may fail to connect the sounds they hear with words they have seen and recognized in their printed form and may find the whole experience confusing and discouraging. For example, a student who is familiar with the word 'coup d'état' in reading or writing may fail to realize that it is heard as /ku:deI'ta/ in listening. (Ur,1991).

2.4.4 Knowledge of Vocabulary

Another area that is claimed to affect EFL listening comprehension is the student's limited lexical knowledge. Underwood (1989) says "For people listening to a foreign language, an unknown word can be like a suddenly dropped barrier causing them to stop and think about the meaning of the word and thus making them miss the next part of the speech." This tells that one requirement for good listening comprehension is knowledge of the vocabulary used in the listening text. A problem many language learners have has to do with the multiple meanings of words and the fact that many students know only the most common meaning of a word. When the word is encountered in one of its less common uses, students are confused. This can be illustrated with a sentence in which a word appears several times, each time with a different meaning. Or, when the listening

text is crowded with several unfamiliar words which demand deep knowledge of vocabulary, then it leaves the learner groping for the meaning of such unfamiliar words.

The other problem of EFL listening in relation to vocabulary is getting words which seem similar in sound. In English there are different words which seem similar in sounds but different in meanings (as ship/sheep, meat/meet, fit/feet, write/right, sight/site, light/light, etc.) (Underwood, 1989). When the foreign listeners come across such words, they may fail to distinguish one word from the other with similar sound. Those foreign listeners who often depend on context are easily able to distinguish between such words. This happens because the context early always makes it obvious which of the two words is being spoken. Words with similar sound confuse the learners when they occur within a stream of speech. Therefore, a student should be exposed for such words and needs to learn their differences in meaning. In addition, the learner needs to learn the expressions that are common in spoken English. Underwood (1989) asserts that foreign listeners are required to recognize the most commonly used interactive expressions (such as well/uhuh/mhm); their role in speech is valuable.

2.4.5 Discourse signaling cues

Olsen and Huckin, (1999, as cited in Jung, 2003) for example, reported that most L2 learners with proper comprehension of English at the sentence level had difficulty identifying the main ideas in a lecture, mainly as a consequence of their inability to utilize discourse level cues that signaled the organization of the lecture. Similarly, it was observed that L2 learners failed to recognize how the lecture discourse was structured as a whole and, thus, were unable to identify relationships between ideas and to distinguish major from minor ideas.

Ample evidence suggests not only that background knowledge of the content of a text is crucial to comprehension of the text, but also that background knowledge of the text organization is necessary. Organization of the text is often indicated by discourse signaling cues. These are metalinguistic devices that function as directional guides to signal how readers and listeners should interpret the incoming information (Tyler, 1994). They explicitly cue the organization of a discourse by (a) signaling relationships between

ideas, (b) indicating the relative importance of ideas, and (c) evaluating the given ideas. Such discourse signaling cues (called cues hereafter) include previews (e.g., There are four stages of this culture shock), summarizers (e.g., To sum up, so far), emphasis markers (e.g., This is the key), and logical connectives (e.g., and, or, first, and second) (Jung, 2003).

2.4.6 Syntactic Complexity of the text

According to Brown and Yule (1983), there are a number of differences between spoken discourse and written discourse which are important in learning EFL listening. That is, while the spoken language is syntactically simpler, the written language is relatively complex. Therefore, if the listener is unable to segment complex embedded sentences into more basic syntactic units or if the listener cannot parse the complex sentences into their constituents, comprehension will suffer. What is not clear at the present time is how much difficulty poor comprehenders have with this type of task. While the cognitive task of making sense of embedded sentences requires analysis of the complex utterances into more basic units, the listener must also know how to add the missing elements in incomplete elliptical sentences. If the listener fails to do this requirement which is necessary for good listening comprehension, comprehension can suffer. These give certain opportunities for the learners to practice listening. However, the complexity of the sentences, which are originally not from natural spoken discourse, is a matter of concern to the researcher. Such complexity may interfere with the learners' listening comprehension.

2.5 Non-linguistic Factors

In this section of non-linguistic listening factors, those factors in relation to the listener, speaker, listening text and task, practice and noise are discussed.

2.5.1 Listener Factors

As Lindemann (2002, as cited in Hayes-Harb and Watzinger-Tharp, 2012) pointed out, "the claim that a given [nonnative speaker] faces difficulties to understand often rests on the assumption that it is solely the speaker's responsibility to get her point across". However, a variety of listener factors may play a critical role in perceptions of a speaker's accentedness and how intelligible they find speech. Rubin (1994) demonstrated

that listeners' expectations of talkers can influence their ability to comprehend speech. Rubin played an audio recording of a lecture produced by a native English speaker to two different groups of native-English-speaking undergraduate students. While they heard the same recording, the two groups of students saw different pictures of the purported speaker: one group saw a picture of a Caucasian woman, while the other group saw a picture of an Asian woman. As they listened to the lecture, the students were asked to complete a cloze test used to measure recall of the lecture. Students who saw the picture of the Caucasian woman performed more accurately on the recall test than did students who saw the picture of the Asian woman. Rubin interprets this finding as indicating that listeners' expectations about the accentedness of speech can impact their ability to comprehend speech, independent of the properties of the speech signal itself.

Lindemann (2002, as cited in Hayes-Harb and Watzinger-Tharp, 2012) engaged speakers of Korean in an interactional task with six native speakers of English who had been identified as having a generally negative attitude to Koreans, and six with a more positive attitude. She showed that negative attitudes might prompt certain strategies such as not providing feedback or problematizing the nonnative speakers' contributions to the task interaction even when they have been understood. Although such strategies do not necessarily hinder communication, they are instances of what Lindemann described as "noncollaborative behavior" or behaviors that "effectively treat one's partner as an incompetent communicator". Moreover, while participants with positive attitudes expressed the belief that they had in fact communicated successfully with their Korean interlocutors, all six with more negative dispositions believed that they had not succeeded in their communication even though only two interactions had actually been objectively unsuccessful.

As Lindemann (2002, as cited in Hayes-Harb and Watzinger-Tharp, 2012) concluded, native speakers with a topic, familiarity with nonnative speech in general, familiarity with a nonnative accent in particular, and familiarity with a particular speaker will affect native listeners' comprehension. The materials were two sets of spoken sentences that preceded or followed a short story- one set of sentences were related to the story, and the

other was not. Topic familiarity (i.e., when the sentences related to the text followed rather than preceded it) most decisively facilitated comprehension, but the three familiarity variables related to the four nonnative readers also enhanced comprehension.

For example, comprehension of the unrelated sentences (where topic familiarity did not matter) was also higher post-text than pre-text, presumably because listeners had gained some familiarity with the nonnative speech through listening to the story, which facilitated their ability to comprehend the speech itself, independent of topic familiarity. Kennedy and Trofimovich (2008, as cited in Hayes-Harb and Watzinger-Tharp, 2012) similarly found that experience with nonnative speech can increase a listener's ability to comprehend nonnative speech (though experience did not appear to have an effect on accentedness judgments). Often, research on accented speech has focused on the difficulties it might cause for listeners and their comprehension. Clarke and Garrett (2004, as cited in Hayes-Harb and Watzinger-Tharp, 2012), however, found that listeners adapt to speech that deviates from the native norm very quickly, as demonstrated by their reduced reaction times to spoken stimuli following even minimal exposure to the speech of a nonnative talker. Their study further reinforces the significance of listener factors in research into comprehension of nonnative speech.

Note that in addition to the listener related and signal-related factors discussed thus far, researchers have also identified other factors that may influence accentedness and intelligibility. For example, Flege and Fletcher (1992, as cited in Hayes-Harb and Watzinger-Tharp, 2012) demonstrated that the range of speech samples to which a listener is exposed can influence ratings of accentedness. They found that listeners judged nonnative speech samples as more accented when there was native speech samples included among the stimuli compared to judgments of stimuli without native speech samples.

2.5.1.1 Listener Characteristic

Listener characteristic appears to have considerable impact on an individual's listening comprehension. Some researchers have sought to identify the listener factors that influence L1 listening comprehension in positive and negative ways. Carroll (1977) and



Watson and Smeltzer (1984, as cited in Hayes-Harb and Watzinger-Tharp, 2012) for example, highlight some factors that can hinder native language listening comprehension, including the listener's (a) degree of motivation to comprehend and learn the information contained in the message and the amount of interest in the topic of discussion; (b) ability to perceive relations among elements of the discourse, and ability to focus attention on the discourse and ignore distractions in the environment.

2.5.1.2 Listeners' awareness of a topic

Background knowledge, also called "world knowledge" or "schemata", has an impact on understanding a subject that a student is going to learn. Learners construct meaning during the comprehension process by segmenting and chunking input (i.e., from which they hear or read) into meaningful units, actively matching the intake, with their existing linguistic and world knowledge, and filling in the gaps with logical guesses. The kind of knowledge learners have before learning a new topic affects how they make sense of the new information. From this one can understand that students having varying levels of prior knowledge about a subject are very likely to understand, interpret and analyze the new information in different ways, and these students try to make sense of new information using their existing behavioral or operational schemata that are engaged in a process of comprehension; in other words, students try to make sense of what is new by relating it to what is familiar using their prior knowledge and strategy. These concepts of learning, in general, indicate that listeners' past experiences strongly affect the way in which the listeners interpret a passage.

Although intuition may suggest that it is easier to listen to a passage on a familiar topic than on unfamiliar ones, there has actually been little research into the role of listener's knowledge (Anderson and Lynch, 1988). This implies the importance of student's familiarity with the topic of the listening text as otherwise students listening and comprehending of a passage will be highly affected.

Listening comprehension may be thought of as an interactive process in which the listener's knowledge is used to make sense of information provided by the speaker. The ability to understand and to construct meaning out of what a speaker is saying is

determined, in part, by the listener's prior knowledge. Current views on listening comprehension agree that prior knowledge of a topic can affect listening comprehension, including the recall measures of the comprehension. Students recall significantly more information from a familiar topic with which students ascend their comprehension by relating the new information to the pre-existing one. Eggen and Kauchack (1999, as cited in Vandergrift, 2006) state that students construct their understanding of the subject they learn on the basis of their experiences; their schemes then determine how effectively new experiences can be assimilated and accommodated. They further suggest that if these experiences are lacking, however, the prerequisite schemes to which new learning can be attached won't exist. Nuttall (1996) also asserts that if communication is to take place, the learner should have certain things in common with the subject under discussion. She further suggests that a more interesting requirement to understand a text is that the learner should share certain assumptions about the subject and the way it is applied. Problems arise, therefore, when there is a mismatch between the subject and the previous experience of the student. From the above statements it seems reasonable to infer that if students have no prior knowledge about a subject, they encounter difficulties in listening and understanding that subject because perception and subsequent comprehension depend on background knowledge.

Current models of listening explain the listening process as an active, constructive one in which background knowledge is crucial. Anderson and Lynch (1988), for example, refer to schematic knowledge as one of the "information sources in comprehension" and suggest that it is the lack of such information that impedes comprehension. Brown and Yule (1983) describe schemata as "organized background knowledge which leads us to expect or predict aspects in our interpretation of discourse". The listener's stereotypical knowledge based on prior experiences predisposes him or her to construct expectations in terms of seven areas: speaker, listener, place, time, genre, topic, and co-text. Brown and Yule contend that the listener uses two basic principles to relate the new information to his or her previous experience: the principle of analogy ("things will be as they were before,") and the principle of minimal change ("things are as like as possible to how they were before,"). In a discussion of ways in which listeners form inferences and use them

to interpret spoken language, Rost, as cited in Jones and Plass 2002) suggests inferential processes at three levels (lexical/propositional, base or schematic, and interpersonal relevance) and proposes editing principles and procedures by which listeners construct meaning. He defines base meaning for a text as "the cultural and experiential frame of reference that makes a text interpretable by a listener". The related editing strategies include employing cultural schemata.

It is obvious that students will find it easier to listen to a passage on familiar topic than on unfamiliar one. Moreover, in order to make students familiar to atopic, scholars advise to activate the learners' schemata. Activating the students' background knowledge creates readiness in the mind of students so that they can use what they know about a topic, and to facilitate effective comprehension. Many teachers gain such awareness from their college education. It is difficult to be sure, however, how many teachers are handling these methods appropriately. Further study needs to be conducted in this regard.

2.5.1.3 Application of Strategies

As it is indicated in the review literature of this study, listening is described as a process of receiving what the speaker actually says, constructing and representing meaning, negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding, and creating meaning. In order to go well through these processes, the importance of applying strategies is unquestionable. Harmer (1991) illustrates these strategies, which he calls micro skills, as follows: "predictive skills, extracting specific information, getting the general picture, extracting detailed information, recognizing functions and discourse patterns and deducting meaning from contexts." He says that an effective listener is the one who is capable of employing the appropriate strategies of listening simultaneously. Dunkel (1986) advises that EFL listeners should employ these strategies of listening in order to be successful in listening comprehension because listeners' success at understanding the content of what they hear depends to a large extent on their expertise in the micro skills.

Several authors state that instruction in listening processes and listening strategies benefits students (for example, Mendelsohn1994; Flowerdew and Miller 2005, as cited in Siegel, 2011). According to Renandya and Farrell (as cited in Siegel, 2011) 'our main job

as teachers of foreign language listening is to help our students develop procedural knowledge, i.e. knowledge about how to process spoken language with ease and automaticity'. Listening strategy training provides a platform to do just that: to teach students 'how to listen'. Through a listening strategy, component teachers can provide students with a model, method, and direction for improvement in L2 listening rather than dubious instructions to 'listen more' or 'listen harder next time' (Siegel, 2011).

Specific strategies can be taught and practiced in listening classes. Students can have opportunities to transfer their L1 listening procedures to L2 (for example, Buck 2001; Field 2008; Siegel, 2011) and to recognize linguistic features that facilitate successful listening. Once listening processes and strategies have been isolated and practiced in class, they can be applied outside of class (Siegel, 2011).

2.5.1.4 Listening anxiety

The reader retains evidence on the page of the words that have been read, whereas listening relies upon information that is transient and unfolds in time. So reading can be recursive, with the reader going back to check word recognition and to check overall understanding in a way that the listener cannot. The transitory nature of listening appears to be a major cause of L2 listener anxiety, leading to the often-expressed conviction that native speakers 'speak too fast' (Field, 2009).

2.5.2 Speaker Characteristic

Comprehending spoken language is a complex process in which the listener constructs meaning out of the information provided by the speaker. Constructing meaning out of the speaker's message depends partly on speaker's factors which are external to the listener. Failure to comprehend may result from unique speaking style of the speaker, or from poor communication skills on the part of the speaker, or from unfamiliar feature of the (L2) speech of the native speakers. As far as the spoken feature is concerned, perception of sounds can be made difficult due to various characteristics of the spoken features of the language, particularly of the speech characteristics of the native speakers. Ur (1991) also gives another explanation for the problem. She says that perception of sounds is made difficult by the different pronunciations of words across versions of the same language. She further states that sound perception is also made difficult by the different

rhythms and tone patterns in the L2 compared with the rhythms and tone patterns in the students' native language. The other problem that makes difficult to understand the native speaker English may be the learners past experience of learning.

This seems the reason why Underwood (1989) criticizes the use of non-authentic texts instead of the authentic one for the teaching of listening. She says that using non-authentic texts for listening causes students to pose an additional problem of having to try to transfer what they have learned by listening to non-authentic materials to their attempts to understand authentic speech. According to Ur (1991), authentic feature of English (which exist in real-life listening) is characterized by colloquial, spontaneous and informal conversation, and she suggests that classroom practice should usually incorporate such characteristic of real life listening.

The above point was concerned with the natural speech of the native speakers which in the case of the target listening course are mostly available in recordings. In 'live' conversation (as in that of a lecture), on the other hand, writers advise that a speaker should be aware of the needs of his audience and should make sure that his message is clear and effective, especially when he/she communicates with nonnative audiences. To communicate effectively, in this regard, the speaker should be aware of not only the needs of the listener but also the other factors which influence comprehension, including the amount of information a listener has on a topic, the educational and intellectual level of the listener, the listener's interest in the discussion topic, and momentary fluctuations in attention, because these cautions help the speaker to decide the type of words to use as well as the rate of information to deliver. If these are inappropriate for the needs of the listener, however, comprehension will suffer.

2.5.3Text Characteristic

One of the major factors that are believed to affect listening comprehension is text characteristics. According to Carroll (1977) and Sheils (1988, as cited in Vandergrift ,2006) the density and explicitness of information contained in the speech; length and conceptual difficulty of the text; and the degree of attractiveness of the message influence the success or failure of listening comprehension. That is, as soon as the text becomes

less explicit or less attractive or conceptually more difficult, comprehension suffers. The details are presented as follows:

2.5.3.1 Length and density of the text

In learning a foreign language, listening and interpreting unfamiliar sounds, lexis and syntax for long stretches of time are tiring. This is because many learners seem to work much harder than necessary aiming for accurate perception and interpretation of every word/point they hear. In a long EFL listening comprehension exercise, a learner's grasp of the message is much better at the beginning and gets progressively worse as he/she goes on. This may be partly due to fatigue. The listener may run out of the energy necessary to absorb and interpret the strange sounds. It seems for this reason that many writers prescribe a short listening text. For example, there is a debate that a short listening text reduces the complexity of comprehension by reducing tiredness and lapse of concentration. Indeed, EFL learners find short simple passages with the minimum of necessary information easier to follow; this gives them more opportunity to grasp the information. With regard to the density of the message, many writers (McDonough and Shaw, 1993) claim that information is packed less densely in the spoken language than in the written language. If a written discourse is transformed to a spoken discourse and if used for the teaching of listening comprehension, it sounds unnatural and becomes difficult to understand.

According Carrier (1999) when a message contains more information that cannot be stored easily in memory, special listening skills and extra effort are required to understand and recall this information. In this case, therefore, if the listener does not possess or use the skills, he/she may fail to understand the information.

2.5.3.2 Quality of the text to arouse interest

It is important to pick topics that will be interesting for students of college age. When a topic is interesting, it generates enjoyment that contributes to motivation. Thus learners' interest should be taken in to consideration during selecting or preparing listening materials.

In colleges, we may have diverse students with varying interests and needs. However, it should be stressed that it is important to pick a subject matter at least which can address the interest of the young at college ages. If the information to be heard is interesting, it motivates the learners by making the listening activity enjoyable; it catches the attention of the learners and also encourages the learners to actively engage in the activity. Underwood (1989) explains the contribution of interest to attentive listening in terms of concentration saying that "If students find the topic interesting, they will find concentration easier." This shows that when the listening topic is interesting, students simply find listening work very enjoyable, because they are motivated to attentively follow what they listen to.

2.5.3.3 Conceptual Difficulty of the text

Difficult concept can be a factor that affects students L2 listening comprehension. If the concept of a listening passage is difficult, comprehension of that passage can be difficult. During selecting or preparing listening materials therefore, we should make sure that whether the difficulty level of the concept is manageable to all the students in the level. Themes that discuss people, environment and social issues are familiar while much theoretical concepts interfere with the students' comprehension regardless of their level. In relation to this, however, there are some people who neglect the higher level classes as opposed to the lower level classes. This may be partly due to the idea that the higher level students are able to cope with any kind of material, with whatever difficult concept it contains. However, the difficult job is on the selection of materials to the students of the higher level classes. Comparing the two, Ur (1991) points out that in lower-level classes selecting topics is not so much of a problem since the vocabulary available limits the range to subjects such as the family, the house, animals, the body and so on. Later, however, the students' command of language allows a much wider selection of topics. Here, we must try to avoid boring or over-theoretical subjects, using as far as possible the ones we think our students may be interested in, that seem of practical relevance, that may arouse or stimulate them.

This implies that the difficulty level should be taken in to account while selecting materials for all levels. If the information of the listening text becomes full of theoretical

concepts and if it becomes beyond the learners' experience, it leads to frustration rather than motivating to listen to it. This is because a difficult concept demands rich past experiences of the learners in addition to the linguistic abilities that are required to attain it. It seems for this reason that Ur (1991) asserts that giving easy material is less damaging than giving difficult material since listening passages that are too difficult can actually cause harm by frustrating, demoralizing, and demotivating students.

Listening activities and materials must be neither too easy nor too difficult, but set at an appropriate level in order to challenge the student to actively understand, form hypotheses, and to try to clear up ambiguities. This is a subjective statement, it is true, but listening comprehension materials are difficult to calibrate because no workable listening ability scales have been developed. In addition, listening comprehension materials must be meaningful and purposeful. No student can be expected to actively commit himself to using materials which are vacuous. Furthermore, students should understand why they are doing a particular activity, how they are to proceed with it, and what they are expected to do with it later. In fact, the above criteria may have to be supplied obligatorily for students whose cognitive strategies demand explicit instructions prior to learning (Snow and Perkins, 1979).

2.5.3.4 Visual support

Another barrier of listening comprehension is lack of visual support. Seeing the speaker's gesture and facial expressions makes it more difficult for the listener to understand the speaker's meaning. Many scholars agree that visual support has advantages of displaying picture and motion combined with sound, and it affords the opportunity to show the relationship of language and paralinguistics. Regarding to this point, for example, Harmer (1991) claims that the major advantage of visual support is that learners can see people speaking and can have a visual context for what is being said. This is because visual support enables learners to point out the many visual clues which listeners use to help them understand what they hear. Emphasizing this point, Underwood (1989) says:

Students will see whether the speakers are young or old, happy or angry, requesting or complaining. They will see the physical context in which the

speakers are speaking. They will see the facial expressions and gestures and, in some instances, the reactions of those whom the speaker is addressing.

These factors are important not only because they contribute to the immediate act of comprehension, but because they help the students to build up the kind of knowledge of context which is important for successful listening. As can be seen from the above statements, students who get visual clues can easily comprehend messages through the active listening they are engaged. Those students, whose listening is based only on audiotape without getting visual support, may face problems resulting from lack of paralinguistic elements. In most real life situations, the speaker is actually visible to the listener and his facial expression and gestures provide some aids to comprehension.

2.5.3.5 Culture-related factors

Lack of sociocultural and contextual knowledge of the target language can present an obstacle to comprehension as language is culture specific. Culture can be explained as what the society thinks and does and the language is the expression of the ideas of the society; language carries knowledge and cultural information and it reflects the substantial and particular ways of thinking of people. It seems for this reason that Brown (1994) says "the marriage between language and culture is inseparable." Culture plays a significant role not only in comprehension but also in learning a foreign language as a whole. Regarding this Brown states the following points.

"...culture, as ingrained set of behaviors and modes of perception, becomes highly important in the learning of a second language. A language is a part of culture and a culture is a part of language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture."

From this one can infer that the student with no background knowledge of culture in English, American or other English speaking countries, is unlikely to understand Anglophone modes of thinking as expressed in the English language. In addition, on studies conducted on the effects of pre-established background knowledge on reading comprehension, Brown found out that subjects performed significantly better when they are provided with reading passages that reflected their own cultural background. This

further demonstrates that background knowledge of culture is a significant factor that affects comprehension. Brown et al (1977, as cited in Long, 1989) found out that subjects performed significantly better when they are provided with reading passages that reflected their own cultural background. This further demonstrates that background knowledge of culture is a significant factor that affects comprehension. Brown et al (1977, as cited in Long 1989) found out that subjects performed significantly better when they are provided with reading passages that reflected their own cultural background. This further demonstrates that background knowledge of culture is a significant factor that affects comprehension.

According to Brown (1994), culture includes the sociolinguistic aspects of language which deal with politeness, formality, metaphor, register, and other culturally related aspects of language as dialects and figures of speech. He adds that if the L2 learners are not familiar with the sociolinguistic aspects of the language, they may misunderstand intended meanings of utterances within the contexts.

2.5.4 Complexity of listening tasks

In real life, the listener has a definite non-linguistic reason for listening, which means either for the sake of communication or entertainment. In listening classrooms, however, the reason for listening is purely linguistic, that is to improve the students listening skills. It is for these reasons that students are required to do something in response to what they hear that will demonstrate their understanding. Thus, students are encouraged to carry out tasks so that the outcome of the performance will be available for checking. Here the responses may be in the form of action, marking, drawing, writing or speaking (Ur, 1991).

The problem arises here however when the tasks require responses beyond checking the students listening skills. Ur (1991) asserts "...tasks that involve a lot of reading (such as answering multiple-choice questions) or a lot of writing (such as taking notes) have disadvantage." Her justification for this point is the existing difference between the effort taken to understand heard information and the effort exerted to read the questions (or to write the required response).

Here if the purpose of the tasks is to endorse all language skills other than targeting listening in particular, it may be necessary to employ tasks that involve reading, speaking or writing. But if the purpose of the task is to improve students' listening skills in particular, the response of the tasks should require responses which help to check only students' listening and understanding. Therefore, many writers agree that listening task should be one which requires quick simple responses and which do not demand the skills of reading, speaking and writing at the expense of listening (Hughes, 1989). Even, as far as the feedback on listeners' performance is concerned, these writers advise that the listening check should be predominantly listening- based, rather than reading, writing, or speaking-based.

2.5.4.1 Listening tasks versus questions

Two major developments have occurred with regard to listening tasks. It has been recognized that it is very difficult to check understanding accurately through the use of conventional comprehension questions. Answering such questions often involves a great deal of reading or writing; and if a learner gives a wrong answer, it may not be due to a failure of listening at all. It may be because he/she has not understood the question properly (a reading problem) or because he/she lacks the language to formulate a written answer (a writing problem). There has therefore been a move towards checking understanding by setting tasks rather than questions (see, e.g., Blundell and Stokes, 1981, as cited in Field, 2009). These tasks can be quite simple. Many involve the completion of simple grids. Others involve filling in forms. If the listening passage is a dialogue between a customer and a travel agent, then the task might require the learner to complete the kind of form that the agent would be using. The advantage of this kind of activity is not just that it reduces the amount and complexity of reading (and indeed writing) that has to be done. It also aligns the purposes and processes of listening more closely with what occurs in real-life encounters. Task-based activities compare favorably with the practice of asking whole-class comprehension questions, where the strong listeners are often keen to respond while the weaker ones mask their failure of understanding behind bright smiles. All class members have to participate, and there is a tangible outcome in

the form of a completed form or checklist which can be collected and marked (Field, 2009).

2.5.5 Text replay

A large assumption is made that learners become more competent listeners as the number of L2 listening experiences increases (Field, 2009). The two factors of teacher intervention and number of replays should be treated as continual and adjusted according to the needs of the class. Trials by teachers have shown that L2 listeners generally respond well to this methodology: they welcome the opportunity to hear a piece of input several times (Field, 2009). This implies the importance of exposing students repeatedly to the aural input so that they can access the information and do the exercise which they are expected to accomplish.

2.5.6 Noise Related Factors

Listening factors that are related to the physical setting where the teaching learning process of EFL listening is taking place can affect the learners' listening comprehension. Some of these factors that are claimed to affect the students EFL listening comprehension are those concerned with environmental distractions or associated visual support.

As far as the environmental distractions are concerned, environmental noises may originate from the surrounding sounds at the time of listening. If these noises come while the students are engaged in listening, they can be a potential source of disturbance that affects the learners' listening comprehension. Background noises on the recording can also be a source of disturbance which hinders effective listening and they take the listener's mind off the content of the listening passage.

Some say the distraction originates from the listening environment while others say the distraction can emerge from the listening equipment (such as, machines, cassettes, volume control, etc.), but this problem is particularly concerned with learners who get their listening from recordings. Unclear sounds resulting from poor-quality equipment can interfere with the listener's comprehension. Tone control interferes with listening comprehension.

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

A descriptive design which involves both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection and analysis was employed for this study. The tools used were semi-structured interview for students and English instructors' semi-structured interview, students' questionnaire (closed-ended), observation and content analysis. The study was conducted on 46 students who were selected as participants of the study and 7 instructors who were involved in the study for triangulation of data.

3.1 Study population

The target population of this study was all first year English students of 2012/13 academic year in Jimma CTE. There were 46 students in total who were enrolled in the current academic year as English students in one section only. The researcher also involved EFL instructors of the college to triangulate their data with the data obtained from the target population in order to maximize the credibility of the data obtained from the target group.

3.2 Sampling technique

The researcher purposely preferred to study on a college because it is the right institution to achieve two purposes of identifying the student teachers' problems as users of English thereby contributing to producing effective English, particularly, listening teachers. In other words, working on today's students teachers not only solves their problem but also the problems of children at school. Jimma CTE was chosen rather than other colleges since it is located in the researcher's current address, Jimma town. Moreover, no research has been conducted on listening at Jimma CTE.

Purposive sampling was employed to select the first year English major students since they were taking the listening course. There were 46 students in one section only and since the number of students was limited, the researcher decided to include all the 46 students which meant 100% of them in the study by using census method of sampling. Furthermore, the researcher involved teacher educators to triangulate their data with the

data obtained from the participants (students) of the study in order to maximize dependability of the data. The researcher used purposive sampling to select English instructors rather than other instructors because they were in the profession of teaching English courses including listening. Totally, there were 7 English instructors and by applying census method of sampling, all of them which means 100% were made to participate in the research.

3.3 Data Gathering Instruments

The methods the researcher used to gather data were interviews, questionnaire, observation and content analysis. Thus, the researcher designed semi-structured interviews for the target group or students and the instructors. A questionnaire, which contained closed-ended items, was designed to collect data from the participants of the study. Classroom observation was conducted while the EFL instructor was giving the listening lesson and the students were engaged in the listening lesson. Furthermore, content analysis of the listening texts and tasks was undertaken.

3.3.1 Semi-structured interview

Semi-structured interview was one of the instruments that the researcher used to gather data from the subjects of the study. As a result, a semi structured interview was designed by the researcher. The interview guide contained nine questions all of which were about factors affecting students listening comprehension. All of the students as mentioned above were made to give the interview. Similarly, semi-structured interview was designed by the researcher for the EFL instructors. The interview guide contained six questions all of which inquired the teacher educators of what they thought about factors that affect students' listening comprehension. As indicated above, all of the EFL instructors were made to take part in the interview.

3.3.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was developed and administered to the subjects of the study. The questionnaire contained thirty closed –ended questions all of which were related to linguistic and non-linguistic factors affecting students' listening comprehension. The closed-ended questions were developed in the Likert-scale format extending from **Never** to **Always** (**Never =1, Seldom=2, Sometimes=3, Often=4** and **Always =5**). Hence, the frequency adverbs were coded as 1 to 5 so that it is possible to represent and analyze the data quantitatively.

3.3.3 Observation

Classroom observation was used to assess the problems that EFL learners were facing from themselves, the speaker, the environment and the listening resources. Before the observation was conducted observation checklist containing 12 items with **Yes/No** format was prepared and also the researcher made records of additional qualitative data during the observation for the items in the checklist. As stated above, there was only one section of the target group of the study with three listening skills periods a week. The researcher conducted five periods' observations in three consecutive weeks.

3.3.4 Content analysis

The researcher used content analysis of the listening texts and tasks as an instrument to triangulate with the data obtained from the target subjects of the study. Before the content analysis was carried 11 criteria were set for the sake of obtaining the required data at ease. The listening texts and tasks used for analysis by the researcher were being used by the listening course instructor while the research was being conducted. Some criteria in the content analysis are treated again in the observation to check their applicability in the actual classroom during listening.

3.3.5 Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher carried out different activities in collecting the data for the study. Firstly, the tools (semi-structured interview for students and semi-structured interview for

instructors, students' questionnaire, observation checklist and content analysis checklist) were developed. Next to this, the researcher gave the tools to his advisor for comment. Immediately, after the incorporation of the comments, the questionnaire was translated into the students' mother tongue, Afan Oromo, so that they can easily understand the items and the tools were duplicated and made ready for execution. Besides, the researcher requested official letter from Jimma University to Jimma CTE to share their valuable cooperation for the researcher during data collection. To this end, the researcher provided the permission request letter to the College and discussed with the academic dean and EFL instructors on how to administer the tools. Consequently, they cooperated with the researcher in all aspects of collecting data.

Firstly, content analysis was carried out by the researcher. Secondly, observation of the listening classes was carried out by the researcher and thirdly the students' interview was conducted with the help of Afan Oromo translator then instructors' interview carried out and finally students' questionnaire was administered while students were in their classroom.

The students' interview was conducted in the college's compound. The interview was conducted for six consecutive days with 7 interviewees interviewed each day. Each student was interviewed for 20 minutes. The interviewer / researcher took notes of the interviewees responses as per the 9 questions developed in advance by the researcher. The instructors' interview was also conducted in the college's compound. All of the 7 instructors were interviewed and it took only one day. Each instructor was interviewed and made to respond to the 6 questions within 10 minutes. While the interviewees were giving their responses to the questions posed, the researcher / interviewer took notes of the data.

Since both the students and instructors were given an important orientation about the significance of the study, all of them participated actively in responding to all of the questions forwarded to them and for this the researcher expressed his gratefulness for their cooperation and contribution.

3.3.7 Methods of Data Analysis

After the collection of data, the researcher employed both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. Thus, the data obtained through closed-ended questionnaire were analyzed through descriptive statistics, using frequencies, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

Accordingly, the researcher used SPSS software to compute the collected data statistically. But, the data obtained through the interviews were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively by counting the respondents who gave the same responses. Moreover, the data collected using observation were analyzed both quantitatively using Yes /No frequency of task occurrences and qualitatively. The data obtained through content analysis were analyzed qualitatively.

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

In this chapter, the results obtained through the instruments: interviews, questionnaire, observation and content analysis are presented and discussed in line with pertinent literature incorporated in the literature review. All the data obtained through the interviews, observation and content analysis were analyzed separately and discussed along with the results of the questionnaire for triangulation since the questionnaire was applied to collect data from the target group of the study and the points around which the study revolves have been categorically classified in the questionnaire.

4.1 Analysis of Instructors' Interview

The researcher prepared semi-structured interview to gather data from English instructors about factors that affect students' listening comprehension. The reason why the instructors were interviewed was to triangulate the data obtained with the data collected from the target group, which were first year English major students who were taking the course 'listening skills' while the study was being conducted. The interview contained six questions and was administered to seven instructors. All of them gave the interview on all the questions. Therefore, hereunder, the analysis of the data obtained from the teacher educators through interview were analyzed by presenting the questions based on the order in which they were presented during the interview.

1. Whether the instructors think students encounter difficulties in their listening

All the seven English instructors responded to this question saying that students encountered problems in their listening comprehension. Therefore, as regards this question, 100% of the instructors did give 'Yes' response which logically led to the next five questions.

2. What linguistics –related problems do you think they face? And How?

The instructors were presented with the second interview question which inquired them about what linguistics-related problems students encountered. All of them responded almost the same saying that the linguistic problems that students faced were pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar which were difficult to comprehend for them. Four of the interviewees added discourse markers that signal the logical relationship between sentences, phrases and words to be taken as another factor affecting students listening comprehension. One of them further said that students most of the time did not understand the meaning and function of most of the discourse cues and as a result they could not properly follow them in the flow of spoken texts they happened to listen in their listening course. With regard to the problem of pronunciation the respondents said that students faced problems particularly when the speaker of the listening text was a native speaker. The respondents also said that students encountered difficult vocabulary and jargons in the course of their listening making it difficult for them to extract and make meaning out of what they listened. The interviewees explained that grammar was the other problem particularly when it was used to construct complex sentences in the listening texts meant for listening practice. Two of them added that when students struggled with the complex grammatical structures contained in the utterances they missed the meaning of the information that they were expected to grasp.

3. Why do you think these linguistic problems hinder students' listening comprehension performance?

The instructors were interviewed about why they thought these linguistic –related listening problems became a problem of listening. With regard to the challenges students faced in pronunciation, five of the interviewees responded that students, when exposed to native speakers on audio tapes in the classroom, they usually failed to grasp their accent and this in turn hindered them from recognizing and working out the meaning it carried while the rest two instructors said that students encountered pronunciation problems because they did not have enough practice on how the individual sounds which made up the words were pronounced. With respect to the issue of native accent the interviewer raised, they said that even if they were presented with a non-native pronunciation most of

them could not understand effectively and to the extent expected. One of these two instructors explained his experience in which he himself was reading the listening texts orally to his students of which most of them failed to grasp his non-native pronunciation.

When the interviewees were asked why students faced vocabulary and grammar problems in their listening, all of them said that students lacked background knowledge of these components of the language. Three of them further said that students did not receive good knowledge of the language when they were primary and secondary school students and they attributed this problem to the absence of appropriate methodology in the teaching of these language items. One respondent said that students thought that grammar in particular was something impossible to learn and that this attitude of theirs hindered not only their listening but also the other language skills. Another speaker said grammar was an essential tool that language users manipulated the way they liked to make meaning and convey information and thus, sentences which comprised complex grammatical structures could be a hindrance to effective listening comprehension.

One of the instructors further said that students were not usually allowed to join the department or field of their interest and they became less interested in learning the target language and its skills, particularly the listening skill.

In response to the why of discourse cues as a factor hindering listening, one of the four respondents who mentioned discourse markers as a factor said that students understood the meaning of the discourse marker if they were asked to give their individual meanings but the problem occurred when they found these linguistic devices in a connected flow of information and sentences. The other three respondents explained that it was because students were not aware of the meaning and function of individual discourse markers and they usually failed to understand them when they appeared in the spoken discourse.

4. What non –linguistic problems do you think students encounter in their listening? How do they affect students listening comprehension?

With regard to this question which asked instructors about what non-linguistic difficulties students encountered in their listening comprehension, all but one of the seven instructors responded that the subject matter of listening texts was not manageable to listen to and

respond to, the listening tasks were difficult to respond to and that students did not get sufficient opportunities to practice their listening comprehension skills. In their explanation of how these factors interfered with students' listening comprehension, all of them said that students, when made to listen to a text which was beyond their level of understanding, they got confused and failed to successfully comprehend the subject matter which meant they could not work out the tasks based on the information transmitted through the spoken media, therefore, they said, such listening texts discouraged students from practicing their listening comprehension. Regarding the use of listening strategies, all of the respondents said that students did not approach their listening practice strategically. In other words, they did not apply listening strategies to better undertake their listening comprehension practice.

Besides the above mentioned non-linguistic factors, four of the respondents added that lack of sufficient listening time, interesting listening texts, background to topics and manageable tasks were non-linguistic factor related problems. The interviewees unanimously responded that students were not provided with ample time for listening comprehension which led comprehension undoubtedly to suffer. One of them added saying that if students were forced to stop before they finished listening and doing the tasks, they would be discouraged. With respect to lack of interesting listening texts, they said that if the texts were not interesting in terms of different aspects such as subject matter and level of difficulty, students would immediately lose the interest to listen. The instructors explained regarding lack of background on the listening topics saying that if students were not provided with sufficient introduction about the listening topic through their listening instructor, the listening would eventually become a challenge to them. Two of them added that the problem would even become worse especially if the topic was far beyond the students' understanding. They said the instructor should give enough support in terms of filling in the gap of background knowledge, as otherwise, comprehension would seriously suffer.

The interviewees said that the listening questions and tasks were long and until students read and understood what they are required to do, they lose the orally delivered information.

One of the respondents explained that there was no language laboratory in the college and listening instructors were forced to use tape players. He further said that the absence of language laboratory affected the quality of the teaching/learning of listening comprehension skills.

5. Why do you think such non-linguistic problems interfere with students' listening comprehension?

The participants who responded to the what and how of non-linguistic factors that jeopardized students listening comprehension in the question above were asked why they thought the problems they mentioned became challenging to the learners. All of them said that due attention was not given during material selection and preparation to meet the level of understanding of students and as a result they, said, this became a challenge in making listening comprehension a success. One of them further replied that when the material developer or listening instructor happened to select listening materials he/she should consider students' interest, experience and level of difficulty of the subject matter. Regarding why the use of listening strategies became a factor affecting students listening comprehension the seven interviewees gave two different reasons. Four of them said that students knew listening strategies from their theoretical listening sessions but they did not know how to practically apply them during listening a passage while the rest three instructors responded saying that it was because students did not know what listening strategies to use.

Six of the interviewees said that the class time was not sufficient for both the practical listening and theoretical topics and that was why lack of time became a potential challenge in students' listening comprehension practice. Even one of them added that students should be provided with extra time for sufficient practice of listening or they should be encouraged to practice listening outside the classroom by using different audiovisual media.

Regarding lack of interesting listening texts, they all replied that it was because listening material developers did not give due consideration to what students were interested in and were not. They all said that because listening instructors did not give sufficient

background information on the listening topics, students usually got the listening texts difficult to comprehend and respond to.

**6. What other problems affecting listening skills do you think are there?
Why/why not?**

Among the interviewed seven instructors two of them said that they did not have other significant factors to add whereas three interviewees responded that surrounding noise could be mentioned as a factor affecting students' listening comprehension. In explaining their responses two of them said that noises coming from the next classroom and students who passed-by the listening classroom disturbed and distracted students' listening comprehension. One respondent said that noise coming from outside the classroom was a problem. Two respondents mentioned lack of attention as a factor. They explained that since most of students did not have interest in learning English in general and listening in particular, they did not give due attention. One of them added saying that students usually found listening texts difficult to understand in terms of the subject matter they conveyed as a result of which they lost the interest to listen.

To sum up, the data obtained through instructors' interview indicate that students encounter linguistic problems related to pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar and non-linguistic problems in relation to listening texts, tasks and practice.

4.2 Students' Interview Data Analysis

The researcher used semi-structured interview to collect data from students about factors that affect their listening comprehension skills. All of the 46 (100%) students were involved as respondents for the interview. Each student was asked nine questions prepared in advance by the researcher. The responses were analyzed so that it could easily be interpreted as an input for the research along with the data gathered through the other instruments.

1. Have you ever faced problems in listening to a text in your listening sessions?

All of the respondents (100%) involved in the interview replied to this first question saying that they faced problems in their listening comprehension practices.

2. What challenges have you faced in relation to linguistic elements which interfered with your listening comprehension?

Of the interviewed 46 respondents 35 (76.08%) replied by listing the linguistic elements that hindered them from undertaking listening in English effectively and they said that vocabulary and grammar were the potential challenges they encountered during listening in English and as to them grammar and vocabulary became the major sources of their listening problems because they encountered challenging vocabulary items and grammatical structures while listening. They responded that while they were engaged in listening texts some complex grammatical items and vocabulary interrupted their listening practice and this made them to struggle with the meaning of such grammar and vocabulary items at the expense of grasping the information conveyed through listening texts. In addition, they said that pronunciation was a problem to them and affected their listening comprehension skills. Twenty of the 35 interviewees said that pronunciation became a problem to them particularly when they were made to listen to native speakers as they could not understand most of what they said since they were not exposed to a native accent before. Five of them further said that it was also because they were not familiar with and did not have background knowledge about how some difficult words can be pronounced. They said that as they struggled to understand certain words they missed the information contained in such words and what is coming next in the text. The remaining 11 (23.91%) respondents said that they had no linguistic related challenges in most of the cases that hindered them from listening in English unless they encountered very difficult vocabulary and grammar.

3. What listening text related problems have you encountered? And to what extent the problem has affected your listening comprehension?

Of the total respondents, 28 (60.86%) respondents responded that they found the listening texts difficult to understand the subject matter of which the listening texts were about and this in turn made them to face challenges in responding to the listening questions which they were expected to respond to as per the information contained in the text. As a result, they said that they most of the time lost the interest to listen and the listening texts were boring and did not invite them to actively engage in listening effectively. The respondents

said that the problem of difficult listening texts sometimes went to the extent of missing almost the whole information provided through the texts. In contrast, 12(26.08%) respondents replied saying that the listening texts did not cause any problem that could jeopardize their comprehension skills and also the listening texts they encountered were interesting and appropriate for them to engage in listening comprehension practice. The remaining 6 (13.04%) respondents said that they sometimes faced difficult listening texts which were beyond their level of understanding and thus, the problem, they said, went to the extent of confusing them in the middle of the listening session.

4. What listening task related challenges have you encountered in your listening lessons? And to what degree has the problem jeopardized your listening comprehension?

From the total 46 respondents, 25(54.34 %) students replied that the listening tasks that they were presented with in their listening sessions were difficult to understand since they were composed of long sentences to which they were asked to give extended responses and they were not given sufficient time to read, understand the listening questions meant to be answered based on relevant information in the listening text. Furthermore, 20 of them added that they did not think the listening texts matched with their level because, they said, the questions required them to give a lot of information at a time. As a result, they replied they were generally not interested to give responses to the listening comprehension questions. Ten (21.73%) of them said that it was sometimes a problem for them to grasp the concept of the questions they were expected to answer. The remaining 11(23.91%) of the respondents replied saying that they were not encountered problems in relation to the listening questions and tasks they encountered.

5. Has your instructor given you opportunities to practice listening? If so, has it been sufficient? Why /why not?

From the total 46 respondents, 31(67.39%) of them said that their listening instructor didn't give them the opportunity to practice their listening comprehension skills and they also said that they did not almost have the opportunity to practice listening in English when they were students in the primary and secondary schools. This was because, they

continued, listening was not given the attention it deserved. Among the 31, 22 students added that they did not get enough opportunity to practice their listening skills because the listening course contained not only the practical listening course but also the theoretical and methodological aspects of teaching listening as a result of which practicing listening became limited hindering them from improving their listening comprehension skills to the standard expected from them and 9 of them further explained that they did not have the opportunity to listen and understand in English outside the classroom as a reason for their weakness in the listening comprehension skills. The remaining 15 (32.60%) of the respondents believed that their instructor did not give them sufficient listening comprehension practice by way of enabling them to easily comprehend listening texts and answer listening comprehension questions. They said that their instructor gave them the right directions and guidelines as to how they could practice listening comprehension in their listening classes which enabled them to tackle the difficulties they faced.

6. Are you familiar with listening strategies? Have you ever used listening strategies in your listening comprehension practice? Why/ why not?

Of the totally involved 46 interviewees, 20(43.47%) students responded that they did not apply listening strategies in their listening because they didn't properly know how to strategically approach their listening practices although they theoretical learnt the importance of using listening strategies in their listening course. Sixteen (34.78%) of them replied that they sometimes used listening strategies in their listening lessons because they said, listening strategies supported effective listening. The remaining respondents which were 10(21.73%) said that they did not apply listening strategies in their listening sessions because their listening teacher did not practically help them as to how they could use the strategies. One interviewee further said that he did not know for sure which strategy works best for which text.

7. Are there other problems that you think have jeopardized your listening comprehension skills? If so, what are they?

Eighteen (39.13%) of the respondents said that they did not have other listening problems to add whereas 21(45.65%) respondents said that they faced shortage of time in listening to the passages and doing the tasks and their instructor did not give them the chance to listen to the listening passage again and again until they grasped the information transmitted to them. Ten students from the 21 added they faced the problem of speedy speakers in their listening. Four (8.69%) of the respondents replied that they encountered the problem of noise and finally the remaining 3(6.52%) interviewees said that they faced the problems of lack of audibility on the part of the speaker/s and fast speakers during listening text.

8. Has your listening instructor ever tried to help you to tackle the problems you have mentioned above? If so, what measures did he take?

In response to this question,21(45.65%) of the total respondents believed that their instructor asked them if they had any questions after their listening sessions to find out their difficulties in listening and encouraged them to ask questions in case of any difficulties they encountered with regard to their listening whereas the remaining 25(54.34%) respondents said that he didn't help them sufficiently so that they could overcome their problems in listening except inviting them to ask questions about the lesson.

9. Did you find the measures taken by your instructor sufficient and helpful in terms of enabling you to comprehend orally delivered information successfully? Why /why not?

With regard to this item,21students responded that their listening instructor encouraged them to raise questions and any difficulties they encountered, majority of the twenty one, which were 18 subjects, further said that their instructor did what was possible to help them.Even one student added that the listening teacher observed their difficulties since he did not have to wait until they asked for helpbut3 students said that they did not think inviting students to ask questions was enough.The 25 students who responded above to

have not received sufficient help from their listening instructor in terms of alleviating their listening comprehension problems replied that they needed sufficient help. One student further said that since the teacher knew their problems, he should take practical actions to help them. Five students added that they had to, of course, practice more by their own but they said they needed some guidelines on how to go about it.

In short, the data collected through the subjects' interview revealed that students encountered linguistic problems in relation to pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar during listening and non-linguistic problems related to the listener, speaker, listening texts and tasks, listening practice and time as challenges affecting students' listening comprehension.

4.3 Analysis of students' Questionnaire

The data obtained through the closed ended questionnaire meant for students was analyzed quantitatively based on frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation using SPSS software. Hereunder, the data is presented in tables and analyzed along with the data obtained through the other tools. The questionnaire is classified into two broad categories of linguistic and non-linguistic, in which the non-linguistic is further classified as factors that affect students' listening comprehension in English. The rationale for this classification is that each category comprises items which share the same characteristics although all of them happen to affect listening comprehension.

In the analysis of the collected data descriptive statistics procedures were applied. Hence, mean and deviation were computed. The standard deviation (SD) was used to determine the dispersion among the data. When the SD is closer to 0, it represents less disparity among the data indicating the strength of the data whereas when the SD becomes greater, it indicates less consistency and high variation among the data at hand. In other words, when the SD is closer to 0, it confirms the strength of the representativeness of the mean of the group and vice versa.

4.3.1 Linguistic factors

In this category of linguistic factors, items related to pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, sentential structure and discourse markers are presented in the table below with their frequency, percent, mean, and standard deviation statistically computed and analyzed.

Table 4.3.1.1: Responses to Linguistic factors related items

R.N o	Items	Never 1		Seldom 2		Sometime s 3		Often 4		Always 5		Total		M	SD
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
		1	I found it difficult to recognize the words I know because of the way they are pronounced	1	2.2	3	6.5	3	6.5	15	32.6	24	52.2		
2	Unfamiliar words including jargon and idioms interfered with my listening comprehension	2	4.3	1	2.2	3	6.5	28	60.9	12	26.1	46	100	4.02	.906

3	Complex grammatical structures interfered with my listening comprehension	1	2.2	3	6.5	4	8.7	15	32.6	23	50	46	100	4.22	1.009
4	Difficult Discourse markers interfered with my listening comprehension	4	8.7	2	4.3	3	6.5	12	26.1	25	54.3	46	100	4.13	1.258
5	The length and complexity of sentences interfered with my listening comprehension	3	6.5	1	2.2	2	4.3	27	58.7	13	28.3	46	100	4.00	1.011

Note: F= Frequency, M=Mean, SD=Standard deviation

Among the 46 respondents only 1 (2.2%) replied that he never encountered words he did not recognize because of the way the words were pronounced while 3(6.5%) of them said that they seldom encountered words they did not recognize because of the way they were pronounced. Other 3 (6.5%) participants replied that they sometimes encountered words which were difficult because of the way they were pronounced. Fifteen (32.6%) respondents replied that they often encountered words they did not recognized because of the way they were pronounce whereas 24(52.2%) respondents replied that they always



encountered words they did not recognize because of the way they were pronounced. The mean value appeared to be 4.24 inclining to Always and Often. The standard deviation was found to be 1.058. The data confirmed that students encountered words they did not recognize because of the way they were pronounced. Therefore, pronunciation should be considered as a factor which affects learners' listening comprehension. The data obtained through the students' and instructors' interview also indicated that students faced difficult pronunciation during listening especially when they were exposed to a native accent on the tapes they happened to listen. There is still data coming from the listening classes which further strengthens the problem encountered by students with regard to difficult pronunciation. During the classroom observation the researcher could observe that the speakers on the tape were native speakers usually with difficult pronunciation in which most of the students were complaining to their teacher that they could not understand what the speaker said because of the pronunciation. Ur (1991) forwards that students may encounter significant and difficult words with challenging sounds to perceive and parse into parts in the flow of speech which means this problem is caused by unfamiliar sounds faced by L2 listeners.

Regarding the data gathered through item 2, 2(4.3%) of the respondents came up with the response that they never encountered unfamiliar and jargon vocabulary while only 1 (2.2%) respondent replied that he seldom encountered unfamiliar and jargon words. Three (6.5%) respondents said that they sometimes encountered unfamiliar and jargon vocabulary. Twenty eight (60.9%) respondents replied that they often encountered unfamiliar and jargon words whereas 12(26.1%) respondents said that they always encountered unfamiliar and jargon vocabulary in their listening comprehension practice. The mean score was found to be 4.02 indicating the category of Always and Often. The standard deviation was calculated to be .906. The data collected through the subjects' interview indicated that students struggled with the meaning difficult and unfamiliar vocabulary items during listening. The instructors also replied that students encountered difficult vocabulary while listening. The data obtained through content analysis also confirmed the presence of unfamiliar words which could hinder students' listening comprehension. The researcher further investigated and found through his observation

that the listening instructor did not give key vocabulary instruction before students were exposed to the listening texts. Therefore, the data collected through all of the instruments implies that unfamiliar and jargon vocabulary items to be one of the factors that affect students' listening comprehension. In support of this finding, Underwood (1989) says that when people are exposed to unfamiliar words in their listening and it becomes a barrier to effective comprehension of the aural information which may lead to the extent of missing the information to come in the next part of the speech.

From the total respondents only 1 (2.2%) student responded that he never encountered complex grammatical structure which interfered with his listening comprehension whereas 3(6.5%) respondents replied they seldom encountered complex grammatical structures which interfered with their listening comprehension. Four (8.7%) respondents said that they sometimes encountered complex grammatical structures which interfered with their listening comprehension while 15(32.6%) respondents replied they often encountered complex grammatical structures which jeopardized their listening comprehension. Twenty three (50%) of the respondents said complex grammatical structures always jeopardized their listening comprehension practice. The mean value was found to be 4.22, which lies in the Always and Often category of the scale indicating that majority of the students encountered complex grammatical structures that jeopardized their listening comprehension. The standard deviation was calculated to be 1.009. The data obtained through students' interview confirmed that students encountered complex grammatical structures in their listening. Similarly, the instructors' interview indicated the presence of grammatical challenges in the students' listening to texts. The researcher could also find out difficult grammatical structures in the listening texts meant for students listening practice. Therefore, the data collected through all these instruments implies the presence of grammatical problem as a factor affecting students' listening comprehension.

In response to item 4, 4 (8.7%) respondents replied that they never encountered discourse signals which interfered with their listening comprehension whereas 2(4.3%) respondents said they seldom encountered discourse cues which jeopardized their listening

comprehension. Three (6.5%) respondents replied that they sometimes encountered discourse markers which interfered with their listening comprehension while 12 (26.1%) respondents replied saying that they often encountered discourse cues which jeopardized their listening comprehension and 25 (43.3%) respondents said they encountered discourse cues which interfered with their listening comprehension. The mean value appeared to be 4.13 indicating the Always and Often category in the continuum and the standard deviation was found out to be 1.258. The instructors' interview also confirmed the presence of difficult discourse cues which hindered students from effective listening comprehension encounters. Therefore, the data gathered through both instruments imply that discourse cues belong to the factors which affect students' listening comprehension. With respect to discourse cues encountered in listening Olsen and Huckin (1999, as cited in Jung, 2003) reported that most L2 learners with proper comprehension of English at the sentence level had difficulty identifying the main ideas in a speech, mainly as a consequence of their inability to utilize discourse level cues that signaled the organization of the speech.

In their response to item 5, 3 (6.5%) respondents said they were never hindered by lengthy and complex sentences in their listening and only 1 (2.2%) respondents said that he was never jeopardized by lengthy and complex sentences during listening. Two (4.3%) respondents replied that they sometimes faced lengthy and complex sentences which hindered their listening comprehension whereas 27 (58.7%) respondents replied they often encountered lengthy and complex sentences in their listening comprehension. Thirteen (28.3%) respondents replied that they always encountered lengthy and complex sentences which interfered with their listening comprehension. The mean score was found to be 4 indicating that majority of the students faced lengthy and complex sentences in their listening comprehension. The standard deviation appeared to be 1.011. The instructors, in the interview, also indicated that lengthy and complex sentences caused difficulties in the students' proper understanding of the listening texts. Besides, lengthy and complex sentences were revealed in the analysis of the listening texts. In the texts, lengthy and complex sentences were found. As a result, the researcher can infer from the data obtained that lengthy and complex sentences that make up the listening texts are one of

the sources of problems in relation to students' listening comprehension. According to Brown and Yule (1983), if the listener is unable to segment complex embedded sentences into more basic syntactic units or if the listener cannot parse the complex sentences into their constituents, comprehension will suffer. While the cognitive task of making sense of embedded sentences requires analysis of the complex utterances into more basic units, the listener must also know how to add the missing elements in incomplete elliptical sentences. If the listener fails to do this requirement which is necessary for good listening comprehension, comprehension can suffer.

4.3.2. Non –Linguistic Factors

In this category of listening factors, those items in relation to listener, speaker/s, listening texts and tasks, listening practice and timing and noise or distractions are presented together with their statistical analysis of frequency, percent, mean and standard deviation in the tables of each category of items to come below.

4.3.2.1 Listener –related factors

Listeners' problems may arise from inability to use appropriate listening strategies, inability to grasp pronunciation, frustration, listening only to voice without seeing the speaker's facial expressions and gesture and lack of attention. In Table 2.1 below, the data collected through these items are statistically computed and presented.

Table 4.3. 2.1.1: Responses to Listener related factors

R. N.	Items	Never 1		Seldom 2		Sometim es 3		Often 4		Always 5		Total		M	SD
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
		6	I am attentive during listening	2	4.3	3	6.5	2	4.3	14	30.4	25	54.3		

7	I use different strategies while listening to maximize my understanding of the oral text	26	56.5	14	30.4	2	4.3	3	6.5	1	2.2	46	100	1.67	.990
8	I can predict what will come next in the listening text	28	60.9	12	26.1	1	2.2	3	6.5	2	4.3	46	100	1.65	1.037
9	I do not feel worried and discouraged when I failed to understand the spoken text	25	54.3	12	26.1	5	10.9	3	6.5	1	2.2	46	100	1.76	1.037
10	I can listen and understand the meaning of what the speaker says even if I do not see the facial expression and gesture of a live speaker/s	6	13	8	17.4	15	32.6	8	17.4	9	19.6	46	100	3.13	1.293

Note: F= Frequency, M=Mean, SD=Standard deviation

As indicated in item 6 above, 2(4.3%) of the respondents replied that they never listened attentively and 3(6.5%) of them responded saying that they seldom listened attentively

whereas 2(4.3%) subjects responded saying that they sometimes gave attention during listening while 14 (30.4%) respondents indicated that they often listened attentively and 25 (54.3%) subjects gave their response that they always listened attentively. The mean score is found to be 4.24 indicating the Often and Always category of responses in the scale and the standard deviation is calculated to be 1.099. Therefore, the result obtained indicates that students' less attentiveness during listening is less significant to be treated as a listening problem to the subjects of the study.

Item 7 asks whether students use listening strategies, majority of them which is 26 (56.5%) of the total respondents replied that they never used listening strategies during listening and 14(30.4%) said that they seldom used listening strategies while 2(4.3%) of them said that they sometimes used listening strategies whereas 3(6.5%) respondents replied that they often used listening strategies and only 1 (2.2 %) respondents said that he/she always used listening strategies. The mean score is 1.67, which lies in the seldom and never of the scale and the standard deviation is calculated to be .990. This data is further supported by the data gathered through students' interview, instructors' interview, classroom observation and content analysis in which majority of the student respondents and instructors revealed in the interviews that students did not apply listening strategies in their listening encounters.

Item 8 specifically asks students whether they use prediction as a listening strategy. In the response given, 28(60.9%) of the respondents said that they never used prediction as a listening strategy and 12(26.1%) respondents replied that they seldom used prediction strategy while listening whereas only 1(2.2 %) respondent replied that he sometimes used prediction in his listening. Other 3(6.5 %) respondents replied that they often used prediction during listening while 2(4.3 %) participants responded that they always applied prediction in their listening. The mean is calculated to be 1.65 which is found in the seldom and never side of the scale and the standard deviation appeared to be 1.037. So, this data strengthens the data obtained in response to the general question asked about students' use of listening strategies above since prediction is one of the listening strategies.

For item 9, 25(54.3%) of the respondents responded that they never felt unworried when they did not immediately comprehend the spoken text and 12(26.1%) of them said that they seldom felt unworried when they did not immediately understand the orally delivered passage while 5(10.9%) of them replied that they sometimes felt unworried when they did not understand the orally delivered information and 3(6.5%) respondents said that they often felt unworried when they missed information from the spoken text while the remaining only 1(2.2%) subject responded that he always felt unworried when he missed information during listening. The mean score is found to be 1.76 showing the negative category of responses of seldom and never. The standard deviation is calculated to be 1.037. Therefore, this data implies that the problem is significant in terms of affecting students' listening comprehension.

Item 10 was devised to check whether students' listening comprehension was hindered by the absence of facial expression and gesture of speaker/s on audio tapes. It is known that when two or more people conduct face to face conversations, the facial expression and gesture of the speaker has contribution for the listener's/s' better understanding.

Therefore, Regarding this item which asks whether students can understand the speaker without seeing facial expression and gesture, 6(13%) of the respondents replied that they never understood if they did not see the facial expression and gesture of the speaker and 8 (17.4%) of them responded that they seldom understood in the absence of the speakers facial expression and gesture whereas 15(32.6%) respondents said that they sometimes understood the speaker/s in the absence of facial expression and gesture and 8(17.4%) respondents replied that they often understood even if they did not see the speakers facial expression and gesture while 9(19.6%) respondents replied saying that they always understood even if they did not see the speakers' facial expression and gesture. The mean value is found to be 3.13 and the standard deviation is calculated to be 1.293. The data shows that the absence of speakers' facial expression and gesture does not affect the students' listening comprehension.

4.3.2.2 Speaker –related factors

Speaker factors can be a source of listening comprehension problems. Problems of listening comprehension related to speaker can be seen in relation to the speaker's speaking style, audibility, speed and native accents. Thus, the following table presents listening factors in relation to the speaker.

Table 4.3.2.2.2: Responses to speaker- related factors

R. No.	Items	Never 1		Seldom 2		Some times 3		Often 4		Always 5		Total		M	SD
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
11	I find the speaker's speed appropriate in my listening lessons	24	52.2	12	26.1	6	13	2	4.3	2	4.3	46	100	1.83	1.102
12	The speaker's speaking style (e.g. casual, formal, friendly) appropriate and convenient for me?	2	4.3	4	8.7	5	10.9	10	21.7	25	54.3	46	100	4.13	1.185

13	The speaker's/s' sound is audible enough for me	0	0	0	0	6	13	12	26.1	28	60.9	46	100	4.72	.688
14	I understand native speakers in my listening sessions?	24	52.2	13	28.3	4	8.7	3	6.5	2	4.3	46	100	1.83	1.122

Note: F= Frequency, M=Mean, SD=Standard deviation

In response to item 11, 24(52.2%) of the respondents responded that they never found the speakers' speed appropriate in their listening lessons and 12(26.1%) of them responded that they seldom encountered speakers with appropriate speed in their listening lessons while 6(13%) respondents replied that they sometimes encountered speakers with appropriate speed in their listening and 2(4.3%) respondents said that they often encountered speakers with appropriate speed in their listening lessons whereas other 2(4.3%) respondents replied saying that they always encountered speakers with appropriate speed in their listening sessions. The mean score is calculated to be 1.83, showing a negative tendency of seldom and never and the standard deviation is calculated to be 1.102. Majority of the students, in the interview, also replied that they encountered fast speakers in their listening. Likewise, in the observation, it was found out that the speed at which the speaker spoke was not reasonable and was beyond what students could manage to listen and comprehend properly. Therefore, this implies that the fast speed of the speaker is a potential problem that hinders students' listening comprehension.

In response to item 12, 2(4.3%) of respondents replied that they never got the speaker's speaking style appropriate and convenient for them to comprehend the text and 4(8.7%)

of them said that they seldom found the speaker's speaking style appropriate and convenient for them to comprehend the listening text. Five (10.9%) respondents said they sometimes found the speakers speaking style convenient for them. Ten (21.7%) respondents replied that they often found the speakers speaking style convenient for them while 25(54.3 %) respondents gave their response saying that the speakers speaking style was always convenient for them. The mean is found to be 4.13 indicating that majority of the students responded that the speakers speaking style was convenient for them. The standard deviation is 1.185. Similarly, in the observation, it was found that the speaker's speaking style was appropriate and convenient for effective listening comprehension practice to take place.

As indicated in the table above, all of the respondents gave only two types of responses for item 13 in which 28(60.9 %) of them said that they often found the speakers' voice audible for them to listen whereas 12(26.1%) of them said that they always found the speakers' voice audible for them to listen effectively. The mean score, which is 4.48, lies in the positive side of the scale confirming the absence of audibility problem. The standard deviation is calculated to be .722 showing the narrowness of variation among the respondents in terms of the responses they gave. In the observation, it was also revealed that the speakers of listening texts were audible enough.

According to the data presented in the table for item 14, 24(52.2%) responded that they never understood native speakers and 13(28.3 %) replied that they seldom understood native speakers while 4 (8.7%) said that they sometimes understood native speakers while 3(6.5%) of them responded that they often understood them whereas 2(4.3%) respondents said that they always understood native speakers. The mean score is 1.83, which is inclined to the negative responses of seldom and never. The standard deviation is found to be 1.122. The instructors' interview confirmed that students failed to understand native speakers because of their pronunciation which students were not familiar with. Therefore, this finding is related to the pronunciation problem which students responded to have encountered in Item 1 above and strengthens it.

4.3.2.3 Listening text –related factors

Listening text- related factors can be a source of listening comprehension problems. Problems of listening comprehension related to the listening text can be seen in relation to topic familiarity, difficulty level of subject matter, the texts'interestingness,cultural contents of texts, length of the text and the use of visual support. Thus, the following table presents listening factors related to the listening text along with the data analyzed statistically.

Table 4.3.2.3.3: Responses to listening text related factors

R N o.	Items	Never 1		Seldom 2		Sometim es 3		Often 4		Always 5		Total		M	SD
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
		1 5	I encounter familiar topics in the listening texts?	0	0	4	8.7	3	6.5	17	37	22	47.8		
1 6	I understand the subject matter in the listening texts without difficulty	28	60.9	10	21.7	4	8.7	2	4.3	2	4.3	46	100	1.70	1.093

17	I am exposed to listening texts having contents the same as my culture	1	2.2	2	4.3	3	6.5	12	26.1	28	60.9	46	100	4.39	.954
18	I am exposed to reasonable length listening texts	28	60.9	11	23.9	2	4.3	3	6.5	2	4.3	46	100	1.70	1.113
19	The listening texts are interesting for me	27	58.7	10	21.7	5	10.9	3	6.5	1	2.2	46	100	1.72	1.047
20	Visual support is presented along with the text to facilitate my listening comprehension	29	63	11	23.9	4	8.7	2	4.3	0	0	46	100	1.61	.977

Note: F= Frequency, M=Mean, SD=Standard deviation

According to the data obtained from item 15, none (0%) of the respondents replied that the topics of listening texts were neverfamiliar with them and 4(8.7 %) of them responded that they seldom got the listening topicsfamiliar with them whereas 3(6.5%) respondents said that they sometimes found listening topics familiar while 17(37%) respondents replied that they often found listening topics familiar with them whereas22(47.8%) of the respondents replied saying that listening topics were always familiar with them. The mean score is calculated to be 4.24 and the standard deviation is

found to be .923, indicating that students do not encounter unfamiliar topics in their listening.

In item 16, it is shown that 28(60.9%) of the respondents replied that they never found the listening texts having reasonable level of difficulty and 10(21.7%) of them responded that they seldom encountered listening texts with reasonable level of difficulty whereas 4(8.7%) respondents said that they sometimes encountered texts with reasonable level of difficulty while 2(4.3 %) respondents said that they often encountered texts with reasonable level of difficulty and 2(4.3%) respondents replied that they always encountered listening texts with reasonable level of difficulty. The mean is calculated to be 1.70, having a negative tendency of seldom and never of the scale and the standard deviation is found to be 1.093 .In support of this data, majority of the students, in the interview, informed that they found the listening texts difficult and the interviewed instructors also said that the listening texts presented to students were beyond their level of understanding. Similarly, the content analysis confirmed that the listening texts were difficult for the students to grasp through listening. Therefore, the obtained data imply that the level of difficulty of the texts meant for listening comprehension practice need to be considered as one of the factors that affect students' listening comprehension.

The data collected from item 17 shows that of the total respondents, only 1 (2.2%) of them replied that they never encountered contents the same as their culture and 2 (4.3 %) responded that they seldom encountered contents the same as their culture. Other 3(6.5%) respondents said that they sometimes encountered contents the same as their culture whereas 12(26.1%) respondents replied that they often encountered contents the same as their culture while 28(60.9%) of them said that they always encountered contents the same as their culture. The mean appeared to be 4.39 and the standard deviation is found to be .954, indicating that majority of respondents did not encounter culturally different contents. In the content analysis also it was found that the listening texts did not contain topics different from their culture. Therefore, the question of cultural relevance of the listening texts is less significant to be considered as a hindrance to students' listening comprehension.

Regarding item 18, from all the respondents who were involved in filling in the questionnaire, 28(60.9 %) replied that they were never exposed to listening texts with reasonable length and 11 (23.9%) said that they were seldom exposed to texts with reasonable length in their listening while 2(4.3%) respondents said that they sometimes encountered reasonably long listening texts and 3(6.5%) respondents replied that they often encountered listening texts with reasonable length whereas other 2(4.3%) respondents said that they always encountered listening texts having reasonable length. The mean value is calculated to be 1.70, indicating a negative tendency that students were not exposed to listening texts with reasonable length and the standard deviation is found to be 1.113. The data obtained through content analysis also indicated that most of the listening texts were lengthy. Therefore, all the data discussed so far implies that lengthy listening texts need to be considered as one of the factors that affect students' listening comprehension.

With respect to item 19, as shown in the table above, 27(58.7%) of the respondents replied that they were never exposed to interesting listening texts and 10 (21.7%) of them said that they were seldom exposed to interesting texts in their listening comprehension sessions whereas 5(10.9%) respondents replied that they sometimes found their listening texts interesting and 3(6.5) participants responded that they often enjoyed the listening texts while only 1(1 %) respondent replied that he always enjoyed the listening texts. The mean value is found to be 1.72 showing a negative tendency that students did not find their listening texts interesting and the standard deviation appeared to be 1.047. In the students' interview, majority of the interviewees also said that they were not interested in the listening texts they were exposed to. Likewise, the instructors confirmed that most of the listening texts were not interesting for the students. Therefore, the data imply that lack of interesting listening texts to be among the factors that affect students' listening comprehension.

In response to item 20, 29(63%) respondents said that they were never presented with visual support associated with the listening text 11 (23.9%) of them responded that they were seldom presented with visual support during listening and 4(8.7%) respondents

replied saying that they were sometimes exposed to visual support whereas 2(4.3%) respondents replied that they were often exposed to visual support materials while none of respondents said that he/shewasalways presented with visual support during their listening encounter. The mean score is found to be 1.61 which indicated the negative category of seldom and never in the scale and the standard deviation is found to be .977. The data was supported by the data obtained through the observation in that the researcher did not observe any displayed visual support in all of the five observations while listening was going on although some of the listening texts were analyzed to have contained visual support figures .Therefore, thisimplies that visual support is one of the factors that affect students' listening comprehension.Harmer (1991) claims that the major advantage of visual support is that learners can see people speaking and can have a visual context for what is being said. This is because visual support enables learners to point out the many visual clues which listeners use to help them understand what they hear.

4.3.2.4 Listening task –related factors

Listening task- related factors can be taken as one of the sources of listening comprehension difficulties. Problems of listening comprehension related to the listening tasks can be seen in relation to the nature and type of tasks presented along with the listening texts. The following table provides data collected through listening task related items.

Table 4.3.2.4.4: Responses to Listening task related factors

R . N o.	Items	Never 1		Seldom 2		Sometim es 3		Often 4		Always 5		Total	M	SD
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%			

21	I am presented with listening tasks that require to mark, draw, fill etc.	26	56.5	15	32.6	2	4.3	1	2.2	2	4.3	46	100	1.65	.994
22	The listening tasks and questions are reasonably simple to respond to	26	56.5	12	26.1	5	10.9	2	4.3	1	2.2	46	100	1.70	.986
23	I am Exposed to different types of listening tasks	27	58.7	12	26.1	4	8.7	1	2.2	2	4.3	46	100	1.67	1.034
24	The listening tasks and questions are short to respond to	16	34.8	17	37.0	8	17.4	3	6.5	2	4.3	46	100	2.09	1.092
25	The listening instructor presents pre-listening tasks	21	45.7	16	34.8	6	13.0	3	6.5	0	0	46	100	1.80	.910

Note: F= Frequency, M=Mean, SD=Standard deviation

The reason why the researcher decided to include item 21 was to know whether tasks which required students to mark, draw, fill etc. are used in the practice of listening since they minimize the burden of reading longer questions and responding through extended

writing which was more challenging for the students to accomplish a lot of reading and writing while they were listening to the texts.

In response to this item as indicated in the table above 26 (56.5%) respondents replied that they were never presented with listening tasks that required them to mark, draw, fill etc. and 15 (32.6%) of them responded that they were seldom presented with listening tasks that required to mark, draw, fill etc. whereas 2 (4.3%) respondents said that they sometimes did marking, drawing, filling etc. listening tasks whereas only 1 (2.2%) respondent replied that he often encountered listening tasks which required him to mark, draw, fill etc. while 2 (4.3%) respondents replied that they always did tasks that required them to draw, mark, fill etc. The mean score appeared to be 1.65, which is inclined to the negative side of never and seldom responses and the standard deviation of the data is found to be .994. The data obtained through the students' interview revealed that students were presented with Wh-type questions instead of tasks which required them such as to mark and to draw. This data is further strengthened by the data obtained through the content analysis. In the content analysis, it was found that most of the tasks were Wh-questions which are usually difficult to answer in that they needed extended response through longer writing. The instructors also said that the listening tasks were Wh-questions which required students to give extended responses. Therefore, the obtained data implies the absence of tasks that require students to mark, draw, fill etc. as a factor that affects students' listening comprehension. Field (2009) points out that the advantage of this kind of activity is not just that it reduces the amount and complexity of reading (and indeed writing) that has to be done. It also aligns the purposes and processes of listening more closely with what occurs in real-life encounters. Task-based activities compare favorably with the practice of asking whole-class comprehension questions, where the strong listeners are often keen to respond while the weaker ones mask their failure of understanding behind bright smiles but unfortunately the data obtained through the instruments mentioned above revealed that students were not presented with listening tasks that required them, for instance, to mark, draw and fill.

Regarding item 22, 26(56.5%) respondents replied that they never found the listening questions reasonably simple to respond to and 12(26.1%) of them said that they seldom found the listening tasks and questions reasonable simple to respond to whereas 5(10.9%) respondents replied that they sometimes found the listening tasks and questions reasonably simple to respond to and 2(4.3%) respondents said that they often found the listening tasks and questions reasonably simple to respond to while only 1(2.2%) respondent replied that he always found the listening tasks and questions reasonably simple to respond to. The mean value appeared to be 1.70 which lies in the negative side of seldom and never and the standard deviation is calculated to be .986. Majority of the subjects replied in the interview that the listening tasks and questions were difficult to respond to. Similarly, the instructors' interview confirmed that students were made to respond to difficult questions in their practice of listening skills and the content analysis realized that the questions that students were exposed to were difficult. Therefore, the gathered data implies that the level of difficulty of listening tasks and question should be considered as a factor affecting students' listening comprehension practice.

In item 23, among the total respondents, 27(58.7%) of them responded that they never encountered different types of listening tasks and questions whereas 12(26.1%) of the respondents said that they seldom got exposed to variety of listening tasks and 4(8.7%) respondents replied that they were sometimes exposed to different types of listening tasks and questions and only 1(2.2%) respondent replied that he was often exposed to variety of listening tasks and questions while 2(4.3%) respondents replied saying that they always encountered different types of listening tasks and questions in their listening. The mean value is calculated to be 1.67 inclining to the negative side of the continuum and the standard deviation is found to be 1.034. The subjects, in the interview, made clear that they were made to work out difficult Wh-questions in their listening confirming that they did not encounter other types of listening tasks. The same is true with the instructors who responded to the interview question that students usually confronted Wh- questions. Furthermore, the data obtained from both the content analysis and observation confirmed the absence of variety of listening tasks and questions meant

for helping students to practice listening comprehension. Therefore, the obtained data implies that absence of variety in the listening tasks and questions to be a factor affecting students' accomplishment in their listening comprehension.

As indicated in the table ,for item 24 , 16 (34.8 %) of the respondents replied that they never encountered short listening tasks and questions to respond to and 17(37%) respondents said that they seldom encountered short listening tasks and questions while 8 (17.4%) respondents said that they sometimes encountered short tasks and questions and 3(6.5%) respondents replied that they often encountered short tasks and questions to respond to(4.3%) respondents said that they always encountered short listening questions and tasks to respond to. The mean value is found to be 2.09 inclining to the negative side of seldom and the standard deviation is 1.092. Moreover, the data obtained through content analysis confirmed that the listening questions were lengthy for the students to respond to. Therefore, the length of listening questions can be taken as a factor that affects students' listening comprehension.

According to the data presented in the table above for item 25,21(45.7%) of the respondents replied that they were never involved in pre-listening tasks and 16 (34.8) of them responded that they were seldom engaged in pre-listening tasks whereas 6 (13%) respondents said that they sometimes encountered pre-listening tasks and 3(6.5%) respondents replied that they often practiced pre-listening tasks while none of the respondents said that he/she always encountered pre-listening tasks. The mean score is calculated to be 1.80 showing that students were not presented with pre-listening tasks and the standard deviation appeared to be .910. The data obtained through both content analysis and observation also confirmed that pre-listening tasks were almost neglected. As a result, as the data implies lack of pre-listening tasks needed to be considered as a factor that affects students' listening comprehension practice.

4.3.2.5 Practice and time –related factors

Listening practice and time - related factors can be taken as one of the sources of challenge in listening comprehension. Problems of listening comprehension related to listening practice and timing can be seen in relation to the sufficiency of practice

opportunities and time allotted for listening and playing audio tapes or reading aloud repeatedly. The data is provided in the table below.

Table 4.3.2.5.5: Responses to listening practice and time factors

R o. N o.	Items	Never 1		Seldom 2		Sometim es 3		Often 4		Always 5		Total		M	SD
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
		26	The listening instructor gives me sufficient opportunity to practice listening comprehension	21	45.7	14	30.4	8	17.4	3	6.5	0	0		
27	The instructor plays the tape or reads orally repeatedly	25	54.3	12	26.1	4	8.7	4	8.7	1	2.2	46	100	1.78	1.073
28	I am provided with sufficient time during the listening comprehension sessions	22	47.8	12	26.1	8	17.4	2	4.3	2	4.3	46	100	1.91	1.112

Note: F= Frequency, M=Mean, SD=Standard deviation

As shown in item 26 in the table, 21 (45.7%) of the respondents responded that they never had sufficient opportunity to practice their listening and 14 (30.4%) of them replied that they seldom got enough opportunity to practice listening comprehension whereas 8 (17.4%) respondents replied that they sometimes got enough opportunity to practice their listening comprehension and 3(6.5%) respondents said that they often got enough opportunity to practice listening while none of them replied that he/she always had enough listening practice. The mean value of is found to be 1.85, showing a negative tendency of seldom and never category of the scale and the standard deviation is calculated to be .942. Moreover, majority of students and instructors, in the interviews, pointed out that students did not get enough listening practice opportunity. Therefore, as the data indicates lack of the opportunity to practice listening comprehension is a significant factor which affects students' listening comprehension.

As indicated in the table above, in response to item 27, majority of the respondents replied saying that they did not get the listening texts repeated. Hence, 25(54.3%) participants responded that they never got the listening tape repeated while 12 (26.1%) respondents replied saying that they seldom got the listening tape replayed while 4(8.7%) respondents replied that they sometimes got the listening tape replayed and Other 4(8.7%) respondents replied that they often got the listening tape played repeatedly while only 1(2.2%) respondent replied saying that he always got the listening tape replayed. The mean score is found to be 1.78 indicating that majority of the responses were in the negative category of seldom and never of the likert-scale and the standard deviation is calculated to be 1.073. The data gathered through observation also confirmed that students did not get the listening tape replayed for their convenience. As a result, this data implies that absence of replaying the audio tape is one the factors that affect students' listening comprehension.

According to the responses given to item 28 about the sufficiency of time allotted for the listening practice, majority of the respondents which were 22 (47.8%) replied that they were never given sufficient time for listening while 12(26.1%) respondents said that they were seldom given sufficient time for listening and 8(17.4%) of the respondents came up

with the response that they sometimes got enough time during listening whereas 2 (4.3%) respondents replied that they often got sufficient time in their listening and other 2(4.3%) respondents said that they always got ample time in their listening. The mean value is calculated to be 1.91, inclining to the negative side of never and seldom and the standard deviation is found to be 1.112. The data obtained through students' and instructors' interviews also confirmed that students did not get sufficient time while practicing their listening comprehension. For this reason, as the data implies lack of sufficient listening time is required to be considered as a factor that affects students' listening comprehension practice.

4.3.2.6 Noise-related factors

Noise- related factors can be considered as one of the challenges that affect students' listening comprehension. Problems of listening comprehension related to noise can be treated as background and surrounding or environmental noise. The table below provides data gathered through the two items along with their statistical analysis.

Table 4.3.2.6.6: Responses to noise related factors

R N o	Items	Never 1		Seldom 2		Sometim es 3		Often 4		Always 5		Total		M	SD
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
29	Background noise during listening interfered with my listening	24	52.2	13	28.3	6	13.0	2	4.3	1	2.2	46	100	1.76	.993
30	I have encountered external or surrounding noise during listening	25	54.3	12	26.1	4	8.7	4	8.7	1	2.2	46	100	1.78	1.073

Note: F= Frequency, M=Mean, SD=Standard deviation

In response to item 29, majority of the respondents responded that they did not face background noise during listening. Thus, 24(52.2%) of them said that they never encountered background noise when they happened to listen and 13(28.3%) replied saying that they seldom faced background noise during listening a text while 6(13%) respondents replied that they sometimes encountered background noise during listening and 2(4.3%) respondents replied that they often faced background noise while listening while only 1(2.2%) respondent said that he always encountered background noise during listening. The mean value is calculated to be 1.76 which indicated the negative category of responses of never and seldom and the standard deviation is found to be .993. The data obtained through observation also indicted that background noise was not observed on the audio tape. This may be because the tape recorder was high quality and the recording of listening texts was made in a surrounding free from noise that could distract effective comprehension of the orally transmitted information.

As provided in the table, in responding to item 30, majority of the subjects replied that they did not experience external or surrounding noise during listening. Hence, 25(54.3%) respondents said that they never encountered surrounding noise during listening and 12(26.1%) respondents replied that they seldom encountered external noise in their listening whereas 4(8.7%) respondents replied that they sometimes experienced external noise during listening and other 4(8.7%) respondents said that they often encountered surrounding noise while listening whereas only 1(2.2%) respondent replied that he always experienced external noise during listening. The mean score is calculated to be 1.78, showing the negative responses of never and seldom and the standard deviation appeared to be 1.073. The data collected through observation also indicated that there was no surrounding noise which disturbed students while they were listening. External noise was not a problem in the students' listening comprehension practice and this may be because the classroom and its surrounding was far away from distractive noises that could go to the extent of hindering comprehension.

To conclude, the data collected through the questionnaire revealed difficulties that are found to be factors affecting students' listening comprehension. These factors are both

linguistic- related and non-linguistics related .The linguistic category of factors that affect students' listening comprehension comprises pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, discourse cues and lengthy and complex sentences and the non-linguistics related are categorized as factors related to the listener, speaker, listening text and task and listening practice and timing.

4.4 Analysis of the observation

Classroom observation was among the instruments used in this study. The observation was conducted while students were engaged in listening classes. Before the observation was carried out, observation checklist was prepared. The checklist contained the items: delivery of pre-listening tasks, key word instruction, speed of the speaker, the who of speakers, speaker's speaking style, the variety of listening tasks, the use of visual support, number of times the tape was played for the students' convenience, the amount of time given for the listening, surrounding noise and background noise.

4.4.1 Delivery of pre-listening tasks

From the 5 observations conducted by the researcher only two of them were pre-listening tasks carried out before the actual listening task was done. Obviously, when students are not engaged in pre-listening tasks, they will be seen confused when they are exposed to the listening text and their participation will decrease in terms of dealing with the text. Even in two of the classes the pre-listening tasks were not done to the required standard of creating readiness and awareness in the students mind about the subject matter and issues which were going to be raised in the listening texts. For example, pre-listening activities were not carried out sufficiently except by way of giving simple introduction about the topics. This was observed when the texts entitled "Introduction to Contemporary Business" and "Man, the Bridge Builder" were presented for listening.

In the three listening sessions , pre-listening tasks were not carried out leaving the student to struggle in making meaning out of what they listened.

4.4.2 Key word instruction

The listening instructor gave activities and tasks in which he told the titles to get students introduced to the days listening passage in all the observations. However, in all of the sessions the instructor was not observed introducing students to key vocabulary items which are believed to be supportive of the listening comprehension performance of students. Difficult vocabulary items were mentioned as a challenging factor for effective listening comprehension in the content analysis section below. However, in all the five oral delivery of the texts key vocabulary items were not taught for the learners' ease of understanding.

4.4.3 Speed of the speaker

In all the five observation sessions it was found out that the speed of the speakers was not reasonable. Students were seen struggling with the speed of the speakers. The students were heard complaining and whispering to each other about the speed of the speaker on the tape. Even one student raised his hand and told the teacher that the speaker was so fast and the class said "Yes" at once after him by way of showing that they faced the same problem. The difficulty here is that it is not possible to adjust or slow down the tape mechanically once it is recorded the same as the way we can do when someone is reading a text orally in which the listener could ask the speaker to slow down.

4.4.4 Native speakers or non –native speakers

In the three of the observed listening sessions, the researcher could observe that students were mostly exposed to listen to native speakers. The students' exposure to a native accent is a good thing for the students to practice pronunciation, however, before their exposure to the native pronunciation they need to have sufficient non-native listening practice. But, excessive exposure of native speech before they are accustomed to the non-native accent may hinder students' listening comprehension. It is known that in Ethiopia English is learnt as a foreign language in which even non-native speech is not encountered outside the classroom. Therefore, the listening teacher is first required to

maximize the native listening exposure to give the opportunity for the students' effective listening comprehension practice.

4.4.5 Speaker's speaking style

The speaker's speaking style on the tape was found to have been appropriate and convenient for the students. The speakers speaking style means in a sense the way the speaker produces his /her speech ranging from casual, friendly to formal and others like soft and harsh. This distinction prevails when we compare the way two different people exchange a talk .The way they speak differs depending on their relationship, status and mood. For example, talking to a friend is different from talking to an elderly man/woman. Therefore, in this regard, the researcher could observe the speakers speaking style was suitable for the students and students were not observed complaining about the speaker's speaking style in all the five observations the researcher carried out. Specifically speaking, the speaking style of the speakers in all the listening texts was formal and the information was delivered by way of formally addressing the listeners without any unusual and strange speaking style.

4.4.6 The variety of listening tasks

The Listening tasks which the listening instructor used were not varied. In all the observations conducted, only Wh- questions that required students to write extended responses were presented which made them busy writing a lot of information in response to the questions. Tasks which required students for example to draw, mark and fill were not presented for the students except only one type of question items which was Wh- questions. Majority of the students were not actively engaged in the listening activities because they were bored of the same type of questions in their listening classes among other factors. Therefore, we can conclude that there is lack of variety in the listening tasks which were presented along with the listening texts students were made to listen to.

4.4.7 Visual support

From the five observations conducted by the researcher when listening classes were going on, in none of the classes was visual support materials used. Visual support facilitates students' effective practice of listening comprehension. Therefore, unless the

listening topics are on abstract issues which are usually difficult to represent in figures, visual support is recommendable to be used as a supportive material for students' effective involvement in the process of listening comprehension. But, unfortunately the students did not have the chance to have a look at supportive figures in their listening sessions. The teacher should have, at least, drawn some figures on paper and displayed for the students while they were listening.

4.4.8 How many times the listening tape was played or read orally?

In four of the observations the tape was not replayed. Thus, students were not able to manage to grasp the spoken information to practice their listening and the classroom was disturbed by the noises students made because of their inability to understand the spoken text which was strictly heard only once. Therefore, generally the listening lesson was not a success in this regard. This problem becomes even worse when, as indicated in above, the speakers of the listening texts recorded on the tapes are fast making it difficult for the students to easily access the information in one listening encounter.

4.4.9 Time allotted for listening and doing tasks

With regard to the amount of time allowed to engage students in the listening and doing tasks, from the total of five observations, in the three listening lessons, students were not able to finish the listening and this became evident when students from all directions of the classroom made noises of complaint about the problem. To be more specific, for example, in one of the sessions the students were allowed only 10 minutes to listen and do the tasks for a listening text which lasted 10 minutes. The students should have been given sufficient time until they organized their answers for the tasks and questions. Therefore, we can consider lack of sufficient time for listening and doing tasks and questions as a hindrance to students' listening comprehension.

4.4.10 Background noise

In all the five observations, the researcher did not hear any noise from the background of the recorded tape. Therefore, there was no any internal noise which could jeopardize students listening comprehension. To justify this, the researcher at least did not observe

any student complaining to his/her instructor about any background noise on the listening tape and the researcher could also listen to the text very clearly.

4.4.11 Surrounding noise

In all the five observation sessions, the researcher did not observe any surrounding noise around the classroom while the listening lessons were going on. The listening environment was fairly quiet and free from any kind of noise according to the researchers' observation.

To sum up, the data gathered through observation indicated the presence of problems in relation to pre-listening tasks, key-word instruction, native accent, speed of the speaker, time allowed for listening, task variety, audio tape replay and visual support.

4.5 Content Analysis

The listening material texts meant for teaching the listening skills are significant resources available for the teaching /learning process of the listening course. The module consists of different listening texts entitled "Cells and tissues", "Man, the bridge builder", "Introduction to contemporary business", "The democratic process". The texts are analyzed in terms of vocabulary, grammar, sentential structure, topic relevance, difficulty level of subject matter, length of texts, visual support material. The listening tasks and questions are also analyzed in terms of pre listening tasks, variety, length and level of difficulty.

4.5.1 Vocabulary

Some of the listening passages contain difficult concept terminologies and technical words which could jeopardize the students listening comprehension. For example, in the text entitled, "Cell and Tissues" the terms and expressions 'electron micrographs', 'phospholipids' and 'salamander' can be mentioned. In the text entitled "Man, the Bridge Builder" terms such as 'piers', 'abutments' and 'truss' are included. In "Introduction to Contemporary Business" difficult terminologies which have to do with computer parts and systems like 'algorithmic oriented language' and "big nine" are made part of the text and the listening text with the title "The Democratic Process" contains

challenging words such as “ body count” and ‘pluralism’. When the students face such words in the listening texts, they stop listening to the message and miss the information contained both in that difficult word and other parts of the texts. Therefore, the listeners, instead of working out the meaning of orally delivered information, they waste time struggling with the meaning of significant but individual vocabulary items.

Therefore, listening texts should not contain technical and unfamiliar words for the convenience of students’ effective comprehension as otherwise they will tend to waste their time struggling with such vocabulary at the expense of grasping the textual information.

4.5.2 Grammar

Most of the texts contain challenging grammatical items used to present certain information but which could instead be expressed in a simpler way by way of facilitating effective listening comprehension of the listening passage. The presence of difficult grammatical expressions jeopardizes and discourages the students’ effective listening comprehension. When the listeners encounter challenging grammatical structures, they busy themselves trying to recognize the function of the grammatical items through which information is conveyed in the listening texts.

For Example ,in “The Democratic Process”in the sentence **Put differently, liberal democracy has two facets.....**in the phrase **put differently** the subject is dropped to appear just after it and this causes difficulty for most of our students of this level with poor level of English proficiency. Instead, if the subject was stated directly with the subject coming first or the phrase omitted, it would be better for the students’ better understanding. The phrase simply gives additional information at the expense of clear understanding of the listeners.

In this regard, Underwood (1989) pointed out, as indicated in the literature review of this paper, that when students are made to encounter difficult grammatical structures such as ellipsis and embedded sentences in the listening texts, they usually fail to parse the information and comprehend. This implies that students should be presented with listening texts that are to their level of language command.

4.5.3 Sentential structure

Most of the sentences contained in the listening texts are complex and embedded which could be beyond the students' understanding. In such listening texts comprehension is minimized because it exposes students to struggle with the complex nature of the sentences they encounter in the listening texts instead of trying to listen and grasp the information. One of the reasons behind their complexity is that they are long and when a sentence gets longer and longer it tends to become challenging to grasp the information and becomes more complicated as illustrated below based on the listening texts discussed above.

The listening text entitled "Cells and Tissues" comprises, for example, this long sentence: 'Mammalian red blood cells lose their nucleus in the process of maturation, and a few types of cells such as those of skeletal muscles have several nuclei per cell, but these are rare exceptions to the general rule of one nucleus per cell.'

Another example of long and complex sentence is comprised in the text entitled "Introduction to Contemporary Business". The statement reads as 'We shall concern ourselves with a very restricted system of forces in our discussion, namely, forces acting in one plane only, if a group of forces is restricted to acting in a plane (obviously the plane containing the bridge), it is a coplanar force system.'

And in the text entitled "Man, The Bridge Builder" we can find an embedded and complex sentence structure as in 'As man's reasoning power expanded, he learned that by placing piles of stones in a stream he could span wider streams'

4.5.4 Topic relevance

The listening texts meant for listening practice are not relevant to the students' experiences, needs and interests while it is crucial to present texts which are familiar with the students' reach of knowledge and experiences in terms of different aspects such as level of understanding and appropriateness of the topic. Therefore, this makes it difficult for the students to make sense out of what they listen. The listening topics selected for the course are professionally remote from the students' experience. In other words, they all

belong to the same genre of informative texts which discuss professional issues thoroughly and seem to have the agenda of mere teaching of the subject matter contained in them. Therefore, one can conclude that the listening module does not contain interesting texts like stories and simple poems which could help to get the students' ears and maximize their interest to listen and which could thereby help students to improve their listening comprehension. For example, the text entitled "Man, the Bridge Builder" gives explanation about types of bridges and how they are constructed which is not relevant to these language students who did not have the knowledge about how a bridge is built.

4.5.5 Difficulty level of subject matter

The listening texts are somehow beyond the level of understanding of students. The subject matter presented through the texts are so challenging that the students are left to struggle at the expense of effective listening comprehension. The difficulty level of listening texts can also be seen in terms of the subject matter and its organization. The researcher could confirm that the listening texts are beyond the students' level of managing to practice their listening. For instance, the text entitled "Cells and Tissues" contains detailed explanations and descriptions of cells and tissues and this hinders students from listening to the text successfully.

4.5.6 Length of texts

The texts are not appropriate in terms of length and most of them require students to listen for longer minutes and eventually lead them to get tired of listening instead of listening with ease and interest. It is usually difficult to listen attentively for longer time spans. To be specific, the length of the shortest listening text which is entitled 'Cells and tissues', is 5 pages long and takes 12 minutes when played on a tape while the longest one is entitled, "The democratic process" having 12 pages which takes 25 minutes when played on a tape.

4.5.7 Visual support

There are some figures in association with some of the listening texts in the listening module but the figures remained only for the eyes of the instructors. Only one of the texts entitled "Man, the bridge builder" contains visual material showing two figures of men sitting on a figure like a bridge to illustrate equilibrium while the other three texts do not contain any visual material or figure.

4.5.8 Pre –listening tasks

The listening texts are presented with accompanying questions and tasks. The tasks are categorized into three major phases which makes the listening process a step by step act of making meaning out of listening. The first and introductory stage is termed as pre-listening stage. At this phase of the listening lesson the instructor is expected to create conducive conditions by way of introducing and creating readiness in the students mind about the text to be played or read out loud. But, unfortunately the listening task material did not contain pre-listening tasks.

4.5.9 Variety of tasks and questions

Varieties of tasks are important in conducting effective listening comprehension sessions. The listening texts contained in the material are not varied to include different types of tasks and questions like filling, marking, true/false etc. Most of the tasks are questions of the same nature which ask listeners to respond to Wh-questions based on the information transmitted orally. Students become bored and less interested when they are presented with the same type of tasks and question.

4.5.10 Length of questions and tasks

In the listening materials questions are provided to be answered based on the information in the listening texts whereas the questions are very long. Most of the questions extended up to three lines or two sentences and above. Such lengthy questions are usually difficult for the students to grasp and respond to accordingly.

4.6.11 Level of difficulty of questions and tasks

The content analysis revealed that the questions meant for the students to respond to are really difficult. Most of the questions in the listening module raised conceptually difficult questions which can be beyond the students' capacity to respond to in line with the orally delivered information.

To conclude, the content analysis revealed data in relation to vocabulary, grammar, sentential structure, topic relevance, difficulty level of subject matter and visual support and delivery of pre-listening tasks, variety of tasks, length and level of difficulty of questions and tasks and indicated the presence of difficulties that interfered with students' listening comprehension in relation to these aspects of listening texts and tasks.

Chapter Five

5. Summary, Conclusion, Recommendations

5.1 Summary

This study was aimed at investigating factors affecting students' listening comprehension. Fundamentally, the study was intended to respond to questions about linguistic and non-linguistic challenges that hindered students' listening comprehension. The subjects of the study were first year English major students of Jimma CTE. Regarding the sampling method used to select the participants of the study, since the target subjects were only 46, all of them were chosen by using census method of sampling and similarly since the instructors were only 7 the same method of sampling was used to select all of them to participate in the study for triangulation. Data were collected for the study through six instruments namely, students' interview, instructors' interview, questionnaire for students, observation and content and document analysis. The target subjects' data were gathered through two instruments namely interview and questionnaire. The other participants and instruments were used to triangulate and strengthen the data obtained from the target subjects. Observation was conducted for five sessions while the listening lessons were carried out. In the content analysis, the listening texts and accompanying tasks were analyzed in terms of the criteria developed by the researcher and document analysis of students' results was also carried out in three English courses including listening. Data analysis was carried out both qualitatively and quantitatively as per the kind of data collected through the instruments used. Therefore, as the finding indicated, students listening comprehension is jeopardized both by linguistics factors in relation to pronunciation, vocabulary ,grammar, discourse markers and sentential structure and non-linguistic factors in relation to the listener , speaker,listening texts and tasks and listening practice and timing.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Listening skill plays a life-long role in the processes of communication and is required for the successful learning of language for the -would be English teachers at colleges. Listening should be given emphasis as a significant factor in facilitating language learning as different scholars like Krashen (1985) argue. In spite of this reality, the results from the interviews, questionnaire, observation and content analysis indicated that the students encountered linguistic and non-linguistic difficulties in their listening comprehension skills as follows:

- ✦ The findings of this study confirmed that students encountered linguistic challenges in relation to pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, sentential structure and discourse markers in their listening comprehension. Rost (1994) points out that students at low English proficiency level, with a lesser store of linguistic knowledge, and less sophisticated control over this knowledge may encounter problems in understanding speech.
- ✦ It is found out that students faced non-linguistic factors in relation to their inability to use listening strategies, in this regard, Dunkel (1986) advises that EFL listeners should employ strategies of listening in order to be successful in listening comprehension because listeners' success at understanding the content of what they hear depends to a large extent on their expertise in the micro skills. Students are also found to have anxiety in their listening comprehension practice.
- ✦ It is found out that students encountered non-linguistic challenges in relation to the speaker's fast speed and native accent in their listening comprehension. Ur (1991) contends that constructing meaning out of the speaker's message depends partly on speaker's factors which are external to the listener.
- ✦ The finding indicates that students encountered lengthy and less interesting texts with difficult subject matter and without visual support materials in their listening comprehension. According to Carroll (1977) and Sheils (1988, as cited in

Vandergrift ,2006) the density and explicitness of information contained in the speech; length and conceptual difficulty of the text; and the degree of attractiveness of the message influence the success or failure of listening comprehension.

- ✦ It is found out that students were not presented with pre-listening activities and faced long,difficult and the same type of listening questions which affected their listening comprehension.
- ✦ The finding confirmed that students were not provided with sufficient listening practice and the listening texts were not replayed or read orally repeatedly which jeopardized their listening comprehension.
- ✦ Finally, it is found out that lack of time during listening and doing tasks interfered with students' listening comprehension.

5.3 Recommendations

The study confirmed that the EFL learners encountered listening difficulties whenever they were engaged in EFL listening texts and activities on the listening course. Furthermore, the findings of the study shows that the learners' listening problems emerge from two categories of linguistic and non-linguistic factors as indicated above. Therefore, based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are recommended.

- ✓ The material developer and/or listening instructor should make an effort in selecting and presenting listening texts which are composed of appropriate level of linguistic elements of vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure and discourse markers.
- ✓ The listening instructor should provide sufficient practice for the students by making them to practice listening to native speakers before presenting non-native accents.
- ✓ The instructor need to give orientations about the linguistic items especially key vocabulary contained in the listening texts at the pre-listening phase of listening lessons.

- ✓ The instructor should hold conference with the students both as a group and individually on how to overcome their problems in relation to their linguistic challenges which go to the extent of jeopardizing their listening comprehension.
- ✓ The instructor is recommended to find out why students do not apply strategies in their listening and encourage, guide and train them as necessary about using listening strategies based on his investigations by arranging special programs and during listening.
- ✓ The listening instructor should advise students not to worry and feel discouraged even if they miss information and fail to understand and should also encourage and motivate them to keep on practicing. The listening instructor should also look for ways to avoid students' dissatisfaction with their listening comprehension practice.
- ✓ The module developer and /or listening instructor should present visual support materials along with the listening texts. Even if they are not provided in the module, the instructor should look for ways to present such as by way of drawing simple figures.
- ✓ The instructor should play the listening tape as many times as necessary until students get enough opportunity to grasp the information.
- ✓ The material developer and /or listening instructor should present pre-listening tasks along with the listening texts so that students can get the chance to get themselves acquainted with the listening text and get prepared for the listening
- ✓ The speaker of the listening text should be appropriate in terms of speed so that students can get the opportunity to comprehend the orally delivered information and practice their listening successfully.
- ✓ The listening instructor and/or material developer are required to select listening texts with appropriate level of subject matter.
- ✓ The listening instructor and/or material developer should select listening texts having reasonable length and which are interesting as per the level, needs and interests of the listening students to make them interested in their listening comprehension practice.

- ✓ The module developer and /or listening instructor are required to design various types of listening tasks and questions with appropriate length and level of difficulty
- ✓ The module developer and/or listening instructor are required to present listening tasks with appropriate and reasonable length and which are varied enough to make the listening comprehension a success.
- ✓ The listening teacher needs to give sufficient time for the students so that they can effectively engage in listening and doing the listening activities.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Jimma University

College of Social Science and Law

Department of English Language and Literature

(Graduate Programme)

QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE FILLED IN BY STUDENTS

Dear student, the purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information about the listening difficulties learners face while they are engaged in listening to English. Your responses are of considerable importance for the success of the study, so you are kindly requested to provide genuine responses to the questions. Thank you very much in advance for your cooperation!

Please don't write your name

Students' Questionnaire

Direction: The following are a list of statements that will help you to identify the difficulties you faced while you were engaged in listening.

Read each sentence and provide your responses based on the listening difficulties you experienced in the course according to the given scale. Give one answer only for each item.

- Tick (✓) 1 if your response is **Never**
- Tick (✓) 2 if your response is **Seldom**
- Tick (✓) 3 if your response is **Sometimes**
- Tick (✓) 4 if your response is **Often**
- Tick (✓) 5 if your response is **Always**

Linguistic factors	1	2	3	4	5
1. I found it difficult to recognize the words I know because of the way they are pronounced.					
2. Unfamiliar words including jargon and idioms interfered with my listening comprehension.					
3. Complex grammatical structures interfered with my listening comprehension.					
4. Difficult Discourse markers interfered with my listening comprehension					
5. The length and complexity of sentences interfered with my listening comprehension.					
Non-Linguistic Factors					
Listener- related factors					
6. I am attentive during listening					
7. I use different strategies while listening to maximize my understanding of the oral text					

8. I can predict what will come next in the listening text					
9. I do not feel worried and discouraged when I failed to understand the spoken text					
10. I can listen and understand the meaning of what the speaker says even if I do not see the facial expression and gesture of a live speaker/s					
Speaker/s related factors					
11. I find the speaker's speed appropriate in my listening lessons					
12. The speaker's speaking style (e.g. casual, formal, friendly) appropriate and convenient for me?					
13. The speaker's/s' sound is audible enough for me					
14. I understand native speakers in my listening sessions?					
Listening text related factors					
15. I encounter familiar topics in the listening texts?					
16. I understand the subject matter in the listening texts without difficulty					
17. I am exposed to listening texts having contents the same as my culture					
18. I am exposed to reasonable length listening texts					
19. The listening texts are interesting for me					
20. Visual support is presented along with the text to facilitate my listening comprehension					
Listening task related factors					
21. I am presented with listening tasks that require to mark, draw, fill etc.					
22. The listening tasks and questions are reasonably simple to respond to					
23. I am exposed to different types of listening tasks					

24. The listening tasks and questions are short to respond to					
25. The listening instructor presents pre-listening tasks					
Practice and time factors					
26. The listening instructor gives me sufficient opportunity to practice listening comprehension					
27. The instructor plays the tape or reads orally repeatedly					
28. I am provided with sufficient time during the listening comprehension sessions					
Noise related factors					
29. Background noise during listening interfered with my listening					
30. I have encountered external or surrounding noise during listening					

Thank You!

Yunivarsitii Jimmaa

Kolleejii Saayinsii Hawaasaafi Seeraa Muummee

Og-Barruu fi Afaan Ingiliffaa Sagantaa Digrii Lammaffaa

Gaafannoo Barrattootaan Guutamu

Barattootaa,

kaayyoongaafannookanaa odeeffannoorakkooleegosabarumsaabarachuuirratti isaanqunna mufunaanuudha. Odeeffannoon isinirraa argamus fiixaba' iinsa qo'annookanaa faayida guddaa qaba, kanaafaa odeeffannoo kana akkaguuttanuuf kabajawaliinisingaafanna, Deeggarsakeessaniif duruma angalatoomaa

Maalooma qaahin barreessinaa!

Gaafannoo Barataa

Ajaja:

Himoonni armaangadiirakkoolee isinyeroo barnoota ingiliffaadhaggeeffanis qunnamu adda baafachuuf isingargaara

Himoota kana

dubbisuunis rakoo leeyeroo dhaggeeffatanis qannamu haalasa fartuulee kennamani inqutiga aaffiitokkoof deebiitokko qafakenni

Yoodeebiinkeegonkumaata'e 1 jala (✓) kaa'i

Yoodeebiikeedardeedarbeeta'e 2 jala (✓) kaa'i

Yoodeebiinkeeyeroo tokkotokkota'e 3 jala (✓) kaa'i

Yoodeebiinkeeyeroobaay'eeta'e 4 jala (✓) kaa'i

Yoodeebiinkeeyeroo hundata'e 5 jala (✓) kaa'i

Lakk	Rakkooleefaaniinwalqabatan	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Akkaataasagaleessuuirraakanka'ejechootanbeekuhubachuuf nan rakkadha.					
2.	Jechoonnicicmoonhubannaadhaggeeffannaakootiimiidhu					
3.	Seerlugawalxaxaafayyadamuunhubannoodhaga'uukootiimiidha					
4.	walqabsiiftonnicicmoonhubannoodhaggeeffachuukootiimiidha					
5.	Dheerinni fi walxaxinnihimootaahubannoodhaggeeffannookootiimiidha.					
	Rakkooleefaaniinalaa					
	Rakkooleedhaggeeffataanwalqabatan					
6.	Yeroodhaggeeffannaaxiyyeeffannaananhordofa					
7.	Wantootaafaaniindubbatamuufdhaggeettiikooguddisuufmaloogaraagaraanfayyadama.					
8.	Dhaggeeffachuunmaaltuakkadhufu nan raga					
9.	Wantadubbatamuyoonhinhubannehincinqammu					
10.	Otuman fuula fi qaama dubbataa hin agarree waan inni kallattiin dhbbatu dhaga'uun nan hubadha					
	Rakkooleedubbataanwalqabatan					
11.	Saffisni dubbataa dhaggeettii kootiin walsima					
12.	Haalli dubbataa (al-idilee, jdilee, hiriyummaa) anaaf mijataa dha					
13.	Sagaleen dubbataa sirriitti natti dhaga'ama					
14.	Dubbattoota biyya keessaa yeroon dhaggeeffadhu nan hubadha					
	Rakkoolee waan dhaggeeffatamu/kitaabaan wal qabatan					
15.	Waan dhaggaffatamu keessatti mataduree beekamaatu na qunnama					
16.	Waan dubbifamu keessatti qabiyyee isaa sirriittin hubadha					

17.	Waan dubbifamu keessatti wantootan aadaan beekutu na qunnama						
18.	Wantidubbifamudheeraadha						
19.	Wanti dhaggeeffatamu kan ofitti naharkisuu dha.						
20.	Dhaggeettii koo naa cimsuuf meeshaa deeggarsaa fi kitaaba dhaggeeffataan hojjechuun rakkoo wal qabatan						
	Rakkooleegochaanwalqabatan						
21.	Hojii dhaggeeffachuu kaasuu, guutuu, mallatteessuu fi k.k.f barbaadaniinan qabame						
22.	Hojiin dhaggeeffachuu fi gaaffileen deebisuuf salphaa dha.						
23.	Hojiidhaggeeffachuugaraagaraafansaaxilame						
24.	Hojiindhaggeeffachuufigaaffileendeebisuugabaaboodha						
25.	Barsiisaandhaggeeffachuunbarachuuosoohindhaggeeffatindurahojiinikenna						
	Dhiibbaashaakala fi yeroo						
26.	Barsiisaanshaakaladhaggeeffachuufarraaga'aanaafnikenna						
27.	Barsiisaanyeroobaay'eeteppiiitaphachiisayknafaaniindubbisa						
28.	Yeroodhaggeeffachuunbarachuueroongaa'annaafkennama						
	Dhiibbaasagaleenwalqabatan						
29.	Teeppiinqulqullinadhabuundhaggeeffachuukoonimiidha						
30.	Jeequmsialaayknaannooyeroondhaggeeffadhunajeeqa						

GALATOOMAA!

Appendix 2

Students' Interview Guide

1. Have you ever faced problems in listening to a text in your listening sessions?
2. What challenges have you faced in relation to linguistic elements which interfered with your listening comprehension?
3. What listening text related problems have you encountered? And to what extent the problem has affected your listening comprehension?
4. What listening task related challenges have you encountered in your listening lessons? And to what degree has the problem jeopardized your listening comprehension?
5. Has your instructor given you opportunities to practice listening? If so, has it been sufficient? Why /why not?
6. Are you familiar with listening strategies? Have you ever used listening strategies in your listening comprehension practice? Why/ why not?
7. Are there other problems that you think have jeopardized your listening comprehension skills? If so, what are they?
8. Has your listening instructor ever tried to help you to tackle the problems you have mentioned above? If so, what measures did he take?
9. Did you find the measures taken by your instructor sufficient and helpful in terms of enabling you to comprehend orally delivered information successfully? Why /why not?

Appendix 3

Instructors' Interview Guide

1. Do you think students encounter difficulties in their listening?
2. What linguistics –related problems do you think they face? And how?
3. Why do you think these linguistic problems hinder students' listening comprehension?
4. What non –linguistic problems do you think students encounter in their listening?

How do they affect students listening comprehension?

5. Why do you think such non-linguistic problems interfere with students' listening comprehension?
6. What other problems affecting listening skills do you think are there? Why/why not?

Appendix 5

Content Analysis Criteria Checklist

The listening texts were analyzed in terms of these points:

1. Vocabulary
2. Grammar
3. Sentential structure
4. Topic relevance
5. Subject matter difficulty level of texts
6. Length of texts
7. Pre –listening tasks
8. Variety of tasks
9. Visual support
10. Length of questions and tasks
11. Level of difficulty of questions and tasks

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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