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**THE EFFECT OF A STRATEGY-BASED
INSTRUCTION PROGRAMME ON DEVELOPING
EFL LISTENING COMPREHENSION SKILLS**

BY

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to probe empirically the effects of three different approaches: strategy training, metacognitive instruction and pure exposure, on listening performance, attitudes, self-efficacy and on strategy knowledge, use and perceived value among student teachers of English in Egypt. Moreover, the interaction between these three treatments and students' proficiency levels (high/low) was an item of interest.

The study was carried out in two phases: the baseline study and the main study. The principle premise of the baseline study was that unless student teachers' perceptions, problems in listening as well as the actual strategies they use are attended to, attempts to improve their listening comprehension skills might be futile. On the basis of the baseline study findings, a listening programme was designed and implemented using the three different approaches. The subjects of the main study were 72 student teachers of English who were classified into high and low proficiency groups. These students were, afterwards, randomly assigned to one of three groups; strategy group (who received instruction on metacognitive knowledge and were trained in a number of cognitive and metacognitive strategies), metacognitive instruction group (who received instruction on metacognitive knowledge and were allowed to have group discussion) and control group (who were left to use their own overall approach whatever it was). The three groups were given the same instructional materials and the same amount of time. Each group received 2-hour sessions six times a week for six weeks.

A pre-post 3×2 factorial design was used in this study to assess and compare the effects of the three different treatments on the dependent variables involved. A combination of both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques was utilised in order to maintain a balance between reliable quantitative data that help generalise the findings to wider contexts and qualitative in-depth data that help explain the quantitative findings. The study incorporated the use of a listening test, a strategy questionnaire, a self-efficacy questionnaire, an attitude questionnaire, follow-up interviews and retrospective interviews.

The results of the study consistently demonstrated that strategy training is better in promoting all the variables addressed in this study and compares favourably with metacognitive instruction and pure exposure. More importantly, these results showed that the strategy training approach holds great potential for developing students' independence and that it moved them that much closer towards autonomy. These positive results stand in a stark contrast to the inconclusive results of the earlier studies. Furthermore, the findings indicated that the metacognitive instruction group performed significantly better than the control group only in listening and attitudes. Finally, contrary to the widely held belief that prolonged exposure to aural input enhances listening, the results of the quantitative analysis indicated that students in the control group did not make improvement in any of the dependent variables. Perhaps more importantly, the qualitative analysis indicated that pure exposure to the aural input alone without instruction had a demoralising effect when students found that their understanding did not increase with practice.

The findings suggest some potential benefits in the informed teaching of listening strategies as a means of helping learners improve their listening comprehension skills and promoting a sense of learner autonomy. Furthermore, the findings suggest that the time devoted to strategy training is well invested and consequently refute the argument that the risk of devoting time to strategy training is not worth taking.

Implications of these findings for pedagogy, research and research methodology conclude the study.

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Chapter one

Background of the study

1.0 Introduction

This introductory chapter describes the background of the study. It presents an overview of the study and the context where it was carried out highlighting its credits and limitations. The chapter further presents the purpose of the study, its motivation and the general research questions as well as its significance. The chapter ends with a framework of the organisation of the thesis.

1.1 Overview

Listening is a critical skill that underlies all verbal communication inside and outside a classroom. Individuals use listening all the time, in and out, at home, at work, for social, entertainment or for academic purposes. In everyday life, listening is actually used more than any other language skill. Meanwhile, in the field of language learning the role played by listening in developing the overall language proficiency cannot be denied or even ignored. This crucial role is now well demonstrated in second language research (see Brown & Yule, 1983; Faerch & Kasper, 1986; Long, 1989; Dunkel, 1991; Feyten, 1991; Ellis, 1994; Oprandy, 1994; Rubin, 1994, 1995; Mendelsohn & Rubin, 1995; Mendelsohn, 1995; Lynch, 1995; Morley, 1995; Thompson, 1995). The importance of listening is also acknowledged by language learners themselves, who often identify listening as one of the most important aspects of language learning and perhaps their biggest challenge (see Yorio, 1982; El Naggar, 1986). Wolvin & Coakley (1996:13), for instance, assert this idea, highlighting the fact that listening plays a central role in facilitating the mastery of all other language skills:

Listening is the most basic of the four major areas of language development. Our ability to speak, read, write and master complex skills is directly and indirectly dependent upon listening.

This seems quite true as listening is central to all learning at all levels; “it is the primary channel for language input and acquisition” (Peterson, 2001:87). It is also a prerequisite for

oral proficiency (perception enables production); it is via listening that learners can establish a base for more fluent production skills. Furthermore, listening is a significant predictor of reading comprehension and finally it can promote accuracy and extend learner's vocabulary (Morley, 2001).

Despite the importance of listening and the rewards effective listening can bring to the second or foreign language learning process, it has, instructionally, been neglected or overlooked until the last few decades. Listening was not broadly acknowledged as a skill that needs to be developed in its own right or to be taught explicitly (see Oxford, 1993, Anderson & Lynch, 1988, Rivers, 1981, Mendelsohn, 1994, Rost, 1990, 1994, Turner, 1995, MacKay, 1997). Instead, it was left to develop as part of student's general educational training. This was based on the assumption that listening comprehension is naturally acquired and improved by students as they are listening to the teacher all day. Wolvin and Coakley concur with Alder in her remark (in Wolvin & Coakley 1996: 26) that "how utterly amazing is the general assumption that the ability to listen well is a natural gift for which no training is required".

However, after having long been in the shadow of other language skills, listening has recently started to float to the surface of attention and to be recognised as a skill that needs to be developed just like any other language skill (see Brown & Yule, 1983; Brown, 1990; Morley, 1990, 1991, 1995, 1999; Oxford, 1993, Mendelsohn, 1995). Listening should not be just presumed to happen naturally, but be seen as involving distinctive sub-skills, which can be taught and assessed in a careful systematic and structured manner (see Brown, 1977; Ur, 1984, 1996; Rixon, 1981, 1986; Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Rost, 1990, 1994, 2002; Flowerdew, 1994; Rubin, 1994; Mendelsohn & Rubin, 1995; Turner, 1995; Nunan and Miller, 1996; Lynch, 1998; McKay, 1998; Mendelsohn, 1998; White, 1998). In principle, listening is now recognised as a skill that can no longer be neglected or superficially treated (Nord, 1981; Morley, 1991; Grant, 1997), or even be left to develop by osmosis (Mendelsohn, 1994, 1998). Perhaps the most important reason for such recognition stems from the great problems listening poses for large numbers of English language students.

These problems are by and large due to the fact that listening is the skill that makes the heaviest processing demands for second/foreign language. This is because students must store information at the same time as they are working to understand it (Rubin, 1995: 8) see also Brown, 1995; Mendelsohn, 1994; Buck, 1995). This on-line processing is mostly daunting for L2 or FL listeners due to the highly fleeting nature of the message which comes at them very fast and is gone (see Buck, 1995; Mendelsohn, 1995; Rost, 1994; Grant, 1997; Higgins, 1997). It is also due to the memory limitation as well as the lack of control over the message; listeners are at the “mercy of the speaker” (Mendelsohn, 1994: 9); they have almost no control over what is going to be said, how it is going to be said, and how quickly it is going to be said (Mendelsohn, 1995; 132). The words are past flying very rapidly leaving no control over the message, which force listeners to process the message immediately, whether they are prepared to receive the information or they are still processing what they have just heard. In this sense, given the demands posed by listening, there has been a shift of focus from arguing whether listening is important or not to how best to promote its development (Herron & Seay, 1991: 487).

The recent recognition of the importance of developing listening has been paralleled by an interest in language learning strategies and strategy training (for a review see Naiman et al., 1978, 1996; Wenden & Rubin, 1987; Wenden, 1991; Cohen 1990b, 1998; Oxford, 1990, 1996; O’Malley & Chamot, 1990; Chamot & O’Malley, 1994a, 1994b; McDonough, 1995, 1999a, 1999b; Fleitz & Fyeten, 1996). Such an interest has offered thought-provoking ideas about what good language learners do to succeed. It, for example, indicated that successful language learners differ from less successful ones in a number of different ways; of which perhaps the most important is the degree to which they are strategic in their approach to various tasks which comprise language learning (Chamot, 1993:308, see also Rubin, 1975, 1981; Stern, 1975; O’Malley et al., 1985a, 1985b; Wenden, 1985; Abraham & Vann, 1987; O’Malley, Kupper, & Impink-Hernandez, 1987; Chamot et al., 1988a, 1988b; O’Malley, Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Vann & Abraham, 1990). Successful language learners often use appropriate strategies to the task at hand, which in turn results in improved proficiency or achievement, overall or in specific skill areas (Thomson & Rubin, 1996).

In other words, successful learners can, based on the requirements of the task, work out the most appropriate strategy or combination of strategies that would lead to the best task performance (Chamot & Kupper, 1989). In effect, skilled or successful learners according to Scarcella & Oxford, 1992: 63) “select strategies that work well together in a highly orchestrated way, tailored to the requirement of the language task”.

Advocates of strategy training argue that, via the improved use of learning strategies, learners can become more aware of their learning processes (Chamot et al., 1993), become more active, more effective and more self-directed in their own learning (Oxford, 1990; Cohen, 1998; Chamot et al., 1999). Strategy training also leads to proficiency gains (Chamot et al., 1993), and in turn moves the learner that much closer to the state of autonomy and becoming better learners (Wenden, 1991, 1998). Nyikos (1996: 112), for example, refers to a consensus that through overt strategy instruction learners can be helped in four ways: 1) to become aware of the strategies they already use; 2) to apply task specific strategies that can make learning more efficient and allow them to compensate for nervousness, inability to remember and lack of wait time; 3) to monitor for strategy effectiveness; and 4) to create new strategies or to weed out ineffective ones via metacognition control.

By the same token, strategy training is argued to have considerable potential for developing listening in English as a second/foreign language (Oxford, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Mendelsohn, 1994, 1998; Rubin, 1994; Rost, 2002). Mendelsohn (1994), for example, argues that strategy instruction in listening results in a number of benefits enhancing the listeners' performance in the task at hand as well as in similar future tasks. According to Mendelsohn, listening strategy training makes learning how to listen more effective through the use of effective strategies. It also leads learners to think about listening consciously, which in turn develops an awareness of how to listen. Moreover, it enables listeners to handle enormous quantities of information and avoid information overload by providing learners with effective tools that maximize available memory resources and handle the information efficiently as well as helping solve problems as they emerge. Finally, it calls for increasing the learner's autonomy by equipping them with

validated means to continue to grapple with the language being learned long after their formal language classes are over.

In this regard and with the aim to investigate the effect of strategy instruction on developing foreign language listening, a number of studies have been undertaken. These studies of listening strategy instruction have not so far yielded definitive results; few attempts have shown significant good results (Paulauskas, 1994; Thompson and Rubin, 1996), whereas the majority (O'Malley et al., 1985b; Rubin et al., 1988; Schwartz, 1992) have been inconclusive. With such a mixed pattern of inconclusive results (see 4.2), the need for further research has been frequently voiced.

Furthermore, there is some evidence that the use of general learning strategies may be dependent upon learner differences and other factors, e.g., language proficiency (Cohen & Apeh, 1981; Oxford & Crookall, 1989); self-efficacy (Zimmerman; 1990; Chamot et al., 1993; Chamot et al., 1996; Chamot et al., 1999), motivation (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Gardner & McIntyre, 1992, 1993; Green & Oxford, 1995; Bremner, 1999) and learning styles (Oxford & Ehrman, 1988; Rossi-Le, 1995). However, we still do not know much about how the use of listening strategies interacts with different factors and learner differences such as listening proficiency and self-efficacy. The need for empirical studies that aim at giving insight into the effectiveness of using listening strategy instruction and how they interact with proficiency level, attitudes and self-efficacy in listening is pervasive.

1.2 Context of the study

The study is administered at the English Department, Faculty of Education, Al-Azhar University in Egypt. The inhabited areas in Egypt are known to be the most overpopulated areas in the world. Undoubtedly, this overpopulation has left its strong impact on the educational processes in general and on the quality of the educational outcome in particular.

Education in Egypt is free in all state institutes from primary to university level and it is compulsory for the first nine years (basic education). The Egyptian educational system is polarised into two main streams: the state school system and the religious Al-Azhar system

with an addition of a third minor stream (private schools) that is not as old as the first two (see figure 1.1). Educational curricula in all three systems are almost the same. Some differences, however, can be found which distinguish one system from the other.

Figure 1-1: Structure of the schooling system in Egypt

Stage	Age group		
Basic education (9 years)	Primary schools (6-12) Preparatory school (13-15)	Al-Azhar parallel structure	Private schools
Secondary education (3 years)	16-18		
University and higher institutions	State and private universities	Al Azhar University	State & private universities

1.2.1 Nature of education in Egypt

Hargreaves (1997) succinctly described the Egyptian system of education as a system whose defining features are: centralisation, reutilization, mechanistic learning and teaching methods, examination-orientation, as well as paper qualification syndrome. Other equally defining features of that system are teachers with low level both in knowledge of subject matter and pedagogy (Johnson et al., 2000), a mismatch between syllabus and curricula drawn at the central national level and the actual teaching-learning situation (Gahin, 2001). This is besides mal-distribution of services amongst the state regions, quintessential bureaucracy (Cook, 1998), and spoon-feeding, which is a natural reaction of the examination-oriented approach that encourages and promotes rote learning and memorisation. Limited resources, large classes, and underpaid teachers are some other features of the system of education in Egypt.

The educational system in Egypt is a hierarchical centralised structure with the Ministry of Education (MOE) at the top and teachers at the bottom. The system policy is decided at the centre (MOE) where major decisions are made and then passed out as obligatory instructions that have to be followed by teachers. Educational curricula in all the three systems of education described above follow the same route as to what is to be taught, how

it is to be taught, the roles of teachers and learners, as well as the intended outcomes of the educational process. In this sense, the same textbooks are used in the three systems of education for the subjects that are common. These textbooks represent the curriculum for the subjects, as well as the exam syllabus. In short everything that is supposed to be done inside the classroom is predetermined and prescribed by the MOE.

1.2.2 The Status of English Language Teaching in Egypt

English is well established as the primary foreign language, and most people in Egypt, young or adults, are essentially instrumentally motivated and committed to learn it. It is valued as a prestigious subject in the curriculum. At the official level the following objectives are set for ELT:

- To enable and develop the ability to use English for communication;
- To develop an awareness of the nature of language and language learning and hence achieve cross-cultural awareness;
- To foster favourable attitudes towards learning in general and towards appropriate foreign cultures in particular;
- To promote students' lifelong learning as well as develop autonomy; and
- To promote collaborative learning as a step towards bringing up citizens who appreciate teamwork. (MOE, 2000a)

In 1993 the MOE took a step towards improving the status of ELT, trying to cope with the worldwide move towards learner-centred approaches. In this regard, they assigned a more communicative oriented textbook to all schools. "Hello", the new textbook by Dallas and Emslie (2000), aims to "teach students to communicate in English with a focus on developing students' skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing". Other aims include: "helping students to be independent learners ... and developing learner autonomy" (Dallas and Emslie, 2000: 3).

Despite the efforts and plans of the MOE to induce a change in the teaching materials as well as the syllabus level, the quality of teaching English is still low. This might be due to the fact that such change in syllabus and teaching materials was not synchronised with a parallel change in assessment and examination methods, and most importantly, these efforts did not address the programmes for the teacher preparation either pre- or in-service.

The Egyptian classroom of English still, for instance, reflects a teacher-centred ideology with all its underpinning assumptions. The instructional approach used in most classes is grammar translation where the formal teaching of grammar is ultimately still a panacea; grammar is at the heart of what is done in the classroom. The approach is by large and extremely a mechanistic exercise-driven approach with exams as the major target. Teachers in this context are perceived as the dispensers of knowledge who are unquestionably empowered with the expertise to set goals, assign tasks, correct mistakes, and assess progress. In contrast, students are ultimately passive recipients who are easily giving themselves in for teachers to pour piles of grammatical rules and vocabulary as well as ready-made well-written paragraphs that suit any topic to be learnt by heart only for the exams and completely forgotten afterwards. Especially in this context, the teacher is considered the master or leader who knows the way to pass the exam and gain high scores, which is the ultimate goal of the learning process, not only for the learners but also for parents and teachers and the school administration.

In the context described above, it may be understood that the quality of ELT in Egypt is low due to a number of reasons. These reasons can be classified into factors related to constraints of the educational system, which compel teachers to identify themselves with a certain teaching approach rather than another, and other factors related to the teachers' way of preparation and training. These factors are rather interdependent.

Constraints, featuring the educational system, such as examination pressure, underpaid teachers, large classes, lack of resources, centralisation and the qualification syndrome, make it difficult for the teacher to subscribe to the learner-centred approaches the MOE recently introduced. For example, large classes make teachers never consider group work as a technique. In the same vein, large classes make learner-centred teaching problematic as teachers find it difficult to involve students at different levels. Also, the teacher's role as a guide and facilitator is absent, as the teacher cannot move around the class to monitor and guide due to the space problem, instead, s/he manages the class from the blackboard. In addition s/he would not consider involving the peers in the error correction due to time limits. Finally, the use of Audio Visual Aids is hampered by a number of difficulties. Perhaps what helped the situation to be pervasive, is that the educational system, especially

in Al Azhar university, the concern of this study, does not offer in-service training programmes to guide the teachers into how to overcome such contextual limitations.

Another potential limitation posed by the context is the exam-orientation. As a matter of fact, passing exams and getting good scores is the centre of gravity of all the efforts of all those involved in teaching learning processes (i.e., teachers, pupils, headmasters and inspectors as well as parents). This is what made Hargreaves (1997) label Egypt as one of the countries inflicted by the “Diploma disease”. Examinations in this context dominate all the teaching practices inside the English classroom in Egypt; the exam formats decide what goes on inside the classroom. Since examinations only test knowledge of grammar and vocabulary as well as literacy skills (reading and writing), it is not surprising to find that knowledge about the language form is much more important than the ability to use language meaningfully. Also as examinations do not test the oral skills (listening and speaking), which are almost absent from the practice of teaching English.

Other factors causing the poor quality of ELT in Egypt stem from the constraints imposed by the way of preparing ELT teachers. ELT teachers in Egypt are prepared in faculties of education through two main components: 1) subject matter knowledge (language proficiency) and 2) teaching pedagogy (teaching proficiency). The graduates of faculties of education are referred to as specialist teachers. Another source of EFL teachers is the non-specialist teachers; graduates of departments other than English (e.g., geography and history) who were converted to EFL teachers due to a shortage of EFL teachers, after doing one year diplomas in faculties of education. Non-specialists represent 41% of the total teachers of English.

Specialist teachers were frequently depicted as having a low proficiency in the target language as well as in the pedagogy (El Naggar, 1986; Celce-Murcia, 1988; Fouly & Williams, 1990; Gahin, 2001) due to certain limitations of the EFL teacher preparation course (see Fouly, 1988). As for non-specialist EFL teachers the problems are undoubtedly severer as it will not escape the reader that one year of study for someone who knows very little about the language would not in any case ensure developing one’s proficiency in the

language pedagogy let alone language proficiency. Therefore, the complaint is always heard that the teachers of English cannot cope with the basic demands required of them.

Being constrained with their own poor abilities in the target language and pressurised by the exams, parents and the need to cope with the delivery of syllabus teaching as pre-planned by the MOE, these teachers tend to follow a mechanistic approach that mainly focuses on what students will be examined in. In this sense, they tend to focus on grammar and vocabulary learning as well as the written-medium skills (reading and writing) totally overlooking listening and speaking.

The interest in listening or speaking seems to be totally absent from the teaching practices in the classroom. This might be for a number of reasons. Firstly, the teachers themselves are poor at these two skills and do not have enough pedagogical knowledge or confidence to teach them, which is perhaps not only confined to Egypt, but extends to other contexts (Mendelsohn, 1994). Therefore, teachers tend to skip listening and speaking sections in the set-book or at best handle them as a source of expanding students' vocabulary and grammar. Secondly, assessment methods do not accord with the stated publicised objectives for teaching. This means that there is no room for these two skills in the final examination and as the teacher's whole teaching is mainly oriented towards the exams s/he overlooks these two skills. Thirdly, English is seldom used socially and is confined to the classroom, where all teachers in the two main systems of schooling, tend to overuse the students' mother tongue in teaching.

To sum up, with all these inter-related factors in mind and as the average Egyptian starts his B.A. programme in English and even though he has behind him six years' English language learning, he has not been exposed to listening to English or taught how to go about such a skill that poses great demands on most of them. Unfortunately, even university education does not bring about the solution to this issue as the English teacher education training programme does not at all develop listening as a separate skill as shown in the following section.

1.2.3 EFL teacher education in Egypt

The teacher preparation programme offered by faculties of education constitute two main components: developing students' language proficiency and developing their teaching skills. However, the outcome of these programmes does not seem to come out, as it should be. The graduates of these faculties, as explained above (1.2.2) are uncertain about their abilities both linguistically and pedagogically. A number of reasons might account for the deficiency in this outcome. Some of these reasons emerge from the nature of the Egyptian context and discussed in 1.2.2. Other reasons are related to certain points of weakness in the course of EFL teacher preparation. For example, the part of the programme, which is responsible for building students' language proficiency, does not actually seek to develop all the different language skills integratively. Instead, it gives much weight to the grammar teaching as well as the literacy skills, while at the same time neglects listening altogether. This might be clear from table 1.1 below that shows the subjects taught and the weekly time allocated for each subject in the teacher preparation course at the Faculty of Education, Al Azhar University.

Table 1-1: Syllabus and weekly timetable.

First year		Second year		Third year		Fourth year	
Subject	Hrs/week	Subject	Hrs/week	Subject	Hrs/week	Subject	Hrs/week
Essay writing and reading comprehension	4	Essay writing and reading comprehension	4	Essay writing and reading comprehension	2	Essay writing and reading comprehension	2
Grammar	6	Grammar	2	Grammar	2	Grammar	2
Phonetics	2	Phonetics	2	Phonetics & History of English language	2	Linguistics	2
Translation	2	Translation	2	Translation	2	Translation	2
Conversation	2	Conversation	2	Conversation	2	Conversation	2
English Literature	4	English Literature	4	English Literature	3	English Literature (poetry, drama and novel)	6
English Culture	2	English Culture	2	Applied Criticism	2	Applied Criticism	2
				Methods of teaching EFL	2	Methods of teaching EFL	2

A keen scrutiny of the table above reveals a number of interesting points. Firstly, a heavy weight is given to grammar. It occupies 6 hours from the weekly timetable in the first year

and it is taught across the four years. The same applies to the literacy skills (reading and writing). Also it is clear that listening is completely absent from the syllabus.

As for developing students' teaching skills, the methodology course tends to be shallow and inflexible (Fouly, 1988). This course does not seriously try to keep up to date with the new methods of EFL teaching; rather it sticks to rigid old methods that have been used for ages. Moreover, this course does not include any methods of teaching listening as a skill.

To sum up, it is now clear from this presentation of the status of EFL teaching in Egypt that listening is still the overlooked or neglected skill in the programmes for preparing EFL teachers. However, there is hope that organisers of these programmes might start to realise the important role listening plays in promoting the overall language proficiency. Then they would rise to cope with the current trend calling for giving due attention to teaching and developing listening in its own right. It is hoped that this study might be a step forward on the road, opening new avenues towards understanding and handling one important dimension that hampers the achievement of proper EFL teaching in Egypt, namely the absence of listening from the EFL teacher preparation programmes.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The main objective driving this study was to help student teachers of English in Egypt learn how to go about listening and how to get over their problems in listening to English as a foreign language. To realise this, the study aimed to design a listening instructional programme based upon strategy instruction and to probe its effects on developing listening comprehension among student teachers of English. In addition, it tried to compare the effects of this strategy-based approach programme with two other approaches; the metacognitive instruction only and the pure exposure approach. To do this the study was carried out in two main phases: Baseline study and Main study, each of which had its aims, instruments and procedures. The baseline study, which was of exploratory nature, was undertaken to uncover a number of issues that were thought to be important for the main study.

It sought to find an answer to the following major questions:

What are the perceptions and conceptualisations of the student teachers of English hold about:

1. The nature of listening and what it entails;
2. What comprehension strategies they would use to listen effectively;
3. How confident they feel when listening;
4. What repair strategies they would use when comprehension breaks down; and,
5. What problems they encounter when listening to spoken English?

The main aim behind this baseline study was to use its findings as guiding principles for the main study in selecting the strategies to be included in the strategy-based instruction programme as well as to match these strategies with the students' problems and their actual repertoire of strategies. Besides, it sought to give insights about the student teachers' personal knowledge and their implicit theories about listening which serve as a cognitive map that guides them in approaching listening as a skill.

In the light of the findings of the baseline study, a strategy-based instruction programme was designed to be used in the main study, which aimed at:

1. Investigating the effects of a listening strategy instruction programme on listening performance and attitudes of high and low listening proficiency EFL student teachers of English. It also tried to examine the effects of this approach (strategy-based approach) on students' self-efficacy and on students' knowledge and use of strategy as well as their perceived value of strategy use.
2. Comparing these effects of strategy instruction with the effects of two other approaches: metacognitive instruction only and pure exposure to aural input with no instruction at all.

It is hoped that probing the effects of the strategy-training programme or approach compared with two other approaches would make experimental as well as pedagogical sense.

1.4 Motivation for the present study

The present study was stimulated by a number of motives:

1. Student teachers of English at faculty of Education, Al Azhar University, where the researcher works, have extremely low proficiency level in listening to the target language (see Henning, et al., 1983; El-Naggar, 1986; Fouly & Williams, 1988; Celce-Murcia; 1988), which is probably due to inexperience rather than the lack of talent. Henning, et al., (1983: 288), in their study that involved 485 Egyptian student teachers, stated that: “Although these students were preparing to become teachers of English, and although they had been exposed to from six to nine years of English instruction prior to this study, their proficiency in listening and speaking was perceived to be extremely low”.
2. Student teachers feel unhappy that their course does not include a component that teaches them how to listen or how to become good listening teachers. During the four-year course they do not study anything related to listening or how to go about it when not everything is comprehensible. Moreover, asking 477 Egyptian EFL student teachers in eight Faculties of Education to evaluate their pre-service training programme, El Naggar (1986) found that students at the end of the third year had many concerns about their training course. Among these was their feeling that the course did not fully help them build up their language proficiency effectively and that their defective English language skills represented a problem while practising teaching as part of their training. More precisely, 91% felt that their preparation should give room for the oracy skills (listening and speaking), which are the immediate medium of communication with their pupils.
3. EFL student teachers, the target sample of the current study, expressed their wish to be taught listening as a skill in its own right in informal interview with the researcher in 1995-1996, since it would help fulfil their ultimate goal of learning English; becoming good communicators. This seems to be

in line with the findings of a survey done by Yorio (1982) of 454 students in an intensive ESL programme which showed that students recognised the importance of listening and expressed the desire that more focus should be assigned to it in their teaching programmes.

4. Student teachers are afraid that their listening ability at graduation will not be adequate to meet the demands of their roles as assigned by the MOE (see 1.2.2). It was pointed out by some students of the third-year English Department in an informal interview with the researcher that they found many difficulties in listening to materials in the set-book they are to be in charge of teaching once they graduate.
5. There is a need for initiating a change in the course for EFL teacher preparation to provide room for instruction and training in listening as a skill so that these student teachers would be able to transfer this skill to their future pupils and help improve the status of ELT instruction in Egypt. .
6. There is a paucity of research in the field of teaching listening in Egypt in particular that should be attended to.
7. There is a need for introducing new innovative approaches for teaching listening in Egypt, which might open new avenues of research in Egypt on the use of strategies by learners at different levels in a variety of disciplines

1.5 Significance of the study

This study is particularly significant for the potentially important contributions it would make to the field of ELT in terms of four interrelated areas: language learning, listening instruction, and research in listening strategy instruction.

1.5.1 Language learning

The significant contributions the present study could make to the area of language learning, especially within the Egyptian context include:

- The study might give insights for teacher educators in Egypt about the need for giving up the view that learners are mere disembodied memorisers of facts, jugs to be filled up with rules and to subscribe to the view that learner are sharers of the burden in the language learning teaching processes if effective learning is the target aim. There is a need to develop the students' perceptions of their ability as well as roles as learners, explaining the causes of learning success and failure as well as stressing the extent to which they are in charge of learning situations.
- The study might give English teacher educators in Egypt insights about one of many approaches for developing language learning and fostering learner autonomy, namely a strategy-based approach. The results of the study might set an example showing the usefulness of using language learning strategies in language learning. The study might also, if well perceived by the target sample of the study, increase the intent of student teachers to incorporate learning strategy instruction into their teaching routines.
- The study would raise the issue of the need to consider and revise the learners' knowledge and beliefs about the factors that affect learning positively or negatively. It would also raise the issue of the need to give learners the opportunity to uncover their own abilities as well as to think about and **reflect** on their own learning approaches.
- The study would highlight the importance of training student teachers to use alternatives for learning other than rote learning and giving themselves in for teachers. It could give an alternative for the students, if they wanted to, to take their share in the burden of their own learning.

1.5.2 Listening instruction

In terms of the potential significance this study holds for listening instruction research especially in Egypt, the following points summarise some aspects of this significance:

- The study tried to highlight some of the mistaken assumptions widely held about listening and attempted to challenge the misunderstanding that listening is a natural

gift that needs no training. In this regard, it might offer some insight to teacher educators in Egypt about the importance of teaching listening as a skill in its own right, stressing its contribution to the overall language proficiency.

- It is hoped that the study results will initiate an attempt to promote teaching listening in Egypt by giving insights to EFL teacher educators about the necessity of giving listening due attention in the preparation course of EFL teachers to ensure their ability to handle this skill as expected in their future career. The study calls for the inclusion of listening in the programme for preparing English teachers as well as including how to teach and how to assess listening as part of the methodology programme.
- The study might give English teacher educators in Egypt insight about the importance of raising the student teachers' metacognitive awareness about listening as a process, what good listeners do to achieve better comprehension. The study also calls for correcting some of the misconceptions, which have been left as true by students' long exposure to teacher-centred approaches (dependency assumption).
- The study was also expected to help promote teaching listening in the pre-university stage, as it would call for giving room for testing listening as part of the examination in this stage. This, in turn, will ensure teaching listening, given the fact that examinations normally determine what to focus on in teaching

1.5.3 Research in listening and strategy instruction

Some potentially significant contributions might also be added to the area of research on both listening and strategy instruction. These contributions include:

- The study attempted to contribute to the understanding of listening; an area that is scarcely researched in the Egyptian context. So, the study in itself would be a contribution as it adds to the growing database of research in listening in general and in listening instruction in particular.
- If the strategy training approach resulted in better comprehension, the study might help along with other studies that started demonstrating the positive significant effects of strategy training on listening, settle down the contradiction and clarify mixed pattern of results in listening strategy instruction.

- The study gives insight into different listening instructional approaches as well as challenging the widely held belief that listening is a natural gift for which no training is required. The study results might empirically falsify/verify such an assumption.
- The study addresses the issue of individual differences by taking advantage of interaction between students' listening proficiency levels and strategy use. It might contribute to our understanding of the effectiveness of using listening strategy instruction and how they interact with proficiency level.
- In a context that can be best described as a heavily weighted towards the scientific approach mode of enquiry, the study sets an example of using a multi-dimensional approach in data collection and data analysis. It establishes the foundation for further research in Egypt in terms of using postpositivistic approach that calls for mixing up quantitative and qualitative modes of inquiry and making use of triangulation. In addition, the use of retrospective interviews is considered in itself a contribution in the Egyptian context, which mainly relies on survey research.
- The study adds to the growing database in second language strategy instruction that is still in its infancy. More specifically, it was hoped that the study would contribute to the line of research on listening strategy instruction, especially within the Egyptian context where this area is hardly trodden by researchers. It might give insights about the conditions in which strategy instruction works best and what modes and circumstances are needed to ensure effective listening strategy instruction.
- The study sets an example, modest as it is, for future research in Egypt in terms of the potential and value of using strategy instruction in developing language skills. Consequently, it might open new territories for research in Egypt. It might help trigger more large and small-scale research studies in the area of learner-based approaches in the future.

1.6 Overview of thesis chapters

CHAPTER 1 is an introduction to the study; it has presented the background of the study. It has stated the purposes of the study in its two phases: the baseline study and the main

study. It has stressed the rationale behind the study and its significance for the wide field of ELT in general and in Egypt in particular. Finally, it has ended with an overview of the thesis chapters.

CHAPTER 2 establishes a theoretical framework for listening as a construct. It reviews the literature on listening comprehension, what it entails, how it contributes to overall learning in general and to language proficiency in particular and what causes listening to be rated low in terms of research and instruction. It also raises a number of issues such as listening and construction of meaning, listening as a bottom-up and top-down process and how listening is perceived in the cognitive view. The chapter ends with a discussion of the different approaches for teaching listening.

CHAPTER 3 is assigned to reviewing the literature related to learning strategies. It discusses learning strategies within the cognitive view and how they move along a developmental path from a controlled stage to an automatic stage. It makes a necessary distinction between learning and learner strategies and communication strategies as well as learning styles. It also reviews a number of taxonomies of language learning strategies and strategies for listening comprehension. Particular importance is attached to studies in the literature that involved listening strategies for their contributions to methodology pursued in this study.

CHAPTER 4 is devoted to the discussion of the literature related to strategy training, the goals, and reactions to strategy training, and options for providing strategy training with the focus given to strategy-based instruction being the option used in the current study. Particular importance is attached to principles of effective strategy training extracted from related literature, and listening strategy training studies undertaken so far.

CHAPTER 5 is allocated to describing the baseline study, its premise and objectives. It also describes the participants in the study and their selection; the instruments (the students' questionnaire, the self-assessment measure, the retrospective interviews), the research and data collection procedure and the data analysis method. The chapter ends with the

implications obtained from the baseline study for the main study, which is reported in chapter six.

CHAPTER 6 is assigned to the description of the research methodology pursued in the main study. It highlights the aims, rationale behind the whole study in general and selecting the strategies taught in particular. It reports on the instruments used in the study; the listening comprehension test, listening strategy questionnaire, self-efficacy questionnaire, attitude questionnaire, follow-up interviews and retrospective interviews. It raises the issue of triangulation the study made use of to get more rigorous and reliable data. Piloting and final experimentation of the instruments and the programme are also highlighted. The chapter ends with a plan for the data analysis.

CHAPTER 7 is assigned to the presentation of the quantitative results of the main study, and their interpretation. It discusses the descriptive statistics and then the inferential statistics in the dependent variables involved in the study. The MANOVA test is used to test the differences between the two experimental and control groups. In case of significance, the post hoc test was used to find the direction of the difference.

CHAPTER 8 is assigned to the presentation of the qualitative results of the main study, which is thought to lend support to or refute the findings of the quantitative analysis and to filter out other differences not discernable through a quantitative analysis. It reports on the follow-up interviews and the verbal reports and how they add rigour and in-depth information to the quantitative analysis.

CHAPTER 9 presents a summary of the study. Results are discussed, and limitations as well as how to extend this study in future research are highlighted. Implications are presented for both pedagogy and future research. The chapter also discusses a number of issues that emerge from the study and are thought to be central to effective strategy training.

1.7 Chapter summary

The aim of this chapter was to familiarise the reader with the background of the study, its problem, purpose and significance. As highlighted throughout this chapter, ephemeral attention is given to listening instruction in the wider ELT context and no room is given for listening at all in the Egyptian context either at the pre-university stage or in the EFL teacher preparation programme at Faculties of Education, though second language acquisition research has acknowledged listening comprehension as a critical skill that needs and deserves systematic instruction. Section 1.1, in addition to highlighting the negligence of listening from our instruction agenda, has demonstrated that strategy training is one of the means that has potential for developing oral language skills. Strategy training does not only help improve their listening skills, but also can help them take control over their learning. In section 1.2 The context of the study was looked at highlighting the nature and philosophy of education in Egypt, the status of ELT and who is in charge of preparing teachers of English in Egypt. This section has made it clear that EFL teachers in Egypt are uncertain about their abilities both linguistically and pedagogically. One of the reasons for this is the fact that they are not prepared in oracy skills, which are the immediate medium of communication with their pupils. Students in this context showed their desire to have a listening component that shows them how and what to do when listening. The rest of the chapter reports on the purpose, motivation and significance the study hold for the narrow context where it was carried out (i.e., Egypt) and the wider context of ELT.

The next three chapters provide the theoretical framework of the study, with the next chapter providing an overview of listening.

Chapter two

Review of literature (1) listening comprehension

2.0 Introduction

The everyday concept of listening is erroneously associated with hearing. Listening tends to be thought of as the process of receiving a spoken message and converting it into a meaning in mind. Such a view has been shared by many educators, researchers as well as learners who see the task of listening comprehension as a matter of hearing a text and answering corresponding questions. However, the fallacy of this convention is now more widely recognised. When we look more closely at listening comprehension in the light of current developments in applied linguistics, we find that listening comprehension is seen as involving co-coordinating a number of different types of knowledge (linguistic and non-linguistic) and for the listener to construct the meaning, s/he has to go via complex processes. The recent developments in the field have the impact of progressively broadening the scope of what we mean when we say 'listening'.

In this sense, and in an attempt to understand the listening construct better, this chapter introduces an overview of listening as a construct. It starts with highlighting the lack of uniform agreement on a listening definition and provides what the literature perceived listening to entail (2.1). Section 2.2 discusses the key role listening plays in the language learning process and how it is central to all learning. Then, section 2.3 presents the reasons that contributed to listening being left in the shadow of other language skills, moving forward to trace how listening emerged from the shadow to be recognised as a skill in its own right that needs to be developed just like any other language skill (2.4). The available models that tried to work out and demonstrate how second language listening works is the aim of section 2.5. Section 2.6 is devoted to reviewing the theoretical model the study is grounded on and how this model views language learning in general and listening in particular. Finally, the chapter provides a sketch of the three listening instructional approaches highlighted in the literature: a) the traditional approach (sink or swim), b) the strategy training approach, which has emerged recently, and c) a middle ground approach between these two.

2.1 Definition of listening

A common way to begin a discussion of listening is to provide a definition of the concept, which would be crucial for clarifying later discussions. However, it seems that winning an accurate definition of listening has not been so easy (see Underwood, 1989; Buck, 1990; Rost, 1990, 1994; Dunkel, 1991; Dunkel, 1993; Wolvin & Coackly, 1996). As a matter of fact, the term “listening” presents a real mystery. People use listening widely, probably every minute, in a variety of everyday and professional contexts, yet there seems to be no consensus on what the term refers to. The definition of listening continues to be in the developing stages (Wolvin & Coakley, 1996). The lack of consensus on a listening definition is partly attributed to the covert nature of listening as a construct and partly to the fact that academics have defined it in terms of their theoretical interests in the topic. Rost (2002: 2) highlights this fact stating:

Because listening is an invisible mental process, we tend to use indirect analogies and metaphors to describe it. A common metaphor from language students is in terms of ‘getting something’: ‘listening means “catching what the speaker says”’. Among applied linguists, there is the familiar ‘shopping’ allusion: ‘negotiating meaning’ is a frequent response. Anthropologists sometimes answer with ‘tactic’ metaphors: ‘reframing a message in relevant terms’. Psychologists occasionally answer with ‘sensitivity’ imagery: ‘being open to what is in the speaker.

After receiving hundreds of views of applied linguists, psychologists, language teachers, and language students over several years, Rost (2002) started to see different patterns in which listening typically drew upon one of four orientations or perspectives: receptive (receiving what the speakers actually say), constructive (constructing and representing meaning), collaborative (negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding), or transformative (creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy). These four perspectives, according to Rost (2002: 3), contribute *fundamentally* to what listening is (author’s emphasis).

Although it has been difficult to define listening, a sort of agreement seems to have recently been reached on what listening comprehension entails. Listening nowadays is perceived as an active process that involves four interrelated processes: receiving, attending to, assigning meaning and responding overtly to an aural stimulus based on on-going complex and multidimensional cognitive processes (for overview see Buck, 1990, 1991, 1995, 2001; Rubin, 1994; Mendelsohn & Rubin, 1995; Brown, 1995;

Wolvin & Coakley, 1996, Rost, 1990, 1994, 2002). In these processes, listeners, besides the acoustic input, rely on a number of different types of knowledge to construct the meaning; linguistic knowledge (phonology, lexis, syntax, semantic and discourse structure), and non-linguistic knowledge (knowledge about the topic, knowledge about the context, world knowledge). How these different sources of knowledge are applied to the incoming message and in what order is a theme of an ongoing-debate (see 2.5).

2.2 Listening and language learning

Listening is central to all learning as students receive 57% to 90% of their school instruction via listening to teachers and to each other (see Wolvin & Coakley, 1996; Feyten, 1991; Oxford, 1993). Brown (1980: 10) highlights the key role listening plays at all levels, stating: “listening ability lies at the very heart of all growth, from birth through the years of formal education. The better those learning skills are developed, the more productive our learning efforts”. Listening, in the same vein, plays a key role in language learning for its contribution to the development of overall language proficiency (Krashen, 1982; Wolvin & Coakley, 1996; Rost, 2002). Morley (1999: 1) spells out this idea stating:

1. Proficiency in listening comprehension makes a central contribution to the learner’s overall development of competency in second/foreign language.
2. The systematic development of listening comprehension is of critical importance not only as input for learning to speak the language, but also as a premium skill in its own right.

Similarly, Rost (1994: 141-142) summarises the role listening plays in language learning:

1. Listening is vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learner; without understanding input at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin;
2. Spoken language provides a means of interaction for the learner. Since learners must interact to achieve understanding, access to speakers of the language is essential. Moreover, learners' failure to understand the language they hear is an impetus, not an obstacle, to interaction and learning;
3. Authentic spoken language presents a challenge for the learner to attempt to understand language as it is actually used by native speakers; and,
4. Listening exercises provide teachers with a means for drawing learners' attention to new forms (vocabulary, grammar, interaction patterns) in the language.

Despite these central roles listening plays in our daily and professional practices, it has not been rendered the due attention in our instruction and research agenda. This is further discussed in detail in the following section.

2.3 Listening: the neglected skill

Listening has been rated very low in terms of teaching and researching. This, according to Morley (1983: 26), is due to a number of reasons, among which are:

1. Our intense concentration on ‘speaking’ a language;
2. Our use of listening as a means to teach speaking, but not an end in itself;
3. Our false assumption that listening is a passive skill;
4. The absence of a model from first language teaching as listening is seldom taught in first language;
5. The fact that how we listen and comprehend largely remains a mystery; and,
6. The overwhelming complexity of the components of the listening act may have discouraged research and materials development.

Nineteen years later, Morley’s words still ring true in some contexts like Egypt, the context of the current study, where listening is receiving peripheral or no attention at all although things have moved on in some other contexts and the importance of teaching listening has been acknowledged. In addition to the number of reasons highlighted in the above quote, the importance of listening was not recognised owing to a number of mythical false conceptions about what it entails and whether it should be developed. One of these misconceptions as highlighted above is the belief that listening is a passive skill. Other misconceptions are regarding listening as a synonym of hearing and thinking of it as a natural gift that needs no training. Such common mistaken assumptions and many others, which made of listening a rich land of myths and false views, contributed substantially to educators’/teachers’ neglecting listening instruction to poor listeners not seeking listening training, and to society continuing to perpetuate fallacies about listening (see Wolvin & Coakley, 1996). The following section discusses a number of issues, which were widely thought of incorrectly and therefore contributed to such poor status of listening both in instruction and research.

2.3.1 Listening and hearing are synonymous?

The first commonly held false conception assumes that listening and hearing are synonymous. However, hearing does not necessarily imply we are listening. Hearing can be seen as the physiological function of our auditory sense, e.g. that we all have the possibility of perceiving sounds, whereas listening can be thought of as the physiological attribute, which is in action when we discern and actively respond to the sounds heard. In this sense both listening and hearing involve sound perception, but listening involves a degree of intention. As a matter of fact, listening involves more than merely hearing sounds; it goes beyond that level as it requires conscious attention to the message, interpreting it and constructing its meaning. Hearing, on the other hand, is “non-selective and involuntary” (Bone, 1994:20). Hearing is not only the first step in listening, but also it is an integral component that influences the total listening processes, and which, together with attending to and assigning meaning to the aural stimulus, constitutes the whole process of listening (Wolvin & Coakley, 1996). In conclusion, distinct differences are there between listening and hearing and it is by no means right to think of both constructs as synonymous or to use them interchangeably.

2.3.2 Listening is a natural gift?

Many educators and teachers assume that listening is a natural gift that needs no systematic training to be acquired. According to Morley (2001: 70) the reason for the nearly total neglect of listening was an assumption that “listening is a reflex, a little like breathing – listening seldom receives overt attention in one’s native language – has masked the importance of complexity of listening with understanding in non-native language”. This assumption is based on the fact that many young children already acquire relatively adequate oral skills in their first language before starting schooling. In this view, listening develops via normal classroom activities at different educational levels. Put differently, it was suggested that students would learn to understand the spoken form of the language by being exposed to it. However, even if this is true for L1, it cannot be automatically transferred to L2 (see Brown, 1990; Mendelsohn, 1994; Morley, 2001). A considerable number of researchers highlighted the need for the systematic development and overt teaching of listening comprehension not only as a foundation for speaking, but also as a skill in its own right (see Underwood, 1988; Rost,

1990, 1994, 2002; Ur, 1984, 1996; McKay, 1998). As a matter of fact, to be a good listener, one must apply certain skills that have to be learned via training.

2.3.3 Listening is a passive skill?

Traditionally, teachers tended to think of listening as a passive activity in which listeners receive the message sent by the speaker without any act done on their part. But the fact is that, listening is an active skill since the meaning does not reside in the text, but is constructed by the listener based on a number of different sources of knowledge (Richards, 1983, 1990; Long, 1989; Rubin, 1995). So, listeners are not “merely functioning like sponges mopping up the text” (Mendelsohn, 1995: 133). Brown (1990: 11) spells this out stating:

Listeners are not simply passive processors who undertake automatic signal recognition exercises as acoustic signals are fed into them and so construct a ‘meaning’ ... Humans are active searchers for meaning. As soon as someone begins to speak ... listener is actively trying to work out what he is saying, ... what he is likely to say next ... and what he is likely to mean by what he says. The active listeners will use all relevant background knowledge.

More simply stated, in the complete listening process listeners are involved in a number of active processes. They must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation, retain what was gathered in all of the above, and interpret it in the light of the context and previously acquired knowledge. Coordinating all these processes reflects an active rather than passive listener. To do all this, they have to be selective (listeners use only part of the incoming information (the relevant information) to make sense of the input), and interpretive (using background knowledge as well as the input to decipher what is going on and to work out what speakers intend). In Vandergrift’s words (1999: 168) “listening comprehension is anything but a passive activity”. An implication of such an active view is the need for raising the students’ attention of the active nature of listening, which requires special attention in language study on their part.

2.3.4 The meaning of a message is encoded in the language?

Another common mistaken assumption about listening is that the meaning of a message is encoded in the language and the listener's only job is to extract it: decoding the message yielding the text. In this view, the listener is a mere language decoder or processor whose expected job is to sort and rearrange the language bits coming at him/her. However, this is far from true because a good listener is a searcher for and constructor of meanings making use of a number of different knowledge sources. These sources include the linguistic knowledge (phonology, lexical, morphology, discourse features), the knowledge of co-text (knowledge of what has been said already), knowledge about the context of the situation and general world knowledge (see Richards, 1983; Long, 1989; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Buck, 1995; Vandergrift, 1992, 1999). The meaning of the spoken message is the outcome of the interaction between the listeners' schemata and the content of the text where every component can interact with any other component, be it 'higher up' or lower down'.

Brown (1995) emphasises listening as an interpretive process pointing out that, it is rare for a thought with a precise or fixed meaning to pass directly from one mind to another. This might explain the quite often heard statement 'I did not mean that, I meant ...' Listening is not only understanding what words and sentences precisely mean, rather it is a process, which entails going beyond the literal level of the spoken message to arriving at a reasonable interpretation of the speaker's meaning (Brown, 1986) by finding a link between what is said and the context. In Rost's (1990: 33) words,

Understanding spoken language is essentially an inferential process based on a perception of cues rather than a straightforward matching of sound to meaning. The listener must find relevant links between what is heard (and seen) and those aspects of context that might motivate the speaker to make a particular utterance at a particular time.

Therefore, processing the literal meaning does not guarantee comprehension: it is still necessary to understand the pragmatic significance: grasping the meaning intended by the speaker.

2.3.5 Learning to read can guarantee learning to listen?

Researchers such as Anderson and Lynch (1988), Lynch (1989), Feyten (1991), Buck (1992), and Bae & Bachman (1998) have revealed that there is considerable overlap between reading and listening. The identification by researchers of many similarities between reading and listening, according to Wolvin & Coakley (1996:27), may have “lent credence to the false notion that learning to read can guarantee learning to listen”.

Listening, indeed, shares with reading many characteristics among which are:

- The receptive nature of both skills,
- Reading and listening consist of complex related skills,
- Both manifest the same set of cognitive processes,
- They require motivation and readiness,
- Each seems to be affected by the teaching and learning about the other and
- Both are affected by the message receiver’s frame of references.

Such similarities led some educators and teachers to assume that reading and listening involve the same processes; therefore through learning to read one learns to listen. Put differently, it is assumed that listening is like reading and if you listen carefully to the individual sounds and words, then you will be able to understand. With this in mind, it is not surprising to find that some authors resort to adapting typical definitions of reading comprehension to the listening process. Lundsteen (cited in Feyten 1991: 297), for instance, did so and defined listening as “ the process by which spoken language is converted to meaning in the mind”. Nor is it surprising to find the focus in the Audio-lingual method given to numerous repetitions of passages reinforcing the perception of formal similarity between spoken and written texts through repeated access (see 2.4).

While the many similarities between the two constructs perpetuate the misconception, the identified differences clearly reveal that listening and reading are separate unique processes. Among the differences are the real-time nature of spoken messages, the linguistic features, the signals involved for processing and the situational context, all of which are discussed in the following section.

2.3.5.1 Differences between reading and listening

2.3.5.1.1 Real-time nature of spoken language

One obvious difference between reading and listening is that the spoken text exists in time rather than space; it is fleeting in nature and must be perceived as it is uttered. In a spoken text, listeners do not have control over the text as the readers do (Rost, 1990; Lynch, 1988; Lund, 1991; Flowerdew, 1994b; Buck, 1995, 2001). Consequently, listeners must process the acoustic input at a speed determined by the speaker, which is generally quite fast for foreign language learners. Therefore, when processing a listening text, a listener needs to follow paths quite different from the ones followed in processing a reading text. It is important for a listener to understand that while a written text is permanent, the spoken message is fleeting and transitory. In other words, when the reader becomes tired or distracted or even does not understand the material, s/he can stop reading, rest, perhaps check a word's meaning in a dictionary, and then can return later to the material, re-create focus on the material, and reread, re-examine, or continue reading. In this sense, we can say that listening involves the minimum control over the flow of information. This, in Lynch's (1989) words, "puts intolerable load on L1 listeners (not to mention the L2 listener), if the sole purpose of all spoken language were to convey transactional information" (p. 44).

2.3.5.1.2 Linguistic features of spoken texts

Some people mistakenly presume that the language of speech is much the same as the language of writing. However, this is not true in most cases. Speech and writing are both variants of the same linguistic system, but there are some considerable differences between the two (see table 2-1 below). Ideally speaking, the writer's messages, for example, are generally linear, tightly structured, presented in full sentences containing subordinates, frequent modifications by adjectives and adverbs, intellectually demanding with rich lexis and an extensive set of metalingual markers, coherent and tightly organised as well as succinct.

Table 2-1: Linguistic differences between spoken and written discourses

Spoken discourse	Written discourse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loosely or poorly organised and therefore context dependent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tightly organised and deploys more explicit coding of logical relations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fragments of language with more hesitations, false starts, restatements, self-corrections and even grammatically incorrect utterances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presented in full sentences with frequent modifiers (adjectives and adverbs) and therefore more coherent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively undemanding as the speaker speaks in short bursts of speech (pause units) and deploys simple syntax and lexis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intellectually demanding in terms of lexis and syntax as it deploys longer sentences with more subordination.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rich in prosodic features and relies on gesture as well as paralanguage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depends on spelling and punctuation conventions.

The speaker's message, on the other hand, is often non-linear, loosely structured, poorly organised, contain repetitions and are bounded by pauses, relatively undemanding in terms of syntax and lexis, rich in prosodic features, mostly informal and coupled with much more colloquial register. This message is less explicit, less dense in terms of information, packed with grammatically unacceptable items, continuous and spontaneous as well as has its own pronunciation rules (see Rivers, 1981; Richards, 1983; Brown & Yule, 1983; Hatch, 1983; Anderson & Lynch; 1988; Lynch, 1989; Brown, 1990; Buck, 1990, 1995, 2001; Rost, 1994; Wolvin & Coakley, 1996).

Given such differences, it will not escape the reader that this distinction might not apply to some cases where overlapping and mixed patterns can be found in the two variants (e.g., chatty letters or tabloid articles often contain features usually more associated with spoken language and conversely some genres such as university lectures, sermon, may be written to be delivered as speech). Therefore, it might be useful to think of both discourses as represented on a continuum. Oral text, for instance, can be arranged along a continuum with those closer to the spoken language, at one end, and those closer to the written language at the other.

2.3.5.1.3 Signals involved

Reading requires processing only visual signals without competing stimuli whereas listening often involves seeing as well as hearing. Thus, listening requires “processing oral signals and often accompanying visual signals, under the pressure of competing analysis” (Wolvin & Coakley, 1996: 28). In listening, the voice conveys approximately 30% of the meaning of a message. Voices can be determining, pleading, questioning, whining, demanding, or dominating. Moreover, non-verbal cues or body language, along with tone of voice, confirm or deny the message of words.

2.3.5.1.4 Situational context

Reading tends to be a private process with the reader and the writer separated. Therefore, the text needs to be explicit because the audience for a written text may be unknown to the writer and the amount of shared knowledge between writers and readers is unknown. On the other hand, listening tends to be a social process, which involves reciprocity between speaker and listener as well as a process that does not allow the listener to choose the place where s/he wishes to listen.

Finally, and bearing all these differences in mind, it simply cannot be right to think of reading and listening as being identical or to believe that what applies to one of them should apply to the other which is still the case in some contexts like Egypt.

This section highlighted the most widely held misconceptions about listening. At least, these misconceptions should be made known to students of listening if they want to improve their listening comprehension skills. It is the teachers’ role to do so as well as to equip students with the appropriate alternatives to dispel such false conceptions. The following section focuses on tracing how our perspective of listening has changed so that listening is currently occupying much of researchers’ as well as teachers’ interest.

2.4 Listening from the shadow to the focus: historical perspective

As we have seen in section (2.3) listening has been thought of as a passive skill that is acquired naturally and therefore has received only peripheral or hardly any attention. In many parts of the world, including Egypt, the context of the present study, listening has

for long been the overlooked dimension (Feyten, 1991), which is treated like a “neglected step-child” (Oxford, 1993: 205) and is left to be acquired by osmosis (Mendelsohn, 1994). This section provides a historical overview of listening instruction and how it has come to be the focus after being for a very long time in the shadow.

Over time L2 learning and teaching approaches have made different assumption about language skills and their importance, which was reflected in the methodologies based on these approaches interest in (a) given skill(s) more than another. The Grammar Translation Method, for instance, assuming that the goal of L2 learning was the study of literature, and that instruction should be in the native language, communication was of no interest and therefore the focus was mainly on literacy skills neglecting totally the oracy skills. The result of this approach was a learner who could not use the language for communication. The Direct Method came in reaction to the failure of the Grammar Translation Method to produce learners who could use the target language for communication. It emphasised the need to establish a direct bond between the learner and the language via conversing, reading and writing. However, it required native teachers, who are not available in most cases. Then the Audiolingual Approach, which was prevailing during the 1960s, came with its emphasis on the oral-aural skills as often claimed. Rost (1990: 27) underscores the negligence of listening as a skill in its own right in this approach pinpointing:

... Both the audio-lingual and situational approaches emphasised learner identification of language ‘products’ and the role of listening was mainly to reinforce recognition of those products in the syllabus.

Listening activities were mainly structural-based with numerous repetitions of passages reinforcing the perception of formal similarity between spoken and written texts through repeated access. The audio-lingual instruction did not take notable interest in listening beyond its role in the imitation-repetition of patterns and dialogues. This means that, in spite of the recognition of listening value, no attention was given to listening in its own right as a skill. It was rather seen as a means to another end; learning to speak the language (language production). The development of listening comprehension as a skill in its own right in this approach was a rare consideration.

Researchers such as Postovsky (1974), Asher (1981), Wintiz (1981), Nord (1981), Krashan & Terrell (1982), Morley (1991) and Long (1989), succeeded in inducing a slight change in the overlooked listening situation: a shift from listening for production (audio-lingual perspective) to listening for comprehension and for acquisition of linguistic input. The common tenets among these authors was the assumption that second language parallels first language acquisition and therefore instruction should allow for a "silent period" in which students verify comprehension without using the target language.

Asher's Total Physical Response (TRP) method, for instance, stressed listening comprehension via the redundant use of series of verbal commands, which students learn to understand by imitating the actions of the teacher. Asher argued that listening comprehension followed by immediate physical response results in language transfer to other skills such as reading and writing and therefore listening for him is a necessary first step in language acquisition. Similarly, Postovsky (1974), in his investigation of the progress of two groups learning Russian, found that the experimental group (receiving intensive exposure to aural input requiring a written response) outperformed the control group (receiving intensive aural practice) in tests of all four skills. In the same vein, Krashen's (1985) comprehensible input hypothesis and the role listening plays in providing such input also played a significant role in the interest in listening.

The field has come a long way in the last two decades and we have a much better understanding of the processes of comprehension, what listening involves and the variables affecting comprehension. With the emergence of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), with its emphasis on the authenticity of contexts, and text, listening was not only emerging and gaining in popularity and pervasiveness in language curricula (Littlewood, 1981; Rost, 1994), but also it was accorded a central role at all levels of learning which, in turn, aided bringing listening into focus in L2 classrooms. Since this change of listening status, much has been published on listening, listening processes as well as teaching instruction that have made major contributions to improving the situation (see for example Brown, 1977, 1990, 1995; Ur, 1984; Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Underwood, 1988; Rost, 1990, 1994, 2002; White, 1998). Nevertheless, it is still possible to meet teachers and educators who believe that

listening comprehension is an easy skill developed naturally and needing no systematic instruction.

2.5 Processes of listening

While the importance of listening comprehension as a crucial component in language learning is now acknowledged, the actual process of listening comprehension is still not fully understood. Following is a detailed overview of what is presently known about listening as a process.

2.5.1 Listening as a bottom-up or top-down process

Central to any theory of comprehension is an understanding of two different approaches that may be taken by listeners to derive meaning. One is the bottom-up approach and the other is the top-down approach. A considerable number of researchers and academics such as, Clark and Clark, 1977; Carrell, 1983, 1984, 1988; Chaudron & Richards, 1986; Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Nunan 1989; Richard 1990; Morley 1990; Brown, 1990; Flowerdew, 1994; Buck, 1990, 2001, have attempted to describe ‘bottom-up’ processes in listening. Broadly speaking, their views can be summarised as follows: comprehension, according to the ‘bottom-up’ view begins with analysis of the message received at successive levels of organisation –sounds - words - clauses and sentence till the intended meaning is arrived at. More precisely, it is assumed that the aural input is first decoded into the smallest sound segments that can carry meaning (phonemes) and then this is used to identify individual words. Then, processing moves up to the next higher stage, the syntactic level followed by an analysis of the semantic content to arrive at an understanding of the basic linguistic meaning. Then the listener interprets the linguistic meaning in accordance with the communicative situation to understand what the speaker means. Accordingly, comprehension is seen as a decoding process in which the listener’s lexical and grammatical competence serves as a mental dictionary to which incoming words are referred to meaning assignment. Therefore, failure in comprehension in this view is attributed to the linguistic deficiency (lack of phonology, vocabulary and grammar) (see Kobayashi, 1995). In effect, the bottom-up approach views comprehension as a process of passing through a number of consecutive stages and the output of each stage becomes the input for the next higher stage. Comprehension is a process, which happens, in an idealised serial sequential fashion

Research and daily experience refute the assumptions in the serial bottom-up model. The proposed sequence of independent processing stages is inaccurate and an unworkable representation of the way human beings are able to deal with the incoming information (Rixon, 1986; Buck, 2001). In daily life, for instance, it happens frequently when we understand the meaning of a word before decoding its sounds, because we have many types of knowledge including world knowledge. In most situations, we know what normally happens and so we have expectations about what we will hear.

Similarly, research has shown that the processes are not carried out in sequential order. Anderson & Lynch (1988: 22-23), who contrast the bottom-up view of listener as “a tape recorder”, summarise three arguments against the serial model:

1. There is no one-to-one correspondence between segments of the spoken signals and the sounds we perceive.
2. For many phonemes there are no unvarying distinctive characteristics that mark them off as absolutely different from all others. The context of the surrounding words affects the phoneme's characteristics.
3. Even at the word level, as opposed to the level of the phoneme, when individual words are extracted from tape recordings of conversations and played for listeners to identify, only about half of the words can be recognised in isolation.

In short, listeners are not mere language processors who perform actions in a linear fixed order regardless of context, instead, s/he is some one who had expectations about what he is going to hear and which surely influence how he approaches the message. This view represents the top-down view of listening.

Comprehension according to the ‘top-down’ view is primarily directed by listener goals and expectations. The top-down model characterises the listener as someone who has expectations and generalisations about the text information and selects from the heard message what helps him reject or confirm these expectations. Rost (2002: 96) spells this characteristic in his definition of the top-down model: “... a form of language processing that bases inferences on expectations and predictable generalisations cued by the incoming language”. This means that the listener does not receive the meaning as it was assumed in the bottom-up view: instead he constructs it. In constructing the meaning, the listener brings to the task a bank of information that includes prior knowledge, and global expectations about language and the world, which are all used to make predictions about the incoming message is expected to be at any point, and how

the pieces fit into the whole. Thus, scholars working with this model posited “higher level” pragmatic and inferential processes as a starting point, with linguistic knowledge at the “lower level” being processed only if required by comprehenders’ expectations and goals.

In fact, however, neither the bottom-up nor the top-down metaphor is a proper characterisation of the listening process, and it seems more adequate to think of listening process as interactive, where every component can interact with any other component, be it ‘higher up’ or lower down’. Vandergrift (1992: 176) concludes his study (see 3.3.1) stating that his findings provided evidence for an interactive model of listening in which the listener “draws simultaneously on different knowledge sources to interpret the meaning of a given message”. Thus, processing is now thought of as parallel rather than serial (see also 2.6.5).

2.5.2 Listening and background knowledge

Current models of listening view listening as a constructive process in which background knowledge is central to effective comprehension (see Anderson and Lynch, 1989; Chaing & Dunkel, 1992; Schmidt-Rinehart, 1994; Rubin, 1994; Long, 1989; 1990). Anderson & Lynch (1988: 13) states that listening effectively involves systematic knowledge (linguistic knowledge) and non-systematic knowledge (schematic knowledge). According to them schematic knowledge is one of the “information sources in comprehension and it is the lack of such information which impedes comprehension”. Schema theory has been an extremely useful notion for describing how prior knowledge is integrated in memory and used in higher-level comprehension processes.

Schema theory perceives comprehension as an interactive process in which listeners play a very active role and the spoken words themselves do not transmit meaning. The world knowledge and life experience that the listener brings to the text is as important as the linguistic input provided by the text for constructing a meaningful interpretation of the intended message. According to schema theory, meaning is neither in the message itself, nor in the comprehender’s schemata in their absence, pre-activated state, but rather is the result of a process that combines the two. The text, spoken/written, does

not carry meaning in and of itself. Rather meaning occurs as the result of the interaction between the listener's background knowledge about the world and the speech. The text only provides direction for listener/reader as how they should construct meaning from their own previously acquired knowledge (Carrell and Eisterhood, 1983). Put differently, the function of a text, in this view, is to provide language clues that help the reader/listener fit the incoming information into his/her pre-existing cognitive structures as an attempt to give the meaning to the text. Thus, comprehension is the bringing of meaning to, rather than the gaining of meaning from the spoken information. The listener comprehends the text in terms of what s/he is rather in what it is. The essence of meaning according to this theory comes, at least partly, from the mind of the listener; or more precisely, the meaning is the outcome of the interaction between the listener's background knowledge and the acoustic input.

L2 listening research on schema renders support to the central role previously acquired knowledge plays in comprehending aural input (see for example Muller, 1980; Weissenreider, 1987; Markham & Latham, 1987; Chiang & Dunkel, 1992; Vandergrift, 1992). The implication of schema theory to listening is that, it is a must to activate listeners' previously acquired knowledge. As such, it is not enough, careful planning and instruction is an integral part to get listeners to activate their background knowledge in most efficient and effective way possible. So, Vandergrift recommended the planning of pre-listening activities to ensure the schema activation. .

2.6 Towards a model for listening comprehension

A theoretical model in second language acquisition is needed as a basis for explaining how language in general and listening in particular is learned; how they can be best taught in second and foreign language contexts. Such a model is also needed for describing the role of strategic processes in listening comprehension. The current study builds on the cognitive theory, and therefore the following section will be devoted to sketching out language learning, listening forms a cognitive view.

2.6.1 The cognitive model and language learning

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) claim that the cognitive theoretical model (Anderson, 1983, 1985; Gange, et al., 1993; Shuell, 1986) accomplishes all the above objectives and offers an extremely powerful explanation for how language is learned (see also

Chamot et. al., 1993; Chamot, 1995; Chamot & O'Malley, 1994a). Applying the cognitive theory to the field of second language acquisition according to O'Malley & Chamot (1990:217) has the following benefits:

1. Learning becomes an active and dynamic process in which individuals make use of variety of information and strategic modes of processing.
2. Language is a complex cognitive skill that has properties in common with other complex skills in terms of how information is stored and learned.
3. Learning a language entails a stagewise progression from initial awareness and active manipulation of information and learning processes to full automaticity in language use; and
4. Learning strategies parallel theoretically derived cognitive processes and have the potential to influence learning outcomes in a positive manner.

The main tenet of the cognitive theories is the internal mental processes rather than the product. In contrast to the behaviourist view, which is more concerned with the outcome, cognitive psychology seeks to understand how incoming information is processed in memory and particularly how new information is acquired. In this view, the outcome of learning is supposed to depend jointly on two variables: what information is presented, and how the learner processes it (Weinstein & Mayer, 1986).

Cognitive theory describes language learning as the acquisition of a complex cognitive skill (McLaughlin, 1987), where learners are viewed as capacity-limited processors who must use various information-handling techniques to select information, organise it, relate it to what they already know, retain what they consider to be relevant and crucial, use the information in appropriate context, and reflect on the success of their learning efforts (see O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Gange, et al., 1993; Chamot, 1995). The computer inspired cognitive psychologists to explain human behaviour (the acquisition of new information, storing and retrieving it) using information concepts; the brain is a processor, which selects, processes, organises, stores and uses data.

The basic assumption in cognitive theories is that information is stored in various memories with different capacities and accessing time (see Anderson, 1983, 1985, 1995; McLaughlin, 1980, 1987; McLaughlin et al., 1983; Ericson & Simon, 1987; Gange et al., 1993). Three types of memory in human information processing are identified: a) short-term memory, b) working memory, and c) long-term memory

(Shuell, 1986). The information comes in via our sensor receptors (the sensory form of stimulus (auditory/visual) remains unaltered in the mind for a brief time) into short-term memory. The short-term memory has a limited capacity storage (seven items). Therefore, information in the short-term memory needs to be manipulated somehow (e.g., rehearsal) if it is to survive long enough for storage and future retrieval from long-term memory (Gange et al. 1993). The long-term memory is a permanent storage which has unlimited capacity. Information in long-term memory is retained in enactive, iconic or symbolic forms and organised in mental frameworks (schemata) (Anderson, 1995; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

The current study is grounded on one of the information processing models, namely on the ACT Model proposed by Anderson (1983, 1985, 1995). For Anderson there are three types of memory, the *working memory*, which is characterised by a limited storage capacity, and two kinds of long-term memories, a declarative long-term memory and a procedural long-term memory. Anderson's model rests on the distinction between *declarative knowledge* (i.e. 'static' information in memory) and *procedural knowledge* (i.e. 'dynamic' information in memory, like automatic knowledge). Declarative knowledge entails all of the things we know about, and what we know 'how' to do is the procedural knowledge. Anderson believes that declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge are different kinds of knowledge, stored differently.

Declarative knowledge consists of 'what' we know such as concepts, vocabulary and images. It is stored in memory frameworks or schemata that consist of interconnected concepts and ideas. The connections between these concepts are extremely complex and may result from formal education or other experience in which we link objects, people or concepts in idiosyncratic ways (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994). Representation of information in memory in terms of interrelated schemata has a number of important features. First, representation can be organised hierarchically; a second important feature is *spreading activation*, or the activation of additional concepts by evoking a single concept (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990: 22). This means that the information stored through schemata can be altered when we have new experiences that add to, expand upon, or challenge some of the information.

The second way of storing information in memory, procedural knowledge, concerns what we know 'how to do'. Procedural knowledge, which includes both physical and cognitive skills and strategies, is stored as *production systems* (Anderson, 1983, 1985). Anderson argues that all complex cognitive skills can be represented as production systems, which, in a basic form, consist of linked condition and action sequence: IF-THEN sequence. Whereas declarative knowledge may be acquired quickly, procedural knowledge is acquired gradually and only with extensive practice, which results in automatization. In this sense, declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge are distinctive, however, they interact with each other and are interrelated.

According to Anderson, language learning is a cognitive skill, which involves the development of procedures that transform declarative knowledge into a form that makes for easy and efficient performance. He (1983, 1985) argues that for declarative knowledge to become procedural knowledge it has to go through a three-stage model: a) the cognitive stage, b) the associative stage and c) the autonomous stage.

1. The cognitive stage, where a description of the process is learned. During this stage, the learners are instructed on how to do the task, observe an expert performing the task, or attempt to figure it out and study it themselves. This stage involves conscious activity on the part of the learner, and the acquired knowledge at this stage is typically declarative and can be described verbally by the learner. Put differently, information is stored as facts for which there are no ready-made activation procedures. To illustrate this, consider the following example. Learners may initially know, in the sense that they have consciously learnt the rule, that s/he + verb requires the addition of an -s to the stem of the verb in the Present Simple. However, they may be unable to produce the rule correctly in communication (conversation).
2. The associative stage, where a method for performing the skill is worked out. In this stage, the learner strengthens the connections among the various elements of the skill and constructs more efficient production sets (Ellis, 1994). Applied to the above-mentioned example, the learner would work out how to add an -s to the stem of the verb when the context requires. In this stage, two major changes take place towards proficiency in which errors in the original declarative

representation of the stored information are gradually detected and eliminated as well as the connections among the various elements or components of the skill being strengthened. Basically, during this stage the declarative knowledge is turned into its procedural form. However, the declarative representation initially formed is not always lost. Thus, even if we become more fluent at speaking a foreign language, we still remember its rules of grammar. Performance at this stage begins to resemble expert performance, but may still be slower and errors may still occur (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990: 26). Thus, in this stage, learners learn to associate an action or a set of actions with the corresponding declarative knowledge.

3. The autonomous stage, where the performance, e.g., adding an –s, becomes more rapid and automatic as well as the errors disappear. Learners' actions become increasingly proceduralised to the extent that the corresponding declarative knowledge may be lost; learners might not be able to explain or even be conscious of what they are doing. In this stage, the mind continues both to generalize production and also to discriminate more narrowly the occasions when specific productions can be used.

2.6.2 Listening in Cognitive Theory

Language comprehension is viewed in cognitive theory as consisting of active and complex processes in which individuals construct meaning from aural or written information through a complex interaction between the characteristics of the input, the types of the declarative knowledge that are accessed, and the use of strategic process to enhance understanding (Richards, 1983; Byrnes, 1984; Pearson, 1984; Call, 1985; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Anderson, 1995).

Anderson's (1985) three-stage model of comprehension remains an influential psycholinguistic construct in which he suggests that the "mental processes necessary for comprehending spoken and written information are sufficiently similar that the comprehension of both modalities can be generally treated as a common phenomena" (Anderson, 1995: 378). However, it might be pertinent, at the onset, to highlight the fact that Anderson's model is more sophisticated than the view presented in section 2.3.5 that learning to read leads to learning to listen

Anderson differentiates comprehension into three distinct interrelated and recursive processes: perceptual processing, parsing and utilisation. These processes are recursive in that uninterrupted shifts may occur from one process to the next and then back to the previous process. In Anderson's words (1995: 379) these three stages are "... by necessity partially ordered in time; however, they also partly overlap. Listeners can be making inferences from the first part of a sentence while they are already perceiving a later part ". This means that during a single event, the processes may follow one the other, recycle, and may be modified based on what occurred in prior or subsequent processes (see also O'Malley, Chamot and Kupper, 1989: 419). These processes overlap with and are consistent with listening comprehension processes identified in the second language literature (e.g. Clark & Clark, 1977; Call, 1985; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). They also overlap with reading comprehension processes identified in the literature (e.g. Carrell, 1983, 1984, 1989; Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Pearson, 1984).

At the first stage, perceptual processing, that is defined as the process by which acoustic or written message is originally encoded, listeners focus on the sounds of language and retain them in a sensory store called the 'echoic' memory (see Underwood, 1989; O'Malley et al., 1989; Bacon, 1992a, 1992b). Because the echoic memory has an extremely limited storage capacity, listeners almost immediately start to process sounds for meaning. This means that the capacity limitations prevent specific word sequence from being retained for more than few seconds, as new information to which the person attends replace the old information in the echoic memory. So, some initial analysis of the language code may begin while the oral text is still in the echoic memory, and encoding processes may convert some of the text to meaningful representations (Anderson, 1995). At this stage it is expected that listeners focus on sounds that are key to determining meaning within that context. They use contextual information to build expectations of what they will hear.

The second listening stage as identified by Anderson (1995: 379) is parsing. It is the process by which the words in the message are transformed into a mental meaningful representation of the combined meaning of the words. More simply, parsing is the process of deciding how words are attached to phrases and phrases to clauses. During this stage, listeners use words and phrases to construct meaningful representation.

Words and groups of words are checked against information already held in the long-term memory and the meaning is extracted (Underwood, 1989: 2). Here listeners reorganise the information into meaningful units that can be stored in the short-term memory. The size of units depends on several factors including knowledge of language, knowledge of topic and quality of signals, how the information is represented (Richards, 1983). The principal clue for chunking in listening comprehension is meaning, which may be represented syntactically, semantically, phonologically, or by any combination of these (Anderson, 1983, 1985).

Thus, an interplay between various kinds of knowledge about language is involved in chunking, though semantic information in the text is more effective at reducing sentence response time than syntactic information (Byrnes, 1984). What is worth pointing out here is that speed of processing is important. If a second chunk of information arrives in the short-term memory before the previous chunk has been processed, then confusion ensues as the system gets overloaded. So, being familiar with chunking roles will save second language listeners from troubles in comprehending spoken language. Furthermore, second language listeners may have difficulty in understanding language spoken at a typical conversational rate by native speakers if they are not familiar with the segmentation rules, even though they may understand individual words when they are heard separately.

In the third stage, utilisation, listeners probe long-term memory to connect a mental representation of the text to what they already know; previously acquired knowledge. This knowledge is stored in long-term memory in the form of schemata and scripts or interrelated concepts. Relating the new text meaning to the stored information occurs by activating the appropriate schema in which knowledge in long-term memory is activated to the extent that it is related to the new meaning in short-term memory. Utilisation is the key to comprehension and the basic determinant that facilitates it. In any message there is interplay between previously acquired knowledge and knowledge that is entirely new (Anderson, 1995; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

Listeners make full use of two types of information to work out the meaning of propositions: knowledge of the syntax of the target language, and the real world knowledge (Richards, 1983). World knowledge is experientially based and enables

individuals to make inferences and set expectations. It is used to elaborate on new information and give it greater meaning (Long, 1989; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Cognitive scientists believe that world knowledge is organised around scripts, which are special schemata, that consist of 'predetermined stereotype sequences of actions' that define well-known situations (Schank & Abelson, 1977). In other words scripts are what we know about particular situation, and the goals, participants, and procedures, which are commonly associated with them. The concept of scripts is helpful in understanding input in relation to the commonplace situations since they enable the person attempting to comprehend a message to expect what will come next, to make conclusions, and to infer meaning in case of an imperfectly understood portion of texts. Learners who make full use of schematic knowledge can be said to use 'top-down' processing since they are relying upon previously acquired knowledge in memory or upon analysis of text meaning for comprehension.

Linguistic knowledge may also be stored as schemata or propositions in the long-term memory, but the information stored consists of a lexicon of word meanings and a body of grammatical or syntactic rules (Richards, 1983). Linguistic knowledge enables the listener to chunk incoming discourse into meaningful units, actively matching the results, with their existing knowledge and filling in the gaps with logical guesses (Long, 1989:33). Listeners who may interpret meaning due to linguistic characteristics of the text-or in other words analysing the incoming data, and categorizing and interpreting them on the basis of information in the data - are using 'bottom up' processing and are forced to determine the meaning of individual words and then aggregate upwards to larger units of the meaning (Chaudron & Richards, 1986; Long, 1989). This type of processing is inadequate (see Brown & Yule, 1983; Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Nunan, 1989a; Brown, 1990; Rost, 1990) since it leads into three types of inefficiencies (see O'Malley & Chamot, 1990: 36). First, the meaning of any word often depends on the context in which it is used. An individual attempting to comprehend either written or aural text would need to process any word more than once if it was found later not to bear the meaning originally determined, which seems more likely to occur if each word is analysed in isolation of its context. A second type of inefficiency is that lexical access will be faster if the context can be used to narrow the range of possible meanings that must be explored in long-term memory. And third, bottom-up processing, or processing words without using context to project additional meaning, can be expected to have

inefficiencies since individuals who do make predictions about text meaning tend to have greater comprehension (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). Support for Anderson's model (1983, 1985) of the comprehension process has been found in many listening comprehension studies (see O'Malley, Chamot, & Kupper, 1989; Bacon, 1992; Long, 1989, also Chamot, 1995). In the O'Malley et al., (1989) study, think-aloud interviews revealed differences between effective and less effective high school students in their approach to the different stages of listening comprehension (see 3.3.1).

In a nutshell, listening comprehension is viewed in cognitive theory as an active, constructive process in which the listener plays an active role as s/he co-ordinates information coming from different sources to make sense of the spoken message. Cognitive theory suggests that effective processing of text requires both top-down and bottom-up processing.

2.7 Approaches to Teaching listening

There are different approaches for the teaching of listening, among which are: the traditional approach, the strategy-based approach and a mid-way approach between these two. The traditional approach is based on the assumption 'practice makes perfection' in which listening is left to develop as part of students' general educational training. This approach assumes that the more listeners are exposed to listening input, the better listening ability they will have. It only provides learners with a lot of listening practice, without teaching them what to do or how to go about such a pivotal skill. In effect, the traditional approach does not teach students how to listen; students are just required to listen to an aural input and answer some corresponding questions. Such an approach has been referred to by a number of researchers as a testing rather than teaching approach, as listening in this approach is often practised but never taught.

This approach according to Brown (1990:8) consists of exercises, which expose the students to a chunk of spoken material on a tape and then ask comprehension questions to try to find out whether the students had understood the language of the text. She goes on commenting that

... This does not seem so much an example of 'teaching' as of 'testing'. The students are not receiving any help in learning how to process the unfamiliar language – they are simply being given the opportunity of

finding out for themselves how to cope. Many of them (students) of course will not learn how to do this satisfactorily and they will undergo repeated experience of failure and, as a consequence, may choose to withdraw from learning.

Field (1997: 25) agrees with Brown and succinctly summarises this approach features pointing out that

... Listening lessons are often series of tests of skill that has never really been taught. We play one listening text after another, but we do not train learners how to understand them better. Students may learn a little about the information contained in the text, perhaps a little more vocabulary – but there is no systematic attempt to improve their ability as listeners.

The strategy-based approach, on the other hand, assumes that listening needs a real time processing which necessitates listeners to utilise knowledge strategically, to maximise available memory resources and to resolve problems as they emerge (see Vandergrift, 1992, 1996; Mendelsohn, 1994, 1995, 1998; Chamot, 1995). A considerable number of researchers argue for an approach to foreign language listening which is mainly based on strategy training. This approach advocates teaching students to consciously utilise strategies that aid their comprehension to get at meaning. Put differently, it aims at equipping learners with a sense of what successful listeners do to achieve success and to aid them to develop their unique individual pathways to success in listening (see O'Malley et al., 1985b; Rost & Ross, 1991; Schwartz, 1992; Paulauskas, 1994; Rubin, 1994, 1995, 1996; Mendelsohn & Rubin, 1995; Thompson & Rubin, 1996; Grant, 1997). It introduces students to a variety of strategies for working with listening tasks, and gives them opportunities for practice. It strives to expose students to many different ways of approaching the listening task. It also gives them the opportunity to experience working with such strategies and evaluating them so that they can make informed decisions about which strategy, with which type of text, and under which circumstances, can work best for them.

The third approach, a well-founded mid-way approach between the other two approaches, has been in use for a number of years and can be traced in many ELT good listening books or materials particularly those associated with the Natural Approach or task-based instruction with pre-, while and after listening activities. However, this approach has its roots in strategy training or more precisely it reflects the blind training mode of strategy training (see chapter 4 section 4.3.4).

Wenden (1986b) and also Oxford & Leaver (1996) point out that the tasks set in these books, e.g. pre-listening activities such as explaining key words, providing an advance organizer, and the different kinds of comprehension questions, are, in effect, strategies that students could utilize on their own in other contexts. However, the learners will not be aware of these hidden strategies that are text-embedded but not explicitly stated for procedures described in the texts do not provide students opportunities to reflect on that fact and to determine their effectiveness and applicability.

This means that this approach does not create any strategic consciousness, it rather implies that the tasks or material themselves induce the learner subconsciously to use particular learning strategies. Put differently, it leaves the trainees in the dark about the importance of the activities they are being induced to use. They are told what to do and led to do it without being informed about as to why they should act in a certain way. They are not told that a particular strategy will help performance or when it is appropriate to use it. And finally, the emphasis in such approach is on learning something rather than on learning to learn.

2.8 Summary

The intention in this chapter has been to draw the attention to the complexity of listening comprehension as a construct dominated by a number of misconceptions that lent credence to the neglect of this skill from our instruction practices for a very long time (see 2.3). Another aim for the chapter was to understand how L2 listeners go about drawing meaning from the acoustic input and how the listening process needs a coordination of a number of different types of knowledge, linguistic and non-linguistic, (see 2.5). Section 2.6 gives an overview of the framework (cognitive model) the study is grounded on and how it views learning and listening. The chapter ended (2.7) with highlighting the available approaches for listening instruction. The next chapter is assigned to exploring learning strategies and the potential they hold for developing aural skills.

Chapter three

Review of Literature (2): Language Learning Strategies

3.0 Introduction

Before embarking on a discussion of the concept of listening strategy instruction; the approach selected by this study to promote FL listening comprehension (see 1-1 and 1-3), it seems pertinent to shed light on what learning strategies are. This is a first step towards understanding listening strategies and determining which listening strategies would be more effective in promoting listening comprehension. In this sense, this chapter is devoted to giving a literature review on learning strategies and how they are acquired or enter the repertoire of individuals, whereas chapter four looks at strategy instruction and studies undertaken so far to train students in listening strategies. In this regard, chapter three starts with a summary of the background of language learning strategies, starting with the definitions of 'strategy' as a construct (3-1). The following section (3-2) discusses good language learner studies, which have inspired and opened new avenues of research in the area of learning strategies. It also reports on the descriptive studies that focused on describing and identifying strategies used by successful and less successful learners and listeners and led to the creation of a number of language learning classifying schemes. Finally, section 3-3 is assigned to the descriptive studies undertaken in listening strategies; it describes the successful and less successful studies that helped identify a number of strategies that are deemed to be central for effective listening. The same section highlights the attempts taken to classify listening strategies.

3.1 Definition of learning strategies

Language Learning strategies have occupied the interest of many researchers as being a key factor in facilitating language learning. However, there has been a lack of consensus on what a 'learning strategy' refers to which was highlighted by those who are interested in language learning strategies. In this regard, researchers have furnished us with a variety of different conceptualisations and definitions of the word *strategy*, often with varying terms, labels and emphases, which obscure understanding and lead

sometimes to the confusion of those who read the research. Strategies, for instance, have been referred to as *techniques* (Stern, 1983; McIntyre, 1994; Weinstein & Mayer, 1986), *tactics* (Snowman; 1986; Kibry, 1988; Seliger, 1983, Schmeck, 1988), *activities* (Bailystock, 1985), *acts* (Stevick, 1990), *plans* (Schmeck, 1988), *operations* (Wenden, 1991; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990), *moves* (Sarig, 1987), *problem-solving techniques* (Barnett, 1988), *processes* (Ellis, 1985; Dansereaur, 1985; Cohen, 1990, Nunan, 1991; Rubin, 1981; Nisbet & Shucksmith, 1986), *study skills* (Rothkopf, 1988), *procedures* (Faerch & Kasper, 1986; Willing, 1988), and *learning behaviour* (Wesche, 1979).

In her attempt to demonstrate the “elusive nature of the term”, Wenden, (1987a: 7-8) examined some of the elements underlying the different attempts of defining language learning strategies (For a review of some of other definitions see appendix 3.a) and proposed six characteristics that distinguish language learning strategies as a construct. For her, language learning strategies are language learning behaviours which:

1. refer to specific action, not learner characteristics;
2. can be observable or non-observable;
3. are problem-oriented;
4. contribute to learning directly and indirectly;
5. may be consciously deployed; and,
6. are amenable to change.

Based on these characteristics as well as on others highlighted in the literature and reported in appendix 3a, the following working definition of language learning strategies is proposed for the current study: **language learning strategies are a sequence of steps taken by a learner, deliberately, in a specific order for a specific purpose that is to learn, recall or comprehend the target language.** This definition might be characterised by the simplicity of wording in that it includes no words that might need further explanation. In addition, it conveys the important aspects language learning strategies might have. It might be useful to state that ‘steps’, here, are not fixed nor is the ‘sequence’, but they vary in accordance with the simplicity and complexity of the target information. Also, these steps might be developed by some learners in certain learning situations and can be described and taught as well to other learners to be used in similar situations. The description of these steps might be either on the part of the teacher observing and describing the learner’s behaviours or on the part of the learner

retrospectively or introspectively. Therefore, these steps can include both thoughts and behaviours. The study in this definition makes a distinction between learning strategies that are general and tactics that are of specific nature. ‘Tactics’ is used here to refer to individual techniques via which a general strategy can be operationalised. To illustrate this, selective attention is a strategy (general), which is operationalised through tactics such as listening to familiar words, giving attention to key words, listening to intonation or focusing on discourse markers.

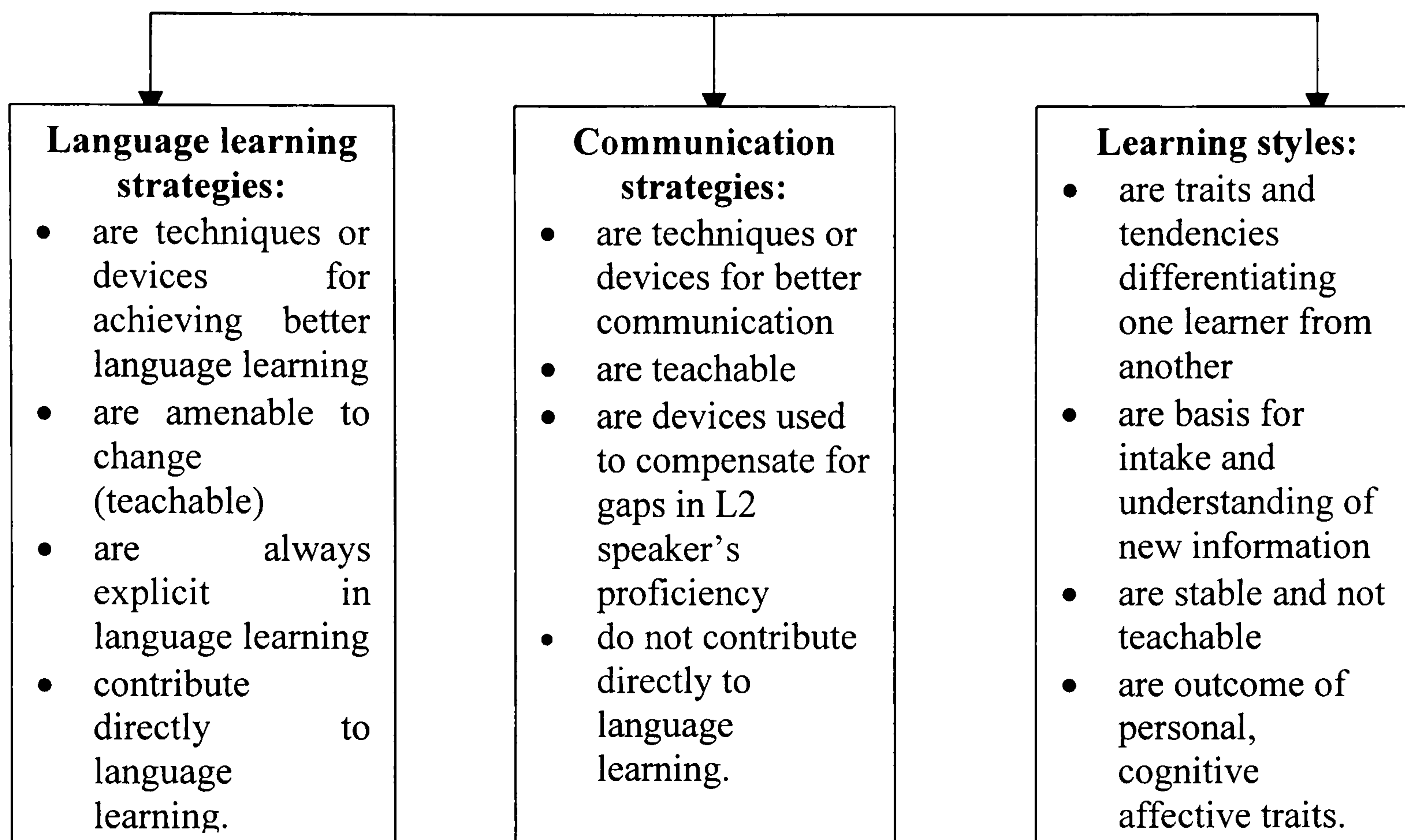
Having settled on a working definition for the current study, it might be useful to differentiate between four terms that exist in the literature (see figure 3-1) and might sometimes be confusing: a) language learning strategies, b) learner strategies, c) communication strategies and d) learning styles. In an attempt to differentiate between language learning strategies and learner strategies, Chamot & O’Malley (1994: 371) refer to learner strategies as strategies that students have developed on their own to solve language problems. These strategies may be explicit or implicit depending on the degree of awareness with which an individual employs them. On the other hand, learning strategies are strategies that have been or could be taught explicitly as part of instruction and these strategies are always explicit in language learning.

While language learning strategies are more related to language learning in terms of processing, storing, retrieving and use of information, communication strategies are less directly related to language learning and are more related to the process of communication, “participating in a conversation” (Rubin, 1987: 27). In other words, communication strategies have more to do with the employment of verbal and non-verbal mechanisms for communicating ideas when precise linguistic forms are not easily obtained during communication (Tarone, 1977; Faerch & Kasper, 1986). They are, in terms of Dornyei & Scott (1997: 177), “first-aid devices used to compensate for gaps in the speaker’s L2 proficiency”. However, according to Chamot et al. (1996), many communication strategies may serve as effective language learning strategies when they are used to achieve a learning goal (see 3.2.2.2).

Learning styles are the major approaches (Oxford, 1992b; Oxford & Anderson, 1995; Oxford & Ehrman, 1995; Reid, 1995,1998), which characterise an individual’s

preferred way of processing and relating new information and skills (Riding and Cheema, 1991; Brown, 1994).

Figure 3-1: Learning strategies, communication strategies and learning styles



They vary from an individual to another. However, within an individual they are fairly stable and even predictable. They are the outcome of personal, cognitive, affective and physiological traits and indicate how learners perceive, interact with and respond to the learning environment (Dececco, 1970; Keefe, 1982; Kibry, 1988; Oxford, 1992b). Figure (3-1) above summarises the distinctive features of each of language learning strategies, communication strategies and learning styles.

The relationship between learning styles and strategy use has been explored by Rossi-Le, 1989 and Ehrman & Oxford, 1990. In their investigation with adult language learners and using Myers-Briggs type indicator, Ehrman & Oxford (1990: 324) found that "... psychological type (style) appears to have a strong influence on the way learners use strategies". Similarly, Rossi-Le found that personality types are directly related to language learning strategy use. She, for instance, reported on a significant relationship between sensory preferences (visual, auditory, tactile and kinaesthetic) and overall SILL strategy use. In short, her findings indicated that having a certain sensory preference significantly predicted the type of strategies students chose.

3.1.1 Learning strategies as a cognitive process

The study of language learning strategies has been grounded by O'Malley & Chamot (1990) drawing on Anderson's (1983, 1985) skills learning theory and within the information processing models of language (see 2.6) which argue that mental processes move along a developmental path from a controlled stage (cognitive processes that require attention and can be used flexibly in changing situations) to an automatic stage (cognitive processes that are well learned and make little or no demands on processing capacity) (see McLaughlin et al., 1983; McLaughlin, 1987). For O'Malley & Chamot strategies can be learnt exactly the same way as other complex cognitive skills (for more detail see 2.6.1). This means that, at the initial stages of strategic development, strategies operate as declarative knowledge and are processed in short-term memory and hence they are controlled. They can then operate through connections in long-term memory bypassing short-term memory and freeing it for other tasks. While a strategy can be proceduralised (i.e., become automatic that learners are most likely to be unconscious of) with already-learned or easy tasks, it can be used deliberately with new or more difficult tasks. Substantial practice and repeated applications of the strategy with various learning materials, according to Chamot & O'Malley (1994: 18) help strategies move from the controlled stage to the automatic stage so that they function rapidly and without errors with specific tasks. The advantage of automated learning strategies is that they no longer have to be attended to in working memory, thus making little or no demand on processing capacity and freeing up attention for new information.

3.2 Language learning strategy research

Language learning strategy research studies, according to McDonough (1995, 1999), can be classified as either descriptive or interventionist. Much of the original second language learning strategy research was descriptive where the focus was given to describing, identifying and classifying strategies used by second language learners (see Rubin, 1981; Politzer, 1983, 1985; O'Malley et. al., 1985; Wenden, 1985; Chamot & Kupper, 1989). Descriptive studies involve studies of successful and less successful L2 learners and studies that explored the factors affecting strategy choice, which include language proficiency-level (Ramirez, 1986; Jamieson & Chapelle, 1987; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Chamot & Kupper, 1989); students' level of motivation (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Chamot & Kupper, 1989); attitudes towards language learning and

strategy use (Bailystock & Frochlich, 1978; Wenden, 1987), learning styles (Ehrman & Oxford, 1988; Abraham & Vann, 1989; Ely, 1989); and the nature of the language task (Ramirez, 1986; Jamieson & Chapelle, 1987; Chamot & Kupper, 1989).

Interventionist studies, on the other hand, are concerned with learning strategies instruction and how to use language learning strategies for a variety of learning tasks. Compared with descriptive studies, interventionist studies are only a small number. For interventionist studies that involve training on reading strategies, see Hosenfeld et al. (1981); Barnett (1988a, 1988b); Kern (1989); Carrell, Pharis and Liberto (1989). With regard to training on speaking strategies, see Dornyei (1995); Cohen, Weaver & Li (1995); Dadour & Robbins (1996); Nunan (1996). For training on listening strategies, the focus of the current study, see O'Malley et al., (1985b); Rubin et al., (1988); Fujiwara (1990); Rost and Ross (1991); Schwartz (1992); Paulauskas (1994) Thompson & Rubin (1996).

The focus of the following two sections (3.3.1 and 3.3.2) is mainly devoted to the descriptive studies, which inspired another line of research that calls for intervening and teaching strategies. The interventionist studies along with the relevant literature related to strategy training are dealt with in Chapter four.

3.2.1 Early descriptive studies (The good language learner studies)

The main drive behind this line of research was to seek an answer to a recurrent observation, that is given two students with equal motivation, academic abilities, the same native language, the same target language and the same teacher, why is one student more successful than another? In other words, the underpinning aim which guided this strand of research was the need to identify and isolate 'what the good language learner does' and then develop ways to teach poor language learners to do the same (see Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975; Naiman et al., 1978; Hosenfeld 1976, 1977; Hosenfeld et al., 1981). It was the good language learner studies that inspired real interest in the research on language learning strategies. Rubin (1975) and Stern (1975) took the lead in creating a profile of what successful learners can do which unsuccessful learners fail to do. Each identified a number of learner characteristics and strategic techniques that are associated with good language learners (see appendix 3b). The findings of these two early studies were further probed empirically by Naiman et al.

(1978/1996). Using interviews, language classroom observation, personal traits and cognitive style tests and teacher interviews, Naiman et al. confirmed the findings by Stern (1975) and Rubin (1975). However, they felt the need to refine the lists by reducing the Rubin-Stern lists to five general strategies instead of ten.

- Good Language Learners adopt an active task approach.
- Good Language Learners are aware of language as a system.
- Good Language Learners realise language as a real means of communication and interaction.
- Good Language Learners are able to manage the affective demands.
- Good Language Learners are able to monitor their second language learning.

(pp. 30-32).

Rubin (1975) and Stern (1975) and Naiman et al (1975) all agreed that the use of observation as a data elicitation technique of language learning strategy use in classroom was limited to certain kinds of strategies that were overtly displayed in the classroom and that observation was not possible for other strategies that were mentalistic, and therefore, the idea of using introspection began to emerge as an alternative. Hosenfeld (1976) made a great contribution to language learning strategies research in terms of methodology when she introduced the use of introspection as a powerful technique for giving insight into how learners approached and performed language learning tasks. She investigated learning strategies (1976) via think-aloud protocols and in a subsequent study, Hosenfield et al. (1981) taught high school students of French reading strategies.

In reflecting upon these early studies, it is clear that, although these exploratory studies contributed to some extent to creating a theoretical framework for learning strategies to operate within and introduced new research methods for strategy assessment, they had a number of limitations. One important limitation was that they offered mere lists of strategies with no attempt to classify or categorise them, which might be due to the lack of a theoretical framework to explain how language learning strategies affect language learning success. Another limitation as noted by Stern (1975) himself was that these lists were highly speculative that is in need of confirmation and modification or rebuttal. A further limitation to these early attempts is that they tended to confuse learning strategies with learner's characteristics. A number of researchers (see O'Malley &

Chamot, 1990; Stevick, 1990; Graham, 1997) highlighted that the types of strategies identified do not necessarily represent specific strategies but rather general characteristics. O'Malley & Chamot (1990: 101) took this concern further noting that "Naiman et al.'s list of strategies used by good language learners sound to some extent less like mental process and more like admonitions for general learning success".

One other limitation pointed out by Cook (1991) was that these studies described what good language learners are aware of whereas the major contribution to their second language learning might be something they are quite unaware of and therefore unable to report on in their interviews. Cook pinpointed another limitation that is the strategies are similar to what teachers probably supposed to be the case because most of the Good Language Learners studied were highly educated people, themselves working in education and therefore the results should not be generalised. A final criticism levelled at these studies was that the type of strategies identified as used by good language learners have been argued not be effective for all learners (Cohen & Apeh, 1981. Abraham & Vann, 1987; Vann & Abraham, 1990). What is more is that it was found that unsuccessful learners also use strategies reported by good language learners (see 3.2.2.1).

3.2.2 Recent descriptive studies

We saw in 3.2.1 that the early studies of language learning strategy research were mainly exploratory: studies that attempted to uncover the strategies used by good language learners using questionnaires and observation schemes. Subsequent descriptive studies, guided by the findings of this early line of research and using introspection, have focused on both strategic differences between successful and less successful learners and identifying broad classes of learning strategies, under which the large number of more specific strategies can be grouped into comprehensive taxonomies using different methods of strategy assessment. The following section touches on these studies with the focus given to language learners in general and listening in particular.

3.2.2.1 Successful and less successful language learners

Guided by the findings of good language learner studies, a considerable number of studies were undertaken with the aim of identifying the strategic differences between

successful and less successful learners (see Chamot et al., 1987; Abraham & Vann, 1987; Chamot et al., 1988a, 1988b; Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Vann & Abraham; 1990). The findings of this line of research revealed that successful language learners are distinct from less successful learners in the number and range of strategies used, in how the strategies were used, in whether strategies match with the task and in individual students' metacognitive knowledge about the task characteristics.

Abraham & Vann (1987) and Vann & Abraham (1990), for instance, concluded that though the learners who were unsuccessful were active and had a quantitatively similar repertoire of strategies to those that successful learners use, they could not apply the appropriate strategies to the appropriate task. They proposed that this might be due to the fact that less successful learners lacked the task knowledge that would have enabled them to assess the task and then apply the appropriate strategies. Conversely, successful learners were more adept at matching strategies to task demands.

Similarly, Chamot & Kupper (1989) indicated that the strategic differences between successful and less successful learners were not so much the number of strategies a learner had, rather the flexibility and appropriateness with which the strategies were used. The same findings were confirmed by Chamot et al, (1988a, 1988b).

Chamot et al. (1993: 10-11), in a concluding remark about the strategic differences between more and less successful language learners, suggest that:

Explicit metacognitive knowledge about task characteristics and appropriate strategies for task solution is major determiner of language learning effectiveness. In their unawareness of task demands and lack of metacognitive knowledge about selecting strategies, less effective learners seem to fall back on a largely implicit approach to learning in which they use habitual or preferred strategies without analysing the requirement of the particular task

The point raised in the quote above acts as one of the guiding principles in the current study in designing the instruction programme. In other words, the current study will make use of this assumption and try to build up the students' metacognitive knowledge in its three components; the task knowledge, the process knowledge as well as person knowledge (for more on this see 4.3.2 and 6.1).

3.2.2.2 *Classifications of learning strategies*

Over the last two decades, language strategy literature has developed well established, if not comprehensive, thorough, inventories of strategies in second language learning in general and in specific skill areas. What follows is a discussion of some of the existing language learning strategy taxonomies.

3.2.2.2.1 Rubin's taxonomy

Rubin (1981) who pioneered much of the work in the area of learning strategies proposed one of the earliest taxonomies of learning strategies. She based her categorisation according to the direct/indirect contribution of the strategy to language learning. Rubin proposed a classifying scheme for language learning strategies of two categories: strategies that may directly contribute to learning (i.e., clarification/verification, monitoring, memorisation, guessing/inductive inferencing, deductive reasoning and practice) and those that may contribute indirectly to learning (i.e., creating opportunities to practise and use of production tricks).

Rubin's taxonomy as one of the earliest classification systems has had its impact towards establishing a sound theoretical ground in investigating learning strategies. Yet the direct-indirect strategy classification raises some concerns, as the distinction between strategies that directly contribute and those that contribute indirectly to learning is not always airtight. For example, seeking opportunities for practice with native speakers, a strategy that contributes indirectly to language learning according to Rubin, can initiate the deployment of strategies such as guessing/inductive inferencing that contribute directly to learning.

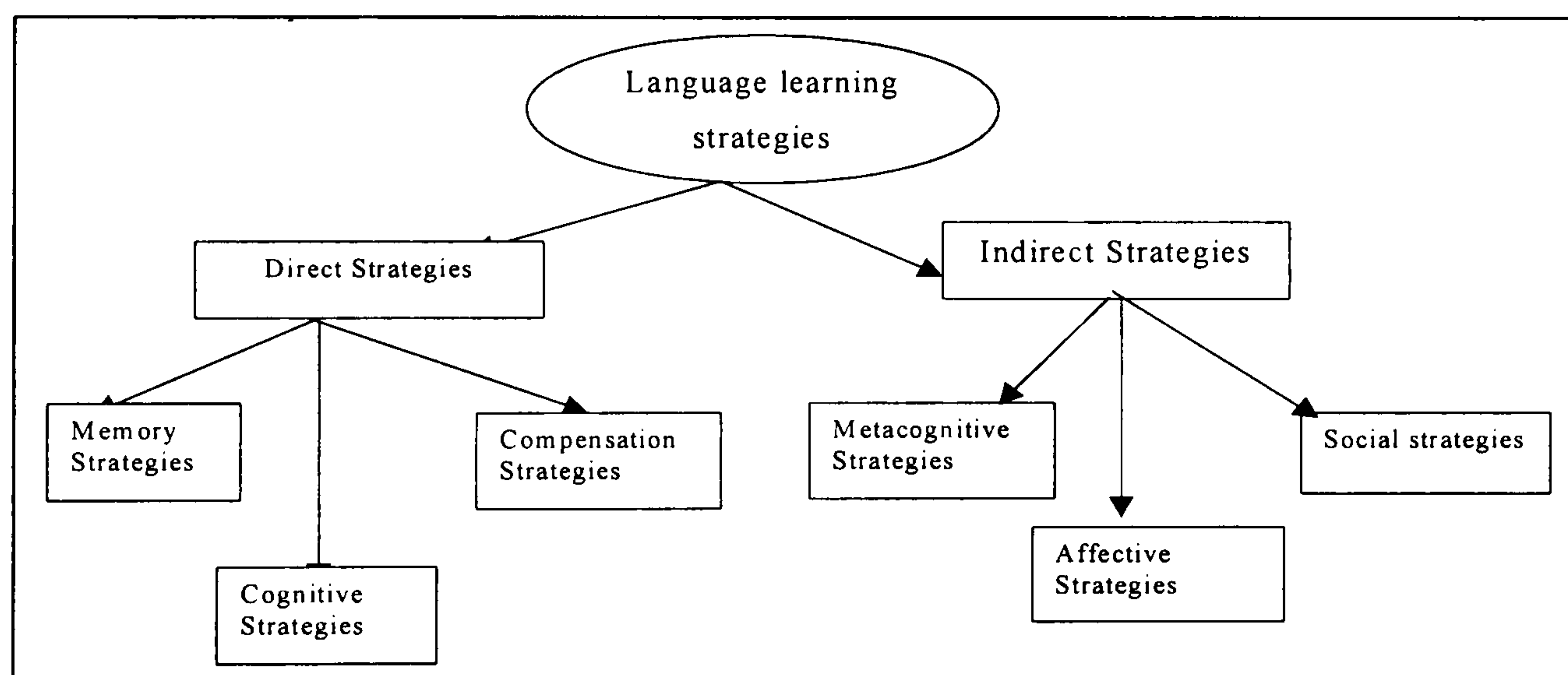
3.2.2.2.2 Oxford's taxonomy

One other most widely used strategy inventory is Oxford's taxonomy. Ellis (1994: 539) points out that "perhaps the most comprehensive classification of learning strategies to date is the one provided by Oxford". Oxford's taxonomy was built on a review of the earlier attempts of research in the field of language learning strategies with the aim of including within her taxonomy virtually every strategy previously mentioned in the literature. The classification she first came up with (Oxford, 1985) was used as a basis for constructing the most comprehensive questionnaire on learning strategies: *The*

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). The inventory as well as the taxonomy of strategies has gone through considerable revision ever since.

Oxford (1990) proposed a new taxonomy (see figure 3-2), in which she does not differentiate between learning strategies and communication strategies, but designated them all as learning strategies. Grounding her taxonomy on the direct/indirect relationship to the target language as clear from the figure below, she classified strategies into direct and indirect ones (cf. Rubin, 1981). The direct strategies refer to strategies that directly involve the target language as they require mental processing of the language (Oxford, 1990: 37). The indirect strategies, on the other hand, provide indirect support for language learning through focusing, planning, evaluating, and seeking opportunities, controlling anxiety, increasing co-operation and empathy and other means (1990: 151).

Figure 3-2: Classification of strategies according to Oxford's scheme (1990)



According to Oxford, direct strategies are subcategorised into memory strategies, cognitive strategies and compensation strategies. Memory strategies, such as structured review, imagery, and grouping, are used to facilitate the process of storing and recalling new information. Cognitive strategies, such as practising naturalistically, analysing expressions and summarising, are used to practise new language directly. Finally compensatory strategies, like guessing meanings intelligently or using word coinage, are means to overcome knowledge gaps.

On the other hand, indirect strategies include metacognitive, affective and social strategies. Metacognitive strategies, such as self-evaluation, self-monitoring and paying

attention, are devices through which learners manage their own learning process. Language learners control their emotions and attitudes through affective strategies, such as anxiety lowering and self-encouragement. Social strategies, such as asking questions involve learning with and from others.

The strength of this scheme lies in the fact that it incorporates every strategy cited in the language learning strategy literature. However, some concerns were voiced about this scheme. First, most of the compensation strategies identified technically belong to the domain of communication strategies. Ellis (1994) aired this concern succinctly stating:

The scheme is marred by a failure to make a clear distinction between strategies directed at learning the L2 and those directed at using it. Thus, somewhat confusingly, ‘compensation strategies’ are classified as a direct type of ‘learning strategy’. In this Oxford departs from other researchers, who treat compensation strategies as distinct from learning strategies. However the organisation of specific strategies into a hierarchy of levels and the breadth of the taxonomy is impressive. (p. 541).

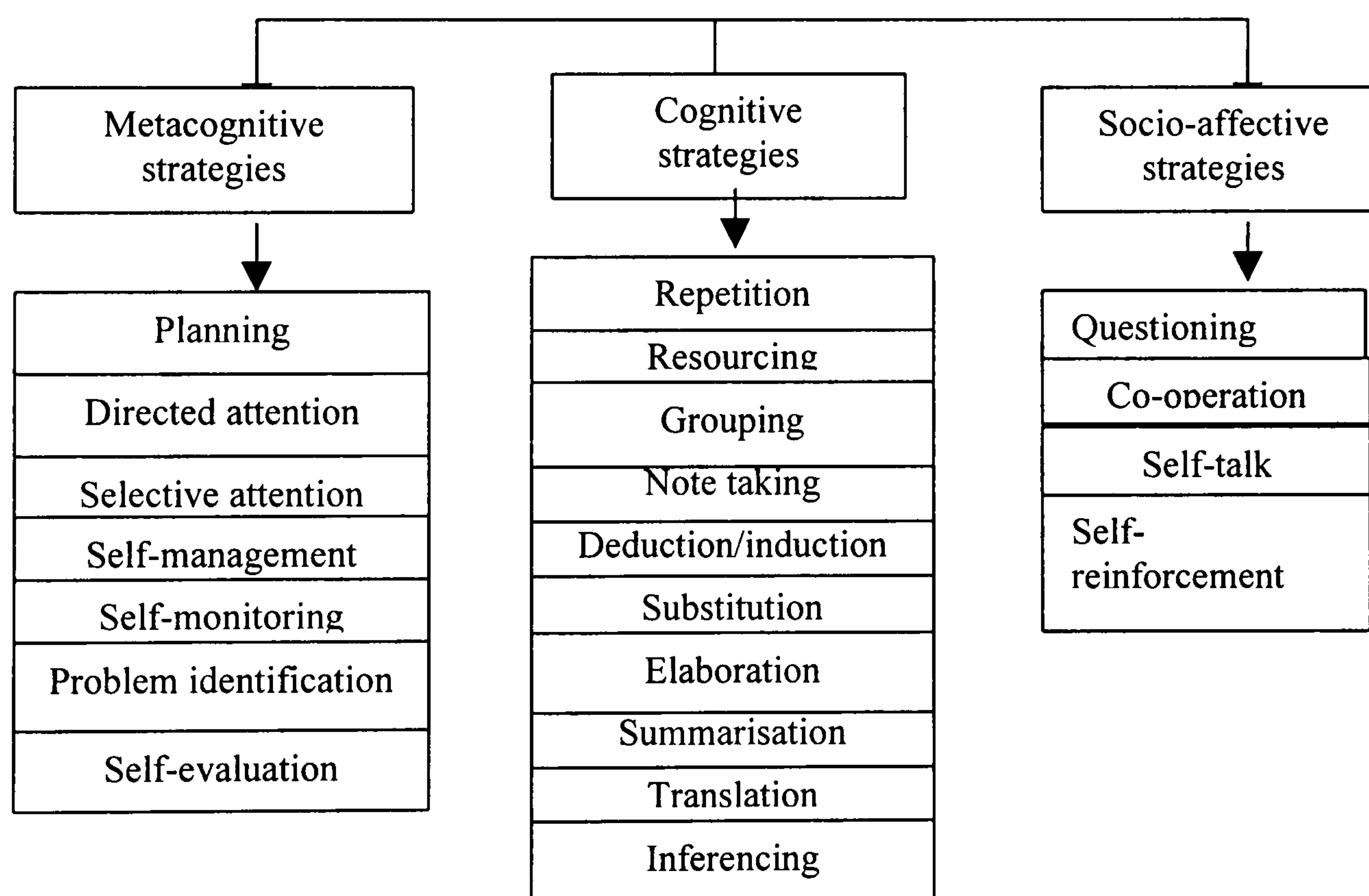
Second, Hermann-Brennecke (1991: 324) challenges the direct-indirect strategy classification by arguing that direct strategies such as using mimes or gestures or avoiding communication may not involve direct use of the target language, while indirect strategies such as asking questions are language-oriented. Finally, the attempt of Oxford to include a great amount of strategies in the inventory was a further concern. According to O’Malley & Chamot (1990), the Oxford inventory has no cognitive-theoretical foundation: “it is far from any underlying cognitive theory” and includes overlapped subcategories. What is more, “it fails to prioritise which strategies are most important to learning” (p. 103), it gives equal importance to the different categories. Oxford’s taxonomy, though attractive in its design, was not used in this study because it includes more detailed categorisation of strategies which is not always helpful. The other thing is one finds a lot of difficulty assigning a specific strategy to the cognitive or memory categories.

3.2.2.2.3 The taxonomy of O’Malley, Chamot and their colleagues

Another most popular categorisation in the literature is the tripartite taxonomy developed and refined by O’Malley, Chamot & colleagues. This taxonomy was based on an extensive series of studies utilising multidimensional data collection methods:

classroom observation, interviews, case studies, and think aloud procedure (O'Malley et al., 1985a, 1985b; Chamot et al., 1987; Chamot et al., 1988a; 1988b; Chamot & Kupper, 1989). The taxonomy was initially developed with ESL students (O'Malley et al., 1985a), and was later extended and validated with foreign language learners (Chamot & Kupper, 1989); English as a foreign language; and students of French in Canada (Vandergrift, 1992). What gives the scheme more strength is that it used a previously developed classification scheme from cognitive science (Brown & Palinscar, 1982), which guided the processes of classifying strategies. O'Malley & Chamot (1990) grouped strategies according to their direct/indirect relationship to the task into three major categories: cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and social-affective strategies (see figure 3-3 below).

Figure 3-3: taxonomy of strategies (O'Malley, Chamot & colleagues).



Cognitive strategies refer to strategies that manipulate the material to be learned mentally, like 'elaboration' or physically as in 'note-taking'. They are more directly related to the performance of a particular learning task and involve direct manipulation or transformation of the learning material (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Brown & Palinscar, 1982). Metacognitive strategies refer to strategies concerned with planning, regulating, and managing learning. They do not process input directly, but go beyond cognitive manipulation and transformation of incoming information. They involve thinking about the way information is processed and stored as well as taking appropriate

steps to manage and regulate the cognitive processes. In effect, they are the executive processes as they regulate and manage learning. They include strategies used to plan for a task, to monitor a task in progress, and to evaluate the success of a task after its completion (Chamot, 1995:15). Examples given by O'Malley & Chamot (1990), Chamot & O'Malley (1994a) are 'directed attention' (deciding in advance to pay attention to specific aspects of language input) and 'self-management' (displaying understanding of the conditions which help learning and trying to bring these about).

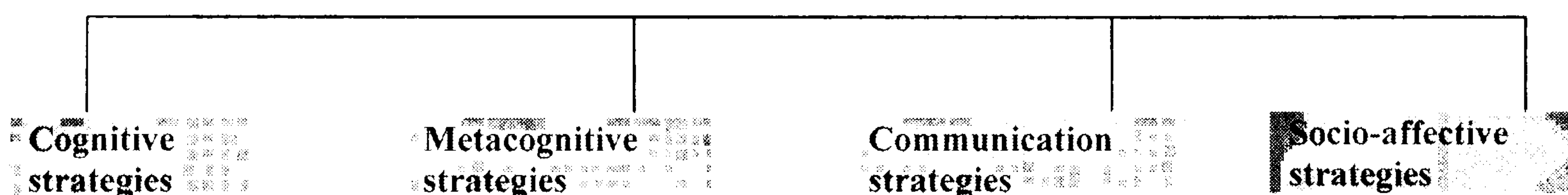
The third category in this tripartite classification scheme is the socio-affective strategies, which mainly focus on the ways in which learners elect to interact with other learners and native speakers. Chamot & O'Malley (1994a: 63) points out that this category is crucial to second language acquisition as language is so heavily involved in co-operations and asking for clarification. Examples of social affective strategies include strategies such as 'questioning for clarification' (asking a teacher for repetition), 'co-operating' (working with peers on a language learning task to obtain feedback, pool information or model a language activity), and using affective controls such as 'positive self-talk' to lower anxiety.

Although this scheme of O'Malley & Chamot and their colleagues is perhaps one of the most popular classification schemes in the literature since it is based on empirical evidence that was obtained, refined and validated in a series of studies, three concerns have been aired about it. First, the taxonomy has not provided definite examples to exemplify the use of each strategy until very recently. Second, some categories such as 'selective attention' and 'directed attention' (O'Malley et. al., 1985a) are extremely similar and hard to distinguish from each other, which caused coding errors in Vandergrift's study (1992). In Vandergrift's words 'almost all discrepancies were due to confusion between selective attention and directed attention' (p. 90). Third and finally, the taxonomy focused in detail only on cognitive and metacognitive strategies and "only touched the surface of social and especially effective strategies" (Cohen, 1998: 17).

In conclusion, despite the fact that a number of taxonomies are available nowadays, there is no agreement on the classification of learning strategies; there are disparity and mismatches across existing taxonomies and other strategy categorisations. This

discrepancy and inconsistency might partially be attributed to the absence of an agreed upon definition (see 3.1) for the construct of learning strategies or to the differences in data collection methods. Yet, a substantial progress has been made in classifying learning strategies compared to the mere listing proposed by early studies (Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975; Naiman et al., 1978). Ellis (1994: 539-540) spells out this idea noting that there are now “comprehensive, multi-levelled, and theoretically motivated taxonomies”. He goes on to note that “high inference” is still called for in order to interpret which strategy is being used when, and that strategies belonging to one type frequently vary on a number of dimensions such as specificity. As we saw in 3.2.2.2 there is much discrepancy and overlapping between the existing taxonomies of language learning strategies. This discrepancy can be sorted out with the use of four broad categories proposed by Hedge (2000: 77-79 see also Ellis & Sinclair, 1989; Rubin, 1987) where all the sub-categories in all the different schemes discussed above may fit under one or other of these four categories (see figure 3-4).

Figure 3-4: Learning strategy taxonomy proposed by Hedge (2000)



In the figure above, Hedge suggested four categories; cognitive, metacognitive, communication and socio-affective strategies. In this, she agreed with the tripartite scheme proposed by O’Malley, Chamot & their colleagues but added a fourth category that is communication strategies which refer to “the use of gesture, mime, synonyms, paraphrases, and cognate words from their first language to make themselves understood and to maintain conversation, despite the gaps in their knowledge of the second language” (Hedge, 2000: 78). On the other hand, she merged the memory strategies in the scheme suggested by Oxford (1990) into the cognitive strategies category. Besides, she combined both the social and affective categories in Oxford’s scheme into one category; socio-affective strategies, following O’Malley & Chamot and their Colleagues scheme.

For the purpose of the current study, the tripartite scheme proposed by O’Malley, Chamot & their colleagues was used in the baseline study to code strategies used by students for two main reasons. First, the taxonomy has a solid ground in general

learning theories. Second, the generic categories fit well to questions about strategy use by successful and less successful students as well as in terms of instruction.

3.3. Listening comprehension strategies

As mentioned in 3.1, the study adopts a simple definition of Language learning strategies pulled together from the literature. In the light of this definition, listening comprehension strategies, are defined for the current study as **a sequence of steps (mental or behaviour) taken deliberately by listeners (always conscious) in a specific order (depending on the task complexity), to enhance the ability to perceive, and internalise as well as comprehend the listening input.**

The following section intended to provide a review of descriptive strategy studies in listening comprehension with two aims in mind:

1. To identify a range of strategies that are referred to in the literature as effective or crucial for a listener if s/he wants to listen strategically. This range would be used as a reference to select strategies to be taught in designing the strategy training programme for the current study.
2. To try to avoid the pitfalls into which other studies fell.

3.3.1 Listening comprehension strategy research

Murphy (1985) examined the listening strategies of ESL intermediate college students who were effective and less effective listeners, identified according to their scores on a proficiency test. He asked participants (12 students) to listen to a recorded academic lecture and to raise their hands when they wanted to talk about the thought processes (think aloud) they engaged in while listening. Students' responses were audio-recorded and analysed for strategies used and their frequency. Findings revealed that effective listeners were more open and flexible as well as able to select and deploy a wide range of different strategies. Less effective listeners, in contrast, focused too much on the text level. Murphy concluded that more effective listeners placed greater emphasis on the use of strategies such as personalising (elaborating from their own knowledge), inferencing and predicting what comes next.

Similarly, O'Malley, Chamot & Kupper (1989) used think-aloud protocols with high school ESL students to empirically validate the three-stage model proposed by Anderson (1983, 1985; see 2.6.1), to examine what strategies were used at each phase and to find out if there were any differences between effective and ineffective listeners who were nominated by their teachers. Eight students (five effective and three ineffective) listened to taped academic lectures with predetermined pauses and were asked to think-aloud.

Findings revealed differences in the strategies reported by effective and ineffective listeners. Statistically significant differences between effective and ineffective listeners were reported for 'self-monitoring', 'elaboration', and 'inferencing'. Besides, qualitative data revealed that listeners used different strategies depending on the phase of the listening task. In other words the analysis of the think-aloud protocols yielded empirical evidence to support and elaborate the three-stage model: perceptual processing, parsing and utilisation stages.

In the perceptual stage, effective listeners listened selectively and monitored their comprehension; they were aware of their inattentiveness and consciously redirected their attention to the task. The ineffective listeners, in contrast, focused on the word-level and gave up when facing difficulties. They reported that when they encountered unknown words or phrases, they usually just stopped listening and failed to be aware of their attention any more. Selective attention appeared to be a crucial strategy in this stage.

In the parsing stage, the effective listeners were listening for larger chunks of meaning, and inferred the unknown words from the context. They shifted their attention to the word-level only when comprehension breakdown occurred. Grouping (i.e., listening for larger chunks) and inferencing proved to be important during this phase. On the other hand, ineffective listeners approached listening as a task primarily requiring comprehension on a word-by-word basis.

In the utilisation stage, the effective listeners had more available background knowledge than the ineffective listeners. This could be due to the background knowledge of effective listeners being better organised and thus readily accessible. In this stage elaboration (relating the new to the known) seemed to be the dominant strategy; and the

degree to which students were able to use this strategy determine their effectiveness as listeners. They made use of previously acquired knowledge in three ways: they used their world knowledge, their personal knowledge, which created something meaningful for them, and carried out self-questioning. They also reported using 'inferencing' (using the information within the text to fill in missing information) to make sense of the text. In contrast, ineffective listeners made little use of elaboration and inferencing. They used them separately and less frequently when solving a comprehension problem.

However, some methodological concerns must be aired about the criteria used to differentiate effective from ineffective listeners in this study and which seem to be circular. The effective listeners were nominated by their teachers according to their abilities to select their attention in class, ability to follow directions without asking for clarification, ability and willingness to comprehend the general meaning of a difficult listening passage, and ability and willingness to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases. The effective listeners were those who used more listening comprehension strategies. Another concern about this study might be that the ineffective learners had a lower level of language proficiency that would predispose them to focus on identifying the words. A further concern is the lack of any coded protocols to clarify the authors' coding scheme. Furthermore, Celce-Murcia (cited in O'Malley & Chamot, 1993: 224) pointed out that the authors did not detail the procedure used to identify the listening comprehension strategies. A final concern is the sample size which was very small (eight students) and therefore we must be cautious about the findings.

This study was however felt to be crucially important to the current study in the sense that it used and confirmed the three-stage model proposed by Anderson, which the current study also used as its theoretical framework. Furthermore, the study pointed out some strategies that are crucial to each of the three stages in the model.

An additional study that aimed at describing listening strategies using retrospective interviews was conducted by Bacon (1991) in an attempt to investigate the listening strategies employed by intermediate foreign language students when listening to a more difficult and an easier text. Findings indicated that 'summarising' was the primary factor in predicting comprehension in both passages distinguishing between 'those who hear shred and details and those who hear ideas and concepts' (P. 20). Also, she found

that 'elaboration/world knowledge' contributed to the comprehension of difficult passages and 'elaboration/personal experience' contributed to the learning variable (what students reported having learned from the passage) of both the difficult and the easy passage. Bacon concluded that listeners tended to remember information that they could relate to their prior world or personal knowledge.

In another study, Bacon (1992), using a think-aloud procedure, attempted to investigate strategies used by 19 male and 31 female university-level students learning Spanish as a foreign language. She also investigated the relationship between gender, level of comprehension of an authentic text, type of processing strategies used, affective response, and order of presentation of text.

The students listened to two short expository authentic broadcasts of different difficulty level in different orders (one group responded to one passage first, while the second group responded to the other passage first) and gave retrospective reports immediately after the task. They were also given a series of questions to explore their thoughts (e.g. did you do anything else to help you understand at any point in the listening? Do you remember learning anything new?).

Findings revealed that the female students used a higher proportion of metacognitive strategies than the males. The male students tended to go through with a more varied cognitive approach. Of the twelve metacognitive strategies tested, Univariate tests yielded significant interaction of gender and listening order factors on the use of the strategy 'monitoring' ($p < .05$). The female students who listened to the easier passage first used 'monitoring' more frequently than others. Of the seven cognitive strategies tested, there was significant gender and listening order interaction in the use of 'bottom-up processing' ($p < .05$). Those male students who listened to the easy passage first used the strategy more frequently than did the other groups. However, both approaches, though different, used by male and female did not result in any change in the level of comprehension.

Regarding the relationship between order of presentation and listening comprehension, Bacon pointed out that listening to the easy passage second, increased comprehension of that passage (compared to the other group), whereas, listening to the difficult passage

first resulted in reduction in the comprehension of that passage (compared with the other group), whereas,

As for the affective responses, at the end of the interview, students were asked to rate their level of confidence regarding their level of comprehension and their level of comfort on a 1-10 point scale. Findings revealed that males were generally more confident than females, but females 'gained in confidence and affect when they listened to the difficult passage first'.

The contribution of this study lies in the fact that it brought the idea of the order of text presentation and its relation to listening strategies into attention. Another contribution is the fact that there are many different approaches for achieving success in listening comprehension. Though the males used a different approach from the females, they achieved the same level of comprehension.

In a similar, well-thought out study, Vandergrift (1992) used semi-structured interviews, stimulated recall and think-aloud protocols to investigate the strategies used by Core French high school students in transactional and interactional listening tasks. He also examined the differences of strategy use by level of language proficiency, gender, listening ability and learning styles.

Students at five different levels of language proficiency (novice 1 to intermediate 111) participated in three separate research phases. In phase 1, the semi-structured interviews, 36 students participated and gave retrospective self-reports of their strategy use. They were asked to recall strategies they used to comprehend spoken French in a number of different contexts. Based on the results of the interviews and consultation with the teacher, 21 participants were selected for phase 2, simulated recall, where students reported on their thought processes during a proficiency interview replayed on videotape immediately afterwards. A think-aloud procedure was used in phase 3 to allow students to report their thought processes concurrently while listening to authentic texts. Students were divided into successful listeners (N = 10) and less successful listeners (N = 11) according to the frequency, variety and sophistication of strategies reported. For coding purposes, O'Malley & Chamot's (1990) language learning strategy

taxonomy was used with additions from Oxford (1990), Rost & Ross (1991), and Ellis (1986) as well as revisions to the schemes to reflect the nature of listening.

Findings indicated that all students evidenced a familiarity with metacognitive, cognitive, socio-affective and repair strategies, with an overall increase in total number of strategies used by proficiency level. There was a positive relationship between proficiency level, listening ability and frequency of strategy use. Metacognitive, cognitive and socio-affective strategies were found to increase at each course level. The use of metacognitive strategies such as comprehension monitoring, problem identification and selective attention appeared to be a significant factor distinguishing the successful from the less successful listeners. Cognitive strategies were the most frequently used for all course levels. The most popular cognitive strategies were elaboration, summarising, inferencing, and transfer. Novice listeners were found to depend heavily on cognitive strategies such as elaboration, summarising, inferencing, and transfer to build up meaning. By contrast, intermediate students made use of cognitive strategies as well as a greater proportion of metacognitive strategies such as ‘comprehension monitoring’.

The average number of socio-affective strategies was small and increased at each course level. The most popular socio-affective strategies were questioning for clarification, co-operation, and self-encouragement. Observed use of repair strategies such as kinesics decreased and became less overt as proficiency increased. Whereas global reprises and hypotheses testing in English decreased as proficiency increased, deployment of these strategies in French increased. Fewer differences were identified by learning styles. Although female students tended to report more metacognitive strategies, differences in actual strategy use by gender were minimal.

A qualitative analysis comparing representative protocols by proficiency level and listening ability proved further support for the quantitative results and revealed significant differences in the use of linguistic knowledge and world knowledge in the comprehension process. The results suggested that metacognitive strategy was the key to successful listening (c.f. O’Malley et al., 1989). The ten successful listeners used a greater percentage of metacognitive strategies (16.17%) than did the eleven less successful ones (8.39%). This led Vandergrift to conclude that the cognitive constraints

of processing at the novice level are so great that there is little room for metacognitive strategies. In turn, the less effective students had to understand a text by focusing on semantic cues, contextual clues as well as extra-linguistic clues such as type of text, background noise, tone of voice, interpersonal relationships.

We must be cautious with such conclusions especially when we know the criteria for classifying listeners into successful and less successful. Vandergrift defined a successful listener as someone who pays attention in class, understands what must be done, quickly “links in” to the gist of a text, is willing to participate and respond appropriately in conversation, and is willing to take risks in guessing the meaning of what is unknown. On the other hand a less successful listener is someone who has a great deal of difficulty understanding, is “thrown off” by unknown words, and easily “gives up”. (Vandergrift, 1992: 4)

Vandergrift’s study is in line with O’Malley et al. (1989) in two senses. First, in terms of the results, both pointed out that successful listeners used a greater percentage of metacognitive strategies than their less successful counterparts. Second, both used the same criteria for grouping students into successful and less successful. Both O’Malley et al., (1989) and Vandergrift (1992) assumed that the successful listeners are those who had a wide range of strategies. Both seem to be circular in their definition of successful and less successful listeners.

The strength of this study lies in the way the think-aloud procedure was used. In contrast to the others discussed above (Murphy, 1985; Bacon, 1992), in think-aloud protocols listeners were asked to verbalise their thoughts retrospectively, the think-aloud procedure used in Vandergrift, instructed the listeners to describe their thoughts in oral or written formats during the pre-arranged intervals in the listening tasks. Vandergrift also used some probe questions in case learners remained silent.

Vogley (1995) also examined the strategies learners perceived they used while performing an authentic listening comprehension task and the relationship between their strategy use and listening ability. She modified Carrell’s (1989) Metacognitive Awareness Strategy Questionnaire (MASQ), which was originally developed to assess second language readers’ strategy use and to assess the listeners’ perceived strategy use.

83 university-level learners of Spanish registered for first, second, third, and fourth-semester participated in two data gathering sessions. In the first session, they took the listening comprehension section of the Spanish Advanced Placement Exam (1984). In the second session, they executed recall tasks on three authentic video listening comprehension tasks. Afterwards, they completed the questionnaire of strategy awareness.

The results revealed a slight inconsistency between the students' responses to the questionnaire and their actual use of strategy. Although half of the listeners reported that they were aware of the effect of grammatical structure on listening comprehension, only 14% had reported that they focused on grammatical structures when performing a listening task. Vogley (1995: 54) concluded that 'although students display the required knowledge and skills to listen and learn effectively (declarative knowledge), they either do not know when to use them or do not know how to use them (procedural knowledge)'.

In summary to the section above, the general descriptive studies together with the good language learner studies inspired a number of studies to probe, describe and identify listening strategies used by successful and less successful listeners (see O'Malley et al., 1989; Vandergrift, 1992; Chein & Li, 1998). The findings of all these studies were not at all different from successful and less successful general language learners; instead they confirmed the same findings. This line of research revealed that both good and poor listeners use strategies. However, the difference between the two groups seems to be in the approach, strategy use and affective aspects of listening, in the ability to select and deploy a wide range of strategies (Murphy, 1985; Chein & Li, 1998) in the ability to match the strategies to the task demands and listening phases; perceptual processing, parsing and utilisation (O'Malley et al, 1989). In addition, some other studies indicated that the key difference between successful and less successful listeners was the use of metacognitive strategies (O'Malley et al, 1989; Vandergrift, 1992).

This line of research pointed out that the most successful cognitive strategies (table 3.1) in helping learners achieve a better level of comprehension are inferencing, elaboration, (Murphy, 1985; O'Malley et al, 1989; Chein and Li, 1998); summarisation (Bacon, 1991); anticipation (prediction) (Murphy, 1987).

Table 3-1: Effective listening strategies as identified in the literature

Strategy		What it involves
1. Metacognitive	Planning	What shall I focus on? What do I expect to listen to? What words might I listen to?
	Monitoring comprehension	Do I understand this? Does it make sense? Is the strategy I selected is the appropriate one?
	Self-evaluation	How well did I understand this? How successful was the strategy I used
2. Cognitive	Elaboration	What do I already know about this? What does this make me think of?
	Inferencing	Logically, what could this mean? Can I make an intelligent guess?
	Prediction	What can I anticipate given that topic? What words can I listen to? What of genre is it?
	Essence and focus of meaning	What is the most important information? What signals this information?

On the other hand, the most common metacognitive strategies identified and associated with successful listeners are monitoring comprehension, self-evaluation and planning, especially selective and directed attention (O'Malley et al, 1989; Chamot et al, 1990; Vandergrift, 1992). Mendelsohn (1994, 1995) adds some other cognitive strategies that were thought to be very effective in improving listening comprehension. These strategies are *SIMT*, which is an acronym to identifying setting, interpersonal relationship, mood and topic, essence of meaning and focus of meaning.

The findings of the good language learner studies along with the studies that attempted to identify and describe the strategies used by successful and less successful language learners in general and in listeners in particular, contributed immensely to developing several classifying schemes of language learning strategies.

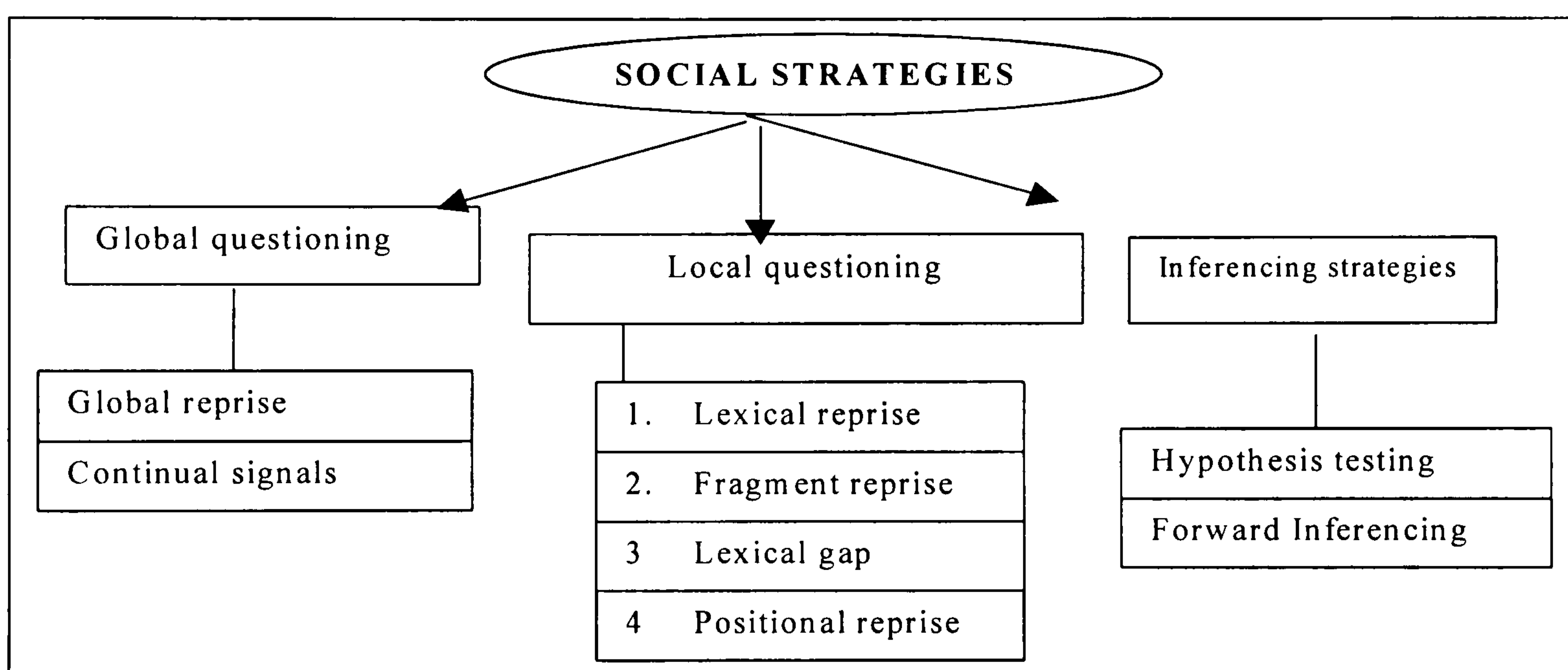
3.3.2 Classification of listening comprehension strategies

Having summarised some existing taxonomies of general language learning strategies (3.2.2.2), it seems pertinent to move from the more general to the specific and to assign this section to the attempts, given in the literature, to classify listening strategies, the focus of the current study. It is worth mentioning, at the onset, that the listening strategy classifications were not developed in isolation from the general language learning

strategies. Listening comprehension strategies were actually based on general language learning strategies with the main focus given to listening, and therefore, some very listening-oriented strategies have been added (e.g., auditory monitoring, voice inferencing and others). Therefore, this section highlights the very few existing taxonomies of listening strategies (Rost & Ross, 1991; Vandergrift, 1992).

Rost & Ross (1991), based on examining extracts of native and non-native speaker interaction, proposed three sets of social strategies in oral communication between native and non native speakers: global questioning, local questioning, and the inferential strategies (see figure 3-5).

Figure 3-5: Classification of listening strategies Rost & Ross's scheme (1991)



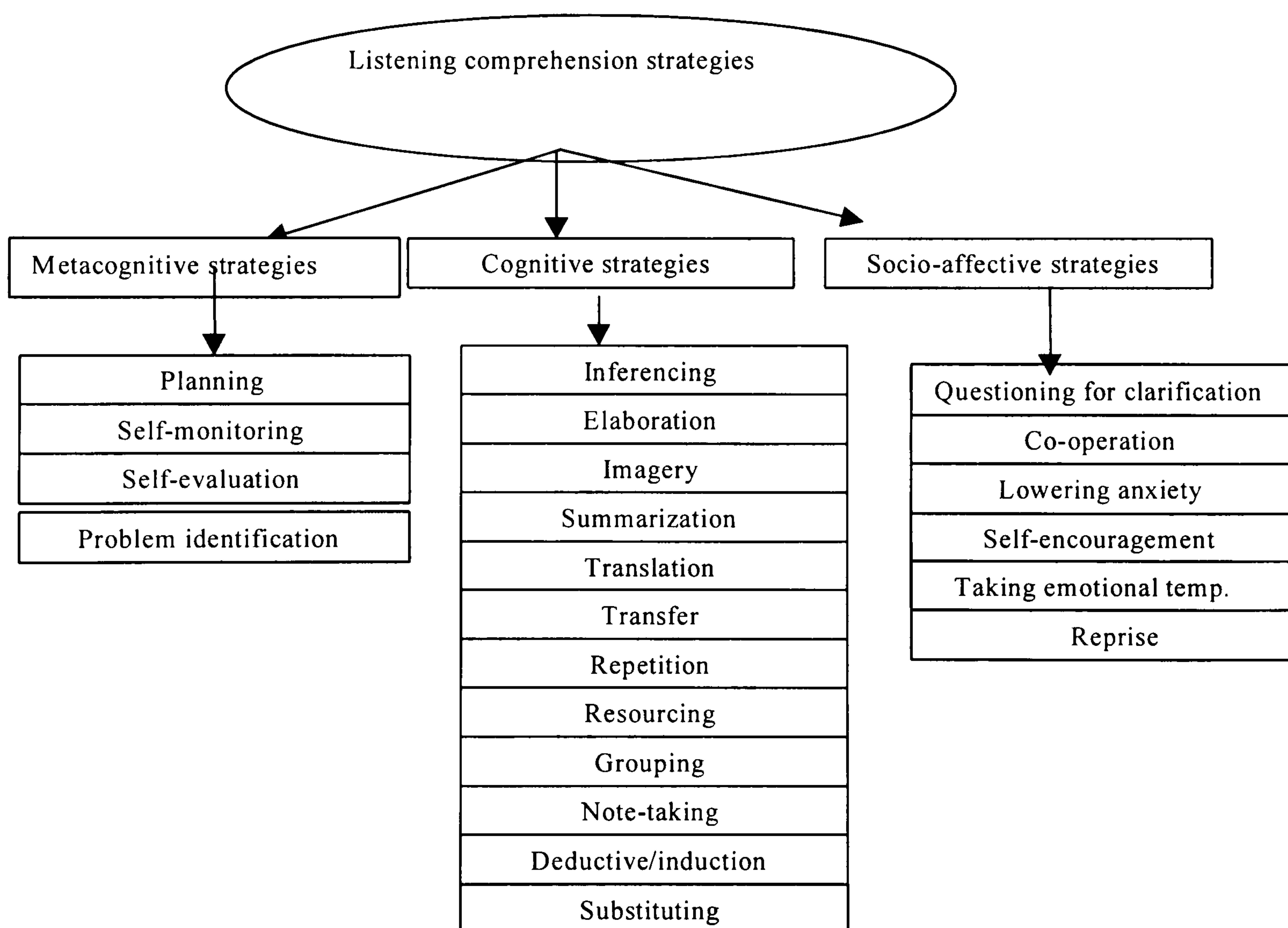
Clearly, the focus of this scheme is on social strategies; in particular the focus is given to asking questions (e.g. asking for clarification, repetition, and the meaning of lexical items) in a two-way listening context which is not the focus of the current study. Therefore, this taxonomy might not be applicable to the setting of the current study, because the type of listening in the study involves no interaction between the listener and the speaker (e.g. listening to tape-recorded materials).

One other taxonomy was developed by Vandergrift (1992), who built on the taxonomies proposed by O'Malley & Chamot (1990), Oxford (1990), Rost & Ross (1991), and developed his own strategy inventory of second language listening comprehension. His scheme, following O'Malley & Chamot (1990), consists of three main groups:

cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies, including twenty-two categories (see figure 3.6) and thirty-nine subcategories.

Vandergrift's scheme is not much different from what O'Malley & Chamot suggested. However, he added three sub-strategies, which had never been mentioned in the other schemes. He added a new strategy to each main group. In cognitive strategies he added "voice and paralinguistic inferencing", which refers to guessing the meaning of an utterance by listening to the tone of voice and paralinguistic features, whereas in the metacognitive group, he added the "auditory monitoring", which is used by the listener to check the sounds of the words they have listened to. Finally, and in socio-affective strategies he added, "faking", which means giving the speaker a signal to carry on the speech even if the listener does not understand the previous utterance.

Figure 3-6: Classification of listening strategies: Vandergrift's scheme (1990)



This scheme of Vandergrift, in spite of being a real contribution in the field, adding new strategies to the three different categories O'Malley & Chamot came up with, was not free from some overlapping due to the many subcategories it contained.

Thus, the scheme developed by Vandergrift (1992) seems to be extensively inclusive. It is apt to apply to different settings of listening whether they are interactive, where listening occurs in two ways and there is a chance for asking and answering questions for better communication or in one-way listening; listening to lectures, TV programmes or to a tape recorded materials where listeners can make use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies to help themselves achieve better comprehension. For all these, this scheme seems to be relevant to be considered in the current study.

3.4 Conclusions

The literature overview in this chapter has highlighted some points for both methodology and content of the strategy training programme. What follows is the conclusions that can be derived from the literature review and what implications they hold for the current study.

1. It is probably correct now, and after the overview presented in this chapter, to say that there has been a lack of consensus or uniform agreement on what constitutes a strategy. Similarly, a lack of a widely accepted theoretical framework basis for identifying and describing strategies was noticed.
2. Verbal reports seem to be the most productive data elicitation technique for identifying Language learning strategies used by listeners. Therefore, the current study in its two phases will make use of verbal reports to examine the strategies used by students.
3. The classification scheme proposed by Vandergrift (1992) which is mainly based on O'Malley & Chamot (1990) seems to be a useful scheme with less overlapping categories and strategies.
4. Explicit metacognitive knowledge about the learner (his/her learning style, personality traits, attitude and motivation), task knowledge (purpose, task demands) and appropriate strategies for task solution is a major predictor of successful listening.

5. Language learning strategies such as selective attention, comprehension monitoring, self-evaluation (metacognitive strategies) and prediction, inferencing, elaboration and summarisation (cognitive strategies) are associated with successful listening and listeners.
6. When we classify listeners into high and low ability or effective and less effective listeners we should be aware not to use the strategy use as the criteria for nominating these students as this will be rather circular (O'Malley et al, 1989; Vandergrift, 1992). We would better use other listening measures.

3.5 Chapter summary

The focus of this chapter was to understand what learning strategy is as a construct, how learning strategy works, and what strategies successful learners and listeners use. Besides, this chapter was sought to give insight into the existing language learning strategy schemes as well as those related to listening so as to be used in the baseline study (see chapter 5) and the main study (chapter 6). An understanding of what we are dealing with is the starting point for effective programme design. This chapter along with the findings of the baseline study is hoped to serve as a framework for the main study (chapter 6) in terms of selecting the strategies to be taught in the main study.

This chapter has summarized definitions of learning strategies, how they work according to the information-processing model and the identification of language learning strategies in general and specific strategies for listening comprehension. In doing so, the terminology dilemma in the literature has been examined and a working definition for the study was arrived at (3.1). Descriptive studies including the good language learner studies (3.2.1) and successful and less successful language learners (3.2.2.1) were reviewed and analysed. Also the available taxonomies of both general language learning (3.2.2.2) and listening strategies (3.3.1) have been examined.

Chapter Four

Review of Literature (3): Strategy Training

4.0 Introduction

Chapter three offered an overview on learning strategies that aimed to catalogue and highlight learning strategies as a construct. The prominence in that chapter was given to a discussion of the descriptive studies. These studies detailed and uncovered the issues involved in language learning strategies in general and listening in particular and left the door open for another strand of research to be undertaken, namely the interventionist studies where strategies are taught to students with the aim to facilitate their performance. This chapter is devoted to exploring the literature related to these interventionist studies. It focuses on the rationale behind teaching strategies; why we teach strategies (4.1.1). Options for providing strategy training are then highlighted giving much weight to strategy-based instruction: the option used in the current study to teach strategies (4.1.2). Particular importance is attached to the studies undertaken to teach listening strategies (4.2) from which principles underpinning the design of the current study were extracted (4.3).

4.1 Strategy training

Strategy training is a learner-based approach that is rooted in strategy teaching. It has been referred to in the literature as “strategy training”, “learner training”, “learning to learn”, “strategy instruction”, “learning learning”, “developing key skills”, “developing independence” and “learner development” (for a review see Ellis & Sinclair, 1989; Oxford, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Wenden, 1991; Chamot & Rubin, 1994; Mendelsohn, 1994; Cohen, 1998; Chamot et al., 1999). The current study uses the term strategy training and strategy instruction interchangeably for they are both descriptive and general enough to serve the purpose.

4.1.1 Why we teach strategies

Strategies are the purposeful actions and thoughts that we engage in when we want to understand, store and remember new information and skills. Strategy instruction is mainly

concerned with helping learners become better language learners by inducing behavioral and psychological changes that will enable learners to take greater control over their learning (see Benson, 2001). In this sense, the major advantage of strategy instruction is essentially self-examination and insight into control over one's own learning (Graham, 1997). Besides, strategy instruction can help learners:

- explore different ways so that they can learn the target language effectively and improve language learning performance (Wenden & Rubin, 1987; Chamot et al, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990, 1996; Cohen, 1998);
- become more self-directed, autonomous via the improved use of strategies (Wenden, 1991, 1998; Oxford & Leaver, 1996; Graham, 1997; Cohen, 1998, 1999; Ellis, 1999);
- become more aware of their own learning processes and in turn increase the willingness and ability to manage their own learning (Chamot et al, 1993; Chamot et al., 1996; Niyokos, 1996; Mendelsohn, 1994; 1995, 1998);
- extend effective strategies to other subject areas (Oxford, 1990; Wenden, 1991; Chamot et al, 1990; Chamot et al. 1993; Cohen, 1998; Chamot et al., 1999)
- enhance motivation (Chamot et al, 1990; Wenden, 1991, 1998; Chamot et al., 1996).
- remove anxiety, reduce uncertainty and foster self-confidence (Niykos, 1996)

Oxford & Leaver (1996) summarize the whole issues involved in strategy training:

The goal of strategy training is to help students become more self-directed, autonomous, and effective learners through the improved use of language learning strategies. Strategy instruction teaches students how to be better learners in several specific ways: (1) identifying and improving strategies that are currently used by the individuals; (2) identifying strategies that the individual might not be using but that might be helpful for the task at hand, and then teaching those strategies; (3) helping students learn to transfer strategies across language tasks and even across subject fields; (4) aiding students in evaluating the success of their use of particular strategies with specific tasks; and (5) assisting subjects in gaining learning style flexibility by teaching them strategies that are instinctively used by students with other learning styles. (p. 227).

Thus, the overall aim of strategy training is to empower learners by allowing them to take control of the language learning process. Strategy training does not just leave learners to haphazardly use whatever strategies they have developed on their own, but it aids them to become consciously aware of what strategies might be useful in a given learning situation.

However, strategy instruction should not be looked upon as a panacea when working with students: strategies are not the solution to every learning problem, but are another possible approach to meeting learners' needs.

4.1.2 Options for providing strategy training

There exist numerous ways of providing strategy training such as awareness training by lectures and strategy workshops (see Oxford, 1990; Dickinson, 1992; Cohen, 1998), general study skills (see Ellis & Sinclair, 1989), the printed word (see Brown, 1989, 1991; Fuller, 1987; Rubin & Thompson, 1982, 1994; Wenden, 1991; Willing, 1988 for a review of such materials see also Hajer, Meestringa, Young, & Oxford 1996), peer tutoring (Wenden, 1987; Cohen, 1998), videotaped mini-courses (see Oxford, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1996; Rubin, 1996; Cohen, 1998), and strategy-based instruction (see Mendelsohn, 1994, 1995, 1998; Cohen, 1998, 1999). Cohen (1999: 63-68) argues that strategy-based instruction is seen as perhaps the most effective means of getting the message about strategies out to the consumers – the language learners. Other means, mentioned above, may have some impact, but they lack the element of continued focus over time. What follows is a discussion of strategy-based instruction option as being the main concern of the current study.

Strategy-based instruction is a learner-centered approach which integrates strategy training with embedded strategy practice in the foreign language classroom with the ultimate goal of helping students become more effective and efficient foreign language learners (Cohen, 1999). It tries to include explicit and implicit integration of strategies into the course content. In this sense strategy-based instruction has two major components:

1. Students are explicitly taught how, when and why strategies can be used to facilitate language learning, and
2. Strategies are integrated in everyday class materials, and may be explicitly or implicitly embedded in the language tasks.

Thus, learners experience the advantages of systematically applying strategies to the learning and the use of the language they are studying. Furthermore, they have

opportunities to share their own preferred strategies with the other students in the class and to increase their strategy repertoire within the context of the typical language tasks that they are asked to perform.

Cohen (1998: 81) points out that in a typical strategy-based instruction situation, the teachers:

1. describe, model and give examples of potentially useful strategies;
2. elicit additional examples from students based on the students' own learning experience;
3. lead small-group/whole-class discussions about strategies (e.g. reflecting on the rationale behind strategy use, planning the approach to a specific activity, evaluating the effectiveness of chosen strategies);
4. encourage their students to experiment with a broad range of strategies; and
5. integrate strategies into everyday class materials, explicitly or implicitly embedding them into the language tasks to provide for contextualized strategy practice.

In strategy-based instruction, teachers have at least three options for how to conduct it, a) starting with the established course materials and then determine which strategies to insert and where, b) starting with a set of strategies that they wish to focus on and design activities around them, or c) inserting strategies spontaneously into the lessons whenever they seem appropriate. Similarly, Mendelsohn (1994, 1995, 1998), for example, makes a case for strategy-based instruction in listening claiming that it results in a number of benefits enhancing the listeners' performance in the task at hand as well as in similar future tasks (see 1.1). The current study uses the second option since there is no established course for teaching listening in the context of the study.

4.2 Listening strategy training studies

Given that the descriptive studies (3.4) detailed and uncovered the issues involved in general language learning and listening strategies, another line of research has emerged, which makes a case for strategy teaching. This section provides an overview of the literature related to intervention studies that were undertaken to teach listening strategies. Within this line of research, studies can be grouped into two categories: the early attempts (O'Malley et al., 1985b; Chamot et al., 1988; Schwartz, 1992) and the more recent studies

that reflect the demonstrable success that latest research in listening strategy instruction started to show (Paulauskas, 1994; Thompson & Rubin, 1996).

4.2.1 Early interventionist studies

An early attempt at language learning strategies instruction was undertaken with 75 high school ESL students at the intermediate level (O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Kupper, & Russo, 1985b). The study empirically investigated the effectiveness of strategy instruction on performance in a variety of language learning tasks required in academic settings (listening comprehension, vocabulary learning, and academic speaking).

The discussion will be limited here to the listening portion. The listening task involved listening to four 5-minute videotaped academic lecture simulations and completing a comprehension check. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three groups. The metacognitive group (n= 27) received training in the use of selective attention (metacognitive strategy), note taking (cognitive strategy), and co-operation (social-affective strategy). The cognitive group (n= 26) received instruction only on note taking and co-operation. The control group (n= 22) did not receive any instruction in listening strategies, but they were left to perform the tasks using their regular approaches. The strategy instruction took place during a fifty-minute period on eight successive days. The instruction was quite explicit at the beginning, and then reminders to use the strategies were faded so that by the time of the post-test, students were not told to use the instructed strategies.

Findings indicated that, though the mean posttest scores for the experimental groups were higher than for the control group, the posttest results (adjusted for initial differences) were not significantly different for any of the comparison. However, significant differences were found for three of the daily listening tests. Results of Test 1 were in the predicted direction: metacognitive > cognitive > control, but results of Test 2 and 3 were different from the predicted direction, e.g. metacognitive < cognitive > control.

The researchers suggested a number of reasons for these results. Among the reasons given was that the post-test video was probably too difficult and not particularly interesting for

students who had little background knowledge about the topic presented. The researchers pointed out that “when the task was more difficult and the cues for strategy use less structured, transfer of strategy training to new listening tasks was not significantly improved” (O’Malley et al., 1988: 228). A further reason was the design of the lessons provided for decreasing the strategy reminders before students had thoroughly automated the strategies. Researchers suggested that learners might have done better if they had been given more opportunity to practice strategy use. They also suggested that a more extended period of instruction would have enhanced students’ ability to adopt new strategies and use them independently.

Another listening strategy training study was undertaken by Rubin, Quinn, & Enos (1988) to investigate the most effective approach of listening strategy instruction {blind (where neither the strategies were labelled nor their value was discussed), informed (where information about strategy’s name and usefulness is presented explicitly) and self-informed (where information about the strategies coupled with opportunities to evaluate the strategy with different application are provided)} in enhancing listening performance. 394 high school students of Spanish were assigned to one of five groups: three treatment groups corresponding to each type of the training, or to one of the two control groups (one group watched the same videos, but received no strategy instruction (CG1) and the other (CG2) watched only pre and posttest video segments). Students of the experimental group were taught three cognitive strategies: prediction/verification, cognates, and storyline. Each strategy was taught four times on four separate days. The listening tasks consisted of Spanish videos, which were viewed by the students in the experimental groups and in one of the control groups. Performance was measured by video pre- and post-tests and with daily tests after each training session.

Findings were mixed; the predicted direction of the listening comprehension posttest was: self-control > informed > blind > control with video > control without video. However, significant differences were found only between the blind and the informed groups’ listening comprehension scores, with the blind group outperforming both the informed and self-control groups. Significant differences between gain scores were found between the blind group and control without video (blind > CG2); between the self-control group and

control without video (self-control > CG2); and between the control with video and control without video (CG1 > CG2). The combined mean gains of those who watched video regularly (including the control group with video) proved to be significantly different from those who watched video only during the pre - and post-tests. Looking at the combined performance on the daily tests of the experimental groups, and the control group with video, on individual treatment days, only one comparison (Day 10) was statistically significant.

As with the O'Malley et al. (1985b) study, problems were encountered with the lesson design in this study. The blind group watched the videos three to four minutes more each treatment day giving that group the most exposure to video input. This led Rubin et al. to conclude that the use of video significantly enhances listening. Another problem highlighted was the teachers' insufficient training to teach strategies; as some teachers experienced difficulty in completing the lesson plan as written and that the teacher instruction was insufficient to ensure successful integration of strategies instruction into their teaching repertoire and that many students needed further practice and clarification in how to apply the listening strategies. The statistically significant daily test comparison (Day 10) occurred on a day that the storyline strategy was practised. In comparing the videos shown those days, the researchers found that the Day 10 video seemed to be the most difficult. They argued that this result provided some evidence that listening strategies (particularly the storyline strategy) are most beneficial with difficult materials (c.f. O'Malley et al., 1985a). Finally, the difficulty level of the videos appeared to affect students' use of strategies, as was the case in the O'Malley et al. (1985b) study. When the listening task was easy enough to be completed without strategies, there were no significant differences between the experimental and control groups; but when the video was challenging, students needed strategies, and the experimental groups outperformed the control groups. An important conclusion of the study was that teachers needed as much time to understand and become proficient in teaching listening strategies as students in understanding and applying learning strategies. Further, the study suggested that teachers should be involved in the design of learning strategy lessons.

Thus, this study highlighted a number of crucial factors that should be attended to if strategy instruction to be effective. One important factor is that teachers who teach strategies should receive extensive training on how to teach strategies: teachers involved in this study experienced difficulty delivering the lesson plans as written. Besides, teachers could not guide students through how to apply the strategies taught and therefore Rubin et al. stressed the need for teacher's ongoing guidance and feedback to the learners until they (the learners) become confident enough to monitor and evaluate their strategy use. A further factor was the need for time duration to be long enough to provide opportunity for sufficient learning, training and practice on the target strategy as well as how to combine it with other strategies. Finally, the lesson design should offer to all the study groups equal amount of time and language exposure to eliminate the effect of any subsidiary factors.

Similarly, mixed negative results have been obtained by Schwartz (1992), who investigated the effects of listener training on intermediate university Spanish students' listening comprehension of a videotext. Listener training was operationally defined as three treatments in which the following components were additively combined: listening techniques for use with specific listening tasks; metacognitive techniques for directing and regulating the listening process; and attributional retraining to emphasise the link between effort and strategy use, and listening comprehension. The training was delivered with interactive video lessons based on an episode of a Spanish television soap opera. The study also investigated the effect of attributional retraining on students' causal attributions, and the relationship between students' pertaining causal attributions and post training listening comprehension.

A pretest-posttest experimental design with a control group was used for the study. Listening comprehension was measured with a 50-item test based on segments of a Spanish film. Causal attributions were measured with the Causal Dimension Scale, an instrument which allows respondents to state a cause and rate it on locus of causality, stability, and controllability sub-scales. Data was analysed using Analysis of Covariance and Spearman's rank order correlation procedure. Qualitative data was collected on students' attributions and demographic characteristics, and students' post training perceptions of listening and of the training programme.

No statistically significant differences were found between treatment groups in listening comprehension or in causal attributions. The variation accounted for by the treatment was 32% in listening comprehension and 20%, 24%, and 30% in the attribution sub-scale. No relationship was found between pretest attributions and posttest listening comprehension scores. The qualitative data suggested positive training effects on students' perceptions of their listening ability and of listener training. These data also yielded information on students' use of the listening techniques presented.

Reflecting on the results obtained from the above-discussed studies, professionals in the field expressed doubts to strategy training (see Kellerman, 1991; Rees-Miller, 1993; Gu, 1996). Kellerman (1991) for example, argue that the risk of devoting teaching time to strategy training rather than language learning is not worth taking. We should teach learners more language and let the strategies take care of themselves. The lack of empirical studies that could demonstrate the effectiveness of listening strategy training or that such training had irrefutable benefits made Rees-Miller (1993: 679) call for a critical assessment of the theoretical bases of learner training. Her essential challenge to the proponents of teaching strategies was that they find evidence that using a strategy is better than not using it and that they determine the factors that make learner training favourable to success. She elaborated on a down-to-earth list of factors that need to be considered before implementing learner training in a given classroom. Such factors are cultural differences, age, educational background of students, students' and teachers' beliefs about language learning, cognitive styles and other factors that complicate the implementation of learner training and result in differential success according to who the learners are.

A number of researchers have responded to critiques of Rees-Miller and successfully answered all the questions she raised (for a review see Chamot & Rubin, 1994; Oxford & Leaver, 1996, and also Rees-Miller, 1994).

Chamot & Rubin (1994), for instance, in response, successfully answered all the questions and concerns raised above by Rees-Miller. Initially, they pointed out that existing research made it clear that strategy use correlates with improved performance (see for example

Chamot, 1993; Chamot, et al., 1993; Chamot, Robbins, & El-Dinary, 1993; Cohen, 1990, Cohen & Aphek, 1981; Hosenfeld, et al., 1981; O'Malley, et al., 1985; Rost & Ross, 1991; Rubin, et al., 1988; Thompson & Rubin, 1993, 1996). Then, they highlighted the fact that it is not a particular strategy that leads to improved performance, but rather the effective management of a repertoire of strategies. What is more is that many factors affect the usefulness of a particular strategy, including proficiency level, task, text, language modality, background knowledge, context of learning, target language, and learner characteristics (see Abraham & Vann, 1987; Chamot & O'Malley 1994b; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Rost & Ross, 1991; Rubin & Henze, 1981; Vandergrift, 1992; Vann & Abraham, 1990; Wenden, 1991).

In their response to the second question they emphasized that translating a particular strategy into teachable behavior entails:

- discovering and discussing strategies that students are already using for specific learning tasks;
- presenting new strategy (ies) by explicitly naming and describing them;
- modeling the strategy (ies);
- explaining why and when the strategy (ies) can be used, and
- providing extensive practice with authentic materials.

Finally they cited some factors that have been found to influence the effectiveness of learner training: the length of strategy instruction, the need for integration into the regular curricula and ongoing classroom activities, instruction adapted to the particular language skill or task, the selection of materials that encourage strategy use and strategy choice, the tasks, and most important the need for adequate teacher-orientation and the development of expertise in learning strategies instruction.

4.2.2. Recent interventionist studies

More recent interventionist studies (e.g. Paulauskas, 1994; Thompson & Rubin, 1996) tend to be more finely tuned than the earlier ones, giving focus not only on training students in a number of strategies that have been identified as effective in the literature but also catering

for the metacognitive knowledge students bring into the learning task. Besides, these recent studies tend to provide a longer time duration compared with the earlier ones. One of these recent investigations was undertaken by Paulauskas (1994) to assess the effect of strategy training on the listening achievement of high beginning and low intermediate adult learners. Two Vygotskian methodologies were examined, one involving small groups (reciprocal strategy methodology) and one involving the class as a group (direct methodology). A control group was included to determine relative differences in performance among the three groups after strategy training.

The two strategy groups received training in four comprehension-fostering strategies: predicting text content, summarising main information, questioning for comprehension of main ideas and clarifying comprehension difficulties. Besides, their metacognitive knowledge was revisited to increase the students' level of awareness. The control group was given the same instructional materials as the strategy groups, but no training on how to approach the listening materials. Each group received a two-hours session every week for six weeks. An immediate posttest consisting of two listening test measures was administered after the last session, and a delayed posttest consisting of the same two test measures was given one month after instruction ended.

As predicted in the first hypothesis of this study, it was found that the two strategy groups performed significantly better than the control group on the two listening test measures. No significant differences were found between the two strategy groups: the reciprocal strategy methodology and direct methodology. These results provided evidence that strategy training in the four comprehension fostering strategies when taking account of the learners' preconceived belief system (metacognitive knowledge) and allowing for a long time duration would help improve the listening comprehension of students at the high beginning and low intermediate proficiency levels. Qualitative data also provided additional information that supported the quantitative results obtained. Paulauskas recommended further research in ESL strategy training to examine variables seen as potentially crucial for designing effective training programmes.

More recently Thompson and Rubin (1996) undertook an extensive, longitudinal empirical study to investigate classroom-based strategy instruction for listening with novice and high intermediate students of Russian as a foreign language. The major purpose of the study was to test the hypothesis that systematic instruction in the use of a range of cognitive and metacognitive strategies will result in improvement of listening comprehension.

The study attended to a number of principles that helped achieving at least one of its hypotheses. Besides training students on a number of effective cognitive and metacognitive strategies that were referred to as central to listening, the study attended to the students' beliefs, or more technically their metacognitive knowledge. Furthermore, the study allowed the longest time duration in listening strategy training used in the literature; 15 hours of instruction in an academic year for 2 years. Finally, the strategy instruction was informed (i.e., strategies were presented, labelled, and modelled).

The study used one experimental and one control groups in real classroom settings with authentic video materials. The two groups received the same materials, viewed the same videos in the same sequence and spent approximately the same amount of time (20 minutes on the average) on each 45 video segments. However, different lesson plans were prepared for the two groups. The lesson plans for the experimental group focused on developing listening strategies, while the lesson plans for the control concentrated on using the content of the video as a basis for speaking and writing activities. The strategies taught for the experimental group were selected in the light of the findings of related studies, what successful learners reported using and, the relationship between text type and strategies. They were: four metacognitive strategies (planning, defining goals, monitoring and evaluation), five cognitive strategies (prediction, listening to the known, listening for redundancies, listening to tone of voice and intonation and resourcing) and a strategy related to each genre of the three used in the study (drama, interview and news).

Two main measures of comprehension (a video comprehension test developed by the researchers and a standardised audio comprehension test) and an additional one (the listening portion of a proficiency test) were used. A Chi-square test confirmed the hypothesis that systematic instruction in the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies

would result in the improvement of listening comprehension. Students who received strategy instruction improved significantly ($p < 0.05$) over those who did not receive such instruction on the video-test. With regard to the audio-test the differences between the two groups in terms of percentage of students in the two groups who shared improvement approached the significance level but did not reach it.

Given the small size of the sample ($n = 36$), the researchers used a t-test to determine the effect size of group differences. The results demonstrated that the difference between pretest and posttest video comprehension scores was 0.44, which is according to Cohen (1988) a medium-size effect. Thus, the medium size effect derived from the t-test provides confirmation that strategy instruction resulted in improved performance on the video test, but was not significant in the case of audio test.

Researchers attributed the insignificance on the audio test to a number of factors associated with the test. Firstly, the audio test did not parallel the type of instruction given. In other words, throughout the strategy training period, learners were instructed to use the visual information contained in the videos to facilitate their listening comprehension which was missing in the audio test. Secondly, many of the items in the audio test were not directly related to the genres taught. Finally, over 10 % of students scored at least 80 % correct on the pretest, leaving little room for improvement.

Although the researchers indicated that the small sample size of thirty-six students should lead to cautious interpretations, a number of important findings are reported. Students indicated increased confidence in their ability to comprehend authentic Russian videos, and experienced success in selecting appropriate strategies for the videos and in evaluating the success of a strategy used. Students identified as good language learners improved the most in listening comprehension, regardless of treatment, and students identified as poor language learners made the least gains in comprehending the videos. Reasons advanced for the findings are the features of Russian, which make listening particularly difficult and the fact that the strategies training was limited only to fifteen hours in an academic year for two years.

This study seems to be very carefully designed and undertaken so as to attend to many of the principles of effective strategy training and which were lacking from other studies. This might explain why it succeeded in confirming at least one of its hypotheses. The success of the study to demonstrate the effectiveness of strategy training in itself is a real contribution to the field. The study addressed the following criteria to ensure effective strategy training:

- Training was based on diagnosis and the selection of strategies to be taught were in the light of the following three criteria: 1) the findings of related studies, 2) what successful learners reported using and, 3) the relation between text type and strategies.
- The package of strategies taught included cognitive and metacognitive strategies.
- The training followed a clear sequence of steps.
- Strategy instruction was informed (see 4.3.4); students were taught what, where, when, and why to use the strategies.
- All groups received the same material, at the same time for the same duration (c.f. Rubin et al., 1988).
- The researcher instructor conducted the strategy instruction and thus, obviated the need for teacher training.

A final point to be added, here, is that if strategies instruction in this study, which was granted a longer period of time, was conducted intensively, The Thompson & Rubin (1996) study might have obtained better results.

4.3 Principles of effective strategy training

The studies reported and discussed in 4.2 along with other studies in other skill areas have resulted in a substantial knowledge base about how to teach strategies effectively, what principles we should attend to ensure successful strategy instruction as well as what pitfalls we should avoid. In this sense the next sections try to discuss some of the principles of effective strategy instruction. The purpose for this is to provide a framework for effective strategy training to be used as a guide for designing the instructional programme for the current study.

A number of factors have been identified that need to be addressed by an effective strategy instruction programme. These factors: 1) diagnosis; 2) the focus of strategy instruction; 3) the package of strategies to be taught; and 4) the approach used.

4.3.1 Diagnosis

There seems to be a consensus among those who are interested in strategy training that the first step should be diagnosis. Strategy training should be based on a diagnosis of which strategies learners use and how appropriately in terms of the task they use them. This can be fulfilled by bringing to light their repertoire of strategies at the beginning and then basing the training on what they lack or do not know very well (see Chamot & O'Malley, 1993; Hosenfeld et al., 1981; Mendelsohn, 1994, 1995, 1998; Oxford, 1990; Oxford, 1996; Wenden, 1991). Such diagnosis should seek answers for questions such as

1. What are the students' actual strategies in use?
2. Is there a wide gap between the strategies they actually use and those appropriate to the tasks?
3. What are students' beliefs and attitudes about language learning?
4. What are students' expectations about the role of both teachers and learners?

4.3.2 Focus of the instruction

The literature review shows that the focus of most studies in listening strategy instruction was mainly on training students on cognitive and metacognitive strategies disregarding their metacognitive knowledge. Foreign or second language educators involved in learner training according to Wenden (1997) assert that strategy training should include both the 'know what' for learning (metacognitive knowledge) and the 'know how' for learning (strategies). Therefore, it seems pervasive to devote the following section to metacognitive knowledge and the role it plays in language learning and learner autonomy. Metacognitive knowledge according to Flavel (1979: 907) is "primarily the knowledge or beliefs learners have about what factors or variables act and interact in what ways to affect the course and outcome of cognitive enterprise". It is the specialised portion of a learner's acquired knowledge base, which consists of what learners know about learning. Wenden in a series of articles (1987b, 1991, 1995, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2002) adopted Flavel's categories of

metacognitive knowledge, i.e. person, task and strategic knowledge, to describe second language learners' metacognitive knowledge.

Person knowledge refers to the general knowledge learners have acquired about what factors (cognitive and affective) facilitate or inhibit their learning and how these factors apply in their experience. It also refers to what learners believe about their effectiveness as learners as well as about their proficiency in a given area (self-efficacy). Task knowledge, on the other hand, is what learners know about purpose, demands (e.g. the needed knowledge and skills to do a particular task) and nature of learning tasks (e.g. receptive versus productive). Finally, strategic knowledge means the general knowledge about what strategies are, why they are useful as well as when and how to use them. Sinclair (2000) adds to the categories above, 'knowledge about the subject to be learned'. Her categories are: a) knowledge about self as a learner, b) knowledge about learning context, c) knowledge about the subject to be learnt, and d) knowledge about learning processes.

It might be useful here to distinguish between metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive strategies, which should not be used interchangeably. Wenden (1998: 519) clearly points out that metacognitive knowledge is the information learners acquired about their learning whereas metacognitive strategies are general skills through which learners manage, direct, regulate and guide their learning. They both constitute and are complementary components of the broader notion of metacognition.

A considerable number of researchers assert that metacognitive knowledge is an indispensable component in effective strategy training component (see Wenden, 1991, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2002; Victoria & Lockhart, 1995; Yang, 1999; Chamot & O'Malley, 1994; Mendelsohn, 1994, 1995, 1998) to the extent that some attributed the lack of significant strategy training to the lack of this. It is regarded as key to successful learning and as what characterises the approach of expert learners to learning (Flavel, 1979). Such learners have already developed insightful beliefs about language learning processes, their own abilities and the use of effective strategies that may compensate for possible weaknesses. Baker and Brown, (1984) stress that metacognitive knowledge is a prerequisite for metacognitive strategies (planning, monitoring and evaluation) to work efficiently.

Collins (1994: 3) highlights the notion that “knowledge proceeds control”; learners must first become aware of their own characteristics as learners, knowledge of the task and strategy knowledge, before they can strategically control their learning processes.

It has been shown that learner’s metacognitive knowledge influences two key phases in self-regulation: task analysis and monitoring. Wenden (1998: 527) points out that metacognitive knowledge is in itself motivational – energising the process of self-regulation. She (1998) elaborates on this showing that metacognitive knowledge is key to the task analysis that constitute pre-task engagement planning, when learners call upon their metacognitive knowledge about a particular task to:

1. identify the nature of the problem it poses;
2. consider whether it similar to one they have already done , and
3. determine how to approach the task and the knowledge and skills they will need to do so.

Metacognitive knowledge is also centrally involved in monitoring the regulatory skill that oversees the learning process that follows the initial planning. It is the basis for determining how one is progressing and it is what constitutes the internal feedback i.e. the state of awareness, which informs the learner when s/he has encountered a problem. Learners’ assessment of the reason for problems encountered and their decisions about how to deal with these problems are based on their metacognitive knowledge. In sum, it informs planning decisions taken at the outset of learning and helps analyse the task demands and decide how best to approach it.

Metacognitive knowledge is also essential for learner autonomy (Dickinson, 1987; Sinclair, 1999; Wenden, 1991, 1995, 1998, 2002). Sinclair (1999: 102) indicates the clear link between the development of metacognitive awareness (metacognitive knowledge) and learner autonomy pointing out that the capacity for making informed decisions about learning, autonomy, involves developing the learners’ deeper metacognitive awareness. As essential as planning, monitoring and evaluation are to autonomous learning, however, according to Perkins & Solamon, (1985), cited in Wenden, 1995: 188), “if they fail to make contact with a rich knowledge base (metacognitive knowledge), these three strategies are weak”.

Wenden (1995: 192) concludes that “the actualisation of autonomy in learners is dependent (though not exclusively) upon their acquisition of the ‘software’ (metacognitive knowledge) for learning; without it, their potential for autonomy – as – learners may not be fully realised. She concurs with Holec (1981) who successfully points out that there is a need for learners’ methodological and psychological preparation to be autonomous, i.e. facility in the use of strategies, including the skills of self-directed learning (metacognitive strategies) and the self-confidence and willingness to take on the challenges of autonomous learning.

Victoria & Lockhart (1995: 232) add another dimension to the relationship between metacognitive knowledge and autonomy concluding: “ enhanced metacognition (metacognitive knowledge and strategies) presumably leads to more autonomy through improved self-knowledge, use of more efficient strategies and a wider variety of resources and increased contact with the learning”. They go on summarising: “ ... metacognition, autonomy and learning interact with each other and that the dynamism of this interaction can be seriously impaired if metacognition is not enhanced”.

In sum, it appears that it is not sufficient for autonomous learners to be able to use metacognitive and cognitive strategies, they must also be aware i.e. base the management of learning on their knowledge of the language learning processes, specifically as it relates to the task, that is the focus of their learning. Thus, strategy training should give equal attention to both the strategies of learning and the knowledge that is essential to their operation. Then, as learners acquire this ‘learning software’ and begin to experience control over their learning, attitudes that inhibit their taking on the challenge of autonomy will also change.

Given that the two studies that demonstrated success of strategy training in listening were those which gave room for the learners’ metacognitive knowledge (Paulauskas, 1994; Thompson & Rubin, 1996), the current study will give much weight to addressing the metacognitive knowledge students brought into the listening task.

4.3.3 Package of strategies to be taught

Research pointed out the necessity that strategy instruction should integrate both cognitive and metacognitive strategies, as they are interdependent. Metacognitive strategies are executive processes used to help learners plan, monitor, and evaluate a learning task (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994). On the other hand, cognitive strategies are sought to help learners to deal efficiently with language input. Such strategies should enable them to: 1) attend to incoming information; 2) comprehend what they attend to and; 3) store this new learning in long term-memory so that retrieval is facilitated (Wenden, 1996).

They are interdependent-cognitive strategy training without metacognitive training is unlikely to have much transfer value, even if it helped learners with specific problems (Brown et al., 1983). On the other hand, metacognitive strategy training without cognitive strategy training will probably not be very well received by learners-it will appear very abstract, and not necessarily relevant to their immediate needs, and motivation to do something with this would likely be low (Mendelsohn, 1994). Vandergrift (1996:215-218) highlights the crucial role of metacognitive strategies in strategy training, stating that such strategies give learners an overview of the other processes: they allow learners to predict, monitor for errors or breakdown, and to look back evaluating the whole processes. This had led to the conclusion that a good strategy-training program should be addressing both.

4.3.4 The instructional approach

In their review of intervention studies in developmental research, Brown et al. (1983) distinguished three different approaches to learner training (blind, informed and self-controlled training) on the basis of explicitness of purposes. Blind training (described in Brown et al., 1983; Brown & Baker, 1984; Chamot & O'Malley, 1993; Oxford, 1990, 1992, 1993; Oxford & Leaver, 1996; Rubin et al., 1988; Rubin, 1994; Wenden, 1991, 1999; Wenden & Rubin, 1987) induces learners to perform particular strategies without giving a rationale to the significance of the strategy, nor are they instructed on how to use them. They are told what to do and led to do it without being informed about as to why they

should act in a certain way. In short, the emphasis in this approach is on learning something rather than on learning how to learn.

In contrast, informed training tells students how a strategy can be helpful and why. It explicitly informs learners what strategies they are learning, how to use them, in what context to use them and their significance as well. Thus, students are not only instructed in the use of the strategy but in the need for it and its anticipated effects as well. Informed training does not emphasise learning, but rather learning how to learn. Such training results in improving performance on the given language task and maintenance of the strategy across time. This approach, based on empirical evidence, was recommended as more effective in helping strategy training bring about the desired effects (Brown et al., 1983; Brown & Balinscair, 1982).

Self-controlled training is the third approach described by Brown et al. (1983). In this training, learners are trained to use a specific strategy and, then, to monitor their performance to determine whether the use of the strategy is effective or not. In this case, the metacognitive supplement consists of general skills necessary to regulate learning.

4.3.5 Time duration

Time is like a vacuum in which learning, training, and practice take place. In this sense, the process of learning to use strategies does not happen overnight. In fact, if strategy training is to bring about its pay-off, it has to be interwoven with regular language instruction over long duration (see Baker & Brown, 1984; O'Malley, 1987; Wenden & Rubin, 1987; Wenden, 1987, 1991, 1996; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990). In this sense, research has emphasised that strategy instruction should devote enough time for students to feel competent and comfortable with strategy use.

4.3.6 Practice

It is also recommended that learners should be given an ample opportunity to practise using the strategies they have learnt, inside and outside the classroom. They should not be told what to do and then left on their own to sink or swim. Instructors should continue to

provide students with opportunities for guided applications of strategy use until they become able to regulate the use of strategy on their own (see Wenden, 1991, 1996; Chamot, 1995; Chamot & O'Malley, 1994; Mendelsohn, 1994, 1995, 1998; Oxford, 1996).

4.4 Conclusions

The literature overview in this chapter has highlighted some points for both methodology and content of the strategy training programme. What follows is the conclusions that can be derived from the literature review and what implications they hold for the current study.

Interventionist studies in listening can be differentiated into two lines of research, earlier studies (O'Malley et al., 1985b; Chamot et al., 1988; Schwartz, 1992) and more recent studies (Paulauskas, 1994; Thompson & Rubin, 1996). Within this classification, they can be further categorized into studies conducted by the classroom teachers (Chamot et al., 1988b; Rubin et al., 1988) and studies conducted by teacher/researcher (O'Malley et al., 1985b; Schwartz, 1992; Paulauskas, 1994; Thompson & Rubin, 1996). The gains in the earlier attempts of listening strategy training were not easy to detect due to certain flaws in the research designs.

Most strategy training reported offered short training, which ranged between 1.45 hours (O'Malley et al., 1985b) to 30 hours (Thompson & Rubin, 1996). As we came to know in chapter three (3.3), learning strategies are part of procedural knowledge that necessitates a considerable investment of time for cued practice, feedback and discussion activities. That the strategy training did not allow for extended training might be due to the fact that strategy training was mainly conducted by researchers who did not have access to the classrooms for a longer period. Furthermore, in cases where the strategy training is conducted by classroom teachers other factors may interfere such as the teacher interest, willingness as well as the ability to maintain a high level of students' motivation.

Recent interventionist studies, learning in general and listening in particular, tended to be better designed and conducted than the earlier ones. They tried to avoid the design flaws in the earlier ones. They tended to use both quantitative and qualitative data to examine the effects of strategy training (Schwartz, 1992; Paulauskas, 1994; Thompson & Rubin, 1996)

as well as different approaches to see the most effective one (reciprocal/direct teaching), and longitudinal empirical classroom-based studies (Thompson & Rubin, 1996).

4.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented a review of the related literature in the area of strategy training with a special focus on strategy training in listening comprehension. The concepts and research set forth in this chapter together with Chapter 2 and 3 constitute the theoretical basis for the design of the current study. The chapter first defined what strategy training refers to and why we teach strategies as well as the different options available for strategy training with due attention to strategy-based instruction, the option (4.1). Then it reviewed, discussed and evaluated the interventionist studies that are concerned with listening (4.2). Some major issues involved in effective strategy training were extracted from both the interventionist studies as well as related literature highlighted (section 4.3). These issues are: a) diagnosis, b) focus of instruction, c) package of strategies, d) instructional approach, e) time duration and, f) practice. It is worth mentioning, here, that all these principles of effective strategy instruction discussed above would be taken into account in the design of the current study.

Chapter Five

Baseline Study

5.0 Introduction

Effective principles of strategy training extracted from the literature and discussed in 4.3 brought to light that the starting point in strategy instruction should be diagnosis. With this in mind, the baseline study, the focus of the current chapter, was undertaken before proceeding on to the main study. It sought to identify the actual repertoire of strategies student teachers, subjects of the study, use in listening and how appropriate these strategies are to listening. This chapter describes the methodology and the research rationale pursued in this study. First it highlights the aims of the study (5.1) and presents the research questions (5.2). Next, section 5.3 briefly introduces the different paradigms available in social sciences with the focus given to the positivistic (quantitative) and constructivist (qualitative) paradigms as the two main dominant modes of enquiry in social sciences. This section argues that, using complementary data collection methods adds rigour, depth and reliability of the data obtained (5.3.1). This section also provides a discussion of the techniques used for data elicitation in the current study: questionnaire and interviews (5.3.2). This is followed by outlining the processes of developing and validating the instruments used in the study (5.3.4, 5.3.5). The presentation and discussion of the results obtained from the different instruments used in this study is the focus of section 5.4. Finally, a summary of the implications the findings hold for the main study was given in 5.5.

5.1 Aims of the study

The baseline study was undertaken to examine a number of issues that were felt crucial to the main study. The main purpose was to diagnose the problems students have in listening to English and the strategies they use to overcome these problems. More precisely the aim of the baseline study was threefold:

- The first aim was to explore student teachers' perceptions about listening, how confident they felt while listening in the target language.

- Secondly, it aimed at revealing the repertoire of strategies student teachers already had and used. The baseline study aimed to answer questions such as which strategies student teachers actually use and which they need to learn and whether there is a wide gap between the strategies they actually use and those needed for successful listening.
- Thirdly, it aimed at uncovering the problems the target group had while listening. These problems were to be considered when selecting the strategies to be taught in the main study.

5.2 Research questions

To address the issues listed in 5.1, the baseline study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What do student teachers of English believe makes up effective listening?
2. How confident do student teachers of English feel while listening in English?
3. What are the comprehension strategies student teachers of English would make use of while listening in English?
4. What are the repair strategies student teachers of English make use of when they fail to comprehend in listening to English?
5. What are the problems student teachers of English have in listening to English?

5.3 Methodology

It might be worth mentioning at the onset that the following section on methodology is not intended as an exhaustive discussion but rather as a framework for analysing the broader theories, which underpinned this project. It just touches upon the relevant issues for this study and those who are more interested should refer to books on methodology.

5.3.1 Methods of inquiry

Research is a careful, systematic investigation endeavour undertaken to broaden our understanding of phenomena in a particular domain. In this endeavour, researchers follow different paths (methodologies) to achieve their research objectives. These different methodologies represent the different research paradigms. The researcher's perception of reality and the status of the knowledge is the main drive behind his/her decisions on how to undertake a piece of research, and what methodology to follow.

Nunan (1992) expresses this idea stating that:

In developing one's own philosophy on research, it is important to determine how the notion of 'truth' relates to research. What is truth (Even more basically, do we accept that there is such a thing as 'truth'?) What is evidence? Can we ever 'prove' anything? What evidence would compel us to accept the truth of an assertion or proposition? (P. 10)

The questions raised by Nunan in the above quote depict the epistemological orientation of different research paradigms. These paradigms can be broadly categorised as positivism (where human behaviour is essentially viewed as rule-governed and is investigated by the methods of natural science), postpositivism (which argues that reality can never be fully apprehended, only approximated), critical theory and finally naturalistic/interpretive paradigm (where the central concern is the individual and the central goal is to understand the world of subjective experience). The first and the last approaches are the most frequently used in social science research. Generally quantitative research methods characterise the positivism paradigm whereas qualitative research methods are often employed for naturalistic/interpretive paradigm.

Reichardt & Cook (1979) lucidly summarise the main elements of positivism and thus quantitative research method (cited in Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991: 11-12) demonstrating that the quantitative research paradigm, in its purest form, assumes a stable reality and thus seeks causal relationships between different constructs through controlled and objective instruments, with little emphasis on the individual's state of mind. Objectivity is of crucial significance as it aims to verify or falsify hypotheses by collecting reliable and replicable numerical data that is suitable for statistical analysis and that warrants reproducibility and generalisability of the findings in and beyond the context of the investigation. This quantitative paradigm is the most frequently used in Egypt and the experimental statistical designs are thought of as more reliable if compared with the qualitative approach that is hardly used in that context.

On the other hand, qualitative research (i.e. naturalistic/interpretive paradigm), in its purest form, holds that there is no such stable reality but a dynamic and subjective reality. Thus qualitative research aims to broaden the scope of understanding phenomena by employing naturalistic uncontrolled data collection procedures. It aims to explore and describe constructs by collecting rich and in-depth data taking full account

of the individual's subjective state of mind then and there. (see Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Nunan, 1992).

In evaluating the two approaches, a conclusion can be drawn that the strength of one paradigm is the weakness of the other. Whereas a pure quantitative research design can help condense data to see the broad picture, compare different groups of students and make generalisations, a qualitative research design can enhance data to see key aspects of cases more clearly by providing in-depth explanation of different factors in a particular context. In this sense, the two paradigms should be thought of as neither mutually exclusive (i.e. one need not totally commit to one or the other) nor interchangeable (i.e. one cannot merge methodologies with no concern for underlying assumptions). Rather, they should be looked at as interactive continuum based on the philosophy of science (Newman and Benz, 1998: xi). This position of making use of the two approaches is maintained and recommended by the advocates of postpositivism who argue for the need for relying on multiple methods, known as triangulation, as a way to capturing as much of reality as possible.

In the light of the above discussion and eminent from the nature of the current study and the context where it is carried out, the researcher became more inclined to identify himself with the postpositivism paradigm, which would best serve his purpose. As this paradigm relies on the use of multiple methods to capture a more comprehensive picture of reality, and as the researcher was interested in gaining insights into students' problems and perceptions (in the baseline study) as well as into the effects of different treatments and the way students would perceive the treatment they received (in the main study), it was pervasive to manipulate both quantitative and qualitative methods. In this sense, the current study used a complementary method of data collection, which is known as triangulation (for an overview see Grotjahn, 1987; Cohen and Manion, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; 2000). Triangulation refers to looking at a research issue from more than one perspective (quantitative and qualitative) to map out or explain more fully the richness and complexity of human behaviour (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000: 112).

Denzin (1970 cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000: 113) has identified six types of triangulation; 1) time triangulation, 2) space triangulation, 3) combined levels of triangulation, 4) theoretical triangulation, 5) investigator triangulation, and 6) methodological triangulation. Methodological triangulation (using the same method on different occasions or different methods on the same object of study), according to Cohen and Manion, is the most frequently used type and the one that possibly has the most to offer. Many methods actually mean greater validity and reliability (Patton, 1990). Denzin and Lincoln (1994: 2) elegantly spell this out stating: “the combination of multiple methods in a single study is best understood as a strategy that adds rigour, breadth and depth to any investigation”.

With this in mind, the current study used a number of data elicitation techniques (see 5.3.4) and did not limit itself to questionnaires and tests, though they are the most preferred and frequently used approaches in most ELT research in Egypt. In this sense, the study is considered a semi-departure from the positivistic tradition dominating ELT research in Egypt. In other words, a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques was utilised in order to maintain a balance between quantitative data that would help generalise the findings to wider contexts and qualitative in-depth data (Levin, 1990). In this connection, the study used qualitative techniques which are very rich in terms of giving explanations to clarify quantitatively obtained results. Meanwhile, it quantified qualitative findings to substantiate the qualitative description. Furthermore, using both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques was to ensure that the data generated are not simply artifacts of one specific method of data collection, and to eliminate the effect of “method boundedness” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000: 112) and consequently increase the trustworthiness of data collected (Glesne and Peshkin, 1993).

5.3.2 Research techniques

Some of the most important strategy assessment techniques include observation, written questionnaires, interviews, verbal reports, and computer tracking (see Oxford, 1990; O’Malley & Chamot, 1990; Cohen, 1987, 1998; Cohen & Scott, 1996). The following section is devoted to considering the potential and limitations of the techniques used in this study, namely, the questionnaire and the retrospective interviews.

5.3.2.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are probably the most commonly used method in general educational research (Cohen and Manion, 1994; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000; Oppenheim, 1992) as well as in language learning research (Nunan, 1992). According to Nunan (1992: 143) questionnaires enable the researcher to collect data in field settings, and the data themselves are more amenable to quantification than discourse data such as free-form field notes. Questionnaires yield responses, which are uniformly organized and lend themselves easily to statistical analysis. Therefore, questionnaires have been utilised in investigating a wide range of topics in SLA research; which includes learning strategies (see Bailystock, 1981; Oxford, 1990; Politzer, 1983; Reiss, 1981; Willing, 1988; Ehrman & Oxford, 1988, 1990).

Oxford & Burry-Stock (1995: 2) highlight that the use of questionnaires in investigating learning strategies have a number of advantages. First, questionnaires describe the strategy use of large numbers of learners so they enable researchers to generate and test hypotheses. Second, they can examine the learners' strategy use in various language tasks. Third, they can be administered within a short period of time, and finally studies using questionnaires can be replicated easily (see also Bell, 1987; Cohen, 1998).

However, the construction of a valid and reliable questionnaire that provides the needed information is a highly specialised and time-consuming business and it is not without its limitations. One of these limitations is that questionnaires cannot capture the varieties of strategies that were not covered in the questionnaire nor can they get at issues such as the frequency of strategy use or the situations where strategies are used. Another limitation is the fact that they cannot examine how learners actually behave (see Cohen, 1990; McDonough, 1995). Much of the whole data constitute the learner's generalised statements about themselves and their strategy use. Learners may over/under estimate the frequency of use of certain strategies. In addition they may be unaware when they are using a given strategy and how they are using it (Cohen, 1998). Thus, the students' responses to the questionnaire statements might reflect only what students perceive themselves doing rather than what they actually do. A further limitation is the problem of different interpretations of respondents; how each respondent interprets the statement.

Finally, the social desirability effect is another concern: the fear of producing socially unacceptable answers. In other words, subjects might give responses that reflect what should be done rather than what they actually do to give a good impression about their abilities or to please the researcher. The effect of such limitations might be minimized if the questionnaires are carefully designed, deployed clear instructions and wording, included examples and were piloted in addition. Furthermore, they should be triangulated with other data collection methods. It is worth mentioning here, that all these aspects were attended to in designing and administering the questionnaire in the current study.

5.3.2.2 Verbal reports

Though verbal reports are not without problems and have come under criticism as a research tool (see Seliger, 1983), there has been an increasing interest recently in second language research in general (Hosenfeld, 1984; Block, 1986; Cohen et al, 1995; Cohen and Apeh, 1981) and in listening strategy in particular (see Anderson and Vandergrift, 1996; Bacon, 1991, 1992; Buck, 1990; Fujita, 1984; Murphy, 1985; O'Malley et al., 1989; Goh, 1998; Vandergrift, 1992; Young, 1996).

According to Goh (1998: 128-129) this growing interest is due to a number of reasons:

1. The importance of learning strategy research has created a need for procedures, which give access to information not accessible with other data collection techniques and which in addition can obtain data about what learners know and do. More importantly, there are strong arguments supporting the role of consciousness in language learning, which implies that learners can be aware of their learning processes.
2. The second reason has to do with the steps taken to improve research designs and write-ups to avoid the pitfalls associated with verbal reports (Matsumoto, 1993; Cohen, 1996). Most of the criticisms levelled on using verbal reports were responses to design weaknesses in some early studies on learners' introspection.

In fact verbal reports provide invaluable information compared with other methods of strategy assessment. Cohen, in a series of articles (1983, 1987a, 1987b, 1990a, 1998)

highlights the idea that verbal reports are more useful than any other means of strategy assessment as they provide numerous insights and useful in-depth information about cognitive processes used before, during and after performing a task, processes that are inaccessible by any of other means. According to Cohen and Scott, (1996: 95) verbal reports are “perhaps the most viable means of obtaining empirical evidence as to strategy use than any other means”. Anderson and Vandergrift (1996: 18) concur with the same idea stating that verbal reports provide a “window into the often hidden processes that language learners use to accomplish their purposes in the second language”.

The current study used the framework suggested by Ericsson and Simon (1980, 1984). This framework is based on the information processing theory, which only allows the reporting of information that is processed in a serial, controlled fashion. Ericsson and Simon. According to Ericsson and Simon (1980: 25) two main assumptions are necessary for verbalisation:

1. Information recently acquired (attended to or heeded) by the central processor is kept in short-term memory and is directly accessible for further processing (e.g. for producing verbal reports),
2. Information in long-term memory must first be retrieved (transferred to short-term memory) before it can be reported.

In this framework, two types of verbalization are proposed, namely the *concurrent verbalization* in which subjects report on their mental processes at the same time the information is being attended to, and the *retrospective verbalization*, in which subjects report on what they have done at an earlier point in time (e.g. while they were performing the task).

Cohen (1983, 1987a, 1987c, 1998) proposes three basic categories of verbal report data, *self-report*, *self-observation* and *self-revelation*. Self-report refers to learners’ description of what they do. It is characterised by generalised statements or labels they apply to themselves “e.g. I tend to be ...”. Such statements or descriptions are usually based on the beliefs or concepts the learners have about the way in which they learn language and are not often based on any specific event. Self-observation (which corresponds to Ericsson & Simon’s retrospective verbalization) refers to inspection of

specific, not generalised, language behaviour either introspectively (while the information is still in the short-term memory, within say twenty seconds of the mental event) or retrospectively (probing for information soon after the task is completed). Cohen (1995, 1998) points out that the bulk of forgetting occurs right after the mental event. Therefore the data from the immediate retrospection may be somewhat more complete than the data from delayed retrospection.

The third category, self-revelation (which corresponds to Ericsson & Simon's concurrent verbalization), is used to refer to learners' report that consist of "think-aloud", stream of consciousness disclosure of thought process while the information is being attended to. The data here are basically unedited or analysed, in contrast to the self-observation data, which might be at least partially analysed or subject to some kind of reflection.

Although not without its problems, the think-aloud procedure has many advantages. One of its advantages is that the mental processing in short-term memory, which is lost in retrospection, can be described and reported (Ericsson and Simon, 1980). This is beside the fact that the data are basically unedited, analysed, or reflected upon. However, like all the other data collection methods, think-aloud has its own limitations. One of the limitations is the effect of the instructions given by the researcher (Ericsson and Simon, 1987). Another limitation is that the data obtained has a low degree of structure, and needs to be first transcribed, coded and analysed by the investigator. This makes it time and effort consuming. In addition, students may only report a limited range of strategies, which they are consciously aware of at the moment of any particular task. Finally, the process of interrupting students to report on their thoughts may change the nature of the thinking and give rise to strategic processing which otherwise might not occur (O'Malley et al, 1989).

To enhance verbal report use, three steps extracted from different sources in literature were recommended (Ericsson & Simon, 1984; Cohen, 1984, 1987a, 1987b, 1998; Wenden, 1986; Vandergrift, 1992, 1996; Yong, 1996). These are: a) time, b) training, and c) language of verbalization. The following section will report on each of these three factors.

5.3.2.2.1 Time gap between the task completion and verbalization

Time is a crucial factor in the provision of accurate and useful protocols as time determines from which type of memory the information is to be drawn. It has been proposed that the verbalization needs to be as close to the task as possible or even while carrying out the task to obtain accurate information. Having the learners report on their thought while carrying out the task or as close to the completion as possible would avoid putting learners in a situation where they have to rely on their long-term memory of what they are involved in during the task.

5.3.2.2.2 Training

To help learners produce useful and accurate protocols, it has also been recommended that learners need to be trained in thinking aloud before going through the process of verbalisation (Cohen & Aphek, 1981; Ericsson & Simon, 1984; Faerch & Kasper, 1987). It is also recommended that the researcher gives some kind of demonstration of his thought processes while carrying out a task. Such a demonstration should offer learners the opportunity to practise to ensure that every learner understands what is to be reported in the protocols.

5.3.2.2.3 Choice of language of verbalization

One of the concerns about using think-aloud protocols is the learners' verbal ability, which can dramatically vary even in one's native language. Cohen (1994, 1998) considers verbal ability as a serious limitation of using verbal reports especially with L2 learners. In his own words, "... this is an actual problem if people are asked to report on information in their L2" (1994: 681). This means giving the learners the choice between his L1 or the target language might help overcome such concern.

5.3.4 Subjects

The subjects of the baseline study comprised of 48 second year students from the Faculty of Education, Al Azhar University in Egypt, preparing to become teachers of EFL. All 48 students were native speakers of Arabic. These students were selected to be the subjects of the baseline study because they were to be the target group of the main study. They were classified into a high ability group and a low ability group. The basis for their classification was their overall grades in the first year besides their scores in the

listening test. The current study tried to use non-circular criteria to avoid the problems descriptive studies in the literature fell into (see 3.3.1). Finally, ten of these students were drawn to complete the immediate retrospective interviews.

5.3.5 Instruments

A wide range of data collection methods was used in the baseline study in an attempt to achieve a comprehensive view of students' perceptions about listening, their problems and their existing repertoire of strategies. The baseline study comprised four main instruments: a) students' questionnaire, b) a listening comprehension test, c) a self-assessment measure, and d) retrospective interviews.

5.3.5.1 Students' questionnaire

The present study employed questionnaires as one of the main instruments of data elicitation. The students' questionnaire, which was administered in Arabic, (Appendix 5a) aimed to tap student teachers' perceptions and conceptualisation about listening to English. It also aimed to ascertain the problems student teachers encounter from their point of views while listening as well as the strategies they use to overcome such problems. The development of the questionnaire was guided by three criteria: First, a review of the related literature in listening and the processes involved, what effective listening entails as well as what successful listeners do (Ur, 1984; Anderson and Lynch, 1988; Brown, 1990; Rost, 1990, 1994; Rubin, 1994; Rubin and Mendelsohn, 1995; Chamot, 1995; White, 1998); second, a review of similar instruments designed for similar purposes (Carrell, 1989; Vogley, 1994); and third, the workability of the instrument with the subjects.

The questionnaire consisted of four main parts with particular foci: a) effectiveness 1 and 2, b) confidence while listening, c) repair strategies and d) what makes listening difficult. The effectiveness section included a total of 14 statements, which were further divided into two parts: a) what do good listeners do to listen effectively and b) what strategies do students use to listen effectively? These two parts, together with the retrospective interviews would give the answer to research questions 1 and 2 (see 5.2). The section of confidence while listening included five statements that attempted to uncover the degree of confidence the students felt while listening in English. This part,

together with the self-assessment measure (5.3.5.3), was sought to give the answer to the third research question. The third part of the questionnaire, repair strategies, included six statements that addressed what students did when they do not understand something; when comprehension failed. The data obtained from this area would answer the fourth of the research questions. The final part included 13 statements related to aspects and features of listening, which could make the listening task difficult. This final part along with the results of the retrospective interviews (see 5.3.5.4) were expected to give answers to the fifth research question. The questionnaire was based on a 5-point Likert scale; according to Bell (1993: 139) the most straightforward scale is probably the one that asks respondents to indicate strength of agreement or disagreement with a given statement or a series of statements.

5.3.5.2 Listening comprehension test

To measure the student teachers' listening ability in English in the main study, a listening test was developed in two different formats (the Testing of English for Educational Purposes format, TEEP) and the multiple-choice question format) and piloted in the baseline study to see its suitability for the subjects of the main study. An extract of four minutes from a lecture delivered by a native speaker who had an RP accent was taken from the BASE (British Academic Spoken English) corpus at Warwick University. The rate of delivery was 129.2 wpm, which is very close to the moderately slow range (130-160 wpm). The topic of the lecture was the *European Union and EMU*. The researcher used the introduction of the lecture, in which the speaker was describing the organisation of the lecture. The test consisted of 28 items: four multiple-choice questions with four choices, three multiple-choice questions with three choice, six true/false or not mentioned, five short-answer questions and ten gap-filling questions. The maximum possible score was 28.

5.3.5.3 The self-assessment measure

The self-assessment measure (Appendix 5b) aimed at tapping the students' self-evaluation of their listening ability. It consisted of nine statements each of which gives an indication of nine levels of listening comprehension, starting from the lowest level that is understanding nothing (zero comprehension) up to the highest one at which a listener would be able to understand implicit and explicit meanings conveyed by the

text. Students were asked to tick the statement that best expressed their ability in listening. The nine levels were as follows:

1. Zero comprehension (understand nothing).
2. Catching individual words.
3. Recognising few sentences.
4. Grasping few ideas.
5. Poor comprehension.
6. Getting the gist of the text.
7. Getting gist and the text details as well.
8. Understanding a whole text in English with no difficulty.
9. Understanding the explicit and implicit meaning conveyed by text.

To determine the level of confidence students enjoyed while listening in English, the measure was administered twice. Students responded to the statements before and after doing the listening test. This means that students would give their self-evaluation to their listening ability before and after experiencing a listening task. Students' confidence would be assessed in the light of the consistency in responses between before and after the listening test administration. For example, if a student stated before listening to the test that he was able to get the gist of an aural text and then confirmed the response after listening, this would mean that this student enjoyed a degree of confidence about his listening ability. If, however, in the post administration, this student said, "No, I could not do this, I can only recognise a few sentences", this might mean that he was uncertain about what he could do while listening and therefore he lacked the confidence in listening. Another reason for a discrepancy between the pre and post task answers might be that students have differing levels of confidence for different types of text. Alternatively, they may have misplaced sense of confidence.

5.3.5.4 Retrospective interviews

In addition to the above three instruments and having triangulation as an aim, the baseline study made use of another instrument: retrospective interviews, which was used after the listening test, with the aim of finding more about the students' listening problems as well as their strategy use.

The task material for the retrospective interviews was decided to be the same text used in the listening test with pauses inserted at different intervals. This was because the researcher was considering using the test in the main study and wanted to go on with investigating the reason for the students' low scores on the test. Eight pauses were inserted at certain points in the text in the light of the syntactic and prepositional content of the text. Each pause was made at the end of a clause that forms a whole idea to avoid cutting up the meaning and depriving the listener from listening to the whole message. Furthermore, the three steps recommended in the literature to ensure that verbal reports would yield accurate and useful information were applied (see 5.3.2.2). The current study, for example, asked students to report on their thought processes immediately after the sections with a pause. In addition, students were pre-trained on how to report on their thought processes. Finally, students were given the choice to decide on the language they will use in their verbalisation, L1 or L2. To sum up, the following table shows the instruments used in the current study, their administration dates as well as the information collected by each instrument.

Table 5-1: Summary of instruments used in the baseline study and the data collected

Instrument	Administration date	Information collected
Students' questionnaire	22 Jan. 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' perceptions and conceptualisation about listening • The problems students faced while listening in English • The strategies students used while listening in English, if any, and their level of confidence while listening
Self-assessment measure Pre-test Post-test	22 Jan. 2000 23 Jan. 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students' level of confidence while listening
Listening test	22 Jan. 2000	The students listening ability in English
Retrospective interviews	23 Jan. 2000 24 Jan.2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies students used to make sense of the spoken message • Students' problems in listening to spoken messages.

5.3.6 Procedures

5.3.6.1 *Students' questionnaire*

5.3.6.1.1 Piloting

Before the main administrations of the students' questionnaire, a pilot administration was conducted to determine the suitability of the statements and to detect any confusing wording. The questionnaire was translated into the students' native language (i.e. Arabic) and administered to five Egyptian students studying in the UK for their first degrees as well as MA's and PhD's. In the piloting, students pointed out some words, which were confusing, the translation of item 41 was considered by the five students to be vague and therefore recommended to be reworded. On the basis of feedback, the wording of the statement was modified.

5.3.6.1.2 Main data collection

The questionnaire was administered twice. The first administration was completed by a sample totalling 198 students of the four years at Faculty of Education, Al Azhar University in Egypt during the first term of the academic year 1999-2000. It was administered for the second time to 48 of the second year students of English department at Faculty of Education, Al Azhar University in Egypt during the second term of the academic year (1999-2000). It must be borne in mind here that the results of the two administrations yielded almost the same finding with slight differences. However due to the limitations of words, the baseline study reports only on the second administration as these students were to be the main sample of the final experimentation.

5.3.6.1.3 Analysis

The questionnaire results were analysed by grouping items by areas of assessment. First, the subjects' responses to each statement (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree) were tallied. Then each item was considered within the group of items that addressed a specific area. Once tallied, the responses were classified as positive (i.e. strongly agree/agree), neutral or negative (i.e. strongly disagree/disagree) responses. The percentage of students' responses to each statement was calculated. Then these were grouped into three response categories: strong responses (more than 65%), moderate responses (35-65%), and weak responses (less than 35%).

5.3.6.2 Listening comprehension test

5.3.6.2.1 Piloting the test

The test was administered to a sample of 48 students of the second year, English department, at Faculty of Education, Al Azhar University to determine the timing needed to answer it as well as its suitability to the sample through their reactions and answers. Also, the pilot aimed to compute the test reliability as well as item analysis to determine the suitability of the test for the main study.

5.3.6.2.2 Analysis

The test was scored and item analysis was computed using ITEMAN. The item analysis revealed problems with difficulty index and the ability to discriminate between more able test takers and less able ones. Of the total 28 questions, only five items were considered good items that have high discrimination ability, five others were considered moderate while the other eighteen questions showed poor discrimination ability. In this sense, the test was deemed unsuitable for the main study. Therefore, the findings of the listening test seemed not to be worth presenting or discussion and therefore, dropped from the findings section.

5.3.6.3 Self assessment measure

Descriptive statistics (percentages) of the 48 students who responded to the statements of the self-assessment measure in the two administrations, before and after the test, were computed and graphically represented using the SPSS.

5.3.6.4 Retrospective interviews

5.3.6.4.1 Training

Data collection interviews were conducted individually and were audio-recorded for later coding and analysis. Students were pre-trained on verbalising their thought processes. The procedure used entailed giving an idea as well as some examples of thinking aloud from everyday experience. They listened to the researcher while reporting his thought processes first during solving a mathematic problem and then doing a listening task. Subjects' attention was also drawn to the fact that thinking aloud

referred to the verbalisation of whatever came to their minds while listening. In the training session, after the students had listened to the researcher modelling the process of thought verbalization, they were asked to carry out two simple trials.

Once, students gained familiarity with the process of verbalising their thoughts, the actual data collection started. In the actual data collection interviews, students were asked to listen to the same taped passage they listened to in the listening test with the inserted pauses. At the pauses, the researcher stopped the tape and the students started to tell as much as they could about their thought processes while listening: what they understood, how they made sense of the message they heard, if they had any problems comprehending this part, what problems, If any how they dealt with such problems, what they were thinking about while listening, what they knew about the topic before listening. Students were given the choice either to verbalize their thoughts in English or in their native language to avoid the varying verbal ability concerns raised in the literature (see 5.3.3.2.3). All of them selected to report in Arabic, yet they sometimes referred to English when verbalising. Probing questions were used when a student seemed uncertain how to proceed.

5.3.6.4.2 Transcribing and coding

The researcher transcribed the audio-recordings of the 10 students' interviews verbatim. Each report consisted of the corresponding excerpts of the listening portion, the questions probed by the researcher when students stopped talking (between brackets), and transcriptions of the students' report. Each verbalisation was transcribed as a separate paragraph. The transcripts were coded for the identification of listening comprehension strategies utilising both schemes suggested by O'Malley & Chamot (1990) and Vandergrift (1992). To code the data, a four- step procedure was followed:

1. reading each transcript carefully several times,
2. highlighting the corresponding verbalisation,
3. categorising the strategy used in the excerpt, and
4. writing the strategy code in the Code Column set in the right margin

The reliability of the coding procedure was checked using inter-coder and intra-coder reliability. Inter-coder reliability is the average agreement between the external coder and the researcher, whereas, the intra-coder reliability refers to the level of agreement

between analyses of the same data by the researcher himself, in two different occasions (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991: 534). The samples used for checking the reliability of coding were three randomly selected transcripts. One of the transcripts was used for training the external coders and the other two were used for the reliability analysis.

Two external coders were invited to check the inter-coder reliability. The first coder (A) was a ten year experienced teacher of English as a foreign language and a head of the English Department in a Language school in Egypt for five years, who was familiar with the literature on learning strategies. The second coder (B) was a student of MA in ELT in one of the UK Universities. A 45-minutes training session was given to each external coder separately. It started with an explanation about the study and how the interviews were conducted. A copy of the O'Malley & Chamot's (1990) taxonomy of learning strategies was given along with one of the three randomly selected transcripts for trial coding. The coders were first asked to read the taxonomy very carefully and to get themselves familiar with the strategies, their categories as well as their definitions. Afterwards, with the help of the researcher they started trial coding. Whenever a disagreement or a problem arose, during the training session, it was sorted out through discussion. Once the external coders became more confident with the procedure, they were left on their own in the actual coding of the two other transcripts.

To calculate the inter-coder reliability and intra-coder co-efficient, the formula provided in both Murphy (1985) and Young (1996) were used (for the formula and procedure see Appendix 5d). The first coding done by the researcher yielded 41 strategy incidences, whereas the second coding yielded 46, 39 of which were identified in the first coding. Applying the formula of intra-coder reliability was found to be 0.95. With regard to the inter-coder reliability, external coder A coded a total of 42 strategy incidences, 37 of which were identical to the researcher's initial coding. Coder B identified a total of 39 strategy incidences, 35 of which matched the researcher's coding. The overall consistency of coding between the three coders was 0.88. Therefore, the inter-coder and intra-coder reliability were thought to be satisfactory.

5.3.6.4.2 Analysis

The retrospective interviews results were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively to identify the actual strategies students used utilising the scheme suggested by

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) with the caveat of using Vandergrift's (1992) when and where needed. The retrospective interviews were also analysed for the problems students encountered while listening. In the quantitative stage, frequency counts of strategy use were calculated. In the qualitative analysis, representative tapescripts were analysed for the identification of strategy use as well as the causes of difficulty.

5.4 Findings

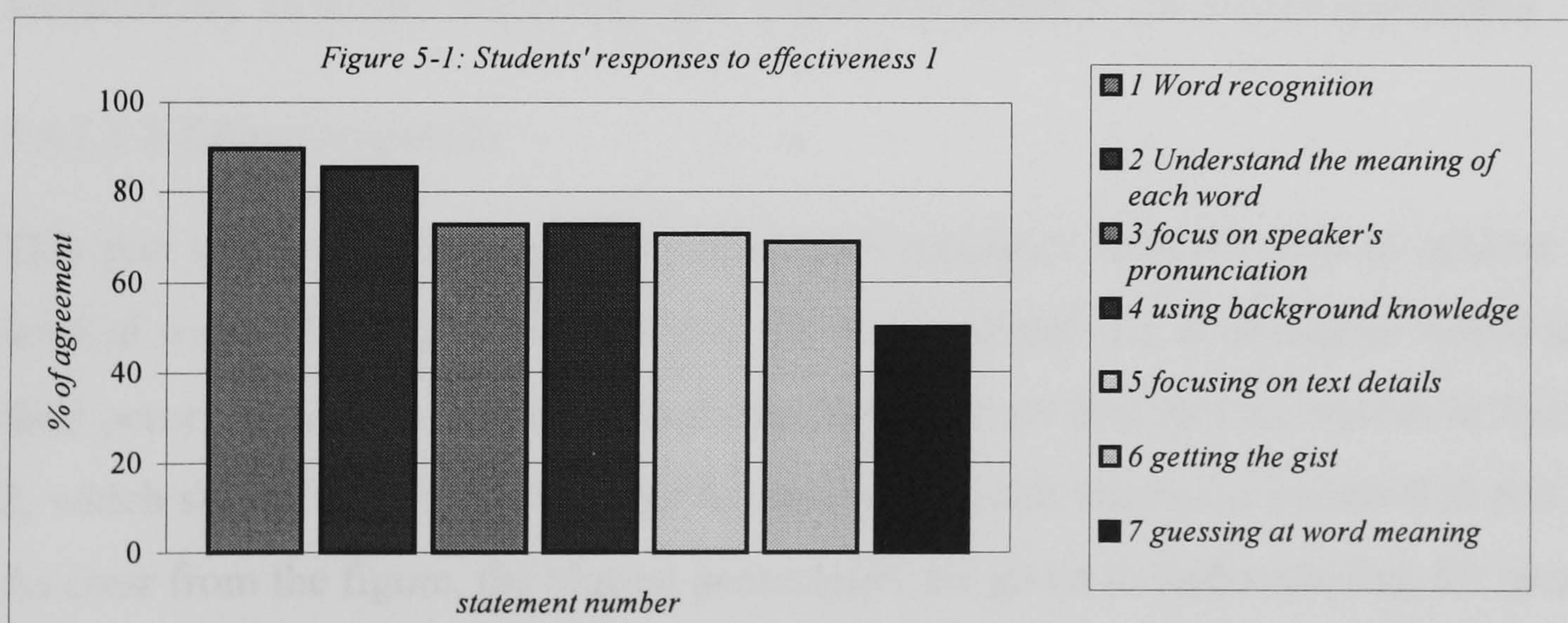
The findings of the baseline study are presented and discussed in the following sections. Section 5.4.1 focuses on the results of the questionnaire, while the focus of 5.4.2 is on the results of the self-assessment measure and finally section (5.4.3) discusses the results obtained from the retrospective interviews.

5.4.1 Findings of the students' questionnaire

5.4.1.1 Effectiveness

5.4.1.1.1 Effectiveness (1)

The objective of this part of the questionnaire was to explore the students' perceptions and conceptualisations regarding what effective listening entails. As shown in figure 5-1 below, students gave the highest percentages to word recognition (89.6 %), word meaning (85.4 %), and text details (70 %), whereas the lowest percentages are given to guessing at word meaning (50 %) and getting the gist (68 %).



This means that the students perceived effective listening as a process that would require concentrating mainly on recognising each word and working out its meaning along with focusing on text details.

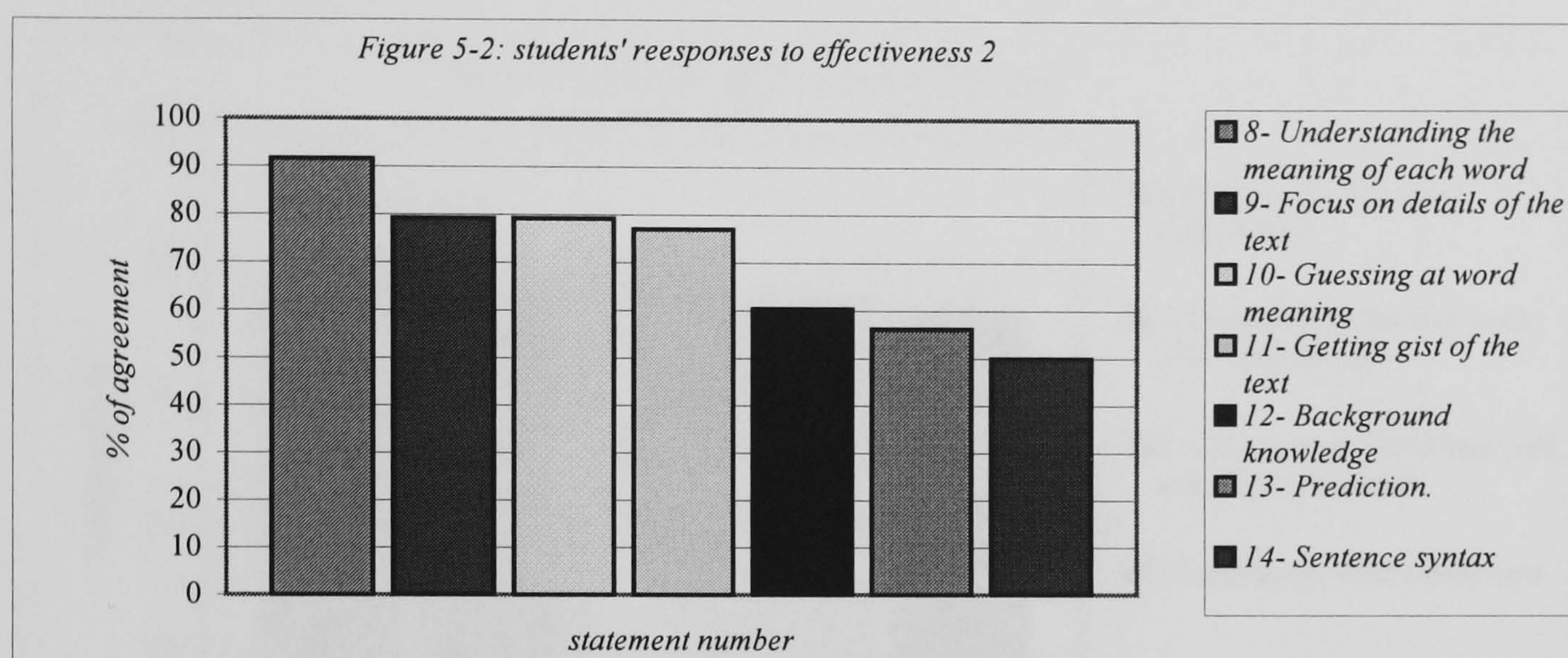
This result might reveal some false conceptions students have about effective listening. They seemed to believe that total comprehension was attainable and their means for it were to listen for every word and to focus on text details. However, total comprehension and listening for every word are irrelevant aims even in the case of L1 listening and hence far-fetched aims in foreign language listening. Moreover, listening for every word and focusing on text details result in memory-overload, making it difficult to maintain concentration.

Another false conception revealed by the data above is that students appeared to believe that the meaning was encoded in the message and by decoding it they would understand the meaning: the fallacy that decoding the message yields its meaning (see 2.3.4). This is especially clear from their tendency to focus on word-by-word listening and text details, giving little weight to using background knowledge. Finally, the findings showed that only 50% would use guessing at word meaning. As a matter of fact, listening in a foreign language is mainly a guessing game because we are dealing with a message of a highly fleeting nature that comes and is gone immediately. In processing this message, the listeners are at the mercy of speaker in terms of the delivery rate and the word use, which again requires a listener to be good at guessing. This finding again might depict the deeply rooted belief that to understand one has to listen to every word. These findings might imply that the main study should consider revisiting and raising students' awareness about what effective listening entails by exposing them to what the literature say about this construct, what it involves and how we should approach it.

5.4.1.1.2 Effectiveness (2)

This part of the questionnaire addressed what strategies students used to achieve high level of comprehension to find out how far their reported use of strategies would match their perceptions about effective listening. Results from this part are shown in figure 5-2, which shows the responses given by students to each statement included in this part. As clear from the figure, the highest percentages are given to understanding the meaning of each word (91.7%), focusing on text details (79.2%), guessing at word meaning (79.2%) and getting the gist of the text (77.1%). On the other hand, only 60.4 of the students would use their background knowledge while listening, and 56.2% would try prediction.

These results show that students in both areas (effectiveness 1 and 2) agreed that effective listening means to recognise and listen to every word as well as to concentrate on text details. However, the same findings depict a kind of discrepancy between what students' perceive makes effective listening and the strategies they use when they listen. An example of the discrepancy here lies in the percentages given to guessing at meaning in both areas. In effectiveness 1, 50% of the students believed that effective listening does not require guessing.

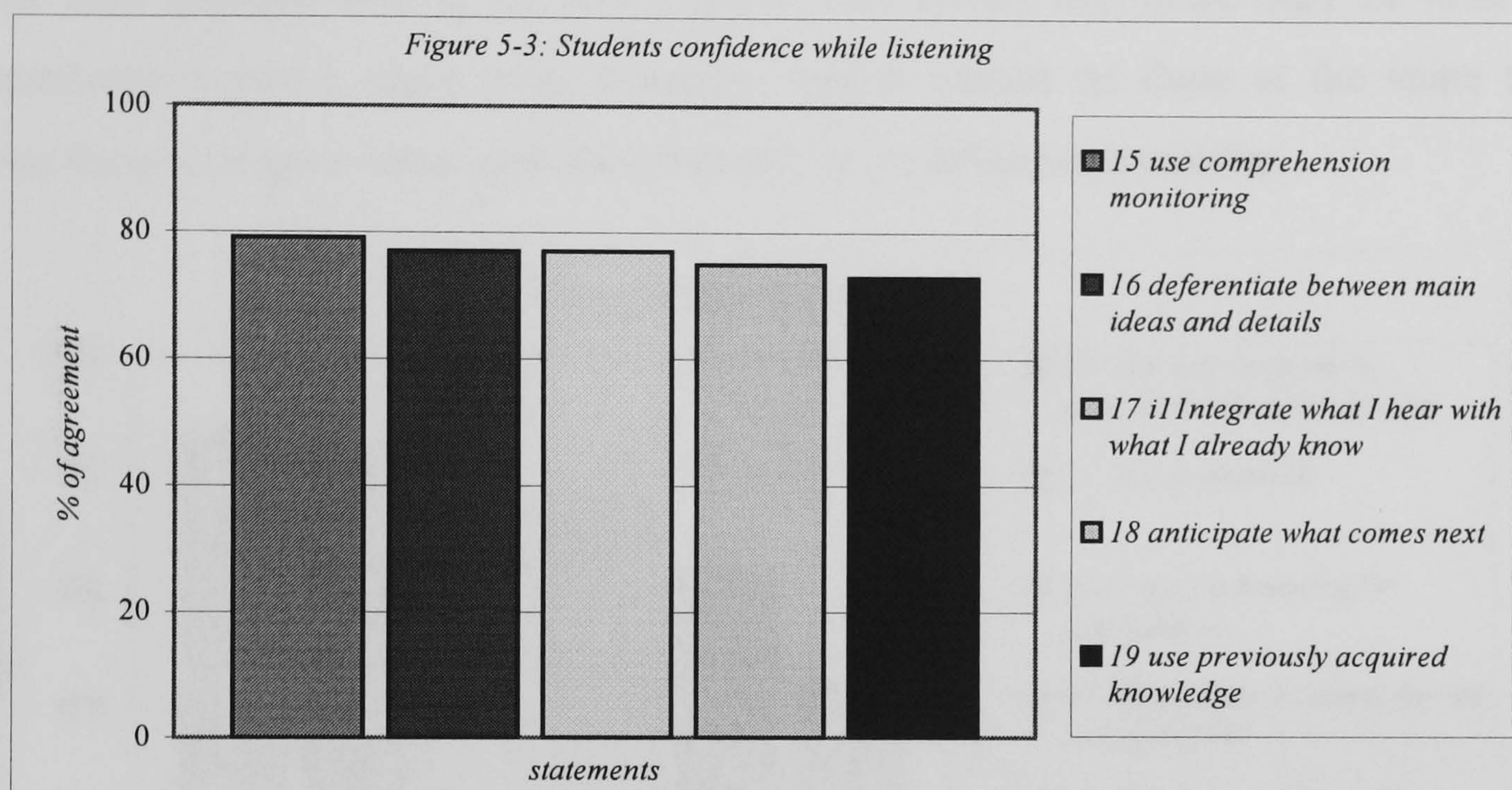


This was not the case in effectiveness 2 where 80% reported that they would use guessing as a strategy. The same pattern of discrepancy could be observed with other strategies such as getting the gist and the use of background knowledge. This discrepancy can be attributed to the fact that students' responses might reflect only what students' perceive themselves doing rather than what they actually do. Also, they might be responding in a way they thought would please the researcher or would yield a fair impression about their abilities (see 5.3.2.1).

5.4.1.2 Confidence

This part of the questionnaire aimed to reveal the degree of confidence students perceived they had while listening to English. Confidence is perhaps a crucial element of effective listening in second or foreign language learning. A confident listener would demonstrate understanding that to listen effectively means to make integration between the aural message and some effective listening strategies (Zimmerman, 1990). The five statements in this part of the questionnaire represented some strategies that might be used by confident listeners. By responding to these statements, students evaluated their own ability to understand spoken English and therefore reflected the degree of confidence they have while listening.

Results are presented in figure 5-3, which shows that responses to the confidence statements are mainly represented by high percentages (the lowest percentage was 72.9 %). The results seem to suggest that most students perceived themselves as confident listeners. For example, 79.2 % of the students reported their confidence in their ability to monitor their comprehension. In other words, they claimed that they were able to know whether comprehension was occurring or not when listening to English.



However, the students' level of confidence wouldn't be defined until the results obtained here were compared with the results obtained from the self-assessment measure (section 5.4.2.), and in the light of this comparison, the third research question (see 5.2) would be answered.

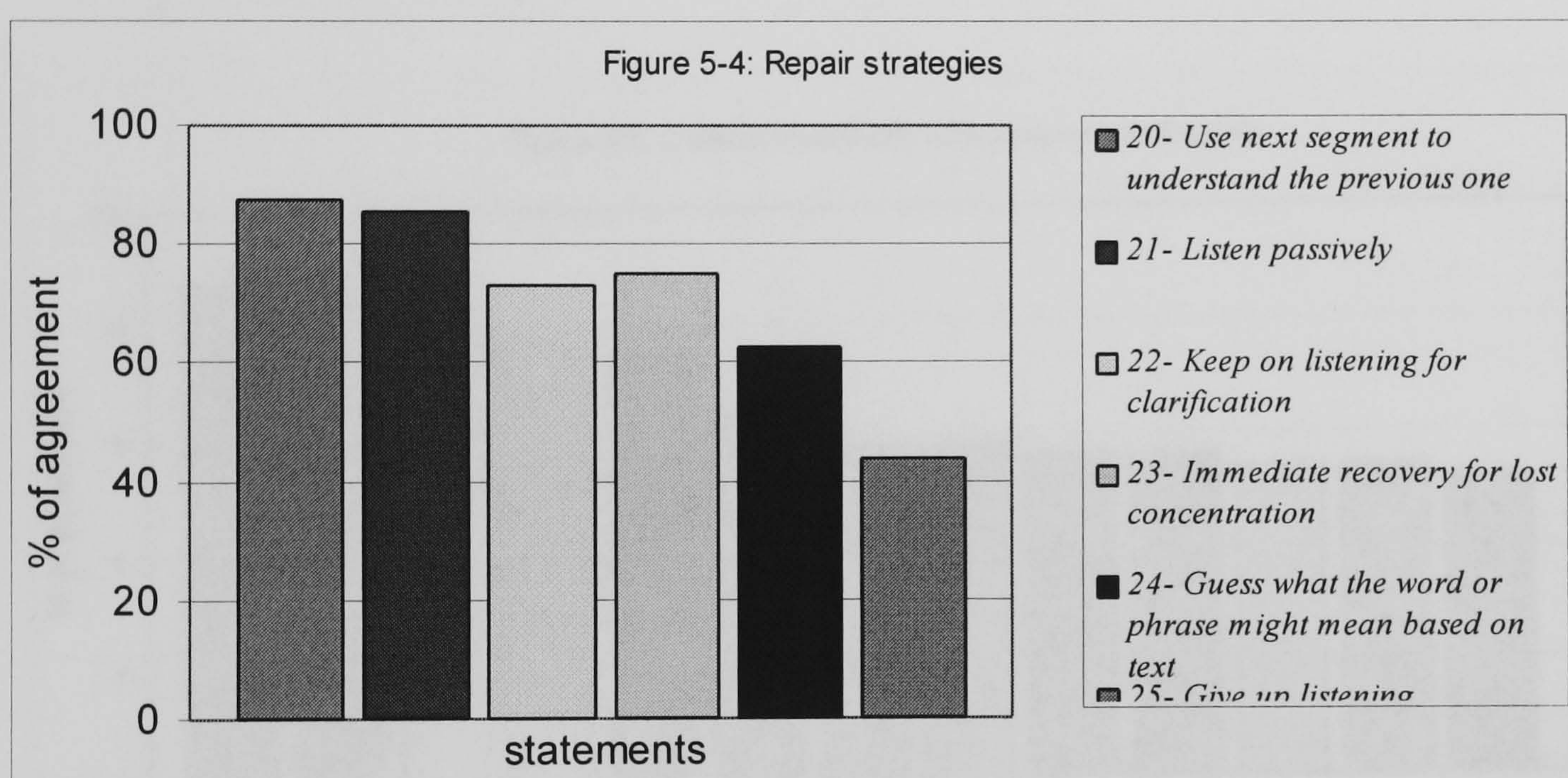
5.4.1.3 Repair strategies

This part of the questionnaire, which included six statements, attempted to find out what students would do when they failed to comprehend something to tap their awareness of repair strategies. The data obtained are represented in figure 5-4.

Students' reported use of repair strategies here might give support to the results from the part of confidence, in which students reported their ability to monitor their own comprehension (see 5.4.1.2). The findings here might add that when students monitored their comprehension and experience a comprehension breakdown; they would use one or another repair strategy to restore their comprehension. The data also show that 75 %

of the students reported they would try to recover their concentration right away if they lost it. The interesting point here was that the students' responses reflected a degree of active listening, which is a main pre-requisite to confidence. However, the data obtained here might be contradictory in terms of the responses given to different strategies.

Nearly half of the students reported that when they failed to understand a segment, they would entirely give up listening, whereas 87.5% of them reported that they would listen to the next segment hoping for clarification. This means that more than 34 % of the respondents reported using both strategies, which cannot be done at the same time unless these strategies were used successively, or on different occasions.

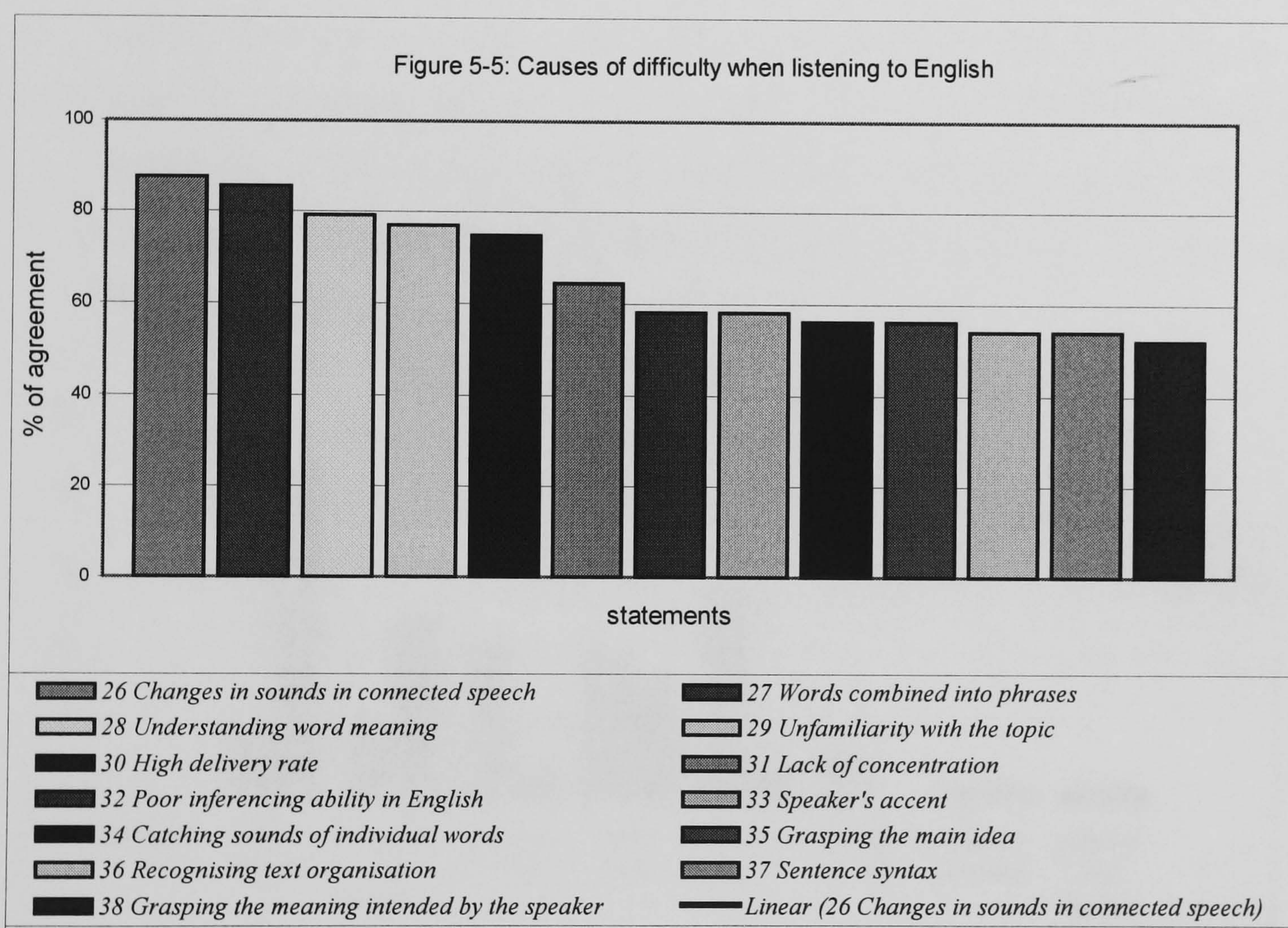


The contradiction is also clear between the high percentages given to the effective strategies (keep on listening actively, immediate recovery of lost concentration) and less effective strategies (listen passively, give up listening entirely). An interpretation for this contradiction might be that students, while responding to each statement, were thinking of different occasions or situations and therefore endorsed the strategies they would use with different contexts. Another interpretation might be that students responded to the statements in a way that would give a good impression about their ability in listening to English, particularly when we put into consideration their lack of exposure to listening tasks (c.f. 5.4.2).

5.4.1.4 Causes of difficulty

The statements here, sought to tap the causes of difficulty under three cores: text-level (five statements), speaker's level (three statements), and listener's level (five statements). Students' responses given to this part are represented in figure 5-5, which shows that the most common problems highlighted by more than 60% of students were:

- Changes in sounds when they occurred in connected speech,
- Words combined into phrases,
- Understanding word meaning (vocabulary),
- Unfamiliarity with the topic, delivery rate, and
- Lack of concentration.



It is clear that these most common problems seem to be related with either features of connected speech or the concentration on text level listening. This must be related to the misconceptions students had and to their lack of exposure to and practice in spoken English.

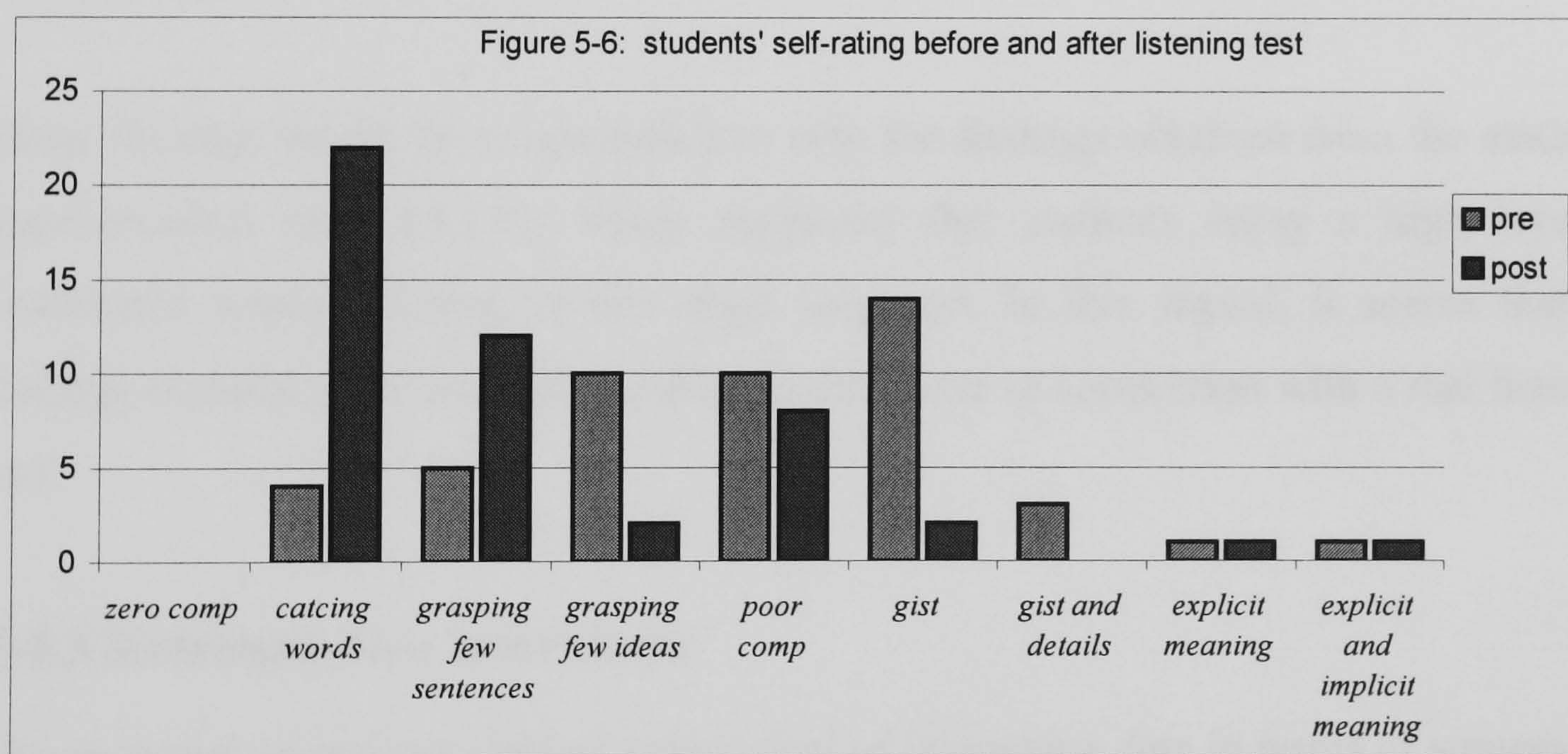
5.4.2 Self-assessment measure

The data collected are represented in figure 5-6, which shows the percentage of students

who responded to the self-assessment measures before and after the listening test.

Figure 5-6 shows that:

- None of the students rated their listening ability to be at the zero comprehension statement, which was not changed from before to after the test administration.
- Similarly, the percentages given to statements 8 and 9, the highest levels included in the measure did not change from before to after the test administration. However, only 2.1% of the students responded positively to these statements.
- As for the other statements, students' ratings dramatically changed from before to after the test administration. This is especially clear at the levels represented by statements 2, 6. Before the test, only 8.3 % of students agreed with the statement at level 2: while listening, they could only grasp few words. However, after the test administration, this percentage jumped up to 45.8%. The opposite happened at level 6: 29.1% of the students, before the test, thought that they were able to recognise the gist of the text, but after doing the test, this percentage fell to only 4.2%.



To sum up, the statements included in the self-assessment measure can be grouped into two categories:

- Statements reflecting poor listeners (1-5).
- Statements reflecting good listeners (6-9).

The following table (5-2) summarises the students who rated themselves as poor or good listeners before and after the listening test in the light of the criteria set above.

Table 5-2: Summary of the results of self-assessment measure

	Before test administration	After test administration
Poor listeners	60.3	91.7
Good listeners	39.7	8.3

The table shows that students' initial ratings of their ability in listening comprehension proved to be imprecise. There seems to be discrepancy between students' pre task rating and post-task rating of their listening ability. This might be due to their lack of exposure to listening to the target language (see 1.2). This inconsistency in students' self-rating might reflect students' lack of confidence while listening in the target language. This lack of confidence made students first rate themselves as good listeners, but after experiencing a real listening task; they are faced with the reality about their true level of comprehension. Another interpretation might lie in the fact that students were rating themselves against different reference points. Generally speaking, they thought their listening ability was satisfactory, but when asked to rate their ability against a particular task (the test), they found out that their listening ability was poorer than they had thought.

These findings might be in contradiction with the findings obtained from the students' questionnaires (see 5.4.1.2), which suggested that students enjoy a high level of confidence while listening to the target language. In this regard, it seems that the findings obtained here are more reliable as they were in connection with a real listening task.

5.4.3 Retrospective interviews

The students' interviews yielded a good deal of interesting data in terms of strategy use and causes of difficulty in listening (for a sample of actual verbal reports see Appendix 5 C). Frequency counts as well as means were calculated to each of the high ability group (henceforth HA) and low ability group (henceforth LA). What follows is a discussion of the results obtained in terms of: a) listening strategy use and b) problems in listening.

5.4.3.1 Listening strategy use

Table 5-3 below presents the overall number and frequency of metacognitive and cognitive strategies reported as used by HA and LA listeners. It revealed the distinction between the two groups in terms of their use of listening strategies.

Table 5-3: Strategies used by high and low ability students

Strategy type	High ability group		Low ability group	
	Frequency	Number	Frequency	Number
Metacognitive strategy	34	4	18	2
Cognitive strategy	50	11	35	8

As it is clear from the table, the HA group seemed to use more strategies more frequently than the LA group. For example, HA students reported the use of four metacognitive strategies 34 times, while LA students reported two metacognitive strategies only 18 times.

5.4.3.1.1 Metacognitive strategies

Table 5-4 below shows the name and frequency of each metacognitive strategy used by HA and LA students. Both (HA and LA) groups used planning strategies. Planning strategies include strategies such as ‘advance organizers’, ‘directed attention’, ‘selective attention’, and ‘self-management’. Different forms of planning strategies were used by listeners in both HA and LA groups. For example, SH5 in his verbalization made use of ‘directed attention’: “I tried to concentrate hard on all that he said”. SL2 also used ‘directed attention’ when he reported: “I decided to listen closely to the tape and disregard all the noise coming from outside as if it is not there”.

Table 5-4: Frequency of metacognitive strategy use by high and low ability students

Strategy	H.A. students	L.A. students
	Frequency	Frequency
Planning	10	6
Monitoring comprehension	20	0
Comprehension evaluation	4	8

However, what distinguishes HA from the LA students is the use of a certain planning strategy (e.g. selective attention). Several HA students mentioned this strategy five times. One example for selective attention (listening to discourse markers) is reported by SH2 who said

“What I did now is ... what I always ... do ... (er) ... is to listen ... closely ... to the first sentence where the speaker usually states his main topic.... then I’ll try to pick up words I’m familiar with... and I got the word ‘particularly’ which gave me a clue to the topic of the talk”

In addition to ‘selective attention’, ‘Comprehension monitoring’ is another strategy that distinguished HA from LA students. Only HA students used this strategy (F=20). Comprehension monitoring, according to Vandergrift (1992: 213), is a ‘superordinate strategy’ that helps listeners decide on what is salient to attend to and what is redundant to ignore by maintaining awareness of the task demands and information content. The following is an example of this strategy when SH4 monitored his comprehension and decided that the word was not of any relevance:

“I couldn’t understand at the beginning what ‘ee-em-you-was, then I felt it wasn’t important. Some of them seem to be nonsense words; words I might have got wrong”.

‘Evaluating comprehension’ was the last metacognitive strategy mentioned by listeners in the retrospective interviews. Like planning, this strategy was used by both the HA and LA groups, but interestingly, the LA group reported using it twice as often as the HA. However, when we look at the reports, it is clear that the use of this strategy by the LA students did not go beyond stating their inability to understand. The following extract might reflect the nature of the use of this strategy in case of the LA group. SL1 reported:

“I understood nothing...I began to feel I knew nothing about English...what did he say about America and the EU...I can’t remember... I don’t know”.

To sum up, unlike the HA listeners, the LA listeners reported using only two types of metacognitive strategies, namely, planning, and evaluating comprehension. If we look at these two metacognitive strategies in the students’ verbalizations, we can see that one of them is mainly concerned with the pre-listening stage, students of the LA group seem to try having a plan before listening. But, they always planned to listen to every word. So, once they started listening to every word, they got lost and could not manage going on with the task. Therefore, their evaluation of comprehension often referred to their inability to understand anything.

5.4.3.1.2 Cognitive strategies

Table 5-5 shows the name and frequency of each cognitive strategy mentioned by HA and LA students. This table shows that both groups used the same bottom-up strategies (e.g. listening to every word and translation). However, a key difference between the two groups is the absence of top-down strategies except for ‘prediction’ (F=3) in the verbalisation of the LA group students. The HA listeners, for instance, used four top-down strategies with generally high frequencies: ‘prediction’, ‘inferencing’, ‘elaboration’ and ‘summarization’. These four strategies all necessitate the use of learners’ background knowledge. ‘Prediction’, for example, refers to using information within the text or context to predict the next part of a text such as a word, a phrase or an idea. The HA listeners used this strategy ten times (F= 10), while the LA group used it only three times (F=3). For example, SH3 used the information already mentioned in the text and predicted that the speaker would deal with the two other questions in the next section. He said:

“The problem is that I could not follow that man as he speaks too fast; he has already mentioned the first question, though I could not grasp it clearly. Anyway, in the next section I might listen to the other two questions”.

Table 5-5: Frequency of cognitive strategy reported use by HA and LA groups

Strategy type	Frequency	
	High	Low
1. Top-down strategies		
Prediction	10	3
Inferencing	7	0
Elaboration	7	0
Summarisation	2	0
2. Bottom-up strategies		
Listening for sounds	2	6
Repetition	2	5
Key words	4	1
Listening to every word	8	10
Translation	2	3
Patterns	3	4
Grammatical relations	3	3

‘Inference making’ is another top-down strategy, used by only HA listeners (F=7). An example of this strategy reported by SH3 who said: *“I couldn’t get the first question, but got words like creation... a year 1958, so I guessed it might be about when the EU was created”.*

‘Elaboration’ is a further top-down strategy that was used only by HA (F=7) students. A

good example of elaboration is shown when SH3 included information that was not in the text he was listening to: “*He is giving reasons for Rob (his boss I think) for suggesting the topic of the talk*”. Although the text did not mention who Rob is, SH3 had included ‘his boss I think’ which is considered as elaboration based on his world knowledge. In another example, a student started thinking about a programme he watched in the TV some time before.

The last top-down strategy used by only the HA listeners was ‘summarisation’ (F =2). A good example of summarisation is when SH5 reported: “*...He is explaining the organization of his talk in three main question*”. Finally as shown in table 5-5 both HA and LA groups reported using bottom-up cognitive strategies, and the LA students used them more frequently. This might suggest that the LA students tend to rely more on the local level of understanding. In summary, each of the LA and the HA groups showed that they have their distinctive repertoire of strategies. However, the frequency of strategies reported by the HA group students was higher in both the cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

5.4.3.2 Problems in listening

The retrospective interviews yielded some insights about some of the factors that could stand as barriers in the way of students’ comprehension. These factors seem to be in agreement with the ones identified through the questionnaire (see 5.4.1.4.). The causes of difficulty that occurred in the verbalisation of both the HA and the LA students are summarised in table 5-6 below.

Table 5-6: Listening problems in the students’ retrospective reports

Difficulty	Example	Note
1 Catching sounds of individual words	“I was unable to relate the sounds heard to known words”.	SL2
2- Combining words into phrases	“I was only able to identify some words, but unable to piece them together into a logical relation”.	SL4
3 Understanding word meaning	...many words I could catch, but don’t understand. ...more long-term...old road wide...in...ta...tis. I don’t know what are these!	SH3
4 Changes in sounds occurring in connected speech	“Words tend to blend and run into others that I was not able to identify any known/unknown word from the stream of speech”.	SH5

5 Speech rate	“The man speaks too fast that he gets ahead of me while I am still on another word”.	SL2
6 Limited short-term memory	...few very few words I could catch and I forgot them when he stopped. This does not help I didn't understand anything	SL1
7 Need for repetition	If he spoke slower or I think I need to listen more than... two or three times to get every word and understand what he says.	SL1

5.5 Summary and implications for the main study

Collecting information on strategies in a variety of ways and then examining the data for similarities heightened the reliability of findings. The baseline study used four instruments: students' questionnaires, listening test, self-assessment measure and retrospective interviews. The difference between questionnaires and retrospective interviews is that, when completing the questionnaire, listeners were not actually doing any task at the same time (they thought about what they would do on a specific situation), whereas listeners in the retrospective interviews reported what they did immediately after the task. The questionnaire served as a source of more distanced, generalised self-observation, while the retrospective interviews, on the other hand, served as a stream of spontaneously provided description.

The data obtained from the retrospective interviews and the questionnaire, used in the baseline study, seem to be complementary. These data were partly similar to and partly different from each other regarding the strategies applied to listening and causes of difficulty. In most cases the data from the retrospective interviews corroborate those from the questionnaire. In other cases there is a discrepancy between data from retrospective interviews and students' questionnaire. With regard to the listening strategy use, the data from both methods agreed that listeners utilise cognitive strategies. The difference was in that the questionnaire revealed that students are mainly bottom-up listeners, although they may use some top-down strategies. As for the retrospective interviews, they showed that the low ability listeners tended to use more bottom-up strategies, but the high ability listeners tended to use both the bottom-up and the top-down strategies more frequently.

Concerning the metacognitive strategy use, there seems to be an agreement on both sides, as the data from the two methods pointed out some metacognitive strategies. However, the retrospective interviews were able to go beyond just naming the strategies

to giving the frequency of their occurrence. Some strategies have been added through the retrospective interviews, which were not included in the questionnaire such as planning and self-evaluation. In terms of the problems students pointed out to hamper their comprehension, the two methods revealed almost the same problems.

To sum up, the results of the baseline study are summarised as follows in response to the research questions presented in 5.2.

5.5.1 What do student teachers of English believe makes up effective listening?

The answer to this question was mainly based on the findings of the first part (effectiveness 1) of the first part of the questionnaire (see 5.4.1.1.1). The answer to this question is that students mainly believed that effective listening meant listening to and understanding every word. It also entailed focusing on the speaker's pronunciation and using background knowledge. Students also seemed to believe that effective listening requires focusing on the text details. They did not seem to appreciate the use of guessing at meaning or listening for the gist as important components for effective listening. The conclusion that can be drawn from this finding is that students' perceptions about effective listening are marred by a number of false conceptions. These misconceptions are not limited to the context of the study, but have been referred to in the literature. Listening is notorious for misconceptions (see 2.3.1). The implication here for the main study is that students need to be made aware that listening is an active process, which requires special attention on their part. They should also be made aware that listening is mainly an inferential process, which requires making guesses at the word and the context level as well as all the necessary information is not stated explicitly in the text as students thought, they need to guess and make inferences about the meaning using the different sources of knowledge. In short, they need to be exposed to what the literature says about listening as a construct, what listening effectively entails and how to approach it successfully.

5.5.2 What are the comprehension strategies student teachers of English make use of while listening in English?

The retrospective interviews together with effectiveness 2 of the questionnaire provided the answer to this question. The findings showed that students reported using

metacognitive (see 5.4.3.1) as well as cognitive strategies (see 5.4.3.2)). The cognitive strategies reported by students in the questionnaire in descending order are as follows:

- Listening to the meaning of each word
- Focusing on text details
- Guessing at word meaning
- Getting the gist
- Using background knowledge
- Predicting
- Using sentence syntax.

Some more cognitive strategies were added by the retrospective interviews. They are:

- Elaboration
- Inferencing
- Translation
- Summarization
- Listening for repetition
- Listening for key words
- Listening for patterns

Only one metacognitive strategy (i.e. comprehension monitoring) was reported in the questionnaire. The retrospective interviews, however, added some more metacognitive strategies used by students in listening (see 5.4.3.1a). They were:

- Comprehension monitoring
- Planning strategies
- Selective attention
- Self-monitoring
- Self-evaluation.

5.5.3 How confident do student teachers of English feel while listening in English?

The second part in the students' questionnaire (confidence) together with the self-assessment measure provided the answer to this question. The data obtained here led the researcher to conclude that the students actually lack confidence in listening to the target language. This was reached after discussing the findings from the second administration

of the self-assessment measure, which reflected the real level of students' confidence as rating was done after doing a listening task. In this regard, the main study will attempt to verify the effect of strategy training on enhancing students' self-confidence in listening to English.

5.5.4 What are the repair strategies student teachers of English make use of while listening in English?

The findings of the students' questionnaire yielded the answer to this question. They showed that students reported using some successful repair strategies, which mainly reflect active listening. The repair strategies reported by students in this area included:

- Keep on listening hoping for clarification later on.
- Listen closely to the next segment to see if it produces additional information that can be used to understand what I missed
- Find myself thinking about the segment and listening without being able to follow
- Guess what the word or phrase might mean based on the text.
- Lose my immediate train of concentration, but try to recover my concentration right away
- Give up trying to comprehend the passage.

However, these results after administering the self-assessment measure seem to be unrealistic, as such strategies need a high level of confidence and what the students reported was in response to predetermined statements done in isolation from any practical task (see 5.3.2.1). So students' subjective responses might not reflect what they actually do. This implies that more practice on doing listening tasks will help students develop their use of more repair strategies to achieve better comprehension.

5.5.5 What are the problems student teachers of English have in every day listening to English?

The retrospective interviews and the students' questionnaire provided the answer to this question (see 5.4.1.4 and 5.5.1). There seems to be an agreement in both findings with regard to the problems students had. These problems included:

- Changes in sounds in connected speech
- Combining words into phrases
- Understanding word meaning

- Unfamiliarity with the topic
- High delivery rate
- Lack of concentration.

These problems with the exception of unfamiliarity with the topic can be sorted out if students were trained to use some appropriate strategies. So, it will be an aim of the main study to offer some strategies that might help students overcome these problems.

5.6 Chapter summary

This chapter offered detailed description of the baseline study, its aims, research questions, instruments and methodology. In particular it presented and discussed the findings obtained from this exploratory study highlighting its implications for the main study to be reported on in the next chapter. The most important implications are as follows:

- Students' conceptions about listening should be revisited.
- Students repertoire of strategies should be directed and extended.
- Though students used a number of effective cognitive strategies, the tactics to operationlize these strategies were very limited. In this sense, the main study would try to heighten the students' awareness about more tactics or clues to use or look for when using the strategy.
- The main study needs to address the issue of self-confidence while listening as an issue deemed to be central to strategy use. Research suggests that students' beliefs about their capabilities to perform academic tasks (self-efficacy) are positively related to learning strategy use.
- Students should be guided in the process of selecting appropriate strategies by raising their awareness about task knowledge and the problems posed by a given task as it was clear from the strategy use that students, especially in the low ability group tended to use an appropriate strategies to the task.
- The main study would address the students' problems highlighted in this baseline study, trying to attend to these problems in selecting the most appropriate strategies.
- The use of complementary data collection method (triangulation) proved very useful in adding depth to the results obtained, so this would be adopted again in the main study.

Chapter Six

Main Study: Research Rationale and Methodology

6.0 Introduction

The main purpose of this study was to find out whether strategy training can help student teachers' of English in Egypt develop their listening comprehension skills. It also sought to compare the effects of this strategy-based instruction approach with the metacognitive instruction and pure exposure on listening performance. This chapter describes the research methodology employed in the main study. Section 6.1 presents the rationale for the study, which was mainly based on the findings of the baseline study and the literature review. Section 6.2 gives an account of the aims of the study highlighting the research questions as well as the hypotheses to be tested. In section 6.3 the focus is given to the research design and listening material selection. It also reports on the instruments utilised in the study, the procedure and data analysis.

6.1 Rationale of the study

The rationale for this study was grounded on both the literature review on the variables addressed in this current study and the findings of the baseline study. The results of the baseline study highlighted a number of problems that hindered students' comprehension while listening (see 5.4). The most common problems reported by students in the baseline study were:

- Changes in sounds in connected speech
- Combining words into phrases
- Rate of delivery
- Listening to and understanding every word
- Lack of concentration
- Unfamiliarity with the topic

It is clear that the first three problems are related to features of connected speech and reveal students' lack of knowledge about these features. The last three difficulties are related to the nature of students' approach to listening and imply some of the misconceptions students held about listening, which were also discussed in the findings

of the baseline study especially in 5.4.1.1. In an attempt to make sense of these findings, it seems reasonable to argue that the problems students have and the misconceptions they held are inextricably interrelated. It is most likely that these misconceptions were in the first place an outcome of some context-related problems (e.g. lack of exposure to real spoken English and lack of training on how to go about listening see 1.3). Then, these same misconceptions were perhaps the cause of most of the problems highlighted by students in the baseline study. To illustrate, students' lack of training on how to go about listening has left them no choice but to follow their own beliefs and to try their own approaches when faced with a listening task. Consequently, it was not surprising to find students' beliefs about listening full of misconceptions (e.g. listening effectively means to listen to every word) and in turn their approaches marred by lack of awareness of how to deal effectively with the spoken message (e.g. the most frequent strategy reported in the questionnaire was trying to understand the meaning of every word 91.7%). The consequences of such misconceptions were other problems; trying to listen to every word resulted in the inability of students to make use of their limited memory capacity which, in turn, resulted in memory overload that was manifested in the students' lack of concentration and then the frequent complaint about the high delivery rate.

In the light of the above overview, the researcher thought that the solution to the students' problems might lie in addressing students' misconceptions and listening problems via a strategy training programme that caters for both providing students with metacognitive knowledge 'know what' and training them on a wide range of effective strategies 'know how'. The metacognitive knowledge component (figure 6-2a) was sought to prepare students for the active and interactive roles they were expected to play in their learning as well as revisit, revise and correct the students' acquired knowledge about language learning as well as about themselves. This component encompassed three main categories: a) person knowledge (e.g., learning styles, beliefs, attitudes, and motivation), b) process knowledge (e.g., written and spoken discourses, listening purposes, how it works, misconceptions about listening) and c) task knowledge (e.g., purpose, task demands and classification). The main objectives of the metacognitive knowledge component were to:

1. raise the students' awareness about the cognitive and affective factors that facilitate or inhibit language learning in general and listening in particular.

2. raise the students' awareness about listening as an active process as well as try to correct some of the misconceptions students had about listening which were highlighted and discussed in chapter five.
3. uncover the students' stored knowledge about learning strategies.
4. develop the students' ability to reflect on their own approaches to learning as well as on themselves as learners.

The need for including metacognitive knowledge in the strategy training programme which was highlighted above was felt more pervasive as the review of the literature highlighted the need for revising the students' metacognitive knowledge if strategy training was to bring its pay off (see 4.3.2). Besides, there have been a number of contextual reasons for the necessity of including it as a central component in strategy training in this study. Some of these reasons are discussed below:

1. Students in Egypt, the context of the study, are the outcome of teacher-centred classrooms (1.3) where teachers are active producers and students are relatively passive consumers whose needs must be completely satisfied. These values, which fostered the dependency assumption in students and rooted the belief that they cannot learn without teachers, completely contradict the active and interactive roles expected in strategy training. Students holding such values can be resistant, unwilling and uncooperative in the face of strategy training. Thus it was necessary to include the metacognitive knowledge component in the hope it might help reshaping and adjusting the students' attitudes and beliefs about learning and their roles.
2. In addition, the findings of the baseline study made it clear that students needed some theoretical background about listening as a component as well as about the cognitive and affective factors that facilitate or inhibit it.
3. The need for empowering students and helping them to make informed decisions about listening and learning which necessitates developing a deeper awareness of the learners' metacognitive knowledge.

The second component in the strategy training programme was the strategies students were going to be trained in. This component aimed at equipping learners with some effective strategies to help them maximize their limited processing capacity and in turn be able to deal with listening. The strategies to be taught included metacognitive strategies, which sought to help students direct and self regulate their learning as well as cognitive strategies which intended to help students actively manipulate the content (see 4.3.3). These strategies were selected in the light of the related literature and the findings from the baseline study, which resulted in the following selection guiding criteria:

- a) Expanding not replacing students' strategic repertoire.
- b) Selecting strategies that enabled students to see an immediate pay off.
- c) Including the three categories of strategies
- d) Teaching strategies with the widest possible application
- e) Starting with effective and comprehensible strategies
- f) Teaching strategies which would promote:
 - prediction and anticipation of the content
 - hypotheses formation and verification
 - guessing and filling in gaps
 - learning to tolerate less than word-by word understanding
 - listening to the gist
 - listening to the essence and focus of meaning

Therefore, the strategies to be taught under the metacognitive category were planning (by setting their goals for the task, identifying the task requirements and demands, and identifying resources including the strategies that will help realising the goals), monitoring (comprehension and strategy) and finally evaluating (comprehension and strategy). The cognitive strategies taught were SIMT (identifying setting, interpersonal relationships, mood and topic), prediction, essence of meaning, focus of meaning, elaboration, inferencing, and note taking. These strategies were selected according to the criteria highlighted and discussed in section below.

6.2 Aims of the main study

The overall aim of the main study was to help Egyptian student teachers of English with their problems in listening to English. Thus, operationally speaking, the study sought to examine and compare the effects of three approaches (strategy instruction,

metacognitive instruction and pure exposure) on high and low proficiency students' listening performance, their knowledge and use of strategies as well as their perceived value of strategy use. The study was also to examine and compare the effects of these approaches on students' self-efficacy while listening and their attitudes towards the treatments they received.

6.3 Research questions and hypotheses

The study was specifically designed to answer the following research questions:

1. Do different listening instructional approaches have differential effects on listening performance among EFL students?
2. Do different listening instructional approaches have differential effects on students' knowledge, use and perceived value of strategy use among EFL students?
3. Do different listening instructional approaches have differential effects on self-efficacy while listening among EFL students?
4. Do different listening instructional approaches have differential effects on attitudes towards listening among EFL students?
5. Are there any differences in the effects above between high and low proficiency level students?

To answer the research questions posited in 6.3, the following null hypotheses were established and listed according to the variables examined: listening performance, knowledge, use, and perceived value of strategy use, self-efficacy and attitudes.

A) Listening performance

1. There are no significant* differences between the three groups of the study in listening performance as measured by the listening test after the treatment.
2. There is no interaction between proficiency level and the effects of treatment on listening as measured by the listening test.

B) Knowledge, use and perceived value of strategy use

3. There are no significant differences between the three groups of the study in knowledge of strategies as measured by the strategy questionnaire.
4. There is no significant interaction between students' listening proficiency level and the effects of treatment on strategy knowledge as measured by the strategy questionnaire.

5. There are no significant differences between the three groups of the study in actual use of strategies as measured by the strategy questionnaire.
6. There is no significant interaction between students' listening proficiency level and the effects of treatment on strategy use as measured by the strategy questionnaire.
7. There are no significant differences between the three groups of the study in perceived value of strategy use as measured by the strategy questionnaire.
8. There is no significant interaction between students' listening proficiency level and the effects of treatment on perceived value of strategy use as measured by the strategy questionnaire.

C) Self-efficacy

9. There are no significant differences between the three treatment groups of the study in self-confidence while listening as measured by the self-efficacy questionnaire.
10. There is no significant interaction between students' listening proficiency level and the effects of treatment on self-confidence while listening as measured by the self-efficacy questionnaire.

D) Attitudes

11. There are no significant differences between the three treatment groups of the study in attitudes towards the treatment received as measured by attitude scale after the treatment.
12. There is no significant interaction between students' listening proficiency level and the effects of treatment on attitudes towards the treatment received as measured by the attitude scale.

* $P < .05$

6.4 Methodology

6.4.1 Methods of inquiry

As discussed in 5.3.1 and as proved helpful and informative in the baseline study, the main study would also use both quantitative and qualitative methods (for more on this see 5.3)

6.4.2 Research design

The design of this study is primarily postpositivistic in nature, a pre-post 3×2 factorial design was used in this study to assess and compare the effects of three different approaches on developing listening comprehension among student teachers of English of high and low listening proficiency. Table 6-1 below presents a schematic illustration of the research design. Where the independent variables are represented as factor A (proficiency) and factor B (treatment).

Table 6-1: Schematic representation of the 3×2 factorial design used in the study

Factor A: proficiency	Factor B: the treatment		
	Strategy training group	Metacognitive group	Control group
High			
Low			

The dependent and independent variables are represented below in figure 6-1, which shows that:

a) The independent variables were:

1. Treatment:

- a) Metacognitive knowledge plus strategies training;
- b) Instruction on metacognitive knowledge only, and
- c) pure exposure with no instruction on strategy training

2. The proficiency level

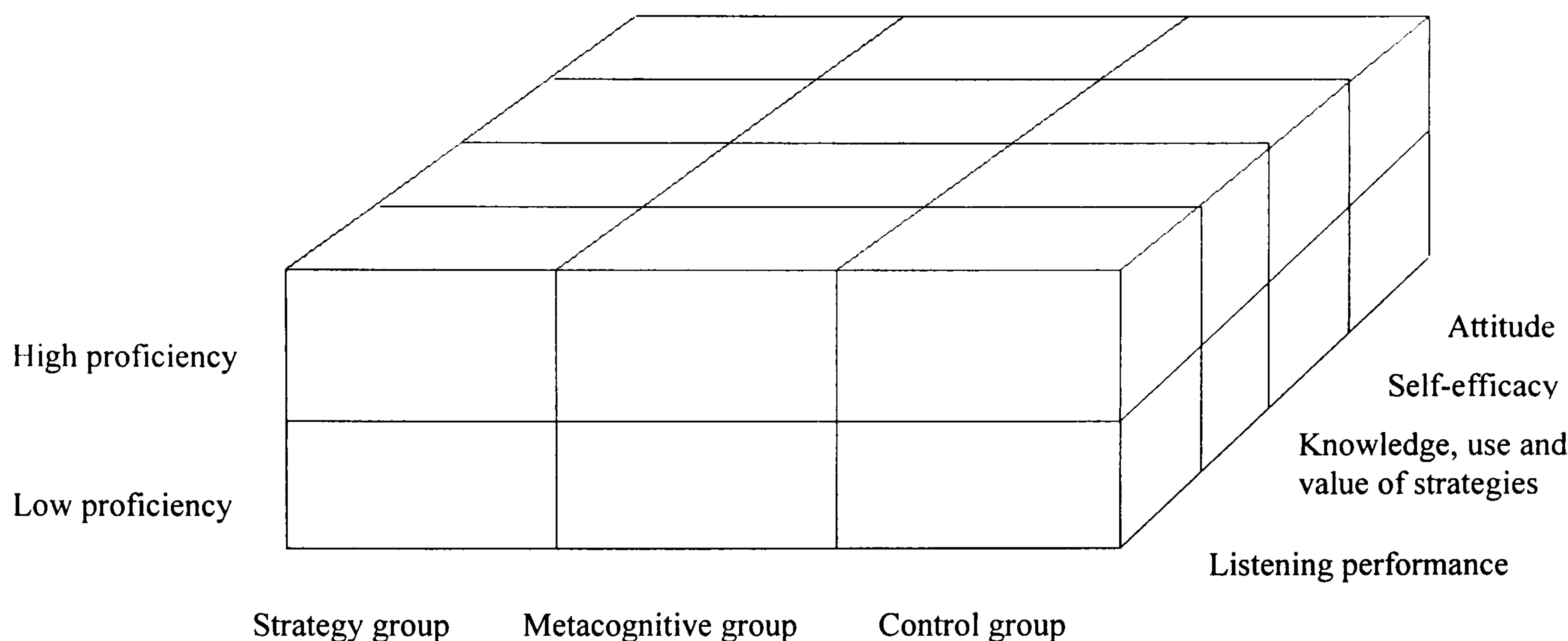
- a) High listening proficiency level and
- b) Low listening proficiency level.

b) The dependent variables were:

1. Listening performance,
2. Strategy knowledge,
3. Strategy use,
4. Perceived value of strategy use,
5. Self-efficacy, and
6. Attitudes

7. Attitudes

Figure 6-1: Design and variables of the study



6.4.3 Participants

The investigation reported here was carried out with a homogeneous group of 72 third year undergraduate students majoring in English at the Faculty of Education, Al Azhar University in Egypt. All students were male with the average age of 20.4 and had Arabic as their native language. These 72 students were selected from an initial sample of 120 students who, at the beginning of the experiment, sat for the Oxford Placement Test 2 (the listening section which consists of one hundred items, each of which merits one point making a total score of 100) and provided a self-rating for their listening ability. In the light of the students' scores in Oxford Placement Test (table 6.2), their listening self-rating, and overall grades in the last two academic years, they were divided into two groups high and low proficiency.

Table 6-2: Results of the Oxford Placement test

Score	50-	50 - 59	60 - 74	75+
Number of students	54	18	36	12
Percentage	45%	15%	30%	10%

To do this, 36 students out of the 48 who scored higher than 60% in Oxford Placement Test (see table 6.4) were selected to represent the high proficiency level and another 36 out of the 54 who scored less than 50% were selected to represent the low proficiency level group. More precisely, a high proficiency student should have met the following three criteria:

- attained, at least, a very good overall grade in the last two academic years,
- rated himself as a good listener, and
- scored more than 60% in Oxford Placement Test.

In the same vein, a low proficiency student should have:

- attained a pass at most in the last two academic years,
- rated himself as poor listener, and
- scored less than 50% in Oxford Placement Test

This makes up the total of 72 students who participated in the main study. These students were then randomly assigned to three groups: the strategy-training group, the metacognitive group and the pure exposure (the control) group (see 6.3.7), each of which had 24 students with two listening proficiency levels (high and low).

6.4.4 Instruments

The study made use of a number of techniques to collect data. The main study comprised six main instruments: a) listening comprehension tests, b) a strategy questionnaire, c) a self-efficacy questionnaire, d) an attitudes questionnaire, e) follow-up interviews and f) retrospective interviews. Detailed descriptions of the instruments used in the current study are given in the following subsections below.

6.4.4.1 Listening comprehension test

The listening comprehension test (see Appendix 6a) was designed to measure students' performance in listening to spoken English before and after the treatment. More specifically, it attempted to measure the students' ability to:

1. identify the topic of the text;
2. listen for details;
3. listen for specific information;
4. listen for the gist of the text;
5. draw conclusions;
6. guess the meaning of unknown words and phrases.

It was also intended to shed light on the effect of listening proficiency level and in particular the interaction between the effects of proficiency levels and treatment on students' listening performance before and after the treatment.

It might be worth mentioning, at the onset, that this test was a newly designed test since the test piloted in the baseline study proved problematic (see 5.3.5.2.1) and did not reflect the nature of the materials used in the training programme. Two parallel forms of matched tests were developed to be used in this study as the pre-and post-tests to measure students' performance in listening to spoken English. Each form of the tests consisted of three parts: 1) an interview; 2) a conversation; and 3) a news segment. There were 30 questions in total in each form and the number of questions allocated to measuring each of the above six skills was almost identical. Each text was heard twice and the instructions for each task were heard on the tape and written in the test paper. In the test, students were asked to fill in gaps, choose from multiple-choice, tick the right answer, and agree or disagree to statements. Students indicated their answers by writing or ticking them as required in the same sheet of questions. Form A of the test was administered as a pre-test at the beginning of the programme. Following the instructional period, Form B was administered as the post-test to assess the change, if any, in general aural comprehension after the six weeks experimental period of total of 60 hours. Any scores gained, i.e., the differences between the pre- and the post-test scores, would be interpreted as a measure of improvement in listening comprehension.

6.4.4.2 Strategy questionnaire

The listening strategy questionnaire, which was administered in English, (Appendix 6b) was specifically designed for the main study to collect information about students' knowledge of 36 listening strategies, their use of such strategies as well as their perception of the value of these strategies. A set of focal learning strategies was identified based on the related literature, the findings of the baseline study and the students' needs and problems. The strategies were operationalised in simple statements (see table 6-3) followed by three main levels, namely, knowledge, use and value. Distracters that describe either negative behaviour or learning strategies that were not taught (e.g. statements 17, 20, 22, 26) were intentionally included to ensure that students did not respond only in ways they thought could please the researcher.

Table 6-3: Sample of strategy questionnaire

Strategy	I know this strategy			I use this strategy			This strategy helped me			
	Yes	Not sure	No	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	A lot	A little	Not at all
I decide in advance what I need to listen for and then I listen for this information without trying to understand everything.										

The strategy questionnaire was administered to the three groups before and after the instructional period to assess any improvement in students' knowledge of strategies and their use as well as any change of the perceived value of strategy use.

6.4.4.3 Self-efficacy questionnaire

The self-efficacy questionnaire (see appendix 6c) was developed to tap the level of confidence of students while listening in the target language before and after the treatment. In the scale, students were asked to rate how sure they were in performing listening tasks in English on a 5-point scale. The rating scale goes from 0 to 100. The higher the number learners mark, the more sure they are, while the lower the number, the less sure they are. For more illustration a sample of the statements on the questionnaire is shown in table 6-4 below.

Table 6-4: Sample of the self-efficacy questionnaire

<u>Instructions</u>									
<i>Circle the number on the line that shows how sure you are that you could listen to English tapes (interviews, talks, news, interactive conversation and lectures) and:</i>									
<u>Statement:</u>									
4) Go beyond the information explicitly stated in the text to draw conclusion									
0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90-100
not at all	somewhat unsure		kind of some		very sure		completely sure		

The self-efficacy questionnaire was administered to the three groups before and after the instructional period to assess any differences in terms of students' self-confidence when performing a listening task.

6.4.4.4 Attitude questionnaire

For the purpose of tapping the students' attitudes towards the treatment they received, an attitude questionnaire comprising 5 statements was developed and administered after the programme. In the questionnaire students were asked to rate how they found the treatment they received on a 5-point scale (for an example see table 6-5 below). In scoring the attitude questionnaire, the researcher gave 5 to the strong agreement on positive statement and 1 for the strong disagreement. This was reversed in case of negative statement.

Table 6-5: Sample of the attitude questionnaire

<u>DIRECTIONS:</u>				
You have been participating in a program that aimed at improving your listening comprehension skills. Here is your chance to tell us the extent of agreement between the feeling expressed in each of the following statements and your own personal feelings. Please answer the questions below honestly so that we can improve the instruction and help you listen to English better.				
1. Is the listening program you received helpful for improving your listening comprehension skills in English?				
1	2	3	4	5
Yes extremely	Yes quite helpful	Yes a little	Not very much	Not at all

6.4.4.5 Follow-up interviews

Upon completing the post-test, all students in the three groups were interviewed by the researcher individually to obtain further information concerning all aspects of the treatment they received. The interviews aimed at eliciting in-depth information from students on their beliefs and attitudes development as they took part in the programme. More precisely, it aimed at obtaining an insight into the responses made in the questionnaires and to elicit the students' views and reactions to the treatment they received: what they liked and what they did not; what was useful and contributed to the success of the treatment and what was not helpful in the treatment. In the interviews,

each interviewee was encouraged to reflect on what they liked and disliked about the treatment they received. It was carried out in the students' mother tongue over a period of ten days after the last week of the teaching intervention. The information obtained here formed part of the qualitative analysis for this study (see 8.1).

6.4.4.6 Retrospective interviews

The retrospective interviews used in the baseline study proved feasible and provided useful insight. Thus the main study employed it again. In order to ascertain the development or change in the students' processing habits, two students from each of the three groups were selected to report on their thoughts, immediately after listening, at the beginning and the end of the programme. The purpose of the retrospective interviews was twofold:

- a) to trace the students' strategy use in their own verbalisation while doing a listening task to see if there were any differences in their strategy use between the treatment groups as the intervention went on (see 8.2), and
- b) to add depth to the information obtained from the results of the strategy use section in the strategy questionnaire. Students were asked to report what they were thinking, i.e. how they made sense of what they were hearing, what they could not figure out, how they were dealing with unfamiliar words, what picture or memories came to mind, etc.

6.4.5 Listening materials selection

Listening comprehension programmes or courses are often organised in terms of the content of the listening texts, i.e., the organisation could be described as situational (at the post office, at the airport) or topical (jobs, crime and punishment). Materials in this programme, however, were mostly sequenced by the kind of strategies taught (e.g., strategies for identifying setting, personal relationship, mood and topic). The instructional materials used for the three groups of the study were selected in a way to ensure that there was a range in terms of varieties (British vs. American), number of speakers (monologue vs. dialogue), topics (mostly topics of general interest) and genre (interview, conversation and lectures). The accompanying task sheets included various features such as gap filling, multiple choice, grid filling, taking notes, true/false sentences and agree/disagree statements.

The materials (for examples see table 6.6 below) were selected from commercially published books in listening and courses in English according to the following criteria:

1. The material should allow students an extensive amount of time for actual listening.
2. The material should vary to provide students with practice in gaining comprehension of many different common everyday situations.
3. The material should be suitable for presenting and illustrating the strategy (ies) being worked at.
4. The material should be in genuine spoken English. In other words, features of connected speech such as hesitation, false starts, fillers, repetition and incomplete sentences should be represented in the text.
5. The content should be at the appropriate level of the students of the study (age, task material match and interest) and the difficulty level should be carefully set (length, delivery). It is worth mentioning here that the researcher had taken the author's judgments in this criterion

Table 6-6: sample of the listening materials selected for the programme

Making predictions	Source	Length (mins.)	Genre
Sentence for completion	Original		(Written version)
Sentence for completion	Paths to proficiency chapter 5	1.23	Spoken version
Title of a story	Blueprint upper intermediate unit 12	2.30	Interview
The end of a story	Snapshot intermediate unit 13	1.87	Story
Story with pauses inserted	Paths to proficiency chapter 5	2.1	Interview with an actor
Story with pauses inserted	Headway upper intermediate unit 9	2.30	Monologue extract from a Radio programme
Story with pauses inserted	Activate your English intermediate	3.1	Dialogue

In a nutshell, the following table (6-7) summarises the number of texts used, how many of which were British/American and the average length of these texts.

Table 6-7: Summary of the materials used

Number of texts used	American accent	British accent	Average length	
			Shortest	Longest
118	34	84	0.98	3.7

6.4.6 Treatment

The research reported here was undertaken with the aim to compare the effects of three instructional approaches on students' listening performance, strategy knowledge, use and perceived value of strategies, their self-efficacy and attitudes towards the approach used. Students who participated in this study were told that the researcher was looking for ways to improve their listening comprehension in English, but they were not told that the three groups are receiving different kinds of listening instruction. The following section describes the treatment received by each of the three groups (see appendix 6d for a general framework for the teaching in the three groups).

6.4.6.1 *Pure exposure (Control group)*

This group received the same input, the same number of texts, as the two other groups but with no direct instruction as to how to approach the listening task or the underpinning principles of effective listening. The lesson plans for this group focused on exposing the students to the same amount of listening as in the two other groups, leaving them to use their own approaches in carrying out the listening tasks; to do whatever they normally did to help them understand listening tasks without any intervention from the researcher who was with them in the language laboratory (for an example see appendix 6e). The essential difference between this group and the other two groups was that they were given speaking and writing tasks on the content they listened to. It is worth pointing out here that to minimise the effect of difference in time of exposure to the texts, students of the three groups were allowed to listen to each extract not more than three times.

6.4.6.2 *Metacognitive group*

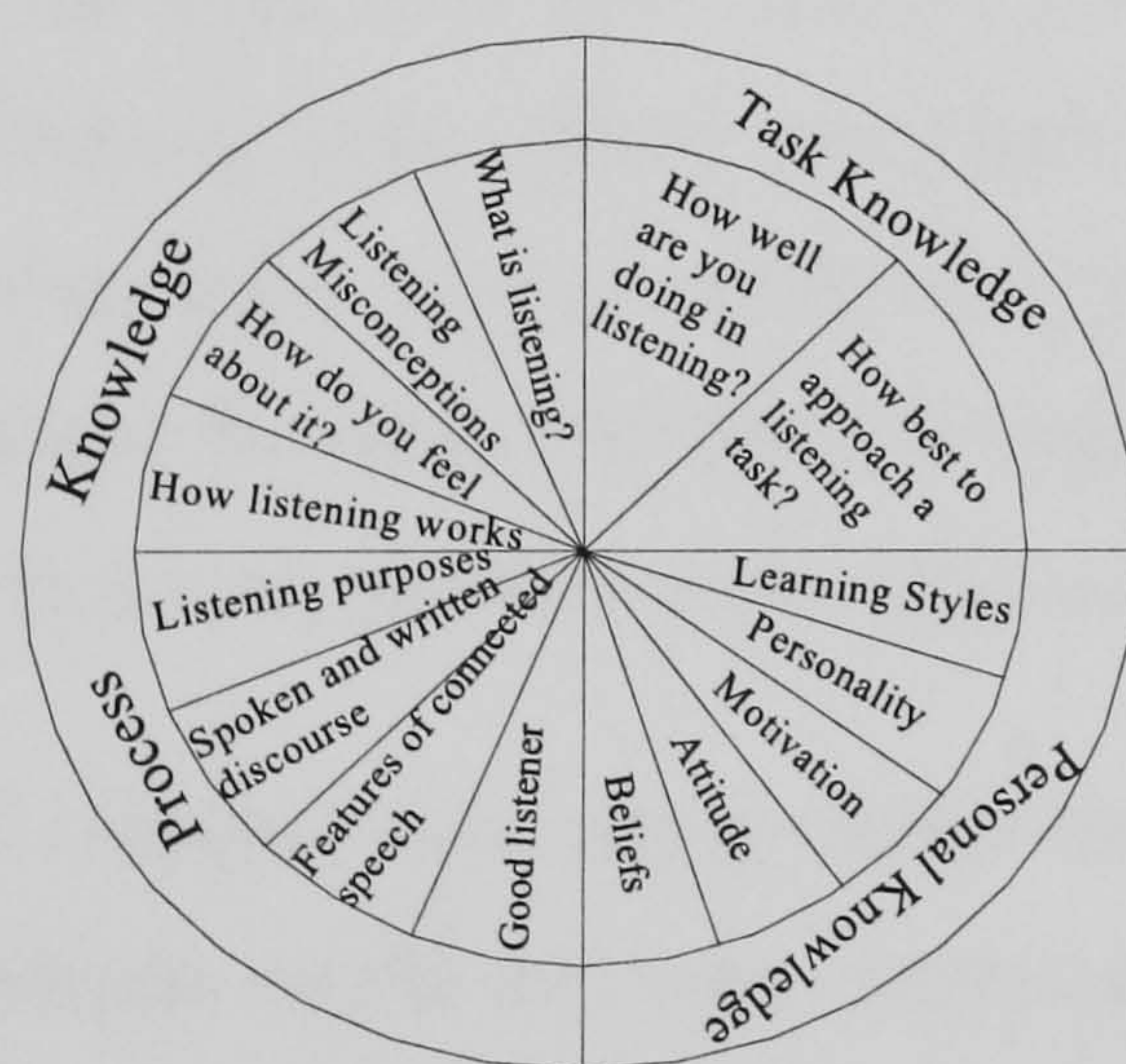
The metacognitive instruction group was mid-way between the pure exposure (control group) and the strategy training group. The main focus of the instruction in this group was to raise students' awareness about themselves as learners, their learning styles, their attitudes and beliefs about listening. Moreover, they were introduced to what the literature highlighted about listening in an attempt to correct some of the misconceptions pinpointed in chapter five. The essential difference between this group and the strategy group was that their lesson plans did not include any explicit instruction on using cognitive or metacognitive strategies (for an example see Appendix 6e). They were similar to the control group in that they both had to do written tasks based on the

listening material content. However, they were different from them in that they were encouraged to have group discussions in which they discussed how they arrived at their answers and what helped them figure them out. They listened to the same number of listening texts as the two other groups, in the same sequence, and spent approximately the same amount of time on any given listening task.

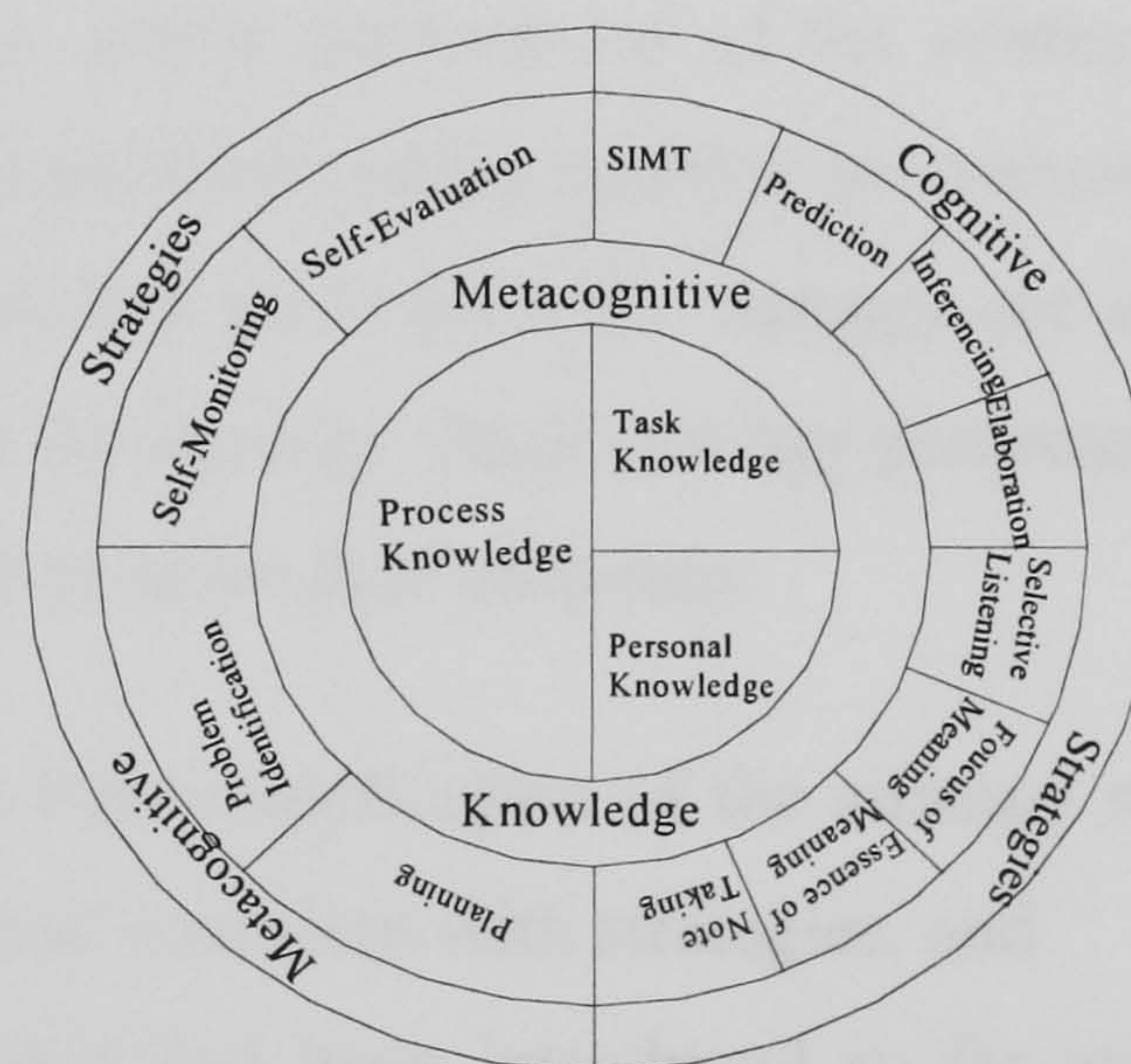
6.4.6.3 Strategy training group

An overview of the treatment that the strategy training group received is shown in figure 6-2 below. Figure 6-2b shows the two main components of the programme, the metacognitive knowledge and strategies. At the core, there are the metacognitive components that are central to strategy training. The second component, represented by the outer shell, is the strategies to be taught that included cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

Figure 6-2: Layout of the treatment received by the strategy group



a) Constituents of the metacognitive knowledge component



b) Overall layout (Metacognitive knowledge + strategies)

The programme consisted of 2-hour sessions on a daily basis, six days a week and for six weeks. The researcher, who was the instructor, followed four general steps in teaching a given strategy: a) presentation, b) modelling, c) practising, and d) evaluation (see appendix 6gc for a lesson plan). The researcher started by presenting the strategy, its name, when to use it, how it would help and why. He, then, modelled the strategy

under scrutiny in Arabic (students' mother tongue) by using the strategy in performing a listening task, thinking aloud as he worked so that students could observe how he thought, what he did while using the strategy, how he monitored his performance and checked his strategic approach. Modelling the strategies was eminent from the belief that unless these processes, which are by their very nature invisible, are made explicit, students can have no way of understanding what it is like to think like a good listener until they become actually one. The researcher in his modelling adopted an apprenticeship approach. This approach was founded upon the apprentice gradually taking over responsibility for a listening task the aims and nature of which had been clearly demonstrated as well as how to approach it strategically. In addition, the researcher involved the students in the modelling by asking questions, which aimed to help students understand when and where they might use the strategy as well as the steps involved in its use. During the phase of modelling, the researcher selected some of the willing students to report on their thought processes while listening, exactly as the researcher did, and it turned out to be a very good technique (7.1). The researcher's modelling gave students insights on how to be strategic when listening, whereas their peers' modelling challenged them to do the same.

The focus of the third step was given to practice, active applications of the strategy presented to listening tasks. Finally, the fourth step entailed getting students to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy and the difficulties that arose from the strategy use as well as the reasons for such difficulties in applying the strategy. Each strategy presented was followed by a consolidation unit, which sought to serve dual purposes:

- a) it gave students more opportunities for the active application of the strategy so that students would feel more comfortable and confident with strategies, and
- b) b) it helped incorporating the strategies that had been introduced so far and showed how to combine more than one strategy when it is needed which is a frequent case required by on-time processing in listening.

4.6.4 Counterbalancing the effect of instruction timing

Since the researcher himself was the instructor in the three groups, it was important to find a way to minimise the effect of timing of instruction (late/early in the day) on students' performance. For this purpose, the order of instruction for each group was

rotated as is shown in table 6-8 below. For example, the control group started at 2 in the first two weeks, followed by strategy group and then by metacognitive instruction group. In the next two weeks, the instruction started with the metacognitive instruction group, followed by control group and then strategy group.

Table 6-8: Time of instruction to the three groups

	Week 1-2	Week 3-4	Week 5-6
2-4	Control group	Metacognitive group	Strategy group
4.30-6.30	Strategy group	Control group	Metacognitive group
7-9	Metacognitive group	Strategy group	Control group

6.4.7 Procedure

6.4.7.1 Pilot study

Before proceeding with the main study, a pilot study was carried out to field test the instruments and the listening materials as well as to confirm procedures for the main study. In this pilot study all the testing methods (listening test, strategy questionnaire, self-efficacy questionnaire, the attitude questionnaire and the verbal retrospective interviews) as well as the instructional materials were field-tested and the pertinent modifications were incorporated in the final versions. The following section reports on the pilot study giving all weight to the listening test and the strategy questionnaire as they were the ones that needed many modifications.

6.4.7.1.1 Listening comprehension test

a) Content validity

Content validity refers to how well a test or observation instrument measures what it purports to test (see Oppenheim, 1992; Hatch and Lazaraton, 1991). An initial set of 46 items was written on each of the three passages selected. Copies of these questions along with the corresponding passages were given to two experts in ELT to check the content validity of the test by examining what each item was measuring. The researcher continued reviewing and rewriting the test items until a 100% agreement was reached on each item with the experts (supervisors). This target was met after the fourth revision of the items. At the end of this process, the number of test items was reduced to 35.

Once the content validity was established, the next step was to check the clarity of the rubric (language used in the test). For this purpose the test was administered to five Egyptian students studying in the UK for their first degrees, MAs and PhDs to check the clarity of the language. The students pointed out two questions in each of the test forms as being confusing (questions number 26 and 27 in Form A, and questions 20 and 25 in Form B). These items were deleted leaving only 33 questions in each form in this version.

b) Pilot test with the target group

The revised version of the test was piloted in March 2001 with 30 Egyptian students at the institute where the main study was going to take place. The main purpose was to find out how long it would take to finish the test and whether the language and the layout of the test was appropriate for the target group and to compute the item analysis and the test reliability. During the administration of the test, the first student who finished was asked to raise his hand and so was the last one. The average time needed for completing the test was then computed, which was approximately 40 minutes for each form.

The pilot test was scored and item analyses as well as reliability indices were computed by employing ITEMAN, an item and test analysis programme. For the findings of the item analysis and reliability see table 6-9 below.

Table 6-9: Results of item analysis in listening tests

	Form (A) Sam	Form (B) Nancy
Mean	18.3	18.3
Variance	75.9	89.3
Standard deviation	8.7	9.4
Alpha	0.83	0.84
Mean p	0.53	0.55
Mean item total	0.54	0.60
Mean biserial	0.70	0.77

Findings of the item analysis revealed that the reliability of the two forms was 0.83 for Form A and 0.84 for Form B, as it is clear from the table above, which indicated that the tests were adequately reliable for administration. Furthermore, the results revealed that almost all the items were satisfactory in terms of their discriminatory ability as they were over 0.40. However, items 13, 17 and 33 in Form A had some problems in their

ability to discriminate (0.22) and their facility value (0.1, 0.6, and 0.6). In terms of facility value they were and in terms of discrimination index they were, 0.22 and 0.22 respectively. Thus these three items were deleted from the test and this left the final form of the test as having 30 questions each.

6.4.7.1.2 Strategy Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to the same five Egyptian students with whom the test was piloted. Piloting the questionnaire was important as it was planned that the questionnaire was to be administered in English. Feedback from these students resulted in rewording some statements. The revised version of the questionnaire was sent off to a colleague in Egypt to administer it to a sample of 33 students at the second year English department at the same institute where the main study was going to take place. The aim of this pilot administration was to find out how long it would take to fill it in and whether the language and the layout was appropriate. The students were asked to complete the questionnaire and to comment on its language and layout. During the administration, the time required for completing the questionnaire was observed. The questionnaire took the average of 21 minutes. The students pointed out that they had no difficulty in understanding the language used to describe the strategies. It was, therefore, assumed that the level of the language would be appropriate for the target group of the present study. However, five students mentioned that the size of the print (10 point) used in the questionnaire was too small, which was changed in the final version to be 12 point.

6.4.7.1.3 Follow-up interviews

The interviews were fully transcribed and analysed for patterns and categories following the Grounded Theory approach (Glasser and Strauss, 1976). The researcher without any attempt to categorise them first read the data. Then, a second reading was performed, by the researcher, and potential themes were noted. The third reading involved the development of categories, where the researcher established a set of categories and then counted the number of instances that fell into each category. These categories were then checked for consistency with two experts.

6.4.7.1.4 Retrospective procedure

It is imperative, at the onset, to mention that, knowing that text type (easy/difficult, familiar/unfamiliar) affects the students' listening comprehension (see Shohamy and Inbar, 1992; Brown et al., 1990; Brown, 1995) and strategy use (Yong, 1996), the researcher thought it was worth controlling the text type effect. In this sense, all students before and after the intervention listened to the same text, *Friends of the Earth, from the Listening File, by Harmer, J., and Elsworth, S. (1989)* for the purpose of eliminating the effect of the text type on students' performance and strategy use.

Four students (representing high and low proficiency levels) from each of the three groups were selected and trained on how to verbalise their thought processes, while doing a listening task. In assigning the students into comparable pairs who would represent each group before and after the treatment, care was taken so that the Oxford test scores was almost the same for each pair to make a feasible comparison. The following table (6-10) shows the students assigned to each group and their scores:

Table 6-10: scores and students participated in the retrospective interviews

Group	Before the treatment		After the treatment	
	Student	Score	Student	Score
Strategy group	SH2	72	SH7	71
	SL15	48	SL18	47
Metacognitive group	MH9	70	MH12	72
	ML14	48	ML21	46
Control group	CH3	72	CH8	73
	CL20	48	CL19	49

In addition to the comparability of the students' on the scores obtained in Oxford Placement Test, they obtained the same overall grade in the last two academic years (very good) and rated themselves as good listeners.

The same procedure used in the baseline study for the training, coding and analysing was utilised here. In other words, The six students, who were to report on their thought processes before the intervention, were trained in individual sessions with the researcher on how to verbalise their thought processes, they were also given the choice to select

the language of verbalisation and they were probed by the researcher when they were stuck and did not know how to proceed. After the intervention, this procedure was repeated with the other six students who reported after the intervention. All the reporting sessions were audio-recorded for the purpose of coding and analysis. The reliability of the coding was calculated with the same formula used in the baseline (see 5.3.5.4). One of the two external coders who participated in the baseline study's coding (the 10 year experienced teacher of EFL) checked with the researcher as a second coder the inter-coder reliability. The overall consistency between the two coders was 0.85. The intra-coder reliability between the first and the second coding the researcher did was 0.90. The reliability indices were considered to be satisfactory.

It seems important to mention that due to an accidental damage of the tape that had the reports of the low proficiency students, it was not possible to transcribe their data. Therefore, the researcher had no choice but to analyse and discuss the reports of the high proficiency students as shown below. With such limitation, it should be useful to point out that the students referred to in the discussion of findings (section 8.2) are high proficiency students and any results should be understood in the light of this. As such, it seems pertinent to point out that the results obtained from these retrospective interviews must be understood as suggestive of patterns in strategy use across the three treatment groups before and after the intervention at the high proficiency level.

6.4.8 Data analysis

To answer the research questions and test the research hypotheses, both quantitative and qualitative analyses were used. A summary of the analyses is presented below.

6.4.8.1 Quantitative analysis

1. The calculation of pre-test mean scores, post-test mean scores for the three treatment groups.
2. The use of MANOVA (SPSS 10) to determine differences between the three treatment groups in listening performance after the treatment.
3. The use of MANOVA to determine differences between the three treatment groups in knowledge, use of strategies and their perception of the value of such strategies
4. The use of MANOVA to determine differences between the three treatment groups in students' level of confidence while listening in the target language.

5. The use of MANOVA to determine differences between the three treatment groups on students' attitudes towards the treatment they received
6. The use of MANOVA to test the interaction between students' proficiency levels and treatment on all the variables above.

6.4.8.2 Qualitative analysis

Qualitative analyses were used to examine interviews and retrospective interviews. The Follow-up interviews with the three groups of the study were analysed qualitatively to give insights into the students' reactions to the treatment. On the other hand, the retrospective reports from the three groups of the study under the high proficiency levels before and after the intervention were analysed (see 8.2). The retrospective reports were analysed qualitatively to trace any change in students' processing habits from before to after the treatments.

6.5 Chapter summary

The chapter has described the rationale underpinning the main study. It highlighted the methods used to test the hypotheses posited in 6.3. Instruments described (6.4.4) and procedures outlined (6.4.7). Finally, the data analysis (6.4.8) method was sketched. The next two chapters are devoted to the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses of the data collected.

Chapter Seven

Results of the Quantitative Analysis

7.0 Introduction

The main study sought to investigate the effects of three training interventions: the strategy training group, the metacognitive instruction group, and the control group on a number of dependent variables (see 6.4.2). The findings of the main study, testing the hypotheses drawn and discussed in 6.3, are reported in two chapters. Chapter seven, the current chapter, presents the quantitative analysis, whereas the qualitative analysis is discussed in chapter eight. This chapter presents the detailed results of the quantitative analyses in four sections, each of which will examine descriptively (e.g. means) as well as inferentially (using Multivariate Analysis of Variance) the differences between the three groups of the study across two proficiency levels. First, section (7.1) provides the results of the listening comprehension test. Then section (7.2) reports on the findings of the strategy questionnaire with its three areas. The third section (7.3) presents the findings of the self-efficacy questionnaire. Finally, the fourth section (7.4) discusses the results of the attitude scale.

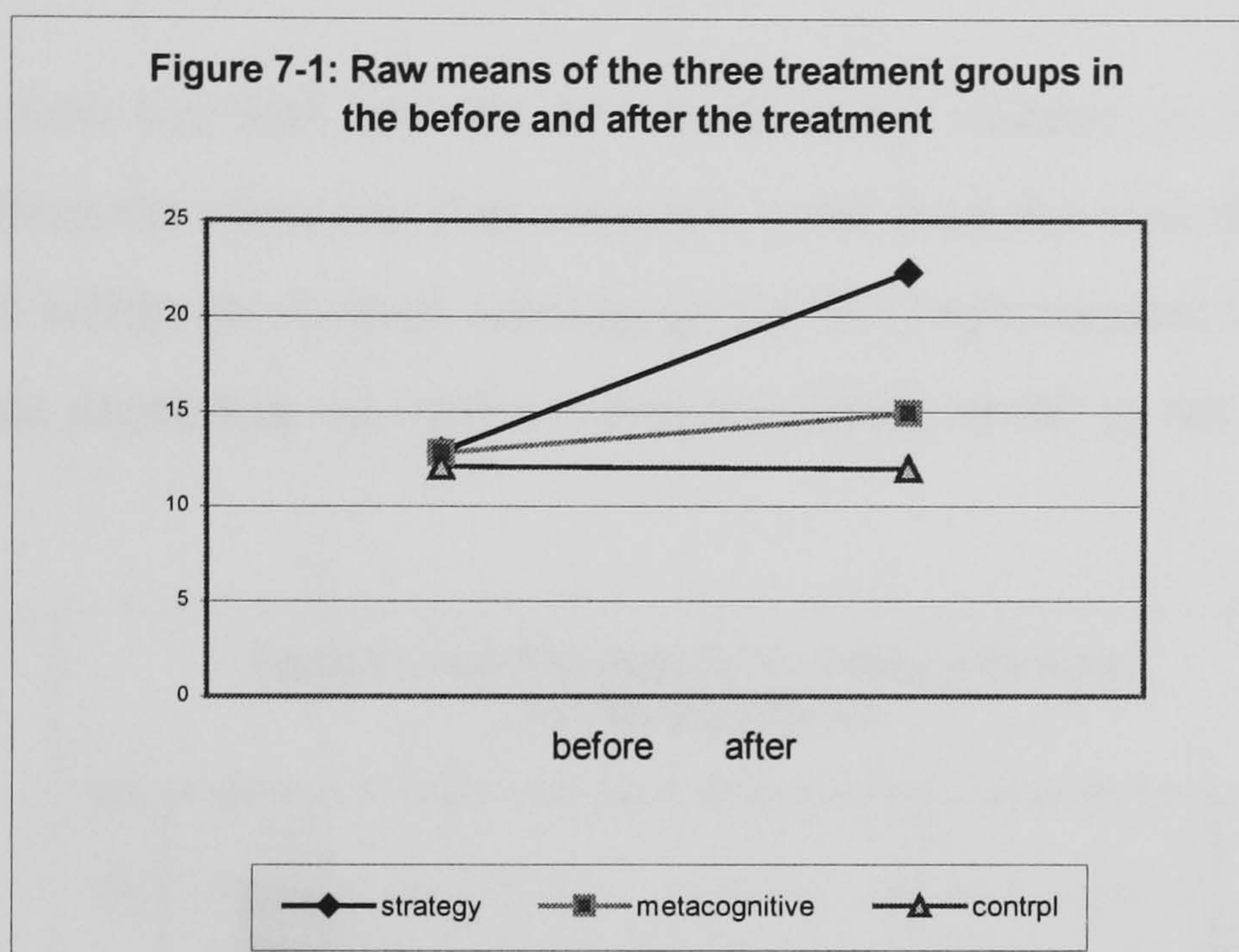
7.1 Listening performance

Listening performance was measured by an audio listening comprehension test that was developed particularly for the current study. The test was designed to measure comprehension at both literal and interpretive levels. What follows is the results of the test data analysis. It starts with a comparison of the raw mean scores of the students in the three treatment groups in the pre- and post-test. Then, the mean scores are adjusted using analysis of covariance and compared across proficiency levels.

7.1.1 Effects of treatment on listening performance

The raw mean scores of the three groups of the study in the listening comprehension test before and after the treatment are graphically represented in figure 7.1 below.

The graph demonstrates that the three groups produce nearly the same scores in the pre-test. However, after the treatment, the differences between the three groups are distinctively clear. The control group (pure exposure) seemed to end almost where they began, suggesting no change in their listening performance after the treatment. An increase in the mean scores of the metacognitive group can also be noticed.



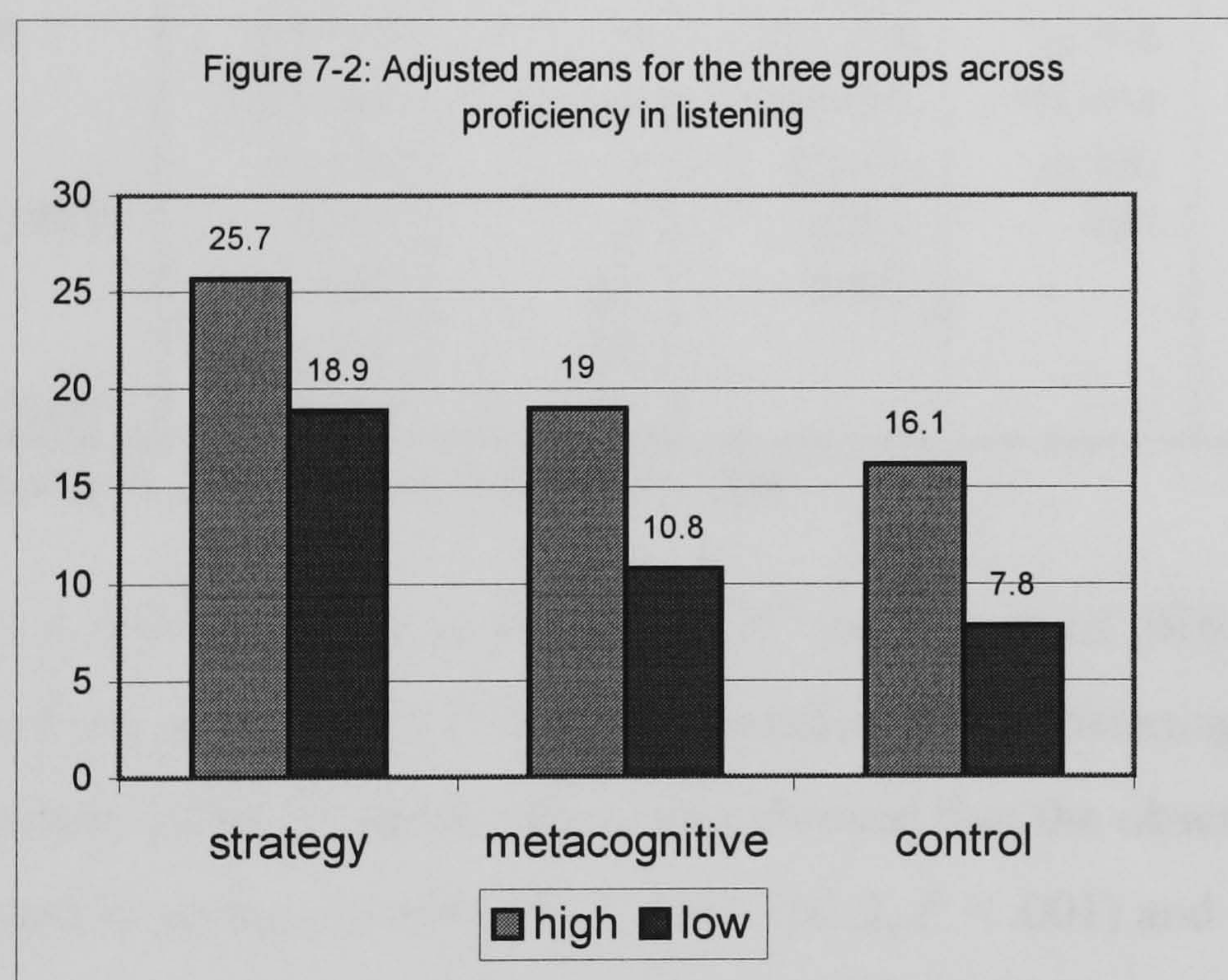
This increase might suggest that metacognitive instruction allied with group discussion could, to some extent, enhance students' listening performance. The most remarkable improvement in listening performance was achieved by the strategy training group. This improvement is much greater than the improvement achieved by the metacognitive instruction group. To sum up, as far as the descriptive statistics show, the most notable improvement was observed in the strategy training group, some improvement in the metacognitive instruction group and no improvement in the control group.

7.1.2 Effects of treatment on listening across proficiency levels

Figure 7.2 below graphically shows the differences in listening attainments (adjusted means) between the high and low proficiency students across the three groups. The adjusted means represent the mean scores on the post-test but have incorporated in the pre-test and shows the improvement in pure sense. The figure below shows, as might have been expected, that the high listening proficiency level students performed better than the low proficiency students across the three groups.

Furthermore, it also shows that the high proficiency students in the strategy training group seemed to have attained the highest means (25.7). What is more interesting is that the low proficiency level students in the strategy training group (18.9) performed as well as the high proficiency students in the metacognitive instruction group (19.0) and outperformed the high proficiency students in the control group (16.1).

This means that both the high and the low proficiency students in the strategy training group benefited from the treatment they received more than the two other groups. This, in turn, suggests that within the strategy training group, the improvement in students' listening performance is not dependent on their proficiency level, which is not the case in the two other groups.



7.1.3 Hypotheses testing: H01-H02

Null hypotheses one and two (Ho1, Ho2) were tested using the *Multivariate Analysis of Variance procedure (henceforth MANOVA) within the SPSS for Windows Release 10*, with treatment (strategy training, metacognitive instruction and control) and proficiency (high, low) being the independent variables (factors) and the students' scores being the dependent variables. Students' listening comprehension post-test scores were analysed using the listening comprehension pre-test scores as a covariate.

a) Treatment effects

H01: there is no difference between the three groups of the study in listening performance due to treatment types as measured by the listening test before and after the treatment.

MANOVA was conducted to examine the effect of treatment on listening performance. The results of inferential statistics support the results obtained from the descriptive statistics.

Table 7-1: Results of MANOVA in Listening Performance.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	2714.654 ^a	6	452.442	117.420	.000
Intercept	475.818	1	475.818	123.487	.000
PRESCOR	273.376	1	273.376	70.948	.000
GROUP	1249.993	2	624.997	162.202	.000
PROF	65.140	1	65.140	16.905	.000
GROUP * PROF	6.528	2	3.264	.847	.433
Error	250.457	65	3.853		
Total	22304.000	72			
Corrected Total	2965.111	71			

a. R Squared = .916 (Adjusted R Squared = .908)

Results of MANOVA (table 7.1 above) yielded an R^2 coefficient of .916. This means the variation in treatment accounted for 92 % of the variation in the listening comprehension test after it was adjusted by the covariate. They also showed that the observed effects were statistically significant in treatment effect ($F(2, 65) = 162.2, P < .001$) and consequently the first null hypothesis of the current study was not verified. This means that there are significant differences between the adjusted mean scores of the three groups in listening performance due to treatment type. In other words, students' listening performance is dependent on the type of treatment received.

Given that there are significant differences in listening performance at $P < 0.01$ between the three groups of the study, multiple comparisons were run to establish where the significances lay. The results of these multiple comparisons showed that there is a significant difference at 0.05 level between the adjusted means (see appendix 7.a) attained by the strategy-training group (22.1) and the other two groups {the metacognitive

instruction (14.8) and the control group (12.2)} in listening comprehension performance in favour of the strategy-training group. It also reveals that there is a significant difference at 0.05 level between the adjusted means attained by the metacognitive instruction group and the control group in listening comprehension in favour of the metacognitive instruction group. Therefore, it can be summarised that the treatment effect is observed in the following order strategy training > metacognitive instruction > control group.

Several interpretations could be given for the superior performance of the strategy group over the two other groups in listening performance. One interpretation may lie in the principles of effective strategy instruction highlighted in the literature and incorporated in this study. These principles were the inclusion of the metacognitive knowledge and adopting a direct instructional approach, which dictated that instruction should be informed, explicit (modelling), as well as providing sufficient time and practice. Other equally effective factors that emerged from the current study were the long duration of training, maintaining students' motivation and removing anxiety and fostering self-confidence (for more on this see 9.3.2). The results of the current study with regard to listening performance were in line with latest studies that showed the positive effects of strategy training on improving listening performance (Paulauskas, 1994; Thompson and Rubin, 1996). The findings, on the other hand, stand in stark contrast with the bulk of the early studies in listening strategy training, which failed to demonstrate the positive effect of strategy training on developing listening (O'Malley et al., 1985; Rubin et al., 1988; Schwartz, 1992). The findings of the current study give evidence for positive effects of strategy instruction given that it attends to the principles of effective strategy instruction.

b) Interaction effect

H02: *There is no interaction between students' listening proficiency levels and the effect of treatment on listening performance as measured by the listening test.*

As shown in table 7.1 above, the MANOVA main table, there is no significant difference in listening performance due to the treatment by proficiency interaction effect ($F(2, 65) = 0.847, P n.s.$) and thus the second null hypothesis of the current study was not rejected. This means that the effect of treatment on listening performance seems to be similar to high

and low proficiency level. However, it might be worth pointing out here that the low proficiency students seemed to approach significance.

7.2 Strategy knowledge, use and value

This section presents the findings of the strategy questionnaire which measured students' knowledge, use, as well as their perceived value of strategies.

7.2.1 Effects of treatment on strategy knowledge, use and value

Table 7-2 shows the raw mean scores of the three groups of the study in the three areas addressed in the strategy questionnaire: a) strategy knowledge, b) use and c) perceived value before and after the treatment.

Table 7-2: Raw means of the treatment groups in pre and post strategy questionnaire.

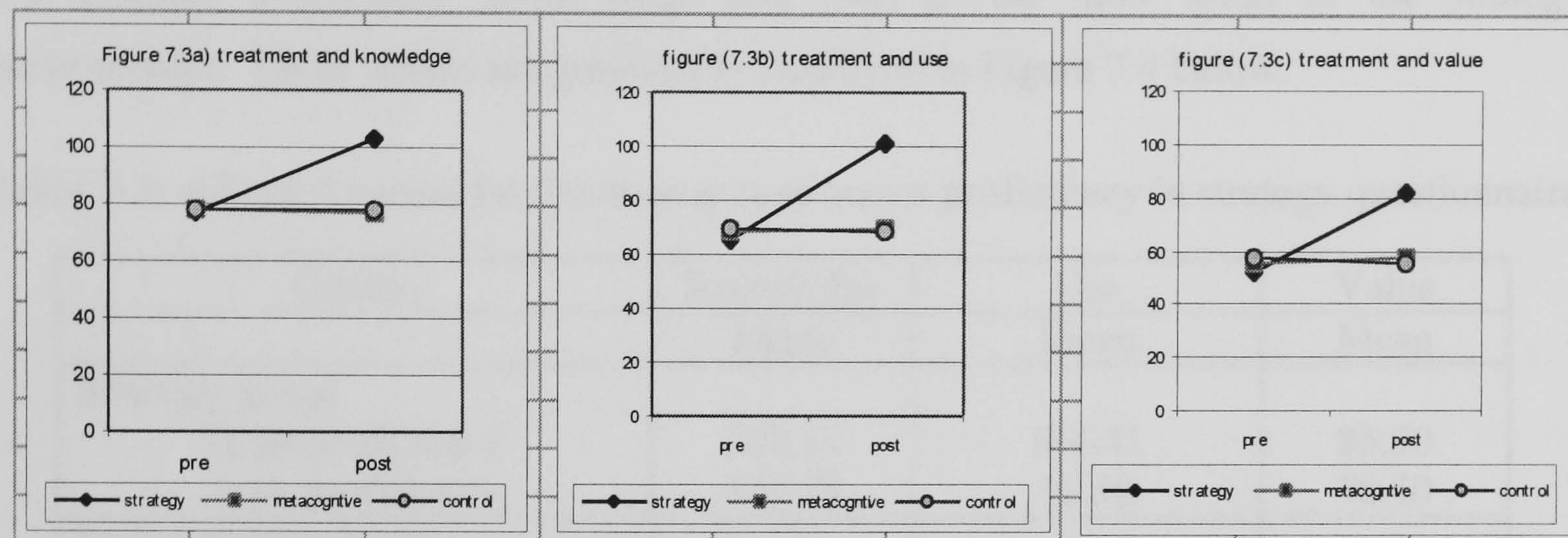
Groups	Knowledge		Use		Value	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
Strategy group	77.3	102.6	65.7	100.9	52.1	81.5
Metacognitive group	77.7	77.0	68.0	69.5	55.4	56.9
Control group	77.8	77.6	69.5	68.0	56.9	55.4

The graphs in figure 7-3 illustrate the differences in the three areas addressed in the strategy questionnaire between the three groups of the study before and after the treatment. Generally speaking, it is clear that the three graphs shown in Figure 7-3 reveal a very similar pattern of results. In all the three areas, students in the three groups were almost at the same point before the experiment. The strategy training group showed a remarkable change between the before and after the treatment in all the three areas, whereas the two other groups did not show any improvement after the treatment, their scores remained almost the same as when they started.

Considering the knowledge level, as figure 7-3a shows, no improvement in students' knowledge of strategies can be observed in the metacognitive instruction and control groups. The strategy group showed a remarkable change in knowledge of strategies, however.

This might be due to the treatment they received in which they were overtly introduced to these strategies and trained on recognising, naming and using them.

Figure 7-3: Raw means of the treatment groups in the pre and post strategy questionnaire



Similar results were obtained in the case of strategy use (figure 7.3b). What is more interesting is that though the strategy training group started lower than the two other groups (65.7), they demonstrated a considerable leap after the treatment in terms of reported strategy use. This might be interpreted in the light of the instruction they received in which they were not only introduced to strategies but also practised these strategies as well as encouraged to use them independently. Therefore, these students having experienced the pay off gained by using strategies, tended to use strategies more. In addition to this, the expansion of their repertoire of strategies helped them to have more choices to select from and, in turn, use new strategies that they had not known before (see 8.1.5 and 8.2.1).

Finally, as shown in figure 7-3c the same pattern of results was recurrent with regard to students' perceived value of strategy use. It is initially observed that the strategy training group (52.1) did not seem to think more highly of strategies as effective tools for listening, as much as the metacognitive instruction group (55.5) and the control group (56.9) did. However, after the treatment we notice that the mean score of the strategy training group increased sharply to 81.5, while the means of the metacognitive instruction (57.0) and the control group (55.5) remained almost the same as before the treatment. This might suggest that due to the effect of treatment students in the strategy training group received, their perception about the value of using strategies were highly enhanced.

7.2.2 Effects of treatment on strategy knowledge, use and perceived value across proficiency levels

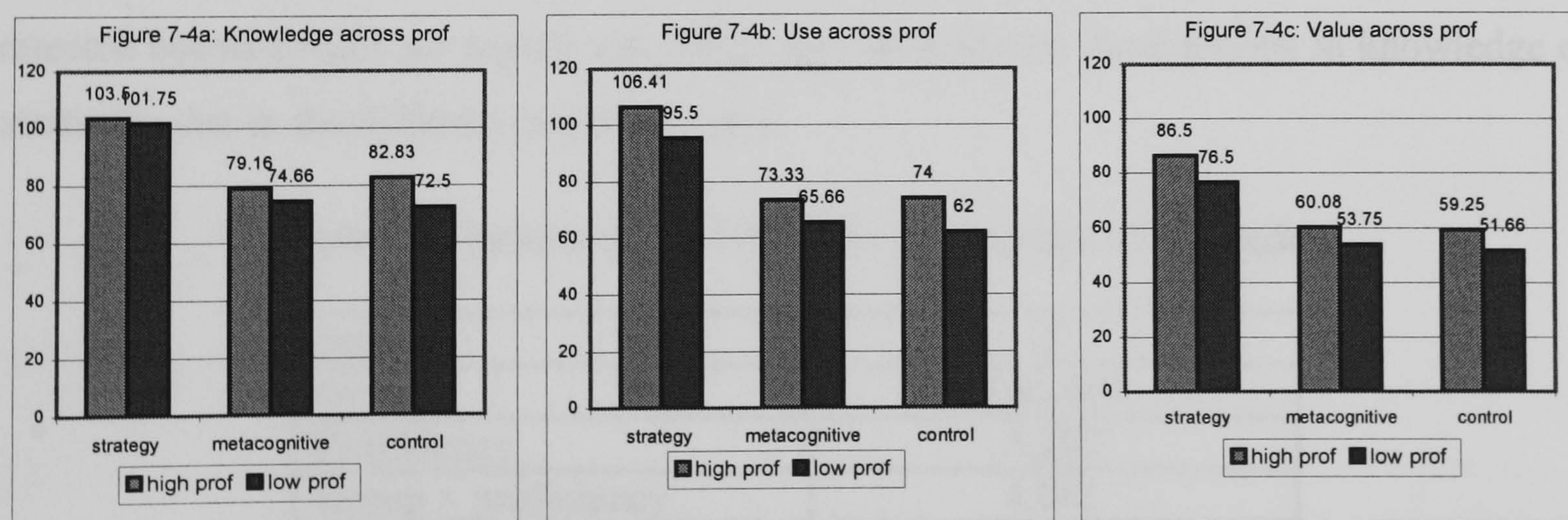
Table 7-3 below shows the adjusted mean scores of the three groups of the study across the two listening proficiency levels (high and low) in the three areas of the strategy questionnaire. These means are graphically displayed in Figure 7.4 below.

Table 7-3: Adjusted means for the three groups across proficiency in strategy questionnaire

Groups	Knowledge	Use	Value
	Mean	Mean	Mean
Strategy group			
High proficiency	103.50	106.41	86.50
Low proficiency	101.75	95.50	76.50
Metacognitive group			
High proficiency	79.16	73.33	60.08
Low proficiency	74.66	65.66	53.75
Control group			
High proficiency	82.83	74.00	59.25
Low proficiency	72.50	62.00	51.66

Across the three graphs, a similar pattern seems to prevail. That is the mean scores of the strategy group students (both high and low) are considerably higher than the mean scores of both the high and low proficiency students in the other two groups.

Figure 7-4: Adjusted means for the three groups across proficiency in knowledge, use and value



This might pinpoint that the strategy group students know more strategies, tend to use strategies more and appreciate the value of using strategies more than their counterparts in

the other two groups. The three graphs also elucidate that the mean scores of low proficiency students in the strategy training group are higher than the mean scores of both the high and low proficiency students in the other two groups who seem to have very similar mean scores to each other. This might, in turn, suggest that strategy training has beneficial effects on learners' knowledge of strategies, their strategy use and their perception about strategy use.

7.2.3 Hypotheses testing: H03-H08

The same procedure highlighted in 7.1, the MANOVA test, was used to test the null hypotheses three to eight. What follows is a presentation of the effects of treatment and interaction on knowledge of strategies (7.2.3.1), on the use of strategies (7.2.3.2) and finally on the perceived value of strategy use (7.2.3.3).

7.2.3.1 Knowledge of strategies

a) Treatment effect

H03: *there is no difference between the three groups of the study in knowledge of strategies due to treatment types as measured by the strategy questionnaire before and after the treatment.*

The results obtained from MANOVA (table 7-4) below, support the results obtained from the descriptive statistics. They show that the observed treatment effect was statistically significant ($F(2,65) = 146.8, P < .001$). This means that the third null hypothesis was rejected because there are significant differences between the three groups in knowledge of strategies due to the different treatment type.

Table 7-4: Results of MANOVA in Knowledge of Strategies

Source	F
Group	146.849
Proficiency	5.287
Group × proficiency	4.061

Put simply, different types of treatment resulted in differences in knowledge of strategies. The results of the multiple comparisons (see appendix 7b) showed that there are significant

differences at the 0.05 level in knowledge of strategies between the adjusted mean scores attained by the students of the strategy training group (102.6) and scores attained by students in both the metacognitive instruction (76.9) and control groups (77.7) in favour of the strategy training group (strategy > metacognitive instruction and control).

b) Interaction effect

H04: *there is no interaction between students' listening proficiency level and the effects of treatment on the students' knowledge of strategies as measured by the strategy questionnaire.*

As shown in table 7-4 above, there is a significant interaction between the effects of treatment and proficiency levels on the students' knowledge of strategies ($F(2, 65) = 4.06$, $P < .05$). Therefore, the fourth null hypothesis was rejected. This means that the effect of treatment and proficiency interaction on knowledge of strategies was different for high and low proficiency students. The MANOVA gives only the multiple comparisons for the main effects; therefore, the interaction post-hoc tests were calculated by hand using the means of treatment-by-proficiency (see Appendix 7c for the means and the procedure).

The post-hoc test revealed:

- There are no significant differences between the high and low proficiency groups in the strategy and metacognitive instruction groups. Only in the control group, there is a significant difference between the high and low proficiency in favour of the high proficiency students.
- Secondly, in terms of between group differences, all the significant differences are in favour of the strategy training groups.

7.2.3.2 Use of strategies

a) Treatment effect

H05: *there is no difference between the three groups of the study in use of strategies due to treatment type as measured by the strategy questionnaire before and after the treatment.*

Table 7-5 below shows the results of the MANOVA test. The results, as the descriptive test indicated, show that there are significant differences at 0.05 level in the use of strategies

between the three groups of the study due to treatment effect ($F(2, 65) = 108.03, P < .001$). This, in turn, means that the fifth null hypothesis was rejected. In other words, students' reported use of strategies is dependent on the type of treatment received.

Table 7-5: Results of MANOVA in use of strategies

Group	108.030
Proficiency	12.584
Group \times proficiency	.464

The results of multiple comparisons (see appendix 7d) indicated that there is only one significant difference between the adjusted mean scores attained by the students of the strategy training group (101.2) and scores attained by students in the other two groups metacognitive instruction (69.5) and the control group (67.8), in favour of the strategy training group.

b) Interaction effect

H06: *there is no interaction between the effects of students' proficiency level and treatment on the students' use of strategies as measured by the strategy questionnaire.*

As shown in table 7-5 above, there is no significant interaction between the effects of treatment and proficiency levels on the students' use of strategies ($F(2, 65) = 0.464, n.s.$), and accordingly the sixth null hypothesis was not rejected. This means the effect of treatment on reported use of strategies seems to be similar for high and low proficiency level students.

7.2.3.3 Perceived value of strategy use

a) Treatment effect

H07: *there is no difference between the three groups of the study in students' perceived value of strategy use due to treatment types as measured by the strategy questionnaire before and after the treatment.*

Table 7-6 below, which shows the results of the MANOVA test, demonstrates that there is significant difference at 0.05 level in the perceived value of strategies between the three groups of the study due to treatment effect ($F(2, 65) = 117.09, p < .001$). This, in turn,

means the seventh null hypothesis was rejected. Put differently, the mean scores are not the same for the three treatment groups and students' perceived value of strategy use differs according to the types of treatment.

Table 7-6: Results of MANOVA in perceived value of strategy use

Group	117.092
Proficiency	9.507
Group \times proficiency	.292

Multiple comparison results (see appendix 7e) showed that there is a significant difference between the adjusted mean scores attained by the students of the strategy training group (82.3) and scores attained by both students in metacognitive instruction (56.7) and control groups (54.9) in perceived value of strategy use in favour of the strategy training group students (strategy training > metacognitive + control).

b) Interaction effect

H08: *there is no interaction between the effects of students' proficiency level and treatment on the students' perceived value of strategy use as measured by the strategy questionnaire.*

The MANOVA results, shown in table 7-6 above indicated that there is no significant interaction between the effects of the treatment and proficiency levels on students perceived value of strategy use, ($F(2, 65) = 0.292, p n.s.$), and thus the eighth null hypothesis was not rejected. This means that reported perceived value of strategy use between high and low proficiency students is not different.

The findings of the strategy questionnaire are consistent with studies by Nunan (1997) and Dadour and Robbins (1996) who emphasise that training students on strategy use had a significant effect on students' knowledge, use as well as the appreciation of strategy use.

A number of interpretations may account for the better responses of the strategy group students to the strategy questionnaire compared with the metacognitive and control groups in the three levels of the strategy questionnaire. First, regarding the knowledge level, it seems that presenting the strategies explicitly and giving them labels or names helped increase the students' declarative knowledge about strategies. This explicit presentation of strategies might have resulted in providing a name for strategies students already used as

well as expanding students' repertoire of strategies by adding new strategies that they were not aware of. The natural outcome of this increase in knowledge was reflected in the increase in the number of strategies reported.

Nevertheless, knowing the name of the strategy (declarative knowledge) does not necessarily mean being able to apply it (procedural knowledge) effectively. However, it was through modelling and the repeated application of the strategies with various listening tasks, that students became more aware that strategies were valuable, accessible tools for effective listening and then they started to buy into them. In this sense, the strategy group students became more apt to apply effort in using these strategies especially after having experienced the pay-off of using them with listening. Moreover, the increase in students' repertoire of strategies may have provided them with more alternatives or options to select from what is more appropriate for different tasks encouraging more use of strategies. A natural outcome of the increased knowledge about strategies, using these strategies and experiencing their pay-off with repeated similar tasks, was to value strategies and to start thinking more highly about them. This might account for the fact that students in the strategy group ended up valuing strategies more highly than those in the other two groups.

Another interpretation for the superiority of the strategy training group to the other two groups in the three areas addressed in the questionnaire might be ascribed to the metacognitive knowledge unit allied with the strategy presentation and modelling. Increasing students' metacognitive awareness particularly, about task characteristics and appropriate strategies for task solution, probably helped the students understand the similarity between a new listening task and previous tasks and select the strategies required to achieve the task successfully, not to mention the cognitive and metacognitive strategies introduced. Conversely, the two other groups, especially the control group, in their unawareness of the task demands and their limited repertoire of strategies, seemed to rely largely on their habitual or preferred strategies, experiencing little success. This demotivated them and made them unwilling to resort to strategies in fulfilling a listening task or to think highly of the value of strategy use.

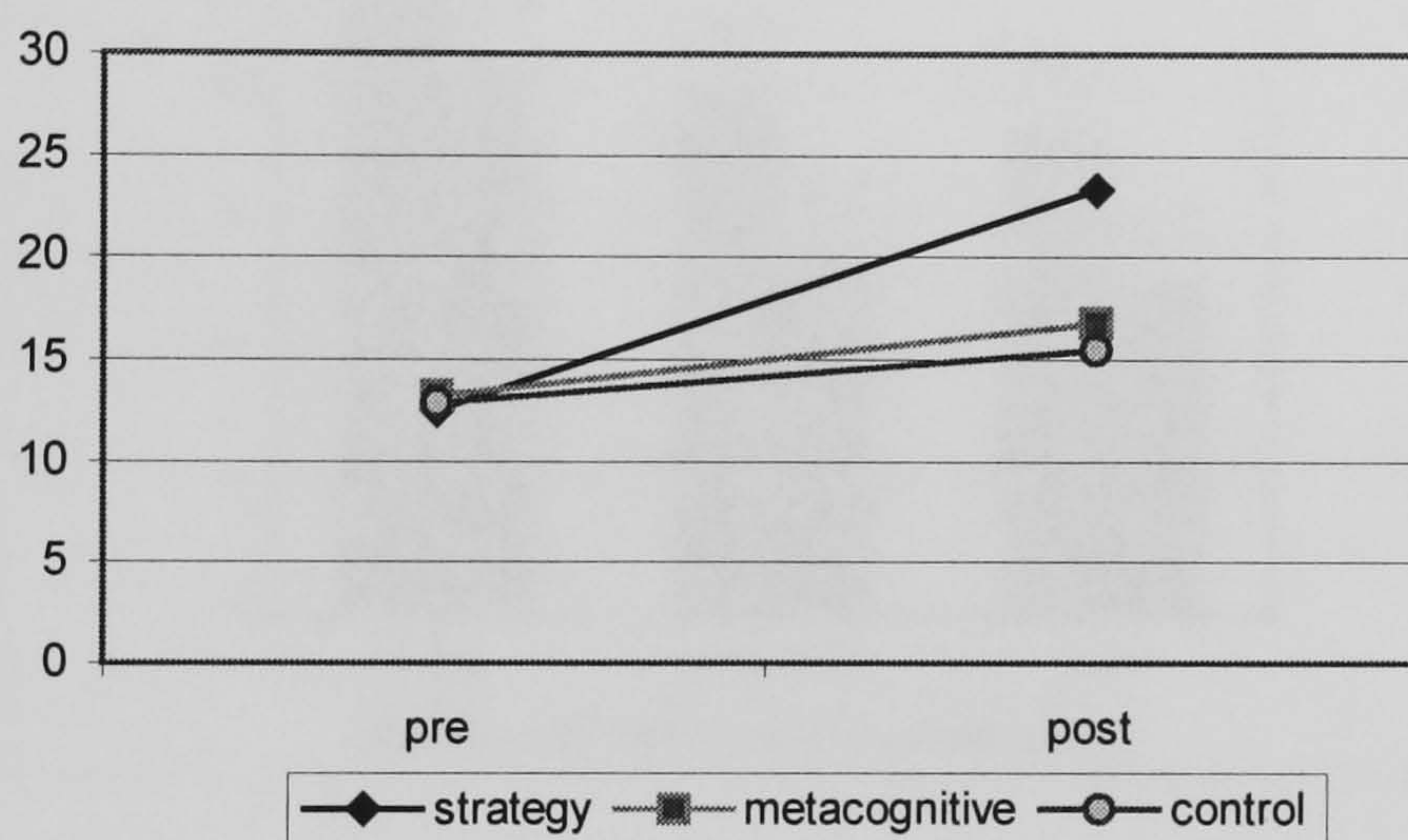
7.3 Self- efficacy

This section presents the results of the self-efficacy questionnaire, which measured students' beliefs about their capabilities to perform listening tasks before and after the treatment (see 6.4.4.3).

7.3.1 Effects of treatment on students' self-confidence

Figure 7.5 shows the raw mean scores of the three groups of the study in the self-efficacy questionnaire before and after the treatment.

Figure 7-5: Row means of the three treatment groups in the pre and post self efficacy questionnaire



The Figure shows that there was an increase in mean scores of the students' level of confidence while listening after the treatment in all the three groups of students. However, the increase in the strategy training group was far greater than that in both the metacognitive and control groups. Their score after the treatment was almost twice as before. This is probably due to the effect of treatment.

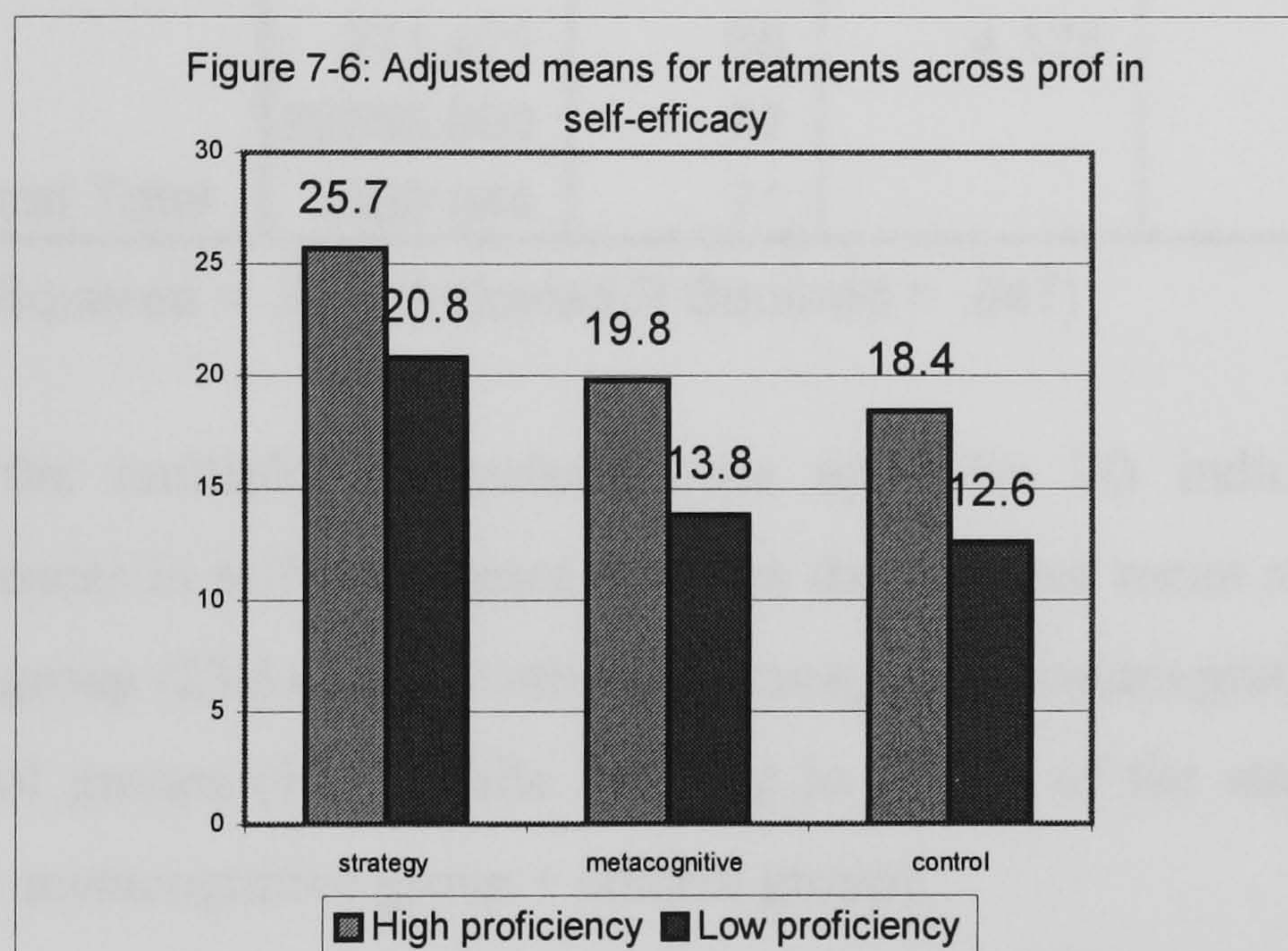
7.3.2 Effect of treatment on self-efficacy across proficiency levels

Figure 7-6 below graphically shows the adjusted mean scores of the three groups of the study across the two listening proficiency levels (high and low) in the self-efficacy questionnaire. The Figure clearly shows that the high proficiency students across the three groups were more confident than the low proficiency ones.

Moreover, the low proficiency students in the strategy training group produced even higher scores than the high proficiency students in the other two groups. The figure also demonstrates that the metacognitive instruction and control groups were very similar in terms of fostering self-confidence in listening.

7.3.3 Hypotheses testing: H09-H010

Null hypotheses (H09 and H010) were tested using MANOVA test the same procedure in (see 7.1.1 and 7.2.2).



a) Treatment effect

H09: *there is no difference between the three treatment groups of the study in self-confidence while listening as measured by the self-efficacy questionnaire before and after the treatment.*

The results of the MANOVA in table 7-7 below shows that the observed main effect (treatment) was significant ($F(2,65) = 109.7, p < .001$). This means that the ninth null hypothesis was rejected. In other words, it means that there is a significant difference at 0.05 level in self-confidence while listening to the target language among the students of the three groups due to types of treatment. More simply, the students' self efficacy depends on the type of treatment.

Table 7-7: Results of MANOVA in self-efficacy

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1668.523 ^a	6	278.087	66.596	.000
Intercept	150.073	1	150.073	35.939	.000
CONF1	284.079	1	284.079	68.031	.000
GROUP	916.554	2	458.277	109.748	.000
PROFICIE	2.734	1	2.734	.655	.421
GROUP * PROFICIE	14.877	2	7.439	1.781	.177
Error	271.421	65	4.176		
Total	26656.000	72			
Corrected Total	1939.944	71			

a. R Squared = .860 (Adjusted R Squared = .847)

The results of the multiple comparisons (see appendix 7f) indicated that there are significant differences in self-confidence between the adjusted mean scores attained by the strategy training group (23.6) and the other two groups, the metacognitive instruction group (16.5) and control groups (15.5) while listening in favour of the strategy training group (strategy group > metacognitive group + control group).

An interpretation of the better self-efficacy in the strategy group might lie in the fact that acquiring more knowledge about the construct students were dealing with along with their ability to apply suitable strategies made them more confident in their ability to accomplish representative listening tasks. It is most likely that those students had a deep sense of self-efficacy leading to positive expectations of learning success (see Zimmerman and Pons, 1986). The findings in the current study are in line with Chamot et al. (1993) who identified a positive relationship between strategy use and level of self-confidence. More specifically, they found that students who use strategies more tend to perceive themselves as more confident language learners. Conversely, students who reported less strategy use, tended to be less confident about their language learning abilities.

b) Interaction effect

H010: *there is no interaction between students' proficiency level and the effects of treatment on the students' self-confidence as measured by the self-efficacy questionnaire.*

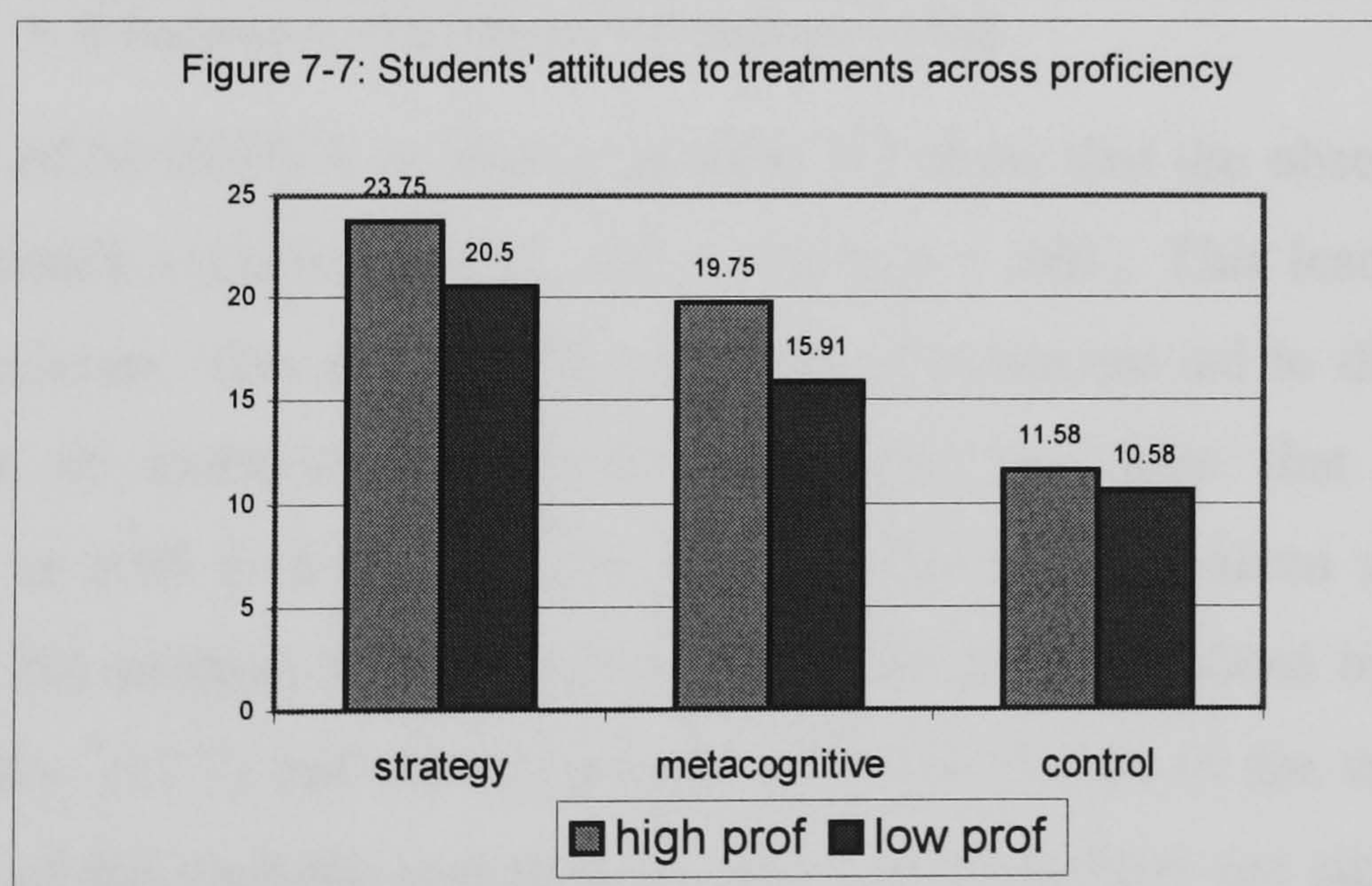
The MANOVA results, shown in table 7-6 above indicated that there is no significant interaction between the effects of the treatment and proficiency levels on students' self-confidence, ($F(2, 65) = 1.781, p, n.s.$). This means that the tenth null hypothesis was not rejected.

7.4 Attitude

This section presents the results of the attitude questionnaire, which measured students' attitudes towards the instructional approach after the treatment (see 6.4.4.4).

7.4.1 Effects of treatment on attitudes

Figure 7.7 graphically shows the differences between the adjusted mean scores of the three treatment groups in the attitude scale across the two proficiency levels.



As it is clear from the Figure, the highest mean score was attained by the strategy group high proficiency students (23.8), while the lowest mean score was attained by the control group low proficiency students (10.6). Furthermore, we can notice that the strategy group

low proficiency students attained higher mean scores than those of both the high and low proficiency students in both the metacognitive instruction and control groups.

7.4.2 Hypotheses testing: Ho11-Ho12

Null hypotheses eleven and twelve (Ho11, Ho12) were tested using MANOVA.

a) Treatment effects

Ho11: *there are no differences between the three groups of the study in attitudes as measured by the attitude questionnaire before and after the treatment.*

Table 7-8: Results of MANOVA in Attitude

Dependent Variable: ATTITUDE

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1644.736 ^a	5	328.947	45.396	.000
Intercept	20842.014	1	20842.014	2876.263	.000
GROUPS	1487.194	2	743.597	102.619	.000
PROF	130.681	1	130.681	18.034	.000
GROUPS * PROF	26.861	2	13.431	1.853	.165
Error	478.250	66	7.246		
Total	22965.000	72			
Corrected Total	2122.986	71			

a. R Squared = .775 (Adjusted R Squared = .758)

The results of MANOVA as shown in table 7-7 show that the observed treatment effects were statistically significant ($F(2, 65) = 102.6, p < .001$). This leads us to reject the null hypothesis eleven. This means different types of treatment led to differences in attitudes. The results of multiple comparison (Appendix 7g) show that there are significant differences at 0.05 level in attitudes between the adjusted mean scores attained by the students of the strategy training group (22.1) and scores attained by both students in the metacognitive (17.7) and control groups (11.08) in favour of the strategy training group. The results of the multiple comparisons also show that there are significant differences at 0.05 level in attitudes between the adjusted mean scores attained by the students of the metacognitive group and those attained by the control group in favour of the metacognitive instruction group. Therefore, it can be summarised that the treatment effect is observed in the following order: strategy group > metacognitive group > control group.

b) Interaction effect

Ho12: *there is no significant interaction between students' proficiency level and the effects of treatment on attitudes as measured by the attitude scale.*

As shown in table 7-7 above, there is no significant difference in attitudes due to treatment by proficiency interaction effect ($F(2, 65) = 1.853, p, n.s.$), which leads us to accept the twelfth null hypothesis. This means, it is reasonable to believe that attitudes between high and low proficiency students are not different.

Table 7.9 below presents a summary of the hypothesis testing in all the six variables involved. As it is clear from the table, the main effects of treatment in all the variables examined were significant. This means that students' listening performance, their knowledge of strategies, use and value, their self-efficacy and attitudes are dependent upon the types of treatment received. Within the main effect of treatment there was a recurrent pattern that showed that strategy training was the most effective approach in promoting all the dependent variables involved. In this same pattern, the effect of metacognitive instruction came second after that of the strategy instruction only in some of those variables (listening performance and attitudes). However, the table indicated that the interaction effects were not significant except in Ho4 (the interaction between treatment and proficiency on students' knowledge of strategies).

Table 7-9: Summary of hypotheses testing

	Null Hypotheses	Evidence (F values)	Results
1	There is no difference between the three groups of the study in listening performance as measured by the listening test before and after the treatment	162.2*	Rejected
2	There is no interaction between the effects of treatment and students' proficiency level on listening performance as measured by the listening test.	0.85	Accepted
3	There is no difference between the three groups of the study in knowledge of strategies as measured by the strategy questionnaire before and after the treatment.	146.85*	Rejected
4.	There is no interaction between the effects of treatment and students' proficiency level on knowledge of strategies as measured by the strategy questionnaire.	4.06*	Rejected
5	There is no difference between the three groups of the study in use of strategies as measured by the strategy questionnaire before and after the treatment.	108.03*	Rejected
6	There is no interaction between the effects of treatment and students' proficiency level as measured by the strategy questionnaire	0.46	Accepted
7	There is no difference between the three groups of the study in perceived value of strategy use as measured by the strategy questionnaire before and after the treatment.	117.92*	Rejected
8	There is no interaction between the effects of treatment and students' proficiency level as measured by the strategy questionnaire	0.29	Accepted
9	There is no difference between the three groups of the study in self-confidence while listening to the target language as measured by the self-efficacy questionnaire before and after the treatment.	109.75*	Rejected
10	There is no interaction between the effects of treatment and students' proficiency level as measured by the self-efficacy questionnaire	1.78	Accepted
11	There is no difference between the three groups of the study in attitude as measured by the attitude scale before and after the treatment.	102.62*	Rejected
12	There is no interaction between the effects of treatment and students' proficiency level as measured by the attitude scale	1.85	Accepted

7.5 Chapter summary

This chapter reported on the results of quantitative analyses of the main study. It examined the effects of treatment (strategy training/metacognitive instruction/pure exposure) and interaction between the treatment effect and proficiency level on the variables examined (students' listening performance, their knowledge, use and perceived value of strategies, their self-efficacy and attitudes towards the treatment). The results of the listening comprehension test) established that strategy instruction was more effective than the other two types of treatment (metacognitive instruction and pure exposure) in enhancing FL students' listening comprehension. For the interaction between this effect and students' proficiency level, no significant differences were found (see section 7-1). Section 7-2 showed that metacognitive instruction only and pure exposure were very similar in terms of their effects on students' knowledge of strategies, use and perceived value, whereas the strategy training resulted in significant differences (see 7.2.3). Regarding, the results of the treatment effects on students' self-efficacy, there were significant differences in favour of the strategy group (strategy training > metacognitive and control). The same pattern in the listening comprehension test results was repeated in case of attitude.

The quantitative analyses yielded very interesting results, which might add a number of contributions to strategy training research in general and listening in particular. These results, if supported by the findings from the qualitative analyses discussed in the next chapter, will help create a comprehensive rigorous picture of the findings by providing in-depth explanations of the different factors in the current study.

Chapter Eight

Results of the Qualitative Analyses

8.0 Introduction

This chapter reports on the findings from the qualitative analyses: the analyses of the follow-up interviews (8.1) and the retrospective interviews (8.2). The follow-up interviews tried to unveil students' reactions to the treatment they received: what they liked and what they did not; what was useful and contributed to the success of the treatment and what was not helpful in the treatment. The retrospective interviews aimed to illustrate different paths students in the three treatment groups took to achieve comprehension. They attempted to give insight into the students' use of strategies in the three treatment groups before and after the intervention.

8.1 Follow-up interviews

Data from the follow-up interviews were examined for patterns and important insights regarding students' reactions and attitudes towards the treatment. Table 8-1 below shows the categories derived from the data provided in the interviews. The data obtained from each group are presented, discussed and compared in some detail in the following sections.

Table 8-1: Categories derived from the follow-up interviews

Categories	Strategy group	Metacognitive group	Control group
The most successful things about the approach used (8.1.1)	√	√	
Changes of perceptions (8.1.2)	√	√	
Changes of attitudes (8.1.3)	√		√
Rating of comprehension (8.1.4)	√		
Ways in which the approach used was helpful (8.1.5)	√	√	√
Students' concerns about the treatment received (8.1.6):			
a) Things students thought were not helpful in the approach	√	√	√
b) Causes of comprehension problems		√	√

In presenting extracts from the students' responses in the interviews, for purposes of clarity, each extract is identifiable by an ID code in brackets. The first letter in the code stands for the group (S for strategy, M for metacognitive and C for control), the second letter stands for the proficiency level (H for high and L for low) and the third number stands for student's number in the group. SL15, for example, denotes the strategy group student number 15 of low proficiency level. What follows is a discussion of the data obtained in the follow-up interviews across the three groups organised by the categories in table 8.1 (for more quotes on each category see appendix 8.a).

8.1.1 Factors contributing to the success of treatment

Examining the first category, which addressed the components that subjects felt contributed to the success of their treatment, it was obvious that both the strategy and metacognitive groups proposed that the preparation unit (metacognitive knowledge unit) was an important factor, which led to the success of their treatments. Students in both groups reported that this unit was like a source, which provided them with a large amount of effective and interesting information about the processes of learning and listening. 83.3% Of the strategy group students (20 students, 12 of them high and 8 low) agreed that this unit contributed to the success of the programme. SH4, for example said, *"I think what made this program a real success, from my point of view, was the good preparation we had received at the beginning"*. SH1 also expressed his fascination about the information this unit added to him as he stated:

What fascinated me was the theoretical background knowledge we had. I mean the preparation unit. I think now I can affirm that neither I nor any of my colleagues knew anything about the themes we handled in this unit before.

54.2% of the metacognitive instruction group students (13 students, 9 high and 6 low) voiced the same viewpoint that the preparation unit guided them through expanding their knowledge about themselves as listeners and about the listening process. This meaning has been clearly spelled out in the quote from MH1:

I think the introductory part we had was great. You know that so far in my three years at the English Department we have studied nothing like that. It widened my mind and got me ready for what came next. I mean the listening part itself.

Apart from the preparation unit, different factors were suggested by the two groups. The strategy group highlighted two more factors (i.e. modelling and practice), whereas the metacognitive group reported one more factor only (i.e. peer group hints). The modelling of

strategies by the researcher as well as by some students, especially using the Arabic language, seemed to have a motivating and influential effect on students in the strategy group. 62.5% of the students in this group (15 students, 9 high and 6 low) said that modelling strategies, especially in Arabic, was the motive that made them buy into strategies and encouraged them to try using them. This idea was spelled out by SH9:

I think explaining how the strategies work in Arabic by the teacher (modelling), I mean giving a model of how they work, was really helpful and interesting at the same time. It showed us practically how our teacher deals with the task ... how he solves the ongoing problems he meets ... how he generates predictions, modifies them and based on the clues in the text draws conclusions

SH9 added that the real challenge for him was watching his peers come to the front of the lab and try modelling the strategies. He said:

When my friend came to the class and gave a live example of how the strategy worked ... it was really the challenge that set me up ... as long as Mohamed is able to do it successfully, then I can do it too.

The third factor reported by students of the strategy training programme was 'practice'. Extensive practice provided within each unit as well as in the consolidation units enabled students to learn, practise, revise and consolidate each strategy. 87.5% of the strategy group students (21 students, 10 high and 11 low) claimed that practice gave them enough time and opportunities to assimilate and apply the strategies in real listening tasks. SL13, for example, reported:

The teaching of strategies was interesting... besides, the most important thing is that the lecturer did not move from the strategy before most of us if not all knew how to use it.

SH11 said, reflecting upon how practice helped him and his group:

I remember we all felt very worried at the beginning of strategy presentation ...but with the extensive repeated practice we had this tension starting to fade away.

Referring back to the metacognitive instruction group, in addition to the preparation unit, this group thought that the 'peer group hints', which was the main feature of their programme, mentioned during the group discussions, was the second factor that contributed to the success of their treatment. In this group students had more opportunities to interact with one another. In this sense, increased student-student interaction in which negotiation of meaning took place might explain the students' feeling that hints mentioned by the peer group helped them. 75%

of the students in this group (18 students, most of them, 14, low proficiency) reported that the discussion they had after listening guided them to different ways of making sense of the information in the text as well as understanding more about what they had listened to. MH11 voiced out this idea in his statement:

The discussion we used to have after listening to the text enabled me to figure out the puzzle. Only when we discussed what we listened to I did start recognising information that I wasn't able to work out during listening time.

MH5 agreed “*talking with my friends enabled me to make sense of ideas and segments which seemed ambiguous and incomprehensible during the listening time*”. In this group students had more opportunities to interact with one another and exchange ideas about how to go about a listening task. In this sense, increased student-student interaction where negotiation of meaning took place might explain the students’ feeling that hints mentioned by peers helped them. However, they also expressed some concerns about the group discussion saying that it should have been completed with the researcher’s guidance when they faced some difficulties or problems that they could not sort out themselves.

To sum up, both the strategy training and the metacognitive groups were highly impressed and influenced by the metacognitive knowledge unit introduced to them at the beginning of their training. Furthermore, each group added different factors assisting the success of their treatment. This assures the need for empowering students by providing them with enough knowledge, which informs their decisions, before asking them to take control of their learning.

8.1.2 Changes of perceptions

Referring back to the categories listed in the table above (8.1), the second subcategory shared by the strategy and metacognitive groups was the changes of their perceptions about learning as well as listening. Students’ data in both groups indicated that the programme helped them change their perceptions and conceptualisations about themselves as learners and listeners as well as about learning in general. They also acknowledged the help of their programmes in correcting some false concepts they used to have about listening. The treatment they received instead fostered facts about listening as a process, how to approach it as well as the adjustment of listening purposes in accordance with the nature of the task and text.

In the strategy group, there were changes in the students' perceptions about themselves as learners, about listening and about learning. 37.5% of the students stated that the programme helped them correct some false conceptions they used to have as well as acquire new perceptions about learning. SH1, for instance, reported that he no longer believed that learning by heart (rote learning) was the best way to approach a learning task. He became convinced that using strategies was surer to lead to better learning and therefore to a greater success plus enjoyment. He reported:

I used to believe that learning by heart was the only way for good grades, but once you tasted the sweetness of trying strategies, you will never worry about grades as they (strategies) ensure high scores, understanding plus enjoyment.

Also, eleven students reported that their perceptions about themselves as learners changed after the intervention. SH4, for instance, said:

I think the strategies programme uncovered some of my own capabilities ... my learning style and what suits me, what my strengths and weaknesses are and how I can make best use of my learning styles.

Moreover, 70.8% (17 students, 11 high and 6 low) of the students in this group reported that there was a change after the treatment in their perceptions about listening as a process. This is lucidly expressed in SL14's statement:

I used to believe that there was no difference at all between spoken and written texts. This is because when we listen to a lecture the lecturer usually uses the same terms and vocabulary in the textbook. But when we did the task of differences between spoken and written discourses I realised a lot of facts, which helped me a lot.

SL16 pinpointed that through the treatment he learnt that different listening situations may involve different listening purposes saying: "... Now I know that different listening situations require different types of listening". Others reported that they learnt that they had been wrong in believing that listening and hearing were synonymous, that they needed to listen to every word, and that they were not allowed to use their background knowledge.

To sum up, the strategy group students seemed to think that one of the important effects they gained from the treatment they received was the way in which it helped them in reshaping their perceptions about some highly important concepts such as learning, listening and the learner's role.

In the metacognitive instruction group, there were changes in students' perceptions about learning as well as about themselves as listeners. Four students all from the high proficiency

group (15.6%) in this group reported that their perceptions about learning changed significantly after the programme.

This was expressed by MH9 as he said:

We were introduced to things that helped us think about our own learning in terms of strengths and weaknesses as well as thinking about new ways of improving our learning.

41.7% (ten students, 7 high and 3 low) in this group also reported that after the treatment they had different conceptions about themselves as listeners. ML22, for example, said:

Actually after going through this course ... I've re-evaluated myself as a listener. I used to be a passive rather than an active listener and now I'm astonished that I have done reasonably well with what I got out of this course".

These were some subcategories, which were shared by the strategy training and metacognitive instruction groups. The following section (8.1.3) presents the change of students' attitudes as depicted in the responses of the students' of the strategy and control groups in the interviews. The strategy group students added a positive change of attitudes towards listening and towards strategy instruction, whereas the control group students reported negative attitudes towards listening and themselves as listeners.

8.1.3 Change of attitudes

Students in the strategy training group indicated positive attitudes towards listening as well as the instructional approach used. 66.7% (16 students, 12 high and 6 low) in this group reported that their attitudes towards listening became more positive. SH1, for example, pointed out: "... Now listening, for me, is no longer pain or something that causes tension as before. It is really something I love to do". Along the same line, SH4 added that listening had become as much enjoyable as a computer game: "... really, I enjoy listening after the course more than before. Listening is now more like a sort of a computer game". In addition, fifteen students stated that they developed positive attitudes towards strategy instruction. SL21, a low proficiency student, stated that he would never panic whenever he first heard an unknown word or a phrase, as he became a strategic listener: "... Thanks are due to strategies that I won't panic when I first hear something I don't know or understand". SH2 also pinpointed that listening is no longer difficult when approached with effective strategies: "This course taught me that listening is no longer difficult if you approach it with successful strategies". SH11 went beyond such positive attitudes stating that strategy teaching helped him take

control of his overall learning as well as transferring them to other language skills and showing a desire to learn more about strategy instruction:

I think strategy teaching taught me how to control my listening and how to attack the text I'm going to hear.... To control not only my listening, but my overall learning...once I practised using these strategies and saw how fruitful they were, I decided to use them with reading and speaking as well. They are really very useful...I really need some recommended readings in strategy teaching.

In contrast to the strategy group, the control group students indicated negative attitudes as a result of the treatment they received. 14 control group students (58.8%) reported that they were not satisfied with their listening abilities and that they even lost hope of getting them improved. CL15, for example, describes a downfall from great expectations at the start of the programme to hopelessness and disappointment by the end of the treatment:

I started with all hope that I was going at last to be good at listening, but the more I listened without understanding, the more hopeless I felt about my own capabilities.

The same idea was revealed by CH12 who stated “*I started the program with a lot of hope and finished it with a lot of pain, sorrow and sadness*”. CH1 and CH5 shared the same attitude adding that they became less confident after the treatment about their ability to listen in English: CH1: “*I think it was my fault. I should have set myself appropriate expectations ... I shouldn't have expected to be a better listener*”. CH5: “*After the programme, I can say the problem lies in me, not in the lack of listening in my preparation course*”.

To sum up, the follow-up interview findings revealed a change of students' attitudes towards their treatment, listening and themselves as listeners. This finding accords with findings of the attitude scale (see 7.4). However, it showed a new dimension that could not be captured by the quantitative findings: the demoralising effect students developed by the end of the programme. Though the quantitative findings showed that there are significant differences in attitude between the three groups, it did not explain the demoralising effect the pure exposure had on the control group students.

8.1.4 Comprehension rating

A further category that was unique to the strategy group was students' rating of comprehension. Of the strategy group, 13 students, almost all of them high proficiency, gave percentages to their level of comprehension after the programme. Some students such as SH1,

SL14 and SH7 estimated the percentage of their understanding of a text. They all stated that their comprehension level had drastically increased after the programme. Here are some of the students' comments:

SH1: "I can touch the change that happened not only for me but also to my colleagues. I can understand and recognise most of the messages, say 85% of what is said".

SL14: "...so after this course if you ask me about my listening skills in comparison with before, yes, currently I can listen with 70% comprehension of what I'm hearing with the help of these strategies I was taught. Before that I could hardly understand few words or sentences.

SH7: "I used to understand a lot of what is said as words and sentences but nowadays I can piece all the words together and get a solid idea of what is going on with the help of strategies. 75% comprehension of the text can express how I changed".

Perhaps the way in which students started to evaluate their listening ability was a reflection of the confidence they gained from the treatment (see 8.1.5 below). They no longer thought that listening was difficult, as they had learnt how to go about the difficulties they might encounter while listening.

8.1.5 Ways in which treatment was helpful

With regards to the category that addressed the ways in which the kind of treatment was helpful, the strategy group acknowledged four different ways in which their treatment helped them. They reported that the strategy program was helpful because:

- It removed anxiety and fostered confidence,
- It provided effective tools for listening,
- It developed independence; and,
- It motivated them for future independent listening.

Almost all students (23, 15 high and 7 low proficiency) in the strategy group highlighted the fact that the programme they received warded off their anxiety, removed fear and built self-confidence while listening. This is clear in the quotes from SH1 and SH3:

SH1: It really has taken out all the fear I used to have when listening, and instilled confidence in my ability to listen to English speakers.

SH3: I think what this course has given me is confidence...once you feel confident, and don't approach listening with fear or irritation, I'm sure you will do it.

This findings added more depth to the quantitative finding that showed that strategy training enhanced students' confidence (see 7.3). The strategy group students' highlighted that their treatment helped removing anxiety and fostering their confidence, gave support to the findings of the self- efficacy questionnaire. These findings accord with what the literature reveled about the potential effects of strategy training on promoting self-confidence.

On the other hand, 15 students (9 of them are low proficiency students) reported that the treatment provided them with a wide range of strategies that could be used as tools to overcome any difficulties not only in listening but also in any other language skill. This is clear in the quotes from SH7 and SH5:

SH7: A wide range of strategies has been added to me that I can use not only in listening but also in other language skills.

SH5: "Strategies are very helpful. I would never use or become aware of such strategies if someone did not introduce them to me".

Moreover, developing independence was highlighted by 58.3% (14 students, 9 high and 5 low) as the third way in which strategy training helped them. SL16, SL23, for example listed some of the skills they acquired during the programme. Their statements were as follows:

SL16: "I learnt to set a purpose for my listening before embarking on listening...activate my background knowledge ... and make predictions. Then while listening ... I listen selectively ... make the link with my background and infer things that weren't said ...and finally ... evaluate how I did and what I learnt".

Perhaps, what is surprising is that this low proficiency student as it seems from his statement highlighted some of what was incorporated in Holec's definition (1983: 3) of autonomy as the learner's ability to:

"... have, and to hold, the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning, i.e.,

- determining the objectives;
- defining the contents and the progressions;
- selecting methods and techniques to be used;
- monitoring the procedure of acquisition properly speaking (rhythm, time, place, etc.);
- evaluating what has been acquired'.

Similarly, SL23, another low proficiency student, reported:

“The programme has provided me with the basic knowledge and skills to be an active learner who can proceed on learning on my own way once the course is over”.

In this way he portrays what Wenden (1991: 15) refers to as independent learners, which according to her are the ones who:

have acquired the learning strategies, the knowledge about learning, and the attitudes that enable them to use these skills and knowledge confidently, flexibly, appropriately and independently of a teacher. Therefore, they are autonomous.

Finally, 17 students (8 high and 9 low) pointed out that strategy training motivated them for future listening. This is reflected in the statement by SH5: *“Now I’d love to listen mostly all the time. Because every time I listen now it adds up to building my confidence and knowledge”*. SH9 also made a decision to go on practising listening on his own and identified two programmes that he would listen to regularly. He said,

By the end of the programme I became sure that practice using such strategies would make perfection, so from there on I decided to listen to the Nile TV and the BBC regularly.

In contrast, the metacognitive instruction group acknowledged two different ways in which their treatment was helpful. First, it raised their awareness about listening as a process and, second, it unveiled new ways of understanding the text. Regarding the first way, listening awareness, nine students (37.5%) reported that the information they had through the preparatory unit enhanced their understanding of the processes underlying listening. In his report, ML13 said,

I believe that the theory we received about listening was something missing in our methodology course. It prepared us for the listening itself ... when you know something about the theory it helps you go about the skill.

Also, ML18 seemed to agree on this idea adding,

After this experience, I believe we shouldn’t be isolated from the theory. We should know some theory about every skill instead of leaving us to our own conceptions, which are most likely to be incorrect.

As for the second way, opening new ways of understanding the text, ten students (4 high and 6 low) reported that the treatment they received gave them insight into how to listen effectively and provided them with alternatives on how to go about listening. MH1, in this regard, reported that by listening to his friends as they sorted out problems they encountered, he discovered new ways of dealing with the aural texts.

But I benefited a lot from just listening to others speaking about their tricks of how they sorted out problems ... I came to know and understand new ways of dealing with the aural texts.

This is true, as students are likely to be more open with their classmates in small groups than in a larger discussion led by the teacher or researcher. Students seemed more willing to talk to their peers about their problems and how they sorted them out.

The control group, on the other hand, reported only one way that was helpful about the treatment they received. That was giving them the opportunity to use the language lab. This was highlighted by eight students (33.3%) in this group. Two indicative examples are given below:

CH3: "... it's my first time to get into the lab. It's really helpful to listen through a headphone as nothing interferes with what you are listening to. It helps you focus your attention on the important facts to be drawn from the passage".

CH1: 2Using the lab is a privilege as you can listen to native speakers in a good controlled environment with less background noise which is what gets me nervous in listening".

8.1.6 Students' concerns about treatment

The last category listed in table 8.1 above addressed the concerns about the treatment students of each group raised. The strategy group highlighted three concerns about their treatment. The first was mentioned by 13 students, most of them from the low proficiency group, who felt that strategies were not easy to apply. The quotes from SL24 and SL16 clearly conveyed this. SL24 stated: "*... they are not so easy to apply especially with a very fast speaker and a lot of unknown words*". SL16 said: "*They (strategies) are easy to learn ... but hard to apply*". On the other hand, 14 students reported that they needed much more practice in using the strategies in order to become strategic listeners. This is confirmed by SH12 who spelled out his need for more practice to feel how strategy use is enjoyable and productive. SH12 reported: "*... They (strategies) are not a quick fix remedy; they need a lot of practice...only*

then you can feel how enjoyable and productive it is". Also, S10 confessed that he needed more and more practice to catch up with his friends' level:

SH10: ... in class it is quite easy but at home I forget all about the strategies. I'm sure this is my fault as I can see my mates using them at home as well as in class...it is practice that I'm missing.

The last concern highlighted by only five high proficiency students was that strategies were not new to them. However, they acknowledged that through the strategy training they learnt how to label the strategies as well as the cues they might look for while applying a given strategy. This concern was evident in the following statement by SH8: *"I've already been using most of them (strategies), but what is new for me is giving them names and so many clues that I can use"*.

The metacognitive group, on the other hand, highlighted four concerns about the treatment they received. First, 15 students (5 high and 10 low) reported that group discussion was not of much help and suggested that more teacher's involvement would have helped. MH5, for example, pinpointed: *"Though it (the group discussion) was quite useful, I think it would have become more useful with the help of the teacher himself"*. ML16 also revealed that, though he had gained some benefits from the successful students in his group, he did not feel their help was quite sufficient without the teacher's instructions: *"The good students like S, A and M came with so many good ideas but the problem is I don't think they are as good as the teacher himself"*.

The other three concerns raised by the metacognitive group were related to features of connected speech (fast speech, lack of concentration) as well as unfamiliar vocabulary. These concerns were also shared by students in the control group. Students in both groups attributed the comprehension breakdown they encountered during the programme to features such as fast speech, and lack of concentration. 15 students (62.5%), in the metacognitive group, stated that fast speech was one of the reasons why they could not understand the texts. ML21 explained that in trying to catch up with the fast aural input, he forgot what he listened to earlier: *"They are talking too fast. At the beginning it was somewhat Ok, I could survive, then I couldn't at all, I forgot every thing they said"*.

By the same token, 18 control group students (75%) reported that fast speech made it very difficult for them to understand what they were listening to. CH5, for instance, found out that

he could not even distinguish words from each other: *“They were slurring their words, so that it was hard to distinguish one word from another”*.

Another concern was the lack of concentration while listening, which was raised by ten students in the metacognitive group and 15 students in the control group. When students were lost with the fast spoken aural input and the unknown words, they could not stop their thoughts from wandering away. This idea was spelled out by MH7 in the following quote: *“I got a lot of what was said at the beginning, yet when the tape went on I couldn’t concentrate any more as I was thinking of what had been said, not what was being said”*. The same concern was spelled out by CH9: *“...from the second week onward I very often found myself daydreaming”*.

Unfamiliar vocabulary was a further concern shared by students in both groups: 13 students of the metacognitive group and 18 students of the control group reported that they could not cope due to the many unfamiliar lexical items. Students in both groups seemed to focus mainly on vocabulary in trying to understand the aural input. Then they reported that they could not cope due to the many unfamiliar lexical items. This is clear in the following statement by MH13 and CL17 who respectively state: *“The texts we listened to were full of words that I couldn’t recognise”, “If I had known the words they were using, I’d have had no problem at all. They were using words which I hadn’t an idea about”*.

The last concern, which was unique to the control group, was the interference of the background noise with the quality of recording. Five students in this group claimed that this interference made it more difficult for them to listen clearly. CL14, for example, said, *“The quality of the sound was not that great. There was a lot of background noise in the tape; a lot of phone ringing and metallic noises as well as banging doors”*. However, that background noise they were referring to was the clues that helped the strategy group, but the control group did not utilise these clues or even realise they were clues.

8.1.7 Summary of 8.1

This section (8.1) reported on the findings obtained from the follow-up interviews. As the discussion above showed there was some conformity between the strategy and the metacognitive groups over some viewpoints about their treatments (e.g. the role of metacognitive knowledge and change of perceptions). The follow-up interviews, for example, revealed that both the strategy training and the metacognitive groups were highly impressed

and influenced by the metacognitive knowledge unit introduced to them at the beginning of the programme. The metacognitive and the control groups also seemed to have some similar concerns about their treatments (e.g. fast speech, lack of concentration and unfamiliar vocabulary). Nevertheless, each group had its unique categories of comments and viewpoints that emerged from their experience with the treatment they went through and would reflect students' reactions to that treatment.

8.2 Retrospective interviews

This section reports on the results of the analysis of the retrospective interviews and illustrates the paths students in the three treatment groups took to achieve comprehension. The purpose of these retrospective interviews was twofold:

- a) to trace the differences in students' listening strategy use across the three groups after the intervention to depict the influence of treatment on students' listening strategies use, and,
- b) to compare the results obtained from these reports with the findings yielded by the strategy questionnaire (see 7.2).

However, it seems pervasive, at the onset, to state that these results of the retrospective interviews must be understood as suggestive of patterns in strategy use across the three treatment groups before and after the intervention at the **high** proficiency level and therefore must be dealt with cautiously and not to be generalised before further research.

Students' reports, which were in Arabic, were transcribed and translated into English. The transcripts were then coded for identification of listening comprehension strategies utilising the scheme proposed by Vandergrift (1992) with the caveat of using other schemes when needed. Then, the inter-coder and intra-coder reliability were computed as explained in 5.3.6.4.3. The retrospective interviews were analysed quantitatively (frequency) and qualitatively. The analysis was guided by the following two questions:

- What types of listening comprehension strategies are used by high proficiency students across the three treatment groups before and after the intervention as represented by the reports given by students (SH2, MH9, CH3) before the intervention and those given by students (SH7, MH12, CH8) after the intervention?
- Are there differences in the quality, range and types of strategies used by treatment?

Results of the quantitative analysis of the retrospective interviews are summarised in table 8-2, which shows the type of strategies (cognitive/metacognitive) and frequency of strategies used by the students who took part in the verbalisation.

The table shows that all students in the three groups, before and after the treatment, deployed both metacognitive and cognitive strategies in their processing. An interesting issue here is that the difference between the use of metacognitive and cognitive strategies across the three groups. The table interestingly reveals that apart from SH7, all the other students used metacognitive strategies much more frequently than the cognitive strategies. A further issue, which is clear from the table, is that while students in the metacognitive and control groups reported almost no change in their use of strategies after the treatment, the strategy group students reported a considerable increase in the overall use of strategies, and particularly in the use of cognitive strategies.

Table 8-2: Type of strategies used by groups: before and after intervention

Strategies	Strategy group		Metacognitive group		Control group	
	SH2 (Before)	SH7 (After)	MH9 (Before)	MH12 (After)	CH3 (Before)	CH8 (After)
	F	F	F	F	F	F
<u>Metacognitive strategies:</u>						
Planning (selective attention)	1	1	0	1	1	1
Planning (directed attention)	0	0	1	0	0	0
Planning (advance-organiser)	0	1	0	0	0	0
Problem identification	3	2	4	5	5	3
Self-monitoring (comprehension).	3	1	4	1	0	1
Self-monitoring (auditory)	0	0	1	1	0	0
Self-evaluation (comprehension)	1	3	0	3	1	2
Self-evaluation (strategy).	0	2	0	0	0	0
Sub-total	8	10	10	11	7	7
<u>Cognitive strategies:</u>						
Inferencing	1	2	2	3	1	2
Identifying SIMT	0	1	0	0	0	0
Essence of meaning	0	2	0	0	0	0
Summarisation	0	2	0	0	0	0
Note taking	0	2	0	0	0	0
Elaboration	0	5	0	0	2	0
Prediction	0	2	0	0	0	0
Repetition	0	0	1	0	0	0
Sub-total	1	16	3	3	3	2
Overall total	9	26	13	14	10	9

The issues highlighted above were rendered by the numeric data in table 8.2. However, an increase in the number and frequency of strategies used can only offer a superficial picture of strategy use rather than giving clear insight into whether the strategies were used properly or have resulted in better comprehension. For example, the number and frequency of strategies used cannot show how a combination of strategies was deployed to understand the meaning of an aural text, nor can it convey whether an “inference”, for instance, was used accurately or effectively at a certain part of the text. Therefore, before coming into any conclusions, it was pertinent to investigate these issues in more depth. It was important to look more closely at students’ reports for variation in strategy use not discernable via simple strategy counts; to see what strategies were used, in which boundaries, how much they were appropriate and if they led to proper processing of the text. Discussion of the qualitative analysis was organised by group and presented in the following three sections.

8.2.1 Use of strategies: Strategy group

The reports (Appendix 8b) given by SH2, the strategy group student before the intervention and SH7 (appendix 8c), strategy group student after the intervention, revealed a different pattern of strategy use and a different level of comprehension. SH2’s use of strategies did not seem to be a successful one. His use of strategies lacked the balance and integration of both cognitive and metacognitive strategies. In other words, he was unable to use proper combination of strategies to achieve proper comprehension. Therefore, his comprehension was shallow and did not go beyond picking up some words from here and there. On the other hand, SH7 showed a high level of awareness of a wide range of cognitive strategies, which, together with metacognitive strategies, helped him achieve a better level of comprehension. What really distinguished SH7’s use of strategies was that when monitoring or evaluating his comprehension, he used to redirect his attention to something he should have done or would do to repair his comprehension breakdown. What is more was that his awareness of task knowledge seemed to help him select the appropriate strategy or combination of strategies.

As is clear from table 8.2, SH2 used four metacognitive strategies eight times. However, a qualitative scrutiny of his report revealed that out of these eight times, he tried selective attention only once: “*I tried to concentrate on the words ... familiar to me*”. He used it once at the beginning of the second listening segment, but as it was only followed by comprehension monitoring: “*I still don’t know what they are talking about*”, and then by problem identification: “*I cannot remember what exactly they were saying*”. This important

strategy did not seem to work out well with him. In fact this student's use of strategy seemed to be revolving in a circular pattern: attempting to grasp any familiar words: " *I could only grasp some words, ... I recognised some words like ... In this part I heard the word 'rain forest', etc.*" , then monitoring comprehension: " *I could only grasp some words ..., I sill don't know what they are talking about, ... but still I'm not sure, ...* ", and then identifying problems: " *... it was so fast, ... they are very fast*", and so on. The only cognitive strategy he used was inferencing: " *from the type of words I hear I could understand they were ... discussing the importance of rain forest ...* ". This was tried near the end of the text and it was also word level inferencing and could only help with getting one of the main ideas included in the text, and that was the only comprehension achievement he reached, though he declared he was "not so sure" about it.

On the other hand, SH7's use of strategies, as shown from table 8.2, outnumbered all the other students. He made use of both cognitive and metacognitive strategies and as clear from the table, he used not only more strategies but also wider varieties, which are clear especially in the cognitive strategy use. A closer examination of his report revealed a systematic deliberate use of strategies where he showed the ability to choose from a variety of strategies those which best suited his purpose of listening. Besides, he was able to combine the two types of strategies (cognitive and metacognitive) to attain fairly good level of comprehension. He, for instance, used six types of metacognitive strategies ten times and eight types of cognitive strategies 16 times.

SH7 used metacognitive strategies to regulate his listening, not to report his comprehension breakdown and problem identification while staying passive about them, as did SH2. He (SH7) appeared to use more variety of metacognitive strategies more appropriately than SH2. It became visible that he had a plan in his mind; to listen not to every word, but to the most important information carrier units (stressed words), which helped him avoid memory overload or missing next segments quite often. Unlike SH2 whose plan was to listen to every word, SH7 showed a deeper understanding of what should be done. The orchestration of metacognitive and cognitive strategies indeed resulted in better listening performance. He, for instance, in segment 1, combined planning with essence of meaning and problem identification and summarisation that were followed by both comprehension-evaluation, which resulted in his realisation of the need for note taking:

They are talking too fast (problem identification) ... but I planned not to listen to every word (selective listening) ... just to listen to the stressed parts (essence of meaning) (laugh) ... so I understood that he was explaining what 'friends of the earth' was. It is a group that is concerned about the environment and how to protect it (summarisation) ... that was all I could get (comprehension evaluation) ... I think I should have taken notes (strategy evaluation). I'll do it next (planning).

In the second segment he started with note taking as planned before and when he noticed a comprehension breakdown, he attempted to use a problem solving strategy together with relating what he heard to what he already knows in an attempt to make sense of the message:

Then ... I don't know what exactly that they were going to do as he said in five years time (comprehension monitoring) ... but I could suggest it's a plan to protect these forests from being cut down (inferencing) ... yes, I remember I saw something on this on TV, to protect them from vanishing (world elaboration).

In this same segment, he evaluated his note taking use (strategy evaluation): “ *I think I did better by taking notes*” and towards the end he set some predictions, anticipating what might come next what had been said so far: “ *... I think another question will be asked ... about how or why (making predictions)?*”

Segment three started with SH7 verifying his prediction on the basis of what he heard. However, he was tuning in expecting a question to be voiced, he couldn't get the question due to its length. And therefore based on what he had identified from the stream of speech, he inferred what it was about. This inference was then followed by elaboration at different levels: world knowledge, imagery and creative elaboration. Afterwards, feeling that comprehension was not occurring, he monitored his comprehension and at this point he could do nothing, he seemed unsure what to do as if he was not familiar with the content of the point raised ‘biological point of view and genetics!’. Finally, he evaluated his comprehension showing his satisfaction with his overall performance:

“ ... I was right, he started with a question (verifying prediction) ... but this part seemed more difficult to me ... the question was so long (problem identification) ... I guess it was why rain forests are important? (inferencing) ... This man said they are important for the people in these countries. Which countries ... maybe these countries in Africa and South America (world elaboration) ... you know I had a picture coming into my mind of these tropical forests and all their resources; plants, birds and animals (imagery elaboration) ... rain forests are important from the biological point of view and the genetics ... I don't know I couldn't make sense out of what he said (comprehension monitoring), but I think as a whole I'm doing well, am I not? (comprehension evaluation)”

In conclusion, two reasons might lead us to say that the good performance of this student reflects the nature of the training he received in the strategy training programme. First, the strategies used in his report were all taught in the programme he was exposed to. Second, he frequently named the strategies he used referring to them with the same technical words (e.g. prediction, note taking and essence of meaning) or acronyms (e.g. SIMT) used in the programme. These two reasons might weaken the assumption that the students' different performance and strategy use were a reflection of individual differences rather than the treatment effect. Also tracking his follow-up interview, it was clear that he was quite fascinated by the wide range of strategies he has been introduced to and which expanded his repertoire.

8.2.2 Use of strategies: Metacognitive group

As it is shown from the reports (Appendix 8 d/ 8e) given by MH9 (metacognitive students before the intervention) and MH12 (metacognitive students after the intervention), both students did not reveal much difference in their performances. MH12 was able to get bits and pieces from the text and make three inferences that helped him get a crude idea about the content of the text. However, he is not much different from MH9 in terms of the strategies used nor the level of comprehension attained. What seems to be common between the two students here is their inability to integrate both cognitive and metacognitive strategies to achieve better comprehension. Being unable to combine the two types of strategies, all that they reported to comprehend did not go beyond a few words that did not make up proper comprehension of the aural text.

Table 8.2 revealed that MH9 used four types of metacognitive strategies ten times, and two cognitive strategies three times. The metacognitive strategies he used were mostly problem identification (four times): "*they are talking too fast*", "*as I was wondering about it I missed part of the text*", and "*I find it difficult to remember ...*", and comprehension monitoring (five times): "*... I couldn't understand it*", "*I think I didn't get it right*".

In addition to the metacognitive strategies MH9 used two cognitive strategies three times. He used repetition once: "*I got a word ... a epishago... which I kept repeating to myself to work out its meaning*", and inferencing twice: "*I got the words rain forest... and in five years time ... there might be a plan or something in five years time... I couldn't really understand what*

this plan was". In his use of inferencing, he just guessed there was a plan with no attempt to elaborate on what sort of plan or why there was such a plan. Therefore, his inferencing was not of much help. Besides, using repetition resulted in missing the following part as he pointed out: "... *as I was wondering about it I missed part of the text*". His level of comprehension was mainly at the word level; just picking up some separate words with no common link between them.

MH12, after the intervention, used almost the same number of cognitive and metacognitive strategies as MH9 with slight variation in frequency. He showed the same pattern: overuse of metacognitive strategies; five types of metacognitive strategies eleven times and one type of cognitive strategies three times. The metacognitive strategy that MH12 most frequently used was problem identification (5 times) merely stating that the speed of delivery hampered his comprehension: "... *I... It was so fast for me*", "... *my real problem was the speed of their talking ... it went so fast*", and wishing if he could listen again: "... *I wish they had talked a little bit slowly or I could listen to it once more*". Besides, problem identification he used comprehension monitoring (once): "...*but it didn't make sense to me, so I thought I got it wrong*", and comprehension evaluation (three times): "... *that was all that I could understand anyway*". The only cognitive strategy MH12 reported using was inferencing: "... *but I heard some words, from which I can guess that they are discussing some issues related to the environment in the countryside*", "... *the word rain forest was repeated here several times ... maybe they are discussing the effects of rain forests on the environment and what makes them important*".

8.2.3 Use of strategies: Control group

Reports from the control group students (CH3 and CH8) did not show any differences between their performances; no changes could be traced in their processing habits (appendix 8f/8g).

In the control group, CH3, before the intervention (see table 8.2), used three types of metacognitive strategies seven times and three types of cognitive strategies three times. His use of metacognitive strategies was mainly problem identification (five times) besides directed attention (once), and comprehension evaluation (once). An examination of his report revealed that he went on listening not certain about what to do. In the first listening segment, he started by identifying his problem: "... *These two people were talking too fast ...*", so he

tried listening selectively: “ *I tried hard to listen to whatever words I could recognize*”, then again and again to identify problems: “ *... when I got a word I missed part of what follows ...*”, and “ *I felt somewhat panic, so I missed lots of what was said*”. In this segment he did not report using any cognitive strategies and the planning strategy he tried to use was not successful, as he did not know how to use it properly. For example he did not choose to listen to main ideas or words or even discourse markers, but instead he decided to listen to every “whatever” word he could grasp, which would be of little help. Therefore, the whole segment passed and he could not grasp a single idea or even a word of what he had heard.

In segment two, his use of strategies was not more successful than in the first one. All he did was trying to figure out whether the setting was a real or imaginary one. He used elaboration (world and personal): “ *... I wonder whether it is a real TV or radio programme or just a pretend one ... This always happens when I try to listen to an English film on TV*”. He did not try to go about the content of the text. He, instead, referred to the problem he was having: “ *I got lost because the words were eaten up*” and concluded by saying he was a “ *hopeless listener*”.

In the last segment he could grasp a few words, which he used as a basis for inferencing the topic of the text: “ *... maybe they are talking about nature, rain forests and environment*”, which was not more than a crude idea of the topic. He finally referred back to his problem in listening: “ *if only they talked slowly ... I just couldn't cope with the speed*”.

After the intervention, CH8, as shown from table 8.2, used almost the same pattern of strategies, perhaps sometimes less frequently. However, his report showed that he was more successful in making out some ideas related to the text.

In segment one, for example, he tried to use between parts inferencing: “*I heard the words director and company so I guessed ...*”. This inference was not an accurate one, as it did not hit the meaning. Like CH3, he used selective attention, which again reflected a lack of awareness of how and what to do while listening selectively: “*... I was trying to listen to all the words that I could recognise*”. Then he went on to segments two and three either identifying problems: “ *I can't remember...they were talking really so fast*”, “*I think many words ... seemed strange to me*”, and “*I wish ... I could stop my mind from straying away while listening*”, or evaluating his comprehension: “*... I couldn't exactly know what they*

were saying”, “... *just I couldn't form a full picture of what is being said*”. The comprehension level he could achieve did not go beyond grasping some words, which he could not even piece them together and come into meaningful ideas.

8.2.4 Summary of 8.2

This section reported and discussed the results obtained from the retrospective interviews (8.2). It examined quantitatively and qualitatively the reports given by the six students before and after the intervention. The qualitative analysis of the reports unveiled a number of issues that were not discernable in the quantitative analysis. These issues are presented in the following points:

- The results revealed that apart from SH7, all the other students used certain metacognitive strategies much more frequently than the cognitive strategies. However, their use of such regulatory strategies tended to be inappropriate and did not reflect effective use of these strategies. In fact, for metacognitive strategies to work effectively, they need to be clustered with appropriate cognitive strategies.
- In contrast to all the other students who took part in the retrospective interviews, the strategy group student SH7, after the intervention, showed a clear difference in strategy use, his level of confidence while listening and the level of comprehension achieved. In his report, he showed a deeper awareness of what he should do to approach listening effectively and what brings success. This awareness was clear when he more than once labelled the strategies he used or would use. Besides, he was aware that successful listening requires combining both cognitive and metacognitive strategies in a way to facilitate comprehension. Therefore, his report presented a pattern of combination of these strategies, which he used fairly successfully. Such awareness was not traced in any of the other students' reports and might be due to the strategy training programme this student received, which aimed at building up students' declarative and procedural knowledge about strategies. Such level of awareness seemed to result in a degree of confidence demonstrated in SH7's report. In comparison to other students who repeatedly declared that they were not sure about what and how well they were doing, SH7 showed confidence in planning, monitoring and evaluating both his strategy use and level of comprehension attained. This was especially clear towards the end of his report when he said: “... I think I'm doing quite well so far, am I not?”. Finally, as highlighted in the discussion above the level of comprehension attained by SH7 was much better than the other students.

8.3 Chapter summary

This chapter reported and discussed the results obtained from the follow-up interviews (8.1) and the retrospective interviews (8.2). The results from the follow-up interviews provided valuable insights and fuller explanation for results obtained in the quantitative analysis. In other words, though the quantitative findings reported in chapter seven showed that strategy training was more effective than the treatment received by the other two groups in all the variables examined, it was only the findings obtained from the follow-up interviews that gave explanations suggesting some factors that might account for such results. This demonstrates the value of triangulation; quantitative analyses, in this study, readily allowed establishing relationships among treatments and the dependent variables (see chapter seven), but such analyses were weak when it came to explaining the reasons for those relationships, the qualitative analyses, on the other hand, helped explain the factors underlying the broad relationships that were established. In effect, the follow-up interviews uncovered the dynamics of the learning events and explained, or at least, situated the quantitative results within a conceptual framework, providing insights not accessible via quantitative analyses alone.

The retrospective interviews, on the other hand, captured the on-going listening strategy use and comprehension processes that cannot be captured via quantitative analysis techniques (e.g. questionnaire). The retrospective interviews gave fuller picture of the change in students' repertoire of strategies and how these strategies are used in actual listening tasks.

In sum, the qualitative analyses served as complementary techniques that provided explanations for the findings obtained in the quantitative analyses. The next chapter will further discuss the findings of the study and the specific and wider implications for the findings.

Chapter Nine

Discussion, Implications and Conclusions

9.0 Introduction

This concluding chapter discusses the findings of the main study. The first section (9.1) gives an overview of the study summarising the theoretical framework and revisiting the aims and different phases of the study. The results are then briefly highlighted in subsequent section (9.2) by restating the research questions and their corresponding answers. Section 9.3 is devoted to the discussion of the findings obtained and the issues that emerged from the current study. The contributions of the study to the field in general as well as its implications for both foreign language pedagogy and future research are the focus of section 9.5. Finally, section 9.6 presents the recommendations that emerge from the current study, whereas 9.7 concludes the study.

9.1 Study overview

The driving aim of this study was to seek ways of helping student teachers of English in Egypt overcome their problems in listening. The study sought to examine the effects of three different approaches: strategy training, metacognitive instruction and pure exposure on the student teachers' of English listening performance, their knowledge, use and perceived value of strategies, their self-efficacy and their attitudes towards the treatment they received. Furthermore, the interaction between these effects and students' proficiency levels (high/low) was examined.

To establish the theoretical framework for the study, chapters two, three and four reviewed the relevant literature. By the end of chapter two it became clear that the view of listening had changed over time from one of a mere passive skill which could be acquired naturally during the general language development to one of an active inferential skill that requires different sources of knowledge. The chapter showed that to understand the meaning of an aural input, listeners use not only linguistic knowledge (phonology, lexical, morphology, discourse features), but also other types of knowledge such as background knowledge (world knowledge, academic knowledge and personal

knowledge), knowledge about the context of the situation, and knowledge of co-text (knowledge about what has already been said).

Chapter three offered another review of literature in the area of learning strategies in an attempt to clarify the grounds for strategy training. First it briefly clarified what is intended by the term learning strategies. Next it described, from a cognitive point of view, how they are learned and internalised. This was followed by an outline of the existing attempts at classifying general language learning strategies and listening strategies. It finally reviewed the descriptive listening strategy research from which a number of strategies, that were deemed to be central for effective listening, were identified to be taught in the strategy training programme devised for this study.

Chapter four provided a rationale for strategy training summarising its potential in language learning. It argued that learning strategy instruction offers new alternative ways to successful learning. It would provide learners with validated means of being effective, efficient and independent. The chapter ended with a brief discussion of the studies which tried to teach strategies and had listening as their main concern. This discussion revealed that very little attention had been paid to strategy training in listening among foreign language learners. It also showed that the findings of these studies had been inconsistent; some studies produced clear significant results, others were inconclusive. The chapter ended with a number of principles for effective listening strategy instruction extracted from the literature review and the intervention studies reviewed that should be attended to in the main study.

The current study was carried out in two phases: the baseline study (Chapter 5) and the main study (Chapter 6). The baseline study was diagnostic and aimed to uncover the strategies students already used as well as the problems they faced in listening. More simply, the decision of what strategies to teach needed to be clearly linked and matched with students' needs, as this would more likely motivate students to learn and use the strategies. The principle premise of the baseline study, then, was that any attempts to improve student teachers' listening comprehension skills would be futile unless their perceptions of listening, their problems in listening and their actual strategy use were attended to. The baseline study made use of a number of data collection methods: questionnaires, self-assessment measures, and retrospective interviews. Findings of this

study revealed that students had some misconceptions about listening as a construct and about their role as listeners. Besides, the findings unveiled a number of problems students had while listening and the strategies they used. However, in their strategy use, students neither used the most appropriate strategies nor knew how to employ them in the most effective manner. It followed from this that we would need to teach students how to learn by building upon and expanding the strategies they already used and giving them help and guidance to become more self-directed in their learning. These findings guided the second phase of the study: the main study.

The aim of the main study was to compare the effect of strategy training with the effects of two other approaches - metacognitive instruction and pure exposure - on students' listening performance, their knowledge, use and perceived value of strategy, as well as their self-efficacy and attitudes. Therefore, a strategy-based instruction programme was designed in the light of the findings of the first phase of the study along with the insights gained from the literature reviews. The main study made use of both quantitative and qualitative data elicitation techniques to provide a comprehensive view of the findings. The results of the quantitative and qualitative results of the main study were presented in detail in Chapters seven and eight respectively, and these are briefly revisited in the next section.

9.2 General findings

This section reports on the main findings in relation to the research questions proposed in 6.3. It starts with restating each question and giving the answer in the light of the data available.

9.2.1 Effects of instructional approaches on listening performance

***Question (1):** Do different listening instructional approaches have different effects on listening performance among EFL students?*

A positive answer to this question was supported by the findings from the current study. The results of the quantitative and qualitative data analyses verified that strategy training incorporating the principles of effective strategy instruction was more effective than either metacognitive knowledge instruction (with group discussion) or pure exposure alone (with no instruction) in enhancing FL learners' listening skills. The results also demonstrated that the metacognitive knowledge instruction coupled with

group discussion is more effective in enhancing listening skills than pure exposure to aural input. Contrary to the widely held belief that prolonged exposure to aural input can enhance listening comprehension, the results of the quantitative analyses indicated that students in the control group did not make improvements after the exposure. Furthermore, the qualitative analyses confirmed the quantitative findings and indicated that pure exposure to the aural input alone even had a demoralising effect.

9.2.2 Effects of instructional approaches on knowledge, use and perceived value of strategies

***Question (2):** Do different listening instructional approaches have different effects on students' knowledge, use and perceived value of strategy use?*

Findings of the study confirmed that students' knowledge of strategies, their use and how they valued these strategies as effective tools for listening were dependent upon the instructional approach used. In particular, the results of the MANOVA test unveiled that there were significant differences between the three groups in favour of the strategy group students. Students in the strategy group reported an increase in their knowledge of strategies, a higher deployment of strategies and greater emphasis on the value of strategies as tools for effective learning in comparison with the two other groups. Metacognitive instruction and control groups were not drastically different from each other in the variables investigated here.

These findings were further supported by the qualitative analyses. In the follow-up interviews, students of the strategy group reported an increase in their knowledge and repertoire of strategies as a result of their treatment and that they thought of strategies highly after the intervention. Moreover, the retrospective interviews indicated that the strategy group student (SH7) demonstrated a greater amount of strategy use particularly in the cognitive strategy category after the intervention (see 8.2.1).

9.2.3 Effects of instructional approaches on self-efficacy

***Question (1):** Do different listening instructional approaches have different effects on students' self-efficacy in listening?*

The three different instructional approaches examined in this study resulted in different impacts on students' self-efficacy in listening. The results, which were consistent across the quantitative and qualitative analyses, revealed that the strategy training approach

was more effective in promoting students' self-efficacy in listening than the metacognitive instruction and pure exposure approaches. In particular, the results of the quantitative analysis of the self-efficacy questionnaire indicated significant differences in self-efficacy between the three groups in favour of the strategy training group. Similarly, the follow-up interviews and the retrospective interviews confirmed these results and gave richer and more in-depth data regarding this issue. The strategy group students in the follow-up interviews, for example, indicated that removing anxiety and fostering confidence was one of the ways strategy training helped them.

9.2.4 Effects of instructional approaches on attitudes

***Question (4):** Do different listening instructional approaches have different effects on students' attitudes towards the treatment they received?*

The quantitative and qualitative data analyses demonstrated that different instructional approaches have different effects on students' attitudes. More specifically, there was a positive change in attitudes in both the strategy training and metacognitive instruction groups but a negative change in attitude in the control group. The qualitative data analyses, particularly the follow-up interviews unveiled that students in the control group developed negative attitudes, which resulted in a demoralising effect.

9.2.5 Effects of instructional approaches across proficiency

***Question (5):** Are there any differences in the effects above between high and low proficiency level students?*

The quantitative analysis established that high proficiency students performed better than low proficiency students across the three groups in all the dependent variables. However, when the proficiency level was taken into account with the treatment effect, the difference due to interaction was not significant except for the area of knowledge of strategies. More precisely, the effect of the treatment seemed to be the same for high and low proficiency students. However, it is worth mentioning that low proficiency students in the strategy group performed almost as well as the high proficiency students in the other two groups across all dependent variables, even though there was no statistical significance. This might indicate that the low proficiency students in the strategy group benefited from their treatment and improved their listening ability and knowledge, use and perceived value of strategy more than both high and low proficiency students of the other two groups. Finally, it was hoped that the findings of

the retrospective interviews would provide valuable insights into this particular issue: the differences between high and low proficiency levels. However, this could not be attained due to an unexpected loss of data from low proficiency students in the three groups (see 6.3.6.1.4). In this sense, this issue might be a useful area for future research and therefore should be further explored.

9.3 Discussion

The following section is devoted to a discussion of a number of issues that have emerged from the current study and they seem together to have a crucial role in order for strategy training to bring about its pay off. These issues are the relationship between strategy training and:

1. metacognitive knowledge
2. motivation
3. the instructional approach
4. confidence
5. learner autonomy

9.3.1 Strategy training and metacognitive knowledge: knowledge precedes control

The review of literature in Chapters three and four showed that metacognitive knowledge plays a potential role in strategy training. However, the strategy training studies discussed in Chapter four exclusively focused on training students in metacognitive and cognitive strategies, giving no weight to the learners' beliefs about language learning and processes. The results of the current study accord with the voices calling for strategy training to include metacognitive knowledge as one of its main aims. Metacognitive knowledge is perhaps the most important factor (though not exclusive) that the current study found to be central to effective strategy training (see 8.1). This goes in line with Chamot & O'Malley (1994: 372) who believe that "explicit metacognitive knowledge about task characteristics and appropriate strategies for task solution is a major determiner of language learning effectiveness".

In the current study, metacognitive knowledge served as a ground base providing students with the needed information mainly on themselves as learners and on the underlying processes involved in language learning and listening. Such information

made the students aware of their own conceptual knowledge and gave them the opportunity to reflect on their previous misconceptions about listening (see 5.4.1.1) and then reject or correct them and to acquire new insights about themselves as learners and about listening as a process. In effect, its overall role can be depicted as incorporating three crucial functions: a) preparatory, 2) regulatory 3) and motivational.

When we say that metacognitive knowledge was preparatory, we mean the part it played in preparing learners with the important knowledge about the factors that constitute the learning situation (e.g. learner, task and strategy). This knowledge, which was sometimes referred to in the literature as the ‘software’, or the ‘knowledge that precedes control’, is the knowledge that learners need to have to be able to make informed decisions about their own learning (see 6.1). The metacognitive knowledge unit in the current study tried to uncover and revise the students’ conceptual knowledge about listening and about themselves as listeners as well as what they were expected to do while listening. In doing this, the metacognitive knowledge unit helped correct and reshape students’ misconceptions. Besides, it provided the resources to challenge the dependency assumption, which resulted from the prolonged exposure to the teacher-centered tradition (see 1.2) in an attempt to adjust their attitudes to strategy training, which assumes active rather than passive learners. Students via the metacognitive knowledge input came to know that they could learn independently from their teachers. Furthermore, they became aware that success or failure is more dependent on their efforts and the strategy they use rather than on innate ability or mere luck. In short, metacognitive knowledge input increased students’ metacognitive awareness and that consequently helped them understand themselves as learners; their weaknesses and strengths, in turn preparing them for the active and interactive roles they were expected to play in the programme.

Metacognitive knowledge input in this study had a regulatory function, as it provided the foundation for effective metacognitive strategy use. It informed the planning decisions taken at the outset of learning, the monitoring process that regulates the completion of a learning task, assessment of problems and progress, and decisions to remediate (see 4.3.2). It also provided the criteria for evaluation made once a learning task is completed. To sum up, it helped students become more effective at managing their own learning (see Ellis, 1999) and opened new avenues to which students had had

no access before. This function of the metacognitive knowledge was exemplified in the report given by SH7, where he showed his ability to manage his own learning. In other words, he demonstrated that he could effectively plan, monitor and identify problems and then decide how best to approach them (see 8.2.1).

Finally, metacognitive knowledge input was motivational; being aware of the processes underlying listening, what facilitates it and what is involved in being a good listener, gave the students the motive to survive and take the risk. In sum, the multi-functional role of metacognitive knowledge input helped students enhance their declarative knowledge, which, according to Sinclair (2000), enhances students' capacity for making informed decisions about their learning and selecting the appropriate strategies in the light of the specific task at hand.

Thus, it seems reasonable to claim that metacognitive knowledge was central and had its contribution to the results obtained in the current study as it helped build up students' confidence to break with familiar patterns and embark on a new way of working. Moreover, it seems more reasonable (though not exclusive) to attribute the insignificant results in the strategy training studies reported and discussed in Chapter four to the overlooking of metacognitive knowledge, which was a missing component in most of these studies and was needed before students could take control of their learning. This seems to be a more plausible interpretation given that the only studies that showed positive significant effects of listening strategy training were the ones that gave room to metacognitive knowledge in their training programmes (Paulauskas, 1994; Thompson and Rubin, 1996). Therefore, strategy training should give due attention for metacognitive knowledge or what has been sometimes referred to in the literature as the psychological and methodological preparation.

9.3.2 Strategy training and motivation

The second issue that emerged from the current study was the relationship between strategy training and motivation. Motivation, a need or drive that energises behaviour towards a goal, has frequently been posited as one of the keys to success. In a general sense, motivation, according to Dornyei & Otto (1998: 65) is "the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and

desires are selected, prioritised, operationalised and (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out". The literature review indicated that strategy training enhances motivation (see 4.1.1) and that "highly motivated students work hard, persevere in the face of difficulties and find satisfaction in the accomplishment of a learning task" (Chamot et al., 1996: 178). The results of the current study accord with this view confirming the effect of strategy training on enhancing learners' motivation.

Though there was no specific measure to collect data on motivation, from the beginning of the study the students in the three groups were **observed** to show a high level of motivation. Their motivation was expressed in their desire to participate in the experiment especially since their regular training programme lacked training in listening and speaking. The reason behind this motivation might be understood in the light of the socio-cultural context in Egypt where a person who can communicate in English is highly thought of in the community. It is most likely for someone who knows English to find a good job, for instance, in the tourism sector. This is especially the dream of most English language students even in the Faculty of Education. So hoping that the programme would make up for the absence of listening in their preparation course, students attended the classes even though they were conducted at late hours of the day. Students' attendance in these late classes was in itself a sign of motivation. However, as classes went on, it was observed that this motivation was not equally maintained across groups, which might be interpreted as an effect of the type of treatment.

It seemed worth investigating, why motivation of the control group was not maintained as much as that of the strategy instruction group. To this, it seems pertinent to distinguish between two types of motivation: initial motivation and consequential motivation (researcher's terms). Initial motivation, here, refers to students' desire to participate in the course to achieve certain goals. This type of motivation might apply to all the students in the three groups who thought that the course would provide a chance for them to be better listeners and communicators. Consequential motivation, on the other hand, is strongly related to success; in fact it is ignited and flamed by achieving goals. In this sense initial motivation either turns to consequential motivation in case of achieving goals or else it will start to fade away and become amotivation. Amotivation, according to Deci and Ryan (1985) (cited in Dornyei, 2001: 144), is the relative absence of motivation that is not caused by a lack of initial interest, but by the individual's

experiencing feelings of incompetence and helplessness when faced with the activity. This was the case with the students of the control group, who were left to follow their own approaches when dealing with the listening tasks, and who experienced little or no success in their listening tasks. Therefore, they seemed to have lost their motivation as classes went on. They were not only amotivated, but also demoralised (see 8.1). However, they still continued to come to the classes thanks to their initial level of motivation. Thus amotivation in the case of the students in the control group was caused by the students' realisation that being a good listener was beyond their capacity or what Vallerand (1997) refers to as the capacity–ability beliefs; students thought they lacked the ability to perform the task.

By contrast, the motivation of the students in the strategy group was maintained, consolidated and enhanced class by class. Their training started by furnishing them with essential metacognitive knowledge, which is necessary for effective learning and motivation (see 9.3.1). Following the metacognitive knowledge instruction, students in the strategy group were exposed to and practised a wide range of effective strategies that would allow them to handle different listening tasks efficiently and with confidence. They were informed of and trained in how to deal with the task at hand strategically, watched strategies being modelled and had considerable guided practice with actual listening tasks. In this way, students felt they were making progress and their goals were achieved to a great extent. This, in turn, enhanced their desire to keep up with their listening difficulties. This finding might go in line with an argument by Chamot et al. (1996: 178), which states that “access to appropriate strategies leads to students gaining a higher expectation of learning success that is argued to be central to motivation. This is particularly so if strategy instruction is combined with metacognitive awareness of the relationship between strategy use and learning outcomes”.

In a nutshell, instruction on both metacognitive knowledge and strategies, helped to maintain and reinforce students' motivation, especially when they experienced the pay off of applying appropriate listening strategies. This made them feel more confident about their ability to achieve improvement in listening comprehension. This was obviously clear by the fourth week of the programme, when some of the students (initially 5 students increasing to be 16 by the fifth week on) in the strategy group initiated their own listening tasks trying to apply the strategies they had been practising

and write a sort of report on their work. In this report, they summarised what they understood, how they came to understand it, what strategies they used and finally evaluated whether they were successful in using the strategies or not, giving reasons for their evaluation.

9.3.3 Strategy training and the instructional approach

The informed approach of strategy training is the third issue that emerged from this study, which might account for the positive results attained in this study. This approach called for strategy teaching to be modelled, to provide enough room for extensive practice and to allow for long duration. These aspects altogether might help in interpreting the results obtained in this study, as each of them might have played its unique role in assisting students to digest the strategies taught and apply them successfully in different listening tasks. The roles of modelling, practice and long duration are the focus of the following sections.

9.3.3.1 Modelling

The informed and explicit approach aims at overtly teaching what ‘the concept of strategy’ is and then modelling the strategy under scrutiny. The modelling of strategies carried out in this study by the researcher and the peers proved to be an effective technique that aided students in how to go about listening tasks strategically (see 8.1.1).

In principle, the researcher’s modelling gave the students the opportunity to see how an expert approached different listening tasks, what he attended to and what he ignored, how he made use of all his available resources and how he orchestrated the strategy use to make sense of a message of highly fleeting nature. This meaning was spelled out in the following quote by SH4:

... by giving real and live examples of strategy applications to listening (modelling), I became aware of which strategies work better for me and under what circumstances. I also became aware when choosing another strategy is inevitable.

Modelling in this study, particularly by the peers, was deemed to be very important as it sought to put the students on the first step forward towards strategy use.

9.3.3.2 Practice

Providing ample opportunity for practice in applying taught strategies is another defining feature of the informed approach of teaching strategies. Students can have declarative knowledge about a complex mental procedure such as a learning strategy but may not be able to apply the strategy effectively without guided practice. The literature showed that complex mental procedure such as learning strategies and listening can be learnt most effectively through guided practice and feedback. Hedge (2000: 255) argues: “perhaps the most vital element in learning to listen effectively in a second or foreign language is confidence, and confidence comes with practice and with achieving success from an early stage”. The findings of the current study and especially the follow-up interviews accord with this assertion. Almost all students (23 out of 24) in the strategy group in the follow-up interviews pointed out that practice provided in each strategy taught and in the consolidation unit (see 8.1.1) was one of the central factors that contributed to the success of their treatment. During the practice stage, the researcher used to nurture students in their applications of strategies taught, praising them, giving them reminders of the clues they should be looking for and pointing out when a given strategy was used successfully. In addition, the consolidation unit that followed each strategy taught, seemed to serve dual purposes. Firstly, it reinforced the strategy being worked at, and secondly, it helped students coordinate the use of strategies introduced so far. Put differently, the consolidation units, gave the students the opportunity to use combination of strategies, rather than relying on one or two preferable or comfortable strategies.

9.3.3.3 Duration of instruction

Finally, long duration, according to the informed approach, is of particular importance in order for strategies to be internalised and become part of the students’ tool kit. The training in this study lasted for 60 hours, which is four times longer than the longest study reviewed and discussed in Chapter Four. Such duration gave students enough time to learn and experience the fruit of using learning strategies. Besides, it allowed for more practice on strategies with various learning tasks so that the students could gradually learn to use the strategy automatically. The long duration of instruction is considered a real contribution of this study that might have added to the elements that led to the strategy training group to surpass the other two groups.

9.3.4 Strategy training and fostering confidence

A further issue that resulted from the current study was the effect of strategy training on removing anxiety and fostering confidence. The results of the quantitative (self-efficacy questionnaire) and qualitative analyses showed that strategy training had an enhancing effect on students' confidence while listening (see 8.1.5). This goes in line with Nyikos (1996: 112) who argues that "strategy instruction helps students overcome fear or anxiety". Warding off anxiety, removing fear as well as building up self-confidence while listening was perhaps a natural outcome, which students gained by having been highly motivated and provided with sufficient metacognitive knowledge input. This confidence was further enhanced by equipping students with specific strategies to deal with listening tasks (cognitive strategies), more general strategies to regulate their listening (metacognitive strategies) as well as providing ample practice over long time duration. This seems to be corresponding with MacIntyre and Noels (1996: 383) who pinpoint that "...strategies contribute to a sense of mastery over the learning process that would reduce uncertainty and anxiety, and maintain or improve both attitudes and motivation". Thus, having become motivated and confident, students went on with the programme, happy with every achievement they made trying to overcome their weaknesses and the problems they faced hoping for better achievement.

9.3.5 Strategy training and learner autonomy

A final issue that emerged from the current study and that was a manifestation of all the other issues discussed above is learner autonomy. Though the strategy training approach proponents claim its capacity to promote learner autonomy (Cohen, 1998; Oxford and Niykos, 1996; Wenden, 1991; Wenden and Rubin, 1987; Chamot et al, 1999; Nunan; 1996), developing learner autonomy was not the focus of strategy training in this study due to the fact that such a relationship is complex and difficult to verify. Besides, since the context of the study is dominated by a teacher-centred tradition, developing autonomy in case of the current study seemed a far-fetched or even impossible aim. A further reason was that autonomy as a construct is not easy to define or develop and, in turn, to evaluate. Sinclair (1998) depicted the dilemma of autonomy evaluation using the metaphor of "wrestling with jelly".

However, since the issue of strategy training and learner autonomy emerged from the students' feedback in the follow-up interviews, the researcher thought it is worthwhile

to highlight and discuss such an issue. The feedback from students demonstrated that increased learner autonomy is an attainable goal even in a context that can be best described as typically teacher-centred. In effect, the data obtained from the current study demonstrated that strategy training that focused on the “know what” and the “know how” for learning is effective in improving listening performance (7.1) and can promote a sense of being independent (8.1.5). The students’ feedback in the follow-up interviews provided evidence that students, by the end of the strategy training programme, started feeling independent as they had the knowledge (metacognitive knowledge) and the tools for effective learning (strategies). Further evidence for this point is to be found in the retrospective verbal reports of the strategy training group student after the intervention. In his report, SH7 demonstrated his ability to use a wide range of strategies appropriately tailored to the task demands. Finally, a further evidence that strategy training has the potential to promote a degree of learner autonomy was the fact that students initiated outside independent listening activities by the fourth week of the programme. In these activities students showed that they could use the strategies appropriately and flexibly as well as independently.

Promoting autonomy was the outcome of a number of factors that became available to the students through the different components of the programme they received. Through the programme students were provided with the metacognitive knowledge input, the strategies (tools), which enhanced their motivation and confidence. These features (knowledge, strategies, motivation and confidence) altogether comprise autonomy in Littlewood’s view (1996), who defines autonomy as a capacity that depends on two main components: a) ability and b) willingness. Then, he further divides ability into knowledge (knowledge about the alternatives from which choices have to be made) and the necessary skills for carrying out whatever choices seem most appropriate. As for willingness, he states that it depends on the motivation and the confidence to take responsibility for the choices required. Applying this to the current study, we find that metacognitive knowledge corresponds to the knowledge in Littlewood’s terms that provided students with the alternatives to choose from. Strategies, on the other hand, together with the practice constituted the skill component. The motivation was represented in the students’ initial motivation at the beginning of the programme, which was then consolidated by the knowledge, and the strategies provided through the training. In sum, being motivated, having the knowledge and the skill built students’

confident and therefore willingness to take the risk and initiate their own independent listening activities.

In conclusion to the discussion of findings, it might be important to stress that the findings obtained in this study opened more questions about listening strategy instruction. As such, it stands in stark contrast to the mixed and inconclusive disappointing outcomes of earlier studies, especially as it used audio materials whereas most of the other studies used video materials, which in themselves should have an enhancing impact on listening comprehension. The questions that have to be answered concern which of the conditions in the study made the difference?

- Is it metacognitive knowledge input?
- Is it the instruction approach?
- Is it modelling
- Is it practice?
- Is it the long duration?
- Is it the motivation?
- Is it the intensive training?

It is the researcher's belief that the *interaction* between all the factors discussed above was the ultimate interpretation for the positive results obtained in this study. These factors interacted with the students' feelings and as a consequence warded off their anxiety, as well as instilled confidence resulting in a better listening performance. In short, metacognitive knowledge presumably led to an improvement in students' self-knowledge. It helped students reflect on their own learning, discover their own learning styles, become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses as well as their attitudes, and expected roles in learning. Such knowledge of themselves left the door open for metacognitive and cognitive strategies to be perceived as the effective way to approach the listening tasks. With the help of metacognitive strategies guided and shaped by the metacognitive knowledge, students have developed a self-directed learning approach whereby they were able to set their own goals, plan how to achieve them with the available resources, and monitor as well as evaluate their progress over time. Similarly, the cognitive strategies, by their specific nature, helped students to deal with the different listening tasks more effectively and with more confidence.

9.4 Implications

The overall findings of the study have specific and broader implications. The implications of this study can be grouped under the following categories: 1) pedagogical implications; 2) methodological implications and 3) implications for future research.

9.4.1 Pedagogical implications

A general implication of the findings obtained in this study is that it added to the growing body of research in listening strategy instruction that maintains that listening is a teachable skill. Therefore, listening should find a place in the students' curricula and most importantly in initial and in-service teacher education programmes. Furthermore, the findings of this study proved that different listening instructional approaches have different effects on listening performance. The significant gains made by students in the strategy training group provided evidence that strategy training is more effective than the other two approaches in developing listening performance and the other variables examined in this study. A crucial implication of this for classroom listening instruction is that listening is best learnt through strategy instruction. Therefore, language teachers' first responsibility should be to train their students in using effective listening strategies. In applying this approach, teachers should help students recognise their existing repertoire of strategies and strengthen them if effective as well as model and introduce new alternative and additional strategies. This is because strategy training that builds up on and allows students to use their own strategies, in addition to other strategies related to listening, might be more helpful particularly for those who already have a well-defined repertoire of strategies.

A further equally important and closely related implication is that for strategy training to be effective in listening instruction, teachers should explore the students' metacognitive knowledge; their beliefs and conceptions about themselves as listeners and about learning and listening processes. Findings here indicated that students who participated in this study, though preparing to become teachers of English, seemed to have some misconceptions about listening as well as learning. In this sense, there is a need to focus on the processes underlying listening because externalising comprehension processes and informing learners of what constitutes listening and strategies related to it may ensure greater success in listening comprehension. In other

words, teachers should abandon the product-centred approach, where the focus is mainly on the final product, for the process-centred approach. To realise this, teachers need to devise ways (e.g., verbal reports, peer modelling) to heighten students' awareness about what listening entails, how to go about it, what they should attend to and what they should ignore and how to reflect on and evaluate their current approach to listening. Being aware of such invisible processes and their relationship to specific strategies such as those introduced and practised in the current study, students may become more apt to incorporate these strategies to their repertoire.

In sum, it appears that there is a need to adjust the students' attitudes to the nature of strategy training, which implies that learners will take control of their learning. In this sense the study calls for the need to focus on both 'know what for learning', which should aim at building the students' metacognitive knowledge to be able to make informed decisions about what to do, and 'know how for learning' which trains and provides students with effective strategies related to listening.

From the various approaches suggested in the literature on teaching strategies, the study adopted the informed approach. Findings of the study came in favour of this approach, especially as reflected in the qualitative findings which pinpointed students' satisfaction about some aspects featuring this approach, e.g. labelling and modelling of strategies. Therefore it should be useful if this approach was followed by language teachers in teaching strategies.

Another crucial implication is that the study demonstrated that metacognitive knowledge instruction approach is to some extent successful in developing listening skills. Students in this group demonstrated an improvement in listening performance, which was reflected in the post listening test, and in attitudes, which was reflected in the attitude questionnaire and the follow-up interviews. This implies that there is a need, at least, to raise students' awareness and to build up their metacognitive knowledge if circumstances make intensive strategy training unfeasible.

A final important implication for classroom listening instruction is that the study offered counter-evidence to the strongly held belief among some practitioners and theorists that listening is developed in the general process of education. The findings proved that in

foreign language contexts where students have no access to native speakers and the focus in their curricula is on the literacy rather than oracy skills, pure exposure to listening does not guarantee better listening skills. What is more, the prolonged pure exposure to aural input without comprehension had a demoralising and amotivating effect.

9.4.2 Implications for strategy instruction research

A crucial implication of the study is that it contributed to the growing database in language strategy instruction research that is still however in its embryonic stage. It adds to the studies which show that strategy instruction can be effective in improving foreign language learners' listening comprehension skills (Paulauskas, 1994; Thomson and Rubin, 1996) as well as their ability to be in charge of their own learning, provided that it is not limited to teaching an approved set of strategies but takes into account effective principles of strategy instruction. Also, it adds to the bulk of research on strategy instruction as it adds a dimension to the principles of effective strategy instruction, namely, interaction. In other words, the success of strategy instruction seems to depend on the interaction between an array of interrelated factors. In short, the study confirmed the following as prerequisites for effective strategy instruction:

- The focus of strategy instruction should be mainly on the 'know what' as well as the "know how" for learning especially if the strategy instruction is to be implemented in a context where the underpinning values characterising the educational system are not consistent with the assumptions strategy training is based on;
- There is a need for the purpose of strategy instruction to be explicit and for strategies to be modelled for the learner not only by the researcher but also by peers who actually made excellent tutors in this study. An ample amount of time should be allocated to explaining the rationale underlining strategy instruction and strategy use.
- The package of strategies for learners to be trained in should allow room for both cognitive and metacognitive strategies due to the complimentary role they have in effective learning.
- The need for intensive training for a long period of time is an affecting factor of how successfully strategies are first acquired and automated. Length of training is a critical factor if strategies are to become part of the students' tool kit.

- There is a need to devote enough time for strategies taught to be assimilated and confidently applied to cold tasks;
- It is necessary to provide enough practice in strategies till students feel certain about how to use them as well as what steps are involved in a given strategy before moving to another. Perhaps more importantly, there is a need to consolidate the strategies introduced every now and then in a way that practically demonstrate how to combine strategies so that they might work more effectively.

It might be worth mentioning here that the findings for optimum strategy training emerged from this current study coincide with recommendations for learner training and have been elaborated in the last 20 years by advocates of learner training.

9.4.3 Implications for the context of the study

A specific implication of this study is introducing the strategy training approach in Egypt - a context that can be best described as a teacher – centred context, where strategy training can be considered as an innovation in itself. This is especially when we know that the underlying principles in strategy training are totally different from the Egyptian system of schooling, which encourages rote learning, repetition and passivity from the learner and the complete reliance on the teacher as a dispenser of knowledge. The strategy approach, on the other hand, encourages a learner to be in charge of his/her own learning and to deploy higher thinking skills such as reflection.

This study showed that strategy training, when incorporating principles of effective strategy instruction, does not only improve listening performance but also leads to a degree of autonomy. Students in the strategy training group, as reflected in the classroom and outside activities, began to show and take more control over their learning, even initiating the practice of the strategies independently with tasks they themselves selected (see appendix 9a for a sample of the outside listening activity reports). The same students also reported, in the follow-up interviews, that the programme resulted in a sense of being able to take control of their listening rather than leaning on their teacher as they had the tools that would aid them to attain such independence. The results of this study in terms of promoting a degree of autonomy, as well as developing listening and attitudes towards listening, are encouraging. Therefore, this study gives insight for teacher educators in Egypt into one of many approaches to

develop learner autonomy, and listening skills. Besides, the study demonstrated operationally how to apply it in a way to guarantee success. However, for successful implementation of such an innovation in Egypt, there are two crucial issues to be attended to: learners' pedagogical values and teachers' pedagogical values. The following sections discuss these two issues in more detail.

9.4.3.1 Learners' pedagogical values

An important tenet of strategy instruction is that students are more effective when they are in charge of their own learning. However, pedagogical values prevailing in the educational system may be at odds with this belief. For example students who are the outcome of a typical teacher-centred context where they have no opportunity for independent self-regulated learning tend to believe that they cannot learn independently from their teachers. For strategy instruction to be successful with such students, there is a need to revise, and modify these students' beliefs and to convincingly demonstrate the fact that they are capable of taking responsibility for their own learning and sharing the burden with their teachers. Perhaps most importantly, we need to encourage learners to look at learning differently and to be in the belief that what causes success is not luck or mere innate ability but rather the use of effective strategies and the ability to take risks.

9.4.3.2 Teachers' pedagogical values

It is given that teachers' practices are influenced by their beliefs and assumptions about language learning, teaching and their roles in this process, as well as learners'. Therefore, for effective strategy instruction, teachers must believe that their students are capable of taking control of their own learning. This, in turn, means to be willing to give their students some control over learning. Besides they have to adjust their teaching methods for such change and temper the transmission model of teaching.

One other important change is the need for a change in the roles of teachers. Teachers, as agents of change, play an extremely key role in helping their learners to become independent. This calls for teachers themselves to be autonomous and independent and it is usually claimed that an autonomous teacher is a prerequisite for promoting learner autonomy (Smith, 2000; McGrath, 2000). With this in mind pre-service teacher training programmes need to prepare teachers technically (i.e., equipping them with the tools, strategies and techniques to promote learner autonomy) and psychologically in the same

way that learners need preparation for strategy training to have optimal effect. This means that teacher training programmes should encourage teachers to engage in critical reflective activities about what constitutes L2 learning, the roles of teachers, texts and learners in the teaching/learning processes. The results of this study in promoting a degree of learner autonomy sets an example of the usefulness of using strategy-based approaches to promote learner autonomy. Therefore, teacher educators in Egypt might consider incorporating a strategy training approach component that aims to develop “the know what” and “the know how” of learning as well as the ability to critically reflect on learning approaches in teacher preparation courses.

9.4.4 Methodological Implications for future research

The current study made use of a number of aspects of research methodology that proved successful, and therefore future research should consider these methodological aspects in designing similar studies. These aspects are:

- Analysing students’ needs, beliefs and attitudes towards learning and listening (in the baseline study) and then addressing them in the main study resulted in getting students willingly involved in the instruction process as if they had ‘ownership’ and were part of it, working eagerly to achieve success. Therefore, it is recommended that future research start from the students’ needs, taking a diagnostic dimension to the actual repertoire of strategies they use as well as the listening problems.
- The relatively long time duration of instruction provided good space for learners not only to break the ice with the new approach they were being introduced to, but also to adopt it as part of their own learning processes. In this sense, it is recommended that future research allow for longer duration to give the students sufficient time for assimilating and applying the strategies taught effectively, flexibly and appropriately.
- Giving verbal reports in the students’ first language proved very useful especially as the researcher shares the same L1 background. The use of verbal reports in the current study as a data elicitation technique was limited to the beginning and end of the intervention, which lasted for six weeks. Future research might add a mid-way session between the beginning and end of intervention as it might help to track learners’ strategy use and/or propose a change in instruction if needed.

- A technical methodological implication for the use of verbal reports arises from the loss of recordings of some students. Furthermore, the frequent use of the tape during the transcribing process tended to decrease the sound quality. Making back-up copies of the audiotapes could have helped to avoid this problem.
- Findings of the study contribute to research in ELT in Egypt, which is essentially dominated by the positivistic paradigm, which is rule-governed, and views the researched phenomena as identifiable, divisible, measurable and quantifiable as well as devoid of personal bias. The bulk of research in ELT in Egypt is solely based on interventionist experimental design. The current study goes in line with this philosophy of research to some extent, however, in the belief that new methodologies should be introduced, the study tried to triangulate the data; making use of quantitative and qualitative data elicitation and analysis techniques. Triangulation, a new concept in ELT research in Egypt, proved very useful in giving deep insight into the underpinning factors affecting students in the intervention they received. It really added rigour to the data obtained in this study. Therefore, the researcher would urge ELT research in Egypt to make use of such concepts instead of being heavily-weighted towards the experimental quantitative approach.
- Another contribution in terms of methodology is the use of retrospection as a tool that can give insight into the listening process taking place inside the mind. So future research needs to consider such a powerful data elicitation technique.

9.5 Limitations of the study

The study has a number of limitations and the discussion of these will point to areas where future research is needed. These limitations need to be addressed in future research to further delineate the effect of strategy training. These limitations, which are discussed in the sub-sections below include: 1) subjects 2) instruction and 3) data collection.

9.5.1 Subjects

The study was based on 72 Egyptian male student teachers of EFL. These students all shared the same L1 that is Arabic. This sampling posed some limitations in terms of size, specialisation, gender and first language background. In terms of size, this study sample may be considered to be too small to allow for a generalisation of the findings

obtained. However, it was not possible in the current study to work with a larger group of students due to the space limitation in the language laboratory available in the institute where the study was carried out. Therefore, and to examine the generalisability of the findings, future research needs to work with a larger sample.

Another limitation was the students' specialisation. Being majors in English, students who were preparing to become teachers of English, might have some effect on the findings obtained here. Future research might extend this study using students' specialisation as a variable. A further limitation posed by the subjects in this study was gender; the subjects were all male due to the nature of the institute where the study was carried out. However, a body of research now exists that points to clear differences between male and female strategy use and in how they decide to use them when engaging in a learning task. Future research could focus on gender as a variable.

Finally, given that teaching strategies is not universally successful, being a homogeneous group is another limitation related to the subjects in this study. The subjects of this study were all Egyptians with one language background, and of the same level of education. Besides, students were motivated which means the findings might be subject to motivation bias. As an extension of this study it could be relevant to examine subjects of other language backgrounds and compare the results with the present study.

9.5.2 Instruction

The instructor in this study was the researcher himself, which might be seen as an advantage and disadvantage at the same time. Having different teachers could pose other potential problems leading to results due more to teacher variables rather than the approach. In the current study the researcher himself was the teacher. Therefore, the teaching was more controlled and there was no such an effect of differences due to using different teachers. The disadvantages of being the researcher and the teacher were the teaching overload on the researcher who had to teach three groups six hours a day at least for six consecutive weeks. This left the researcher very exhausted and the possible researcher's bias towards one approach than the other.

Very closely related to the limitation above is the practicability of the timetable in the current study in real-life circumstances. It was neither realistic nor feasible, as no timetable would allocate two hours for teaching listening only on daily basis. But it was a research project – not a blueprint for a teaching proposal. Talking about the feasibility of strategy training, we need to make a distinction, here, between the soundness of the research project and whether it is likely that it would be transferable in a teaching programme.

9.5.3 Methodology

The study used retrospective interviews as one of the data elicitation techniques, which yielded very rich information and gave insights into students' strategy use that could not be captured by other techniques such as the questionnaire. However, a number of concerns were levelled against the use of retrospective interviews in the literature (see 5.3.3.2) and the following two issues arose from the current study:

- a) The use of different students before and after the intervention despite giving due attention to other factors that could interfere with the data obtained, might be a limiting factor and affect the feasibility of making a fair comparison between students of the different groups (see 6.3.6.1.4 and 8.2).
- b) The students reported their thought processes before and after the intervention on only one text. As such, the strategies used might be specific to the nature of the text used.

9.6 Recommendations for further research

The present investigation has raised a number of questions, which needs further research.

1. Results of this study need to be validated in different contexts with different language learners. If future research provides further support for the findings the implications for instruction in listening and strategy instruction would be significant.
2. Even though the current study was conducted in a relatively long time scale, longitudinal research is key in order to assess the effect of strategy instruction after the student teachers become real teachers in classes of their own. Future research

might examine how the effects of strategy training influence student teachers' actual teaching.

3. The focus of this study was mainly on transactional listening based on taped materials. Listening that is interactional with a live interlocutor makes use of an entirely different set of strategies. These strategies are used to convey to an interlocutor that communication is taking place or has broken down, most often the latter. In this regard, future research may consider the effect of strategy instruction on developing interactional listening.
4. The literature suggests that the effectiveness of strategy use depends on a number of factors such as proficiency level, learning styles, gender, nationality etc. Only proficiency level has been addressed in this study. Further research can investigate strategy training in relation to other factors.
5. This study taught strategies intensively over six weeks ten hours each week. Would it make a difference if learners were taught extensively over the same or longer duration? Future research may examine such an issue.
6. This study indicated that the metacognitive instruction approach was to some extent successful in developing listening comprehension skills. However, students pointed out a crucial concern about this approach: the need for more guidance from the teacher. In this sense, future research may wish to incorporate such a factor and compare it with the strategy instruction approach.
7. The literature suggests that video has an enhancing effect in developing listening due to the visual support it gives. However, this study used audio materials due to constraints and limited resources in the context of the study. Future research may wish to examine and compare the effects of strategy training using video versus using audio materials.
8. The study showed that strategy training helped students consider their capabilities and to think about their own roles and styles. In this sense future research might probe the relationship between strategy instruction and critical reflection.

9. Students in the strategy group have voluntarily initiated independent listening tasks. This was not planned as part of the study. Future research might consider this and investigate the impact of strategy instruction on promoting learner independence (autonomy).

9.7 Conclusions

The view of listening has universally changed so that listening is now acknowledged as a skill that needs to be developed via systematic instruction, though some contexts like Egypt still need to recognise this issue and to demonstrate such recognition in all the different levels of instruction. However, research in listening instruction has not yet reached settlement on which way is best for teaching listening. It is still in need of more research to define how best to develop such a bedrock skill. In this regard, listening strategy training, though still in its infancy, opens new vistas into listening comprehension instruction.

This thesis has provided useful data to support the few studies reported in the literature that showed the positive effect of strategy training in promoting effective EFL listening. Moreover, it refuted the argument by Kellerman (1991: 158) and Rees-Miller, 1993 that the risk of devoting teaching time to strategy training rather than language learning is not worth taking. The study showed that the time devoted to strategy training was well invested as it resulted in developing students' listening performance, attitudes and self-efficacy. Furthermore, it showed that strategy training could promote a sense of learner autonomy as it helped to build up a repertoire of cognitive and metacognitive strategies that could be employed in pedagogic and natural learning contexts. While more research remains to be done, the outcome will likely be major advances in both teaching listening and strategy instruction. In this sense, it is hoped that the study has made an original contribution to the area of strategy training.

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APPENDICES

Appendix: Chapter 3

Appendix 3-A: Various definitions of language learning strategies provided in the literature

Author (s)	Definition
Rubin (1975:43)	Techniques and devices a learner (good language learner) may use to acquire knowledge
Stern (1975:	A general approach that is less observable and problem-oriented,
Wenden (1987a: 6)	Language learning behaviours learners actually engage in to learn and regulate the learning of a second language.
Chamot, 1987: 71)	Techniques, approaches or deliberate actions that students take in order to facilitate the learning and recall of both linguistic and content area information.
Willing (1988: 7)	A specific mental procedure for gathering, processing, associating, categorising, rehearsing and retrieving information or patterned skills
Shemeck (1988:5)	A sequence of procedures for accomplishing learning and specific procedures within this sequence are called learning tactics'.
Cohen (1990: 5)	Learning processes that are consciously selected by the learner
O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 1)	Special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information'.
Oxford (1993: 175)	Specific actions, behaviours, steps or techniques that students employ-often consciously-to improve their own progress in internalising, storing, retrieving, and using the L2.
McIntyre (1994: 185)	Techniques to facilitate language learning deliberately chosen by students.
Cohen (1998: 5)	They constitute the steps or actions consciously selected by the learner either to improve the learning of a second language, the use of it, or both.

Appendix 3-b: Good language learners' characteristics and strategic techniques

Rubin's list, 1975: 45-48

A good language learner:

1. is a willing and accurate guesser;
2. has a strong drive to communicate, or to learn from communication;
3. is often not inhibited. He is willing to appear foolish if reasonable communication results;
4. is prepared to attend to form. The good language learner constantly looks for patterns in the language'
5. practices (the target language);
6. monitors his/her own and the speech of others; and
7. attends to meaning in addition to form.

Stern's list, 1975: 45-48

A good language learner:

1. has a personal learning style;
2. has an active task approach;
3. is tolerant of the target language and its speakers;
4. knows how to tackle the language and is flexible with learning;
5. constantly searches for meaning;
6. is willing to practise;
7. is willing to use the language in real communication environments;
8. is self-monitoring of his/her language developments;
9. has strategies of experimentation and planning with the object of developing the new language into an ordered system and revising this system progressively; and
10. is developing L2 more and more as a separate reference system and learning to think in it.

Appendix: Chapter 5

Appendix 5-a: Students' questionnaire baseline study

Directions

The following statements are about listening in English. Please respond to each statement by placing (✓) under the level which can best indicate the level of your agreement or disagreement with each statement given that: 1 indicates strong agreement, 5 indicates strong disagreement

NAME:

Date:

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly disagree	Disagree
When I listen to English the things I do to listen effectively are:					
1. Recognizing individual words					
2. Understanding the meaning of each word					
3. Focusing on text details					
4. Getting the overall meaning of the text					
5. Guessing at word meaning					
6. Focusing on the speaker's pronunciation					
7. Using background knowledge					
How do you go about listening to English					
8. Understand the meaning of each word					
9. Focus on details of text					
10. Get the gist of the text					
11. Guess at word meaning					
12. Use the grammatical structure					
13. Relate what I am hearing to what I know					
14. Anticipate what comes next					
When I listen I					
15. Know if comprehension is occurring or not					
16. Differentiate between main ideas and supporting details					
17. Anticipate what comes next in the text					
18. Use previously acquired knowledge					
19. Integrate what I hear with what I already know					
When listening to English if I do not understand something, I					
20. Keep on listening hoping for clarification later					
21. Listen closely to the next segment to see if it produces additional information that can be used to understand what I missed					

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly disagree	Disagree
22. Find myself thinking about the segment and listening without being able to follow.					
23. Guess what the word or phrase might mean based on the text					
24. Lose my immediate train of concentration, but try to recover my concentration right away.					
25. Give up trying to comprehend the passage					
When listening in English, the things that make the task difficult are the inability to ...					
26. Catch the actual sounds of individual words.					
27. Understand word meaning					
28. Combine words into phrases					
29. Recognise the changes in sounds in connected speech					
30. Cope with the high delivery rate					
31. Tune my ears to the speaker's accent					
32. Work out the sentence syntax (grammatical structure).					
33. Make inferences in English					
34. Recognise the text organization					
35. Grasp the meaning intended by the speaker					
36. Identify the main ideas					
37. Deal with unfamiliarity topics					
38. Concentrate.					

Appendix 5-b: The Self-assessment Measure

Instructions: please circle the level you think best describes your ability when listening in English.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Key to levels:

When I listen to English spoken by native speakers

1. I understand nothing (Zero comprehension).
2. I can only catch individual words.
3. I can only recognize few phrases.
4. I can only grasp few ideas.
5. I can describe my comprehension as poor.
6. I can get the gist of the text
7. I can get the gist as well as text details
8. I can listen to and understand the whole text with no difficulty
9. I can understand the implicit and explicit meaning conveyed by the text

Appendix 5-c: Sample verbal reports (baseline study)

Pause (1)

Speaker	Nice to be here again I'm going to talk about European politics but more particularly I'm going to talk about the European Union that is the EU and the changing character of the European Union and the reason for choosing this topic, the reason for Rob suggesting that we might tackle this topic is that we are on the eve of a very important change in the European Union because of the imminence of the European and Monetary Union EMU and the creation in Europe of the single currency that will be coming within the next year or two and preparations or doing that are already well-advanced.
{SL1}	I got nothing... I recognized few words 'I, we, Europe', but the speaker is going so fast. A man is speaking. What about ? I don't know. I really could get nothing of what he said.

Pause (2)

Speaker	and not only will that mean that a new unit for currency the Euro will be created for use throughout those members of the European Union who decide the EMU but it will also mean a considerable increase in the powers of the central institutions of the European Union and in particular it will mean the creation of a central European bank which will have quite important powers in relation to money and taxation with respect to all those member-states who have joined the Union because of its topicality and because of its importance
{SL1}	Again, words are going so fast. Once I caught a word and start thinking about it, I miss the rest. I got the word European Union and European bank. I also got...I forgot the other words. if he speaks more slowly.

Pause (3)

Speaker	a further element in the interest in the European Union is more long term that is to say you know a great many areas of the country of the world I should say both in North America and in East Asia there is a certain amount of experimentation with entities new regional entities which are more or less modeled on or inspired by the European Union not that these organizations in the other parts of the world have copied strictly the formulae which have been reasonably successful in the European context that obviously wouldn't have been appropriate but the success in quotes of the European Union as a regional economic and political organization has inspired countries in some other regions to come together in order to do something rather similar and therefore when we are talking about we are talking about something which is of worldwide and global interest
{SL1}	It is the word European that keeps coming. I can hear nothing else but noise. American, I think he said American. I began to feel I know nothing about English. This man is going too fast. ...what did he say about America and the EU, I can't...don't know.

Pause (4)

Speaker	and of course finally underlining the importance of our topic and thirdly we are living in a period in which we are more and more conscious of the global operation of the economy especially with regard to currency stability and potential currency devaluations and in a world of that kind the European Union will once it has its own currency be a major player alongside the United States and Japan and therefore any kind of understanding of the way in which world politics and especially the economic aspects of world politics operate requires us to understand what sort of an animal the European Union is
{SL1}	It is the word European that keeps coming. I can hear nothing else but noise. American, I think he said American. I began to feel I know nothing about English. This man is going too fast. ...what did he say about America and the EU, I can't...don't know. I got the word currency and he also said currency evaluation...and the EU will be strong. I heard the words strong EU and US and Japan. I think I got something this time.

Pause (5)

Speaker	so those are a few introductory remarks about why this is an interesting topic and I've tried to organize a lecture around three broad questions which I thought might be of interest the first question is why was the European Union created in the first place and implicit in that question is another question not only why is it created but why has it persisted why has it grown why had it prospered relatively speaking in the period since its creation in 1958 it's a forty year old institution so clearly we need to know something if we are going to understand it about the forces that were at work at its birth even more importantly since its nature has changed over time those forces that have had an impact on it subsequently and have allowed it to exist and to grow
{SL1}	I think he spoke faster this time!...I couldn't catch a single word...few very few words I could catch and I forgot them when he stopped. This does not help I didn't understand anything.

Pause (6)

Speaker	the second question I want to ask is what kind of an entity is that Union is the European Union that exists we are accustomed to think of the world as divided into how ever many it is a hundred and fifty two hundred nation states all of which enjoy a degree of independence from one another sometimes described as national sovereignty and clearly when regional organizations are created and when they begin to acquire at least some degree of power over their member states then some new kind of entity which is not a national state and perhaps is not even a supra-national state is being created and therefore I want to in my second question reflect a little on what sort of entity is being created here is it a new national state on a larger scale
{SL1}	The second question!...emm...did he say the first one?we are customer what is customer here refer to.

Pause (7)

Speaker	the second question I want to ask is what kind of an entity is that Union is the European Union that exists we are accustomed to think of the world as divided into how ever many it is a hundred and fifty two hundred nation states all of which enjoy a degree of independence from one another sometimes described as national sovereignty and clearly when regional organizations are created and when they begin to acquire at least some degree of power over their member states then some new kind of entity which is not a national state and perhaps is not even a supra-national state is being created and therefore I want to in my second question reflect a little on what sort of entity is being created here is it a new national state on a larger scale or is it something rather different than that which I think is more likely to be the answer that we are going to reach involved also in that second question of what kind of entity is the EU is an answer in terms of beneficiaries if you like in politics we are always keen to know who's winning and who's losing and therefore it's important for us as students of politics to ask who does the creation of the EU benefit could is it likely to assist and who is it likely to not to assist or even perhaps positively damage or handicap in certain ways in other words in terms of power who is going to benefit from this initiative this innovation in the organization of international relations and who is going to suffer
{SL1}	Benefit...it is the same problem. This fast speech makes me lose concentration and even the words I catch and recognize in the beginning of the part, I forgot by the end.

Pause (8)

Speaker	and the third question I want to ask which I think is less crucial less fundamental in some ways but nevertheless of interest to you I am sure is more specifically regarding the UK an that is what is the UK's particular position vis-à-vis Europe and has that position been altered by the election of a Labor government last year led by Tony Blair in other words has that political change in the UK which is no doubt significant in certain respects had any major significance for the relationship between Britain and the European Union which many of you know has often in the past been a rather difficult relationship my conclusion on that third question would be it hasn't changed things very much
{SL1}	The first question? He said the first question after the second! I don't know. I heard the word Tony Blair. If he spoke slower or I think I need to listen more than... two or three times to get every word and understand what he says.

Appendix 6-a: Listening comprehension test (Form A)

SECTION 1 QUESTIONS 1-12

You are going to listen to an interview in which Sam is talking about his job and is telling why it is so stressful. Look carefully at the form (pause: 15 seconds). You are to fill in the missing parts in the light of the information you hear. You may begin to answer while listening (pause: 15 seconds). You will hear the interview twice.

<p>1. Sam has been a police officer foryears</p>		
<p>2. 3. Which TWO assignments did Sam do?</p>		
- Federal investigations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Undercover work	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Detective work	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Traffic regulation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>4. Sam thinks “patrol” is the most stressful assignment. Why is this? </p>		
<p>5. 6. To help police officers deal with stress, the police department arranges:</p>		
▪ Psychological (counselling) programs		
▪		
▪		
<p>7. 8. To relieve his stress, Sam does the following:</p>		
▪ Listening, watching, playing and reading about baseball		
▪		
▪		
<p>Tick the box that shows whether you agree or disagree to each of the following statements. The first example has been done for you.</p>		
Statements	Agree	Disagree
Sam has always been in patrol.		√
9. Sam must be in his forties.		
10. He seems to enjoy his job.		
11. The stress caused by this job is different according to the type of assignment.		
12. It is documented that the divorce rate is higher among police officers than people of other jobs.		

Now listen again

SECTION 2 QUESTIONS 13-18

Listen to a group of people’s discussion about a story, then answer the questions below.
(You will listen to the conversation twice)

13. 14. What happened as a result of Grace’s riding accident?

-
-
-

15. What’s the “horse whisperer”?

.....

16. How did the story end in the film?

.....

17. Which did the speaker like most; the book, or the film?

.....

18. “The Whisperer” is a story about

.....

SECTION 3: QUESTIONS 19-30

PART 1: QUESTIONS 19- 22

You are going to listen to the “The International News Headlines” only **ONCE**. Listen and circle the **FOUR** statements that are true according to what you have heard (You will listen to this part twice).

19. 20. 21. 22. STATEMENTS:

- Fighting has just started in Timor.
- The fighting resulted in many casualties.
- The peace negotiations have been resumed in Timor.
- The American president proposed to stop the Star War Project.
- The American president calls for an end to the cold war with the Soviet Union.
- There has been drought and starvation in many African countries.
- The Common Market countries have agreed on a new agricultural policy.

PART 2: QUESTIONS 23-30

You are going to listen to the second part of the news; "The National News", while listening, finish the notes shown in the form below:

The first story:

23. What is the topic of this story?

.....

24. What is the result of negotiations?

.....

The second story:

25. Is the current inflation rate
Increasing
Decreasing?

26. The reason why unemployment rate is rising is.....

.....

The third story:

27. What is the topic of this story?.....

.....

28. What did the prime minister open?

.....

29. What impressed her much about it?

.....

The last story:

30. What does this news tell you about?.....

Appendix 6-a: Listening comprehension test (Form b)

SECTION 1 QUESTIONS 1-10

You are going to listen to an interview in which Nancy is talking about her job and is telling why it is so stressful. Look carefully at the form (pause: 15 seconds). You are to fill in the missing parts in the light of the information you hear. You may begin to answer while listening (pause: 15 seconds). You will hear the interview twice.

Listen:

<p>1. How long has Nancy been teaching? years</p> <p>2. Why is Nancy’s job stressful? (Give ONE reason) </p> <p>3. Why is the job more stressful than other jobs? </p> <p>4. Stress manifests itself in the form of ‘fatigue’. What does this word mean? </p> <p>5. 6. What TWO things does Nancy do to relieve her stress? </p> <p>Tick the box that shows whether you agree or disagree with each statement. The first example has been done for you:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 70%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%; text-align: center;">Agree</th> <th style="width: 15%; text-align: center;">Disagree</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Nancy has always taught young children</td> <td style="text-align: center;">√</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>7. Nancy must be in her early thirties.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>8. She works even in the summer vacation.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>9. Once she gets home, she forgets all about her job.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>10. She is always patient inside the classroom</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Agree	Disagree	Nancy has always taught young children	√		7. Nancy must be in her early thirties.			8. She works even in the summer vacation.			9. Once she gets home, she forgets all about her job.			10. She is always patient inside the classroom		
	Agree	Disagree																
Nancy has always taught young children	√																	
7. Nancy must be in her early thirties.																		
8. She works even in the summer vacation.																		
9. Once she gets home, she forgets all about her job.																		
10. She is always patient inside the classroom																		

Now listen again

SECTION 2: QUESTIONS 11-17

11. How many times did Mrs. Gibson fail the driving test.....times

12. 13. 14. THREE things she did well in the last driving lesson were:

Three point drive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Three point turn	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency start	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency stop	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moving upon a hill	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moving off down a hill	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. One of the reasons she failed the test was being nervous. Mention another reason.

16. 17. . What did she do wrong with each of the following:

Plate number:.....

At the road junction.....

SECTION 3 QUESTIONS 18-30

THE NEWS: (a) QUESTIONS 18-22

You will listen to the news only **ONCE**. Listen first and decide which topic each news item is about.

	Politics	Sport	Disaster	Crime	Weather	
entertainment						
18. News 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. News 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. News 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. News 4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. News 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

THE NEWS: (b) QUESTIONS 23-30

Now read the following notes: (pause 15 seconds). Listen to the news again and complete the notes:

The first story:

23. Flight number.....

24. Number of passengers

25. Departure time

The second story:

26. Why the postal workers were on strike?

.....
.....

27. Management offered% increase.

The third story:

28. What was held up?

29. By whom?

30. The stolen things are worth

Appendix 6-b: Listening Strategy Questionnaire

DIRECTIONS:

The following statements describe listening strategies that can be used to facilitate listening comprehension. Read each statement and then circle the option that shows if you know the strategy or not (yes, not sure or no), how often do you use the strategy described (always, sometimes, rarely or never) and whether it is helpful or not (a lot, little or not at all). The list of strategies is not complete; so if you use any other strategies, please jot it down in the space provided.

N.B.

There are no right or wrong answers. There are only answers that tell or best describe what you actually do.

Student's Name:

Date:

Strategy	I know this strategy			I use this strategy				This strategy helped me		
	Yes	Not sure	No	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	A lot	A little	Not at all
1. Before listening, I try to think of questions that are going to be asked.										
2. I decide in advance what I need to listen for and then I listen for this information without trying to understand everything.										
3. I try to give full attention to the listening task and ignore irrelevant distracters										
4. Before listening, I try to make sure that all helpful conditions to fulfil the task are present										
5. When listening I know whether comprehension is occurring or not.										
6. When listening, I use my ear for the language (how something sounds) to make decisions (when deciding on adjectives ending).										
7. When listening, I know how well a strategy is working										
8. After listening, I think about how well I did on the task										
9. After listening I identify the central aspects of the task that hindered its successful completion										
10. When listening, I try to think ahead and anticipate what comes next.										
11. While listening, I try to make personal associations with what I hear										

Strategy	I know this strategy			I use this strategy				This strategy helped me		
	Yes	Not sure	No	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	A lot	A little	Not at all
12. While listening, I try to relate what I hear to information I already studied										
13. When listening, I try to connect what I hear with information I gained from experience in the world.										
14. If I do not understand something I hear, I try to guess what it means using the speaker's tone of voice.										
15. If I do not understand a word I hear, I try to guess what it means based on other known words in the utterance.										
16. When I do not understand every word, I use all available information to figure out what I am hearing										
17. While listening, I visualise (picture in my mind) what I hear.										
18. I note down key words and concepts while listening										
19. After listening, I make a written summary of the information I heard.										
20. When listening, I try to give a word-for word translation from English to Arabic.										
21. When listening, I repeat words or phrases over and over in English.										

Strategy	I know this strategy			I use this strategy				This strategy helped me		
	Yes	Not sure	No	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	A lot	A little	Not at all
22. When listening, I try to group the words that sound the same.										
23. When listening, I use my knowledge of Arabic to understand better.										
24. I try to recognise English words that are similar to a word in Arabic or in another language I know										
25. When listening, I work together with other learners to solve the listening task										
26. When listening, I repeat positive statements to my self										
27. When listening, I try to focus on the essence of meaning										
28. When listening, I try to make the focus of meaning my central aim.										
29. When listening, I ask my self where the conversation takes place, what the relationship is between the speakers, what is it about and how it goes.										
30. When listening, I use sentence syntax (the grammatical structure) to comprehend the message).										

Strategy	I know this strategy			I use this strategy					This strategy helped me		
	Yes	Not sure	No	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	A lot	A little	Not at all	
31. I judge how well the strategies I used worked once the listening task is completed.											
32. While listening, I try to listen to every word in the text.											
33. When listening, I try to understand the meaning of key words.											
34. If I do not understand something when listening, I keep on listening for clarification later on.											
35. If I do not understand something when listening, I lose my immediate train of concentration, but try to recover it right away.											
36. If I do not understand something when listening, I give up trying to comprehend the passage.											

Appendix 6-c: Self-efficacy questionnaire*DIRECTIONS:*

Rate your own listening capabilities. You are going to be shown some statements about capabilities in listening to English. For each statement, you are going to rate on the scale provided, how sure you are that you could work on similar tasks like the one shown and learn what you are supposed to learn in a reasonable amount of time.

The rating scale goes from 0 to 100. Remember that the higher the number you mark, the more sure you are, while the lower the number, the less sure you are.

Please mark how you really feel about your capabilities to do listening tasks.

Student's Name:

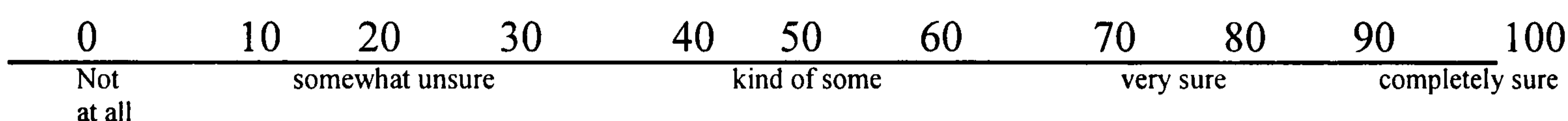
Date:

Directions:

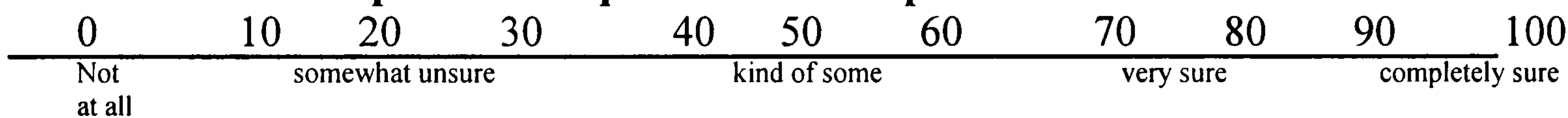
Task

An important part of learning English is being able to understand when you listen to English. You want to be able to listen to and understand tapes. Circle the number on the line that shows **how sure you are** that you could listen to English tapes (interviews, talks, news, interactive conversation, lectures) and

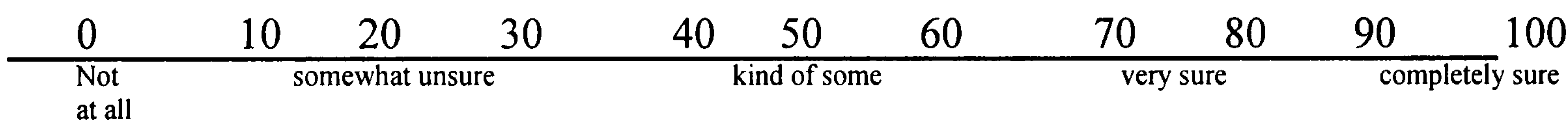
1. Identify the topic of the text you are listening to



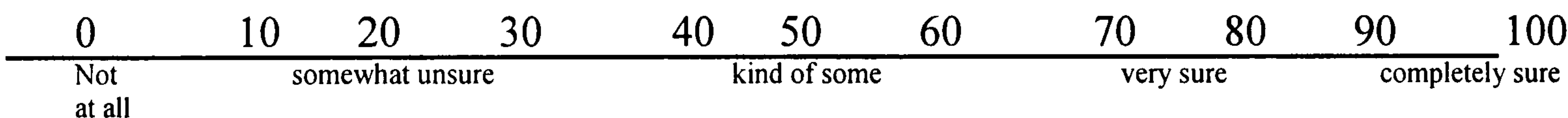
2. Answer comprehension questions about specific information in the text



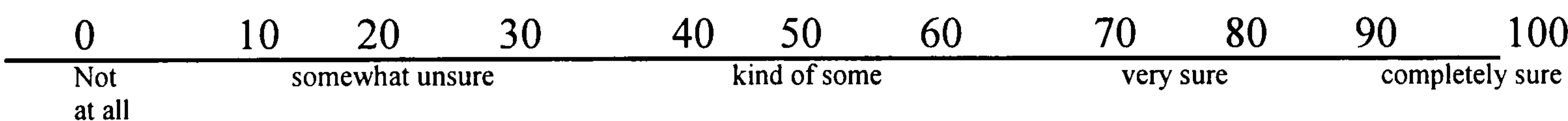
3. Work out the gist of the text (the main ideas)



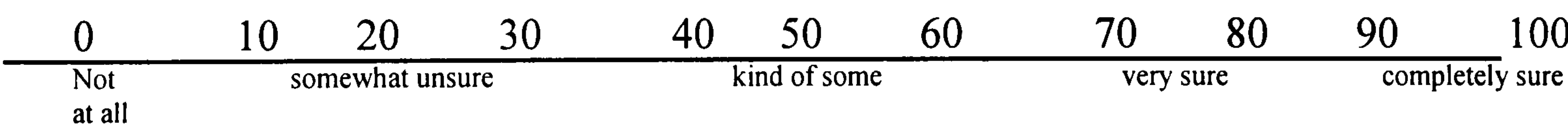
4. Go beyond the information explicitly stated in the text to draw conclusions



5. Guess the meaning of unfamiliar words or phrases based on information given.



6. Listen to and understand the whole text with no difficulty.



Appendix 6-d: General framework for teaching in the three groups

Strategy training group	Metacognitive group	Control group.
<p>Presenting the strategy Naming the strategy Why /how it helps When to use it</p>	<p>Students listen to the same material used in each step in the strategy group lesson. They are given handouts containing comprehension questions on each listening segment. Instructions are given as in the following:</p> <p>Task 1: 1-Listen to some people speaking and answer the questions in the handout sheet:</p> <p>2-Group discussion: Students discuss the following, in-groups: how they figured out their answers, what helped them figure out the answers, and if there are any other possible answers.</p> <p>The same procedures are followed for each task done by the strategy group.</p>	<p>Students listen to the same material used in each step in the strategy group lesson. They are given handouts containing comprehension questions on each listening segment. Instructions are given as in the following:</p> <p>Task 1: 1-Listen to some people speaking and answer the questions in the handout sheet.</p> <p>N.B.: (No group discussion is done by control group students, they just answer the same tasks done by the pure exposure group and hand them to the teacher to be marked.)</p>
<p>Modelling the strategy Teacher's modelling Student's modelling</p>		
<p>Practice Active application of the new strategy to listening tasks</p>		
<p>Evaluation Asking students to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy and any reasons for any difficulties they may have in applying the strategy.</p>		

6-e: Sample lesson plan for the three groups (Making predictions)

A) Control and metacognitive groups

Activity (1) (10 mins.)

You are going to listen to some incomplete utterances. Listen and write an appropriate ending for each one:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.

Activity (2) (30 mins.)

(A) Listen to the following interview with a fire fighter and try to write the main questions the presenter asked the fire fighter:

1.
2.
3.

(B) Listen again and answer the following:

1- According to the fire fighter, the six main causes of fire are:
(The first one is done for you)

1. Careless disposal of cigarettes.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

2- What is the advice given to anyone if a fire broke out?

-
.....
.....
.....

3- What should be checked regularly as a precaution to prevent fire?

-
.....

Activity 3 (24 mins.)

“Would you go to help violence in the street?”

(A) Listen and choose the correct answer; a), b) or c):

1. Stephen
 - a) saw the incident with two male friends.
 - b) was the only person to see the incident.
 - c) was one of the three people who saw the incident.

2. When Stephen went to help,
 - a) the boys threw bricks at him.
 - b) one of the boys hit him with a brick.
 - c) the boys threw a brick at the old man.

3. The boys then
 - a) punched his nose.
 - b) twisted his arm.
 - c) cut his face.

4. The old man
 - a) walked away.
 - b) was the only helped Stephen to get to a pub.
 - c) called the police.

5. Stephen
 - a) recovered quickly and went home.
 - b) had to go to hospital for stitches.
 - c) shows no sign now of his injuries.

6. The boys
 - a) only served short prison sentences.
 - b) were fired.
 - c) were never caught.

(B) Listen again and answer the following:

1. When did the accident happen?
.....
2. Why did Stephen go to the pub after he was attacked?
.....

3. What happened in the hospital?
.....

4. What would Stephen do in a similar situation in the future?
.....

Finally, listen and finish your answers

Activity 4 (24 mins.)

(A) Listen to Robbie talking about a situation when he got into trouble with his parents and note five things he did wrong.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

(B) listen again and tick true or false:

1. Robbie was offered some free tickets.
2. The concert was going to be in the same town where he lived.
3. Robbie had left his parents a note saying he'd be back at midnight.
4. Robbie met one of his friends in the concert.
5. After the concert they went straight away to the bus stop.
6. Robbie had forgotten his mobile phone at home.
7. They couldn't find a public phone box.
8. His parents were really angry when he got home.

Activity 5 (32 mins.)

(A) You are going to listen to a story about Nichole's wedding. Listen and fill in the missing information in the table.

1. What went wrong on the wedding day?	
2. Where did Nichole and Michael first meet?	
3. Who paid for the wedding expenses?	
4. How does she feel now?	
5. Why does she feel so?	

(B) Listen again and write an account of one of the following:

1. Nichole's feeling on receiving the bit of news and how she reacted afterwards?

.....
.....
.....
.....

2. What might have happened to the groom?

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Retell the story from the groom's point of view

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

B) The strategy group

The main aim:

The main aim of the following action plan for teaching strategies is to provide informed strategy instruction and to train students to use ‘prediction’, a cognitive strategy, to facilitate listening comprehension.

Aims

1. To demonstrate, name and explain the strategy.
2. To model the strategy: (Teacher reports on his mental process while listening to a listening task.)
3. To explore the significance of the strategy.
4. To practice using the strategy
5. To evaluate the effectiveness of strategy

Resources

1. A handout of some incomplete sentences
2. An audio recording of some incomplete utterances
3. An audio recording of an interview with a fire fighter
4. An audio recording of a story, “would you help violence in the street? “.
5. An audio recording of the end of a story followed by the complete version.
6. An audio recording of a story, “Nicole’s wedding” with some pauses inserted

Procedures

1. Preparation

Activity (1) (10 mins.)

- Students read the incomplete sentences on the handout provided.
- They are asked to suggest possible endings.
 - 1- Luckily, they heard the alarm and.....
 - 2- He is a bit stupid. Nevertheless,
 - 3- Two people were injured in the accident, but luckily,
 - 4- I've lost faith in this government. I don't
 - 5- We waited for you to come last night, but We were really worried about you.
- Students exchange ideas about their answers and how they arrived at them (clues are listed on the board).

Activity (2) (10mins)

You are going to listen to some incomplete utterances. Listen and write an appropriate ending for each one:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.

- Students exchange ideas about their answers and how they arrived at them (clues are listed on the board).

2. Presenting, naming and modeling (25 mins.)

Researcher explained and suggested a name for what the students have been doing in the last two activities, prediction, which refers to thinking about or anticipating what will be heard next based on a number of clues. He, then provided a number of examples of everyday predictions:

- Booking a ticket, you might expect what questions you might be asked,
- When sitting for a test, you might expect questions,
- Reading a story, you might anticipate what comes next or even an end.

The researcher again asked students to think of situations where they predicted what happened next. Modeling the strategy on a listening task followed this

Modeling the strategy

Here, the teacher models/demonstrates the use of strategy, which can be carried out through thinking aloud while performing a task, spelling out the clues used. The main focus, here, is on modeling the thinking processes.

The researcher

played an audio recording (an interview with a fire fighter) with pauses at certain intervals.

demonstrated the use of strategy.

thought aloud while listening.

spelled out the clues you used.

discussed with students.

What the strategy involves

How it is used

When it is used

What its value and significance are

Listening to the whole story for further discussion

3. Practice

Activity (1) (25mins)

- Students are given the title of a story; “Would you help violence in the street? “
- You are going to hear a story about a young man who has been the victim of violence in the street.
- Students are asked to predict three to five ideas that they anticipate to hear in the passage.

What do I think the story will be about?	What clues do I observe to help me know this?	How was my prediction similar/different from the actual story?

- They are to write their predictions and how they arrived at them

Group discussion:

- Students exchange how they formed their predictions (clues are listed on the board).
- Students listen to the passage to verify which of their predictions were realized.
- Now, listen again and see if you can do the following task

Answer the following:

5. When did the accident happen?

.....

6. Why did Stephen go to the pub after he was attacked?

.....

7. What happened in the hospital?

.....

8. What would Stephen do in a similar situation in the future?

.....

Finally, listen and finish your answers

Activity (2) (25 mins.)

- Students are given the end of a story.
- They are asked to make four predictions about the content of that story.
- Students listen:

(Finally, in the end I got home at two in the morning, really wet and cold. My parents were frantic. They even called the police because they were so worried. Well, I know I'd done wrong and I said I was really sorry. They were all right about it in the end, but I suppose I've learnt my lesson.).

▪ **Group discussion:**

Students exchange information about:

How they formed their predictions.

What they did to arrive at their predictions.

Students listen to the whole story to verify which of their predictions were realized.

Now listen and note five things the speaker did wrong

6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Students express and exchange views on the significance of the strategy and how far it was helpful in facilitating comprehension.

Activity (3) (25 mins.)

- Students listen to the presentation of a story (saying I won't or what stopped the wedding), and are asked to make predictions about some ideas they expect to hear in the story.

What do I think the story will be about?	What clues do I observe to help me know this?	How was my prediction similar/different from the actual story?

- Play a short segment of the story and then stop.
- Verified predictions are to be highlighted
- Students think what is going to happen next.
- Play the following segment of the story
- Students modify their previous hypotheses in the light of the aural input.
- The procedures are repeated till the end of the story.

Now listen and fill in the missing information in the table.

6. What went wrong on the wedding day?	
7. Where did Nichole and Michael first meet?	
8. Who paid for the wedding expenses?	
9. How does she feel now?	
10. Why does she feel so?	

Appendix 6-g: Blueprint of the strategy training programme

DAY/DATE	TREATMENT	MATERIAL	NOTES
10/3/2001 SATURDAY	Oxford Placement Test (2) Piloting Listening Test	An audiotape of Oxford Placement test. An audiotape of the listening comprehension test. Worksheets.	Dividing students into high proficiency and low proficiency Running item analysis to compute reliability', p value and discrimination index for both forms of the test
11/3/2001	Distributing students to three groups		
12/3/2001 MONDAY	METACOGNITIVE KNOWLEDGE Person knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEARNING STYLES • PERSONALITY • MOTIVATION • ATTITUDES 	EXCERPTS FROM: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubin and Thompson (1994) • Wenden (1991) • Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary and Robbins (1999) • Ellis and Sinclair (1986) • Style Analysis Survey (SAS) 	Raising the students' awareness about the cognitive and affective factors that facilitate or inhabit language learning
13/3/2001 TUESDAY	LISTENING PROCESS What do you know about listening? How do people speak in English? How do you feel about listening? The number of ways in which we listen?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparencies • Questionnaire of some misconceptions about listening. • Written vs. spoken task • Listening attitudes task • Number of ways we listen task • Listening as a jigsaw puzzle task 	Raising the students' awareness about listening as an active process, trying to correct some of the misconceptions students have about listening

<p>14/3/2001 WEDNESD AY</p>	<p>STRATEGIC KNOWLEDGE How best to approach a listening task The behaviour of successful listeners General principles to determine strategy choice</p>	<p>EXCERPTS FROM: Stern (1980) Omega (1978) Naiman et al., (1978)</p>	<p>Uncovering the stored knowledge students have about strategies</p>
<p>17/3/2001 SATURDAY</p>	<p>METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES (Planning: taking charge of your own learning)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set some goals for the task • direct your attention • ignore mental, physical and environmental distracters 	<p>Set goals worksheet Check goals worksheet Handouts Transparencies Excerpts from different reading</p>	<p>Developing the students Metacognitive ability; that is to reflect on their own approaches to learning</p>
<p>18/3/2001 SUNDAY</p> <p>MONDAY 19/3/2001</p>	<p><i>Monitoring (noting when something is unclear, ambiguous or unknown to you and then formulating a plan for resolving these problems)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pay attention to your comprehension • do I understand this? Is it making sense to me? • what strategy did I use to achieve this? <p><i>Evaluation (reflecting on how well the task went out after finishing it)</i> How well did I do? Did I realise the goals set? Did I select good strategies? What could I do differently next time? Consolidation unit on Metacognitive strategies</p>	<p>Class discussion Learning strategy checklist Structured class discussion</p>	<p>The concept of evaluating one's own approach to learning was quite new to learners at the beginning. This might be clear when we know that students are used to teacher-directed classes, where they expect the teacher to conduct all types of evaluation</p>

<p>20/3/2001 TUESDAY</p>	<p>COGNITIVE STRATEGIES One) SIMT (setting, interpersonal relationships, mood, topic)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presenting and naming the strategy • explaining its significance • modelling the strategy • practice • checking the strategy • evaluating strategy effectiveness <p>CONSOLIDATION UNIT ON SIMT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an audio recording of some short dialogues taking place in different places (bank, restaurant, butcher’s shoe-shop) • some pictures showing different situations and feeling occurring in different places. • audio recording of some short conversations between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Two neighbours ➢ Mum and daughter ➢ A couple ➢ Friends at a party ➢ Man and daughter • audio recording of some short conversations between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a couple in the kitchen • two neighbours on the phone • a mechanic and a car owner • a customer complaining on the phone 	<p>CLUES TO LOOK FOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Background noise ➢ Appellatives ➢ Specific words ➢ Voice quality ➢ How close are people ➢ Is there any touching, hugging, kissing? ➢ The way people look to each other ➢ People’s clothes ➢ Non-verbal sounds ➢ Extralinguistic clues ➢ Syntactic styles
<p>24/3/2001 SATURDAY</p>	<p>TWO) Making predictions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presenting and naming the strategy • explaining its significance • modelling the strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handouts of some incomplete sentences • Audio recordings of some incomplete utterances • “Would you help violence in the street” a title of a story with its complete version • The end of a story “finally in the 	<p>CLUES TO LOOK FOR:</p> <p>World knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content knowledge • Formal schema <p>Co-text (what has preceded the section being listened to)</p> <p>Signals we have been able to</p>

<p>25/3/2001 SUNDAY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practice • checking the strategy • evaluating strategy effectiveness <p>CONSOLIDATION UNIT ON MAKING PREDICTIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • end....”with the complete story • Story with pauses inserted (Danielle is talking about her attempts to kill her young brother • Story with pauses inserted (saying I won’t) • Audio recording of a story with some pauses inserted at different intervals (bad luck). • Interview with some parents about their views about schools 	<p>identify Stress and intonation</p>
<p>27/3/2001 TUESDAY</p>	<p>THREE) Essence of meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presenting and naming the strategy • explaining its significance • modelling the strategy • practice • checking the strategy • evaluating strategy effectiveness <p>CONSOLIDATION UNIT ON ESSENCE OF MEANING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Some newspapers headlines to be completed ➤ Some telegram messages to be expanded by filling in the grammatical words ➤ Full messages for students to create telegram message forms ➤ An audio recording of the news ➤ Extracts from the radio describing the feelings of a U.S. soldier serving in Vietnam. 	<p>Stress = meaning Content and function words Different messages can be conveyed when stress is shifted Stress = telegraphic form of essence of meaning</p>
<p>31/3/2001 SATURDAY</p>	<p>Four) Focus of meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presenting and naming the strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A handout with some utterances written for students to read and underline the word containing the primary sentence stress 	<p>Primary sentence stress = focus of meaning</p>

<p>1/4/2001 SUNDAY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explaining its significance • modelling the strategy • practice • checking the strategy • evaluating strategy effectiveness <p>CONSOLIDATION UNIT ON FOCUS OF MEANING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ An audio tape of questions and answers exchanges where different content words can be stressed to create a contrast emphasis ➤ Listen and decide the words that have the main stress ➤ An audio recording of a radio quiz ➤ An interview with a BBC radio disc jockey and his wife 	
<p>2/4/2001 MONDAY</p>	<p>Five) Elaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presenting and naming the strategy • explaining its significance • modelling the strategy • practice • checking the strategy • evaluating strategy effectiveness <p>CONSOLIDATION UNIT ON MAKING ELABORATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ An audio recording of an interview with an ex-smoker ➤ An audio recording of an excerpt from a lecture on being a smart kid ➤ An audio recording from a talk on factors affecting school performance ➤ An audio recording about friendship ➤ An interview about mosquitoes ➤ A recording of the summary of the plot of Jane Eyre ➤ An audio recording of two talking about traffic problems 	<p>TYPES OF ELABORATION</p> <p>Personal elaboration (how does this information fit with my personal experience?)</p> <p>World elaboration (how does this information fit with the real world?)</p> <p>Academic elaboration (how does this information fit in with my academic knowledge?)</p> <p>CLUES TO LOOK FOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What you know about the topic (personally, worldly, academically)
<p>3/4/2001 TUESDAY</p>	<p>Six) Inference making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presenting and naming the strategy • explaining its significance • modelling the strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ audio recording of some utterances with parts made inaudible ➤ an audio recording of an interview with a British novelist. ➤ An audio recording of two old friends talking about trekking ➤ Eight short independent dialogues 	<p>TYPES OF INFERENCE</p> <p>Linguistic</p> <p>Voice</p> <p>Between lines</p> <p>Extralinguistic</p> <p>CLUES TO LOOK FOR:</p> <p>What you know</p>

<p>7/4/2001 SATURDAY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practice • checking the strategy • evaluating strategy effectiveness <p>CONSOLIDATION UNIT ON INFERENCE MAKING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ with helping intonation to make inferences ➤ Some short conversations where the tone of voice can aid inferring and guessing. ➤ Interview with a police officer ➤ One-sided call 	<p>The content</p> <p>The contextual clues</p> <p>Tone of voice</p> <p>Extralinguistic signals</p> <p>Pictures</p>
<p>8/4/2001 SUNDAY</p>	<p>Seven) Selective listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presenting and naming the strategy • explaining its significance • modelling the strategy • practice • checking the strategy • evaluating strategy effectiveness <p>CONSOLIDATION UNIT ON SELECTIVE ATTENTION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Audio recording of some recorded messages ➤ Audio recording of some announcements in the railway station and the airport ➤ Audio recording of the weather forecast ➤ Audio recording of the museum time table ➤ Audio recording of an excerpt from a lecture with signalling words ➤ Audio recording of an excerpt from a lecture with signalling words ➤ A story with many discourse markers 	<p>Listening for discourse markers</p> <p>Key words</p> <p>Intonation</p>
<p>10/4/2001 TUESDAY</p>	<p>Eight) Note taking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presenting and naming the strategy • explaining its significance • modelling the strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Excerpts from a lecture on earthquake (texts to note) ➤ Excerpts from a lecture on listening and understanding ➤ Excerpts from a lecture on intelligence and IQ 	<p>GOOD NOTE TAKER SHOULD BE:</p> <p>Selective (stick to the most important information and drop the less important)</p>

11/4/2001 WEDNESDAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practice • checking the strategy • evaluating strategy effectiveness <p style="text-align: center;">CONSOLIDATION UNIT ON NOTE TAKING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Excerpts from a talk on vocabulary, given as part of study skill course ➤ A best selling writer talking about himself ➤ A talk about domestic violence 	<p>Clear (use an appropriate style)</p> <p>Brief (use symbols and abbreviations)</p>
12/4/2001 THURSDAY	Practice on using all strategies taught		
14/4/2001 SATURDAY	Practice on using all strategies taught		
15/4/2001 SUNDAY	Practice on using all strategies taught		
16/4/2001 MONDAY	POSTTESTING		

Appendix: Chapter 7

Appendix 7-a: Results of multiple comparison in listening (treatment)

Table (7-a) Results of multiple comparisons across the treatment groups in listening test

(I) GROUP	(J) GROUP	Mean differences (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.
Strategy	Metacognitive	7.284*	.567	.000
	Control	9.877*	.569	.000
Metacognitive	strategy	-7.284*	.567	.000
	control	2.593*	.568	.000
Control	strategy	-9.877*	.569	.000
	Metacognitive	-2.593*	.568	.000

Appendix 7-b: Results of multiple comparisons across treatments in knowledge of strategies

Table (7-b): Results of multiple comparisons across treatments in knowledge of strategies

(I) GROUP	(J) GROUP	Mean differences (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.
Strategy	Metacognitive	25.77*	1.70	.000
	Control	24.88*	1.70	.000
Metacognitive	Strategy	-25.77*	1.70	.000
	Control	-.892	1.70	.603
Control	Strategy	-24.88*	1.70	.000
	Metacognitive	-.892	1.70	.603

Appendix 7-c: Means, procedure and results of multiple comparisons in knowledge of strategies (interaction effect)

Given that there is significant treatment – by – proficiency interaction, we need to know the direction of these differences. The Multivariate Analysis of Variance gives only the multiple comparisons for the main effects, therefore, the interaction post hoc tests were calculated by hand using the means of treatment -by – proficiency reported in table (7.11) below

Table (7-c): means and standard deviation of the three groups in knowledge of strategies

GROUPS	PROFICIE	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
strategy group	high proficiency level	102.453 ^a	1.775	98.908	105.998
	low proficiency level	102.797 ^a	1.775	99.252	106.342
pure exposure group	high proficiency level	78.018 ^a	1.788	74.446	81.590
	low proficiency level	75.673 ^a	1.770	72.138	79.208
control group	high proficiency level	82.335 ^a	1.723	78.894	85.777
	low proficiency level	73.140 ^a	1.733	69.679	76.602

a. Evaluated at covariates appeared in the model: KNOWLE1 = 77.3750.

and the following formula:

$$\Psi (\text{HSD}) = q\alpha, \rho, \nu, \sqrt{\text{MS Error} / N}$$

Where MS error is the MS error from the analysis of variance; N is the number of cases in each cell and from and q, ρ, ν , is obtained from the Percentage Points for the Standardised Range Statistic Table at a given significance level, α , with ρ means and ν degrees of freedom for the MS error term. In our case, MS error = 34.995, N = 12, $\alpha = 0.05$, $\rho = 6$ cells and $\nu = 65$. The value $q\alpha, \rho, \nu$ from the Percentage Points for the Standardised Range Statistic Table is 4.16. Substituting into the HSD formula we get

$$\Psi (\text{HSD}) = 4.16 \sqrt{34.995 / 12} = 7.1$$

Thus, the mean differences that is larger than 7.1 are significantly different from each other. These differences were calculated and summarised in table (7.12) below.

Table (7.12): Results of the HSD Multiple Comparison Test of the Adjusted Means of the Three Groups in Strategy Knowledge Due to Interaction (1 X 2)

	Means	Strategy high	Strategy low	Pure high	Pure low	Control high	Control low
Strategy high	102.5						
Strategy low	102.8	-0.3					
Pure high	78.0	24.5*	24.8*				
Pure low	75.7	26.3*	27.1*	2.3			
Control high	82.3	20.2*	20.5*	-4.3	-6.6		
Control low	73.1	29.4*	29.7*	4.9	2.6	9.2*	

Appendix 7-d: Results of multiple comparisons across treatments in use of strategies

Table (7-d): Results of multiple comparisons across treatments in use of strategies

(I) GROUP	(J) GROUP	Mean differences (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.
Strategy	Metacognitive	31.703*	2.531	.000
	Control	33.364*	2.564	.000
Metacognitive	Strategy	-31.703*	2.531	.000
	Control	1.660	2.521	.512
Control	Strategy	-33.364*	2.564	.000
	Metacognitive	-1.660	2.521	.512

Appendix 7-e: Results of multiple comparisons across treatments in perceived use of strategies

Table (7-e): Results of multiple comparisons across treatments in perceived value of strategy use

(I) GROUP	(J) GROUP	Mean differences (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.
Strategy	Metacognitive	25.513*	1.953	.000
	Control	27.378*	2.000	.000
Metacognitive	strategy	-25.513*	1.953	.000
	control	1.865	1.917	.334
Control	strategy	-27.378*	2.000	.000
	Metacognitive	-1.865	1.917	.334

Appendix 7-f: Results of multiple comparisons in self-efficacy

Table (7.4) Results of multiple comparisons across the treatment groups in self-efficacy questionnaire

(I) GROUP	(J) GROUP	Mean differences (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.
Strategy	Metacognitive	7.005*	.594	.000
	Control	8.096*	.591	.000
Metacognitive	strategy	-7.005*	.594	.000
	control	1.091	.591	.069
Control	strategy	-8.096*	.591	.000
	Metacognitive	-1.091	.591	.069

Appendix 8-a: Sample of the follow-up categories across the three groups:

(A) The strategy group

Categories	Frequency		Evidences
	High	low	
<u>Factors contributed to the success of the treatment</u>	12	8	SH2: “...It was a time of extremely intense growth and development of my knowledge and ...”. SL22 “the preparation we had gave us a great deal of information about things that we were not aware of or never attended to, things like the spoken and written discourse, what listening means and how we should deal with listening”.
	9	6	SH8: “...It (modelling) helped me see how expert listeners go about working through a problem or coming up with an answer. In addition it gave me inspiration of the processes which go on inside one’s head during listening which I normally can’t see. It also provided me with valuable insights into solving problems while listening. SL24: “...by giving real and live examples of strategies application to listening tasks (modelling), I became aware of what strategies work better and under what circumstances as well as I became aware when choosing another strategy might be inevitable...”
3.Practice	10	11	SH3: “...the teaching of strategies was interesting as the lecturer introduced the strategies in diverse ways to raise all students’ interest. Besides the most important thing is the lecturer did not move from the strategy before most of us if not all know how to use it”. SL18: “... with much practice, it (note taking) is going to be very helpful especially during lectures...you know I have my own short hand writing in Arabic which I use during lectures but I never thought about using something similar in English...”.

The strategy group (continued)

Categories		Frequency	Evidences
<u>In what way was the treatment helpful</u>	1. Fostering confidence	High 15	SH2: "...now and after that course I'm going to sit for The FC exam and I'm sure I'll pass it". SL15: " I'm no more afraid of listening. I don't feel tense anymore when listening to English..."
	2. Providing effective tools for listening.	6 9	SL2: "...but this course taught me that listening is no more difficult if you approach it with successful strategies..." SH3: "In addition to expanding our knowledge base we were provided with successful strategies for coping with the spoken message, tools for monitoring our own comprehension ... successful strategies for being active rather than passive listeners".
	3. Developing self-independence	9 5	SL17: "...in this sense... I can draw from my background knowledge to increase my comprehension level...generate predictions and make conclusions as well....". SH3: "...besides they resulted in a sense of being able to take control of our learning..."
	4. Motivating students for future independent listening	8 9	SL1: "...Secondly, the strategies encouraged me to take risks, to reflect, to step outside of the situation..." SL18: "...once I practised using these strategies and saw how fruitful they are, I decided to listen to the Nile TV when I go home for holidays also I asked my lecturer to recommend some readings in strategy teaching"

The strategy group (continued)

Categories		Frequency	Evidences
<u>Perceptio</u> <u>ns and</u> <u>attitudes</u>	Changes of perception as a learner	8	<i>S22: “.. I think the benefits I got from strategy instruction do not only lie in the strategies I have been introduced to and practised but also in providing me with the opportunity to consider my self as a learner, what sort of learner I am, I mean”.</i> <i>S12: “...this course has made a step for me on the way not only to develop my own listening skills but also to be a good learner and teacher as well”.</i>
	Changes of perception about listening	11	<i>SH5: “...I now realised that to listen effectively I have got to do something before, something while and something after listening. Before listening, I set a goal for my listening, activate my background knowledge. Based on my previously acquired knowledge, I anticipate and predict what I expect to hear. During listening, I ask where, when, what relationship between the speakers and how the message is delivered and then what the topic is. I listen selectively, I listen to the essence and focus of meaning, elaborate from the personal, academic or world knowledge. Based on all these I can draw inferences and make conclusions. After listening, I check goals and the strategies I used as well as the level of comprehension I achieved. I can now listen without fear or panic.</i>
		6	<i>SL17: “you might say I’m naïve but this is it, I used to se listening as hearing and answering question. I have never seen the big picture and that it involves setting a goal, making use of my information as well as making prediction or all these things we have been taught”</i>

The strategy group (continued)

Categories	Frequency	Evidences
<u>Leap in understanding spoken text</u>	High	<p><i>S1: "...I can touch the change that happened not only for me but also to my colleagues. I can understand and recognise most of the message, say 85% of what is said".</i></p> <p><i>S14: "...currently, I can listen with 70% comprehension of the message with the help of strategies I was instructed on...before that I can only understand few words or sentences".</i></p> <p><i>S7: "...I used to understand a lot of what is said as words and sentences but nowadays I can piece all the words together and get a solid idea of what is going on with the help of strategies. 75% comprehension of the text can express how I changed</i></p>
	low	
<u>Concerns</u>	4	<p><i>SH4: "the problem is the speaker won't allow you to use these strategies. He is eating his words leaving you no time² with strategies is they are</i></p> <p><i>SL20: "I was wondering how my friends could use these strategies. I seem to struggle with using them. They every class come with reports showing their use of strategies, I can't explain, but really they are not easy to apply".</i></p>
	5	<p><i>SH6: you need someone to remind you to use a given strategy till you get used to it and do it on your own"</i></p> <p><i>SL15" they need much guided and independent practice".</i></p>
	5	<p><i>SH12" some strategies were not new for me at all. Also some other do not work for all situation like SIMT, I can be in the mosque but talking about something unpredictable".</i></p> <p><i>SL24"they seemed ridiculous to me, I have my own ways".</i></p>
	0	

B) The metacognitive instruction group

Categories	Preparation unit	Frequency High low	Evidences
<u>Factors contributed to the success of the treatment</u>	Preparation unit	8 5	MH3: "I think knowing a little about listening as a process as well as its unique characteristics left my mind more open to understand the content of the text and to relate it to what I already know". ML21: "...you know the background knowledge we had in this course was what I expected to find in the course of the teaching methodology we had in the first term. I expected we will have some thing related to listening theory and how listening happens and how to teach, but it was a wish that did not come true",
	Peer group hints	4 14	SH1 " honestly I'm not at all good at listening, but I benefited a lot from just listening to others speaking about their tricks of how sort out problems ...I came to know and understand new ways of dealing with the aural texts." SL16: "... in the group discussion ideas sparked off. Ideas like guessing unknown words, ignoring unfamiliar information, the need for improving vocabulary, narrow listening, and the need for practice".
<u>In what way helpful</u>	Raising awareness about listening process	5 4	SH1: "...I think the introductory part we had was great. You know so far in my three years at the English Department we have studied nothing like that. It widened my mind and got me ready for what came next. I mean the listening part itself". SL21: "...you know the background knowledge we had in this course was what I expected to find in the course of the teaching methodology we had in the first term. I expected we will have some thing related to listening theory and how listening happens and how to teach, but it was a wish that did not come true"
	New ways of understanding the text	4 6	SL19: "The discussion we used to have after listening to the text enabled me to figure out the puzzle. When we discuss what we listened to I only started recognising information that I wasn't able to work out during listening time and how my mates worked it out". SH5: "Talking with my friends enabled me make sense of ideas and segments which seemed ambiguous and incomprehensible at listening time and showed me how they did it".

The metacognitive instruction group (continued)

Categories		Frequency High low	Evidence
<p><u>Perceptions and attitudes</u></p>	Changes of perception about learning	4	<p>MH5: "I now believe that to be a good language learner, I have to take risk, be active and take advantage of any opportunity for practice".</p> <p>MH15: "I started seeing learning as the analogy the teacher used during the preparation unit as an orchestra, where the teacher as well as myself has a role. Without such a role there will be no learning"</p>
	Changes of perception as a listener	7	<p>MH2: "Now I am aware that, rather than letting the message coming at me, I have to be an active listener I should do a number of things before, during and after listening"</p> <p>MH13: "I don't believe any more that I should listen to every word".</p>
<p><u>Concerns</u></p>	Group discussion is not enough	5	<p>MH8: "I wouldn't deny that I came to know and adopt many of what my peers pointed out during the discussion, but the teacher should have told us some more".</p> <p>ML20: "Discussion was very good and rich to the task we were doing, it helped me realise ideas that I couldn't work out alone, but the point is will it help me be a better listener".</p>
	Fast speech	6	<p>MH8: "our teachers don't speak to us so fast like the people in the tape and they usually shift to Arabic. The tapes are too fast for me to understand".</p> <p>ML19: when I listen, I try to listen and translate to be able to understand, but it was impossible with such a rapid speech to do so".</p>
	Unfamiliar vocabulary	5	<p>MH10: "very often I listened to words that seemed very long and I hadn't had any idea about or came across before".</p> <p>MH17: "... if I knew or could identify the words used, I wouldn't find any difficulty understanding the text itself".</p>
	Lack of concentration	6	<p>MH10" I couldn't help day-dreaming as I couldn't get through the meaning".</p> <p>ML14" I really couldn't concentrate as the time was late for me. I'm used to finish my lectures by three o'clock".</p>
		9	
		8	

A) The control group

Categories	Lab use	Frequency High low	Evidence
<u>In what way was the approach helpful</u>	Lab use	4 4	CH7: 2 "the lab helped me t hear quite well without interference of any other sounds coming from outside as in the lectures". CH17: " the lab was an excellent place for listening but we lacked the guidance and teaching".
<u>Attitudes</u>	Negative attitudes towards oneself as a listener	6 8	SH8: "I have built castles in the air I couldn't realise what I expected. It was really disappointing experience that uncovered the fact that I'm not going to be a good listener". SL18: "at the beginning of the programme I was cheerful and I said to myself my problem is at last going to be over. Now and after the programme is over, I feel helpless. I really can't do much better. I got it now it is not easy to be a good listener".
<u>Concerns</u>	Fast speech	7 11	CH1: "they were speaking very rapidly leaving me with a crude idea about what was it all about". CL19: "they seemed to be speaking too fast jumbling their words together".
	Unfamiliar vocabulary	8 10	CH2: "they seemed to use words which we have never come across". CL18: "there were many words in the texts we listened to which I did not know".
	Lack of concentration	9 6	CH3: "as the programme went on, my concentration went down, I mean became less". CL61 " I think I did not concentrate as much as I could have, but it was too late and I my self was too tired".
	Background noise	1 4	CH12: "they were speaking unclearly. I couldn't tell what they were talking about, the quality of the recording was not high. I mean there were a lot of door bangs, phone rings and you name". CL16: "the noise level in the tape was very high, interfering with what you can get".

Appendix: Chapter 8

Appendix 8-b: Retrospective report of SH2 (high proficiency listener strategy group) before the intervention

Retrospective reports: (SH2)	Strategy used
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (1)</i></p> <p><i>I don't know ... I could only grasp some words (1) – forest, environmental issues ..um... backyard.. and..er.. it was so fast(2).....(What were you thinking while listening?)... (laughing) honestly I was just thinking about the way they speak and if I could one day understand every thing they are saying..</i></p>	<p>(1) <i>Comprehension monitoring.</i></p> <p>(2) <i>Problem identification.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (2)</i></p> <p><i>I tried to concentrate on the words that would be familiar to me (3). I recognised some words like... er... “environmental issues”, “acid rain”, “forests”, but I still don't know what they are talking about (4).....(Anything else you want to say?) ... no, let's go on listening</i></p>	<p>(3) <i>Planning: selective attention.</i></p> <p>(4) <i>Comprehension monitoring.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (3)</i></p> <p><i>In this part I heard the word “rain forest”. er... but...they are talking about... er... I don't remember what exactly they were saying (5) ...<u>(anything you had in mind then?)</u> ...from the type of words I heard, I could understand they were talking, er... discussing the importance of rain forest and how it affects the environment (6). That was all I could get (7) but still I'm not so sure (8) because they are very fast (9).</i></p>	<p>(5) <i>Problem identification.</i></p> <p>(6) <i>Inferencing: between parts inferencing.</i></p> <p>(7) <i>Self-evaluation: comprehension.</i></p> <p>(8) <i>Comprehension monitoring.</i></p> <p>(9) <i>Problem identification.</i></p>

Appendix 8-c: Retrospective report of SH7 (high proficiency listener strategy group) after the intervention

Retrospective reports (SH7)	Strategy used
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (1)</i></p> <p><i>Now, let me see: that was an interview, I tried to identify the SIMT and from the way they are talking I mean someone is asking and another is answering, I knew ... (1) er...it is an interview with the director of friends of the earth. I couldn't take his name but I know it does not really matter. (2) They are talking too fast (3), but I planned not to listen to every word (4). Er ...just to listen to stressed parts (laughs) (5)... So, I understood he was explaining what 'friends of the earth' is. It is a group that is concerned about environment and how to protect it .(6) That was all I could get (7). I think I should have taken some notes (8). I'll do it next.(9)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (2)</i></p> <p><i>I've taken some notes: (most imp. , inter. Issues, so many, rain forest, next 5 yrs, priority). (10)</i></p> <p><i>Yes, ...um ..a question was asked about the most important international issues... I think the answer was ...um ...there are so many important issues but the priority now was the rain forests. (11) ... Then II don't know what exactly that they were going to do as he said (in 5 years time),(12) but I could guess it's a plan to protect these forests trees from being cut down, (13) ... yes, I remember I saw something like that on TV , to protect them from vanishing. (14) I think I did better by taking notes (15).... Also I'll predict what will come next; (16) I think another question will be asked... about...um... how or why... now let's listen...</i></p>	<p><i>(1) Identifying 'SIMT'.</i></p> <p><i>(2) Self-encouragement.</i></p> <p><i>(3) Problem identification.</i></p> <p><i>(4) Planning: selective attention</i></p> <p><i>(5) Essence of meaning.</i></p> <p><i>(6) Summarisation.</i></p> <p><i>(7) Self-evaluation: comprehension.</i></p> <p><i>(8) Self-evaluation: strategy.</i></p> <p><i>(9) Planning: Advance organisation.</i></p> <p><i>(10) Note taking.</i></p> <p><i>(11) Summarisation.</i></p> <p><i>(12)Comprehension monitoring</i></p> <p><i>(13) Inferencing: between parts.</i></p> <p><i>(14) Elaboration: world.</i></p> <p><i>(15) Self-evaluation: strategy</i></p> <p><i>(16) Prediction</i></p>

<i>Segment (3)</i>	
<p>My notes are: (Imp., rain for,... difference?...important...country,...depend on... biological...genetic...) (17)</p> <p><i>I was right... He started with a question (18)...but this part seemed more difficult to me. The question was so long, (19) but I tried to concentrate on the essence of it. (20) I guess it was why rain forests are important. (21) <u>(What were you thinking then?)</u> Er...my mind started to work out why rain forests should be important (22) .. This man said they are important for the people in these countries (which countries?) may be these countries in Africa and south America. (23) I had a picture in my mind (24) of those 'tropical forests', and all their treasures; plants, birds and animals. I always liked to read about them. Surely they are important (25)... Then he said people there depend on them for their whole life and that rain forests are important from the biological point of view and the genetic.. er ...I don't know I couldn't get what he said here (26)... but I think as a whole I'm doing well , am I not? (27)</i></p>	<p>(17) Note taking.</p> <p>(18) Prediction verification.</p> <p>(19) Problem identification.</p> <p>(20) Essence of meaning.</p> <p>(21) Inferencing.</p> <p>(22) Elaboration: world.</p> <p>(23) Elaboration: world</p> <p>(24) Imagery.</p> <p>(25) Elaboration: creative.</p> <p>(26) Self-evaluation: comprehension</p> <p>(27)Self-evaluation: comprehension.</p>

Appendix 8-d: Retrospective report of MH9 (high proficiency listener metacognitive instruction group) before the intervention

<i>Retrospective reports: (MH9)</i>	<i>Strategy used</i>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (1)</i></p> <p><i>They are talking so fast. (1) Er...I got a word, "epishago" (2) which I kept repeating to myself trying to work it out,(3) but I couldn't understand it and (4) ... as I was wondering about it, I missed part of the text.(5) Anyway, I think I did not get it right.(6) <u>(Was that all?)</u> Er... I...then I got words...like...national concern, backyard, and...environment, but I couldn't find a link between them.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (2)</i></p> <p><i>I was trying to concentrate hard. (7) I got the word "rain forest" ...and "in five years time" ... may be there is a plan or something in five years time. (8) I couldn't really understand what this plan is. (9) <u>(Anything else you want to say?)</u> Also I heard the words "environment", "critical period" and "protection", but I didn't know what he was saying about them. (10)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (3)</i></p> <p><i>Too fast again, (11) but, I can guess they are discussing a natural phenomenon or something related to nature. (12)..... <u>(how did you know that?)</u> Er.... All the words that I could grasp rain, forest trees, but I can't say I'm sure about that I find it difficult to remember everything I can recognise while listening. (13)</i></p>	<p>(1) Problem identification. (2) Auditory monitoring. (3) Repetition. (4) Comprehension monitoring. (5) Problem identification. (6) Comprehension monitoring. (7) Directed attention. (8) Inferencing. (9) Self-monitoring: comprehension. (10) Comprehension monitoring. (11) Problem identification (12) Inferencing. (13) Problem identification</p>

Appendix 8-e: Retrospective report of MH12 (high proficiency listener metacognitive instruction group) after the intervention

<i>Retrospective reports: (MH12)</i>	<i>Strategy used</i>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (1)</i></p> <p><i>I missed the first part (1)...I think it was a question...and an answer...I kept for a while thinking about the first part or sentence trying to figure it out. It seemed strange it sounded to me like...er.. “can pain in a be sha go”(2) ... but, it didn’t make sense to me.(3) So I thought I got it wrong. Also I missed part of what is said (4) but I heard some words from which I could guess they are discussing some issues related to the environment in the countryside (5) but I don’t know what exactly (6) I...I...it was so fast for me (7)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (2)</i></p> <p><i>I was trying to make use of the course I have just attended. I er didn’t try to listen to words but to the key words and the overall ideas (8)... however, my real problem was in the speed of their talking... it went so fast (9)... I could get some words ...er...like important issues, rain forest. So, I can guess he is saying why rain forest is important (10), but I don’t know why. I don’t know I couldn’t catch what he said (11) ...I’m not sure.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (3)</i></p> <p><i>In this part they said something about ‘rain forest’ ... this phrase was repeated several times, and so was the word ‘important’ ... also something ...um....biological. May be they are discussing the effect of rain forests on the environment, or what makes rain forest important (12). That was all I could understand anyway (13) I wish they had talked a little bit slowly or I could listen to it once more. (14)</i></p>	<p><i>(1) Problem identification.</i></p> <p><i>(2) Auditory monitoring.</i></p> <p><i>(3) Comprehension monitoring</i></p> <p><i>(4) Problem identification</i></p> <p><i>(5) Inferencing.</i></p> <p><i>(6) Self-evaluation: comprehension</i></p> <p><i>(7) Problem identification</i></p> <p><i>(8) Planning: selective attention.</i></p> <p><i>(9) Problem identification</i></p> <p><i>(10) Inferencing,</i></p> <p><i>(11) Self-evaluation: comprehension</i></p> <p><i>(12) Inferencing.</i></p> <p><i>(13) Self-evaluation: comprehension</i></p> <p><i>(14) Problem identification</i></p>

Appendix 8-f: Retrospective report of CH3 (high proficiency listener control group) before the intervention

<i>Retrospective reports: (CH3)</i>	<i>Strategy used</i>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (1)</i></p> <p><i>These two people are talking too fast (1). I tried hard to listen to whatever words I can recognize (2)...but... er..you know...when I get a word I miss part of what follows, because I'm thinking about the word and what it means (3)...I just felt some panic...so I missed lots of what is said (4)...I'm ...sorry.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (2)</i></p> <p><i>I ...um was thinking about the way they are saying the words. I wondered whether it was a real TV or a radio programme or just a pretend one (5)...it seemed real. This always happens to me when I try to listen to an English film on TV. I get lost because the words are eaten up (6). They are so fast...actually I switched off for a while (7)...then I tried hard but er...I don't know...I think I'm a hopeless listener. (8)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (3)</i></p> <p><i>Here I got some words, rain forest...trees...and some other words that I can't remember now. . Yes, the word environment. May be they are talking about nature ...rain forest and environment. (9) If they talked slowly, I'd get more of the words they said I just couldn't cope with the speed. (10)</i></p>	<p><i>(1) Problem identification</i></p> <p><i>(2) Planning: directed attention.</i></p> <p><i>(3) Problem identification</i></p> <p><i>(4) Problem identification</i></p> <p><i>(5) Elaboration: world.</i></p> <p><i>(6) Elaboration: personal.</i></p> <p><i>(7) Problem identification.</i></p> <p><i>(8) Self-evaluation: comprehension.</i></p> <p><i>(9) Inferencing: between parts inferencing.</i></p> <p><i>(10) Problem identification</i></p>

Appendix 8-g: Retrospective report of CH8 (high proficiency listener control group) after the intervention

<i>Retrospective reports (CH8)</i>	<i>Strategies used</i>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (1)</i></p> <p><i>All I could guess is that it was an interview with the director of some company. (How did you come to know that?) Um... I heard the words director and company so I guessed it.(1) (What were you thinking about while listening?)...I was trying to listen to all the words that I can recognize (2)...and...er.. I got many words like environment, acid rain and... I can't remember now... they were talking really so fast.(3) I couldn't exactly know what they were saying.....(4)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (2)</i></p> <p><i>I think a question was asked but I couldn't grasp it...and...er,, I think many words I heard seemed strange to me.(5) The words that I made out were few. Let me try to remember... they were saying something about the importance of rain? (6)... Just I couldn't form a full picture of what is being said.(7)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Segment (3)</i></p> <p><i>"Rain forest", yes it is. (8) I heard this word several times now and so is "critical issues". I could understand that they are discussing the rain forest and how it is affecting people.(9) Am I correct? (10)... I wish they were talking slowly or I could stop my mind from straying away while listening.(11)</i></p>	<p><i>(1) Inferencing: Between parts.</i></p> <p><i>(2) Planning: selective attention.</i></p> <p><i>(3) Problem identification.</i></p> <p><i>(4) Self-evaluation: comprehension.</i></p> <p><i>(5) Problem identification.</i></p> <p><i>(6) Questioning for clarification.</i></p> <p><i>(7) Self-evaluation: comprehension</i></p> <p><i>(8) Self-encouragement.</i></p> <p><i>(9) Inferencing: between parts.</i></p> <p><i>(10) Comprehension monitoring.</i></p> <p><i>(11) Problem identification</i></p>

**TEXT CUT
OFF IN
ORIGINAL**

Listening Activity

Name: Ahmed H. Shalaby

Date: 2-4-01

Material: An Interview with an ex-smoker.

Source: A tape I got from the library.

Why I chose this topic?... I thought it would be more familiar to me.

Goals I set for myself:

- 1- I will not listen to every word.
- 2- I will try to use some of the strategies I learnt.
- 3- I will see if I will understand the text or not.

** How I did the task

- In the beginning - before listening - I put some predictions.
- I listened for a short part, stopped the tape to see what I understood and to check the first predictions.
- If I don't understand something, I'd listen again.
- I may try to put other predictions for the next part.
- I then went on listening, stopped again, and so on.
- When I finished the text, I rewound it and listened to the whole text to see if I can understand and follow what I listen to.

*** Now these are the notes I had on each pause:

Pause (1)

- Before listening: - (I first made the following predictions I expect to hear an answer to the following:
(When did you start smoking? How? - How did you get the money for the cigarettes then? Were you a heavy smoker?))

- After listening (to the first part) (I listened to it twice)

- * I could understand (1) The man started smoking when he was 14
- 2- He, at first, thought smoking is 'cool' (this word was new to me, but I went on listening) and (3) His parents tried hard to stop him (but I ~~didn't~~ couldn't catch what they did)

N.B. + Only my first prediction (question) was answered so I thought of some more besides the others:

- How did smoking affect your health?
- Why did you think of giving up?

Pause (2)

In this part some more questions (predictions) were answered.

I could understand:

He smoked for 25 years and he smoked 20 to 30 cigs. a day. He tried many times to give up (quit as he said), but he couldn't. He was a player in the school basketball team. The coach told him to stop smoking if he wanted to play well. I'm not sure what exactly happened then, but he didn't give up then.

Pause (3)

My Predictions: What advice he may give to other smokers?

I could understand:

In 1983, he had a heart attack and then he quitted for the last time. He now dreams that he returned back to smoking in nightmares.

(He said something funny but I didn't know what was it they were laughing, but I wasn't sure what he said exactly. It seemed to me like he said;

"If someone wanted to quit, he should have a heart attack" or I'm not sure)

He finally advised any smoker who want to give up to try and try again)

** Final Comments:

- This is my second trial on self-listening activity. I feel I did better this time and I am happy about my performance this time.
- Predictions were very helpful as it helped increase my concentration.
- I didn't panic when I missed something or didn't understand it, but I went on listening and tried to guess the meaning.
- I decided to go on doing these tasks once a week.