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An assessment of the teaching, learning and testing of the listening skill at the university of Burundi. Case of the Junior Level of the Departments of English

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UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI

INSTITUTE FOR APPLIED PEDAGOGY

ENGLISH-KIRUNDI DEPARTMENT

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE TEACHING, LEARNING AND TESTING OF THE LISTENING SKILL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI. Case of the Junior Level of the Departments of English: Academic Year: 2004-2005

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of **"Licencié en Pédagogie Appliquée, Agrégé de l'Enseignement Secondaire en Anglais".**

Bujumbura, May 2007

DEDICATION

To my late father
who left us so early,
To my mother,
To my brothers and sisters,
for their courage and support,
To Honorable Evariste NZIGUHEBA's family,
To my brother-in-law Alphonse HABONIMANA,
for their self-sacrifice,
To Ange Larine AKIMANA,
And to you all who care,

I warmly dedicate this work.

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LIST OF ABREVIATIONS

1. A/Y	: Academic Year.
2. B.A	: Bachelor of Arts.
3. C.U.P	: Cambridge University Press.
4. DELL	: Department of English Language and Literature.
5. Dpt	: Department.
6. eg.	: "Exempli gratia" (Latin for "Example given").
7. E.K.D	: English-Kirundi Department
8. etc.	: "Et cetera" (Latin meaning "and the rest")
9. Freq.	: Frequency
10. I.A.P	: Institute for Applied Pedagogy
11. i.e.	:"id est" (Latin for "that is / that means")
12. L.C.C.	: Listening Comprehension Course
13. L.C.L.	: Listening Comprehension Lesson
14. L.C.T /E	: Listening Comprehension Test or Exam
15. Ltd.	: Limited
16. O.U.P	: Oxford University Press
17. S/SS	: Student / Students
18. T / TS	: Teacher / Teachers
19. U.B.	: University of Burundi
20. T.V.	: Television

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CHAPTER I: THE PROBLEM

1.1. General Introduction

In many countries, including Burundi, English is learnt in schools for different reasons. In some schools, English is learnt because it will be used as a teaching medium; in other schools, English is used as a vehicle language through which learners can learn other subjects. In some countries, where English is not used in the classroom for teaching or lecturing, English is still taught to students in order to provide them with access to technical and special literature necessary for advanced studies, as well as for international communication about specialized subjects.

In addition, English is a mother tongue in some countries whereas it is a second or a foreign language in others. In most countries in Africa, including Burundi, learners study English as an "isolated" school subject as they study Mathematics, French, History, etc. They do not study it as a medium to follow lectures at school or as a means of communication in their environment.

Although little is known with certainty about the nature of the second language acquisition, at any rate, the end result of second or foreign language learning is the ability to comprehend and produce the second language in its spoken or written form. But what is known is that; the learning of any language involves the acquisition of some of the receptive and productive skills, the receptive skills being listening and reading, while writing and speaking are productive skills. At a high level, it is also possible to put together listening and reading because of their similarities, as pointed out by A.H. GREENE (1967: 165)in the following quotation :

> *Reading and listening are identical and that skill in one means that equal skill will be held in the other. Listening does not permit "going back", taking time to look up a word in a dictionary, controlling the speaker's rate delivery, or pausing to absorb what has just been heard. On the other hand, reading is done without the personal contact often presented in the listening situation including the voice inflections, gestures, and facial expressions.*

Listening also goes with speaking and both form the communicative process. The ordering of these four language skills is not the concern of our study but their acquisition. R.T. NASR (1972: 17) says

> *One way of acquiring these skills is by experiencing them; by using them in real situations and relating certain activities, persons or subjects with the foreign language.*

Many researchers have debated on the order of these forms of skills. Some agree that it is possible to start with listening and then continue with speaking , reading and finish learning later with the writing skill. Seeing that it is not possible to deal with all the four language skills in this study, our concern focuses only on one language skill, the listening skill.

B. JONES (1983: 89) says:

> *Listening begins when the baby, in the middle of an activity, suddenly stops playing with his toes, raises his head, turns it to one side and tries to hear once more that sound from other sounds, the sound which is*

disturbing his ears. It can be the sound of a voice, a gun shot, a bell ringing, a clapping of hands.

People continuously listen to sounds, voices, and noises. For most of the time we do not pay attention to them. Even when we pay attention, we do so with varying degrees of concentration; unfortunately, even in the mother tongue, many people are still unable to listen carefully and retell or report what they have listened to. This is due to the lack of attention about what is being said. But anyone growing into an adult-educated area must develop this habit of listening, and even the desire to concentrate on the serious talk aimed at him. At the same time, he must give full attention to what is said in order to respond effectively and change his behaviour accordingly. This is the role of listening.

There are misconceptions concerning listening that have delayed the teaching of listening in many schools. One is that listening is a matter of knowing a language. Many people think that if they know the grammar of the language, they will understand what is said. But, when can one say he understands the grammar of the language? B. JONES (1983: 301) remarks: "*good listening habits are taught and not caught*". By being taught, we understand that it must be developed by progressive practice under skilful guidance from secondary school to University.

1.2. Background to the problem

Many courses devised to teach a foreign language include a component called "background to the literature". The aim of the component would be to consider types of speakers, types of learners, types of places, time, and situations of contexts which arouse different expectations, the part they play in a culture. If then the student is to understand the language he is exposed to

while listening, "understanding" as G. BROWN and G. YULE (1983: 75) say it, must imply "seeing" the point of the language; that is, the interest and the use the language has for him. According to them, the student must have enough background to the culture of the speakers of the language concerned with in order to enable him assess why something is said. But for other studies, culture does not cause any problem in the acquisition of a given language. Understanding depends on individual talent and training.

However, people know that every child enters school with some degree of listening ability. This kind of listening ability is innate, and for this reason, some authors hold the mistaken idea that listening ability will increase gradually as an individual grows up. But indeed, language is taught in a certain order of skills: listening, speaking, writing and reading. According to A. H. GREENE (1968: 168)

> *What we think we know about the language without being taught is incidental learning. It makes a person an accurate and responsive listener unless he is taught how to listen and how to utilise the results of listening in determining his future actions.*

Researchers agree on the fact that listening, which was recovering from a long period of neglect, is now receiving increasing attention in the school programme. The delay in the teaching, learning and testing the listening skill may be due to the fact that people pass most of the time listening to others without any form of concentration on the element of the language. Then authors such as A. M. GREENE (1966: 179) and others make the difference in terms of time people pass in listening. They say: of the time people spend in communicating each day, approximately 45 percent is devoted to listening, 30 percent to speaking, 16 percent to reading and 9 percent to writing. This is what gives the wrong feeling that listening should be developed in general language

arts context whereas it will be developed as one of the most important skills in language learning and language acquisition.

Despite the fact that people start listening from their early childhood and consecrate a good amount of time to listening, most people are still being poor listeners because the kind of activities they are engaged in are not always listening activities but what some researchers called "hearing". In fact, listening implies more than hearing. It involves giving active and conscious attention to sound, for the purpose of gaining meaning from it.

Many theories and discussions have been made about the nature of listening, and most of them agree that the listening skill has to be taken as any language skill. From the same theories and discussions, some argue that listening is not to be assessed while others say that there is no reason why it cannot be assessed, seeing that it is equal to other language skills. In addition, the evaluation of the listening skill has been dragging behind, and one of the principal reasons is the difficulty in determining the specific skills and abilities essential to good listening and identifying factors in these skills which are measurable by standard procedures. Another reason may be the fact that researchers who dealt with the listening skill did not consider it as a whole in the general process of teaching, learning and testing. They provided some guidelines of these three activities independently and separately whereas all these three are interdependent and interrelated. This means that teaching influences learning and hence testing also.

Among researchers who recently have been interested in and attracted by the listening skill we can mention A. ANDERSON and T. LYNCH (1988), G. BROWN and G. YULE (1983), P. UR (1983), A. E. ASHWORTH (1982), who provided some guidelines for the teaching, learning and testing of the listening

skill. They say that listening has to be considered as any of the foreign language skills.

In fact, this thesis attempts to inform different practices and methodologies used by both students and teachers of the listening skill at the University of Burundi in the Department of English Language and Literature, and at the Institute for Applied Pedagogy, following the recent teaching, learning and testing methods propounded by English Foreign Writers.

1.3. Statement of the problem

Understanding and comprehending English spoken by native speakers is not an easy task for Burundian students who mostly are only exposed to messages communication in their mother tongue and/or in their second language. Moreover, the teaching of listening skill in secondary school, if it happens to be taught, is done at various degrees, depending on the teacher and the material, the visual aid at the teacher's disposal. Sometimes, teachers can think they are teaching listening when they are not. Teachers may be playing a tape recorder or reading a text from their book and think that they are teaching listening to their learners.

The teaching, learning and testing of listening skill at the University of Burundi could not be difficult as such if students were introduced to it from the early learning of English and if the skill were introduced gradually and progressively. Students at the University of Burundi say that listening comprehension course is at the same time easy and difficult. They add that to succeed or fail in it depends upon the type of tape they listen to, the time and the environment.

Three major problems are identified in the teaching, learning and testing of listening skill at the University of Burundi. The first problem is the time allotted to listening comprehension activities, that is, 45 hours or 40 hours per year. We all that if the teacher is available, he can teach it in one or two weeks and the course is finished. After, he gives students an examination. The teacher himself can decide to give only one day for the preparation of the examination. One can see some students sitting together, telling and retelling what they remember in different tapes they have listened to. Some go beyond to look for books that the teacher has used in order to read and memorize other units that were not studied in the classroom. They do so whereas they do not have a tape and a radio to refer to. The second problem is the lack of sufficient materials used in the teaching, learning and testing of the listening skill. Materials, as the teaching aids in hands of the teacher, help the teacher to achieve his objectives. The third problem is the kind of methodology and theory that can be used in the teaching, learning and testing the listening skill.

Apart from these three problems cited above, the major problem is that, though listening is taught, learnt and tested, much remains to know as to how this process is achieved because in the end it is noticed that the learner's performance in listening comprehension leaves much to be desired. G. BROWN and G. YULE (1983: 55) remark

> *The ability to understand spoken language is not acquired naturally, then it appears that this ability must be taught.*

From this view point we understand that there must be a relationship between teaching listening, learning it and testing it. Teaching listening is not the equivalence of bringing a radio recorder and a tape and start playing a listening extract as many times as possible in order to help better understanding, rather it consists in giving some theories about how to listen and what to listen to. This

simply means that while teaching listening, the teacher's instructions would be to make the learners aware of its importance which arises not only to students at school, on the playground, and at the campus, but also to adults in almost every life activity. Students must also feel the necessity of developing the listening skill. Most of the learners are not aware that accurate listening derives from the formation of good habits which must be continually kept high through practice.

1.4. Research hypotheses

Before conducting this study we wondered about the teaching, learning and testing of the listening skill; then, we formulated the following assumptions which can be proven right or wrong throughout this work. It is then hypothesized that:

- The lack of theory and methodology to teach, learn and test the listening skill at the junior level of the University of Burundi may be the major cause of failure In the course of Listening Comprehension in the Department of English.
- The monotony of materials used in teaching and testing the listening skill may be among factors hampering the success in Listening Comprehension course.
- The fact that students had not had Listening Comprehension lessons at the secondary school may be another element which does not allow them to understand what is said in the Listening course.

1.5. Purpose and objectives of the study

This study aims at evaluating the teaching, learning, and testing of the listening skill at the University of Burundi. More precisely, our purpose is then to describe and evaluate the techniques used in the listening process, and finally sketch out some theory and methodology which can be used in teaching, learning and testing the listening skill at the University of Burundi.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This work is useful in the sense that it tries to evaluate different techniques used by learners and teachers; theories and methodologies used by teachers in the Listening Comprehension activities. In the final analysis, the instructor will find new ways of teaching and testing the skill of listening. In addition, teachers of English, especially those of Listening Comprehension courses at University of Burundi, as well as students will benefit from this work because we think that it helps them to review their syllabus designs, their way of teaching, learning and testing it. This work will also help them to think about how to improve the teaching, learning and testing conditions of the Listening Comprehension.

1.7. Scope of the study

As already mentioned, the concern of our study is an assessment of the teaching, learning and testing of the listening skill at the junior level at the University of Burundi. The study focuses on nowadays teaching, learning and testing procedures used in the Department of English Language and Literature and in the English-Kirundi Department with a specific reference to materials,

theoretical activities and methodology, and the kind of practice used to facilitate all those elements above in order to develop listening skill.

Our research is directed toward the junior level students at the University of Burundi. The Department of English Language and Literature (DELL), in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and English-Kirundi Department (EKD) at the Institute for Applied Pedagogy (IPA) are our main area of investigation. We thought that the number of the students is representative enough for the assessment of teaching, learning and testing of listening skill is concerned.

1.8. Justification

The reason why this study is to be taken into consideration resides in the fact that not much research has been carried out on the listening skill. H. A. GREENE (1967: 162) says: *"Listening is recovering from a long period of neglect is now receiving increasing attention"*. To this point, G. BROWN and G. YULE (1983: 54) add *"in the last ten years, listening comprehension has begun to be taken seriously"*.

In Burundi, we can mention researchers such as F. KANEZA (2000) in *"Assessment of the Learning of the Listening Skill in the English Language and Literature Department at the University of Burundi"*, A. NIYONDAGARA (1984) in *"Developing Testing Listening Skill in Secondary Schools"*, and E. NKURUNZIZA (1967) in *"Appraisal of Project Aftermath: Listening Skill.* Therefore, researchers attracted by the listening skill at the University of Burundi worked on it atomistically and not holistically.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

The present chapter deals with different ideas and opinions discussed by other authors in relation to our work entitled: *"An Assessment of the Teaching, Learning and Testing of the Listening Skill at the University of Burundi"*.

Research agrees on the importance of the four language skills in language teaching, language learning and language testing. Those four language skills are categorised as listening, speaking, reading and writing. B. W. ROBINET (1978: 117) says that no matter how these four language skills are ordered, it could be possible to start with the traditional sequence, as the one above, or we could begin with the productive skills (speaking and writing) and then deal with the receptive skills (listening and reading). We have deliberately chosen to discuss first the receptive skill of listening, not because it is more important than the others but because this sequencing may demonstrate that it is equally important in the learners' attempt to develop communicative competence in the language. G. BROWN and G. YULE (1993: 54) remark :

> *Previously, where there was any interest at all, it seemed to be assumed that the students would just pick it up some how in the general process of learning the foreign language.*

In other words, L.C. was not taught or so much considered as important before the 1980s because people thought one acquires listening but does not learn it. The same authors continue to show how difficult it is to teach listening skill and give a number of reasons why it is not easy. One of the difficulties they point out is the fact that teachers address the class in a public style which is slow and

clear. Therefore, the students imitate them and also speak slowly and clearly. About imitation, R. T. NASR (1972: 16) says

> *Oral mastery depends on practising and repeating the patterns produced by a native speaker of the foreign language and one's mastery of any language is always on two major levels: producing and receiving.*

Moreover, another important element which causes the difficulty in the teaching, learning and testing of the listening skill is the teaching materials to be used. As it has been said earlier, Listening Comprehension requires at least two people: the speaker and the listener. These two people can be face-to-face or distant one from the other. In the last case, there is the need of using auxiliary listening materials such as the telephone, the radio, television, audiotapes, video-cassettes, etc. Most of the time, foreign language learners are not familiar with these materials. While listening to productions using these materials, the materials are being used by the speaker and the listener. Students are not the first listeners to whom the message is intended. The interaction is between the two people speaking to one another and the student, who has to pay attention to the speakers, becomes the third listener; that is what G. BROWN and G. YULE (1983) call "overhearer".

According to W. L. RIVERS (1968: 189), the listening comprehension materials will provide training in a steady progression and not leaving essential learning to chance. He suggests that if suitable materials are not available, the teacher should choose, adapt and refract those that are obtained or prepare his own. We understand that the teaching of listening comprehension cannot hold without materials. Listening materials are like a ladder that both teachers and learners use to get access to knowledge. Materials may be of a wide range.

P. STREVENS (1983:27) establishes characteristics that teaching materials need to display in order to enable the teacher to achieve his teaching objectives. Namely:

1. *Materials should be realistic, that is, being used by teachers and learners; capable of being learned from, cheap enough to be available, actually at hands, not just empty entries, in an official list which never reaches learners;*
2. *Materials should be relevant to the particular point in the learner's progress, to his aim and age-group;*
3. *They should be interesting, that is, varied; related to the learner's topics of interest and intellectually satisfying;*
4. *They should also be encouraging, that is, having the quality of making the learner feel he is making progress, or at least enjoying his learning. Briefly, materials do not only serve the teacher, they should also play a great role on the learners.*

In addition to the variety of materials, the teacher's role in the selection and ordering of materials is very important. In choosing listening materials, G. BROWN and G. YULE (1983) propose the grading of materials by speaker; by intended listener; by content; by support; by types of purpose. Authors agree that it is easier to understand a recorded audio-tape when only one person is speaking and that, as the course progresses, the learner may be exposed to tapes of different sexes, ages, jobs since this should enable him to distinguish easily between the speakers.

In fact, the use of visual materials such as television, video and films in the teaching, learning and testing of the listening skill are helpful because foreign language learners understand better the language they see produced in a

dramatic context than when it is simply played on a tape. However, true listening occurs when the viewer understands what is being said. Otherwise, it can turn out to be mere watching if it is not accompanied by a guided listening from the teacher. Then the use of a radio is more important because it helps all learners to be more imaginative on things they hear and not on what they see.

2.1.1. Relation Between Language Learning and Language Teaching

Teaching is intellectually exciting. It requires the teacher to know in deep the subject being taught. The teacher also needs to select key strategies on materials, to organise and structure ideas, information and tasks for his students. Teaching consists of a set of skills that can be acquired, improved and extended. According to G. BROWN and M. ATKINS (1988: 10), teaching requires the teacher to consider what the students know, to communicate clearly to them and stimulate them to learn, think and perhaps in their turn, to stimulate their teachers.

For the psychologist, learning refers either to a process which produces a progressive series of changes in behaviour and experience, or a result – the sum total of all such changes in the learner. According to F. KANEZA (2000: 23),

> *Learning is different from teaching but the former depends on the latter. The learners use their learning strategies after having been taught what to learn. All the learners must take into account all the learning factors which can prevent them from success independently from the teaching*

In the same way, J. C. AGGARWAL (1996: 60) says:

> *It is worth bearing in mind that learning is what the students do, teaching is what academic staff does and that improvement in the teaching can only be demonstrated if there is consequential improvement in learning.*

We all know that improvement in learning may occur for reasons that have nothing to do with teaching. For example, students are able to spend more time, gain better access to libraries and become more strongly motivated. This is true because, although students do learn because of the instructions they receive, we are sure that they also learn in spite of these instructions they receive.

In learning listening, there is a widespread outcry about the inability of students to learn competently the course of listening. Therefore, there are few theories about language learning as approaches to the learning of the listening skill. CRYSTAL (1987: 26) supports the same idea that there is no single theory that can account for the diversity of foreign language learning. He continues to show us that the wide range of approaches and methods are not helpful to the learner since he has to set up his own learning strategies independently from the teacher's methods.

In short, G. BROWN and M. AKTINS (1988) agree that whereas students' responsibilities to learn may be described as individual and personal, theirs as teachers may be regarded as collective and professional. We understand that students tend to learn what there are taught. Therefore, the role of a language teacher, as D. BYRNE (1986: 1) indicates, is:

To create the best conditions for learning. In a sense then, you are a means to an end, an instrument to see that learning takes place.

Conclusion: Language learning depends on language teaching.

2.1.2. Relation Between Language Testing and Language Teaching

If teaching requires the teacher to know in deep sense the subject being taught, testing will require him to find out what the students know. Testing is an essential part of teaching; every teacher at whatever level he teaches, is called upon to test his students. Testing is as important as teaching at all stages of education. It was found out that the tests given by teachers can have a permanent effect on the future career of a student, and in this respect, ASHWORTH (1982: 1) says:

We should take our responsibility of testing seriously. We should know why we test, how we test and what use we should make of the marks we obtain from our tests.

Testing is very important because it comes in at the planning stage when teaching objectives are identified. Because ,not like teaching or learning, any testing constitutes a panic, everyone knows this from their experience. Whereas, after a test, a testee can go back to read what would be answers to questions for many courses because they have notes in hands, this is not a case after a test in listening comprehension. Many students, most of time, rely on the type of audio-cassette to which they are going to listen. Some scholars like J. DONOUCH (1981) and others agree on the distinction between the teaching and testing processes. He points out that the teaching technique of asking questions after a listening task is a testing technique and not a listening technique because teaching is designed to help students to understand and comprehend the spoken language, and not to assess their level of

comprehension. If then, the way the teacher assigns different tasks to her students is confused with his teaching techniques, the results from this being the students' failure in the test or examination because they were not introduced to how to listen but to what to listen. For example, a student who has not been introduced to how to listen the discrimination between sounds, both in words and in sentences will find it difficult to make the difference between "washing" and "watching" in:

a) Washing: she's washing the car
b) Watching: she's watching the car.

He may also face difficulty when it comes to the discrimination between "in" and "on" in

(c) It's in the box and
(d) It's on the box, especially when the structure words "in" and "on" are not stressed.

The same authors claim that testing increases panic and therefore reduces students' performance. On the other hand, CUNNINGSWORTH (1988) and his counterparts suggest that teaching by testing increases students' motivation. HEATON (1988) makes a clear opposition between teaching and testing as expressed in the following:

> *A large number of examinations in the past have encouraged the tendency to separate testing from teaching. Both testing and teaching are so closely interrelated that it is virtually impossible to work in either field without being constantly concerned with the other.*

However, the importance of tests is shown by ASHWORTH (1982) wh maintains the idea that tests are to diagnose, to evaluate, to select, to report, to compare and to predict.

2.1.3. Relation Between Language Learning and Language Testing

Learning takes place even outside the classroom when learning from experience. As G. BROWN and M. AKTINS (1988) say, a wise man learns from the experience of others.

If teaching and learning are then periodically covering a small section of the total syllabus, so testing should be done through evaluation of the total course objective. We all know that not all natives are good listeners. The native listener normally experiences spoken language in a situational context where he is aware of 'significant' features of context even before anyone speaks at all. Sometimes, however, even the native listener experiences spoken language which is relatively out of context. Native listeners then, may occasionally find it difficult to work without the precise topics, purposes and attitudes of largely international conversations, even given that they have a lot of information about the situational context. The situation is rather similar when the native listener turns on the radio or television. He has to use all the strategies, in a highly active manner, to determine who is speaking and why, to whom, and in which situation.

According to G. BROWN and G. YULE (1983), students need to learn to interpret utterances spoken in their target language and the teacher should be able to offer all the facilitating devices and strategies at their disposal. It is these devices and strategies which help the students to understand what is said by people. The authors continue to say that the listener will not normally be expected to remember everything he hears. It is interesting to note that various

studies have shown that students tend to learn what it is they are taught. Thus, any method that tends to emphasize one or the other elements of the listening will tend to result in a greater learning of that subskill of listening.

However, any awareness of the ways in which the spoken language differs from the written language is of crucial importance in the testing of the listening. The spoken language, in certain ways, results from the large elements of 'redundancy' that it contains.

HEATON (1988) claims that although it is not always possible when listening comprehension tests are conducted on a large scale, it is helpful if the speaker can be seen by the listeners. In the same way, he says that apart from the use of a videotape, however, the tape recorder is the only way of ensuring complete uniformity of presentation and thus a high degree of reliability. He divided tests of listening into two broad categories:

1. Tests of phoneme discrimination and of sensibility to stress and intonation, and,
2. Tests of listening comprehension questions.

The opposition between learning listening and testing listening can be expressed by the fact that what is tested is not what students have learned or studied as for other written languages because the content is different in listening. Students have to listen to new material. For that reason, as J.C. AGGARWAL (1996) points it out the teacher has to use a variety of methods for this purpose. The same author defines evaluation in terms of :

1. The extent to which an objective is achieved
2. The effectiveness of the learning experiences provided in the classroom;
3. How well the goals of teaching have been accomplished.

According to A. NIYONDAGARA (1984:4):

> *To evaluate one's ability to comprehend spoken language is a complex matter. This complexity becomes evident when one tries to specify systematically what should be tested.*

Then, in order to facilitate the testing techniques, many teachers prefer to use comprehension questions and blank filling because other forms of questions would seem difficult to test. Normally, many teachers do not test the knowledge of the language; rather they test the use of it, that is, its comprehension.

Briefly speaking, teaching remains central to both learning and testing or evaluation. There is interrelatedness between teaching objectives (ends), learning experience (means) and evaluation (evidence of what is taught and learnt). Testing, however, being part of teaching, should not dominate the teaching and learning activities. Otherwise, it can increase the learner's panic. Listening comprehension teachers should stop confusing testing listening comprehension with the teaching of listening itself.

2.2. The Teaching of Listening Skill

Listening comprehension lessons, where they take place, are usually unstructured . Students listen to a tape recording and the teachers ask questions to test the students' grasp of the main idea, or to test their recall of the sequence of ideas, or simply to test their comprehension questions.

However, according to B. JONES (1983) comprehension consists of three parts: "translation" which roughly corresponds to subskills; the second she calls "interpretation". These two terms include other subskills and also entail the re-ordering of the ideas in the receiver's mind; the third she calls extrapolation. These three subskills can be explained by paraphrasing M. UNDERWOOD's (1983) definition about listening. She says that listening is the activity of paying attention to and trying to get a meaning from something we hear. We all know that to listen successfully to spoken language we need to work out what speakers mean when they use particular words, in particular ways, on particular occasion. And not simply to understand the words themselves. For her, no one knows exactly how listening works and how people learn to listen and understand. This idea had already been expressed by E.A. NIDA (1965) who wrote that everything floods in upon us in such a confusion that we have no idea of what exactly we are hearing.

There are many different types of activities which can be done in listening comprehension and some teachers may prefer some types instead of others. Many writers support the idea that the teaching of listening should be gradual and progressive. M.J. WALLACE (1980) proposes four steps in the gradual teaching of listening. According to her, these steps are to be followed:

1. Teachers have to begin with the sound because it is the noise that first strikes learners' ears;

2. Listeners must be able to identify the intonational devices of the languages;
3. They must be aware of means by which contrast is signalled (stressed or unstressed words).
4. The listeners must be alert to such grammatical signals such as those indicating tense, number, regular plural form, question, negatives, etc.

In addition to these four steps proposed by M.J. WALLACE (1980), teachers also have to introduce some particularities of the language to their students. Some of these particularities are:

- The reduction of vowel quality in words occurring in the stream of the speech and the use of contractions.

Example: *- Did you give him the book? /him/ →/im/*

- I don't know, he might have /duw nat now/ → downt now/or
→ /dənow/
mayt hæv/ → máytəv/

- The form of words such as *"for", "to", "him", "is"* and *"has"* when unstressed becomes */fə/* or */fr/, /tə/, /im/, /z/* and */z/* are called weak forms.
- The disappearance of some words: *Where are you going?→ "Where you going?*
- The juxtaposition of some words sometimes means that one of the sounds at the junction point has been assimilated to the other, or even disappears.

/tem ˈpi: pl/ →ten people

- /si ˈdaun/ → sit down

- /ˈrait/ → all right

- /steipmen/ → statement

Not all these words or sentences are new to the foreign language learner, but he may fail to recognize one of these because of its spoken form. According

to M. W. RIVERS (1968), the end results of coping with these problems must be by means of long practice and familiarity.

Therefore, we pointed out the role of listening materials in the teaching, learning, and testing of the listening skill. The following subtitle tries to focus on the role of these materials in the teaching process.

2.2.1. The Use of Radio, TV, Video, Cinema in the Teaching of Listening Skill

The teaching of listening comprehension is frequently done by means of a radio player, sometimes with a television set, and rarely with films. These powerful media of mass communication can give millions of people their only contact with a second language. Television is a great and more powerful medium of contact. Both TV and cinema offer opportunities for the listener to see objects and gestures and relate them to the meaning he hears. The use of video in teaching is more helpful in the way that it can be run in slow motion or at half-speed, with or without sounds. It may be possible to stop at a particular point in the programme and/or freeze the picture on the screen in order to pay special attention to a point. That is what B. TOMALIN (1986) calls "teaching techniques".

B. TOMALIN (1986), M. W. RIVERS (1968), G. BROWN and G. YULE (1983) agree on the importance of using audio-visual materials because these materials help the learner to relate what he hears to what he sees, for example, body movement, facial expression, slight changes in breathing, length of pause and degree of emphasis, the learner can also see in what kind of situation a person is addressed formally or informally and why. Not like a

video, cinema and films, television's speciality lies in the fact that you cannot stop it for a while and still have the same contact.

Even though most authors agree on the importance of using television, cinema, video or film, these do not replace the teacher. They are the means, the aids to the teaching of listening skill. We know that within a given picture, one learner can focus on one element, and another learner to another different element. And for that, some authors suggest using a radio in teaching listening comprehension. In that way, all listeners will be creating the situation imaginatively.

In general, the teaching of a language cannot hold without materials. Materials are like a ladder that teachers and learners use to get access to knowledge. In this regard, let us point out that teacher's training alone is not enough when they do have instructional materials to support the teaching-learning process.

Materials do not only serve the teacher, they also play a great role on the learners. Materials as any other resource supporting the teaching of a language should be constructed in accordance with the teacher's aim and objectives as well as the learners' needs. Selection of materials should be related to the learners' purposes.

As a matter of fact, no teaching of listening comprehension can be successful if the teacher does not distinguish the nature of listening he is dealing with A. ANDERSON and T. LYNCH (1988), distinguish between reciprocal listening and non-reciprocal listening. According to them, the first refers to those listening tasks where there is the opportunity for the listener to interact with the speaker and negotiate the content of the interaction; the second refers to the tasks such as listening to the radio. They also make a distinction between

analytic listening and extended listening. The first is the listening that students do with the teacher in the class, and second is the one that students do only for pleasure.

Apart from all these distinctions, what is important is, whether the teacher is dealing with reciprocal listening or non-reciprocal listening, analytic listening or extended listening, he has to bear in mind that the students are reaching various levels for the listening they do. According to A. HARRY (1967:168), the teaching of listening entails the distinction between the following types of listening.

1. Appreciative listening, that is, the hearer settles down to enjoy a dramatization, a story or a poem,
2. .Creative listening or the fact of entering imaginatively into the experience, the setting and the feeling of the characters,
3. Attentive listening which deals with comprehension;
4. Analytical listening: this takes place for example when the listener Weighs what he heard against his personal experience.

Among all these types, one which is frequently applied to the junior level of the University of Burundi is the attentive listening which deals with comprehension.

U. B.

2.2.2. Assessment of the Teaching, Learning and Testing of Listening Skill at the University of Burundi

2.2.2. a. Introduction

In any language teaching, learning and testing processes, the teachers must assess the learner's work. This is because a teacher may need to find the level of the achievement of his learners as individual or as a group. It is also a way of assessing himself since it will show him how the course has been handled. Tests may be used to see their level of language performance or language competence.

The kind of assessment which is involved here is synonymous with an evaluation of what has been achieved in teaching, learning and testing of the listening skill.

According to F. KANEZA (2000), it is the assessment of proficiency which is made to determine how much English an individual actually knows. In the same way, J. HALLIDAY (1996:113) claims that:

> *This assessment is a normal part of teaching for without it the teacher has no means of knowing what level of task is appropriate for a particular student.*

2.2.2 .b. An Assessment of the Listening Skill Teaching

Many writers agree on the fact that the teaching of listening has taken less interest for a long time. One can imagine what was happening in its previous teaching-learning of listening. If a student has difficulty understanding

the language addressed to him by a teacher, many difficulties arise when he is exposed to a language spoken by a native speaker using a radio, television, video, etc.

Assessing the listening skill teaching can be very difficult, even impossible if we rely on R.T. NASR's (1972) suggestion which says *"language cannot be taught, it must be learned"*. In the case of listening, teachers have no choice in the content to teach or in the structure of it as G. BROWN and G. YULE (1983:5) point out:

> *Most of the courses are structured in the same way. They typically contain chunks of spoken language which take between three and seven minutes to play. The playing on the tape is sometimes intended to be prefaced with some remarks on its content and occasionally, by explanation of some "difficult vocabulary items which will be encountered in the text. The students are then expected to listen to the tapes.*

In addition, many tapes contain the instructions like: *"You are going to hear the tape x-times."* Remember that the explanation of difficult items does not mean that the student will be able to understand everything. For example, the teacher will not write words "Can't remember what" to be explained, but students will have problem recognizing those words when uttered as /kan 'trimwat/ and therefore, he will think that it is a new word. The teacher may use the tape to draw the attention to characteristic features of taking up a turn and therein, it is positively valuable for the student to be able to study or pay attention to these features, both in transcribed version and on tape.

For example, G. BROWN and G. YULE (1983: 54) show the following transcription:

Different colours *When the sun*

/diffen ˈkʌləz/ */wən? sˈʌn/*

For that, the use of transcribed text in listening has been adopted by these authors as they say it (1983: 85):

> *Written transcript should be presented as the transcript of the spoken language and not tied up to look like written, since it will hardly be helpful to the student if he keeps finding gross mismatches between what he thinks he hears and what is represented on the tape. So, pauses and ums, laughs and coughs should be indicated and incomplete sentences left uncompleted.*

We quite understand that written text should be presented in the way that it shows all the speaker's reaction. For the authors, everything dealing with all these elements above is not crucial to the message anyway, and the listener is to be reassured that he does not need to hear everything all the time in order to arrive at a reasonable interpretation.

As any teaching, the teaching of listening should be presented in the way it shows progression and gradation. In assessing the teaching of listening, the teacher should be able to see how well he is doing and what experiences his students are reaching.

2.2.2. c. An Assessment of the Listening Skill Learning

Assessing the listening skill learning has met a number of difficulties related to its nature and the nature of listening comprehension itself. For B.W. ROBINET (1978: 178):

> *The goal of listening is to enable the learner to perceive the second language in the way native speakers perceive it. (...) there is a need for listening practice that is not the usual kind of mimicry or memorization exercises often used in classroom.*

Therefore, the author also says that listening should have as one of its objectives the development of the ability to predict what may be expected next in the stream of speech. But, if this ability is easily demonstrated by native speakers of the language, it also depends upon the topic being discussed. For example, learners will have no difficulties predicting what will follow after the word "bank" if they have been at least once in the bank; then they will be able to have the prediction of words such as deposit, withdraw, money, cash, checks, traveller's checks, teller, manager, checking account, savings accounts, interest, loan, etc.

In listening, many students are limited by their view of language as isolated words and sounds without the total system of contrasts, that is, a language itself. Many writers agree on the fact that much remains to be known about how we learn out native language, and, if this is the case, as it has been said earlier, the assessment of the learning of the foreign language becomes much more difficult.

The assessment of the learning of the listening skill means the evaluation of what has been achieved. As said by F. KANEZA (2000), it differs from other types of assessment in that:

1. It assess whether a particular individual is able to learn any foreign language in the spoken form.
2. It also helps to determine how English an individual actually knows, with a view to how well he might be able to use it in a context of a given situation.

In fact, a learner needs the help of a teacher when he wants to learn any subject and to solve any problem, and the interaction between the teacher and the learner is the core of the teaching-learning process. If the teaching of how to learn progresses positively, then the learner will be able to make the use of the things around him.

J.C. AGGARWAL (1996) suggests that the process of learning must be taught. To him, the teaching-learning process is a means through which the teacher, the learner, the curriculum and other variables are organised in a systematic manner to attain pre-determined goals and objectives. Therefore, the listening skill can also be taught. Once taught, it can also be tested as the next subtitle points it out.

2.2.2.d . An Assessment of the Listening Skill Testing

In any teaching process, teachers must assess the learner's progress. In fact, the learner may be doing well or having difficulties and the role of the teacher may be to find the level of achievement of the learner. It is also a way of assessing himself since it will show him how the course has been taught. In assessing the listening skill testing, we also include the use of tests and exams because they help the teacher to see the level of language performance or language competence.

The term "testing" and "evaluation" are not to be equal. To avoid the confusion between the two terms, M. FINACCHIARO and S. SAKO (1983: 12) differentiate them in the following terms:

> *Evaluation is much more a comprehensive term than testing, since it includes both the measurement of the student's achievement and of probable success in real life of language both through test and observation and use of data yielded by the test scores.*

We all know that the fact of testing always contains a subjective element in it, either in the choice of test or test items or in scoring. And what the students have to learn constitutes the corpus of what is to be tested. It is true that teachers evaluate not only their students but also a programme in order to ascertain its suitability or achievement and then readjustment if necessary. Furthermore, the test will have an influence on the teaching and learning.

Normally, what is tested in listening comprehension cannot be considered as the knowledge of the language as such. In fact, in testing listening comprehension, teachers do not give their students the same content as they

taught, but something similar from it or quite different from it. For example, if the teacher gives the same content, students will tend to read and memorize what they wrote in their notes. This time, listening loses its quality.

Moreover, in the form of any test, evaluation is inseparable to both teaching objectives, classroom procedure, learning conditions. Testing is a dynamic process which takes place in the various programmes. The outcome of an evaluation might indicate the need for change. Like evaluation, testing is also a continuous process which underlies all good teaching and learning activities.

To sum up about this point of testing, we retain the idea of R.M. VALETTE (1968) who also agrees that the main objective of a listening test is to evaluate the student's comprehension. His degree of comprehension depends on his ability to discriminate phonemes, to recognize stress, and intonation patterns and to retain what he hears.

CHAPTER III : METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

3.1. Introduction

The present chapter is concerned with the methodology used in collecting and processing data for the topic under study. We will show procedures used in determining the subjects and the basis on which the sampling was made. We also account for the use of instruments like the questionnaire, the state of class note-taking and the state of scores after the listening courses. We also describe procedures of analysis of the questionnaire.

3.2. Data collection procedures

3.2.1. The subjects

The totality of our informants consists of junior level students in the Departments of English at the University of Burundi. We only chose five classes, that is, the second year and third year students in the Department of English Language and Literature (D.E.L.L) of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and first cycle of English-Kirundi Department (E.K.D) at the Institute for Applied Pedagogy (IPA).

In search for answers to our questions, we selected one hundred and ninety-two subjects from five hundred and seventy-six subjects of the 2004-2005 Academic year.

Table 1: Distribution of the research population

	2nd year students	3rd year students	4th year students	Total
D.E.L.L	55	30		85
E.K.D	36	37	34	107
Total	91	67	34	192

The table above shows the total number of our informants per class. The questionnaire distribution was conducted without considering the level of proficiency, sex and motivation in the listening skill. As can be seen from the table one above, we used for our research population, students in the second year, 3rd year and 4th year in the English-Kirundi Department at IPA and those in the second and third year in the D.E.L.L, at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

In fact, freshmen were not concerned with our study simply because they cannot provide right information before the end of the academic year. Moreover, at that level, they are supposed not to have the same level of proficiency in English due to different background. Actually, they are only looking where things go.

Therefore, the research populations were made of 85 students from the D.E.L.L and 107 students from the E.K.D, 2 teachers from the D.E.L.L and 1 teacher from the E.K.D. The sample consisted of 192 students and 3 teachers. Thus, the whole number of subjects who were given the questionnaire was 195.

The sample survey technique used for the selection of the subjects, especially for the students, was on the basis of a random selection. It is based on the probabilities and students were willingly ready to take the questionnaire.

We decided this way because a systematic survey have been difficult to operate and would have caused frustration to my population.

3.2.2. Questionnaires

In our research, a questionnaire was used to gather as much information as possible from teachers and students. We designed our questionnaire in a way that questions would arise the student's interest to express an opinion or state that we expected to know about. Also questions were related to the teaching, learning and testing situation so that the respondent, be he a teacher or student, would give the information at his disposal as precisely, honestly and sincerely as possible.

Both types of questionnaires were made of four main points or themes related to: motivation, methodology, materials, course structure and content.

The student's questionnaire aims at providing us information on the appreciation on how teaching, learning, and testing activities are organised in regard to his needs and ability. In its turn, the teacher's questionnaire aims at supplying us information on how he organises his teaching and testing activities for his students and how he facilitate his students' learning.

The questionnaire was distributed to respondents by the researcher himself, especially during class break, and the names of the respondents were written by the researcher for later collection.

3.2.2. a. Students questionnaire

The student's questionnaire was made of 20 items which are grouped into 4 categories.

(i) Questions intended to illicit information about the student's background (see questions, 1, 2, 4 and 5)

(ii) Questions related to the student's attitude towards the teacher's methodology in teaching and testing the listening skill (see questions 6, 7, 8, 18 and 18)

(iii) Questions drawing attention on the method used by students in the learning of the listening skill (see questions 14, 15, 16, and 20)

(iv) Questions related to the place of materials in the teaching, learning and testing of the listening skill (see questions 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13).

N.B: Questions 3 and 17

3.2.2.b. Teacher's questionnaire

As already mentioned above, the teacher's questionnaire was designed to seek for answers to the research questions set in chapter one. The questionnaire comprises 21 items divided into 3 categories :

i) Questions drawing attention to the methods used in the teaching and testing of the listening skill (see questions 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8);

ii) Questions seeking information about the availability and suitability of the teaching materials for the listening (see questions 9, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15);

iii) Questions providing information on the teacher's attitudes towards the teaching, learning and testing of the listening skill (see questions 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21).

N.B: Questions 1, 2 and 3 are more general.

Let us add that most of the questions for both teachers and students were half closed-ended questions. These kinds of questions limit the misinterpretation while tallying the results. Half closed-ended questions differ from open questions where the informants are given opportunity to express themselves freely. Open questions are questions like teacher's questionnaire, question 3, 8, and 18 and for student's questionnaire are questions 3b and 7c.

3.2.2. Taking Notes in the Listening Class

The way the listening skill is taught, learnt and tested causes many problems. Teachers of listening give little importance to note-taking in class. Apart from some difficult items which are explained or some answers; very few things are given as notes for students. Some researchers suggest teachers to focus on the communicative element rather than on its linguistic contents.

But, according to J. HARMER (1991: 8)'s view:

> *Many advanced teachers expect too much from their students, feeling that the setting of tasks and goals is in someway demeaning. But just advanced students have difficulty in perceiving progress and success, they may well need the clarity that the setting of short-term goals, tasks, etc. can give them.*

Our purpose in the checking of notes by students aimed at checking if the latter are at least given some theoretical principles on the learning of the listening skill. We all know that notes taken in the class or conference can be considered as a sort of guide to the teaching and learning process. Class notes are like a ladder used to reach a certain objective. Note-taking in the listening class can be as formula to refer to or to apply while listening because not all that is said or heard is necessarily to be listened to.

3.2.3. Scores after the Listening Skill Course

Another instrument we resorted to in our investigation about the listening skill was the scores obtained by the learners. Thus, the testing of listening should focus on different elements and not on comprehension alone. According to A. HUGHES (1989; 134):

> *It may seem rather odd to test listening separately from speaking since the two skills are typically exercised together in oral interaction. However, there are occasions, such as listening to the radio, listening to lecturers or listening to railway station announcements, where no speaking is called.*

The evaluation of other people's level of comprehension is difficult in the way that there are no instruments to measure that level of comprehension rather than the use of test or exam. Many researchers suggest testing linguistic knowledge before testing communicative ability, but this does not mean that there is a difference between the two tests; both are closely linked and cannot be separated because less linguistic knowledge entails difficulties in communication. In fact, a number of test items contribute to the evaluation of

classroom test and exam. According to A. HUGHES (1989: 172), low or high scores depend on many factors such as:

(i) *The types of language components regularly used in testing*

(ii) *How well those items correspond to the course objectives and classroom activities?*

(iii) *What do the language components test ?*

(iv) *What must the students do or are able to do in order to answer successfully the question given in a test or an exam.*

During scoring a test or an exam, A. HUGHES (1989) suggests the following viewpoints in answering questions such as "what do the language components test?" He said:

> *It is probably worth mentioning again that in scoring a test of receptive skill, there is no reason to deduct points for errors of grammar or spelling, provided that it is clear that the correct response was intended.*

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.0. Introduction

The present chapter constitutes the core of the study. It consists of the analysis of the data collected from the answers of the questionnaires sent to both teachers and students. Its main aim is to find answers to research questions, that is, hypothesis already stated in the first chapter of our study.

Therefore, our role as a researcher is to shed light to the questionnaire, to the state of note-taking and the scores after the listening course and finally come up to conclude the end results of our work, that is, to check if the main preoccupation of our work has received adequate answers and explanations.

We structured this chapter around four themes which fit well with the problem at hand, and also the questionnaire has been structured accordingly. The themes are:

(1) Background and motivation of the students;

(2) Teaching aids, that is, their suitability, availability, quality and quantity;

(3) Course structure and course content;

(4) The teaching, learning and testing process.

4.1. Data from Student's Questionnaire

As said earlier, not all learners were given the questionnaire. I selected for each class, a third of the learners. Then, among 192 selected out of 576 learners to whom the questionnaire was given, only 3 learners did not hand it back. In other words, 189 informants answered the questionnaire for learners. Another element to remember is that the freshmen were not concerned with our

work simply because they were new and could not have adequate information before the end of academic year. Thus, learners in the second year gave information about first year course, that means each learner investigated provided information about the teaching, learning, and testing of listening skill as he had experienced it at the previous level or levels.

Table 2: Number of learners investigated

Dpt	Classes	Number of questionnaires distributed	Number of questions returned
DELL	2nd	55	52
	3rd	30	30
EKD	2nd	36	36
	3rd	37	37
	4th	34	34
TOTAL		192	189

This set of answers is made of questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The researcher wanted to know whether or not learners have been introduced to the learning of the listening skill before they come to the university, the materials they were using and how they were motivated. J. HARMER (1991:20) says that:

> *To know exactly how or why your students are motivated will mean finding out how they feel about learning English at the beginning of the course.*

J. HARMER continues distinguishing between two different kinds of motivation: extrinsic (which is concerned with factors outside the classroom) and intrinsic motivation (which is concerned with what takes place inside the classroom). He also says that learners who are motivated perceive goals of various kinds such as short-term and long-term goals.

According to A. NZEYIMANA (2004: 101),

> *Learning without motivation can lead to total failure (...) Indeed, students' source of motivation may come from their own feelings and from their teachers.*

It goes without saying that without motivation, learners are blocked and will no more learn the language. The teacher's role will be to motivate learners and maintain their interest.

Question 1

1. a. Before coming to the University of Burundi did you learn listening comprehension in the senior cycle of the secondary school? Yes ☐ *No* ☐

b. If yes, were you motivated? Yes ☐ *No* ☐ *Why?*

c. If yes, did your teacher use:

	Always	Sometimes	Never
Audiotapes			
Reading aloud			
Video-tapes			
Television			
The radio			
Guest speaker			

Table 3: Presentation of data for question n°1

	$DELL_{II}$			**$DELL_{III}$**			**EKD_{II}**			**EKD_{III}**			**EKD_{IV}**					%
	Freq			Freq			Freq			Freq			Freq			Freq		
Q.1.a. Yes	36			12			19			20			14			101		53.4
No	16			18			17			17			20			88		46.5
1.b Yes	20			9			10			6			6			51		26.9
No	16			3			9			14			8			50		26.4
1,C.Audio tapes	A.	S.	N.	A.	S.	N.	A.	S.	N.	A.	S.	N.	A.	S.	N.	A.	S.	N.
reading aloud	6	21	-	0	6	-	1	10	-	0	10	-	0	6	-	7	52	31.2
video tapes	5	7	-	6	21	-	9	0	-	0	14	-	6	8	-	26	40	34.9
television	1	1	-	12	18	-	0	4	-	0	2	-	0	0	0	13	25	20.1
The radio	1	3	-	0	0	0	0	1	-	0	0	0	0	6	-	1	10	5.8
Guest speaker	2	3	-	13	12	-	0	8	-	0	13	-	0	5	-	15	41	29.6
	1	2	-	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	2	-	0	2	-	1	6	3.7

Keys: A: Always

S: Sometimes

N: Never

From the answers in the table 3, 101 out of 189 students, that is 53.4% said they have learned listening comprehension in their secondary schools. Only 88 out of 198 students, that is 46.5%, said that the opportunity was missed to them. Then, the table shows us that, among 101 who learned listening comprehension, only 51 out of 101 were motivated whereas the remaining were not, that is 50 out of 101 students. Those who were motivated said that it was because listening was not included in their tests nor in their exams. The unmotivated were forced to listen to people whose speed was difficult to catch. They also added that they were most of the time listening to songs in English and were not so much interested in what was taught in class.

This kind of question was asked in order to have an idea about the students' background and to check if they had had a chance to learn the listening skill. As can be seen in the table above, few students got the opportunity to deal with listening activities during their secondary school learning. Even those who benefited from it, were only listening to songs because of lack of sufficient materials.

Question 2

1. *When did you think about embarking on studies in the Department of English ?*
    a. *After the 4th form of secondary school*
    b. *After the State Examination ("EXAMEN D'ETAT")*
    c. *After being oriented in the Department of English*
    d. *For other reasons (mention them).*

Table 4: Presentation of the data for the question n°2: When the informants thought of studying English

	$DELL_{II}$	$DELL_{III}$	$DELL_{II}$	$E\text{-}K_{III}$	$E\text{-}K_{IV}$		
	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.	%
a. After 4th form	19	12	19	14		80	42.3
b. After the State Exam	24	6	14	12		69	36.51
c. After orientation in the Department of English	0	6	0	2		15	7.9
d. For other reasons	9	6	33	9		41	21.6
Total	52	30	36	37		189	100

N.B: Other reason:

Some students mentioned that they were oriented first in the departments they did not choose, others said, they have studied in the scientific sections but that they were interested in English.

In asking such a question we wanted to know how long students had been thinking about embarking on studies in the Department where English is frequently used for many subjects. For many students, the choice dates back to a long date as the table above shows. As it can be seen, 80 students, that is, 42,3% were motivated since the 4th form of secondary school, while 70 students, that is, 37% decided to do their studies in the Department of English after succeeding in the State Examination, only 15 students, that is 7,9%, for unmentioned reasons were streamed into the Department of English, when English was not their first favourite subject.

Question 3:

a. *Classify the following subjects in terms of success and motivation, one being the most interesting for you*

Grammar, Reading, Listening, Oral expression.

b. *Can you justify your order in about four lines.*

G stands for Grammar

R stands for Reading

L stands for Listening

O stands for Oral expression.

Table 5: Presentation of the data for question 3: Students classify four Subjects

	DELL								**EKD**											
	$DELL_{II}$				**$DELL_{III}$**				**EKD_{II}**				**EKD_{III}**				**EKD_{IV}**			
Place	G	R	L	O	G	R	L	O	G	R	L	O	G	R	L	O	G	R	L	O
1st	19	2	21	0	6	6	6	11	17	4	4	10	10	6	2	5	18	6	4	5
2nd	15	17	6	4	6	9	6	10	3	16	6	12	4	4	6	13	7	14	5	13
3rd	8	12	22	0	15	9	0	7	5	11	9	10	19	19	5	15	6	8	17	15
4th	2	4	2	36	3	6	8	2	7	4	19	7	6	6	25	17	3	3	21	17

GENERAL FREQUENCY				
Place	G	R	L	O
1st	**70**	24	37	31
2nd	35	**60**	29	52
3rd	53	59	53	47
4th	21	23	**75**	**79**

To find out the general frequency of each aspects of English language, we counted the number of times that aspect is selected per class and per place. For example, grammar, first place, we added 19+6+17+10+18 = 70.

In asking question 3, we only wanted to test the students' feelings and motivation toward some aspects of the English language. As it can be noticed from the above table, grammar occupies the first place with 70 students (that is 37%); reading comes in the second position with 60 students (that is 31.7%) ; in the fourth position come listening with 75 students (that is 39.6 %) and oral expression with 79 students (that is 41.7 %).

b. The order of these subjects, as it has been given by many students, finds its justification in the fact that grammar is rule-governed and is learnt from secondary school and makes the basis of English or any language.
According to them, reading on the other hand brings change to the improvement of pronunciation whereas listening increases their ability to catch new words and pronunciation from different speakers, it helps them to detect each word when it is spoken in different circumstances. But its difficulty lies in the fact that they do not know how to study it. Oral expression on its side, makes them happy especially when it comes to express their feelings through the use of other skills. After classifying different aspects of the language, the researcher wanted to know whether or not students listen to other materials in English after classes.

Question 4.

a. *After your listening comprehension in class, do you have other opportunities to listen to channels broadcasting in English? Yes/No*
b. *If yes, which one (s)*

Table 6: Presentation of data for question 4b: Other channels that the students listen to

	$DELL_{II}$	$DELL_{III}$	EKD_{II}	EKD_{III}	EKD_{IV}	Freq.	Total
Yes	35	17	17	24	22	114	60.4
No	12	21	21	6	18	75	39.6
BBC	27	9	9	22	20	93	49.2
VOA	12	11	11	3	10	50	26.4
Africa. Channel	4	6	6	20	4	35	18.5
RTNB	18	-	-	-	2	20	12.1
Tanzania	1	-	-	1	-	2	1
Rwanda	1	-	-	-	2	3	1.5

The purpose of this question was to ask the respondents to tell us whether they do extended listening whatever the materials they listen to in English. As the table above shows, the respondents listen to other sources of English language: 93 students, that is, 49.2% listening to the BBC, 50 students, that is, 26.4% to VOA while 35 students, that is, 18% listen to Africa channel. It is to be mentioned though that, even if students listen to these different channels, the listening designed to be taught does not have any relationship with English spoken on the radio channel if it is not designed for that issue. However, the teacher can decide to use that kind of English as a teaching material by just telling his students to listen to a given radio programme at a given time. As G. BROWN and G. YULE (1983:81) point it out *all taped speakers should speak a rather similar type of accent.*

From this point, we understand that when the students are listening to different radio channels, they are trained on speech of different types and the material they listen to is done only once unless the student records it for

himself. Therefore, the following question shows how students can perform from a material he listens for his self-motivation.

Question 5:

a. *When listening to songs in English, do you easily get the content of the song? Always* ☐ *sometimes* ☐ *Never* ☐

b. *From the songs you know, have you learnt them from your own listening comprehension capacity or you were given the texts and you memorized them.*

Table 7: Presentation of the data from the question 5: How informants understand the content of songs

	DELL II	DELL III	EKD II	EKD III	EKD IV	Total	Percentage
Always	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sometimes	37	24	30	24	19	134	70.8
Never	15	6	30	15	16	55	29.1

This question sought to find out to which extent our informants were able to listen to songs and get their content. I chose songs because students are interested in songs and most students like to listen to songs about love, justice, freedom, etc.

If then, students are not able to listen to something they want and which motivate them, the difficulty arises when it becomes to listening to materials heard for the first time and for which the topic is totally new to them.

Among 134 students who know some songs, 97 accepted to have been given texts and memorized them, only 39 students accepted to have the content of songs from their ability to listen to the radio.

N.B.: For the following answers, the researcher decided first to show what the informants answered on question 6, 7, 8 and make comment after, because all the three questions have something in common.

Question 6:

During the listening comprehension lesson, do you think you learn "How to listen" or you only listen?

Table 8: Presentation of the data for question: What informants learn through the listening comprehension course

	DELL II	EKD III	EKD II	EKD III	EKD IV	Total	%
How to listen	12	3	3	14	9	41	21.6
I only listen	40	25	21	31	25	142	75.1

Question 7:

a. Do you appreciate the way your teacher teaches the listening comprehension course? Yes ☐ *No* ☐

b. Are you deriving satisfaction from it? Yes ☐ *No* ☐ *How?*

c. If no, what do you expect from his teaching (4 lines).

Table 9: Presentation of the data for question: How the informants appreciate their listening course

		DELL II	DELL III	EKD II	EKD III	EKD IV	Total	%
a)	YES	8	9	20	20	20	77	40.7
	NO	40	21	16	17	10	104	55
b)	YES	3	6	5	13	10	37	15.5
	NO	5	3	15	7	4	34	17.9

Question 8:

Do you think that your teacher needs to improve his teaching techniques in the listening comprehension course? Yes☐ No☐ Which techniques do you suggest to use that are not used?

Table 10: Presentation of the data for question 8: How informants appreciate their teachers' techniques in LCC

	DELL II	DELL III	EKD II	EKD III	EKD IV	Total	%
YES	41	27	30	18	22	138	73
No	11	3	4	18	12	48	25.3

We judged very important to put together all these questions in order to have the students' point of view on the way listening is taught, how class activities in listening are conducted and handled by their teachers. We also wanted the students to judge the teacher's teaching activities, his methods and techniques, what students think can be changed from it, etc.

HEATON (1982: 121) defines a method as:

> *A specific set of teaching techniques and materials generally backed by stated principles but necessarily having any reference to linguistics.*

To this, RICHARDS et al. (1985: 176) adds:

> *A method is a way of teaching a language which is based on systematic principles and procedures, that is, which is an application of views on how a language is best taught and learnt.*

The table 8 shows that 41 students, that is 21.8% learn how to listen during the listening comprehension lesson whereas 142 students, that is 71.1% said that they only listen during the same activity. The results tell us, then, that students need to be taught about how to listen and what to listen to. This point is expressed in table 9 where 104 students, 55% do not appreciate the teaching process, and only 37 students, that is 19.5% derive satisfaction from it.

As a matter of fact, students need to learn how to listen and because some do not appreciate the teachers at all, as expressed in table 10, they proposed a change in the teachers' techniques: 138 students, that is 73 % maintain the idea that change in the teaching techniques is necessary, only 48 students, that is 25.3% think everything is good. Among students who suggest change in the teaching process, some suggested what the teachers would do:

1. give the students theories on how to learn to listen,
2. use gradable tapes with one speaker, two speakers, three speakers, with simple situation, complex situation, more complex situation,
3. use tapes with speakers of different age, sex, job, origin,
4. give students the course outline and course objectives,
5. avail tools for better listening activities and vary activities,
6. use up-to-date tapes,
7. let the students listen and discuss what they have heard and let them dramatize the tape,
8. give homework: to listen to a given channel at a given time and then report what they heard.

In fact, any method used in the teaching, learning and testing of English through the listening skill should aim at developing the students' ability to listen as efficiently as possible. As P. BIMENYIMANA (2003: 62) says:

> *It is inappropriate to regard the method favouring the teachability (teacher-centred method) instead of favouring learnability (learner-centred method).*

The following questions deal with materials used in the teaching, learning and testing the listening skill. There are five questions, that is from question 9 to question 13.

Any teaching, learning and testing process needs materials to support it in order to achieve one's goals. There are a lot of materials, but all of them cannot apply to the teaching, learning and testing for all levels of students. P BIMENYIMANA (2003) says, suitable materials are responsive to the learners' needs and teacher's objectives. The questions seek to evaluate their materials, their quality, quantity and suitability to the learners' needs for better listening activities.

A. CUNNINGSWORTH (1984: 44) says:

> *When looking at listening material, we should ask what sort of listening practice our students need (monologue, dialogue, etc.) and what they are required to do in response to what they hear.*

Here are the answers we collected from the informants about their listening materials.

Question 9

a. *Does your teacher of listening comprehension course give you some references (i.e. bibliography) to refer to when learning the listening comprehension course?*

   Yes ☐ *No* ☐

b. *If yes, are they helpful to you? Yes* ☐ *No* ☐

Table 11: Presentation of the data for question 9: Teachers' bibliographical reference and their usefulness

		DELL II	DELL III	EKD II	EKD III	EKD IV	Total	%
Teacher gives bibliography	Yes	8	6	8	10	11	43	22.7
	No	42	24	32	27	21	146	77.2
Is bibliography helpful	Yes	6	6	8	8	7	34	17.9
	No	2	0	0	2	4	8	4.2

NB: Not all the informants respondent to the above questions. That is why the total number of informants is not equal to the number of students we used in the research.

The table above shows that teachers do not give reference to their students. Only 43 students, that is, 22.7 accepted to have been given references while the majority denied it, that is, 146 students (77.1%) of the 43 students who recognized getting bibliographical references from the teacher, 11 said that they were of no use for them.

Question 10: *Do you think you need listening textbooks in order to learn Listening skill?*

Yes ☐ *No* ☐

Table 12: Presentation of the data for question 10: Informants who said they need textbooks for listening

	DELL II	DELL III	EKD II	EKD III	EKD IV	Total	%
Yes	44	27	29	21	22	144	76.1
No	8	3	7	6	11	42	23.8
Total	52	30	36	27	23	189	100

From this table, we can conclude that, although students are not given references in the listening skill, the majority of them still need textbooks. The

table shows that 144 students out of 189, that is, 76.1% wanted to have textbooks at their disposal while very few of them, that is, 45 students out of 189, that is, 23.8% said textbooks were not necessary. For them, it is not the textbook that helps listening comprehension. It is rather the material to which they listen and how they listen to that material.

Question 11: *If you come across a book containing what a teacher is using in the listening comprehension course, are you going to:*

a. *Memorize it*
b. *Read it and understand it only*
c. *Do nothing with it*
d. *Retain the title of the unit and its correct answers?*

Table 13: Presentation of the data for question 11: How informants learn from the textbooks

	DELL II	DELL III	EKD II	EKD III	EKD IV	Total	%
A	7	3	7	10	2	29	15.3
B	38	15	23	16	25	117	61.9
C	0	3	0	2	0	5	2.6
D	7	9	6	9	12	43	22.7

In asking question 11, we wanted to analyse the idea expressed by some students in question 10 where 45 respondents denied the need of textbooks. Curiously, in the present question, among 189 students, only 5 answered that they can do nothing with the book. When 117 out of 189 students, that is, 61.9% said that they would only read and understand it; 29 students can memorize it and 43 students would memorize the title of unit and its correct answers. We can then say that 72 students out of 189, that is, 38% would memorize the book.

Textbooks are necessary to refer to while listening. G. BROWN and G. YULE (1983: 86) point it out:

> *When the students have had a good deal of experience with the written language than with the spoken language, it seems perfectly reasonable, from time to time, particularly with introductory portions of long texts to provide a written transcript.*

Question 12

a. *Do you think that in listening comprehension course you need theoretical notes? Only practice? Or both?*
b. *According to you how many times would you like to listen to the tape before your teacher asks different questions?*

(i) *Twice*
(ii) *Three times*
(iii) *Four times*
(iv) *It depends on the kind of tape*

Table 14: Presentation of the data for question 12.a: What the informants like for listening or practice: theory, practice or both?

	DELL II	DELL III	EKD II	EKD III	EKD IV	Total	%
Theory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Practice	9	2	5	6	4	26	13.7
Both	43	28	31	31	30	130	68.7
Total	52	30	32	37	34	100	56

N.B.: No answer: 33 students, that is, 17.4% preferred not to give their viewpoint.

Table 15: Presentation of the data for question 12b: The number of time required to listen to the tape

	DELL II	DELL III	EKD II	EKD III	EKD IV	Total	%
Twice	3	0	0	0	0	3	1.5
Three times	0	7	9	6	2	24	12.6
Four times	4	2	4	10	5	25	13.2
It depends on the tape	44	21	23	21	27	136	70.9
Total	51	30	36	37	34	189	90.4

The reason why we asked the above question was to find out whether questions 9, 10, and 11 were important. The results show that almost all the students need both theoretical notes and practice: 130 students out of 189, that is, 68.7% need both, only 26 out of 189, that is, 13.7% need only practice; 33 respondents left blank space.

In the same way, table 15 shows that for the students to be successful in the listening comprehension course, the kind of tape they are listening to plays an important role: 136 out of 189, that is 71.9% answered the question saying it depends on the kind of tape, whereas 24 out of 189 students, that is, 12.6% suggested to listen to the tape three times and 25 out of 189 students, that is, 13.2% suggested to listen to the tape 4 times; only 3 out of 189 students, that is, 1.5% suggested 2 times for listening.

As many students said it, the number of times to listen to the tape could depend on the level of difficulties that the tape contained. For that, also, L. BLUNDELL (1981: 2) said:

> *Students can listen to the recordings as many times as necessary, secure in knowing they are familiar with the language vital to the successful completion of the task. You should also refrain from asking comprehension*

questions between each playing of the recording since this distrusts from the function of the listening task.

Question 13:

a. *Are the tapes used by your teacher interesting to you?*
   Yes ☐ *No* ☐
b. *If no, which one(s) would you like to listen to most?*
c. *Does your teacher give you a general idea about the content of your listening? Frequently* ☐ *Sometimes* ☐ *Never*

This question was asked because students oftentimes say that they fail because of the tapes which are not interesting.

Table 16: Presentation of the data for question 13a: i.e. if the tapes used by the teacher are interesting

	DELLII	DELLIII	EKDII	EKDIII	EKDIV	Total	%
Yes	19	13	21	20	17	90	47.6
No	30	14	15	17	17	93	49.2
Total	49	27	36	17	34	183	96.2

The kind of materials used in teaching, learning and testing process plays an important role. As it can be seen, we should not go without saying that if the materials are boring, students are not motivated. In addition, this can not be the only one reason of failure because we know that, even in other courses, not all the students have the same level of motivation.

The subquestion 13.b was asked in order to give an opportunity to the so called "de-motivated" students to suggest the kind of type they would prefer to

listen to; the ones they find appropriate. According to them, the tapes would be related to

- love, education or political issues,
- family welfare, health, academic issues,
- funny stories, songs,
- selling, buying, ordering food and drinks.

According to L. BLUNDEL (1981: 1),
The most interesting topics are those which deal with the recordings of people, speaking in a number of every day situation.

Table 17: Presentation of the data for the question 13.c: Does the teacher introduce the listening by giving a general idea about the content?

	DELLII	DELLIII	EKDII	EKDIII	EKDIV	Total	%
Frequently	9	0	0	4	5	18	9.5
Sometimes	40	5	6	18	5	86	44.4
Never	3	25	20	15	20	83	43.9
Total	52	30	26	37	30	187	97.8

From the answers above in the table 17, teachers do not frequently tell their students the general idea about the listening lesson before they deeply enter into details from it. However, to introduce listening leads the students to use their imagination in order to create the context of the listening. Some of the causes of failure or motivation may then be due to the lack of not having an idea about the listening situation, about the course content or about the whole listening skill.

Question 14:

N.B: The following questions deal with course structure and content the listening skill

When the tapes include some difficult words, do you:

a. *Think of why the teacher did not explain those words*
b. *Pay attention to the following element*
c. *Write the words on the sheet of paper.*

Table 18: Presentation of data for question 14: Student's way of handling new words in listening exercise

	DELLII	DELLIII	EKDII	EKDIII	EKDIV	Total	%
Notice the new word	6	4	6	8	4	28	14.8
Do not care about it	9	6	10	20	7	52	27.5
Write it down on a side sheet of paper	37	20	20	9	27	113	59.7
Total	52	30	36	37	38	193	102.1

The large number of informants means that one student can do the two activities at the same time, for example, he can notice the new word and at the same time not care about it.

In asking that question, the researcher wanted to find out the strategies used by the students to cope with difficult words during the listening activities. Having problem in listening may cause communication to break down. The table above shows that 113 out of 189 students, that is, 59.7% write the words on a sheet of paper; 52 out of 189 students, that is, 27.5% pay attention to the following elements and do not care about the meaning; and 28 out of 189 students spent their time thinking of the reason why their teacher did not explain the difficult words. From the three groups of students, only the second group is trying to get the message through the use of context instead of losing their time. The majority of them: 113 out of 189; in spite of paying attention to the context and trying to construct a message, go through words to check for the explanation. We have to remember that many vocabulary items used in listening comprehension with high speed may cause difficulties to the foreign language listener whereas they are not new to him. This is a consequence of learning an item in isolation or a well-foregrounded situation and not in different contexts when it is spoken with a given stress. B.W. ROBINET (1978: 214), G. BROWN and G. YULE (1983:83) show the following transformation: *"for", "to", "him",*

"is", has and *"them"* when unstressed becomes /fə/ , /fr/, /tə/, /im/, /z/, /z/ and /em/ are called weak forms.

Other examples:

The aren't going /ðei:a:?gəuiŋ/

I can't come /aika:?k^m/

You can't remember what /kantrimwat/

Therefore, students will even have difficulties to write the "so-called difficult words" but once written by the teacher, the words are no more new. This is partly a matter of time, practice and context of a situation.

Question 15a: *Do the following elements cause you any trouble when they occur on the tape while listening? These elements are: coughs, laughs, breathing, car and machine noises.*

Yes ☐ *No* ☐

Table 19: Presentation of data for question 15a: Student's reaction to coughs, laughs, breathing, car and machine noises

	DELLII	DELLIII	EKDII	EKDIII	EKDIV	Total	%
Yes	44	23	32	28	30	157	72.5
No	9	7	4	7	4	31	27.5
Total	53	30	36	36	34	189	100

It was noticed that the above elements cause trouble to many students when occurring on the tape they are listening to. Only 31 out of 189 students were not disturbed by those elements. To deal with these elements, researchers suggested the teacher to tell his students that words or sentences uttered at the same time when those elements happen in the recordings are not to be paid

much at attention to. Moreover, even in many books, authors prefer to write these words or sentences in a way that no one can read them in order to show the lack of importance.

Let us analyse the students' results about the same elements when those elements are not part of listening activities.

15.b. When the above elements occur outside the classroom, do they have the same effect as on the tape?

Yes ☐ *No* ☐

Table 20: Presentation of data for question 15b: Disturbing elements from outside the tape

	DELLII	DELLIII	EKDII	EKDIII	EKDIV	Total	%
Yes	12	9	6	16	9	52	27.6
Non	40	21	30	21	25	137	72.4
Total	52	30	36	37	34	189	100

This subquestion reveals that the same disturbing elements when heard from outside the classroom and not on the tape, do not cause many problems to the listeners because they do not constitute part of listening activities they are engaged in.

It was noticed that only 52 out of 189 students, that is, 27.6% still have the problems to cope with those elements wherever they are heard but some writers including P.UR (1984), present their view that, those students who have problems coping with these elements, show a lack of concentration on the materials they are listening to. All these kinds of noises can be caused, not only by the some outside disturbance, but also by a temporary lack of attention of the

part of the listener, or by the fact that a word or a phrase was not understood because it was mispronounced or misused, or simply because the listener did not know it before listening.

In fact, the last set of questions dealt with students' behaviour during listening test or examination.

Question 16: How do you prepare for your listening comprehension test or examination?

a. Revise all the units studied in class

b. Listen to different channels broadcasting in English

c. Make comment about the course content with my classmates

d. Do nothing.

Table 21: Presentation of data for question 16: How learners prepare for the LCT/E?

	DELLII	DELLIII	EKDII	EKDIII	EKDIV	Total	%
A	27	21	16	16	24	104	55
B	18	17	28	15	21	109	57.6
C	15	17	4	6	10	62	32.8
D	3	0	0	0	0	3	15
Total	63	55	48	27	55	278	147

N.B. Again, the large number of informants was caused by students who ticked more than one answer. For example, one can tick A and B at the same time.

If we analyse the answers given by the respondents, we realise that most students combine revision of the units studied in the classroom, 104 out of 189 students, that is, 55% with the listening to different channels broadcasting in English, 109 out of 189 students, that is, 77.6%. Only 3 out of 189 students do nothing before the examination or test. Probably because they know that the content of the recordings must be totally new to them and that the listening is not a reading material.

Normally, English spoken on different channels without the purpose of being used in class does not have anything to do with the one required in the teaching and learning process. These two types of recordings of English are quite different from each other. Also, speech is continuous in different channels broadcasting in English; there is no way to start listening to it again without the use of tapes. A revision of units studied simply means memorizing the units as already pointed out in question 11.

But, how do students feel before a listening examination? For this purpose, we asked question 17.

Question 17

a. *Does the listening comprehension exam/test make you panic?*

   Yes ☐ *No* ☐

b. *Why?*

Table 22: Presentation of data for question 17a: Students' behaviour during the listening exam

	DELLII	DELLIII	EKDII	EKDIII	EKDIV	Total	%
Yes	46	27	32	10	23	148	78.4
No	6	21	4	17	11	41	21.6
Total	52	48	36	37	34	189	100

This question shows the attitude of students during the listening examination/test. In fact, 148 out of 189 students, that is 78.4%, agree that the listening examination/test makes them panic while 41 of 189 students, that is 21.6% do not. Thus, most students are frightened by the listening examination, because they probably do not know what to expect.

According to them, they are frightened because the listening examination/test may have no relationship with any of the situational context taught in class.

A. ANDERSON and T. LYNCH (1988: 46) say:

Everyday experience tells us that listening is sometimes hard, and sometimes easy, but we are normally unaware of which factors are contributing to that variation. Although a large number of factors are involved, they fall into three principal categories, related to:

(i) The type of language we are listening to,

(ii) Our task or purpose in listening,

(iii) The context in which listening occurs.

For these reasons, students are right in saying that the listening examination/test makes them panic. The only possible way out one can suggest them would be:

1° to make intelligent guesses about the context,

2° to always increase their stock of new words,

3° to master the English syntax,

4° to practice listening everyday by listening to radio broadcasts.

We also thought to know if the fear was coming from the type of items used by the teacher in testing or examining. Then, we asked question 18.

Question 18

During an exam/test, does your teacher of listening comprehension course give you questions from the units studied in class?

Always ☐ *Sometimes* ☐ *Never* ☐

Table 23: Presentation of data for question 18: What the listening examination includes

	DELLII	DELLIII	EKDII	EKDIII	EKDIV	Total	%
Frequently	0	4	0	0	0	4	2.1
Sometimes	12	12	6	10	23	63	33.3
Never	40	14	30	19	10	107	54.4
Total	52	30	36	29	33	170	89.9

NB. The number of informants for this question is not equal to the number of all informants we used in this work simply because some did not answer the questions.

As it can be seen, one of the possible causes of fear for the listeners is because students never listen to what was studied in class. They are obliged to face a new material.

Question 19:

During the exam/test does your teacher go beyond the tape instructions? eg: "You are going to hear the type twice".

Table 24: Presentation of data for question 19: Teacher's instructions

	DELLII	DELLIII	EKDII	EKDIII	EKDIV	Total	%
Yes	30	22	24	16	26	118	62.4
No	22	28	12	20	9	71	37.5
Total	52	30	36	36	35	189	100

Asking this question, the researcher had only one main reason: to find information about teacher's judgement on the instructional materials found in the recordings. The results from the table show that 118 out of 189 students, that is 62.4% appreciated the fact that their teacher was not a slave of the tape's instructions. The teacher adapts the testing of listening to the level of his students.

Question 20: *Tick on what you usually do during the listening comprehension examination/test .*

a. *I pay attention and listen carefully*
b. *I always feel cold*
c. *I pay attention and check to see if the listening texts correspond to what I memorized from the textbook.*
d. *I sit with the best student in the listening comprehension and look at his answer.*
e. *I sometimes tick the answers randomly (as if with closed eyes).*

Table 25: Presentation of the data for question 20: What students do during the examination/test?

	DELLII	DELLIII	EKDII	EKDIII	EKDIV	Total	%
I pay attention	39	18	22	18	28	125	66.1
I feel cold	0	0	4	16	4	24	12.6
I check the listening text	32	21	3	16	13	85	44.9
I copy from a classmate	6	17	5	2	10	40	21.1
I answer randomly	40	15	28	20	14	117	61.9

N.B: The large number of informants is caused by students who ticked on more than one element, saying for example that they pay attention and listen carefully and at the same time tick randomly the answer.

The table shows that, during listening comprehension test, most students prefer to pay attention and listen carefully: 125 out of 189 students, that is, 66.1%, but if the answer is not got, they answer randomly instead of leaving a blank space: 117 out of 189 students, that is, 61.6%; 24 out of 189 students, that is, 12.6% felt cold: 85 out of 189 students, that is, 44.9%, paid attention and checked to see if the listening texts corresponded to what they memorized from the textbook while 40 out of 189 students, that is, 21.1%, sat with the best students in the L.C.E/T and looked at their classmates' copies. The reason why all these situations happen in the class is caused by the fact that listening is not like any other course subject.

To sum up this point, let us look at J. HALLIDAY (1966: 17).

The way that examination is set and marked can be biased in favour of students who have been taught one way as opposed to another. It is often important to maintain secrecy about the examination so that students do not merely memorize the correct answers. The examination may assess the teacher's ability to prepare students for examinations rather that students' ability (...) Thus, examination tends to promote the assessment of theoretical knowledge rather than practical knowledge and attitudes.

4.2. Data from Teachers' Questionnaire

The role of a teacher is very important since he is, the watchman who sees if the teaching materials are suitable to the learners' level and needs if not, he decides to replace them or add other materials that may complete the already available ones for the courses.

Along this subsection, the symbols T_1, T_2, T_3, stand for answers and commentaries made by the three teachers to whom the questionnaire was handled.

T_1 stands for teacher 1, T_2 stands for teacher 2 and T_3 stands for teacher 3.

Question 1

1. a. How long have you been teaching listening comprehension?

Answers T_1: 4 years

T_2: 3 years

T_3: 7 years

b. Have you been teaching listening comprehension in the whole Department?

Yes ☐ *No* ☐

Answers T_1: No

T_2: No

T_3: No

c. If yes, do you make the content of your listening comprehension course gradable, progressive? Yes ☐ *No* ☐

N.B: Because of 'No' answers given by all the three teachers for the subquestion b, the subquestion c cannot be answered.

This question was very important in the way that any job requires some experience. From the answers above, only 1 out of 3 teachers has spent more than 5 years.

For the researcher, to ask whether or not the respondent has been teaching in the whole department sought the answer to question c where the researcher wanted to know if the teacher revised the content of their course and made them gradable and progressive in his teaching. From the result, we can say that it is not easy for teachers to plan their course progressively when they are not moving with their classes in order to check how well the students are doing.

Question 2:

Are your students deriving any satisfaction from your listening comprehension lessons that goes beyond the mere feeling of having mastered one more lesson, and being ready for the next lesson?

Always ☐ *sometimes* ☐ *rarely* ☐ *never* ☐

Answers:

T_1: always

T_2 and T_3: sometimes

In asking this question, the researcher aimed at having the teacher's self-evaluation, whether there is a match from one lesson to the following. The respondents' answers show that T_1 always finds the close relationship between lessons, and T_2 and T_3 find that not all the lessons have the relationship between them. The mastery of a new lesson does not necessarily imply having mastered the preceding one. They say that it depends on the lesson.

In this regard, A. ANDERSON and T. LYNCH (1988: 41) say:

> *Any programme intended to teach either an area of knowledge or skill must involve the principled selection and ordering of materials and activities. Learners should be encouraged by achieving success on less complex task before moving to the more complex.*

Question 3: *Are your students able to use the context of your lesson immediately in a lifelike way?*

Yes ☐ *No* ☐ *How?*

Answer T_1: Empty space

T_2: It's hard to tell

T_3: Yes.

The researcher's aim was to have the teacher's appreciation of the aspect of the programme, whether or not the content focuses on the real life activities, as stated by GRANT (1987: 15) where he says in raising the criticism that few teachers believe that all language-learning activities have to be real life. And this is very important since communication involves copying with everyday-life problems related to it. None of the three teachers answered the question "how". The researcher did not know the reason why they left an empty space for that subquestion.

***Question** 4: Do you think that the way you teach listening comprehension focuses on the learner's needs or on the content of what you want to teach?*

Yes ☐ *Partly* ☐ *No* ☐ *on both* ☐

Answers: T_1: Yes

T_2: Partly

T_3: on both

By this question, the researcher wanted to check if the methods and techniques used by the teacher are centred on the learner's needs or the content, and enhance one or both.

We previously said that many teachers got confused between testing techniques and teaching techniques.

As A. NZEYIMANA (2004) says:

> *What the teacher needs is a knowledge of the best and most effective methods to use but of course taking into account his audience, level, aim and the target skill/subskill.*

The methods used have been said to be the causes of success or failure in language learning. There is also the view that the teacher is only an important element; methods are only as good as the teacher – they are simply instruments in the hands of teacher.

The researcher found the answers quite different. But he admitted that methods and techniques that a teacher uses in teaching should be based on both the learner's needs and the content The answers give the researcher opportunity to say that a good teaching theory focuses on the learners as well as on the content, and, therefore determines what the teaching-learning would like to be. Whatever methods and techniques used in the classroom they must take into consideration the learner's interest.

Similarly, three questions have been asked around this issue on the part of students where they have expressed their appreciation on the way they saw the teachers handling the listening comprehension course. (see student's questionnaire, questions 6, 7, 8).

Question 5 :

a. Do you set up your objectives? Yes ☐ *No* ☐

b. Are they reached? Completely ☐ *Partially* ☐ *Never*

Answer a.	T_1 Yes	b. T_1: Completely
	T_2 Yes	T_2: Partially
	T_3 Yes	T_3: No answer

To be successful, any activity needs a plan to follow. On the other hand, small objectives are very important for every activity; they are like a way to follow from one point to the other. They guide a person to reach their target.

They help determine the methods, materials or any aid that can facilitate the completion of a given task.

As the survey shows, the three respondents found the necessity to set up objectives, but how these objectives are reached depends upon each individual teacher and the level of proficiency of the students. For T_1, all his objectives in teaching are completely reached, while for T_2 objectives are partially reached, that is, he sometimes fails to reach them. T_3 preferred not to answer the question. The researcher did not know if none of the three alternatives is applicable for T_3, or if the teacher only forgot to answer it.

Question 6: *How do you plan listening comprehension lesson?*

This question is related to the preceding one because after setting up one's objectives, the step of reaching them depends on how you planned different activities. Only one respondent answered the question. Two left an empty space without comment. In asking such a question, the researcher wanted to check how similar or different their lesson plan may look like.

According to T_1, the LCL is planned as follows:

1. Pre-listening vocabulary explanation
2. Presentation of comprehension questions
3. Listening
4. Answering comprehension questions (by students)
5. Correction of exercise given on comprehension questions.

According to K. JAMES, R.R. JORDAN and A.J. MATHEWS (1979) each unit of listening comprehension has to include at least the following elements.

For example: Unit 2:

Stage 1: Dictation

Stage 2.1.Listening comprehension

2. Listening and blank-filling

3. Reading comprehension

4. Structure of grammar

Stage 3: Guided note-taking from the material listened.

Through their book, the commonest points for all the units are:

Stage 1: Dictation

Stage 2: Points 1, 2, 3

Stage 3: Guided note-taking

But, according to L. BLUNDELL and J. STOKES (1981), a listening lesson plan should include the following steps:

1. Objectives
2. Tape: tape script
3. Key language which includes:
    1. Function : giving information or instruction
    2. Lexis: It deals with difficult words
    3. Structure
    4. Teaching hints, that is: context and situation which would have happened to your students
    5. The setting of what your students only need or will be able to do.
4. Tasks: They include :
    a. Before listening, that is, lead-in
    b. Listening task, that is, tell your students what their task is
    c. Reading task, that is, tell your students to read the passage and identify parts of the sentences which were difficult to them.

d. Writing task.

With the three different lesson plans, if the teacher follows one or the other among them and adequately, probably many students may succeed in listening course.

Question 7

7. a. Do you give theoretical notes to your students about "how to learn to listen?" Yes☐ No☐

b. If yes, do you think those notes are helpful to them?

Yes☐ No☐

c. If no, how do you think they learn to listen?

Answer a. T_1. Just a few b. T_1. Yes

T_2. No T_2. Empty space

T_3. No T_3. Yes

Question 7 of the teachers' questionnaire sought to know how it relates to many questions in the students' questionnaire, especially question 6, 7, 8, 9 and 12, where students judged all the teaching process. As B. JONES (1983) says, good listening habits are taught, not caught. Two respondents out of 3 found theoretical notes very useful to the students. Theoretical notes help explain or understand difficulties or features of pronunciation, structure and vocabulary used in the talk. They look like a guidance given in the form of headings, cues and layout and help the students to use some strategies during listening activities.

As far as T2 is concerned, the researcher thought about how the teacher facilitates the learning for his students. Though two respondents admitted giving theoretical notes, the results from class-taking notes revealed that the

kind of notes the researcher found is made of exercises and some vocabulary items.

***Question 8**: Does your teaching of listening comprehension course include other subskills? Which ones?*

Answer T_1: Yes, vocabulary learning

T_2: Speaking

T_3: Yes, vocabulary, grammar, functions, etc.

The three teachers taught listening in relation with other subskills, but the list is not limited to those above; in fact, there are many other subskills that go together with listening such as reading, writing, interpretation, extrapolation and translation.

By this question, the researcher wanted to search the different activities other than comprehension questions, yes/no questions, true/false questions and giving the summary that can be taught through listening skill.

For example, L. BRUNDEL and S. JACKIE (1981:3) suggested the following kind of exercises for reading and writing tasks in the listening activities:

1/ Reading task: ask the students to read the article and underline words and phrases they do not understand. Let them try out possible explanation for the parts underlined, using clues from the context.

2/ Writing tasks: depending on the ability of your students, you may choose to do the writing as a group or an individual exercise.

***Question 9a**: Do you give bibliographical reference to your students before you teach the listening comprehension course?*

Always ☐ *Sometimes* ☐ *Never* ☐

b. Do you think the references are helpful to your students? How?

Answers a . T_1. Always

T_2. Never

T_3. Sometimes

b.T_1. "As the purpose of University Education is to teach students how to learn, this helps them to learn by themselves"

T_2. __

T_3. "They can go to the library and get the books being used for the listening comprehension course"

This question was asked in order to see whether or not teachers make their students work by giving them guidance. What is better would be to supply the students with audio-cassettes or listening comprehension compact disks so as to learn by themselves. Any project involving individual or group work on the part of the learner should be encouraged.

Question 10 .a. *How do you find the quality of the listening aids?*

b. Are they varied? Yes ☐ *No* ☐

c. What are the ones you use?

Answers: a. All respondents left an empty space

b. T_1. No

T_2. No

T_3. Yes

c. T_1 and T_2 : Radio (cassette player)

Audio cassette

Book (teacher's book)

T_3: This question is unclear

It is easy to see here that the teaching materials are not sufficient. If we analyse the answers to this question, we realise that the three respondents did not say anything on the quality of the listening comprehension materials. Here, the researcher wanted to have information about the materials the teachers were using and to see whether or not the teaching aids were suitable to the learner's needs, or whether or not they were in good state. In their answers, two out of the three teachers remarked the insufficiency of the teaching aids because they were composed of only a radio-cassette and the teacher's book. It is to be remembered that the idea of insufficiency was first propounded by the learners in answering question 13 when they express their feelings about the tapes used by their teachers. What is surprising is the answer given by T_3 in sub-question c where he says that the question is unclear while in sub-question b he agreed using varied materials.

In our view, teaching listening or any course requires materials that are as varied as the activities to be carried out. Not using varied materials for the course of listening comprehension entails boredom in students and in the end, lack of motivation.

Question 11

Are your aids authentic both linguistically and culturally? Yes ☐ *No* ☐

Answers: T_1 Yes

T_2 Yes

T_3 Yes

All teachers agreed that, though materials are not sufficient enough, as they expressed it in question 10; the few materials they possess are both linguistically and culturally related, that is, there is no mismatch between linguistic and cultural elements. In fact, thanks to audio-tapes, the teacher has the opportunity to introduce new language and structures along with elements about culture.

Question 12:

a. *Are those aids guiding you teaching the different levels of your students in a gradable or progressive way?*

b. *Do you find those materials suitable to the learners' needs and objectives?*

Yes ☐ *No* ☐

Answer a.	T_1	Yes	b.	T_1	Yes
	T_2	Yes		T_2	Yes
	T_3	Yes		T_3	Yes

With that question the researcher would like to find out the quality of materials. Again, this question is partly similar to the two preceding questions, that is, question 10 and 11. All the respondents found the materials suitable to the learners' needs and objectives. When the materials present some drawbacks defaults, the teacher's role is to accommodate these materials to the learner's interest. In any case, listening materials must be adapted to the level of the learners once the teacher has determined it. This led us to ask the next question, namely about the need of tapes and textbooks.

Question 13: *Do you think that your students need textbooks and tapes to practise listening comprehension on their own? Yes* ☐ *No* ☐

Answer: T_1 Yes

T_2 Just tapes

T_3 Yes

According to two of the three teachers, it is better that students have both a textbook and a tape to do self-practice. This kind of practice can help them find out that some "so-called" difficult words are not difficult at all. Students can be familiar with the intentional devices of some words or phrases which are not pronounced in the way students used to hear (see examples given earlier).The answer of T2 that students should be given only tape should not be rejected. This may be defended by the fact that students may not be able to distinguish between listening and reading; they will likely rely on their eyes rather than on their ears if they are given books.

Question 14: *If your students ask to record or buy the tapes you are using in teaching listening, will you accept? Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Why?*

Answer T1 .Yes, after the course is over

T2.No, the university should do that

T_3. No, because it is not easy to record in a successful way. Besides the tapes are personal, the institute does not provide any.

By asking this question, the researcher wanted to check on the availability of listening comprehension materials. One main reason for this question was to check whether or not teachers were willing to help their learners find or make their own listening materials. Almost all the three respondents denied helping them. The "yes" answer for T_1 is tagged with condition; the phrase "after the course is over" used by T_1, simply means "no" answer because at that time, tapes cannot be helpful to the students.

This question is in relation to questions 10, 11, and 16 of the students' questionnaire. The second teacher's answer shifted the responsibility of producing enough materials to the University but with the third teacher's

answer, the University may have problems to fulfil the task of making the materials available to the students. Besides, the heads of department may not know what the lecturer is teaching, given the fact that he may not be using the same materials for all academic years.

Question 15:

a. Which topics do you often use in listening?

b. In what kind of topics are your students' listening most proficient?

Answer a. T1.The topics covering any area of social and academic life.

T2.Empty space

T_3.Topic about everyday life

The above question tried to find out the kind of topics the teachers usually make their students listen to and what judgement teachers make about the different levels of achievement. From the answers given, T_1 and T_2 seem to use the same topics. As to the question of the kind of topics the students are most proficient, none of the three respondents gave an answer. In fact, the question of knowing the kind of topics students are proficient, teachers can be helped by his students before or after the course is finished.

After dealing with the listening topics, we wanted to know how students listen. Are they helped or handicapped by some factors other than the vocabulary? We asked the following question.

Question 16:

How do you deal with the following hindrances when they occur on the listening cassette? These hindrances are: coughs, laughs, and sneezing, breathing, car and machine noises?

a. I play the part of the tape where they appear

b. I do not care about them

c. Other things you do

Answer:

T_1 I consider these as part of communication

T_2 Not applicable

T_3 I play the part of the tape where they appear

Regarding the answers above, one can see that none of the three teachers has a similar way of dealing with these listening obstacles. The obstacles are kinds of noise which may occur from different sources. Because of noise caused by some outside disturbance, the message communicated may not be perceived by the listener; but noise is not the only cause for the listener to lose a message, other factors such as: lack of attention, a mispronounced or a misused word or simply a difficult word may cause the learner not to listen very well.

Though T1 and T3 gave their point of view on how they deal with the listening hindrances it is still not clear how this works. There are two kinds of noise:

(i) Noise from outside the audio-cassette

(ii) Noise from inside the audio-cassette

If students are disturbed by the first type of noise, this simply entails that there is a lack of concentration about the material they are listening to. If the noise is included into the tape being listened to, it should be considered as part of the message itself and be interpreted accordingly.

According to P. UR (1984:10),

> *Many foreign-language learners run into a psychological problem. They have a kind of compulsion to understand everything, even things that are totally unimportant, and are disturbed and even completely thrown off balance if they come across an incomprehensive word.*

Wherever the noise comes from, it has a negative effect on the listener. The second teacher's answer needs to be criticised. In fact, there are very few cassettes which do not contain one or the other of the different listening hindrances mentioned above. The best approach would be to consider that "obstacles" often accompany language, and that, listening to a cassette with laughs, coughs, sneezing, breathing, car and machine noises is another aspect of listening like the one of trying to decipher the words covered by music of the song. This kind of listening will require more attention from the listener and probably more help from the teacher.

The question seeks to know how much attention the listeners devote to some aspects of the language.

Question 17: *When teaching listening with audio-visual materials such as pictures, video-cassette, etc. do you ask your students to pay attention to:*

a. *The culture of the native speakers of English*
b. *The place*
c. *The time*
d. *The attitude of the participants*
e. *The speech only*

Answer T_1: Not applicable

T_2: The speech only

T_3: All of the elements above

The above question was asked to seek information about teacher's instruction when using audio-visual materials. We all know that, when watching the same video-cassette, T.V. or films at the same time, different people come up with different viewpoints which make up the whole story. But, in the teaching-learning process it is better to determine the element that a teacher wants his students focus on, otherwise, students may be paying attention to different things.

Video or television offers an opportunity to the listener to see how the language is produced. The listener can analyse the participants' attitude, the speaker and the listener's movements, their facial expressions, their gestures, etc. but all these elements are easily noticeable when the teacher's instructions are clear.

From the teacher's answers above too, T_1 does not have such materials while, for T_2, students have to pay attention to the speech only. Therefore, it seems as if students listened to the radio-tapes, while T_3 found all the elements necessary to be dealt with while teaching listening with audio-visual materials. For this purpose, the instructions for this case must be clearly and well given. If so, no doubt that students will succeed in the course of listening; even without a long preparation for the test or examination.

Question 18:

a. Do you think that your students need time to prepare for their listening comprehension test or examination? Yes ☐ *No* ☐

b. What do they have to prepare?

Answer: a. T_1: Yes b. T_1: Do some listening exercises on their own (radio, TV)

T_2: No T_2: -

T_3: No T_3: -

If we consider the answers from the question above, we see that 1 out of 3 teachers finds that students need time to prepare for the examination or test. The respondent says that students can do some listening exercises on their own using a radio or a television while 2 out of 3 do not share the same opinion of giving students time to prepare for the exams.

In fact, though T_1 suggested time for students to prepare for the examination, the problem arises as in the lack of materials available for that practice. In addition, T_1 answer matches with students' answers on the question 16 where the majority of students listen to different radio and television channels broadcasting in English, or revise all the units studied in class. For the respondents to answer with "no", this answer shows us how less importance

listening is given. From T_2 and T_3 answers, question 13 is useless even though all the three answered it with "yes". Normally, students have to regularly train their ears to the listening activities; otherwise failure may always be inevitable.

Question 19: *Do you happen to give the same listening text on the exam as you taught during listening course?*

Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Never ☐

Answer:

T_1: Never

T_2: Frequently

T3: Sometimes

This question has something in common with the preceding one. If we look carefully at answers in question 18 and those in this question, we find something a little bit paradoxical. For instance, when teacher 1 suggested time for students to prepare for exams, see question 18; he never gave the same listening text on the exam as he taught during the listening course. However, the time that teacher 1 found necessary for students would rather imply that students have to memorize what they studied. In the same logical analysis, teacher 2 and teacher 3 found that students did not need time to prepare for the exam (see question 18), but they happen to give the same listening text on the exam as they taught during the listening course; and this only would imply that students need time to revise at least these listening texts the two teachers gave. If question 18 had "no" answers for all respondents and question 19 "never" answers, students would not have to waste their time revising their notes or making any extended listening.

Question 20 a: *When testing listening, do you make up other questions than those suggested in the unit or tape?*

Always ☐ *Sometimes* ☐ *Never* ☐

b. While testing, do you go beyond instructions given in the tape?

Always ☐ *sometimes* ☐ *never* ☐

Answer a) T_1: Sometimes b) T_1: Sometimes

T_2: Not applicable T_2: Not applicable

T_3: Always T_3: Sometimes

Concerning this question about modification that can be brought about while testing listening comprehension, 2 out of 3 teachers showed that they were not slaves of the tape instructions; only 1 respondent found the question not applicable when testing. Why not applicable? The teacher did not give any specificity. The researcher simply thinks that the teacher follows the instruction without going beyond or under them. After this question, we wanted to know about the content of the listening comprehension tests and exams. Then, we asked the following question:

Question 21: *Do your tests or exams include the following items?*

	Always	Sometimes	Never
Phoneme discrimination			
Stress and intonation			
Comprehension questions			
Grammar			
Vocabulary			
Writing			
Speaking			

Table 26: Presentation of data for question 21: Items included in the test or exam

	Always	Sometimes	Never
Phoneme discrimination		T_1	T_3
Stress and intonation		T_1 T_3	
Comprehension questions	T_1 T_2 T_3		
Grammar		T_3	T_1
Vocabulary		T_1 T_2 T_3	
Writing	T_3		
Speaking	T_2 T_3		

The purpose of asking this question was aimed at finding out how varied the questions are during the listening tests and exams. Some of these kinds of tests are even more difficult to test or evaluate, but they are not impossible to be assessed.

The reason why this question includes all these elements resides in the fact that many teachers consider only testing listening through comprehension questions or true/false answers or yes/no answers. These three types of questions do not really test that a learner has understood the message listened to because, for yes/no answer for example, some learners prefer to close their eyes and tick the answer at random methods. Nevertheless, teachers should use a range of varieties to test the different aspects of the language.

From the respondents' answers, all of them always give tests/exams on comprehension questions and, sometimes on vocabulary items. Other elements which are tested by the teachers in the listening exams or tests are stress and intonation (see T_1 and T_3) and speaking (for T_2 and T_3).

Of the three respondents, the one who seems to test on all the elements is T_1; the only element he never tests is phoneme discrimination. According to T_1, grammar, vocabulary, writing and speaking, each constitutes a separate course in the DELL and that, there is no need to test on them in the listening comprehension course.

4.3. Results from Class Notes-taking

After checking on the different kind of notes students had taken, we found that all the teachers gave less importance to note-taking. But, as K. JAMES (1979) says, the purpose of taking notes during a talk or a lecture is to help you (as a listener) concentrate on what the speaker is saying and then provide a summary for reference or revision later.

The kind of notes we found was related to some exercises, few vocabulary items, that is approximately 3 or 7 new words per a unit, and very few comments. However, for one academic year, we found an introduction on the first page of what listening is about.

In addition to the lack of theoretical note-taking, none of our respondents had more than 8 pages for the whole course subject. Theoretical notes help the students use some strategies to overcome learning difficulties. They also help them decide what to listen to and how to listen.

4.4. Results from Tests/Examinations Scores

The reason why we decided to consider the different results obtained in listening tests and examinations was to verify whether or not students really fail in listening course as it was stated in the research question. We drew a table of

the results they obtained over the last year. The result in the table do not imply that all these students had failed. We checked how many students are able to get 12 out of 20 or above in the first or second session.

Freshmen in DELL demonstrated the ability in their listening comprehension course, unfortunately, they are the only ones who succeeded among the five classes dealt within this study.

Table 27: Results obtained in the listening comprehension exams: Academic year 2002-2003

Number of students		Number of students who got under 12 out of 20		
	Number of students	1st session	2nd session	Difference
DELL	1st year: 175	21	15	6
	2nd year: 135	122	102	20
Total 1	310	143	117	26
EKD	1st year: 153	86	60	26
	2nd year: 115	79	8	71
	3rd year: 110	52	27	25
Total 2	369	252	95	122
$T_1 + T_2$	679	360 i.e. 53.01%	212 i.e. 31.2%	148 i.e. 21.71%

From the table above, a particular point can be made on 1st year students in the DELL, where only 21 out of 175 students, that is, only 12% were not able to get 12 out of 20 in their first session. It is also noticed that 15 out 21 students, that is 71.4% also did not succeed after the second session of examinations. Another point which needs explanation is EKD second year, where, while 79 out of 115 students were under 12 out of 20 in the first session, only 8 out of 79

students, that is, 10% still being poor listeners after the second session. Was there a negligence in the first exam? Was the second session exam easier than the first? Normally, students are supposed to do better in the second session. This seems quite reasonable for other courses because students have to review the content of the course.

CHAPTER V .GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

V.1. General Conclusion

All along this study, we have tried to assess the teaching, learning and testing of the listening skill at the junior level of the University of Burundi in order to check if there are some deficiencies that need to be corrected. We had to analyse elements in the methodology and materials used in the course of listening at that level.

The researcher investigated some of the factors which handicap and limit the teachers' efforts in teaching and testing the listening skill and the student' efforts in learning it.

As to the structure of the study, the researcher used the following plan: Chapter one of the present study dealt with the researcher's aim by highlighting some of the factors that affect the teaching, the learning and the testing of the listening skill. We identified that the main factors are related to : materials, structure of the listening skill and students' background.

In chapter two, the researcher made an attempt to relate the present study to previous ones and some comments were made by reviewing the literature available on the problem. We discovered that in Burundi the most important work about this was done by KANEZA F. (2000), NIYONDAGARA A. (1984), NKURUNZIZA E. (1997).

In chapter three, the researcher justified the methodology used in the data collection procedures. In chapter four, the findings of the study were discussed

and this led to a general conclusion and recommendations which constitute the last chapter.

In the teaching-learning process, teachers at the University have to be aware to situations in which students of the English Department may use the English language. In short, English is used in studies, research, business, jobs, prayer, diplomacy, etc. all these situations involve the use of linguistic skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Whereas the first two linguistic skills are neglected by many teachers because they involve the ability to communicate, the last two ones are given much emphasis due to their grammatical functions, that is, rules governing them.

Therefore, the teachers' and the students' attitudes towards listening skill teaching and learning affect it mastery. If the teachers and the students believe that listening can be taught and learnt anyhow, they will hardly teach it and hardly learn it and afterwards their efforts to the teaching and learning of it will be frustrated. Both teachers and students will do better where positive attitudes exist. What is more, it is believed that the perfect textbook or methodology does not exist, that is to say that, designing an appropriate teaching or testing material and then creating good learning conditions is not an easy task. As CUNNINGSWORTH (1984:65) says:

> *It is rare that a piece of published materials is wholly and completely suited to an individual teaching. There is nearly always scope for some adaptation and supplementation which adds a personal touch and makes the lesson more direct and relevant to learn.*

Both categories of respondents, that is, teachers and learners have expressed the need for a lot of materials and resources to supplement their effort in teaching or in learning, be it in class or outside the class. Teachers found that, with

materials at their disposal such as tapes, video-tapes, listening books, etc. learners continue to learn at their own pace. Materials provide vivid and authentic audio-visual images transcending the limitation of time and space imposed by the classroom environment; this helps to increase students' motivation and interest in learning in general, and in listening in particular.

In addition, depending on the materials to teach, teachers have to adopt a suitable method. As E. NKURUNZIZA (1997: 10) suggests,

> *The aim of any language theory is to ease the process of learning on the part of the learner by providing him with an appropriate material and guidance. As for methods, good ones are those that take into account the learning situation, the purpose of the learning and the subject of the learning. A good teacher is one who can choose a method that fits his class.*

Briefly, the end results of this work shows that all the three hypotheses stated in the first chapter are proven right by analysing and comparing answers from teachers' questionnaire and students' questionnaire. For example, the hypothesis one is proven right through answers from students' questionnaire on questions 6,7,8, 18 and 19 and teachers' questionnaire on questions 4,5,6,7 and 8. Hypothesis 2 is proven right through answers on teachers' questionnaire on questions 9,10,11,12,14 and 15 and students' questionnaire on questions 9,10,11,12, and 13.

Hypothesis 3 is proven right by comparing only students answers from questions 1,2, and 3.

After analysing the factors that hamper the teaching and the learning of the listening skill, the researcher made the following suggestions and recommendations.

5.2. Recommendations and suggestions

My first recommendation is addressed to the students at the University of Burundi, especially those in the English Departments. It is regrettable that some of them try to find the textbooks that their teachers are using in order to find the content of what they are asked to listen to in class, and memorize units and answers for further tests and exams. To overcome all these difficulties, they have to adapt their listening strategies to their teacher's methodology instead of criticizing it.

My second recommendation is addressed to the listening skill teachers at the University of Burundi in the Departments of English. Teachers of listening skill should adopt a language teaching methodology which reflects progressive changes in the learner's behaviour towards the listening skill and then produce positive results. For this, purpose, we suggest that they stick to the teaching procedures of a listening class and seek to increase the students' vocabulary stock; because without the mastery of the meaning of words and idioms, listening is doomed to failure.

My third recommendation is addressed to the heads of the English Departments at the University of Burundi. They have to avail a wide range of materials among which both teachers and learners can easily choose the materials to use in different activities. Indeed, both categories of respondents have negatively criticized the materials for being of the same type and insufficient.

In addition, I recommend the government, especially the Ministry for National Education and Culture to introduce a gradable and progressive teaching and learning of the listening skills in secondary schools and see, to

which level learners can start with that skill in their mother tongue (Kirundi), and then move to French, and finish with English.

For further research, we suggest

- To undertake an assessment of the textbooks used in teaching listening at the University of Burundi;
- To conduct a comparative study on the level of achievement between sophomores and seniors in DELL, and between 3rd year students and 5th year students in the EKD;
- To assess the psychological barriers that lead to low achievement in the listening skill learning;
- To conduct a comparative study on the level of achievement through the teaching of listening with audio-tapes and video-tapes.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I

A letter sent to students of the Departments of English

University of Burundi
Institute for Applied Pedagogy (IPA)
English-Kirundi Department

Dear fellow student,

I am a researcher at the University of Burundi, and for the moment I am undertaking a research on the teaching, learning and testing of the listening skill.

Enclosed with this is a questionnaire for students of English at the University of Burundi. My purpose is to gather data that would help me to deal with my research bearing on the following topic: **"ASSESSMENT OF THE TEACHING, LEARNING AND TESTING OF THE LISTENING SKILL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI: Case of the Junior Level of the Departments of English: Academic Year: 2004-2005".**

The answers that I expect from you are important and vital to the completion of my work. I would therefore be grateful if you could objectively and sincerely answer the following questionnaire. In addition, I promise that your answer will be appropriately and carefully treated only for the completion of my work.

Thank you in advance and I hope good cooperation from you.

Yours faithfully

Jean Bosco HATEGEKIMANA

STUDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Name and Surname (if necessary)

D.E.L.L. I.P.A

Class: Second year student

Third year student

Fourth year student

Sex:

1.a. Before coming to the University of Burundi, did you learn listening Comprehension in the senior cycle of the secondary school?

Yes No

b. If yes, were you motivated? Yes No

c. If no, did your teacher use:

	Always	Sometimes	Never
Audio tapes			
Reading aloud			
Video tapes			
Television			
Radio			
Guest speaker			

2. When did you begin to think about embarking on studies in the department of English?

a. After the 4th form of secondary school?

b. After the State examination ("Exam d'Etat")?

c. After being oriented in the department of English?

d. For other reasons (mention them).

3.a. Classify the following subjects in terms of your success and motivation, one Being the most interesting for you.

Grammar Reading Listening Oral expression

b. Can you justify your order in about four lines?

4.a. After your listening comprehension in class, do you have other opportunities to listen to different channels broadcasting in English?

Yes ☐ No ☐

b. If yes, which one(s) do you easily listen to and easily understand? 1.

2.

3.

5.a. When listening to songs in English, do you easily get the content of the songs? Always☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely☐

b. From the songs you know, have you learnt them from your own comprehension capacity or you were given the text and you memorized them?

6. During the listening comprehension lesson, do you think you learn "how to listen" or you only listen?

7. a. Do you appreciate the way your teacher teaches the listening comprehension course?

b. Are you deriving satisfaction from it? How?

c. If no, what do you expect from him in his teaching? (four lines).

8. Do you think that your teacher needs to improve his teaching techniques in the listening comprehension course? Which techniques do you suggest which are not used? Yes No

9. Does your teacher of listening comprehension course give you some references (i.e. Bibliography) to refer to when learning the listening comprehension course?

If yes, are they helpful to you? Yes☐ No ☐

10. a. Do you think you need listening textbooks in order to learn the listening skill? Yes ☐ No ☐

b. What are the advantage?

11. If you come across a book containing what the teacher is using in the listening comprehension course, are you going to:

a. memorize it

b. read it and understand it only

c. do nothing with it

d. retain the title of the unit and its correct answer

12. a. Do you think that in the listening comprehension course you need theoretical notes, only practice or both?

b. According to you, how many times would you like to listen to the tape before your teacher asks different questions?

a. Twice

b. Three times

c. Four times

d. It depends on the kind of the tape

13. a. Are the tapes used by your teacher interesting you?

b. if no, which tapes would you like to listen to most?

c. Does your teacher give you a general idea about the content of the listening before you listen to it?

Frequently ☐ sometimes ☐ Never ☐

14. When the tape includes some difficult words do you:

a. think of why the teacher did not explain those words?

b. pay attention to the following words?

c. write the words on a sheet of paper.

15.a. Do the following elements cause you any trouble when they occur on a tape while listening ? These elements are :

"Coughs, laughs, breathing, car and machines noises" Yes ☐ No ☐

b. When the above elements occur outside the classroom, do they have the same effects as in the tape? Yes ☐ No ☐

16. How do you prepare for your listening comprehension tests or exams?

a. Revise all the units studied in class

b. Listen to different channels broadcasting in English

c. Make comment about the course content with my classmates on the units studied

d. Do nothing

17. Does the listening exam or test make you panic?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Why? (2 lines)

18. During an exam or test, does your teacher of listening comprehension course give you questions from the units studied in class?

Always ☐ Sometimes ☐ Never ☐

19. During a test or an exam, does your teacher go beyond the tape instructions?

e.g. "You are going to hear the tape twice" Yes ☐ No ☐

20. Tick what you usually do during the listening comprehension test or examination

a. I pay attention and listen carefully

b. I always fell cold

c. I pay attention and check to see if the listening text corresponds to what I memorize from the textbook

d. I sit with the best student in the listening comprehension and look at his answers

e. I sometimes tick the answers randomly (as if with closed eyes).

APPENDIX II

A letter sent to teachers of Listening Comprehension course in the Departments of English at the University of Burundi

University of Burundi
Institute for Applied Pedagogy (IPA)
English-Kirundi Department

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a researcher at the University of Burundi, and for the moment I am undertaking a research on the teaching, learning and testing of the listening skill.

Enclosed with this is a questionnaire for teachers of listening Comprehension Course at the University of Burundi. My purpose is to gather data that would help me to deal with my research bearing on the following topic: ***"AN ASSESSMENT OF THE TEACHING, LEARNING AND TESTING OF THE LISTENING SKILL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI. Case of the Junior Level of the Departments of English: Academic Year: 2004-2005."*** The answers that I expect from you are important and vital to the completion of my work. I would therefore be grateful if you could objectively and sincerely answer the following questionnaire. In addition, I promise that your answer will be appropriately and carefully treated only for the completion of my work.

Thank you in advance and I hope good cooperation from you.

Yours faithfully

Jean Bosco HATEGEKIMANA

Teacher's questionnaire

Name and surname:

Sex:

Teacher in the D.E.L.L. I.P.A

1.a. How long have you been teaching listening comprehension?

b. Have you been teaching listening comprehension in the whole department?

Yes ☐ No ☐

c. If yes, do you make the content of your listening comprehension course gradable, progressive? Yes ☐ No ☐

2. Are your students deriving any satisfaction from your listening comprehension questions that goes beyond the mere feeling of having mastered one more lesson, and being ready for next lesson?

Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐

3. Are your pupils able to use the content of your lesson in their immediate life?

4. Do you think that the way you teach listening comprehension focuses on the learner or on the content of what you teach?

Yes ☐ Partly ☐ No ☐

5.a. Do you set up your objectives?

Yes ☐ No ☐

b. Are they reached ? Completely ☐ Partially ☐ Never ☐

6. How do you plan your listening comprehension lesson?

7. Do you give theoretical notes to your students about "how to learn to listen?"

a) If yes, do you think those theories are helpful to them? Yes ☐ No ☐

b) How do you think they learn to listen?

8. Does your teaching of the listening comprehension course include other subskills? Which ones?

9.a. Do you give bibliographical references to your students before you start teaching your listening comprehension course?

Always ☐ sometimes ☐ Never ☐

b. Do you think the references are helpful to your students? How?

10.a. How do you find the quality of the listening comprehension materials?

b. Are they varied?

c. What are the ones you use?

- -

- -

- -

11. Are your aids authentic both linguistically and culturally? Yes ☐ No ☐

12.a. Are those aids guiding you teaching different levels of your students in a gradable or progressive way? Yes ☐ No ☐

b. Do you find those materials suitable to the learner's needs and objectives?

Yes ☐ No ☐

13. Do you think that your students need textbooks and tapes to practice listening comprehension on their own?

Yes ☐ No ☐

14. If your students ask you to record or buy the tapes you are using in teaching, will you accept? Yes ☐ No ☐ Why?

15. In what kind of topics are your students listening most and why?

a. Which topics do you often teach in listening?

b. In what kind of topics are your students' listening most performant?

16. How do you deal with the following hindrances when they occur on the listening cassette: coughs, laughs, sneezing, breathing, car and machine noises?

a. I play the part of the tape where they appear.

b. I do not care about them.

c. Other things you do.

17. When teaching listening with audio-visual materials such as pictures, video cassettes, television, etc., do you ask your students to pay attention to:

a. The culture of the native speakers of English?

b. The place

c. The time

d. The attitude of the participants

e. The age of the participants

f. The speech only

18.a. Do you think that your students need time to prepare for the listening comprehension test or examination?

b. What do they have to prepare?

19. Do you happen to give the same listening text in the examination as you taught during the listening course?

Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Never ☐

20.a. When testing listening, do you make up other questions than those suggested in the unit or tape?

Always ☐ sometimes ☐ Never ☐

b. While testing, do you go beyond instructions given on the tapes?

Always ☐ sometimes ☐ Never ☐

21. Do your tests include the following items?

	Always	**Sometimes**	**Never**
Phoneme discrimination			
Stress and intonation			
Comprehension questions			
Grammar			
Vocabulary			
Writing and speaking			

NTEGEKINANA JEAN BOSCO
NIVERSITE DU BURUNDI 113
STITUT DE PEDAGOGIE APPLIEQUEE
. P. A)
PARTEMENT D'ANGLAIS - LITTERATURE
UDIANT MEMORAND

Le 27/7/2006

APPENDIX III

Date d'entrée 27/7/06
N° de 60
N° d'entrée 2980

Letter sent to the Head of the Academic Services

Objet : Demande d'accès à la salle informatique.

A Madame le Directeur des services Académiques à l'Université du Burundi à BUJUMBURA.

Madame le Directeur,

J'ai l'honneur de venir m'adresser auprès de votre haute autorité pour vous demander l'accès à la salle informatique pour avoir des données relatives à mon travail.

En effet madame le Directeur mon sujet porte sur "An Assessment of the teaching, learning and testing of the listening skill at the lower level of the University of Burundi : Academic year 2004 – 2005", et sur cet, j'aimerais avoir ces données pour uniquement faire un constat sur le taux d'échec et de réussite des étudiants dans le cours de compréhension à l'audition.

Espérant une suite favorable à ma demande, je vous prie d'agréer madame le Directeur l'expression de ma très haute considération.

Etudiant mémorand
Jean Bosco NTEGEKINANA

APPEDIX IV

Answer from the Letter sent to the Head of Academic Services

FICHE DE TRANSMISSION N° 9

A: Etudiant Hategekimana J - Bosco de: SAC date: 15/09-06

- [ ] Pour approbation
- [ ] Pour signature
- [ ] Pour information
- [x] Suite à votre demande
- [ ] Comme convenu
- [ ] Pour suite à donner
- [ ] Pour avis
- [ ] Pourrions-nous en parler ?
- [ ] Projet à rédiger
- [ ] A refaire
- [ ] A corriger
- [ ] A dactylographier
- [ ] A classer
- [ ] A expédier
- [ ] A noter & retourner

Commentaire Il serait plus intéressant pour votre recherche de vous adresser aux départements concernés par le sujet. La cellule informatique ne délivre pas ce genre de données car elle n'en dispose pas.

Signature