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SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**



**DEVELOPING LISTENING TECHNIQUES TO IMPROVE ORAL  
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# Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

## Introduction

This report intended to draw a broad picture about how the use of listening techniques could influence oral performance. This work documents a research that was carried out by the authors during the first semester of 2014 in the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador with a sample population of students selected from the different Intermediate II courses of the Teaching Major of the B.A. in English at that time. The purpose of the study was to develop Listening techniques and investigate how these techniques enhanced the oral performance of the students in the class.

English learning must be directed to get an outcome, in this case: the usage of English Language to communicate with others in a country where this language is becoming necessary in many fields. English learning as a second language is an integration of the four-macro skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. Any of these processes can be isolated from the rest, but according to research about the factors influencing listening comprehension in English and possible measures of improvement, Listening is very significant.

As a group, we agree that a big part of language learning depends on Listening, since it provides the aural input that serves as the basis for language acquisition and enables learners to interact in spoken communication. Authors



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consulted express that at the workplace and beyond, a listening period is very important when it is followed by a productive task such as an oral activity since students get new vocabulary, pronunciation, etc. Listening enables oral activities in the classroom; consequently, this experiment aimed to work with Listening techniques and investigate if those techniques improved the oral performance in Intermediate II students.

### CHAPTER I

#### 1.1 Background and Need

Through years, many researchers have studied about how to improve the four English macro skills, according to some findings about listening, which is the most important macro skill that helps to develop the other three such as speaking, reading, and writing, among English students (Oxford, 1990). Taking into account those findings about listening and through the development of listening techniques, we will investigate if the Intermediate II students improve their oral performance, through the usage of certain listening techniques.

The cognitive advantage of an initial exposure to listening gives learners a more natural way to learn the language (Abdalhamid, 2012). It is important that students can be aware about the importance of listening and also enhance their listening proficiency through techniques to facilitate their English learning and develop their speaking skills, but students are generally not aware that through listening techniques, they can improve their oral performance. “Students get input from the listening skill on how to speak accurately and fluently. It can be stated that students need more practical activities, which provide them with more listening practice and input from listening material and audio-visual media that contain good model of accuracy, fluency, pronunciation, rhythm, intonation, grammar and standard rate of delivery (Floriasti, 2012)

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### 1.2. Statement of the problem

English is so widespread nowadays because it has become the standard language for all kinds of international communication. This language learning has become very popular among the different majors offered by the University of El Salvador, every year thousands of new applicants try to get a place either in the English Teaching major or in the B.A in Modern Languages. It is known that the speaking of English opens better job opportunities not only in El Salvador but also in other countries, that is why it is a challenge for the Foreign Languages Department to be updated about methodologies, theories, techniques and materials to provide the most adequate English teaching and the tools that the students really need to be proficient in their performance in English communication.

Communication is so important in our daily lives; we communicate our feelings, desires, thoughts, etc. Communication involves the four micro skills; but according to Morley and Rost (2001), who developed studies about “listening skill”, listening is the most used skill in daily life; this is the reason why listening is the most important skill in the English learning process. In addition listening can facilitate the emergence of the other language skills because it is developed faster than the other skills (Oxford, 1990).

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When a person begins to learn a second language, a huge amount of tasks floods his or her mental capacity. Many of the tools that are taught in the classrooms are pronunciation, vocabulary, and other skill-getting tasks such as memorization of grammatical rules. Most language learning classrooms are steeped in explicit tasks and activities such as reading and writing, in keeping with a traditional approach. However, listening skills are not as often focused upon and taught. These skills are less apparent and, so, have received less explicit attention (Chiang & Dunkel, 1992; Moyer, 2006)

In view of the fact that the listening skill plays an essential role in students' learning, it is necessary to study what will be the improvement that Intermediate English II students, in the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador will get in their oral performance through the development of listening techniques.

Since the students get full understanding while they are exposed to aural input, listening can function as a model to communicate in the appropriate speaking context (Floriasti, 2012). According to Abdalhamid (2012) in his study about "Listening comprehension strategies of Arabic-speaking learners" when students are taught listening strategies, their listening performance considerably improves. Based on these theories, this study aims to develop listening techniques to improve the oral

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performance from Intermediate I students, and investigate the awareness and the use that students make of them.

### *1.2.1 Unawareness of listening techniques*

The studies that have been carried out regarding listening are very limited; however, some of them have shown that only few students used a repertoire of strategies to obtain a better listening comprehension. According to Murphy (1985), who developed one of the first studies about listening strategies, skilled learners used a greater variety of strategies than less skilled learners do. We wanted to verify if Intermediate II students use listening techniques because they are aware of those techniques or if they completely ignored them; in addition, if the students needed to be skilled as well in order for them to improve not only their listening comprehension but also their oral performance through listening techniques.

The lack of these techniques, makes students be hardly able to understand, with ease and confidence, simple sentence-length speech in basic personal and social contexts and to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with the routine tasks and social situations of the Intermediate level (ACTFL guidelines, 2012), since listening is the model input in which students acquire pronunciation, vocabulary, etc. Listening proficiency is the key to achieve proficiency in speaking (Dunkel, 1986; Abdalhamid, 2012).

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### *1.2.2 The development of listening strategies should be encouraged.*

While second language strategy research has generated an enormous amount of interest in recent years, the number of studies devoted specifically to listening comprehension remains small and the number of studies which investigate the use of strategies in listening is even more limited (Rubin, 1994).

It is necessary to bear in mind that listening is not only a process of receiving and recording aural input, but listeners actively involve themselves in the interpretation of what they hear, they usually bring their own background knowledge and linguistic knowledge to bear on the information contained in the information. In addition, the listening process is not the same every time and every person requires different strategies while listening.

Because in the classrooms learners listen with a purpose and listen to things that interest them, accounting for the goals and experiences of the learners will keep motivation and attention high. For example, if learners at the classroom need to be able to understand new rules and procedures introduced by the teacher, in class they should be helped to develop the abilities through the use of some techniques like to identify main ideas and supporting details, to identify cause and effect, to indicate comprehension or lack of comprehension, and to ask for clarification just to mention some examples of strategies that consequently would increase chances for successful listening.

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### *1.2.3 Listening techniques can work to increase the oral performance.*

People communicate what they have in mind every day, as it is a part of daily life. Even though words are always spoken daily and produced ten thousands for average people, it does not make speaking easier, especially for foreign learners (Thornbury, 2009). Speaking is a skill, which deserves attention, as it is a foreign language. Thus, teaching the comprehension of spoken speeches is therefore of primary importance if the communication aims is to be reached (Osada, 2004)

Therefore, through the input that students get from listening, helps them to speak accurately and fluently. It can be stated that students need more practical activities, which provide them with more listening practice and input from listening material and audio-visual material that contain good models of accuracy, fluency, pronunciation, rhythm, intonation, grammar and standard rate of delivery. The use of listening strategies therefore can give the students an extra help in comprehending the messages, grammar form, pronunciation, and vocabulary. The use of listening strategies facilitates the student's listening comprehension as well as enriching speaking skills and improving listening skills.

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### 1.3. The Purpose

The purpose of this investigation was to develop listening techniques to improve the oral performance for Intermediate II students of the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador. Many Intermediate II students could have ignored that if they use listening techniques while listening to a text, they were able to improve not only their listening skills but also their oral performance.

In El Salvador most of the workplaces nowadays require an outstanding oral performance when seeking new employees such as call centers industry, which has grown rapidly in the last years, however based on our own experience in this scenery, there are many people who do not reach the expectations of these companies due to their oral performance, poor pronunciation, lack of vocabulary, etc. being these just some factors that influence their oral performance. A low oral performance will influence the procurement of a job and to get good grades either in speaking activities or oral exams.

The possible influence that listening strategies had in the oral performance in the students seemed to be an interesting topic to discuss for the researchers, since there were not previous investigations made on this topic at the Foreign Languages Department. It was intended that the findings obtained from this research could help both students and teachers to learn more about which strategies students generally



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used and which could work better to improve oral performance. Then they could better focus on refining those strategies to their highest potential.

### **1.4. Significance to the Field**

Listening is more than just being able to hear and understand what someone else says. What listening skills involve is the ability someone has to interpret something. For this reason, Listening comprehension has often been as a passive activity. It is in the contrary, an active process in which the listener must discriminate among sounds, understand words and grammar. In short, listening is a complex activity which requires substantial mental effort. As a result of this fact it was decided to base the research on how listening skills could improve or affect oral performance, guiding the investigation throughout different activities and as well as through different approaches that will allow enhancing techniques that make easier the improvement of oral performance.

The main purpose throughout the investigation was to demonstrate how the uses of proper skills improve every different ways of learning. By the use of techniques in every session, we expected the students to identify which techniques could work better with them and could help to improve their development in the listening skill and their oral performance. The benefits that we looked at by applying listening skills in their oral performance would not only allow them to progress in

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their learning of a new language in the present , but also it would help them out in the near future to utilize every technique in their daily approach to their new language acquired.

As our main research topic said, it was attempted to know how listening skills could affect or improve oral performance. The reason why interviews were going to be performed in the investigation was to gather as many details as possible, to know how participants' knowledge was and to know what strategies or techniques had variation or improvements at the moment that the project was going to take place. As expected, the result the researchers were going to obtain from interviews and observations would allow the students to measure how the techniques performed by using listening skills affected or improved oral performance in the sample of students.

### **1.5. Limitations**

The investigation was planned to develop listening techniques to improve the oral performance in English Intermediate II students. As far as the study is concerned, the researchers decided to limit the investigation, the sample groups were integrated just by the English Intermediate II students who belonged to the different English Intermediate II groups from the first semester, 2014. The investigation was carried out with forty volunteers. There were two sessions per week, on Tuesdays and on

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Thursdays during seven period weeks. The sessions lasted fifty minutes from 12:00 P.M. to 12:50 P.M. The researchers set up twenty students per each group.

### **1.6. Ethical Considerations**

The researchers conducted the investigation about listening techniques to improve the oral performance in students from English Intermediate II, in the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador. An observation group was set and all the groups from English Intermediate II in the Foreign Languages Department were invited to join the investigation during the first term of 2014. Besides this, a classroom was requested for Tuesday and Thursday for a fifty minutes session per each day.

### **1.7. Research Questions**

#### ***1.7.1. Main Question***

- *What will be the improvement that Intermediate English II students in the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador will get in their oral performance through the development of listening techniques?*

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### 1.7.2. Subsidiary Questions

- *Are the English Intermediate II students aware about the usage of listening techniques to improve their oral performance?*
  
- *Do the English Intermediate II students have a range of strategies to apply while listening a text?*
  
- *Which listening techniques can work best to increase the Intermediate II students' oral performance?*

### 1.8. Objectives

#### 1.8.1. General Objective

- ✓ To describe the improvement that Intermediate English II students in the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador will get in their oral performance through the development of listening techniques.

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### ***1.8.2. Specific Objectives***

- ✓ To confirm the English Intermediate II students' awareness about the usage of listening techniques to improve their oral performance.
  
- ✓ To explore if English Intermediate II students have a range of strategies to apply while listening a text.
  
- ✓ To identify which listening techniques can work best to increase the Intermediate II students' oral performance.

**CHAPTER II**

**2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The story of the four skills of language learning is dense, and there is a multitude of sources addressing the importance of writing, speaking, and reading. A closer look at the history of language learning, however, reveals a marked lack of focus on the skill of listening (Chiang & Dunkel, 1992). The majority of research and resources available simply do not offer an appropriately representative picture of the importance and use of each respective skill. A simple search of the words listening, speaking, reading, and writing in a database or library produces a disproportionate ratio of information concerning the four language learning skills, revealing obvious deficiencies especially in the study of the listening skill. Additionally, the listening skill has been specifically neglected in the research and focus of language teaching (Chiang & Dunkel, 1992; Morley, 1984; Moyer, 2006; Mendelsohn, 1998; Schmidt-Rinehart, 1994).

Second language (L2) teaching practices have, until recently, focused mainly on reading, writing, and speaking as the skills necessary in language acquisition (Vandergrift, 2003). This is because before the 1970's, listening was only seen as a receptive skill in language learning (Johnson, 2008) where students...listened to repeat and develop a better pronunciation (Vandergrift, 2011). As cited in

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Mendelsohn, 1984, 1995, at that time it was believed students could acquire their listening skill by "osmosis", defined as a gradual, often unconscious process of assimilation or absorption, (Cambridge Advanced Learners' Dictionary, 2013).

This method of language acquisition, known as the audio-lingual method, was popular after World War II, and was born out of the need to teach US soldiers the language spoken in the countries they were "deployed" in (Johnson, 2008). The importance of listening as a skill, in language learning was not recognized until "the early 70's, when work by Asher, Postovsky, Winitz, and later Krashen brought attention to the role of listening as a key factor in facilitating language learning (Vandergrift, 2011). These studies, however, were based on the audio-lingual method, and looked at listening as a passive, receptive skill (Johnson, 2008; Mendelsohn 1995; Vandergrift, 2011).

Learning a foreign language is commonly associated with speaking that language, and learners may be captivated by speaking the language immediately, however for teachers, this process is more than likely to plunge students right into speaking. Children have months of listening to their native language before they even utter their first word. However, when a person is taught a foreign language, he is expected to speak the language from day one on.

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As per researchers' assumption listening is a very crucial skill to acquired or learn a new language. Understanding spoken words is a prerequisite to speaking, reading, and writing; comprehension should precede reproduction. Research has shown strong evidence that listening comprehension and language acquisition are closely related. Further, listening skill reinforces the other language skills. By promoting listening skills, before focusing on oral skills, results in an increase for second language acquisition. (Cheung, Yun Kul, 2010).

Based on these theories the following study discussed what listening techniques could improve the oral performance in English Intermediate II students. This literature review addressed three areas of research related to the usage of listening techniques to improve the oral performance. The first section is about the unawareness that students have about listening techniques. In the second section, there is a discussion about the encouragement for students to develop listening strategies. Finally, the last section focuses on what listening techniques could work to increase oral performance.

### ***2.1. Unawareness of listening techniques***

Even though listening is now recognized as an active mental process, it is still difficult to describe (Vandergrift, 2011). However, what researchers have been able



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to determine is that for aural information to be understood, it requires effective use of strategies on the part of the listener. This is of particular significance in second language learning because without effective strategies, students' listening comprehension becomes challenging, problematic, and ineffective (Mendelsohn, 2006).

According to Rost (2002) strategies are conscious steps or actions by which learners can guide and evaluate their own comprehension and responses. Quite similarly, Wang (Wang Chu-Ming & Qi Lu-Xia, 2003) defined that learner strategies are the thinking activities consciously selected by learners in order to understand or grasp the language materials. And listening strategies are the strategies used by learners while listening to language materials. In a more detailed manner, White explains, “strategies are efforts to compensate for uncertainties in understanding, and could include making inferences, realizing where misunderstandings have occurred, and asking for clarification” (White, 1998).

It has been shown that listening plays a vital role in the natural process to acquire the English language. There are strategies that enhance the listening skill so that students may have a better understanding when they are exposed to listening activities in the classroom (Holden, 2004). Agreeing with O'Malley (1990), there are three main types of listening strategies: metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies,

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and socio-affective strategies. From the three types of strategies mentioned by O'Malley in our research, we are to choose just two types of them: metacognitive strategies and cognitive strategies respectively because these strategies are inherent in any learning process and can be more effective when explicitly taught.

Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) could confirm that when students are aware of listening strategies, they tend to plan and consciously execute appropriate actions to achieve a particular goal. Knowing the awareness about the listening techniques that students from English Intermediate I have, will help us to investigate how they influence in their listening comprehension and how their oral performance improve.

### ***2.2. The development of listening strategies should be encouraged.***

Listening and speaking have been considered two of the most difficult skills in the English learning process, however these skills complement each other. According to Cheung (2010) listening should be the first and foremost skill to be acquired in learning a new language. Since the first studies about listening and speaking, it has been shown that the proficiency in listening is the key to achieve proficiency in speaking (Dunkel, 1986). For some researchers, listening is the most important skill for language learning because it is the most commonly used language skill in normal daily life (Morley 2001; Rost, 2001). It is stated that we get the model to

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communicate in English language through listening (Floriasti, 2012) and according to Oxford (1990), listening can facilitate the emergence of other language skills.

As mentioned in chapter one, the studies that have been carried out regarding listening are very limited; however some of them have showed that only few students used a repertoire of strategies to obtain a better listening comprehension. The lack of these techniques make students struggle in simple sentence-length speech, providing personal information and to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with the routine tasks and social situations of the Intermediate level (ACTFL guidelines, 2012), since listening is the model input in which students acquire pronunciation, vocabulary, etc., listening proficiency is the key to achieve proficiency in speaking (Dunkel, 1986; Abdalhamid, 2012).

Rudolph Verderber (2010) expresses “Well, how are you meant to improve if you don't practice. The only way a spoken language can enter the brain is through the ears, so if you don't practice listening, then spoken English will always be too fast and too difficult and if you don't learn to recognize the sounds of spoken English, you will never understand it.”

William. R. Holden (2004) expresses that the instructor should “strongly encourage” learners to make consistent use of particular strategies at appropriate points in the listening process in order to comprehend the input. During the listening

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activity itself, students should be encouraged to monitor their level of comprehension and make decisions about appropriate strategy use.

Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) in their investigation could confirm that when students are aware about listening strategies and when they are encouraged to use them, they tend to plan and consciously execute appropriate actions to achieve a particular goal. Knowing the awareness about listening techniques that students from English Intermediate II have will help us to investigate how the use of them help to improve in their listening comprehension and how their oral performance improves.

In the following study we as a group wanted to investigate how the development of listening techniques in the Intermediate II students improves their oral performance; the awareness that the Intermediate II students had about these techniques, and if they had a range of listening techniques that they applied while listening in addition to which listening techniques could work better to improve their oral performance.

### ***2.3. Listening techniques can work to increase the oral performance.***

Even though words are always spoken daily and produced ten thousands for average people, it does not make speaking easier, especially for ESL learners (Thornbury, 2009). Speaking is a skill which deserves attention, thus, teaching the

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comprehension of spoken speeches is therefore of primary importance to reach communication (Osada, 2004).

Therefore, Dunckel (1991) expresses that in an ideal world, students get input from listening skill how to speak accurately and fluently. It can be stated that students need more practical activities, which provide them with more listening practice and input from listening material and audio-visual material that contain a model of accuracy, fluency, pronunciation, rhythm, intonation, grammar and standard rate of delivery. The use of listening strategies therefore can give the students an extra help in comprehending the messages, grammar form, pronunciation, and vocabulary. The use of listening strategies facilitates the student's listening comprehension as well as enriching speaking skills and improving listening skills.

Rickerson (1984) stresses the need to provide for second language students with an opportunity to produce the language to enhance the motivation during language learning. Thus, it was expected input and listening practice improve students'-speaking skills to get upper level. Listening and speaking influence each other as the more students get input from listening, the richer the knowledge they acquire then the more fluent they become.

### 2.4. CONCEPTS

#### ❖ **Listening**

⊕ Different scholars define listening differently. Chastain (1971) defined the goal of listening comprehension as being able to understand native speech at normal speed in an unstructured situation.

⊕ Postovsky (1975, p.19) said, “Listening ranges in meaning from sound discrimination to aural comprehension (i.e., actual understanding of the spoken language).” Goss (1982) stated that listening is a process of taking what you hear and organizing it into verbal units to which you can apply meaning.

⊕ Brown and Yule (1983) explained listening as follows: Listening comprehension could mean that a person understands what he has heard. However, in EFL teaching, it often is taken to mean that the listener can repeat the text, even though the listener may reproduce the sound without real comprehension. “If he could actually learn the text as he heard it, he would probably be said to have understood it”

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### ❖ Listening Techniques

⊕ They are a group of strategies used to increase the understanding and improve the listening skill.

### ❖ Listening Strategies

⊕ Listening strategies are techniques or activities that contribute directly to the comprehension and recall of listening input.

### ❖ L2

⊕ L2 is the term for second language. If a student speaks English as their L2 it means their mother tongue is not English.

⊕ *Second Language; Foreign Language.* The language a person knows is learning or is acquiring in addition to their native language (L1).

### ❖ Language Acquisition

⊕ Language acquisition is the process by which humans acquire the capacity to perceive and comprehend language, as well as to produce and use words and sentences to communicate. Language acquisition is one of the quintessential human traits Friederici, AD. (Oct 2011).

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### ❖ Metacognitive Strategies

⊕ Refer to what learners do to oversee, regulate or direct their learning and include planning, monitoring and evaluating stages, which mirror the pre-task, on-task and post-task activities featured in many texts.

⊕ Involves “planning, monitoring, and evaluating” (Goh 1998, p.125-126; Rubin, 1994, p.211) what is learned.

### ❖ Cognitive Strategies

⊕ Cognitive strategies, on the other hand, refer to strategies used to manipulate the input or material, or to apply a specific skill or strategy to a particular task. O’Malley and Chamot (1990)

⊕ Study strategies which involve “actual mental steps” (Vandergrift, 2003, p.427) used to “process, store, and recall” information (Goh, 1998, p.125-126).

### ❖ Socio-affective Strategies

⊕ They encompass the attempts to create and promote positive emotional reactions and attitudes towards language learning (Chamot & O’Malley, 1987). Vandergrift (2003) defined socio-affective strategies as the techniques



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listeners employ to collaborate with others, to verify understanding, or to lower anxiety.

### ❖ Learning Strategies

- ⊕ They are the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information” (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990)

### ❖ Language Material

- ⊕ Language material refers to a bibliographic record for an item which is basically *textual* in nature (whether printed, manuscript, microform, or electronic resource)

## CHAPTER III

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes and explains the methodology organized for the research; a description about the participants, setting, instruments, procedures, and data analysis.

When a person begins to learn a second language, a huge amount of tasks flood his or her mental capacity such as vocabulary, phonetics, pronunciation, grammar, reading etc. all of them are important in the English learning process, however the following study was focused in two of the four macro skills.

The listening skill plays an important role in the students' English learning process since students get full understanding while they are exposed to aural input, listening can function as a model to communicate in the appropriate speaking context (Floriasti, 2012). Based on these theories, this study aimed to develop listening techniques to improve the oral performance of English Intermediate II students, and investigate the awareness and the usage that students made of them.

#### 3.1. Method

The method used in this research was a qualitative descriptive research method. This study was based on the belief that the students could improve their oral

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performance through the usage of listening strategies to facilitate the listening process, since listening comprehension sets a foundation for the future acquisition of speaking.

The following are the research questions addressed in this study:

### **Main Research Question:**

- *What will be the improvement that Intermediate English II students in the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador will get in their oral performance through the development of listening techniques?*

### **Subsidiary Research Questions:**

- *Are the English Intermediate II students aware of the usage of listening techniques to improve their oral performance?*
- *Do the English Intermediate II students have a range of strategies to apply while listening to a text?*
- *Which listening techniques can work best to increase the Intermediate II students' oral performance?*

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### 3.2. Setting

This experiment took place at the University of El Salvador in the Foreign Languages Department with a volunteering sample of 40 students who were divided in two different groups, 20 students in each group.

To start the data collection process, a questionnaire for volunteer participants, from the English Intermediate II groups, was delivered in both groups; to confirm how much students knew or were aware about listening strategies. This questionnaire was developed in 15 minutes in a specific classroom at the Foreign Languages Department. Instruction for every instrument or activity was given beforehand so that all the expectations and objectives of the study, instrument, or activity could be clear.

Every student answered the questionnaire individually; and they had their own desk which was located far away from each others to ensure the accuracy of the questionnaire.

In addition to the questionnaire, students had listening-speaking sessions once a week. Both groups were scheduled on two different days to attend their fifty minutes sessions each. The sample was immersed in listening activities where researchers guided them to apply certain listening strategies not only to improve their listening comprehension but also to improve their oral performance, which is the main goal of this study. At the end of each listening- speaking session, students had

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an oral evaluation about the topic that had been studied in order to confirm the achievement and improvement in their oral performance.

All these activities were carried out in a comfortable setting. This was a space free of distractions and pressures. The researchers made attempts to establish a good rapport with the participants as well.

### **3.3. Sample/participants**

According to Gay (2006) “sampling refers to the process of selecting participants for a study”. In order to find out what listening techniques improve the oral performance a sample of 40 students were asked to participate.

Non-random volunteer sampling was the technique that was used in this study. This is a type of convenience sampling, where out of the large group of volunteers, a group of 40 students offered to take part in the sample group. Students from the different sections of Intermediate English II in the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador were taken into account by the researchers to set up the sample population, which was encompassed by 40 students. The researchers visited every English Intermediate II group and invited them to participate in the experiment. The sample population got the instructions and the schedule when the sessions were going to be carried out as well.

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### **3.4. Intervention**

The independent variable measured by this study consisted in what listening techniques would help the Intermediate English II students to improve their oral performance. It has been shown that Listening is the main skill that facilitates the learning of a new language in this case, English. In addition, the independent variable measured if English Intermediate II students were aware about the usage of these techniques and if they had a certain range of strategies to apply while listening. Lastly, interventions in the area of listening strategies and students' awareness, researchers have found out that unconsciously, students apply listening strategies while listening and there are others that do have their own range of strategies, but it is subject to the English level that students have, so listening strategies usage tended to vary depending on what proficiency level students had.

### **3.5. Materials**

The main types of materials used during the intervention were first, a questionnaire since we considered that reliability and validity were important aspects included in a questionnaire. According to Suskie (1996), a perfectly reliable questionnaire elicits consistent responses. Although it is difficult to develop, it is reasonable to design a questionnaire that approaches a consistent level of response.

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Second, there was a sort an array of listening materials to be used in the listening- speaking sessions such as recordings, videos, tapes, worksheets, etc. in which the students had the opportunity to be in touch with listening as much as possible and they got the chance to apply the listening strategies.

### **3.6. Measurement Instruments**

#### **❖ A questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a printed self-report form designed by the researchers; in order to obtain information through the responses of the participants (Burns & Grove, 1993). A questionnaire was used to collect primary qualitative data from students. The aim was to gather impartial data from a representative sample of participants. The reason why a questionnaire was used is because the answers obtained from questionnaires were standardized into a whole section, meaning that questionnaires were more objective, even more than interviews where the researcher had to analyze the responses one by one.

An obvious advantage of questionnaires was that they could provide unassuming information for a qualitative method because one could count questions or analyze the written responses that were similar. What was desired by the use of a questionnaire, were opinions of students of the Intermediate English II class in order

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to know if such opinions were consistent with the research questions from this investigation.

The listening-speaking sessions once a week, fifty minutes length were the developed with the sample groups in which, as mentioned before, the students were immersed in listening activities where researchers guided them to apply certain listening strategies not only to improve their listening comprehension but also to improve their oral performance which was the main goal of this study.

### **3.7. Data collection/procedures**

Based on the fact that data is primarily collected to provide information regarding a specific topic, in chapter II researchers explained the complete process to give validity to their work.

To start the data collection process, the questionnaire for volunteer participants from the English Intermediate II groups was delivered in a specific classroom at the Foreign Languages Department. The instruments were filled in a quiet room where the participants were fully monitored. This questionnaire was developed in 15 minutes or even less. It was carried out individually since the instruments require only personal and real information about the students.



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As result of the fact that there are ten groups of English Intermediate II, the researchers chose volunteer students for each group, making a total of 40 participants for the sampling of the study. The participants first answered a questionnaire that investigated the awareness and the usage that students made of listening strategies to improve their oral performance. The instrument was feasible; it provided multiple options for respondents to submit data with clear and unambiguous questions; additionally, each item was understandable to the respondent and the appropriateness of the technical terms used in it.

Second, a six week experimental investigation was held with both groups. The students were exposed to the different listening techniques to improve their oral performance. One group was taught by the use of some techniques, whereas the other group was exposed to different ones. The students were taken to a classroom at noon, because at that time, there were classrooms available and the experiment could be held without having interruptions. It was planned to have one session during the week, 50 minutes each, for 6 weeks assigned for each class during the first semester of the year 2014.

At the end of the six-week treatment period, the subjects of the study were randomly assessed by using a post- listening test developed by the researchers to measure the students' oral performance. In this test, the students applied the different

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techniques to which they were exposed. The results were analyzed to show the findings of the study and to get to the conclusions and recommendations of the study. All data entry and tabulation for the whole study will be completed with the Microsoft program Excel.

### **3.8. Data Analysis**

Analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modeling data with the goal of highlighting useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision-making. Data analysis has multiple facets and approaches, surrounding diverse techniques under a variety of names, in different business, science, and social science domains.

After gathering all the information needed through the questionnaire and the six-week treatment period, the results were examined through an extensive analysis to determine the results of the investigation.

### CHAPTER IV

#### 4. ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

Chapter IV includes the descriptive analysis of the data collected through the research procedures described in Chapter III. Since this study aimed to develop listening techniques to improve the oral performance for English Intermediate II students, the researchers organized a Listening and Conversation Club. At the beginning of the experiment, an initial listening test was administered, and an interview was delivered to know how English Intermediate II students got answers during the first listening activity in the Listening and Conversation Club, besides the awareness that the sample (i.e. the students) had about listening techniques. During the sessions, the sample was exposed to listening exercises related to every day topics which were followed by a task that contained questions related to them. Post listening activities were developed as well; such as role plays, students' own point of view about the topic, dialogues, etc. in order to measure the students' speaking skill. Two rubrics were created to measure the improvement in their oral performance.

##### 4.1. Sample

All the students from the English Intermediate II groups from semester I 2014 were invited and encouraged to enroll in the club. The researchers visited the different English Intermediate II groups to provide the information regarding when the

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listening and conversation club was planned to start, where it was going to take place and at the same time the purpose or reason why this project was set. Flyers containing the information about the listening and conversation club were delivered among the students during those visits. Out of the enrolled students two separate sample groups were created. Both, English Teaching major and Modern Languages major students incorporated into these two sample groups. They attended seven listening- speaking sessions and completed six appendixes that were directed to get certain information about the awareness and usage that the sample had about listening strategies.

By the end of this experiment, the sample groups were scheduled as it is shown in the chart below:

| <b>MAJOR</b>     | <b>Tuesday</b> | <b>Thursday</b> |
|------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Groups           | <b>A</b>       | <b>B</b>        |
| Teaching Option  | 9              | 12              |
| Modern Languages | 8              | 6               |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>17</b>      | <b>18</b>       |

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The topics (audios) developed in the Listening and Conversation club were the following: “*Internet*”, “*Neighborhood’s Playground*”, “*Foreign students working in the U.S.A*”, “*The origin of the word OK*”, “*Popular expressions about food*”. All these topics included in the tasks were based in familiar topics as it is stated in ACTFL guidelines for Intermediate II students “At the Intermediate level, listeners can understand information conveyed in simple, sentence-length speech on familiar or everyday topics” (ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, 2012). The speed rate, vocabulary and length in the audios described above varied from the first session to the last one.

### 4.2. Awareness of the Initial Situation

In session one an interview was carried out in both sample groups. First, the students were exposed to a listening activity under the topic “*internet*”, after that they answered Task 1 that contained questions about that topic. Then, they completed *The initial questionnaire- interview* that was aimed to discover the students’ awareness regarding listening techniques and confirm the usage of them. *The initial questionnaire -interview* was encompassed by four questions. In the first two questions, the researchers expected to get an idea how students got the answers from task 1 with no previous exposure to listening techniques. The questions and their possible answers were:

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### 1- What helped you to answer the questions in task 1?

- a. Understanding words
- b. understanding grammar
- c. Understanding context
- d. Excluded improbable answers
- e. Based on logics
- f. Anything else

### 2- What made you uncertain about the reply?

- a. You found something ambiguous
- b. The speed of the text
- c. You didn't know about the topic
- d. Anything else

In question 1, thirty-two students agreed what helped them to get answers in the first task was through *understanding words*.

- I tried to keep certain words to remember later on what was the listening about- Rachael said.

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- I felt very confused with many words that I didn't know... I felt confused because I didn't know the meaning. Vladimir Cordoba said.

- What helped me was "*Understanding the words*" because I think vocabulary is important when you listen. – Astrid said.

The second highest option that the sample applied to get the answers was through *understanding the context*

In question number 2 what made the sample uncertain about the reply was *the speed of the text*, twenty five students agreed on this.

- 'The speed rate in the voice plus new vocabulary made me uncertain' – Gabriela Rojas said.

The third question was: **Do you know about listening strategies?** The sample had two possible answers *Yes* or *No*. If their answer was *Yes*, they needed to specify, from the attached list, what cognitive strategies had applied before or while they were in the initial listening activity. Twelve students out of thirty-five answered *Yes*. They had a notion about listening strategies. The rest of the sample who were twenty-three students said *No*. From the twelve positive answers, the strategy that was the most popular among them was '*predicting answers before listening*', ten of these students agreed they used this strategy when they were exposed in a listening activity in the classroom. The second popular cognitive strategy was '*constructing a*

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*response quickly and efficiently*, *deducing meaning of unfamiliar lexical items from context* and *identifying what type of information to search for*. Nine students agreed they use these three strategies. Eight students agreed they got much help when they *reviewed the task before listening*. Seven students said what helped them to get the information from a listening activity was *recognizing synonyms/phrases* and *using previous or subsequent items to help information location*. Six students said that they got a better understanding in a listening activity when they *checked an example before or while listening* and just four students agreed that *keeping the pace with the listening text* and *retaining chunks of language for short periods* helped them to get a better understanding in a listening activity.

### 4.3. Listening Sessions

Before starting the second listening session, the set of listening strategies were presented; in order that the sample got extra help to comprehend the message, grammar forms, pronunciation, and vocabulary. First, the researchers introduced what a listening technique was, how and when to use it, etc. In addition, the students were motivated to apply pre- listening techniques such as “recognizing synonyms or phrases, deducing meaning of unfamiliar lexical items from context, identifying what type of information to search for, reviewing the task before listening or checking



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examples”. The aim was to bring the listening closer to them, after being comfortable with it, the students could do the rest steps without fear in the following sessions. As Berne in Osada (2004) points out that one of facts about L2 listening comprehension – the use of pre- listening activities, particularly those that provide short synopsis of the listening passage or allow listeners to preview the comprehension questions, facilitate L2 listening comprehension. Training the use of listening strategies facilitates L2 listening comprehension. The sample was encouraged to use these specific set of strategies in every listening session.

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### 4.4. Tables

#### *Task 1.*

In the second session, the students listened to a radio program about *Internet*. While listening, they circled A, B or C to answer the following questions. Strategies to be used: *Identifying what type of info to search for and look for specific information.*

#### Appendix 1.

|    |   |   | Number of Students          | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |     |
|----|---|---|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| 1. | <b>The topic developed in this recording is about</b> | A | The importance of schools   | 0                 | 27 =                    | 8 = |
|    |   | B | The importance of computers | 8                 |                         |     |
|    |   | C | The importance of internet  | 27                | 77%                     | 23% |

|    |   |    | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |     |
|----|---|----|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| 2. | <b>What is the state where these facts were taken from?</b> | A. | Florida            | 0                 | 31 =                    | 4 = |
|    |   | B. | London             | 4                 |                         |     |
|    |   | C. | California         | 31                | 89%                     | 11% |

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|    |  |   | Number of Students                       | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |     |
|----|--|---|--|-------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| 3. | <b>What topics has Peggy included on her own page?</b> | A | Family, personal information and school  | 24                | 24=                     | 11= |
|    |  | B | Sports, school, friends                  | 9                 |                         |     |
|    |  | C | Vacation, importance of internet, school | 2                 | 67%                     | 33% |

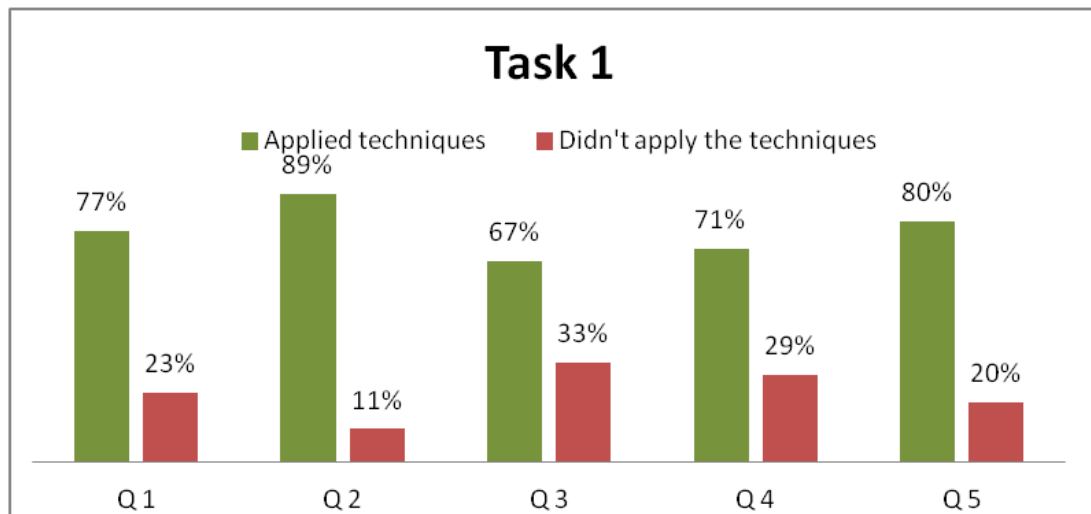
|    |  |   | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |     |
|----|--|---|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| 4. | <b>According to the listening .....are able to use the internet per day.</b> | A | Forty              | 6                 | 25=                     | 10= |
|    |  | B | Thirteen           | 4                 |                         |     |
|    |  | C | Thirty             | 25                | 71%                     | 29% |

|    |  |   | Number of Students      | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |     |
|----|--|---|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| 5. | <b>How much would cost wiring schools in California?</b> | A | Fifteen billion dollars | 3                 | 28=                     | 7=  |
|    |  | B | Fifty million dollars   | 4                 |                         |     |
|    |  | C | Fifty billion dollars   | 28                | 80%                     | 20% |

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**Table showing the results in percentages about the students who applied and did not apply the techniques meant to be used in the first session.**

| <b>TASK 1</b>          |  |                          |                                |
|------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Question Number</i> | <i>Techniques</i>                                    | <i>Applied Technique</i> | <i>Did not Apply Technique</i> |
| <b>Question 1</b>      | ❖ <i>Identifying what type of info to search for</i> | 27=77%                   | 8= 23%                         |
| <b>Question 2</b>      |  | 31= 89%                  | 4= 11%                         |
| <b>Question 3</b>      | ❖ <i>Looking for specific information.</i>           | 24= 67%                  | 11= 33%                        |
| <b>Question 4</b>      |  | 25= 71%                  | 10= 29%                        |
| <b>Question 5</b>      |  | 28= 80%                  | 7=20%                          |



As indicated in the graphic above, between 67% and 89% of the students applied the listening techniques in the different questions from this task, while between 11% and 33% of the students did not apply correctly the techniques.

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### *Task 2.*

In the following task students were trained and evaluated in these strategies: *Reviewing task before listening, keeping pace with the text, predicting answer before listening, and identify what type of information to search for.* Students listened to a radio program about *the neighborhood's playground.* While listening, they circled A, B or C to answer the following questions.

|    |                                       |   |              | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|----|---------------------------------------|---|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | <b>Playground is the same like...</b> | A | Soccer field | 3                  | 30=               | 5=                      |
|    |                                       | B | Highway      | 2                  |                   |                         |
|    |                                       | C | Park         | 30                 | 86%               | 14%                     |
|    |                                       | D | Water park   | 0                  |                   |                         |

|    |   |   |                                 | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|----|---|---|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 2. | <b>The playground was built almost...</b> | A | Fifty years ago                 | 3                  | 32=               | 3=                      |
|    |   | B | Fifteen years ago               | 32                 |                   |                         |
|    |   | C | Thirteen years ago              | 0                  | 91%               | 9%                      |
|    |   | D | None of the three options above | 0                  |                   |                         |

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|           |  |   |                    | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|-----------|--|---|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>3.</b> | <b>What did it happen with the playground?</b> | A | It was renovated   | 8                  | 27=               | 8=                      |
|           |  | B | It was burned down | 27                 |                   |                         |
|           |  | C | It was closed      | 0                  | 77%               | 23%                     |
|           |  | D | It was sold        | 0                  |                   |                         |

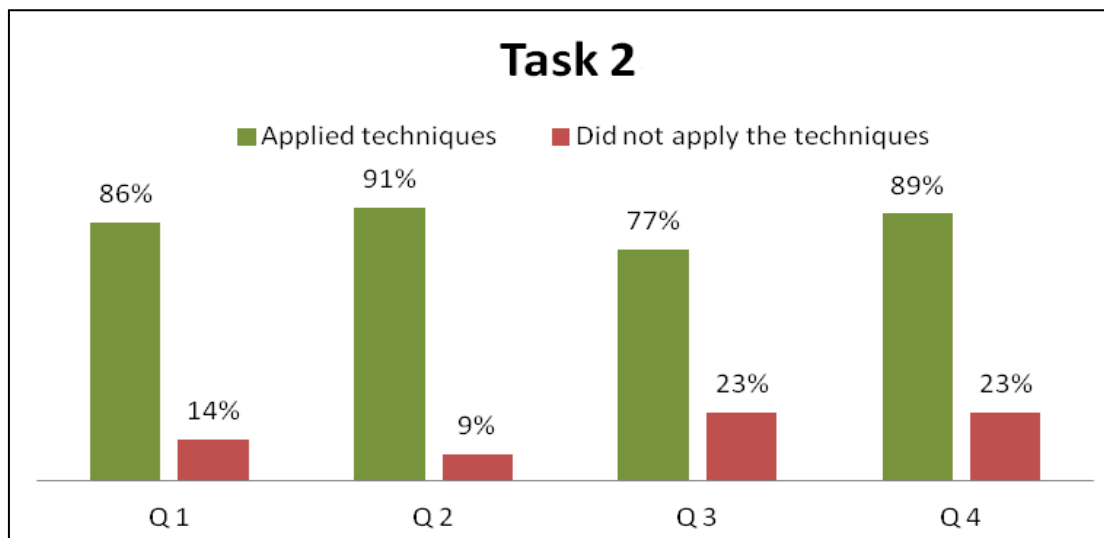
|           |   |    |  | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
|-----------|---|----|--|----------|----------|
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Mark true (T) or false (F) next to every statement</b> | A. | Children didn't like to play there                               | 8        | 27       |
|           |   | B. | The playground was burned down by accident                       | 5        | 30       |
|           |   | C. | The day that the organizers chose to rebuild it was on a weekend | 31       | 4        |
|           |   | D. | No one showed up to help and rebuild the playground              | 4        | 31       |

| Statement | Applied technique | Did not apply technique |
|-----------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| A         | 27 = 77%          | 8 = 23%                 |
| B         | 30 = 86%          | 5 = 14%                 |
| C         | 31 = 89%          | 4 = 11%                 |
| D         | 31 = 89%          | 4 = 11%                 |

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**Table showing the results in percentages about the students who applied and did not apply the techniques meant to be used in the second session.**

| <i><b>TASK 2</b></i>   |   |                          |                               |
|------------------------|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Question Number</b> | <b>Techniques</b>   | <b>Applied Technique</b> | <b>Didn't Apply Technique</b> |
| <b>Question 1</b>      | ❖ <i>Reviewing task before listening.</i><br>❖ <i>Predicting answer before listening.</i>         | <b>30= 86%</b>           | <b>5= 14%</b>                 |
| <b>Question 2</b>      |   | <b>32= 91%</b>           | <b>3= 9%</b>                  |
| <b>Question 3</b>      | ❖ <i>Keeping pace with the text.</i><br>❖ <i>Identify what type of information to search for.</i> | <b>27= 77%</b>           | <b>8= 23%</b>                 |
| <b>Question 4</b>      |   | <b>31= 89%</b>           | <b>4= 23%</b>                 |



Task 2, Appendix 2 graphic shows that between 89% and 91% of the students applied the listening techniques in the different questions from this task, while between 9% and 23% of the students did not apply correctly the techniques. The results revealed that in task 2 the percentage of the students who applied the techniques was higher in comparison with previous task.

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### Task 3

In the following task, the students were trained and evaluated these strategies: *Reviewing task before listening, retaining chunks of language for short periods, keeping pace with the text, identify what type of information to search for, looking for specific information, constructing a response quickly and efficiently.* Students listened to a radio program about *foreign students working in the U.S.A.* While listening, they circled a) b) or c) to answer the following questions.

|    |  |   |                                    | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|----|--|---|------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | <b>The topic developed in this recording is about:</b> | A | Traveling abroad to work.          | 10                 | 20=               | 15=                     |
|    |  | B | Traveling to Ukraine to get a job. | 5                  |                   |                         |
|    |  | C | Traveling to America to get a job. | 20                 | 57%               | 43%                     |

|    |   |   |   | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|----|---|---|---|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 2. | <b>What type of job you can get through this program?</b> | A | Janitor, working in a school or in a hospital.              | 0                  | 28=               | 7=                      |
|    |   | B | Hotels, restaurants, amusement parks                        | 28                 |                   |                         |
|    |   | C | Being a manager, sells representative, personal assistance. | 7                  | 80%               | 20%                     |



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|    |  |   |                      | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|----|--|---|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 3. | <b>What is the name of the program to enroll</b> | A | Summer Work Travel   | 31                 | 31=               | 4=                      |
|    |  | B | Spring Break Travel. | 0                  |                   |                         |
|    |  | C | Job Travel.          | 4                  | 89%               | 11%                     |

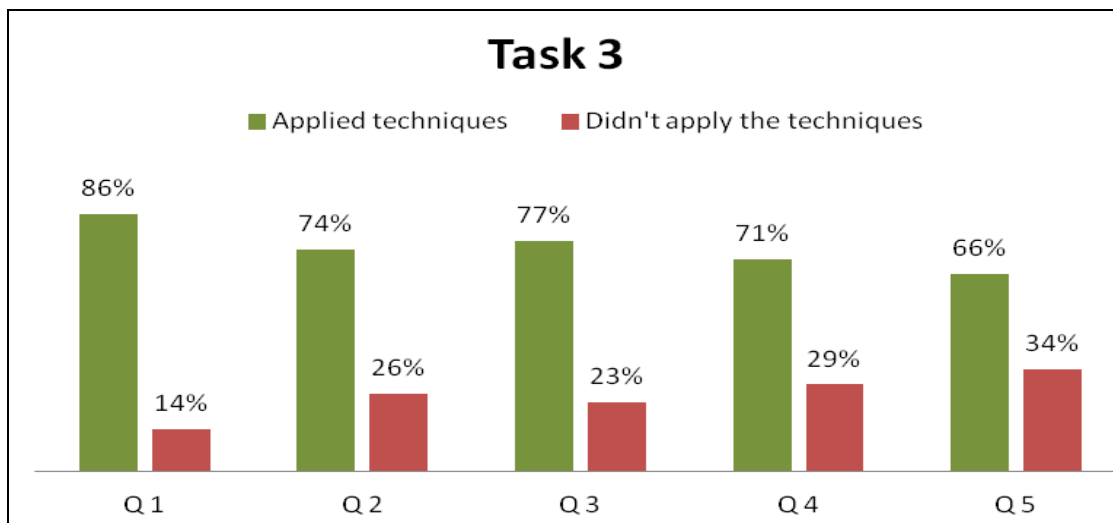
|    |   |   |                            | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|----|---|---|----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 4. | <b>According to the listening Last year ..... came to the United States to attend to the program.</b> | A | one hundred and fifty      | 0                  | 32=               | 3=                      |
|    |   | B | one hundred fifty thousand | 32                 |                   |                         |
|    |   | C | fifteen hundred            | 3                  | 91%               | 9%                      |

| 5. | <b>Write in your own words the main idea about the audio.</b> | Strategy:<br>Constructing a response quickly and efficiently | YES | NO | Applied technique | Didn't apply the technique |
|----|---|--|-----|----|-------------------|----------------------------|
|    |   |  | 26  | 9  | 26 = 74%          | 9 = 26%                    |

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**Table showing the results in percentages about the students who applied and did not apply the techniques meant to be used in the third session.**

| <i><b>TASK 3</b></i>   |  |                          |                               |
|------------------------|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Question Number</b> | <b>Techniques</b>  | <b>Applied Technique</b> | <b>Didn't Apply Technique</b> |
| <b>Question 1</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Reviewing task before listening.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Retaining chunks of language for short periods.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Keeping pace with the text</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Identify what type of information to search for.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Looking for specific information.</i></li> <li>❖ <i>Constructing a response quickly and efficiently.</i></li> </ul> | <b>20= 57%</b>           | <b>15= 43%</b>                |
| <b>Question 2</b>      |  | <b>28= 80%</b>           | <b>7= 20%</b>                 |
| <b>Question 3</b>      |  | <b>31= 89%</b>           | <b>4= 11%</b>                 |
| <b>Question 4</b>      |  | <b>32= 91%</b>           | <b>3= 9%</b>                  |
| <b>Question 5</b>      |  | <b>26= 74%</b>           | <b>9= 26%</b>                 |



In this session the students completed appendix 3, the results gotten show that between 86% and 66% of the students applied the listening techniques in the different questions from this task, while between 14% and 34% of the students did not apply correctly the techniques.

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### *Task 4*

In the following task students were trained and evaluated these strategies: *Predicting answer before listening, identifying what type of information to search for, and retaining chunks of language for short periods*. Students listened to a radio program called *WORDS AND THEIR STORIES* about the origin of the word OK. As they listened to the radio program, they filled in the blanks with the correct information that was missing.

|    |  |   |   | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|----|--|---|---|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | <b>The students assigned a title after listening to the radio program.</b> | A | The topic made reference to the listening         | 31                 | 31=               | 4=                      |
|    |  | B | The topic did not make reference to the listening | 4                  | 89%               | 11%                     |

|    |  |   |                         | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|----|--|---|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 2. | <b>According to the listening OK means .....</b> | A | All right or acceptable | 28                 | 28=               | 7=                      |
|    |  | B | All right               | 7                  |                   |                         |
|    |  | C | Acceptable              | 0                  | 80%               | 20%                     |

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

|    |   |   |                        | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|----|---|---|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 3. | <b>Some people say it came from the .....</b> | A | Native American Indian | 10                 | 10=               | 25=                     |
|    |   | B | American               | 15                 |                   |                         |
|    |   | C | Native American        | 10                 | 29%               | 71%                     |

|    |   |   |        | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|----|---|---|--------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 4. | <b>Language expert Allen Walker Read wrote about the word OK in reports published in the...</b> | A | 1960's | 34                 | 34=               | 1=                      |
|    |   | B | None   | 1                  | 97%               | 3%                      |

|    |   |   |          | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|----|---|---|----------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 5. | <b>Where Martin Van Buren was born — Old Kinderhook .....</b> | A | New York | 34                 | 34=               | 1=                      |
|    |   | B | None     | 1                  | 34%               | 97%                     |

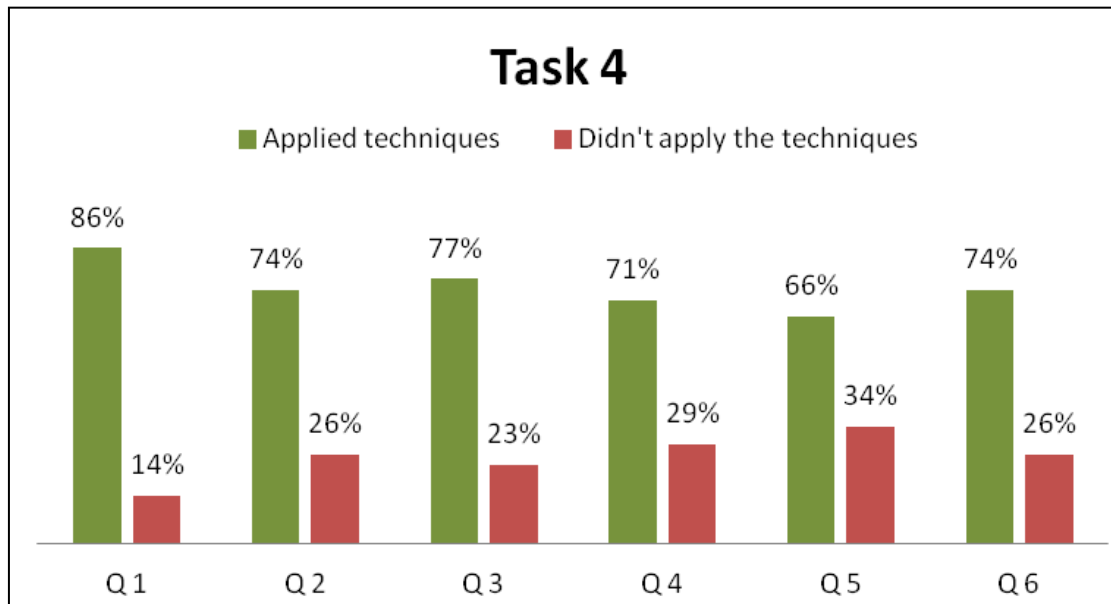
## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

|    |   |   |                             | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|----|---|---|-----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 6. | <b>One story said it was first used during the early days of the telephone to tell an operator that .....</b> | A | A message had been received | 19                 | 19=               | 16=                     |
|    |   | B | A message has been received | 13                 |                   |                         |
|    |   | C | None                        | 3                  | 54%               | 46%                     |

**Table showing the results in percentages about the students who applied and did not apply the techniques meant to be used in the fourth session.**

| <i><b>TASK 4</b></i> |   |                   |                        |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|------------------------|
| Question number      | Techniques  | Applied Technique | Didn't Apply Technique |
| Question 1           | ❖ <i>Predicting answer before listening.</i>                | 31= 89%           | 4= 11%                 |
| Question 2           |   | 28= 80%           | 20%                    |
| Question 3           | ❖ <i>Identifying what type of information to search for</i> | 10= 29%           | 25=71%                 |
| Question 4           |   | 34= 97%           | 1=3%                   |
| Question 5           | ❖ <i>Retaining chunks of language for short periods.</i>    | 34= 97%           | 1= 3%                  |
| Question 6           |   | 19= 54%           | 16=46%                 |

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance



The graphic above shows the results gotten from appendix 4. In this session, between 86% and 66% of the students applied the listening techniques in the different questions from this task, while between 14% and 34% of the students did not apply the techniques correctly.

### ***Task 5***

In the following task students were trained and evaluated these strategies: ***Predicting answer before listening, identifying what type of information to search for, retaining chunks of language for short periods, and keeping pace with the text.*** Students listened to a radio program called WORDS AND THEIR STORIES about popular expressions about food. As they listened to the radio program, they filled in the blanks with the correct information that was missing.

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

|    |                                 |   |                                     | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|----|---------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | <b>If he never seems to ...</b> | A | Worry about anything and stays calm | 19                 | 19=               | 16=                     |
|    |                                 | B | Worry and stay calm                 | 7                  |                   |                         |
|    |                                 | C | Worry and stays calm                | 7                  | 54%               | 46%                     |
|    |                                 | D | None                                | 2                  |                   |                         |

|    |                    |   |            | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Did not apply technique |
|----|--------------------|---|------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 2. | <b>You are ...</b> | A | In trouble | 31                 | 31=               | 4=                      |
|    |                    | B | Trouble    | 2                  |                   |                         |
|    |                    | C | None       | 2                  | 89%               | 11%                     |

|    |                              |   |                   | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Didn't apply technique |
|----|------------------------------|---|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 3. | <b>You mean it is of ...</b> | A | Little importance | 29                 | 29=               | 6=                     |
|    |                              | B | Importance        | 1                  |                   |                        |
|    |                              | C | In trouble        | 3                  | 83%               | 17%                    |
|    |                              | D | Little important  | 2                  |                   |                        |

|    |                   |   |                  | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Didn't apply technique |
|----|-------------------|---|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 4. | <b>If you ...</b> | A | Sit and watch TV | 33                 | 33=               | 2=                     |
|    |                   | B | Watch TV         | 2                  |                   |                        |
|    |                   | C | None             | 0                  | 94%               | 6%                     |

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

|    |   |   |                  | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Didn't apply technique |
|----|---|---|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 5. | <b>So separating the wheat from the chaff means keeping .....</b> | A | What is Valuable | 23                 | 23 Sts            | 12 Sts                 |
|    |   | B | Valuable         | 4                  |                   |                        |
|    |   | C | What is          | 2                  | 66%               | 34%                    |
|    |   | D | None             | 6                  |                   |                        |

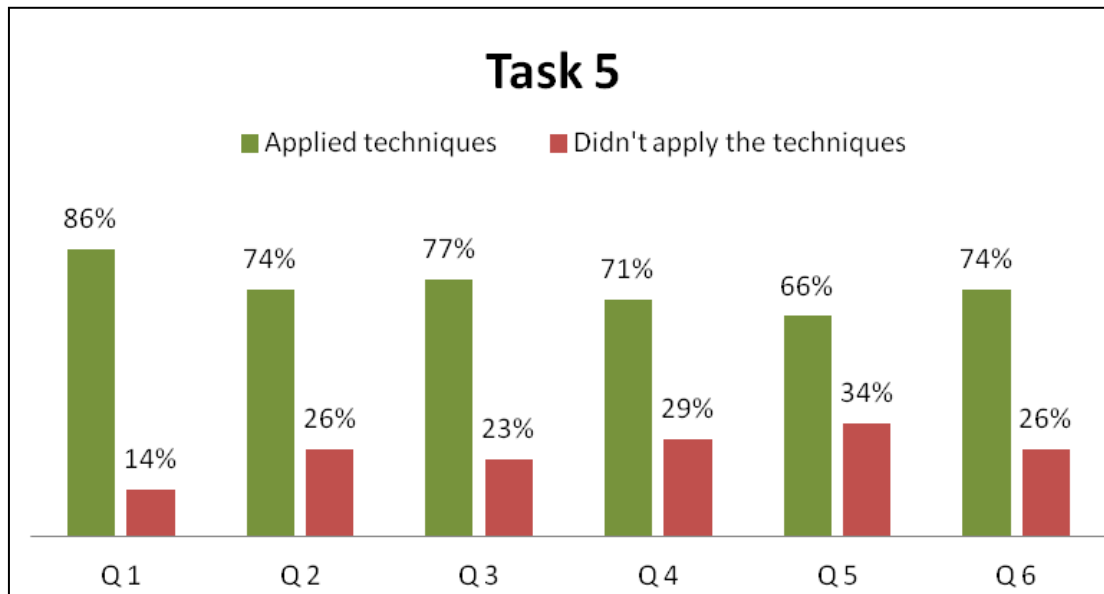
|    |                              |    |   | Number of Students | Applied Technique | Didn't apply technique |
|----|------------------------------|----|---|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 6. | <b>You should always ...</b> | A. | Try to make the best of a bad situation | 27                 | 27 Sts            | 8 Sts                  |
|    |                              | B. | Try to make the best                    | 2                  |                   |                        |
|    |                              | C. | The best of a bad situation             | 1                  | 66%               | 34%                    |

**Table showing the results in percentages about the students who applied and did not apply the techniques meant to be used in the fifth session.**

| <b>TASK 5</b>   |  |                   |                        |
|-----------------|--|-------------------|------------------------|
| Question number | Technique  | Applied Technique | Didn't Apply Technique |
| Question 1      | ❖ <i>Predicting answer before listening.</i><br>❖ <i>Identifying what type of information to search for.</i><br>❖ <i>Retaining chunks of language for short periods.</i><br>❖ <i>Keeping pace with the text.</i> | 19= 54%           | 16=46%                 |
| Question 2      |  | 831= 9%           | 4=11%                  |
| Question 3      |  | 29= 83%           | 6=17%                  |
| Question 4      |  | 33=94%            | 2= 6%                  |
| Question 5      |  | 23= 66%           | 12=34%                 |
| Question 6      |  | 27= 66%           | 8=34%                  |



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The graphic above shows the results gotten from appendix 5. In this session, between 86% and 74% of the students applied the listening techniques in the different questions from this task, while between 14% and 29% of the students did not apply correctly the techniques. It can be noticed an improvement of the students who applied the listening techniques correctly in comparison with previous sessions.

### ***Task 6***

In the following task students were trained and evaluated these strategies: ***Guess the meaning of an unfamiliar word/ expression in a sentence.*** Students listened to a radio program called *WORDS AND THEIR STORIES* about popular expressions about food. As they listened to the radio program, they matched the idiom with the correct meaning.

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

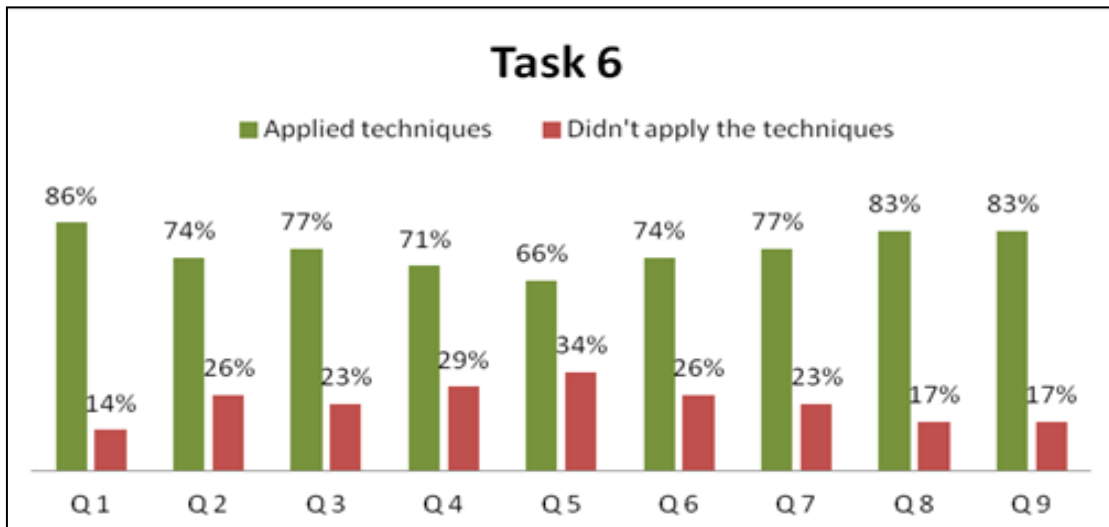
| Idioms |  | Correct option | Meaning  | ✓        | ✗        |
|--------|--|----------------|--|----------|----------|
| 1.     | Cool as a cucumber                       | D.             | Someone never seems to worry about anything and stays calm in a bad situation.           | 30= 86%  | 5=14%    |
| 2.     | To be in a pickle                        | C.             | If you are in trouble or in a difficult situation.                                       | 26 = 74% | 9=26%    |
| 3.     | To be like to peas in a pod              | H.             | If two people are very similar.  | 27= 77%  | 8= 23%   |
| 4.     | Full of beans                            | G.             | If someone is very energetic.  | 25= 71%  | 10 =29%  |
| 5.     | It does not amount to a hill of beans    | E.             | When something is of little importance.  | 23= 66%  | 12 = 34% |
| 6.     | You don't know beans                     | I.             | If you do not know anything at all about something.                                      | 26 = 74% | 9= 26%   |
| 7.     | To spill the beans                       | A.             | Tell something that was supposed to be a secret.   | 27= 77%  | 8 = 23%  |
| 8.     | To be a couch potato                     | F.             | If you sit and watch television all day and get little or no physical exercise.          | 29 = 83% | 6 = 17%  |
| 9.     | You cannot squeeze blood out of a turnip | B.             | You cannot get something from a person that he or she is not willing to or able to give. | 29 = 83% | 6 = 17%  |

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

Table showing the results in percentages about the students who applied and did not apply the techniques meant to be used in the last session.

| <i><b>TASK 6</b></i>   |  |                          |                               |
|------------------------|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Question number</b> | <b>Technique</b>   | <b>Applied Technique</b> | <b>Didn't Apply Technique</b> |
| <b>Question 1</b>      | <i>❖Guess the meaning of an unfamiliar word/ expression in a sentence.</i> | <b>30= 86%</b>           | <b>5= 14%</b>                 |
| <b>Question 2</b>      |  | <b>26 = 74%</b>          | <b>9=26%</b>                  |
| <b>Question 3</b>      |  | <b>27= 77%</b>           | <b>8= 23%</b>                 |
| <b>Question 4</b>      |  | <b>25= 71%</b>           | <b>10 =29%</b>                |
| <b>Question 5</b>      |  | <b>23= 66%</b>           | <b>12 = 34%</b>               |
| <b>Question 6</b>      |  | <b>26 = 74%</b>          | <b>9= 26%</b>                 |
| <b>Question 7</b>      |  | <b>27= 77%</b>           | <b>8 = 23%</b>                |
| <b>Question 8</b>      |  | <b>29 = 83%</b>          | <b>6 = 17%</b>                |
| <b>Question 9</b>      |  | <b>29 = 83%</b>          | <b>6 = 17%</b>                |

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The graphic above shows the results gotten from appendix 6. In this session, between 86% and 66% of the students applied the listening techniques in the different questions from this task, while between 14% and 34% of the students did not apply correctly the techniques that were asked to use.

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

### 4.5. Findings

#### 4.5.1. Major Findings

Through the Appendix B- interview and the first task, the researchers were going to explore if the sample group was aware about listening strategies or if they tended to apply them intuitively. The researchers found that twenty-three students out of thirty-five, who concluded the experiment, did not know about listening techniques, however during the first listening task many of them used the listening techniques intuitively and they got good results in the activity. On the other hand, there were twelve students that claimed they knew about listening techniques but some of them did not get all the correct answers during the first listening task.

In group A (Tuesday group) integrated by seventeen students, eight of them belonged to Modern Languages major. Seven of those eight students confirmed they had never heard about listening strategies and techniques before, but in the first task, they got the correct answers about the listening in a 90%. In regards to English Teaching Major students, seven out of nine students expressed they knew about listening strategies, but they did not get all the answers correctly in the first listening activity.

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In group B (Thursday group), integrated by eighteen students who belonged to both majors; three students out of six who belonged to Modern Languages Major and seven out of twelve English Teaching major students got a 90% of the correct answers in the first listening task. Two out of those three Modern Languages students confirmed they knew about listening strategies and two out of the seven English Teaching major students confirmed they were aware about listening strategies.

At the beginning of the first task, the researchers did not present the set of strategies that the students were supposed to apply to get the correct answers from the audio. That immersed set of strategies were *identifying what type of information to search for* and *looking for specific information*. Through that task, the researchers got the following results: between 67% and 89% of the students applied the listening techniques in the different questions from this task, while between 11% and 33% of the students did not reply correctly in the use of the techniques. The first audio was about internet in the schools. The highest option where students replied correctly the correct answer was when they were looking for specific information. Students needed to get the name of the state where the facts were taken from; 89% percent of the students got the correct answer that was California. The second highest reply was when students had to get the specific amount of money that cost wiring schools in California; 80% of the student got the correct answer that was fifty billion dollars.

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In regards to the second strategy that students were expected to use was when they had to get the topic that was developed in the audio; 77% percent of the students got the correct answered that was the importance of internet schools. For this particular question students had to *identify the type of information to search for* -such as key words- to build the overall idea to get which from the given options were close to the audio topic.

The topic that was developed in the second listening task was the “Neighborhood’s Playground”. The strategies that were presented to the sample group before going through the audio were *reviewing task before listening, keeping pace with the text, predicting answer before listening* and *identify what type of information to search for*. Between 77% and 91% of the students who applied the listening techniques in the different questions from this task, while between 9% and 23% of the students did not reply correctly in the use of the techniques. In the questions where the sample group exceeded the expectations in the usage of the presented strategies were in the following questions. In question number one and two, the sample had to *look for specific information*, a strategy that they were expected to apply in the first task, as well as *reviewing task before listening*, 86% percentage of the students in the first question, 91% percent for the second question got the answers correctly. The second item that was answered correctly was question number four, 89% percent of the students got the correct answers for the true or false statements. The strategies that the students applied in this question *were keeping pace*

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*with the text and identify what type of information to search for.* The results revealed that in task 2 the percentage of the students who applied the techniques was higher in comparison to the previous task.

The third listening task was about “Students Working in the USA”. The strategies immersed in this listening activity were *reviewing task before listening, retaining chunks of language for short periods, keeping pace with the text, identify what type of information to search for, looking for specific information, constructing a response quickly and efficiently.*

The results showed that between 86% and 66% of the students applied the listening techniques in the different questions from this task, while between 14% and 34% of the students did not reply correctly in the use of the techniques. In this particular session, the students had to handle or gather different information and besides taking advantage of the given strategies, they needed to be focused in the listening text. What called the researchers’ attention was that even though it was the third session, there was an increase in the students who did not meet the expectations in regards to the usage of the techniques. From the 9% and 23% percent of the students, who did not reply correctly in the use of the technique in the second listening task, during the third task there was an increase in the amount of students to 14% and 34%

The researchers’ impression was that the length of the listening and the background noise affected the sample group in addition that they had to get more



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information since it was a longer audio than the previous two. In addition, students showed a replicable usage for the strategies presented during the previous tasks. One of the new strategies presented before the listening activity was *retaining chunks of language for short periods*, that was applied to get the answer for question two. 74% of the sample group got this answer correctly.

The fourth listening task was about the origin of the word OK. The strategies presented before the listening activity were *Predicting answer before listening*, *identifying what type of information to search for*, *keeping pace with the text* and *retaining chunks of language for short periods*. Between 86% and 66% of the students applied the listening techniques in the different questions from this task, while between 14% and 34% did not apply them correctly. In this particular task the results showed that from task three and four there was the same percentages for the students who got the correct answers and the students who did not apply the technique. In this task, the students had to keep pace with the text and got the words that were missing through the listening text. The researchers noticed that some students had problems with subject and verb agreement and tenses, and that was a drawback in applying the strategy identifying what type of information to search for. That audio was also longer than the first and second one. Another observation was that the students got slightly anxious when they were exposed to a long audio or a lot of information to gather.

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The fifth and sixth listening task was about “Popular Expressions About Food” there were two separate worksheets that were developed in each session. In the fifth task, the sample group was asked to *retain chunks of language for short periods* and *keep pace with the text*, in addition *predicting answer before listening*, *identifying what type of information to search for*. The students had to read through the text and fill in the blanks with the words that were missing. What researchers found out was that the highest percentage for the students who applied the listening techniques in the different questions from the task was between 86% and 74%. Between 14% and 29% of the students did not reply correctly in the use of the techniques. The results were very similar to task number four.

In the last task the researchers asked the students to apply all the techniques already taught in previous tasks and one specific strategy (*Guessing the meaning of an unfamiliar word/ expression in a sentence*) to get the correct answers in the listening activity. This task was deeper and more extended than the fifth task. As the sample group listened to the radio program, they matched nine idioms with its correct meaning. The results gotten according to the appendixes were the following: In this session, Between 86% and 66% of the students applied the listening techniques in the different items from this task. The researchers confirmed that the students managed the use of the strategies. On the other hand, between 14% and 34% of the students did

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not reply correctly in the use of the techniques, these percentages showed that some students still needed to practice more on the usage of techniques to get the answers more efficiently.

In order to show the students' development and to maintain objectivity in their listening and comprehension and oral performance, three rubrics were made based on the ACTFL guidelines for English Intermediate II students. During the weekly listening sessions four students were selected from the rest of the sample, the researchers provided undivided attention to how they developed during the task and at the same time, the researchers marked each of the attributes from the listening comprehension and the speaking rubric. The appendix C was the rubric about listening comprehension and the appendix D was the rubric for speaking. The scores, that the sample group got, showed that if the students got a low score in the listening comprehension rubric, they got low rate in the speaking rubric.

Both rubrics were related and they varied in a directly proportional way that was what could be observed and gathered from Thursday's group. However, for Tuesday's group there were some students who got almost all the answers correctly in the listening task, however as a production activity for the last task, students were asked to carry out a dialogue about a daily social situation where they had to use at

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least five of the idioms already studied. When they were trying to express their own point of view and ideas during that free activity, hesitation problems came out, as well as subject-verb agreement errors and verb tense mistakes.

### *4.5.2. Additional and Unforeseen Findings*

What was not planned by the researchers to discover were some differences between the Modern Languages major students and the students from the English Teaching major. The researchers noticed that, Even though both groups of students were at the same proficiency level (English Intermediate II), Modern Languages students were proactive; they liked to participate more than the English Teaching students. During the interview they expressed that they joined the club to reinforce their listening and speaking techniques, on the other hand English Teaching major students expressed that they joined the club to learn about listening techniques and their usage to improve their oral performance. According to the results obtained and through observation in every listening session, English Teaching major students were more passive, even though the listening techniques were presented before the listening task, they lacked the ability to process them as quickly as the Modern Languages students did; besides, they hesitated and ignored basic vocabulary and grammar structures. The researchers' assumption is that Modern Languages students had a more developed cognitive level than English Teaching' students since they manage three languages at the same time.

**CHAPTER V**

**5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

During different studies, experts have shown the importance of listening to acquire or develop the oral performance. According to Oxford, 1990, listening comprehension designed the blueprint for future acquisition of speaking. Another study suggested that strategies could be taught and through that, the performance in the second language process increased (Chomot, 1990). Throughout the different chapters of this investigation, the main focus has been on the listening techniques to improve the oral performance in English Intermediate II students in the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador. The researchers found out about the awareness that those students had about listening techniques, if they had a range of strategies to apply while they were in a listening activity, as well as the listening techniques that worked best to increase the English Intermediate II students' oral performance. Chapter V begins with the discussion of the significant results reported in chapter four and proceeds with the conclusions, recommendations that can be taken into consideration, for further research on this field and the limitations found during the research project.

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

The Research Questions developed in this research were the following

### Main Question

- *What will be the improvement that Intermediate English II students in the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador will get in their oral performance through the development of listening techniques?*

The listening techniques were really important tools for English Intermediate II students. Throughout the listening sessions, the researchers noticed that the students showed an improvement during the process to get the comprehension of listening texts. The students showed an improvement not only in their listening comprehension but also in their oral performance. Students were evaluated through speaking rubrics based on ACTFL guidelines in order to show their development and to retain objectivity.

According to the rubrics students showed that when they got the full understanding about the listening text, they handled the post listening activity successfully; using the new vocabulary in the correct context, even as per researchers' observation students participated more by bringing into their reality the topic that they had listened to previously for example when they were providing their own point

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

of view or other different post listening activity such as role plays or dialogues, telling a story and so on.

The usage of listening techniques compared with the oral performance was directly proportional.

### Subsidiary Questions

- *Are the English Intermediate II students aware about the usage of listening techniques to improve their oral performance?*

According to the results just twelve English Intermediate II students out of thirty five who concluded the investigation, were aware about listening strategies; however it is important to point out that even though those students claimed they were aware or knew about listening strategies, not all of them met the researchers' expectations for the first listening task.

- *Do the English Intermediate II students have a range of strategies to apply while listening to a text?*

Besides the awareness that English Intermediate II students had about listening strategies, the researchers wanted to discover if those students had their own

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

set of strategies or techniques that they could use during the controlled or free listening activities. Among the twelve students who agreed they were aware about listening strategies, there were students who knew and applied the same listening strategies.

The set of strategies from the most popular to less popular were *predicting answers before listening, constructing a response quickly and efficiently, and deducing meaning of unfamiliar lexical items from context*. Followed by *identifying what type of information to search for, review the task before listening, recognizing synonyms/phrases, using previous or subsequent items to help information location*. As well as *check an example before or while listening, keeping the pace with the listening text and retaining chunks of language for short periods*.

Another remark that researchers noticed was that for students who confirmed that they did apply their own listening strategies or techniques, they could get the answers correctly on the first task. On the other hand, in the rest of the listening sessions they had some trouble to assimilate and apply the strategies that were expected to be used in the other tasks, since the tasks were presenting a higher level of difficulty. However other students who confirmed they had their own set of strategies did not get the correct answers in the first task, nevertheless they showed an improvement through the other sessions. The listening task in which the researchers noticed that students had trouble was in the sixth task. Although some of the students



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mentioned that they had their own set of strategies or techniques, with the strategies that they were asked to use they could not get all the answers correctly.

*Which listening techniques can work best to increase the Intermediate II students' oral performance?*

Through the listening sessions, researchers found out that the usage of listening techniques compared to the oral performance was directly proportional. In the listening tasks where students got all the correct answers, they talked more about the listening topic in the post listening activities that were held. The techniques that worked best to increase their oral performance were:

- ❖ *Reviewing task before listening.*
- ❖ *Predicting answer before listening.*
- ❖ *Keeping pace with the text.*
- ❖ *Identify what type of information to search for.*
- ❖ *Predicting answer before listening.*
- ❖ *Retaining chunks of language for short periods.*

The techniques that worked best to increase the students' oral performance

## **Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance**

As per the researchers' observation, the listening techniques can work best to increase the oral performance when the students had a guide to introduce the listening strategies or techniques in the listening process (specifically during the pre-listening stage) that was why as per the researchers' observation. The facilitator had an important role at the time of working with listening strategies to improve the oral performance in English Intermediate II students since they needed to get encouraged and familiar with the listening text and the task that they were going to be working on. The researchers observed that there was kind of stress and anxiety while the students were working on the first task, since the researchers did not provide the set of strategies that they needed to apply to get the answers from the listening. The students showed they had their own set of strategies or techniques, but the way in which they took advantage of them in their classrooms was subject to the real proficiency level that the students had. The researchers found that some English Intermediate II students ignored basic vocabulary and grammar structures, subject verb agreement and verb tenses, plus the passivity or anxiety during the sessions.

### **5.1. Conclusions**

From the data analysis results and the discussion, the following conclusions can be drawn from this investigation.

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

- The listening skills have a strong impact upon the use of listening strategies since the findings highlight the interrelation of listening techniques and the oral performance in English Intermediate II students. The usage of listening techniques compared with the oral performance is proportional.
- The Modern Languages students and the English Teaching major students have their own learning features. In other words, students from Modern Languages major are proactive and assimilate the listening techniques faster than the English Teaching option. Even though English Teaching major students are quiet, they hesitate when they speak and digest the listening techniques slowly, they were becoming skilled at dealing with the listening techniques and showed an improvement at the end of the sessions.
- The extent to which the listening techniques improve the oral performance in the students is also subject to the proficiency level that the students really have.
- The development of listening techniques depends on the environment. The context and the time of teaching play an important role as well as the teachers, since they become the students' guides in this process. The way in which the teacher

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

introduces or presents the techniques is very important to avoid anxiety among the students and to guide them to a better understanding of this.

- There is a need to enhance students' listening strategy awareness among English students starting in the basic levels.

### 5.2. Recommendations

Considering the results obtained through the investigation process, the research group suggests the following recommendations for future research in this particular field.

- English Teachers could add in their lesson plans more listening tasks aimed at developing listening strategies, since they are connected to improving their oral performance which is the main goal for the students. Educators might consider increasing the percentage of listening activities in class to encourage students to speak in a proficient manner, promoting listening techniques in order that students focus on the development of their English communication.

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

- Teachers could motivate and encourage their students to visit the Foreign Languages Department Laboratory by providing extra material in order for the students to practice out of the classroom as well.
- Students could ask teachers about new ways to acquire some learning strategies -specifically those students with a lack of knowledge about them- or ask their peers for information about what they have done to become better students and improve their L2 learning.
- The head of the Foreign Languages Department could delegate a team of students who are presently carrying out their university community service to develop this research with new groups of English Intermediate II students since everything is about practice, something that is difficult to reach out of the classroom among the group of students, since students need a guide, a good environment and motivation.

### **5.3. Considerations for Future Investigations.**

According to the investigation, the researchers identified some cautionary aspects throughout the project.

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- The time. The only schedule available to develop the research project was at lunch time since it was the period of time in which the classrooms were empty at the Foreign Languages Department. This affected the students' punctuality and absenteeism. To avoid unpunctuality and absenteeism the researchers recommend choosing a better schedule, preferably in the mornings.
- The place. Even though the research was carried out in a classroom, the background noise coming in from outdoors affected the students when they were in a listening activity. That is why the development of the experiment would work better in the laboratory of the Foreign Languages Department, in order to avoid the lack of technology resources as well. Multimedia resources were insufficient to fulfill the learning experience. Extra tools like headsets, audio gadgets, laptops and more multimedia resources are very important to expose the students to the listening strategies or techniques, and to enhance the listening comprehension in every task.

**CHAPTER VI**

**6. Bibliography**

**6.1. Bibliographical References**

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# APPENDIXES

# Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

## Initial Questionnaire

### Pre-listening prompt

Please, as much as you can remember verbalize what thoughts you had while listening to the text and answering the item. Choose an option.

#### 1. What helped you in answering the question?

- a) understanding words \_\_\_\_\_
- b) understanding grammar \_\_\_\_\_
- c) understanding context \_\_\_\_\_
- d) excluded improbable answers \_\_\_\_\_
- e) based on logics \_\_\_\_\_
- f) anything else \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. What made you uncertain about the reply?

- a) you found something unambiguous \_\_\_\_\_
- b) the speed of text \_\_\_\_\_
- c) you didn't know about the topic \_\_\_\_\_
- d) anything else \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. Do you know about listening strategies? If yes, go to question 4.

- a) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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### 4. Which of these strategies do you know, or have you used before?

- Keeping pace with the text
- Retaining chunks of language for short periods
- Constructing a response quickly and efficiently
- Recognizing synonyms/paraphrases
- Deducing meaning of unfamiliar lexical items from context
- Identifying what type of information to search for
- Using previous or subsequent items to help information location
- Reviewing task before listening
- Predicting answer before listening
- Checking example before/while listening

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

### Task 1

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_

**You will hear a radio program about internet. While listening, circle a), b) or c) to answer the following questions.**

**1) The topic developed in this recording is about:**

- a. the importance of schools
- b. the importance of computers
- c. the importance of internet

**2) What is the state where these facts were taken from?**

- a. Florida
- b. London
- c. California

**3) What topics has Peggy included on her own page?**

- a. Family, personal information and school
- b. sports, school, friends
- c. vacation, importance of internet, school

**4) According to the listening**

- ..... are able to use the internet per day.
- a. forty
  - b. thirteen
  - c. thirty

**5) How much would cost wiring schools in California?**

- a. fifteen billion dollars
- b. fifty million dollars
- c. fifty billion dollars

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

### Task 2

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_

You will hear a radio program about "The neighborhood's playground". While listening, circle a) b) or c) to answer the following questions.

**1) Playground is the same like...**

- a. Soccer field
- b. Highway
- c. Park
- d. Water Park

**2) The playground was built almost...**

- a. Fifty years ago
- b. Fifteen years ago
- c. Thirteen years ago
- d. None of the three options above

**3) What did happen with the playground?**

- a. It was renovated
- b. It was burned down
- c. It was closed
- d. It was sold

**4) Circle True (T) or False (F) next to the statement**

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| a. Children didn't like to play there                       | T | F |
| b. The playground was burned down by accident               | T | F |
| c. The day that the playground was rebuild was on a weekend | T | F |
| d. No one showed up to help and rebuild the playground      | T | F |

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Task 3

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_

You will hear a radio program about "Foreign students working in the U.S.A." While listening, circle a) b) or c) to answer the following questions.

1) The topic developed in this recording is about:

- a. Traveling abroad to work
- b. Traveling to Ukraine to get a job
- c. Traveling to America to get a job

2) What type of job can you get through this program?

- a. As a janitor, working in a school, in a hospital
- b. Work in a hotel, a restaurant, an amusement park
- c. Being a manager, as a sell representative, as a personal assistant

3) What is the program's name to enroll?

- a. Summer Work Travel
- b. Spring Break Travel
- c. Job Travel

4) According to the listening:

Last year ..... came to the United States to attend to the program.

- a. One hundred and fifty
- b. One hundred fifty thousand
- c. Fifteen Hundred

5) In your own words, write the main idea about the audio

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## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

### Task 4

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_

You will hear a radio program called "Words and their stories". As you listen, fill in the blanks with the correct information that is missing.

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

Now, the VOA Special English program WORDS AND THEIR STORIES.

Millions of people all over the world use the word **OK**. In fact, some people say the word is used more often than any other word in the world. OK means (1) \_\_\_\_\_. It expresses agreement or approval. You might ask your brother, "Is it okay if I borrow your car?" Or if someone asks you to do something, you might say, "Okay, I will." Still, language experts do not agree about where the word came from.

Some people say it came from the (2) \_\_\_\_\_ tribe known as the Choctaw. The Choctaw word **okeh** means the same as the American word **okay**. Experts say that early explorers in the American West spoke the Choctaw language in the nineteenth century. The language spread across the country.

But many people dispute this. Language expert Allen Walker Read wrote about the word OK in reports published in (3) \_\_\_\_\_. He said the word began being used in the eighteen thirties. It was a short way of writing a different spelling of the words "all correct." Some foreign-born people wrote, "All correct" as "o-l-l k-o-r-r-e-c-t," and used the letters O.K. Other people say a railroad worker named Obadiah Kelly invented the word long ago. They said he put the first letters of his names -- O and K -- on each object people gave him to send on the train.

Still others say a political organization invented the word. The organization supported Martin Van Buren for president in eighteen forty. They called their group, the O.K. Club. The letters were taken from the name of the town where Martin Van Buren was born — Old Kinderhook, (4)\_\_\_\_\_.

Not everyone agrees with this explanation, either. But experts do agree that the word is purely American. And it has spread to almost every country on Earth. Then there is

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the expression **A-OK**. This means everything is fine. A-OK is a space-age expression. It was used in nineteen sixty-one during the flight of astronaut Alan Shepard. He was the first American to be launched into space. His flight ended when his spacecraft landed in the ocean, as planned. Shepard reported: "Everything is A-OK."

However, some experts say the expression did not begin with the space age. One story says it was first used during the early days of the telephone to tell an operator that (5) \_\_\_\_\_.

There are also funny ways to say okay. Some people say **okey-dokey orokey-doke**. These expressions were first used in the nineteen thirties. Today, a character on the American television series, "The Simpsons," says it another way. He says **okely-dokely**.



## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

### Task 5

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_

**You will hear a radio program about a list of “Popular expressions about food”. As you listen, fill in the blanks with the correct information.**

Now, the VOA Special English program WORDS AND THEIR STORIES. A listener from Brazil, Elenir Scardueli, sent us a list of popular expressions about food. So today we will talk about expressions that use vegetables and fruits.

For example, a cucumber is a long, green vegetable that people often eat in salads. You might say a person is **as cool as a cucumber** if he never seems to “\_\_\_\_\_” and stays calm in a stressful situation. If you put a cucumber in a solution of vinegar and spices for a long time, it becomes a pickle. But if *you* are **in a pickle**, you are “\_\_\_\_\_” or a difficult situation.

If two people are very similar, you might say they are like **two peas in a pod**.

There are several expressions about beans. If someone is very energetic, you might say she is **full of beans**. If you say something **does not amount to a hill of beans**, you mean it is of \_\_\_\_\_. I might say **you don't know beans** about a subject if you do not know anything at all about it. But if you **spill the beans**, you tell something that was supposed to be a secret.

Potatoes are a popular food in many areas. But something is considered **small potatoes** if it is not important. You probably would not want to hold a **hot potato** in your bare hands. This also means a problem or issue that no one wants to deal with. Someone might call you a **couch potato** if you “\_\_\_\_\_” all day and get little or no physical exercise.

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

Like potatoes, turnips are root vegetables that grow in the ground. Here is an old saying: **you cannot squeeze blood out of a turnip**. That means you cannot get something from a person that he or she is not willing or able to give.

Farmers have to separate the valuable parts of their crops from the waste. So **separating the wheat from the chaff** means keeping \_\_\_\_\_ and rejecting what is worthless.

Students often have to take a difficult test to gain entrance to a special school. So you could say the ones who are chosen are the best ones, or **the cream of the crop**.

There is an old saying that **forbidden fruit tastes the sweetest**. That means some people get pleasure from doing something that they are not supposed to do.

Bananas are a popular fruit to eat. But if you **go bananas**, you are wild with excitement or worry.

Finally, let us talk about lemons. Lemons have a sour taste if you eat them plain. But lemons make a nice drink when you mix their juice with sugar and water. So here is an expression about lemons that we like: **If life gives you lemons, make lemonade**. This means you should always “\_\_\_\_\_”.

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

### Task 6

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: Match the food expression with the correct meaning.

“As cool as a cucumber” \_\_\_\_\_

“To be in a pickle” \_\_\_\_\_

“To be like two peas in a pod” \_\_\_\_\_

“Full of beans” \_\_\_\_\_

“Does not amount to a hill of beans” \_\_\_\_\_

“Don't know beans” \_\_\_\_\_

“To spill the beans” \_\_\_\_\_

“To be a couch potato” \_\_\_\_\_

“To squeeze blood out of a turnip” \_\_\_\_\_

1) If someone is very energetic

2) If you are in trouble or a difficult situation.

3) If two people are very similar

4) If someone never seems to worry about anything and stays calm in a stressful situation.

5) If you cannot get something from a person

6) If you do not know anything at all about a situation

7) If it is of little importance

8) If you tell something that was supposed to be a secret

9) If you sit and watch television all day and get little or no

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

### Appendix C

#### Rubric to evaluate the listening comprehension and the use/knowledge of listening strategies

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

|                                    | Criteria  |  |  | Points |
|------------------------------------|---|--|--|--------|
|                                    | 2<br><b>Poor</b>  | 3<br><b>Fair</b>   | 5<br><b>Good</b>   |        |
| <b>Listening Process</b>           | Student is having a hard time receiving, attending, and assigning meaning to words spoken.  | Student is receiving information, but is having a hard time attending to it and assigning meaning.   | Student comprehends what is being said because they are receiving, attending, and assigning meaning to what they hear.                       | —      |
| <b>Listening Proficiency Level</b> | Student is able to understand some information from sentence length speech, one utterance at a time, in basic personal and social contexts, though comprehension is often uneven. | Comprehension is most often accurate with highly familiar and predictable topics although a few misunderstandings may occur                                    | Student is able to understand, with ease and confidence, simple sentence- length speech in basic personal and social contexts                | —      |
| <b>Active Listening Strategies</b> | Unable to use active listening strategies to participate in situations  | Demonstrates some ability to use active listening strategies to participate in situations almost meeting expectations  | Uses active listening strategies with a high degree of effectiveness to participate in situations exceeding expectations                     | —      |
| <b>Comprehension Strategies</b>    | Unable to identify and use a variety of listening comprehension strategies to clarify the meaning of oral texts   | Demonstrates some ability to identify and use a variety of listening comprehension strategies to clarify the meaning of oral texts almost meeting expectations | Effectively identifies and uses a variety of listening comprehension strategies to clarify the meaning of oral texts exceeding expectations. | —      |

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

### Appendix D

**Rubric to evaluate the Oral Performance based on the ACTFL guideline,  
Intermediate level.**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

|                      | Criteria  |   |  |  | Points |
|----------------------|---|---|--|--|--------|
|                      | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4  |        |
|                      | <b>Needs Improvement</b>  | <b>Fair</b>   | <b>Good</b>  | <b>Excellent</b>   |        |
| <b>Grammar</b>       | No subject-verb agreement; no verbs conjugated correctly.                               | Some subject-verb agreement, errors made were not naturally made by native English speakers | Subjects generally agreed with verbs; those that did not were conjugated logically as that of a young native English speaker | Consistent subject-verb agreement; approximate to a native speaker                             | —      |
| <b>Vocabulary</b>    | Only basic vocabulary words was used  | 1 or 2 descriptive vocabulary words were used   | 3 or 4 descriptive vocabulary words were used  | Creative expression of the illustration, using 5 or more vivid vocabulary words                | —      |
| <b>Pronunciation</b> | Pronunciation very difficult to understand  | Student's pronunciation difficult to understand without concentrated effort                 | Student's pronunciation mostly understandable with some errors   | Student's pronunciation understandable with few errors   | —      |
| <b>Fluency</b>       | Student was unable to express ideas fluently; many pauses or breaks, hesitant or choppy | Student had difficulty expressing ideas fluently  | Student was able to express ideas fluently with little difficulty  | Student was able to communicate clearly with no difficulty, pauses or breaks in natural places | —      |

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

### Description of Intermediate levels:

#### High:

They are able to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with the routine tasks and social situations, exchange of basic information related to their work, school, recreation, particular interests.

They are able to handle successfully many uncomplicated tasks and social situations requiring an exchange of basic information related to work, school, recreation, particular interests and areas of competence, though hesitation and errors may be evident.

#### Mid:

Speaker is able to communicate uncomplicated communicative tasks about self, family, home, daily activities, personal preference, etc.

Speakers at the Intermediate-Mid level are able to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. Conversation is generally limited to those predictable and concrete exchanges necessary for survival in the target culture; these include personal information covering self, family, home, daily activities, interests and personal preferences, as well as physical and social needs, such as food, shopping, travel and lodging.

#### Low:

Speakers at the Intermediate-Low level are able to handle successfully a limited number of uncomplicated communicative tasks by creating with the language in straightforward social situations.

Conversation is restricted to some of the concrete exchanges and predictable topics necessary for survival in the target language culture. These topics relate to basic personal information covering, for example, self and family, some daily activities and personal preferences, as well as to some immediate needs, such as ordering food and making simple purchases.

At the Intermediate-Low level, speakers are primarily reactive and struggle to answer direct questions or requests for information, but they are also able to ask a few appropriate questions.

## Developing Listening Techniques to Improve Oral Performance

### Appendix E

**Rubric to evaluate the Usage of Listening Techniques and the Improvement in their Oral Performance, based on the ACTFL guideline, Intermediate level.**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

|                                   | Criteria  |  |  | Points |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|--------|
|                                   | 2<br><b>Poor</b>  | 3<br><b>Fair</b>   | 5<br><b>Good</b>   |        |
| <b>Listening Process</b>          | Student is having a hard time receiving, attending, and assigning meaning to words spoken.  | Student is receiving information, but is having a hard time attending to it and assigning meaning.   | Student comprehends what is being said because they are receiving, attending, and assigning meaning to what they hear.                       | —      |
| <b>Speaking Proficiency Level</b> | Students is able to handle successfully a limited number of uncomplicated communicative tasks by creating with the language in straightforward social situations. | Students is able to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations.                                   | Students is able to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with the routine tasks and social situations of the Intermediate Level    | —      |
| <b>Comprehension Strategies</b>   | Unable to identify and use a variety of listening comprehension strategies to clarify the meaning of oral texts   | Demonstrates some ability to identify and use a variety of listening comprehension strategies to clarify the meaning of oral texts almost meeting expectations | Effectively identifies and uses a variety of listening comprehension strategies to clarify the meaning of oral texts exceeding expectations. |        |