CHAPTER V
LISTENING

5.1. General

A language user is in a position to recognize the speech sounds consciously and unconsciously, among various distractions. For example, a man in the bus station hears a variety of voice and noise, i.e., the speech of different people, the sounds coming out for public address systems, noises produced by the vehicles and sounds coming from the platform shops. Amidst these varieties of sounds, a person is capable of listening to one’s speech and understands the sound sequences as words and sentences and in turn responds linguistically. The situation in which the act of listening takes place decides the quantum of hardness found in performing the skill of listening. Apart from these difficulties, in performing the skill of listening while someone is talking, one has to discriminate a foreign sound occurring in the linguistic manifestation being transmitted to him.

Listening is an on-line activity one has to apply the skill of listening in a totally new environment and comprehends the message making use of one’s previous linguistic knowledge. Moreover when the act of listening takes place, the listeners may not get enough time for comprehending and interpreting what others speak. The speaker may be quick in the transmission of message. The listener has to go on making meaning from the utterances. Hence the listener has to get clues supplied by the speaker for interpretation. In most of the contexts the listeners are not properly offered enough time to comprehend message.
5.2. HEARING VOICE AMIDST NOISE

All the sounds, which are physically perceived, may not be meaningful. Meaningful sound sequences can be treated as voice. The meaningless and non-interpreted sounds may be called as noise. The unfamiliar words and their phonation seem to be mere noise to the listener, until he interprets those words.

5.3. LISTENING AND AUDING

Dorothy Dubin (1980 p.64) says the term listening is usually used to refer to both listening the middle level and ‘auding’. In listening the individuals become aware of the sound sequences. They are able to identify and recognize the sound sequences as known words if the words are within the purview of listening whereas ‘auding’ is the highest level in the hierarchy and it involves not only for giving meaning to the sound sequences but assimilating and integrating the oral message. An individual at the ‘auding’ level would be able to gather the main idea of a spoken passage, identify analogies and inferences, and perform all the high-level comprehension skills.

5.4. MECHANICS OF LISTENING

Listening effectively involves a multiplicity of skills especially in face-to-face conversation.

1. The spoken signals have to be identified from the midst of surrounding sounds.
2. The continuous stream of speech has to be segmented into units, which have to be recognized as known words along with the context.

3. The syntax of the utterance has to be grasped and the speakers intended meaning has to be understood.

4. Linguistic knowledge to formulate the correct and appropriate response to what has been said has to be applied.

Apart from this, there are some other skills that are required for strengthening one's listening skill. Listening with a purpose is a way of exercising a listening skill. An act of listening involves non-linguistic skill also.

The activity of listening may have social purposes namely maintaining social cohesion. Through careful listening one can judge whether the speaker is in good mood or not. One's main purpose is to grasp the information but he/she needs to apply the skills in order to relate the spoken information to the non-linguistic environment.

5.5. EFFECTIVE LISTENING

There are a number of ways in which a listener can process an incoming speech. All those always constitute the means of effective listening. A listener may not hear accurately what has been said to him due to the disturbance of surrounding noises or the uniqueness of speakers' accent. Under these conditions, the listener may experience some hardships in understanding what has been spoken to. Similarly a listener can hear fully but may fail to comprehend fully because of
the syntax and semantics of the foreign language in which the message comes. In this situation one can allow the incoming speech to come and make no attempt to process the speech.

It is a known fact that listening is a passive and a receptive skill. To have effective listening one has to make use of the listening skills patiently. A listener has to play an active role in processing the incoming speech applying all of his linguistic talents with what he hears from the interlocutor and has to understand what the speaker means. As stated above an effective listening involves the use of linguistic and non-linguistic skills and an effective listener engages himself absolutely in the process of comprehension. He applies whatever knowledge he has in connection with the message said to him to construct his own interpretation of what has been said with the help of the clues available.

A successful listener with his previous knowledge of the language can immediately recognize the speech sounds directed at him and he can interpret the same. The previous knowledge helps to reach an adequate comprehension of what some one has said or written. If one fails to make meaning from others speech, it may be due to the fact that the linguistic elements used in the speech are not known to the listener or the speaker might have failed to employ the linguistic strategies according to the norms of the language concerned. Thus, the reason for non-communicability is on the part of the speaker or the listener.
5.6. Necessary skill for listening

Munby (1978) states that the following skills are necessary for successful listening.

1. Structuring discourse,
2. Understanding important information
3. Guessing /deducing meaning making use of contextual clues.
4. Recognizing the modes of:
   - Introducing an idea,
   - Transition to another idea,
   - Concluding an idea.
5. Identifying the main point by vocal understanding (decreased speed increased volume), verbal case and
6. Selective extraction of points involving coordination of related information.
   - Rearranging contrasted items of information through comparison.
   - Tabulation and contrast.

While listening, the listener is capable of predicting something about the message. A student can predict the matter, which comes from his teacher provided he is able to get an outline or the heading of the topic, which the teacher speaks about. Similarly a news listener could guess the news well in advance if he possesses some background knowledge of the news items.
The listener is always inquisitive towards the new information or message, which comes through the speeches of others. The reader always makes use of the previous knowledge, which he already possesses, to understand the new information. The listener gives main attention and importance to the unknown and unreleased message.

Shelagn Rixon (1981) says there are three steps applied by the listener for effective listening.

1. The listener predicts some of the information and expects it to be included in the utterance.
2. He assesses how much of that information as known and to be new
3. He decides the degree of the subject message, which is likely to be relevant to the purpose of listening.

5.7. Background information and listening

An introduction or purpose or a note on the topic, which is being spoken, will be useful for the listener. Instead of directly going to the message, the congenial atmosphere and the background information about the matter will pave the way for the listener to grasp the information in an easy manner. In teaching/listening process also the students are in need of an introduction before they are taught

5.8. Input sources of listening

Listening seems to be a passive activity, but the active involvement of the cognitive process in discrimination, identification and assigning meaning, making use of the all types of linguistic knowledge to the words spoken to the listener is
important and inevitable in the acts of listening and understanding. During listening, from the actual input sources, which come to represent message, clues are perceived and the message is understood.

The input sources of listening characterize the quantum of meaning received by the listener. The input sources and their perception on the part of the listener are controlled by the following factors viz.

a. The way in which the information is organized,  
b. The listeners familiarity with the topic  
c. The explicitness of the information given and  
d. The type of input

If the above factors are favorable to the listener, then the amount of understanding increases.

The findings of the research on the L2 learners (Gillen 1978, Bower, Black and Torher 1979, Stein and Nezwar Skil 1978; Haber and Bingham 1984)) show that in stories when the events are described by order in which they occurred, then the story is better understood by the students and more accurately recalled than it is described out of chronological sequences.

5.9. Sound Perception

While listening, the listener perceives the sounds not as individual phonemes but as words and other meaningful units. So while listening the listener does not discriminate or identify the smaller units called sounds individually. The listener perceives the words with the context, he applies all the grammatical, syntactical
and semantic knowledge, so as to comprehend the meaning of the items listened correctly

“When we hear sounds, we hear them as either speech or non-speech” we cannot hear speech as a series of acoustic hisses and buzzers, but only as a sequences of speech sounds’ (David Crystal).

Pollack and Pichutt (1963); Bard and Anderson (1983) found that when the individual words are extracted from tape recordings of conversations and played for listeners to identify, only about half of the words are found to be recognized in isolation. If listeners hear them in their original context of utterance, they are readily identified by the listeners.

5.10. The factors affecting the listening activity

Many factors are behind the variations in the listening comprehension of the persons. Sometimes the activity of listening becomes easier and sometimes it becomes difficult. Though several factors control listening activity, the performance and mood of the speaker and listener are major factors that affect the listening activity besides the following.

i. The form of language material listened.

ii. The listener’s task and purpose of listening.

iii. The concept in which listening occurs.

5.11. Listening process

Listening process is a passive activity like the reading activity. The listener expresses the matter he listened only after listening is over. The level of understanding of the input sources given in the listening process could not be
identified or assessed. The act of listening process takes place in the following manner.

1. If a person listens carefully to the individual sounds as if they were letters then he will be able to recognize the words.

2. The important thing the listener has to do is to recognize each word of the speaker. If the words are taken care of during hearing, then the meaning of the sentence will easily be revealed.

3. Listening is basically a guessing game like reading. The thought about what speaker is likely to say and the guess on what the speaker would communicate etc. occur in the process of listening.

4. The careful listening of the words produced by the speaker and the listeners' grammatical knowledge on the words and his goal of hearing the words are important in the listening process.

5.12. Listening and Recall

While listening, the listener receives the words in a sequence produced by the speaker. The listener need not necessarily know all the words produced by the speaker. Sometimes the listeners are not able to comprehend the sentences produced by the speaker due to the vocabulary constraints and their unfamiliarity of the words. In such cases the listeners' capacity decides the degree of his listening comprehension. The loss in listening comprehension is less in L1 learners, since they are able to decode and provide what they have understood from theirs speech.
5.13. Listening Comprehension

Listening activity is a type of interaction occurs between the words, and the listener. In order to decode those words the listener applies all his linguistic as well as literal knowledge to understand the words. Comprehension involves the understanding of the meaning and not mere listening. So when the words are not understood or identified by the listener it would become mere sounds and the listening comprehension fails. Mere listening of the sounds will not produce any meaning. For better listening the words produced should follow some conventional usage so that the listener may easily understand what he listens.

The elements that control the variation in speech are:

1. Intonation
2. Accent
3. Sound intensity
4. Pauses
5. Delivery rate
6. Pitch range

5.14. The Influence of Task and Content in Listening Comprehension

Listening also includes decoding the pragmatic meaning. A listener can get a distinct meaning according to the place and context in which the conversation takes place. Instead of saying 'nobody will come to a party' a speaker may utter an interrogative sentence "who will come". It is the duty of the listener to comprehend in such a way to arrive at the correct meaning intended by the speaker. If the context and atmosphere are not congenial to the listener then it is
difficult to understand the sentences produced by the speaker and the pragmatic inference of the utterances.

5.15. Listening as decoding process

During listening, the listener decodes the sound references listened with linguistic knowledge he possesses. The listener is pushed to decode various sound responses, as symbols.

The listener must be able to correlate the sounds and symbols with concept in order to have comprehension. Sometimes identical or similar sound references give confusion to the listener in interpretation. The decoding process during the listening activity involves the following.

1. Identification of phonemes (The ready auditory memory span)
2. Identification of utterances and their meanings.
3. The memory power and vocabulary counts.
4. Interpreting the Voice, Stress, Modulation and speed of the speaker.

5.16. Hearing-Listening

Among the four language skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing, listening is the foremost skill through which other skills are acquired. From the birth, the child begins to listen to the sounds. The experience and cognitive developments create knowledge in the child and it motivates the child in the comprehension process. The repeated hearing of same sounds is recorded in the memory of a child. When the sounds are correlated with actions or gestures then the sounds become meaningful. This sound discrimination is an essential need for a child in understanding communication.
Listening is not an easy task. The listener is forced to match and mix the word with appropriate meaning in order to understand the message which comes from the speaker. If the hearer or the listener is not able to discriminate the sounds or the sounds with their related meanings he will not be able to comprehend the matter that comes to him.

Anne Anderson and Tony Lynch (1984,p: 6) says understanding is not something that happens because of what a speaker says; the listener has a crucial part to play in the process. This involves activating various types of knowledge, applying what he knows to what he hears and trying to understand what the speaker means.

It is a common notion that speaker or writer provides meaning and listener or reader perceives or gets the meaning. While the speaker's utterances are completely known to the listener, the speaker conveys meaning and listener identifies text meaning. But in certain contexts, the speaker provides one meaning and the listener without decoding that meaning, tries to impose his own meaning on the linguistic elements he had received. And there are some contexts in which the speaker provides a meaning in an accepted fashion, but the listener imposes another meaning in a right way without causing misunderstanding. The meaning obtained by the listener is sometimes not the intended meaning of the speaker. Thus the process of making meaningful occurs in various ways. But there are some contexts at which the speaker supplies meaning the listener can either "get the meaning" or "impose the meaning" (when
it is not known to the listener) or get the “unintended meaning” of the speaker or simply ignore the utterances without creating meaning.

It is the duty of the listener to comprehend well the matter spoken to him to communicate and acknowledge the speaker, so he is always in a quest and intuitiveness to receive the right meaning from the speaker.

5.17. The relationship between Listening and Speaking

During conversation or dialogue listening and speaking play an important role in getting and passing information. These two are the prominent skills in the conversation activities other than the literacy skills. Most of the research findings show that for effective participation in conversation, one has to possess good listening and speaking skills.

Speaking and listening skills are mostly interrelated. The speaker listens to his partner's voice then he speaks and he listens even to his own speech. The peculiar quality found in the process of speaking is that it could be changed or modified by the speaker whereas on the part of listener, he has no chance for clarification. He only listens and decodes the meaning. He cannot interpret the activity, if he found any obstacle or shortcoming while listening.

5.18. The relationship between Listening and Reading

A man who knows the pronunciation system of a particular language, will not find difficulty in pronouncing the words. Garrod (1986) has pointed out that in both reading and listening; processing has to takes place sequentially. But in order to
comprehend the message successfully, he has to analyze whole segment of the input, such as phrases sentences and paragraphs.

5.19. LISTENING TEST ANALYSIS

5.19.1. Test item no: 3.1 identification of text based information, identifying the number.

Given text: - one dialogue (through listening mode)-Appendix-III

Instruction: listen carefully the conversation and answer the following question

Question: what is the total number of the pupils in this school?

Options: a. 1,500  b. 2,000  c. 2,500  d. 1,000

Expected correct answer- a. 1,500

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<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
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<th>Given text</th>
<th>Mode of questioning</th>
<th>Task involved</th>
<th>No. Of students attended</th>
<th>No. Of correct answers</th>
<th>No. Of incorrect answers</th>
<th>% of the correct answers</th>
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<td>Objective</td>
<td>Recognition</td>
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<td>125</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>83.2</td>
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COMMENT

83.2 % students selected the correct answer. The information about the number of students comes in the fourth line of the conversation in question and answer format. Since recognition is considered as an important factor in listening comprehension, this question has been included in this questionnaire.

15 students have selected the wrong answer c, 2,500. This answer is totally incorrect and irrelevant because these numbers have not been uttered in any place of the given conversation.
5.19.2. Test item no: 3.2. Identification of the significance of the character involved in the given conversation.

Instruction: listen the conversation carefully and answer the following questions
Given text: one conversation-Appendix-III

Question: - why did Mrs. Cathy visit the school?

Expected best answer: **to inaugurate the association**

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<td>Question/Answer</td>
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<td>104</td>
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</table>

Comment

69.3 Percent of the students wrote correct answer to this question.

Some of the partially correct answers written by the students are: -

1. Attending the function
2. To find the Indian school function
3. To talk in the function
4. To meet the students and the principal
5. Visiting an Indian school
6. Gain information of Indian schools
7. For inspection

12 students wrote as: - 'Mrs. Cathy visited the school to teach English'

This answer is incorrect to the given question, because the purpose of the visit of Mrs. Cathy is to inaugurate an English association in the school and not for teaching purpose. In the conversation Mrs. Cathy asks about the English
language teaching in the school, the students would have misunderstood that she has come to the school for teaching English. This answer is therefore based on the inference of the unstated information.

5.19.3. Test item no.3.3 identification of the meaning of the passage

Instruction: listen the conversation carefully and answer the following questions.

Given text: conversation-Appendix-III

Question: In the conversation 'English association' refers to

Options

a. An association formed by English people

b. An association organized to develop the activities related to English language

c. An association, which should be inaugurated by an English lady.

d. An association organized at the visit of English people.

Expected correct answer: - b. An association organized to develop the activities related to English language.

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<th>No. Of incorrect answers</th>
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<td>Recreation</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>56</td>
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</table>

Comment

56 percent of the students have selected the correct answer. This question has been prepared with the aim of testing the students' knowledge in imposing meaning to the phrase 'English association', which is the key information in the given dialogue. 4 students have selected the answer c, (an association which
should be inaugurated by an English lady). The students have inferred that an English lady should inaugurate the English association. In the given conversation an English lady was invited to inaugurate the English association by an Indian school principal. This may be one of the reasons for the inference made.

5.19.4. Test item no: - 3.4. Identification of the information from the dialogue

Instruction: listen the conversation carefully and answer the questions given in the questionnaire.

Question: - why did most of the teachers prefer teaching subjects other than English?

Expected best answer: ‘English teaching needs more correction works, so most of the teachers do not prefer English subject.

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<td>Question/Answer</td>
<td>Inference</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>42.6</td>
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</table>

Comment

In the given conversation the reason for the avoidance of teaching English as a subject is discussed and the principal tells that teaching the subject needs more correction works and it takes more effort so that most of the teachers prefer to teach subjects other than English. Only 42.6 percent of the students have comprehended it correctly and wrote the correct answer. Some of the students have written certain answers, which are not at all discussed in the conversation.

176
30 students have written the answer by their own view without paying need to any of the information provided in the conversational text.

The incorrect answers are: -

1. Partly correct answers:
   a. Teaching English is difficult
   b. English is a foreign language
   c. English language teaching needs hard work

2. Irrelevant answers
   a. ‘Teachers cannot teach English’
   b. ‘Englishman are good in teaching English’
   c. ‘English teaching is not difficult’
   d. Teachers are not interested to teach other language
   e. English subject marks are not important
   f. Students not study English subjects well
   g. Teachers do not like English language

Reasons for the incorrect answers;

The students’ ability in making contextually formed inference is the main cause for the incorrect answers.

5.19.5. Test item no: 5 understanding the gist of the conversation.

Instruction: listen the conversation and write answer to the following question.

Given text: conversation

Question: what is the gist of the given conversation.

Expected best response: ‘This conversation is about a school’
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<th>Sl. No.</th>
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<td>Question/Answer</td>
<td>Recognition</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>39.3</td>
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</table>

**Comment**

Only 39.3 percent of the students wrote correct answer to this question. The conversation between Mrs. Cathy and the school headmaster is about the school, where the English association is being inaugurated. The purpose of Mrs. Cathy's arrival is to inaugurate the English association. But before the inaugural function started, the headmaster of that school talks to Mrs. Cathy. The conversation, which took place between them is given as a text to test the listening comprehension of the students. Hence nothing was discussed about the English association; instead it runs with the discussion about the school. So the gist of the given conversation is about the school and not about the English lady's visit or the English association. 17 students wrote that the idea of the conversation is about the English association, and 12 students have written that the conversation is about the English lady (Mrs. Cathy). The students have found the purpose of the visit of Mrs. Cathy and so that they have assumed that the substance of the conversation is about the English association.

The incorrect answers are:

a. The purpose of the conversation is about Mrs. Cathy

b. English association was discussed in the conversation.

c. The head master talked the association
d. Conversation was about the English lady's visit

e. The conversation is about English medium sections

f. Foreign lady's visit is the matter of the conversation

g. Mrs. Cathy will join in the school

5.19.6. Test item no: - 6 identifying the information of the given sentence

Instruction: read the following statement and select the best suitable inferential statement among the four.

Given text. One statement given in the questionnaire

Four optional statements given in the listening mode.

Question: - why electricians wear rubber soled shoes?

Answers: (given as listening source)

a. Rubber soled shoes are cheaper than the leather soled shoes.

b. Electricians can walk quickly with the rubber-soled shoes.

c. Rubber soled shoes are bad conductors of electricity.

d. Rubber soled shoes are more durable.

Expected correct response: -c. Rubber soled shoes are bad conductors of electricity.

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<td>3.6</td>
<td>Statements</td>
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<td>Recreation</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Comment

62 percent of the students wrote correct answer to this question. In order to test the student's knowledge other than the content of the text, this question has been
included in the questionnaire. While listening the four options, the students are expecting the (information) relevant answer to the question given in the questionnaire. By making use of this previous knowledge and experience they could select the correct answer. Previous knowledge and a good listening capacity will help the students to arrive at the right selection.

5.20. Listening tests on 'recall' and 'retention'

Two tests on recall and retention have been included in the listening test.

5.20.1. Method of testing

Test 1: one passage containing four sentences was given to the students for listening, the same passage was repeatedly played for three times in order to make the students understand that clearly. Then all the students were asked to write the same passage without any modifications in it.

Test 2: 5 sentences were selected in this test procedure. Each sentence was played two times individually; the students were asked to write the sentences in the paper without any modification.

Retention and recall are important characteristic features in language teaching/learning process. In order to convey a message, which was previously grasped or heard, and in order to convey the message, which is acquired orally from others, to others, a better recall power is inevitable. If the recall and retention power fails, consequently the communication loss or failure will occur which in turn will hit the perfection of all the sorts of learning as well as communication activities.
With the view of testing the students retention and recall power in acquiring literal information, the above two types of tests were included in the questionnaire. The students' responses were analyzed in the following way.

I

1. Dropping of words/sentences
2. Addition of words /sentences
3. Modification of words/sentences

II.

1. Relevant selection of new words
2. Irrelevant selection of new words

III.

1. Words mostly dropped
2. Words comprehended wrongly

Test on 'recall' and 'retention'

5.20.2. Test item no:8 writing the passage without any modifications after listening the same.

*Instruction: carefully listen the passage on 'Mano Majra' and write the same in your answer sheet without any modifications in it.*

Given text: appendix- 3 (given as spoken form through cassette player.

Students' response:

18 students wrote the passage without any modification in it. The remaining students struggled with various errors like, dropping, addition and modification of the words, incorrect spelling, etc.
5.20.3. Dropping words

135 students committed errors in writing the sentences. The errors in sentence occurred due to the interpretation of sentence pattern, incorrect use of words, modification of ‘be’ verbs, tense forms etc. All such samples are classified as:

5.20.4. Dropping full sentences---

Giving to the lack of recall power 61 students dropped anyone of the full sentence given in the passage.

5.20.5. Addition of words

75 students have included new words in the sentences. These students have replaced the given words and substituted new words.

5.20.6. Modification of words.

41 students have modified the words by its morphological and grammatical structure, for example 15 students have changed the tense forms and 36 students have changed the ‘be’ verbs.

5.20.7. Relevant selection of same meaningful words in contexts

Students have used new words, which are synonymous to the given words in the passage. While listening, the students understood the contextual meaning of the sentences but, while reproducing the sentences many of them could not recall the original words of the given text but by making use of the understanding of the passage they have substituted new words, which are synonymous in meaning.

5.20.8. Words dropped

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>tiny</th>
<th>little</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lender (money)</td>
<td>giver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. home land, mother land, his land
4. large, big
These above four words were substituted by the students to arrive at the desired contextual meaning of the given passage.

5.20.9. Irrelevent selection of new words
27 students have used the words irrelevant to the context. Such words affect the meaning of the sentences. Hence in many sentences the incorrect selections of words are irrelevant and incomprehensible. Such words are given here.

1. Mano maja is any place
2. It has inches wall
3. Lala Ram lal at money lender
4. Four brick is building
5. Mano resident Lala Ram lal
6. Triangular offer common series
7. Brick buildings form equilatered house
8. It has includes three brick buildings
9. A large peepul tree them in middle
These irrelevant substitutions might have occurred due to the misunderstanding of the meaning of the given passage or due to the inability in selecting appropriate words.

5.20.10. Words mostly dropped.
125 students dropped the word ‘equilaterals’
83 students dropped the words ‘Sikh’
These two words are not commonly used in communication. It may be one of the reasons for the dropping of the words in writing, or these words may be unfamiliar to them in comprehending them.

5.20.11. Words/sentences wrongly comprehended

The students wrongly comprehend the following words and as a result they wrote other words, which are phonologically associated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no.</th>
<th>Words in text</th>
<th>words substituted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>brick</td>
<td>big</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>peepul</td>
<td>people, pupil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>money lender</td>
<td>many lander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>equilateral</td>
<td>equivated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>series</td>
<td>serious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>seek, sick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>lala ramlal</td>
<td>laramlal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.20.12. Sentences wrongly comprehended

I. Sentence in text:

*Mano Majra is a tiny place*

Sentences written by the students

1. 'mano majra' is a old kingdom
2. 'mano majra' is a house
3. 'mano majra' is has a temple

II. Sentence in text.

*It is the homeland of moneylender 'Lala Ramlal'
Sentences written by the students:

1. It is the home of lala ramlal
2. Mono majra is the homeland of many Lander lala ramlal
3. It is the home of lala ramlal.

III. Sentence in the text:

The three brick buildings form an equilateral triangle.

Sentences written by the students

1. The three big buildings form triangle,
2. There are three brick triangle buildings,
3. The three brick buildings exuviated triangle.

68 percent of the students wrote incorrect sentences and those sentences are irrelevant to the given text. They differ by form and meaning. This might have occurred due to the lack of comprehension on the part of students.

5.21. Recall and retention of the sentences.

Five individual sentences were selected for this test. They were individually played twice by the cassette player to the students. All the students were asked to write sentences without any modifications in it. That samples are analyzed here.

5.21.1. Sentence 1: -English has been given a position of official language in Indian constitution.

Students’ response:

1. Deletion;

English has been given the position of ---language in Indian constitution.
2. Addition:
English has been given the abusive position of official language in Indian constitution.

Modification
English has been an official language of Indian constitution.

5.21.2. Sentence 2: - TNPSC is a body constituted under article 217 of Indian constitution

Student's responses

1. Deletion:
TNPSC is a body constituted article 217 of Indian constitution.

2. addition;
TNPSC is a body constituted for under article 21 Indian constitution

3. Modification;
TNPSC is a body under Indian constitution in article 217.

5.21.3. Sentence 3: - one third of the soldiers died in 'kalinga war'

Students' response:

1. Deletion
'One of the soldiers died in 'kalinga war'

2. Addition
One of third of the soldiers were died in 'kalinga war'

3. Modification
One third of the soldiers were killed in 'kalinga war'
Such type of problems in comprehension affects the meaning of the sentences. In many occasions the sentence patterns are also not properly followed by the students.

Comment
33 percent of the students wrote the sentences correctly. The remaining 67 percent of the students struggled with various shortcomings like, addition, deletion, modification, incorrect selection of words, misuse of articles, prepositions, ‘be’ verbs, etc. These errors occurred due to the low level listening comprehension and knowledge in the use of sentence patterns. Low-level retention and recall affects the perfection of sentences and the improper use of words spoils the meaning of the sentences. These types of errors often change the meaning of the words entirely.

Remedial measures
Listening, though an oral skill otherwise the first skill realized, still occupies a predominant role in the day today events of human beings. So considering its importance and role the students should be given more practice in listening exercises. The curriculum has to include and introduce exercises related to the enhancement of listening skill so that the students can develop the other skill of language in a balanced way.

5.22. Summary on Listening
The act of listening in any context is important and inevitable for one who wants to understand and produce sounds and letters for communication. In most of the cases the miss identity of the sounds and words lead to the total irrelevant
meaning or misinterpretation of meaning on the particular lexical item, and the total matter being listened. So it is the duty of the listeners to understand a sound clearly and cleverly with all the linguistic nuances that endowed with the particular language. The present study has conducted a test with the specially designed test batteries to evaluate the four basic skills of the graduate students and the test results shows that the second language learners are badly in need of attentiveness in understanding the foreign sounds.

Test results show that the informants have not taken much care and they never went to a position of thinking new words or new sounds or even thought about the words considering the following or succeeding words in order to make meaning in right way as well as perceive the correct meaning pertaining to the expression and context. Most of the students committed errors in listening the unfamiliar words. Even after repeatedly listening same sentences for three times, they could not identify those words correctly. 20 percent of the students overgeneralized the words and they replaced them with new words, which were familiar to them. For ex.25% of students have perceived the words in improper way and some of those words, which were wrongly written are listed here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words given in Spoken form</th>
<th>Students Samples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constituent</td>
<td>constituency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inaugural</td>
<td>inauguration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological</td>
<td>technical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>evolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brick buildings</td>
<td>big buildings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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These above types of errors are commonly found in the responses of the students.

Another deficiency found in listening comprehension is the discrimination of voiced and voiceless sounds. There has been a notable change identified in the responses of the students in using the voiced and voiceless consonant sounds. The indifference may be occurred due to the influence of the mother tongue interference.

5.23. Remedial measures to enhance the listening skill

1. Exercises related to listening comprehension should be included in curriculum

2. Special exercises and coaching should be given to the students for learning the voiced and voiceless sound systems in L1 and L2.

3. Teaching sound patterns of L2 is very much important to avoid the mother tongue influence in speaking.

4. Inclusion of Audio-lingual practices will be more useful for effective listening

6. Exercises in the audio and visual media will help the learners to improve the act of listening.