

ENGLISH DEPT.

**Listening Comprehension Testing Methods and  
Their Impact on Student Performance**

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Liana Sukiasyan

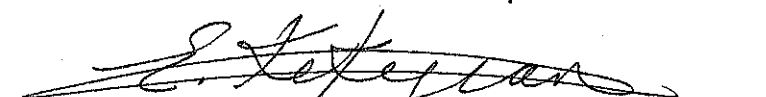
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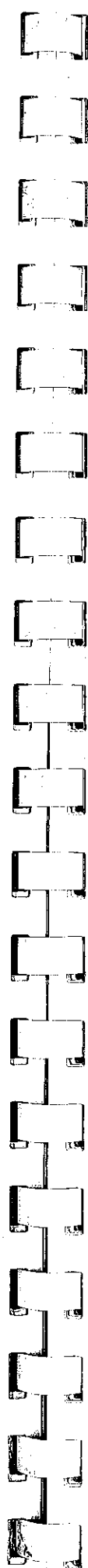
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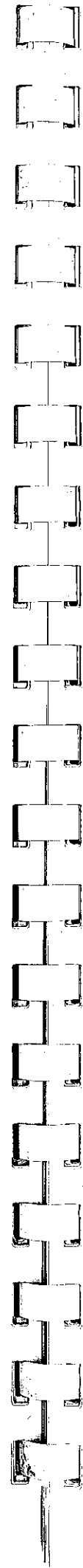
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**Abstract:**

This study is designed to investigate the effects of testing methods on testing L2 listening comprehension. The study sets out to investigate the impact of audio versus video testing methods on the performance of Armenian students. The investigation is conducted at the European University in Yerevan, Armenia.

The quantitative method of data analysis is used for analyzing the data gained from 30 Armenian students with an intermediate level of L2 proficiency aged between 16 to 17 years. The materials used in this investigation are a listening comprehension section from a TOEFL test (a Test of English as a Foreign Language) and attitude questionnaires. The data gained from the listening comprehension test are analyzed on the basis of both a paired t-test and an independent t-test. The data gained from the attitude questionnaires are analyzed through the calculation of the frequency of the students' responses.

Findings of this study provide strong evidence that both the audio and the video testing methods have the same impact on the examinees' performance. The results gained from the questionnaires reveal that the majority of the students consider video testing more motivating and interesting compared to that of audio testing. In this regard, the study supports the idea that visual stimuli may be helpful in interpreting the provided message through adding motivation and raising interest towards the provided oral input.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, listening comprehension in Armenian institutions is tested only by means of audio recordings. Candidates are provided with long or short aural input. The aim of these kinds of tests is to provide the examinees with oral input very close to real life situations.

The results of such tests are usually considered as the students' general ability to comprehend and correspondingly operate in the L2. Whether this method of testing can be considered close to real life listening is questionable. One can never state that real life listening is based only on audio recorded messages. People usually associate every heard sound with a particular 'visual' concept. Thus, the issue of the current study is whether the candidates will perform better when they are supported by visual aids while being tested or when they are tested using only audio recordings.

### **1.1 Information Concerning the Investigated Area**

Assessing listening comprehension, which is considered one of the significant areas of language testing, is one of the least developed (Buck, 2001). Little research has been conducted to identify the role of visual elements in the L2 listening comprehension process (Gruba, 1999). Whether visual actions should be separated from aural ones has been a topic for investigation for such scholars like Donaldson (1976), Gunter (1980), Fisher (1984), Baltova (1994), Kasten (1995), Berry (1995), Progosh (1996), Gruba (1999), and Wagner (2004). The results of these studies have revealed contradictory conclusions. Some of the scholars mentioned, among them Baltova (1994), Progosh (1996), and Wagner (2004), share the idea that visual stimuli have a positive impact on the examinees' performance. "The combination of sound and vision is dynamic, immediate, and accessible; the power of the medium is acknowledged by all, even if its benefits and disadvantages are still a matter of controversy,"

(Lonergan, 1984, cited in Ikeguchi, 1997, p. 1). Some other scholars, among them Donaldson (1976), Gunter (1980), Fisher (1984), Kasten (1995), and Berry (1995), argue that visual stimuli have a negative impact and may hinder the comprehension of audio texts. Whether the impact of testing methods on the test takers' performance might differ depending on the examinees' nationality is an open question. It appears possible that no study has been conducted with the purpose of considering the effect of nationality.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The primary aim of this study is to compare the two methods of testing, specifically, using video versus audio recordings and to investigate the role of visuals when listening comprehension is tested. The further aim of this study is to examine the impact of the testing methods on the tested students' performance and to study which of these testing methods enhances comprehension. This study is designed with the aim of investigating the effects of testing methods on Armenian learners. It is quite possible that the impact of testing methods on the examinees' performance might differ depending on test takers' nationality. To be precise, it is possible that Armenian test takers will perform quite differently when L2 listening comprehension is tested using a video recorder. Thus, based on the logic mentioned above, in the present study I will examine the performance of 30 Armenian students using two different testing methods.

## **1.3 Overview of the Study**

This thesis is organized into five chapters. The main purpose of Chapter One is to state the purpose and the scope of the study. The aim of Chapter Two is to establish a historical perspective for the study; it starts with a review of definitions of listening comprehension, then questions the necessity of visual stimuli while the L2 is being assessed,



as well as citing a number of examples of empirical investigations. Chapter Three introduces the research design. It provides details relating to the subjects of the study, the materials used, as well as describing the procedure and the way the collected data were analyzed. Chapter Four provides information about the findings related to the listening comprehension testing methods and their impact on the students' performance. Finally, Chapter Five concludes the study with a discussion of the findings and implications of the investigation. It then deals with the limitations of the study, followed by suggestions for further research.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter reviews how listening comprehension has been defined and discussed by different scholars and demonstrates the kinds of processes that take place when listeners receive aural input. It then questions whether test takers need to be supported with video recordings while being assessed. This is discussed in light of how different scholars consider both modes of listening comprehension presentation, i.e. video vs. audio, in terms of their similarity to real-life listening. The chapter ends with a discussion of various studies relating to the methods of testing L2 listening comprehension, followed by an explanation of the issues the study sets up to investigate.

### **2.1 Listening Comprehension Defined**

Assessment of listening abilities is considered to be one of the least understood and least developed fields (Buck, 2001, p. 1). It is generally considered that our understanding of listening comprehension can be divided into two stages of development: theory prior to the 1970s and current theory (Murphy, 1991). According to Murphy (1991), prior to the 1970s, listening comprehension was characterized as a "receptive language skill in which listeners were pictured as passively assimilating the messages presented to them by speakers", whereas in current theory listening comprehension is described "as an interactive, interpretive process in which listeners engage in a dynamic construction of meaning" (Murphy, 1991, p. 56).

On the basis of how Chaudron and Richards (1986), Anderson and Lynch (1988), Rost (1990), and Oxford (1993) have described listening comprehension, Brett (1996) points out that "any definition of listening comprehension must acknowledge that many processes work together in an interactive, overlapping and

simultaneous fashion" (without pagination). The current understanding of listening comprehension is well defined by Wolvin and Coakley (1988), who assume that listening comprehension is a combination of a various processes such as:

... analyzing, concentrating, understanding, registering converting meaning to the mind, engaging in further mental activity, responding, reacting, interpreting, relating to past experiences and future expectancies, assimilating, acting upon, selecting, receiving, apprehending, hearing, remembering, identifying, recognizing, comprehending, sensing, evaluating, emphasizing and organizing

(cited in Brett, 1996, without pagination).

The above mentioned processes that take place during listening comprehension are well described by Richards (1983), who has identified more than 50 microskills that learners need to master in order to understand L2 discourse. These microskills fall into two categories: microskills for conversational listening and microskills for listening to academic lectures. Microskills for conversational listening assume the ability "to discriminate distinctive sounds of the target language, to recognize the stress patterns of words, to distinguish word boundaries", whereas microskills for listening to academic lectures assume the ability "to identify the purpose and scope of a lecture, to identify the role of discourse markers, to recognize key lexical items, to deduce meanings of unfamiliar words from context, as well as to detect the attitude of a speaker toward subject matter" (Richards, 1983, cited in Murphy, 1991, p 57).

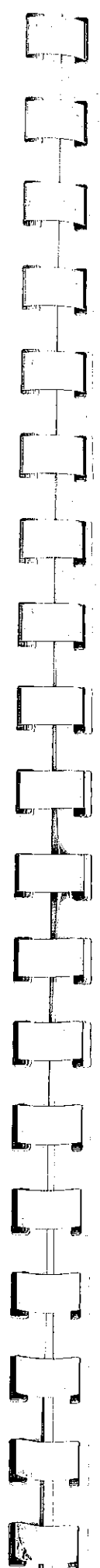
Some scholars, among them Wolvin and Coakley (1988), view listening as a cognitive process and define it as "the process of receiving, attending to and assigning meaning to aural stimuli" (cited in Brett, 1996, without pagination). The elements mentioned by Wolvin and Coakley (1988) have been considered by others also. The process of "receiving, attending to, and assigning meaning to aural stimuli", which is also called speech perception, assumes the listeners' comprehension of provided oral input. Richards (1983)

in his “script competence” theory describes the process of applying knowledge to the incoming sound defining two processes: top-down and bottom-up. Consequently, listening comprehension is a two-stage process. These top-down and bottom-up processes are considered to occur simultaneously and to be interrelated (Wagner, 2004).

Top-down processing assumes that different types of knowledge processing may occur concurrently. For example: When we see somebody opening the door walking out and closing it after shaking her hand and saying something, be it ‘Bye-bye’, ‘good-bye’ ‘see you’ ‘see you later’ or something else, we can understand from her gestures what she was saying. Thus, our background knowledge about what people say when they walk away helps us to determine what the girl would say before closing the door.

Bottom-up processing assumes listening procedures that takes place in a certain order starting with the lowest level of detail and moving up to the highest: from phonemes to the syntactic level, to the analysis of the semantic content, ultimately to understanding linguistic meaning. Buck (2003) refers to bottom-up processing naming it as “Understanding words” (p. 15). He describes this process dividing it into 2 parts: “recognizing the word and then understanding its meaning” for which two kinds of information are used: “the perceptual/acoustic information and knowledge of the context” (p. 15). He mentions that usually words are not recognized in isolation. The listener makes sense of the utterance only after the *parsing* process has taken place. Buck defines *parsing* as a process in which the listener combines the meaning of individual words and creates a certain meaning, and as soon as “the idea unit is created the words and the syntax are forgotten” (2003, p. 16).

Basically, it is considered that during the comprehension process in order to understand the meaning of the provided information listeners use their existing knowledge, which can be subdivided into two categories: **linguistic knowledge**, which involves phonology, lexis, syntax, semantics, discourse structure, and so forth; and **non-linguistic**



**knowledge**, that is, knowledge about the topic, about the context, and general knowledge about the world and how it works (Buck, 2003). In addition to the above mentioned categories of knowledge, there are a number of other types of knowledge used in listening, such as:

- knowledge of the language
- knowledge about what has already been said
- knowledge about the situation in which the speech is taking place
- knowledge about the world.

(Buck, 2003, pp. 1-2)

Bejar et al. (2000) point out three types of knowledge that are used in listening: **situational knowledge**, which corresponds to what Buck (2003) calls “knowledge about the context”; **linguistic knowledge**, which refers to grammatical points, i.e. phonology, vocabulary, morphology, and syntax, as well as discourse, and pragmatics; and **background knowledge**, which corresponds to what Buck calls “knowledge about the world”. Here one thing needs to be taken into consideration - the same concept may be named differently by different authors. For instance, no matter whether we call it “situational knowledge” or “knowledge about the context”, they both perform the same function.

Starting from 1970s researchers changed their perception towards listening comprehension and began to view it in a different light: that is, listening comprehension was defined as a combination of various processes based on abilities like analyzing, concentrating, understanding, and so forth. These different processes that are usually considered to occur simultaneously are classified as subcategories of bottom-up and top-down processing. These bottom-up and top-down processes are not the only stimuli of listening comprehension. In order to comprehend the provided oral input one needs to rely on the help of both linguistic and nonlinguistic knowledge.

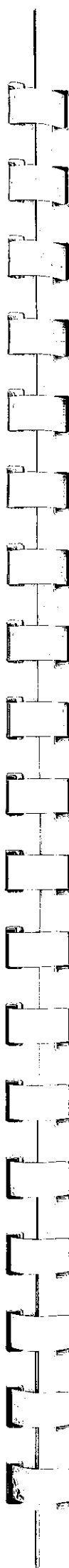
## 2.2 The Role of Visual Stimuli in Listening Comprehension Tests

Listening comprehension tests usually are aimed at providing the examinees with real-life listening situations (Ur, 1998). It would be interesting to find some statistical information about how frequently real-life listening is supported by visual aids. This information could be helpful in understanding which method of testing could be considered close to real life listening. Ur gives examples of real life communicative situations:

- listening to news / weather forecasts / sports reports / announcements etc. on the radio
- discussing work / current problems with family or colleagues
- making arrangements / exchanging news etc. over the telephone
- chatting at a party / other social gathering
- hearing announcements over the loudspeaker (at a railway station, for example, or airport)
- receiving instructions on how to do something / get somewhere
- attending a lesson / seminar
- being interviewed / interviewing
- watching a film / theatre show / television program
- hearing a speech / lecture
- listening to recorded / broadcast songs
- attending a formal occasion (wedding / prize-giving / other ceremony)
- getting professional advice (from a doctor, for example)
- being tested orally in a subject of a study

(Ur, 1998, p. 2)

From the real-life examples mentioned above one can see that in most cases “we are in the physical presence of, or able to see, the person(s) we are listening to” (Ur, 1998, p. 4). With the help of video one can see the speakers’ sex, age, appearance, relationships, dress, mood, cultural behavior, gestures, as well as the setting for the interaction (Brett, 1996). “Apart from the speaker himself – his facial expression, posture, eye direction, proximity, gesture, tone of voice – a real life listening situation is normally rich in environmental clues as to the context and implications of what is said” (Ur, 1998, p. 5).



Listeners may have a number of difficulties while listening to an L2 text without visual support, which may cause them to interpret the provided information in quite a different way. Buck (2003) points out several important speech characteristics in listening comprehension: “speech is encoded in the form of sound” and “speech is linear and takes place in real time” (pp. 4-8). In the “speech is encoded in the form of sound” section (pp. 4-5), he draws our attention to the fact that the intonation pattern of the speech may be modified by the speaker, which can make the comprehension process quite difficult and in some situations even incomprehensible because of ambiguous usage of certain phonemes. In addition to the above mentioned constraints, there are some others which can make the comprehension process quite difficult, particularly “possible difficulties in hearing resulting from learner impediments, acoustic inadequacies, and factors related to the speaker” (Arnold, 2000, p. 779).

Taking into consideration the above mentioned speech characteristics, one may say that it is in such situations that we may need to support our test takers with visual aids. Let us consider the following example: Suppose we see a girl with a gun, who is standing in front of a man. If the girl raises the gun saying “I am going to ---”. Her gestures will help the listener to understand what is going on even without hearing or understanding what she utters next. No listener, even one who does not know the meaning of the verb “to kill” or who could not comprehend it because of the speaker’s heavy accent, will suppose that the girl is saying “I am going to feed you.”

In the “speech is linear and takes place in real time” section (pp. 5-8), Buck draws our attention to the fact that it is the speaker and not the listener who determines the speed of the speech, which can be quite fast for the listener. Producing three words in a second is considered to be normal speed of speech in English, which requires automatic perception of the provided input (Buck, 2003). So listeners usually do not have time to think about the

meaning of each word. In a test situation listeners also have no chance to review the aural information and they need to rely on their memory (Buck, 2003). An investigation into whether a person can memorize all that is heard revealed that human beings "can hold in working memory information produced with the duration of about 2 seconds or about 7 words" (Buck, 2003, p. 10).

The necessity to very quickly obtain the meaning of aural information has led the human mind to develop the ability of forming 'scripts', which assumes the ability of matching each word with a certain concept (Buck, 2003). Schank and Abelson (cited in Buck, 2003) define a 'script' as a mental structure which describes everyday situations, i.e. shop script, house script, party script. But there is a very important point here: "scripts tend to be culture bound" (Buck, 2003, p. 20). Here the idea is that, when we listen to somebody speaking, we usually draw inferences, in the form of scripts, beyond the uttered words. And although those inferences are considered an essential part of any message, there may be some difference between what is said and what people guess.

Tests which are used with the intent of evaluating L2 listening comprehension are usually designed to assess the examinees' comprehension of details and facts, comprehension of vocabulary, comprehension of main ideas and supporting ideas, inferences about content and relationships, as well as comprehension of communicative function of utterances (Bejar et al, 2000). For example, in the TOEFL test all dialogues and monologues are based on relationships which are relevant to an international student and to academic listening: superior/subordinate; chair/member; evaluator/applicant; authority/offender; employer/employee; manager/worker; investigator/subject; instructor/learner; advisor/advisee; health provider/patient; native/non-native speaker; and male/female (Bejar et al, 2000).



The point is that many of these relationships may be understood differently in different cultures. "Meaning is not something in the text that the listener has to extract, but is constructed by the listener in an active process of inferencing and hypothesis building" (Buck, 2003, p. 29). Many scholars agree that meaning of aural input is understood with the help of inferences which are made by knowledge. For example, Rost (1990) points out that

Meaning in discourse is created by the listener within a personal knowledge domain. Meaning is created only by an active listening in which the linguistic form triggers interpretation within the listener's background and in relation to the listener's purpose

(cited in Brett, 1996, without pagination).

"The meaning is not in the passage, but is constructed by the listener... different people might make different inferences, and get different understanding of the same passage" (Buck, 1999, p.3). Considering the fact that not all the necessary information is clearly stated in the message, a question arises whether and how one can obtain the right meaning of not clearly stated input without the help of visual input. According to Bejar et al. (2000) situation visuals may be of great help, since they "will provide preliminary information to the examinees about the features of the situation, that is, who the participants are, where they are (the setting), and sometimes, the type of stimulus (text type)" (p.11). Some scholars, among them Krashen (1981, cited in Jackson, 1999), consider that using video recordings will foster a positive attitude towards L2 language learning. According to Arnold (2000, p. 780) "Visualization generally refers to mental images called up for some purpose. It is seeing with what is sometimes called the 'mind's eye'".

In education, visualization can facilitate the interiorization of knowledge by creating a more receptive state of awareness, permitting the affective/creative functions of a more holistic nature to participate in and strengthen the learning experience.

(Arnold, 2000, p. 780)

On the one hand, from the theoretical perspective, it could appear that visual stimuli should be helpful for test takers completing L2 comprehension tests. The use of visual aids

could be helpful in deriving the right meaning of the provided information, since it “may better mirror realistic discourse” (Wagner, 2004, p. 8). On the other hand, from practical perspective, visual images may be quite distracting (Kasten, 1995).

### 2.3 Empirical Evidence

Providing the listener with visual stimuli gives the tester an opportunity to present the message not only in the form of verbal information, but also in the form of nonverbal information. With the intent of exploring the listening process when video recordings are used, Wagner (2004) conducted a study the purpose of which was “to examine the construct validity of a listening test based on a model of L2 listening ability that treats listening as a complex combination of

language ability and task characteristics” (p.2). The primary hypothesis of the study was that video would allow listeners to perceive and process nonverbal information. The participants of the study were 85 ESL students from three different public high schools in New York. All participants were 14-18 year old non-native speakers of English with intermediate or advanced level of L2 proficiency. The results of the study showed that video tests had a positive impact on the test-takers. As Wagner (2004) mentions, “virtually all of the test-takers reported that the video was helpful in understanding the spoken text, and many also indicated that the videos were interesting to watch” (p. 1).

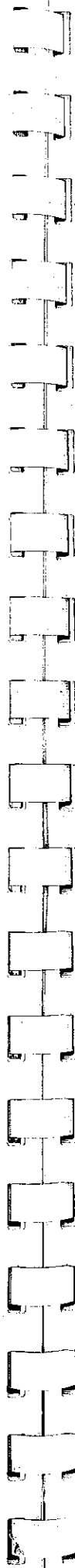
Similar studies have been conducted by Progoosh (1996) and Baltova (1994, cited in Wagner, 2004). Progoosh (1996) used video recording as a means of testing L2 listening comprehension and surveyed the students’ attitudes towards the test. The results showed that more than 92 percent of the examinees considered the use of video recording in testing to be a good idea.

Baltova (1994), with the intent of investigating the role of visual media in second language comprehension, conducted two experiments, the subjects of which were eighth grade learners of French. In the first experiment she tested the examinees under four conditions: "sound-only, visual + sound, visual-only and test items only" (Baltova, cited in Gruba, 1999, p.32). The results showed that the use of video recordings has a positive impact on the tested students' performance. Moreover, the students claimed that they enjoyed the video listening assessment better than the audio one.

In the second experiment Baltova (1994) tested the students only under two conditions: without help of visual stimuli and with the help of visual stimuli. This time the results showed that there were no major differences in the test scores between the two treatments. Based on these investigations, Baltova pointed out that despite the insignificant difference in the students' scores, the examinees' motivation was enhanced when they were provided with visual stimuli (Baltova, cited in Gruba, 1999).

Gruba (1999) argues that video will contribute to construct and content validity when it is used in testing and teaching. Trying to investigate the role of visual elements in L2 listening comprehension when digital video was used, Gruba (1999) conducted a study the participants of which were 12 non-native tertiary students of Japanese with upper intermediate level of L2 proficiency. His study showed that visual elements played a confirmatory role in helping the listeners to initiate and generate macrostructure. Besides, visual elements provided listeners with a "fertile ground on which to speculate about what may have occurred in a given narrative" (Gruba, 1999, p.271).

Despite the above mentioned positive conclusions which are based on research results, there are some scholars, among them Donaldson (1976), Gunter (1980), and Fisher (1984) (cited in Brett, 1996), who consider that the use of visual imagery may hinder the comprehension of audio texts. According to them the vital problem is that when



the visual processing mode is dominant, attention to visuals may override attention to sound. A similar conclusion was drawn by Kasten (1995, cited in Gruba, 1999), who conducted an investigation with Chinese university students in Hong Kong. The students were provided with multiple-choice video and audio tests. Although the result pointed to superior performance on the video-based mode of exam presentation, during the test Kasten (1995) noticed that a number of examinees tended to ignore the video monitor. A similar study was conducted by Berry (1995), the intent of which was to investigate the impact of audio versus video stimuli on the test takers' written responses. Since the main purpose of the study was to investigate how the way of aural input presentation could affect the content of the written outcome, the examinees were supposed to write essays after being provided with some topic. Based on the results of the study Berry pointed out that depending on the way in which aural input was provided the scores significantly varied on the listening and writing components. The results of the study also revealed that no difference was noticed on the reading component.

Ikeguchi (1997) argues that there is no difference between testing the students through video recordings or audio ones. Her conclusions are based on a study conducted with the intent of finding the effect of visuals on examinees' comprehension ability. The participants of her study were 93 first year students of Junior College in Japan. The study was conducted in two stages. The first testing was conducted in the following way: the students and the teacher read and role-played the chosen material, after which the students took the test. The test questions were based on the just read information. The second testing was administered after the students had watched the chosen video recording. Here the students' task was to answer the questions concerning the visual material. The same material: a 15 item test, was used for both testing procedures. The results of the study revealed that visual stimuli did not have significant effect on the students' performance.

## 2. 4 Aims and Research Questions

Based on this literature review, it can be concluded that “the assessment of listening abilities is one of the least understood, least developed and yet one of the most important areas of language testing and assessment” (Buck, 2001, p.1). The data available reveal that in most cases video testing has been considered more motivating and more interesting, though no clear significant difference in the students’ performance has been established. As shown in section 2.3, some studies even yield contrary results. On the basis of this literature review, it is quite apparent that major tests such as TOEFL continue to use an audio mode of test presentation. This is because it is still questionable whether either listening comprehension testing method is more advantageous. “There is no doubt that video offers the potential for enhanced face validity and authenticity, although there is a lot of concern about its potential for distraction” (Bejar et al., 2000, p. 28).

Taking into consideration that there appears to be a strong probability that no experiment concerning the methods of testing L2 listening comprehension has been conducted in Armenia, I decided to try to investigate the impact of testing methods on Armenian students’ performance. This study will be carried out addressing the following research questions:

- What is the relationship between testing methods and the students’ performance?
- What is the role of visuals when listening comprehension is tested?

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter introduces the research design. It provides details relating to the subjects of the study and the materials used. It then describes the procedure followed when the collected data were analyzed.

### 3.1 Subjects

A total of 30 students from the European University in Armenia participated in this study. The students ranged in age from 16 to 17. All 30 students had Armenian as their first language. Consequently, they all were non-native speakers of English living in Armenia. Their level of L2 proficiency was determined to be intermediate on the basis of an EFL Placement Examination, which they had taken before being accepted into the EFL Preparatory Course. Students with an intermediate level of L2 proficiency in this institution are supposed to know such grammatical points as all tenses, question forms, as well as article and preposition usage.

The selection of the students was conducted in the following way: All students from the 'Intermediate Level' student population who were taking an EFL preparatory course were given a consent form which included the intent of the study, the introduction to participants' rights, as well as an explanation of participants' duties. (See Appendix A for an example of the Consent form). All students from the EFL preparatory course population who were interested in being part of the study were involved in it. The total number of the students was 30, who were divided into two groups with 15 students in each. Both male and female students were involved in the study. The number of the females, which was 19, exceeded that of the males, which was 11. It should be mentioned that the gender factor was not taken into consideration.


### 3. 2 Materials

The materials used in this investigation were the listening comprehension section from a TOEFL test (a Test of English as a Foreign Language) and attitude questionnaires. (See Appendix B for the provided TOEFL test booklets and Appendix C for examples of attitude questionnaires). The TOEFL test is a high status norm referenced test with a multiple-choice format, which is used to measure English proficiency of foreign speakers (Bachman, 1995). The listening comprehension section which lasts 40 minutes and involves 50 items was divided into two equal parts each lasting 20 minutes and involving 25 items. One of the parts was left as the original one: audio recorded, whereas the other part of the TOEFL test was video recorded with the help of English language teachers. With the intent of keeping the speech speed the same as it was in the audio cassette, the actors in the video do not speak they just move their lips trying to contextualize what the real speakers say. (Table 3.1 demonstrates how each section of the test was split into two equal halves keeping the order of the original test.)

Table 3.1

Test sections	Items		Time	
	Total	For Each Subtest	Total	For Each Subtest
Section I: Listening Comprehension				
Part A: Short Conversations	30	15	40 minutes	20 minutes
Part B: Longer Conversations	8	4		
Part C: Talks	12	6		
	<i>Total 50</i>	<i>Total 25</i>		

In the Listening Comprehension section of the TOEFL test the examinees are tested on their comprehension of details and facts, comprehension of vocabulary, comprehension of main ideas and supporting ideas, inferences about content and relationships, as well as comprehension of the communicative function of utterances (Bejar et al., 2000). Each subtest, like the original test, consisted of three parts. In the first part the examinees are



required to listen to short conversations. After having heard them they choose the best response from the four provided options. In the second part the examinees are exposed to longer conversations after which they again choose the best response from the four provided options. In the third part the examinees' task is to choose the most appropriate response for each question after they have listened to talks, lectures, or public announcements which are representatives of academic discourse in the USA (Bejar et al., 2000).

The primary purpose of the questionnaires was to collect the examinees feedback concerning their feelings and attitude towards both subtests. The questionnaires were not long, so that it would not take students much time to complete them. Each questionnaire consisted of three sections. In the first and third sections all statements addressed to the students asked for the students' opinion directly, whereas the second section tried to elicit information indirectly. For example, the students were asked whether either test was easier, although it was evident that both of them were at the same level.

### 3.3 Procedure

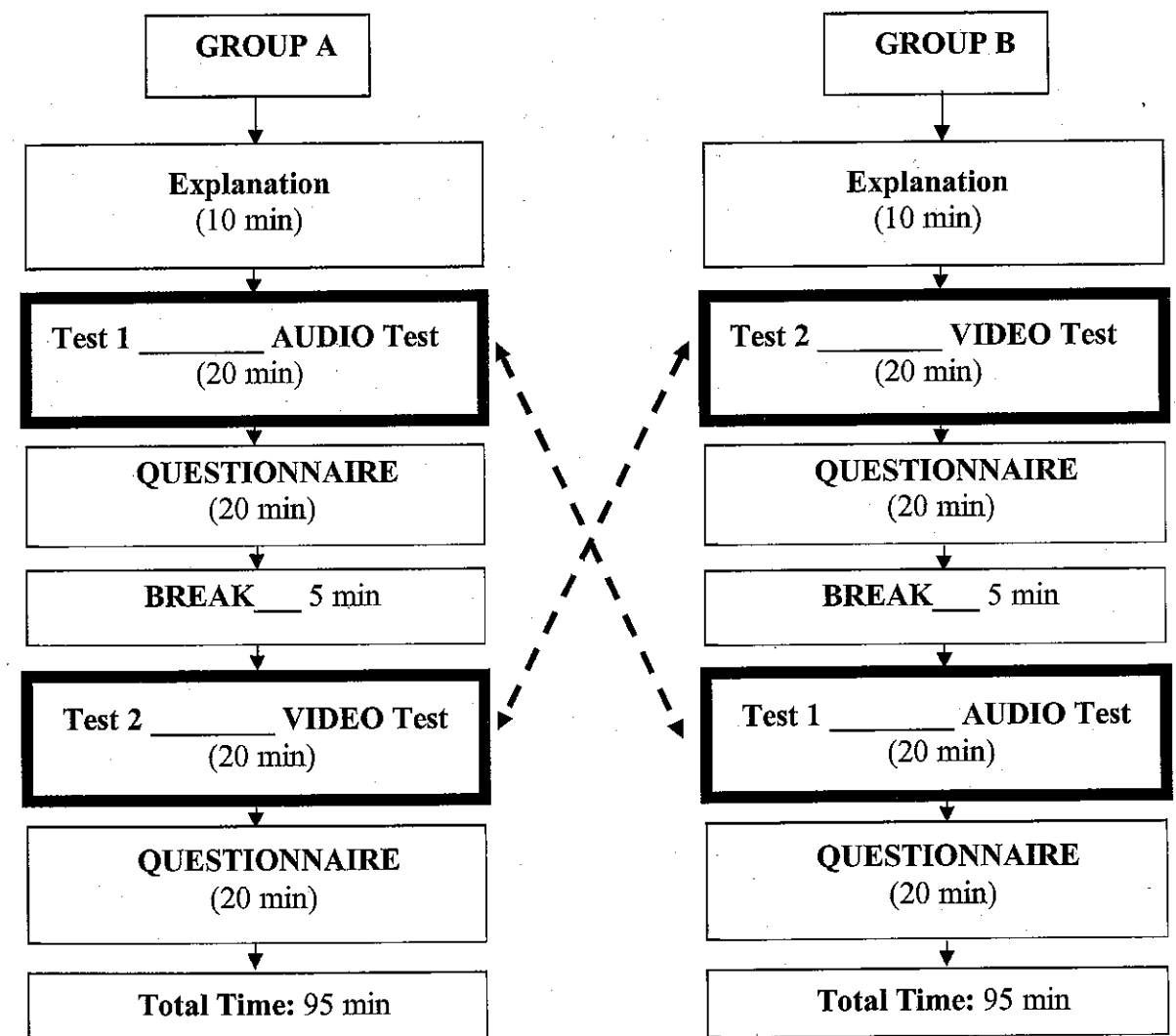
As mentioned in the "Materials" section (3.2), the candidates took the listening comprehension section of a TOEFL test, which was divided into two equal parts. One of the parts was audio recorded and named "test 1", whereas the other part was video recorded and named "test 2".

Once the students agreed to participate in the study the EFL Placement test was used to ascertain that there was no difference between the two groups in terms of L2 proficiency. As soon as the EFL Placement test results assured that the two groups were at the same level of L2 proficiency one of the groups was named group 'A' and the other group 'B'. The two groups took the two tests on the same day, but the testing procedure was carried as outlined below.



The difference between the testing procedures was as follows: the examinees took the same tests, but in a different order. Thus, the candidates of group 'A' first took the audio test: "test 1", and only after completing it, they took the video test: "test 2". The candidates of group 'B', on the other hand, first took "test 2", the video test, and subsequently "test 1", the audio test.

The candidates were provided with an attitude questionnaire after each test. Thus, each candidate had to fill in two questionnaires: one for the audio test and another for the video test. The diagram below demonstrates the overall testing procedure.



The two tests were administered by the classroom teacher during regular class time. The teacher explained to the class that they were going to take two listening tests: an audio test and a video one. Then she distributed to the class TOEFL booklets and answer sheets prepared for the testing. (See Appendix B for an example from the provided TOEFL test booklets.) Despite the fact that both the audio and video tests had instructions, the teacher, before starting the cassette, talked about the format of the test and explicitly explained how the students were going to fill in the answer sheets. During her explanations the students were free to ask questions, which would not have been possible if they had only been provided with audio or video instructions.

Each part of the test took about 20 minutes, after which each student was given an attitude questionnaire. The entire time for filling up the questionnaire was 20 minutes, though some of the students finished working on it much earlier. As soon as the students were through with the questionnaires, they had a short break for five minutes.

After the break the second test was administered. Since the students were already familiar with the format of the test, and since both subtests contained instructions, this time the teacher did not deal with explanations, she just distributed to the class TOEFL booklets and answer sheets prepared for the testing, and started the cassette. The entire test took about 20 minutes, after which the students were provided with an attitude questionnaire once more.

The total testing procedure took 95 minutes. Checking was immediately conducted after the test and on the next day the students were familiar with their marks. The maximum score for each subtest was 25, which was based on the fact that each subtest had 25 items. Therefore, the students gained one point for answering each item correctly.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed on the basis of a quantitative analysis. Quantitative data analysis began with the creation of a task rating plan. (See "Analysis of Test Scores" in the "Results" section). In order to determine whether there was a marked difference in the scores obtained on the two tests, the mean differences were calculated. In order to examine whether there was a difference between two testing methods, a paired t-test was conducted. In order to investigate whether the difference in testing order caused a difference in the candidates' performance, as well as whether the two testing methods had the same impact on the two tested groups, an independent t – test was conducted.

Another framework for quantitative analysis were the attitude questionnaires, which were distributed to the students both after the video and the audio tests. The questionnaires were analyzed through the calculation of the frequency of the students' responses.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This chapter reports on the findings related to the listening comprehension testing methods and their impact on students' performance. The chapter first introduces how the students' tests were scored, as well as how those scores were analyzed. It then presents the results of the conducted paired t-test and the independent t-test.

### 4.1 Analysis of Test Scores

The intent of this study was to investigate the method effect of testing listening comprehension on the students' performance on L2 listening comprehension tests. The two variables dealt with were 'the test method' and 'the test score'. The variables were identified in the following way: In view of the fact that the test method was the subject of investigation it was called the independent variable. "The independent variable is the major variable which you hope to investigate" (Hatch & Farhady, 1981, p.15). The test score was considered a dependent variable, since, "the dependent variable is the one which is observed and measured in order to determine the effect of the independent variable" (Hatch & Farhady, 1981, p.15).

As was mentioned in the "Methodology" section, the chosen listening comprehension test was a section taken from the Paper-Based TOEFL test. After the test had been selected it was divided into two equal halves with 25 items in each. The scoring system was as follows: for answering each item correctly, the candidate gained 1 point, and as a result, the number of correctly answered items corresponded to the number of gained points. (See Appendix D for the scores that the students gained on both tests).

Statistical analyses were performed using SPSS for Windows, version 11.0. With the intent of examining the variability of the responses, the mean differences were calculated.

The calculation of mean scores was realized through conducting a t-test. Table 4.1 shows the results gained from the paired t-test.

**Table 4.1**  
**Differences in Mean Scores Across Tests**

Testing Methods	N	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	Sig	t
Audio Test	30	17.00	10.7667	3.37008	1	.496	1.662
Video Test	30	17.00	9.5333	2.75097			

As table 4.1 illustrates, the mean score obtained for the audio testing was slightly higher than that obtained for the video testing: 10.8 and 9.5, respectively. However, the results of the paired t-test revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the two testing methods.

**Table 4.2**  
**Differences in Mean Scores Across Groups**

GROUPS	Testing Methods	Mean
GROUP 1	Audio Test	10.5333
	Video Test	9.6000
GROUP 2	Audio Test	11.0000
	Video Test	9.4667

As table 4.2 shows, the mean score obtained for the audio testing in group 2 was slightly higher and the mean score obtained for the video testing slightly lower when compared to the mean scores of the students from group 1. However, the results of the paired t-test revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the two testing methods in both groups when considered separately.

To further examine the results an independent t-test was performed. Based on the information gained from the independent t-test the effect of testing order could be investigated. Thus, it was possible to examine whether the students who took the audio test first and the video test later scored differently as compared to those students who first took the video test and the audio test later. The effect of tests within groups (whether the two test methods had the same impact on the two tested groups) could also be examined. Table 4.3 illustrates the results of the independent t – test.

**Table 4.3**

**Differences in Mean Scores Across Groups**

	GROUP	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	df	Sig.	t
AUDIO	group 1	10.5333	2.58752	.66809	1	.678	.374
	group 2	11.0000	4.08831	1.05560			
VIDEO	group 1	9.6000	2.13140	.55032	1	.812	.130
	group 2	9.4667	3.33524	.86115			

Table 4.3 shows the results gained from the independent t – test. With the help of the independent t – test the effect of testing order and the effect of tests within groups were observed. On the basis of the findings of the independent t – test, it was apparent that the scores of those examinees who had taken “test 1” first and “test 2” later slightly differed from the scores of those who had taken “test 2” first and “test 1” afterwards. However, the results of the independent t-test revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the two testing methods when the testing order was changed.

On the basis of the independent t – test I could also state that no statistically significant difference was found when the effect of tests within groups was observed. Thus, the two testing methods had the same impact on the two examined groups.

## 4.2 Questionnaires

After both the video and the audio tests, the students were asked to complete attitude questionnaires in an attempt to ascertain their attitudes towards the two testing methods. Both the audio and video questionnaires were divided into three sections. Each section involved questions which were grouped according to type and to the information they were supposed to elicit. The first two sections were based only on closed questions, whereas the third section involved open ended questions. The students were encouraged to write their comments concerning the two testing methods. (The full questionnaires are provided in Appendix C).

Referring to the way in which the questionnaires were formed, it should be mentioned that the first and the third sections were aimed at providing the students with direct questions, whereas the second section of the questionnaire was aimed at providing the students with such questions that would help to elicit information indirectly. For example, the students were asked whether either test was easier, although it could be assumed that both subtests were at the same level of difficulty as they were made up of alternate questions from a single TOEFL practice test.

Table 4.4

Student's Attitudes towards the Tests

Question(s)	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Slightly disagree		Partly agree		Agree		Strongly agree	
	A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V
1.1	1	1	4	7	1	6	15	6	6	5	2	3
1.2	0	2	4	0	6	10	7	10	12	5	1	1
1.3	0	4	2	5	4	4	12	6	9	7	3	3
1.4	6	3	7	1	4	6	3	5	6	7	4	6
1.5	0	0	0	0	6	3	13	8	8	10	1	3

Table 4.4 shows how the answers of all 30 students for section one were recorded.

'A' stands for the audio test answers and 'V' stands for video test answers.

The frequency of students' responses for each question was tallied and recorded as percentages. Table 4.5 illustrates an example of a frequency table, which shows the students' preferences of testing methods (See Appendix E for a comprehensive list of frequency tables showing the answers of all questions).

**Table 4.5**  
**Student Preferences for Testing Methods**

Question 1.1	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Partly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Missing	Total
	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)
<b>Audio</b>	1 (3.3%)	4 (13.3%)	1 (3.3%)	15 (50%)	6 (20.0%)	2 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)	30 (100%)
<b>Video</b>	1 (3.3%)	7 (23.3%)	6 (20.0%)	6 (20.0%)	5 (16.7%)	3 (10.0%)	1 (3.3%)	30 (100%)

F = Frequency; P = Percent

The answers of the first section of the questionnaires indicated contrary results: most test-takers (almost 80 percent) felt that they could comprehend the provided information better when they were tested through audio recording. At the same time 60 percent of the students reported that seeing people made it easier for them to understand what was said. Similar results were found by Baltova (1994, cited in Wagner, 2004), who reported that video was helpful in understanding the listening tests.

The second section of the questionnaire required the test-takers to indicate on a six-point Likert scale, identifying the level of difficulty and helpfulness for both tests. (See Appendix E for the records and frequency tables of the answers to all questions). Table 4.6 demonstrates how the answers of all 30 students for section two were recorded.



**Table 4.6**  
**Student's Attitudes towards the Tests**

**Question 2. 1**

Difficult 5		4		3		2		1		Easy	
A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V
2	3	2	4	16	11	2	5	6	1	1	3

**Question 2. 2**

Helpful 5		4		3		2		1		Not Helpful	
A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V
4	7	3	7	9	5	7	4	5	2	1	2

**Question 2. 3**

10 or fewer (0% - 40 %)		11 - 15 (45%-60 %)		16 - 20 (65%-80 %)		21 - 25 (85%-100 %)	
A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V
6	5	10	10	11	11	1	2

The results revealed that according to 60 percent of the students both the audio and video tests were either at the third level of difficulty or below it. Virtually all students expected to get similar grades for both tests. The results also revealed that approximately 60 percent of the students considered the usage of video tests more helpful than that of the audio one. Similar results were found by Wagner (2004), who stated that the test takers considered the video testing to be more helpful and interesting as compared to the audio testing.

According to the third section of questionnaire responses, more than 78 percent of the students felt that testing through video recording was a good idea, and in case of having an opportunity to choose, they would prefer to be tested through the video testing method. In their comments the students mentioned that they preferred the video testing method because seeing the actors' gestures helped them to comprehend the provided input. Wagner (2004) came to a similar conclusion, noting that non-verbal communication reinforces the speakers' utterances.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter deals with the discussion and evaluation of the results of the study, followed by the discussion of the potential implications of the research related to the listening comprehension testing methods. It then deals with limitations of the study based on which suggestions for further research are given. The chapter concludes with an overview of the study.

### 5.1 Discussion

This study could be considered significant in terms of the issues it addresses regarding the two methods of testing: audio versus video, as well as regarding the context where it was conducted. As was mentioned before, it seems to be the first time that such an investigation was conducted in Armenia. The statistical results of the investigation show that there is no difference between testing the students through video recordings or audio ones. These results confirm those found by Ikeguchi (1997), whose study revealed that there was no difference between the two testing methods.

Visual stimuli are sometimes regarded as a means of testing listening comprehension which provides test takers with additional support (Gruba, 1999). Regardless of the fact that the statistical analysis of students' scores did not show any difference between the two testing methods, based on the results of the questionnaire survey, it seems that the majority of the students found the video testing more motivating and interesting than the audio format: "It is enjoyable to watch the video. Besides, when I don't understand something the speakers' gestures help me to guess", mentioned some of them. These results confirm those found by Baltova (1994), (cited in Gruba, 1999), who argued that the examinees' motivation was much enhanced when they were provided visual stimuli. Similar results were found by Wagner

(2004), who reported that nearly all test-takers considered tests supported by visual stimuli more interesting and helpful in comprehending the spoken text.

Despite the positive attitude that most of the students had towards the video testing, some of the students preferred to be tested only through an audio recording. According to them, it was the audio testing and not the video one that gave them an opportunity to evaluate their real abilities. They also considered that the video distracted them. It was impossible for them to watch and read simultaneously. "I can concentrate when I only listen ... video distracts my attention", mentioned some of them. Similar results were found by Kasten (1995), (cited in Gruba, 1999), who had found that a number of examinees tended to ignore the video monitor during the test administration. These results confirm those found by Gruba (1994), (cited in Gruba, 1999), who, after noticing that several examinees did not watch the video but look at their desks trying to concentrate, questioned the utility of video-mediated examinations. Similar ideas were expressed by Berry (1995), who conducted a study with the intent of investigating the impact of audio versus video stimuli on the test takers' written responses.

## 5.2 Implications

The implications of this study are as follows: One implication of this investigation may be the fact that it encourages Armenian teachers to reconsider their choice of using only audio recordings for L2 listening comprehension teaching and testing. In this regard, the study suggests that visual stimuli may contribute to the comprehension process through adding motivation and raising interest towards the provided oral input.

Another implication of this study is that it may be counter-productive to promote the idea that "both types of elements are used as part of the information that listeners need to be able to select and interpret to make sense of a message" (Gruba, 1999, p. 275). In this respect,

if it is the first time that such an investigation was conducted in Armenia, it may be assumed that Armenian teachers need information such as what kind of role visuals have in supporting auditory cues and whether they may enhance L2 listening comprehension.

### 5.3 Limitations

There are a number of limitations to this study. The first might be the result of the video test itself. Since the video version of the test was not video recorded by actors, it is quite possible that the contextual and visual clues were not sufficiently interrelated with the oral input. Test developers should consider the extent to which visual clues interact with the provided oral message (Gruba, 1999). Thus, it would be useful to confirm this study using a test which was video recorded by professionals.

The second limitation of the study concerned the type of listening being investigated. Since the candidates were going to attend a video recording and to listen to an audio recording, it should be mentioned that they were involved only in transactional (non-participatory) listening processes. Since the communication was non-verbal, the candidates could not ask for repetition in case of failing to understand some information. With the intent of helping the students, the instructions for the tests were read and explained by the class teacher. Here the students were given the opportunity to ask for clarification or explanation of missed or misunderstood information, but as soon as the recording was turned on, the students were involved only in a non-participatory listening process.

Another limitation of the study was connected with the students' testing experience prior to the current examination. As the results of the comparison of the students' mean scores revealed, both groups scored better on the second testing. This means that they could not get involved in either testing procedure at once. One of the explanations for the students' behavior could be insufficient experience in testing listening comprehension. This is

quite possible, since, as was mentioned before, the examinees were 16-17 year old students with an intermediate level of L2 proficiency. Consequently, it could be useful to confirm the results of this study with two groups of examinees who have the same level of L2 proficiency, but who differ in testing experience.

Another limitation of the study was connected with the students' testing experience using a video recording. As their instructor mentioned later, the students had not had as much experience of being tested through video recording as they had had through audio recording. As a result, some of the students seemed confused and a little bit stressed. If students worry during the test, their anxiety does not allow them to concentrate and give full attention to the task (Arnold, 2000). Thus, based on this statement one might say that if the students had had prior experience of being tested through video recording, the results of the tests might have been different. It might be quite possible that some of the students accepted the idea of being tested through the video recording rather negatively because of their lack of experience. Consequently, it could be very useful to confirm this study with a group of students who would have equivalent experience with being tested through both the video and audio recording.

A further limitation of the study was the number of the test takers. Though the number of the students used in this study reached 30, it would be extremely useful to verify this study with a larger group of test takers with different L2 proficiency levels. For example, 30 examinees representing a beginner level population, 30 intermediate, 30 upper intermediate and so forth. Specifically, to measure the impact of testing methods on students' performance with different L2 proficiency levels might be an important topic for future research.

#### 5.4 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to compare two methods of testing L2 listening comprehension via video versus audio recordings. The samples for the examination were 30 non-native speakers of English language living in Armenia. The results, which are based on a paired t-test and an independent t – test, showed that there was no significant difference in the test results whether the assessment was delivered through an audio or a video recording. The results of questionnaires, however, showed that the students found the video testing more motivating as compared to the audio testing.

In conclusion, this study was an experiment aimed to give direction for future development of testing methods in Armenia. Despite the limitations mentioned in the section above, this study contributes to the assessment of listening comprehension in the Armenian education system and encourages the use of video in L2 testing. Although further research is necessary before it can be ascertained which method of testing best enhances listening comprehension, this study provides support for the use of video materials to measure L2 listening comprehension in the Armenian testing system.

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**APPENDIX A**

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS

**Consent form** for persons participating in research projects

Project title: **Listening Comprehension Testing Methods and Their Impact on Student Performance**

Name of investigator: Liana Sukiasyan

**Research Goals:** This study seeks to examine the relationship between testing methods and the students' performance.

**By agreeing to participate, I affirm that I understand that:**

- My participation is completely voluntary.
- The information I provide will be used only for research purposes.
- I may withdraw from the study at any time without the risk of any penalty.
- The information I provide will be anonymous.

**Name of participant:**

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ 200

November, 2004

Dear Armenian students,

Would you like to participate in a research project?

As part of a group of students from European University who participate in this study you are supposed to

- (a) read and sign this form, which will state that you understand the aim of the study and the procedures you will be involved in
- (b) take two short tests with the duration of 20 minutes each
- (c) fill in a short attitude questionnaire after each test.

The entire process will take about 70 minutes. The testing procedure will take place at auditorium number 401 on the fourth floor of the "European University" building.

Your help would be much appreciated.

Liana Sukiasyan

Department of Applied Linguistics,

American University of Armenia

# AUDIO TEST

A Listening Comprehension  
Section of a TOEFL Test

Designed for a Case Study

## PART A

### Directions:

In part A you will hear short conversations between two people.

After each conversation you will hear a question about the conversation.

The conversations and questions will not be repeated. After you hear a question, read the four possible answers and choose the best answer.

Then, on your answer sheet find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.

1. (A) Turn up the volume.  
(B) Stop talking so much.  
(C) Play the music more softly.  
(D) Play different music.
2. (A) He decided not to attend summer school.  
(B) He may have difficulty working and studying at the same time.  
(C) He's working hard so that he can afford to go to New York.  
(D) He's teaching school this summer.
3. (A) The clothes don't look clean to him.  
(B) He doesn't intend to get the clothes.  
(C) He can pick out his clothes.  
(D) The woman should stop staring at his clothes.
4. (A) The woman should get another job.  
(B) He won't have to wait much longer.  
(C) The woman was mistaken.  
(D) He was waiting in the wrong place.
5. (A) Rewrite the paper.  
(B) Ask the woman to do some typing.  
(C) Read the newspaper again  
(D) Check the paper for mistakes



6. (A) The transportation for the trip is free.  
(B) The class didn't enjoy going on the field trip.  
(C) Some people may not go on the trip.  
(D) Everyone in the class has paid the fee.
7. (A) He doesn't know how to turn the calculator on.  
(B) He lost the woman's calculator.  
(C) He broke something the woman lent him.  
(D) He can't help the woman tonight.
8. (A) A salary cut.  
(B) A real estate bargain.  
(C) A rent increase.  
(D) A vacation trip.
9. (A) She might not be able to attend the ceremony.  
(B) She is not going to graduate this semester.  
(C) She has only a week to complete the work.  
(D) She hasn't been able to find a job.
10. (A) They're being mailed to his old address.  
(B) They're being sent to the woman's address.  
(C) They're being forwarded to his apartment.  
(D) They're being held at the post office.
11. (A) He's probably nearby.  
(B) He should pick up his things.  
(C) He broke his racket.  
(D) He might be playing tennis right now.
12. (A) He spoke to a well-known expert on inflation.  
(B) He doesn't know when the group will finish.  
(C) He didn't have time to prepare for the discussion.  
(D) He expected the discussion to be shorter.
13. (A) Watch the clock carefully during the final exam.  
(B) Pick up their papers on the twelfth.  
(C) Finish their assignments early.  
(D) Discuss their paper topics after class.
14. (A) He has taken extra courses before.  
(B) He won't mind the extra work.  
(C) He's making a bad decision.  
(D) He should be graduating this term.
15. (A) The modern art prints are too expensive.  
(B) He really appreciates the woman's gift.  
(C) He hopes the woman likes the modern art.  
(D) People who enjoy modern art would like the prints.



PART B

Directions:

In this part of the Test, you will hear longer conversations. The conversations and questions will not be repeated.

After you hear a question, read the four possible answers and choose the best answer. Then, on your answer sheet find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.  
Remember, you should not take notes or write in your workbook.

16. (A) The reproductive cycle of barnacles.  
(B) A new source of protein.  
(C) Types of sea animals.  
(D) The adhesive quality of barnacles.

17. (A) They eat protein.  
(B) They never move from one location.  
(C) They cause erosion of rocks  
(D) They re found only in deep water.

18. (A) It works on wet surfaces.  
(B) It is stronger than synthetic glue.  
(C) It's nutritious source of protein.  
(D) It has been used successfully by doctors.

19. (A) Nutrition.  
(B) Ecology.  
(C) Medicine.  
(D) Geology.





PART C

Directions:

In this part of the Test, you will hear several talks. After each talk you will hear some questions. The talks and questions will not be repeated.

After you hear a question, read the four possible answers and choose the best answer. Then, on your answer sheet find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.

20. (A) To make recommendations on sensible dieting.  
(B) To report the latest advances in physical therapy.  
(C) To relate an experiment combining sleep and exercise.  
(D) To offer advice about sleeping problems.
21. (A) Your heart rate is lowered.  
(B) It becomes harder to relax.  
(C) You become too tired to sleep.  
(D) Sleep rhythms are disrupted.
22. (A) Failure to rest during the day.  
(B) Lack of sleep on weekends.  
(C) Vigorous exercise in the evening.  
(D) Eating cheese before going to bed.
23. (A) Fire prevention.  
(B) Pest control.  
(C) House construction.  
(D) Toxic chemicals.
24. (A) It's cheaper.  
(B) It's safer.  
(C) It's quicker.  
(D) It's readily available.
25. (A) To keep the heat inside.  
(B) To prevent insects from escaping.  
(C) To reduce the risk of fire.  
(D) To keep the wood dry.



# VIDEO TEST

A Listening Comprehension  
Section of a TOEFL Test

Designed for a Case Study

## PART A

### Directions:

In part A you will hear short conversations between two people.

After each conversation you will hear a question about the conversation.

The conversations and questions will not be repeated. After you hear a

question, read the four possible answers and choose the best answer.

Then, on your answer sheet find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.

1. (A) She wasn't able to organize it.  
(B) Its location has been changed.  
(C) It has been rescheduled.  
(D) She doesn't know anything about it.
2. (A) It's interesting.  
(B) It's easier than he expected.  
(C) It's too crowded.  
(D) It's quite difficult.
3. (A) Ask Joan to come to the meeting before lunch.  
(B) Tell Joan about the meeting at lunch.  
(C) Ask Joan to meet him for lunch.  
(D) Cancel the meeting with Joan.
4. (A) The plans are being drawn up.  
(B) The construction was finished on time.  
(C) The library is closed for repairs.  
(D) The addition will be completed soon.
5. (A) The train is always late.  
(B) She needs to check the train schedule.  
(C) They are going to be delayed again.  
(D) They need to decide on a schedule.



6. (A) She doesn't need an umbrella.  
(B) She left her umbrella in the car.  
(C) She will share her umbrella with the man.  
(D) She doesn't plan to stay outside long.

7. (A) Take a lot of money.  
(B) Go to a different restaurant.  
(C) Ask someone else to go with her.  
(D) Wear different clothes.

8. (A) She doesn't like to go shopping.  
(B) She went shopping yesterday.  
(C) She doesn't live near the shops.  
(D) She prefers shopping to studying.

9. (A) Finish the game.  
(B) Play harder next time.  
(C) Reconsider his decision.  
(D) Stop complaining.

10. (A) She gave one or two parties.  
(B) She came to two parties.  
(C) She comes to most of their parties.  
(D) She missed most of their parties.

11. (A) He went mountain climbing last year.  
(B) He's climbed mountains in many parts of the world.  
(C) He was the last person to go.  
(D) He isn't interested in going.

12. (A) She doesn't know anything about it.  
(B) A good name hasn't been found for it.  
(C) They decided to postpone building it.  
(D) It hasn't been designed yet.

13. (A) Stay home to prepare for his exams.  
(B) Attend the concert after his exams are finished.  
(C) Ask the woman to study with him.  
(D) Go to the concert with the woman.

14. (A) He's surprised he couldn't find the hotel.  
(B) He often gets lost.  
(C) He doesn't know where the hotel is.  
(D) He'd rather go to another hotel.

15. (A) He would send a postcard if he went away.  
(B) He wouldn't be able to take a vacation.  
(C) He had already moved to Florida.  
(D) He didn't want to go to Florida.



PART B

Directions:

In this part of the Test, you will hear longer conversations. The conversations and questions will not be repeated.

After you hear a question, read the four possible answers and choose the best answer. Then, on your answer sheet find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.

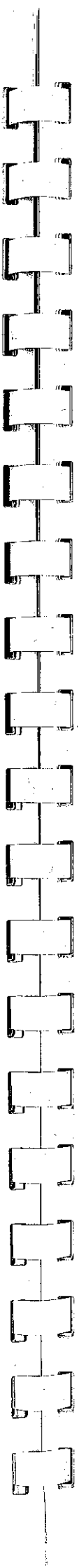
Remember, you should not take notes or write in your workbook.

16. (A) The election for senator.  
(B) The election for treasurer.  
(C) The election for secretary.  
(D) The election for president.

17. (A) They are competing against each other in an election.  
(B) The man is writing the woman's speech.  
(C) The man is interviewing the woman.  
(D) The woman is planning the man's campaign.

18. (A) Make posters.  
(B) Write a speech.  
(C) Answer questions.  
(D) Study chemistry.

19. (A) Compare their lecture notes.  
(B) Review the man's talk.  
(C) Prepare questions to ask candidates.  
(D) Vote in the school election.



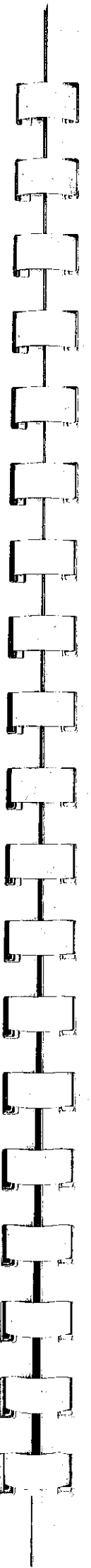
PART C

Directions:

In this part of the Test, you will hear several talks. After each talk you will hear some questions. The talks and questions will not be repeated.

After you hear a question, read the four possible answers and choose the best answer. Then, on your answer sheet find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.

20. (A) The layout of the laboratory.  
(B) A laboratory experiment.  
(C) The workbook for the laboratory course.  
(D) A piece of equipment.
21. (A) Homework must be handed in on time.  
(B) The students must follow all instructions exactly.  
(C) The students will be able to make choices about the laboratory work.  
(D) A great deal of equipment is available.
22. (A) The activities are to be done during class.  
(B) The activities take less time.  
(C) Students are not required to do the activities.  
(D) Few instructions are given for the activities.
23. (A) A recent textbook assignment.  
(B) Requirements for the final examination.  
(C) Choosing research topics.  
(D) Preparing an outline for a paper.
24. (A) Immediately.  
(B) The following week.  
(C) In two weeks.  
(D) At the end of the semester.
25. (A) To present final papers.  
(B) To give a model of outline style  
(C) To discuss the preliminary outline.





**APPENDIX C**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**  
*(for the audio test)*

*The intent of this research is to study two methods of testing L2 listening comprehension, i.e. using video recordings versus audio recordings, and to examine the impact of these two testing methods on students' performance. All participants are guaranteed anonymity.*

**I. DIRECTIONS:** For each of the statement below place "1" in the cell that most accurately describes your attitude.

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Partly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1.	While listening to the audio recording I could understand the provided information more easily than while listening to the video recording.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	could understand the meaning of the dialogues even when I heard unfamiliar words.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	could understand the meaning of the monologues even when I heard unfamiliar words.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	found that seeing people doesn't make it easier to understand what was said.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	was aware that my performance was affected by the format of the test.	1	2	3	4	5	6

**I. DIRECTIONS:** For each of the statement below place "1" in the cell that most accurately describes your attitude.

1.	I found this test _____	DIFFICULT	5	4	3	2	1	EASY
2.	I believe that not seeing the speakers was _____ for completing the task.	HELPFUL	5	4	3	2	1	NOT HELPFUL
3.	Out of the 25 questions in the test I believe that I have answered correctly _____	10 or fewer (0% - 40 %)	11 - 15 (45% - 60 %)	16 - 20 (65% - 80 %)	21 - 25 (85% - 100 %)			
		49						



III.

**DIRECTIONS:** *Please, spend a few minutes to complete.*

1. Do you think that using an audio recording for a test of listening comprehension is a good idea?

**YES**

**NO**

Why? / Why not? (Please, give reasons for your answer.)

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2. If you could choose, which method of testing you would prefer.

**A. audio**

**B. video**

Why? Please, mention three reasons.

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

(c) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Please, add any further comments here.

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## QUESTIONNAIRE

(for the video test)

*The intent of this research is to study two methods of testing L2 listening comprehension, i.e. using video recordings versus audio recordings; and to examine the impact of these two testing methods on students' performance. All participants are guaranteed anonymity.*

I. **DIRECTIONS:** For each of the statement below place " " in the cell that most accurately describes your attitude.

While listening to the video recording I		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Partly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1.	could understand the provided information more easily than while listening to the audio recording.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	could understand the meaning of the dialogues even when I heard unfamiliar words.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	could understand the meaning of the monologues even when I heard unfamiliar words.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	found that seeing people makes it easier to understand what was said.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	was aware that my performance was affected by the format of the test.	1	2	3	4	5	6

I. **DIRECTIONS:** For each of the statement below place " " in the cell that most accurately describes your attitude.

1.	I found this test _____	DIFFICULT 5	4	3	2	1	EASY
2.	I believe that seeing the speakers was _____ for completing the task.	HELPFUL 5	4	3	2	1	NOT HELPFUL
3.	Out of the 25 questions in the test I believe that I have answered correctly _____	10 or fewer (0% - 40 %)	11 - 15 (45% - 60 %)	16 - 20 (65% - 80 %)	21 - 25 (85% - 100 %)		



III.

**DIRECTIONS:** *Please, spend a few minutes to complete.*

1. Do you think that using a video recording for a test of listening comprehension is a good idea?

**YES**                      **NO**

Why? / Why not? (Please, give reasons for your answer.)

---

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2. If you could choose, which method of testing you would prefer.

**A. audio**                      **B. video**

Why? Please, mention three reasons.

(a) 

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(b) 

---

(c) 

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3. Please, add any further comments here.

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**APPENDIX D**

**Scores of the Students Gained on Both Tests**

ID	Audio Testing		Video Testing	
	Number of Correct Answers	Score	Number of Correct Answers	Score
0101	15	15	9	9
0102	9	9	11	11
0103	9	9	9	9
0104	12	12	9	9
0105	8	8	13	13
0106	12	12	7	7
0107	11	11	12	12
0108	9	9	11	11
0109	13	13	8	8
0110	9	9	11	11
0111	14	14	6	6
0112	5	5	8	8
0113	12	12	13	13
0114	11	11	9	9
0115	9	9	8	8

ID	Video Testing		Audio Testing	
	Number of Correct Answers	Score	Number of Correct Answers	Score
0201	16	16	17	17
0202	9	9	7	7
0203	9	9	7	7
0204	17	17	16	16
0205	4	4	15	15
0206	7	7	6	6
0207	8	8	6	6
0208	7	7	16	16
0209	9	9	9	9
0210	8	8	11	11
0211	9	9	9	9
0212	10	10	8	8
0213	8	8	13	13
0214	9	9	16	16
0215	12	12	9	9

**APPENDIX E**

**Student Preferences for Testing Methods**

Question(s)	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Slightly disagree		Partly agree		Agree		Strongly agree	
	A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V
1.1	1	1	4	7	1	6	15	6	6	5	2	3
1.2	0	2	4	0	6	10	7	10	12	5	1	1
1.3	0	4	2	5	4	4	12	6	9	7	3	3
1.4	6	3	7	1	4	6	3	5	6	7	4	6
1.5	0	0	0	0	6	3	13	8	8	10	1	3

Question 1.1	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Partly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	Missing
	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)
<b>Audio</b>	1 (3.3%)	4 (13.3%)	1 (3.3%)	15 (50%)	6 (20.0%)	2 (6.7%)	30 (100%)	1 (3.3%)
<b>Video</b>	1 (3.3%)	7 (23.3%)	6 (20.0%)	6 (20.0%)	5 (16.7%)	3 (10.0%)	30 (100%)	1 (3.3%)

F = Frequency; P = Percent

Question 1.2	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Partly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	Missing
	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)
<b>Audio</b>	0	4 (13.3%)	6 (20.0%)	7 (23.3%)	6 (40.0%)	1 (3.3%)	30 (100%)	0
<b>Video</b>	2 (6.7%)	0	10 (33.3%)	10 (33.3%)	5 (16.7%)	1 (3.3%)	30 (100%)	2 (6.7%)

Question 1.3	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Partly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	Missing
	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)
<b>Audio</b>	0	2 (6.7%)	4 (13.3%)	12 (40%)	9 (30.0%)	3 (10%)	30 (100%)	0
<b>Video</b>	4 (13.3%)	5 (16.7%)	4 (13.3%)	6 (20.0%)	7 (23.3%)	3 (10.0%)	30 (100%)	1 (3.3%)

Question 1.4	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Partly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	Missing
	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)
<b>Audio</b>	6 (20.0%)	7 (23.3%)	4 (13.3%)	3 (10%)	6 (20.0%)	4 (13.3%)	30 (100%)	0
<b>Video</b>	3 (10.0%)	1 (3.3%)	6 (20.0%)	5 (16.7%)	7 (23.3%)	6 (20.0%)	30 (100%)	2(6.7%)

Question 1.5	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Partly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	Missing
	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)
<b>Audio</b>	0	0	6 (20%)	13 (43.3%)	8 (26.7%)	1 (3.3%)	30 (100%)	2 (6.7%)
<b>Video</b>	0	0	3 (10.0%)	8 (26.7%)	10 (33.3%)	3 (10.0%)	30 (100%)	6 (20%)

**Question 2. 1**

Difficult 5		4		3		2		1		Easy	
A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

Question 2.1	Difficult 5	4	3	2	1	Easy	Total	Missing
	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)
<b>Audio</b>	2 (6.7%)	2 (6.7%)	16 (53.3%)	2 (6.7%)	6 (20%)	1 (3.3%)	30 (100%)	1 (3.3%)
<b>Video</b>	3 (10.0%)	4 (13.3%)	11 (36.7%)	5 (16.7%)	1 (3.3%)	3 (10.0%)	30 (100%)	3 (10.0%)

**Question 2. 2**

Helpful 5		4		3		2		1		Not Helpful	
A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V
<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

Question 2.2	Helpful 5	4	3	2	1	Not Helpful	Total	Missing
	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)
<b>Audio</b>	4 (13.3%)	3 (10.0%)	9 (30.0%)	7 (23.3%)	5 (16.7%)	1 (3.3%)	30 (100%)	1 (3.3%)
<b>Video</b>	7 (23.3%)	7 (23.3%)	5 (16.7%)	4 (13.3%)	2 (6.7%)	2 (6.7%)	30 (100%)	3 (10.0%)

**Question 2. 3**

10 or fewer (0% - 40 %)		11 - 15 (45%-60 %)		16 - 20 (65%-80 %)		21 - 25 (85%-100 %)	
A	V	A	V	A	V	A	V
<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

Question 2.3	10 or fewer (0% - 40%)	11 - 15 (45% - 60%)	16 - 20 (65% - 80%)	21 - 25 (85% - 100%)	Total	Missing
	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)	F (P)
<b>Audio</b>	6 (20.0%)	10 (33.3%)	11 (36.7%)	1 (3.3%)	30 (100%)	2 (6.7%)
<b>Video</b>	5 (16.7%)	12 (40.0%)	11 (36.7%)	0	30 (100%)	2 (6.7%)

## COMMENTS

### Question 3. 1 (After the audio test)

Do you think that using an audio recording for a test of listening comprehension is a good idea?

**YES**                      **NO**

Why? / Why not? (Please, give reasons for your answer.)

- (No) Because, I think, that we can understand more by watching and listening than only by listening.
- (No) Because, it is easier to understand something by not only listening, but also watching.
- (No) because, I can't understand well what they are speaking about without seeing them.
- (Yes) Because, we demonstrate our real abilities.
- (Yes) Because, it helps me to know the language better.
- (Yes) Because while listening to the tape you develop skills.

### Question 3. 1 (After the video test)

Do you think that using a video recording for a test of listening comprehension is a good idea?

**YES**                      **NO**

Why? / Why not? (Please, give reasons for your answer.)

- (Yes) When we see speakers, we understand better.
- (Yes) Watching video is funny.
- (Yes) Because video allows me to see what is happening.
- (Yes) Because, by seeing their manners you can understand what they mean better.
- (Yes) It is easier to understand.
- (Yes) Pictures help us to understand the speech.
- (Yes) It is more interesting to watch than only listen.
- (-) Both video and audio are the same for me.
- (No) Because, it distracts my attention.
- (No) Because, I cannot watch and read simultaneously.

- Question 3.1

If you could choose, which method of testing you would prefer.

A. audio      B. video

Why?

A. audio

- Video distracts my attention.
- I can concentrate better when I only listen.

B. video

- We can watch it like a usual TV program.
- It is more interesting
- We can understand better by seeing people.
- It is easy to remember some details when you both listen and watch.
- When I don't understand something the speakers' gestures help me to guess.
- It is enjoyable.
- Video makes me be more attentive during the test.
- It seems easier.