

THE EFFECT OF RATE OF SPEECH AND CALL DESIGN FEATURES ON EFL
LISTENING COMPREHENSION AND STRATEGY USE

by

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DEDICATION

To my family and friends, without whom nothing at all would be possible.

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ABSTRACT

Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) allows designers to control for rate of speech and the amount and kinds of control learners have over playback in listening comprehension exercises for second language (L2) learners. Research shows that slower rates of speech can improve listening comprehension (Chaudron, 1988; Zhao, 1997), as can pausing (Zhao, 1997). Jensen and Vinther's (2003) work suggests that, in listening comprehension training, slower speeds can help improve L2 learners' comprehension of grammatical structures.

This study examined the influence of different rates of speech and learner controls in a CALL environment. The study used a pretest—training—posttest design. All subjects were pre-tested on listening comprehension on both slow (135 words per minute) and fast (180 words per minute) dialogues. They also performed a maze task as a pretest. Then the participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions for ten training sessions: A) trained on only fast dialogues, B) trained on only slow dialogues, C) given a choice of speed for the second playback during the lessons, and D) given an option to pause playback when listening the second time. Posttests followed training. Data were also collected through surveys and interviews, allowing the issues of CALL design and communication and learning strategy use to be investigated as well.

The data support the previous research but also suggest that design features can affect L2 learners either positively or negatively. This study, which was done with Chilean, college-level students of English as a foreign language (EFL), has implications

for CALL design and classroom teaching, as well as language testing. These are discussed, as are suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

“Slower, please... Could you repeat that?” In beginning English as a second language (ESL) or English as a foreign language (EFL), these are often the first phrases one learns to say. Everyone, when learning a second language (L2), finds normal L2 speech produced by native speakers to be too fast to keep up with, and this is experienced as a hindrance to comprehension. Speaking to an L2 language learner in a slower and clearer manner can help the L2 learner comprehend. But will it help that person learn the L2? This is the primary question that drove the research that is reported in this dissertation: what rate of speech most helps the L2 learner improve his or her listening comprehension—fast or slow?

Perhaps the answer is slow. Perhaps the more a learner understands, the more he or she learns, or, put another way, the more accessible the input to the L2 learner is, the more that second language acquisition (SLA) takes place. On the other hand, the goal of almost every L2 learner is to be able to understand native speakers speaking naturally. If this is the goal, should not the material that the learner practices with be as much like authentic speech as possible? When L2 learners are immersed in an environment rich with authentic listening material, they are eventually able to pick up on the content. Would it not be best to get the learner immediately accustomed to “the real thing”?

One might suggest that providing L2 learners with only authentically fast listening materials would in this way make L2 acquisition more like L1 acquisition. After all, babies learn their first language immersed in an environment of authentic speech.

While the idea of learning a second language in just the same way that children learn their first language has wide appeal, there is a great deal of evidence that adults in fact do not learn languages the same way that children do. Rather, adults use many of their general problem solving skills to learn languages (Meisel, 1997). If this is what adults are doing, then perhaps a slower listening speed is better for them, so as to give them time to do the kind of analysis on the L2 that they are prone to doing. It is also important to note that in fact the input directed towards a child learning his or her L1 is typically simplified—although not necessarily slowed down—for the child’s benefit (Moskowitz, 1998).¹

Foreign language (FL) teachers tend to have personal convictions about how fast they should speak to their students. These beliefs are based mostly on intuition and personal experience. However, intuitions about the language learning process have many times been proven wrong by research (Ellis, 1994; Proctor, Capaldi, & Vu, 2003), and not all FL teachers have the same intuitions about what the correct solution is to the question of what speed is most beneficial to L2 learners.

Because of this, there is a place in the field for the research presented in this thesis, and it can inform classroom practice in a very practical way. Another area in which the research presented here can be put to use is in the field of computer-assisted language learning (CALL). Research about what rate of speech could best help language learners is even more important for CALL than it is for classroom applications because, unlike the case of the face-to-face classroom experience, there is in CALL no trained

¹This is not, however, universally true (Brice-Heath, 1983).

specialist (teacher) observing the learner and making moment to moment adjustments according to the learner's behavior and the teacher's interpretation of it.² Instead, CALL programs must be well thought through in their inception and programmed according to best practices.

CALL lessons have the potential for including any number of added features such as visual aids, help menus, glosses, and so on. Many features that can be added to a language lesson are difficult, time consuming and expensive to add. Others are extremely simple to program. CALL features should always be considered in terms of the ratio of cost to benefit. Therefore, research should be done on features that might be added to CALL to check for their usefulness, and it makes sense to start by researching the utility of those features that are especially easy to add into a CALL lesson and which present little to no additional cost in the production of the lesson.

The study presented in this thesis looked at simple features in CALL that directly had to do with the question of rate of speech and the development of listening comprehension in an L2. Four styles of presentation of listening comprehension practice were studied and compared: 1) fast dialogues, 2) slow dialogues, 3) allowing the language learners to choose between fast and slow dialogues, and 4) allowing the language learners to pause fast dialogues.³ A number of other issues about CALL design—such as what kind of visuals will accompany the lessons and what kinds of

² An exception to this would be through video conferencing, but this is quite labor-intensive and represents only a very small proportion of what counts as CALL.

³ Another condition that might have been studied is allowing the language learners to rewind and play listening passages back. However, this would have added the confounding factor of increased time on task, and so it was decided to simply study pausing by itself.

comprehension checks and feedback the learners will be given—invariably come up when designing CALL lessons, and the present study also investigated the way in which learners responded to these.

1.2 KEY CONCEPTS

This study researches the effect of rate of speech, in computer-delivered lessons, on the development of listening comprehension in L2 learners. There are six areas which are key to the conceptualization of this investigation and which shall be dealt with in a preliminary fashion here in Chapter 1, as a means of framing the literature review that is to be found in Chapter 2, which in turn sets the background of the study. These six areas are: CALL, rate of speech, listening comprehension, SLA, speeded processing of an L2, and the use of communication and learning strategies.

1.2.1 CALL

Language learning may be assisted by computers in one of two major ways: either the computer can be used to take the role of a tutor, in a sense replacing a human teacher or interlocutor; or the computer might be used instead as a tool to enhance human communication. The former is referred to as *tutorial CALL*, and the latter is called *computer-mediated communication (CMC)*. Early efforts in CALL had goals leaning more towards tutorial CALL; programs were made with the hopes of creating intelligent tutors for language learners. Then, a profound shift in research focus happened. The majority of publications about CALL in the last decade or more have been concerned

with CMC (Hauck & Stickler, 2006). One reason for this shift was the realization of the enormous amount of time and effort that are involved in programming intelligent systems, especially ones meant to help the development of something uniquely human and so complex as language (Colpaert, 2006). Another major reason for the shift is that tutorial CALL has become associated with behaviorism (Hauck & Stickler, 2006). Levy's (1997) now-famous dichotomy of "tool" versus "tutor" types of computer applications was key in establishing this stigma.

Some recent publications, however, have called this dichotomous condemnation into question, arguing that the situation of autonomous language study at a computer does not necessarily impose a behaviorist approach onto the structure of the application (e.g., Hubbard & Bradin Siskin, 2004). In addition to the demands of the autonomous language learner and those of foreign language departments seeking supplemental materials for their students, there is an increasing need for tutorial CALL materials because of the growth in distance education (Howell, Williams, & Lindsay, 2003).

Given the demand, then, it is important to investigate different ways in which tutorial CALL materials might be crafted, so as to ascertain which ways are most helpful to what kinds of learners. This is one of the reasons that the present experiment was conducted through a tutorial CALL format. Another major reason was that a computer-mediated format allowed a level of control over the experiment that would not have been possible in a regular classroom setting, even though many of the implications of this study can be applied to classroom practice as well.

1.2.2 RATE OF SPEECH

The rate at which a speaker produces words in conversation varies depending on the speaker and the particularities—such as register and subject matter—of the occasion for speaking (Rubin, 1994). Largely because of physical realities of articulation, but also because of conventions associated with different registers of speech, clarity of pronunciation varies with rate of speech. Pronunciation is clearer and more careful with slower speech. Because these phenomena naturally go hand-in-hand, and because the research that forms the basis of this thesis is intended to inform not only CALL practices but also classroom practices, rate of speech in the present experiment was adjusted primarily through human means. That is, when slower and faster recordings were made, they were made by telling the actors either to speak slowly and clearly, as if speaking to a beginning language learner, or to speak naturally but at a good clip. This is in contrast with other studies about the effect of rate of speech on L2 comprehension in which rate of speech was manipulated entirely through technological means (e.g., Blau, 1990; Griffiths, 1990; Zhao, 1997).

1.2.3 LISTENING COMPREHENSION

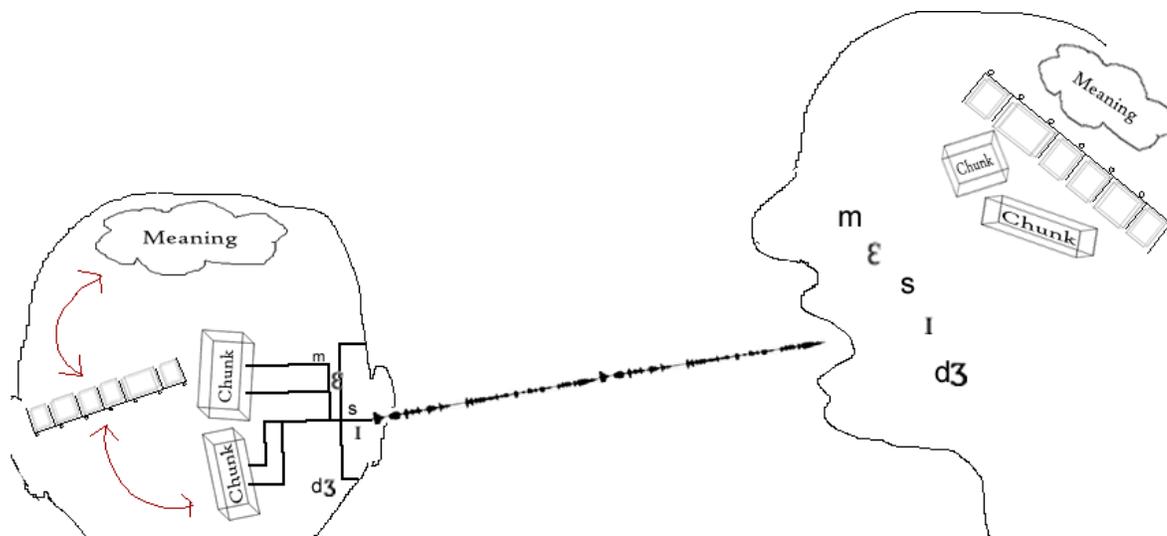
When a person comprehends a spoken message, this means that the listener has in mind essentially the same meaning of the message as the speaker had intended the listener to form. Thus, for example, if a speaker says something to the effect that the listener should show up at 2:00, the listener will have comprehended the message if he or she forms the opinion, after listening to the message, that the speaker wants the listener to

show up at 2:00. Proof of comprehension is not as easy to come by as evidence of production. However, there are many possible indirect but convincing indications of comprehension. In the present example, if the listener does in fact show up at 2:00, then this could be taken as evidence that the listener comprehended the message.

The steps involved in listening comprehension and the skills that are required for it are many. An understanding of these steps and skills is necessary in order to approach, in an informed manner, the question of which rate of speech might be of most use to an L2 learner. The data from the present study are interpreted and discussed in Chapter 5 in terms of this understanding. What follows here is an overview of the steps involved in listening comprehension. The nature of these steps is fleshed out in Chapter 2, where more detail from the literature on the topic is provided.

Figure 1.1 represents speaking and listening in a way that reflects psycholinguistic models of speech production and listening comprehension, but it also has an element of metaphor, as will be explained shortly. On the right side of Figure 1.1 is the speaker, and at left, the listener. The processes of speaking and comprehension, although very different in some key ways, do share many characteristics in common. The listener's task is, in some sense, to reverse the process that the speaker goes through in order to produce a spoken message. Following Garrett's (1990) model of speech production, the creation of a sentence begins at the message level. This is depicted in Figure 1.1 by the word "meaning" in a cloud in the speaker's mind. Here, the meaning of the message is contained, without any language-specific characteristics. The meaning is then represented as a sentence, which is formed of separate words and language chunks (formulaic groups

Figure 1.1: *Model of listening comprehension*



of words that are so common as to have their own status in the mental lexicon similar to words) in the particular order that syntax demands. Information about the lexical items' forms, along with a syntactically-informed plan for prosody lead to a phonetic level of representation, which allows the speaker to articulate the sentence.

The acoustic signal (represented by the linear wave pattern between the speaker and the listener in Figure 1.1) comes to the listener. The listener needs first to identify individual sounds, which will then allow for the identification of words and chunks of speech. Words and language chunks are depicted in Figure 1.1 as the boxes labeled with the word "chunk." These words and chunks then have to be fitted together into a syntactic structure. Syntactic structure is represented in Figure 1.1 by the lined up boxes that are above and to the left of the loose "chunks" in the listener's mind. Each chunk has a

specific place in the line where it ought to go. This is meant to represent the way in which each word has its specific place in the syntactic structure of a sentence.

The lined-up boxes in Figure 1.1 are drawn like a train on wheels. The reason for this is to emphasize the temporal nature of sentence processing. A sentence (or other division of a spoken message) needs to be interpreted quickly, often because there are other sentences following it that will also need to be comprehended. Furthermore, a listener must interpret a spoken message before the acoustic representation of what was heard fades from his or her short term memory.

In this metaphorical model, the train keeps moving, and if the chunks are not placed in their proper spot on time, one is left with empty cars or jumbled up cargo in the wrong places. What is meant by this? “Empty cars” in this analogy are like what happens when a person hears a message and understands most of the sentence but is unable to provide some details. For example, if a person understood that he is to arrive at *some* time but failed to catch the exact time, he might ask, “*When* do you want to me to show up?” The message was mostly comprehended and even a space was left where it was understood that a certain time should be specified, but that one detail is missing. Using the analogy of Figure 1.1, the train is nearly complete, but one of the cars is empty.

Another possible error that can result from the time constraints of listening comprehension (having to load the train while it quickly moves away) is to have caught a number of words but not to categorize them correctly. This situation was referred to above as “jumbled up cargo in the wrong places.” One might, for example,

know what some of the words in a sentence were but not know exactly what relation those words/concepts have to each other.

Errors like these are not uncommon in L1 comprehension, and they are all the more likely with an L2 listener, who has fewer resources to rely upon for comprehending a spoken message and whose mental capacities are strained by performing the task of L2 comprehension, which is (at least in earlier stages of L2 learning) much more taxing than L1 comprehension. Because there is quite a bit of room for error in listening comprehension, and because also language is such that the very same utterance can mean quite different things depending on the context in which it appears, listening comprehension does not rely on purely linguistic processes.

Listening comprehension must also necessarily call into service nonlinguistic cues. A listener takes whatever raw data that the language decoding system provides and interprets it in light of what is known about the context of the message. Background and general world knowledge, pragmatics, and the constraints of the discourse will help the listener interpret the acoustic signal in a way that makes maximum sense. For example, during a conversation about podiatrists, a listener is much more likely to interpret a word as “feet,” even if at first it sounded like “feed.” The influence that contextual knowledge can have on the comprehension of a message is represented by the two-way arrows in Figure 1.1.

1.2.4 SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

A language learner at the very beginning of his or her journey towards SLA and fluency understands little of messages spoken in the L2. As time goes by and the learner advances in L2 proficiency, the learner understands a greater percentage of spoken messages, over a wider variety of topics and under a greater range of circumstances. How does this change take place? There are two main types of changes that happen: 1) the L2 learner builds up a greater knowledge of the language, and 2) the L2 learner processes the L2 in a more and more efficient way, approaching, and in some cases reaching, automaticity.

In order that there be expansion of knowledge of the L2, a learner needs exposure to the L2 and practice with it, as well as (at least in the case of adult L2 learners) paying some attention to those aspects of the L2 that have yet to be acquired (Schmidt, 2001). *Input* is the exposure to the L2 that a learner gets, while *intake* is the part of the input that is noticed, comprehended, and analyzed in such a way that the L2 learner learns something new about the L2 (Gass, 1997; VanPatten, 2004).

The way in which one gets to be more automatic in L2 processing is not much different from the way in which one becomes more automatic in nearly anything that one learns: through repeated practice, a behavior can be performed more quickly and with less conscious effort (Andersen, 1993). Often, certain kinds of metacognitive understandings about the process help speed one along the trajectory towards effortless and (near-) automatic execution of the processing (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

In L2 listening comprehension, this means that sounds, words, and formulaic chunks are identified ever more quickly and efficiently, and the ability to fit these into an emerging syntactic structure also becomes faster and more accurate. The skills of taking linguistic cues and interpreting them in light of contextual knowledge may already be largely in place from L1 experience, but an increased understanding of L2 pragmatics and discourse styles, along with an evolving understanding of the non-equivalence of L1 and L2 words and concepts, may also develop over time, and these too would aid in quick and accurate comprehension of spoken L2 messages.

1.2.5 SPEEDED PROCESSING OF AN L2

Although increased speed in processing the L2 is part of developing fluency and proficiency in all language skills, fast processing of an L2 message is particularly important in listening comprehension. In reading, one usually has the option of reading at one's own pace and, when necessary, going back to previous parts of the text and re-reading them. In listening comprehension this is not so. In listening comprehension, the message unfolds quickly in time, and usually the listener has no control over the speed at which the message is delivered nor which part of the message is presented at any given time.

It is possible to be a very good and fast reader in an L2 but unable to recognize the spoken forms of L2 words well. As a way of further understanding what processes are involved in listening comprehension and where difficulties arise, the present study included a test that is written and that therefore does not require recognition of spoken

words, but that at the same time simulates listening comprehension in terms of a rapid and unidirectional unfolding of the message. The task that was used for this is called the maze task, and it is described in detail in Chapter 2. By looking at how strongly listening skills correlate with the ability to comprehend written language presented in a timed and linear fashion, some insight may be gained into the importance of quick L2 syntactic and lexical processing versus the necessity of recognizing spoken L2 forms.

1.2.6 STRATEGIC LISTENING

In Section 1.2.3 it was explained that the process of listening comprehension contains within it a system of checks and balances that draws upon knowledge both from purely linguistic cues as well as general world knowledge. The need for this exists in L1 listening comprehension and is even greater in L2 listening comprehension, because in L2 listening comprehension, what is known about the message from purely linguistic cues is often reduced. There is much that a listener can do, either in the L1 or the L2, to compensate for impoverished information on the linguistic side of listening comprehension, and this kind of compensation is referred to as *communication strategies*. To give two examples of communication strategies in listening, a listener could deduce the meaning of a message based on his or her knowledge of pragmatics, or the listener might make use of visual cues to figure out the part of the spoken message that he or she had been unable to understand based on the acoustic signal alone.

Another type of strategic behavior that a language learner can make use of is called *learning strategies*. This term is used to refer to the ways in which a language

learner regulates his or her own mental processes so as to best focus attention and maximize learning opportunities. An example of this is when an L2 learner consciously focuses attention on what he or she considers the most important part of a spoken message without allocating mental resources to what are deemed relatively unimportant details of the message.

To what extent do successful L2 learners understand spoken messages in the L2 as a result of simply more efficient processing, and to what extent is it the result of excellent uses of strategic listening? This is another question that is addressed by the present study. The issues of efficiency and speed of L2 processing clearly intersect with the issue of rate of speech.

1.3 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY AND GENERALIZABILITY

The role of rate of speech in the unfolding process of SLA, specifically in terms of listening comprehension as developed through CALL, might be studied in any number of contexts. The study that is described in this thesis is one that was done in an EFL context in Chile, with college students as the subjects. There is no reason to believe that the effect of rate of speech on FL learning when English is the target language should be any different than in the case of another target language. Therefore the findings of this study should be applicable to other L2 contexts besides EFL.

The subjects in this study are college students. This means that the findings of this study apply to adult learners and not to children. The subjects performed the various steps of the experiment on their own time and using their own equipment. Because this is

similar to the way in which adults generally participate in online courses, the results of this study can speak to many online learning scenarios, without needing to worry that the experiment was done in such a controlled way that it would not apply to real world usage.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study looked at four different ways of presenting listening practice through CALL to EFL learners, in an attempt to see which of those four ways was the most helpful to the learners in the advancement of their listening comprehension. Specifically, the experiment was designed to address the following six research questions:

1) How does the speed of delivered speech during an FL learner's training affect acquisition? For example, do learners who hear faster speech during their training process both faster and slower speech better than learners who have been exposed mostly to slower speech?

2) What happens when FL learners are given a choice as to which speed their training materials are? Which speed do they prefer, and under what circumstances? Do they make choices such that their listening comprehension improves faster than that of other learners who are not given a choice but instead listen to only slow or only fast dialogues?

3) Are learners who are allowed to pause listening passages during their training—compared to learners who are not allowed to do this during training—able to process those passages better so that they consequently show greater gains on measures of listening comprehension?

4) Between groups that demonstrate different speeds and/or accuracy of processing spoken language, do they also demonstrate different speeds and/or accuracy in forced (timed) processing of written language?

5) Are those FL learners who demonstrate greater comprehension of spoken language achieving this primarily through strategic listening, or is it instead that their syntactic processing and lexical access function more automatically?

6) What kind of features do learners prefer in computer-delivered FL listening lessons and tests?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The answers to the above questions can inform classroom practice as well as the design of pre-recorded learning materials, both as applied to CALL applications and otherwise. Answers to Research Question 6 will not be limited only to listening comprehension lessons but will also speak to some more general aspects of CALL design and thus could inform the future development of several types of CALL. Furthermore, the nature of this study is such that the findings will have application to FL teaching in general and not just the specific case of EFL.

1.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has introduced the fundamental questions that inspired the present study and has shown that the answers to these questions can have far-reaching applications. Six concepts that are basic to the present investigation were introduced in

this chapter: CALL, rate of speech, listening comprehension, SLA, speeded processing of an L2, and the use of communication and learning strategies. Chapter 2 reviews existing literature on all six of these areas and also discusses the issue of testing, because the design of the experiment presented in this thesis relies on the assumption that listening comprehension was accurately measured both at the beginning and the end of the experiment.

After the presentation of background research about pertinent issues in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 explains the research design of the experiment and the methods that were used to gather and analyze data. Chapter 4 presents the results of that data collection and analysis. Finally, Chapter 5 takes a more detailed look at those results, presents an interpretation of them, discusses the implications of the findings as well as the limitations of the study, and offers suggestions for further study and applications of the knowledge about SLA, listening comprehension, and CALL design that the present study offers.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 established that the underlying question behind this study was to investigate how rate of speech influences the development of listening comprehension in second language learners. This chapter presents the theoretical work that informs the study. The chapter begins with Section 2.2 providing an outcomes-oriented definition of listening comprehension. Section 2.3 reviews models of listening comprehension that come from the pedagogy tradition, in which the skills involved in listening comprehension are described. Section 2.4 traces the processes of listening comprehension from a psycholinguistic point of view. How those psycholinguistic processes then interact with general cognition is discussed in Section 2.5. Having described the processes that comprise listening comprehension, the chapter then moves on to a discussion of how listening comprehension might be assessed in Section 2.6.

The assessment of listening comprehension is important in the present study because the central point of interest in this study is second language acquisition itself, specifically in terms of listening comprehension. Therefore, a discussion of this broad theme, second language acquisition, as it pertains to listening comprehension, is found in Section 2.7. Section 2.8 covers issues of speech modification for language learners, and Section 2.9 looks at the specific issue of rate of speech on L2 listening comprehension and what this might mean for L2 listening comprehension gains over time. The issues covered in this chapter inform how the experiment is designed. Because the experiment is

delivered in the form of CALL (computer-assisted language learning) lessons, the final section, Section 2.10, reviews areas of import for the design of CALL lessons.

2.2 A DEFINITION OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION

In order to measure development in FL listening comprehension, it is necessary to have a working definition of what listening comprehension is. FL listening comprehension is here taken to differ from L1 listening comprehension only in so far as the fact that the message is heard in the listener's L2 and not in his or her native language. If one is not fluent in a given L2, then the experience of listening to the L2 will be different than the experience of listening to one's native language (and these differences will be discussed in Section 2.4). However, the extent to which one can say that listening comprehension has occurred is based on the same criterion, whether it happens in the L1 or the L2, and that is *the extent to which the listener has formed a mental model of the message similar to the mental model that the speaker intended.*⁴

Mental models—mental representations or interpretations of a message—typically do not retain detail about the linguistic means through which the meaning was originally conveyed (Garnham, 1981; Johnson-Laird, 1983; Kintsch & van Dijk, 1978). A mental model may be largely visual, or it may use some other nonlinguistic representation that has meaning for the person whose model it is. Naturally, there is no

⁴ Defining listening comprehension in this way is not to say that misunderstandings are always due to the listener's failure to comprehend, as opposed to the speaker's failure to communicate effectively. However, in an SLA study like the present one, one must rely on the assumption that some messages are quite straightforward and easily understood.

direct way to compare a listener's mental model and a speaker's mental model. Behaviors on the part of the listener are the only indications that others can use to determine whether and how well a message has been understood. For example, if a listener jumps after hearing the word "Jump!" this is a good indication that the listener has understood the message. Ways of judging listening comprehension that are more practical and appropriate for the present study are explored in Section 2.6.

2.3 MODELS OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION

The above working definition is for judging, at the end of a process, to what extent listening comprehension has taken place. It is also necessary, however, when investigating the development of listening comprehension, to have a model of the process as well. How is listening comprehension achieved? The moment this question is pursued in any depth, it becomes clear that there is no one process that can be called listening comprehension, nor is there any one way that listening comprehension is achieved.

In listening comprehension, many levels and types of processing work together, and these are difficult to separate from each other (Lynch, 2002). The skills that comprise listening comprehension can be divided up into two types: bottom-up and top-down (Rubin, 1994). Bottom-up skills involve decoding acoustic input; top-down skills involve the application of contextual information and general world knowledge onto the raw data that purely linguistic processes (sound identification, lexical access, and parsing) present for interpretation. "Understanding spoken language is essentially an inferential process based on a perception of cues rather than straightforward matching of sound to meaning"

(Rost, 1990, p. 33). It is a listener's ability to connect the multiple elements of discourse that determine how good comprehension is (Chun & Plass, 1997).

Inspired by pedagogical and assessment needs, a number of taxonomies of the skills involved in listening comprehension have been published (e.g., Buck & Tatsuoka, 1998; Rost, 2002; Rubin, 1994), with one including as many as 250 sub-skills (Munby, 1978, cited in Buck & Tatsuoka, 1998). The problem with many of these taxonomies is that they were based more on intuition than theory (Dunkel, Henning, & Chaudron, 1993). However, Buck and Tatsuoka's (1998) theory-driven mathematical model for separating out different listening comprehension skills resulted in a conclusion that the authors themselves found so counter-intuitive that they concluded that their results were seriously skewed by the particular sample that they had chosen.

Researchers have failed to identify which of the proposed skills are fundamental and necessary in listening comprehension (Dunkel, et al., 1993; Rubin, 1994), and when and how, exactly, bottom-up skills interact with top-down skills (Vandergrift, 2004). This is because the answers to these questions change depending on what is being listened to and the contexts surrounding the occasion. Bradlow and Pisoni (1999) found that, for both L1 and L2 listening, when the difficulty of comprehension is increased by one factor, it can be counter-balanced by ease of comprehension resulting from another factor.

Which skills are used in listening comprehension and to what extent depends also very much on the listener and his or her language ability. For a given task, different skills are used by different people to accomplish the same result (Gorsuch, 2004; Wu, 1998).

Where bottom-up decoding skills fail, top-down, strategic skills might be called in to compensate (Rost, 2002). On the other hand, a poor listener's attention may be so dominated by decoding tasks that there are not enough time or resources for higher-level (that is, top-down) thinking (Rubin, 1994). Further, the many sub-skills that work together to achieve listening comprehension do not always develop at the same time or at the same rate (Bradley & Forster, 1987; Rost, 2002; Vandergrift, 2004).

2.4 LINGUISTIC PROCESSING IN LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Listening comprehension is often difficult, and the comprehension system makes use of every resource it has. Two major reasons why the task is such a hard one are that 1) spoken messages are transient in nature, and yet 2) working memory is limited. Spoken messages come at the listener in real time, and usually the listener does not have control over the speed, nor can previous sections of a message be easily repeated. The message must be processed at the rate at which it is received, and this task is accomplished in working memory.

2.4.1 WORKING MEMORY

Working memory has two functions: one is to temporarily store the information that is in one's consciousness, and the other function is to perform various computations on it (Carpenter, Miyake, & Just, 1994). Working memory has a limited capacity. When working memory is overloaded with too many things to remember and/or too many

calculations to be performed, then some things need to be dumped from the temporary storage and/or some of the calculations have to be aborted.

During the process of comprehension, whether in L1 or L2, it will sometimes not be possible to immediately identify certain parts of an incoming message. These parts are tagged as unknown. Tags function much like variables do in a mathematic equation, and they require the listener to remember something quite abstract, as well as to remember what kinds of relations that as-yet unidentified section of the message might have to the rest of the utterance (Mitchell, 1994). In order to continue interpreting an incoming message, it may become necessary to entertain more than one possible interpretation of the message at a time, pending verification of one interpretation over another. However, people with low working memory spans (or an otherwise good but currently overtaxed working memory) may be unable to entertain more than one possible interpretation of an incoming message at a time (Carpenter, et al., 1994). When evidence is found that contradicts the current interpretation, the mental model must be updated. In the case of listening comprehension, however, by the time an original interpretation is rejected, frequently the original signal (what the listener heard) is no longer available, resulting in a failure to comprehend.

When listening comprehension fails, it is quite often because working memory has been overtaxed (Carpenter, et al., 1994). There is all the more a threat of this in L2 listening comprehension, as all stages of listening comprehension in the non-fluent L2 learner are less efficient and more prone to error. The next few sections examine these various stages in the listening comprehension process: 1) identification of sounds, 2)

lexical access, 3) sentence parsing, and 4) the integration of the resultant linguistic interpretation with nonlinguistic knowledge.

Keeping in mind the limited capacity of working memory and the additional challenges presented by a second, not yet mastered language, many areas of possible trouble can be identified. These areas of difficulty are precisely the ones that L2 learners must work with and improve in order to better their L2 listening comprehension, and so their identification can help in the attempt to formulate possible methods for best meeting these challenges.

2.4.2 IDENTIFYING SOUNDS

The first step in comprehending spoken language, even before identifying words, is identifying sounds. There are two commonly discussed theories of how sounds are identified (Harley, 1995). One proposal is called template matching. According to this model, the listener has stored in his or her mind mental representations of sounds, and sounds are identified when there is a match between one of these templates and part of an incoming acoustic signal. For an L2 listener, this will require the development of some new templates for sounds that exist in the L2 but not in the L1.

Presumably there would be one template for each basic unit of speech perception, but it is not entirely clear what the basic unit of speech perception is (Connine & Titone, 1996). Consider for example the fact that one single phoneme in a language can have several variations, depending on the other sounds around it, as well as the physical condition of the speaker and the register within which he or she is speaking. Evidence has

been found to suggest that for French speakers, the basic unit of speech perception is a syllable (Mehler, Dommergues, Frauenfelder, & Segui, 1981), while for English speakers it is individual phonemes (Cutler et al., 1986), and for Japanese speakers it is the mora (Cutler & Otake, 1994). Cutler et al. (1986) found that French L1 speakers continued to rely on syllabification when presented with English words that could be divided into discrete syllables, but when necessary, could employ a segmentation routine similar to that of English speakers. This implies that L2 learners must not only learn new sounds that are found in the L2 and not in the L1, but that additionally, new segmentation routines must be learned. For a learner at the earlier stages of L2 acquisition, misidentification of sounds and inefficient or inappropriate sound segmentation routines will cause either slowing or failure in sound identification.

An argument against the theory of template matching is that because of tremendous variation in the production of phonemes, depending on the phonemic context in which they are produced, the number of templates that would have to be stored in a listener's mind would be prohibitively large. An alternative theory of sound identification is the idea of "analysis by synthesis." The motor theory is an example of this (Harley, 1995). By this theory, one is able to identify sounds by understanding their means of production, that is, how they are articulated. A listener processes speech by computing which motor movements are necessary to produce the sounds heard. For the L2 learner, the implication of the motor theory is that the receptive skill of listening depends to some extent on the development of production skills and that an imperfect mastery of the latter will cause sound identification to be imprecise. Because most second language learners

never achieve a native-like accent (Flege, Munro, & MacKay, 1995), this suggests that the L2 learner is doomed to permanently imperfect L2 listening comprehension.

2.4.3 LEXICAL ACCESS

The next level of processing in listening comprehension requires breaking the signal up into lexical items. Unlike printed text, spoken words are usually not separated from each other but instead flow one directly into another. One source of information about word boundaries that listeners sometimes avail themselves of is prosody. For example, English speakers capitalize on syllables with metrically strong vowels to identify potential word onsets (Cutler & Norris, 1988). However, this metrical segmentation strategy relies on characteristics that are particular to English. Quené and Koster (1998) found that Dutch speakers did not employ this strategy when listening to Dutch. Therefore, L2 listeners will need to develop new strategies for being able to identify word boundaries.

How, for example, could a listener know whether he or she has heard “tulips” or “two lips”? Gow and Gordon’s (1995) work indicates that initially one does not know. Initially, both possibilities are activated, and it is necessary to entertain both interpretations until evidence from somewhere outside of the acoustic signal itself can help to eliminate the interpretation that does not fit with other cues. This represents further strain on working memory. Likely an L1 speaker will be quicker to find decisive evidence for the correct interpretation, while the L2 speaker will be required to maintain

multiple possibilities for a longer time (provided that his or her L2 vocabulary includes all of those possibilities).

Once a form is identified, it is used to access the item in the mental lexicon (Forster, 1976; Morton, 1970). What is to be found in the mental lexicon includes not just basic word forms like “cat” and “speak,” but also forms of irregular verbs, such as “bought,” and formulaic chunks of language such as “How’s it going?” (Backus, 2003; Pinker, 1994). An enormous amount of language use is based on collocations (Biber, Conrad, Reppen, Byrd, & Helt, 2002), which suggests that a native speaker has in his or her lexicon very many formulaic chunks of language. Even in the case when an L2 speaker knows all of the words and grammatical structures involved, if a given chunk of language is not recognized as such, that is, as a chunk, then the language learner must analyze all the individual parts and then their collective meaning. People who can recognize entire chunks at a time can skip these steps, while language learners have a heavier burden in the analysis of the signal.

The form of a word that is contacted in the lexicon is called the lexeme. Contacting a lexical item via the lexeme allows access to the lemma, where syntactic and semantic information is specified. Some of this information is about what kind of roles a word can play (such as whether it is a noun or a verb) and how it interacts with other words (for example, whether a specific verb can or must have an indirect object and whether the indirect object must be animate).

2.4.4 PARSING

Information about each lexical item's syntactic properties helps the listener know how the words fit together. Word order is another major source of information about how the lexical items fit together. This process of determining lexical items' relationships with each other is what is called parsing. When lexical items' relationships to each other are determined and their meanings established, then an interpretation of the sentence is produced (Garrett, 1990).

Incorrect parsing can happen in L1 comprehension (Bever, 1970). A listener can settle on the wrong interpretation of a sentence, only to realize later that he or she has been led down "the garden path." Even when native speakers do arrive at a reasonably close interpretation of a message, this in no way means that the parsing of the message was completely accurate. There is evidence to suggest that native speakers often comprehend sentences using a standard that might be called "good enough," which does not require that all information about a sentence be processed and placed in a thoroughly accurate, detailed, and hierarchical structure (Ferreira, Bailey, & Ferraro, 2002). When other cues in a sentence do not point to the actual syntactic structure of a sentence, native speakers may tend to interpret the sentence in a way that contradicts the sentence's syntactic structure but fits better with general world knowledge.

This happens with some regularity in L1 listening comprehension, and it happens more commonly in L2 listening comprehension, where words are more frequently tagged as unknown or are misidentified, or the language learner is unable to detect or interpret the grammatical structure of a given sentence. It has been shown that language learners

are typically not able to reproduce what they hear in the target language when it contains structures that the learners have not yet mastered (Natalicio, 1979). It is as if the language learner in some sense did not hear the grammatical structure. With that lacking from the L2 learner's emerging mental model of a sentence, little more than a collection of unconnected words is established. The learner is then left to use his or her common sense to guess what the connection between the semantic units might be. This explains why L2 learners frequently comprehend sentences at a largely lexical level (Swain, 1985; VanPatten, 2000).

2.5 THE NONLINGUISTIC PART OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION: TOP-DOWN PROCESSING

It is at the parsing stage that the strictly linguistic processes of listening comprehension end and that other mental processes belonging to general cognition enter. This latter type of processing is referred to as top-down processing, whereas the purely linguistic mental processes described in Section 2.4 are referred to as bottom-up processes (Rost, 2002). Any sentence, even when heard correctly, could have more than one interpretation, depending on the context within which it is uttered. Knowledge about context, including general world knowledge, will guide a listener in deciding the correct interpretation of a sentence. Use of the question "Don't you think it's cold in here?" can be used to illustrate this idea. The question might be taken as a request to turn up the heat, in one context, but as means of gathering factual information in another.

Contextual knowledge can also guide the listener to choose between two or more possible interpretations of an utterance. For example, the same acoustic string may be interpreted as “The sky is falling” if encountered during a discussion of Chicken Little, but as “This guy is falling” if heard while someone is pointing to a man on a wobbly ladder in a cartoon. Using information about general world knowledge and context is always necessary in listening comprehension (indeed, any kind of comprehension), but it is all the more necessary in L2 listening comprehension because, as has been shown, many of the other sources of information about an incoming messages deliver incomplete or faulty reports.

2.5.1 STRATEGIC COMPETENCE

Canale and Swain (1980) defined communicative competence as having three parts: strategic competence, linguistic competence, and sociolinguistic competence, (discourse competence was later added by Canale in 1983). Strategic competence is knowing how to use, and using, when appropriate, strategies so as to make up for gaps in one’s knowledge of the L2, or for problems in communication caused by factors of performance. Language learners’ use of *communication strategies* to cope with the difficulties of L2 communication is conscious and intentional (Bialystok, 1990). The major types of communication strategies that Bialystok (1990) names are avoidance, paraphrasing, conscious transfer, and appealing for assistance. Since these actions are oriented towards speech production and actively engaging with an interlocutor, similar moves would take a different form in the case of the kind of listening that is studied in the

present experiment. As an example, the idea of paraphrasing might, instead of being a round-about way of describing something, be, when applied to listening comprehension, a loose interpretation of the time frame of the message, based on a non-exhaustive selection of cues from the utterance.

Closely related to the concept of communication strategies, and more easily applied to the activity of listening comprehension, is the concept of *learning strategies*. These have been defined as “the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information” (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 1). This is clearly a broader term, and communication strategies can be considered a type of learning strategy—the difference being a matter of whether the strategy is used in order to acquire competence or to exercise it, which is, in many ways, a false dichotomy.

A great deal of research has been done on the use of learner strategies (e.g., O’Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzares & Russo, 1985; Oxford, 1990; Politzer & McGroarty, 1985; Rubin, 1981; Skehan, 1989; Wong-Fillmore, 1979) because their use can help a person to become a better language learner and hence become more competent in the L2. There does not seem to be one group of strategies that is most effective in leading to improved learning. Rather, it appears that more successful language learners use a wide range of strategies and choose them according to what suits their own particular learning styles (Dörnyei, 2005).

2.5.2 SELF-REGULATION

Dörnyei's recent book (2005) reviews at length research on learning strategies. His ultimate conclusion is that there is no clear-cut difference between strategy use and learning. Dörnyei suggests that the field of SLA embrace the term that has been adopted in the field of educational psychology, replacing the construct of "learning strategy" with the concept of "self-regulation." Consider the following examples of learner strategies: "Work on the big things first: save the details for later" (Wong-Fillmore, 1979); "Monitoring of L2 performance" (Naiman, , Frölich, & Stern, 1975); "Memorization" (Rubin, 1981); "If you see that someone does not understand you... rephrase what you are saying" (Politzer & McGroarty, 1985); and "Remembering a new word in the second language by mnemonic or associational techniques" (O'Malley, et al, 1985). All of these activities are examples of a language learner taking control over his or her language learning and/or taking control over a situation of L2 use. In these situations, the act of taking control can rightfully, and in fact most adequately, be described as self-regulation. These behaviors are distinct from the purely linguistic processes described in sections 2.5.2 through 2.5.4, and these are behaviors that a learner can use regardless of his or her current level of L2 mastery.

An understanding of the importance of self-regulation in language learning has fostered successful and widely-applied programs at the Open University in the United Kingdom, a primarily online (distance education) university. Language students of this university must be particularly good at self-regulation in order to continue successfully in online courses despite very limited time under a teacher's guiding presence. Thus, the

department has developed activities to “foster learner reflection on the following: self-knowledge, beliefs about self, beliefs about learning in general, beliefs about language learning in particular” (Hauck, 2005, pp. 79-80), and they have found that self-knowledge and metacognitive awareness lead to successful strategy use, and this aided SLA and course retention rates.

2.5.3 LINGUISTIC VERSUS NONLINGUISTIC ASPECTS OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION

The linguistic and nonlinguistic aspects of listening comprehension cannot be fully separated. They support and inform one another. Their proper functioning requires that they continually work together to check and, when necessary, compensate for each other. However, they are of two different natures. Unlike general cognition, linguistic processes are modular and independent, and they work automatically (Fodor, 1985). Linguistic processes are more universal; that is, they function similarly in all language learners. The work done by general cognition, on the other hand—including all strategic efforts, self-regulation, and capitalizing on contextual cues—can differ enormously from person to person, language to language, and situation to situation.

The fundamental question of the present study, that is, the question of how rate of speech influences the development of listening comprehension in second language learners, is one that aims to look more specifically at the linguistic aspects of listening comprehension. However, it is clear that these never exist in a vacuum. The discussion that follows about assessment aims to identify ways in which meaningful judgments of

L2 learners' listening comprehension can be made so that the potentially vast variation that comes from strategic behavior and contextual factors is minimized but not trivialized.

2.6 ASSESSMENT

2.6.1 RELIABILITY

The current experiment required a pretest and a posttest. As with all types of assessment, these tests needed to be reliable and valid. Reliability is a characteristic of test scores and their consistency across variables of the measurement context (Allen & Yen, 1979). Classical true score theory defines a test score as the sum of the true score plus error. A perfectly reliable test score would be one free of error (American Psychological Association, 1985). Reliability thus requires minimizing measurement error. Measurement error is unexplained variance in a score. The more consistent that measurement scores are, the more reliable the measure can be said to be (Allen & Yen, 1979). Thus, one of the best ways to improve reliability is to make the circumstances under which the test is administered as consistent as possible. Computer administration of tests has this to its advantage. A computer will always display instructions and questions in exactly the same way, and listening passages will always sound the same (barring, of course, technical difficulties).

There is some degree of luck as to how difficult any given listening passage will strike an individual test taker, possibly resulting in either under- or overestimation of the person's true score. For this reason, a greater number of listening passages will result in

greater reliability, as long as the number of items does not become excessively great and cause fatigue in the test takers.

2.6.2 VALIDITY

Validity is defined by the American Psychological Association (1985) as “the appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of the specific inference made from the test scores” (p. 9). Therefore, to judge validity, it must be well defined what construct is being measured, what population the test is for, and what the scores will then be understood to indicate about the test takers. Reliability is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for validity. Establishing validity requires a number of types of evidence and arguments, which should come from a variety of sources. Each of these types of validity contributes to the overall validity, and if there is a question with any one kind, then the validity as a whole is thrown into doubt (Chapelle, 1999).

The simplest kind of validity is *face validity*: the test appears to be a good measurement of what it is meant to measure. This kind of “armchair validity” has been disparaged by several experts (see Bachman, 1990 for a review), but it is still true that if a test taker does not sense that a test is valid, this could affect his or her performance, most likely by lowering the test taker’s motivation and hence his or her score (Progosh, 1996).

To affirm a test’s *discriminant validity* is to affirm that the test is measuring what it is meant to measure and not a related, confounding construct. For example, a listening comprehension test that requires test takers to remember trivial details may be tapping more into short term memory than language abilities (Shohamy & Inbar, 1991). Kintsch

and van Dijk (1983) tested subjects on two types of comprehension questions about listening passages. “Local” items required the listener to pick up on details of a dialogue. “Global” questions asked about the general themes of the dialogues. Kintsch and van Dijk (1983) found that it was rare for students who could answer global questions to have problems with local items. On the other hand, they found that the opposite quite often occurred: a test taker who had failed to understand the general gist of a dialogue could still sometimes answer some local items correctly. Given this, it seems that global comprehension questions are the more appropriate question types for tests of listening comprehension ability.

Construct validity “concerns the extent to which performance on tests is consistent with predictions that we make on the basis of a theory of abilities, or constructs” (American Psychological Association, 1985, p. 9). In the case of the present study, the construct to be tested is English listening comprehension. One important test of validity for items on an English listening comprehension test is to make sure that native or highly advanced speakers of English would have no trouble at all getting 100% or nearly 100% on the test. If that is not the case, then the test is measuring something other than simply English comprehension.

Another type of validity, *content validity*, concerns the degree to which test items are representative of the domain to be tested. For example, a listening comprehension test that only tested people’s ability to understand dialogues of two turns maximum would not be a good measure of listening because it would not have any items that matched the more frequent situation of having to follow a conversation that went on for several turns.

In the case of a test that is meant to measure general listening comprehension ability, the dialogues should be situations that more or less anyone could be expected to be familiar with, and with vocabulary of fairly high frequency. Dialogues that concern familiar situations are safer in test construction because background knowledge has been shown to improve test takers' performance (Rubin, 1994; Schmidt-Rinehart, 1994). Therefore, topics that only a small percentage of the test takers would be familiar with should be avoided, because they would give a systematic advantage to one small group of the examinees.

2.6.3 TEST ITEM TYPE AND OTHER FORMATTING ISSUES

While the issues of reliability and validity are abstract, whether they are manifest or not in the specific use of a particular test has everything to do with the very practical considerations of the test's format and the details thereof. The most fundamental question about format has to do with the type of item that makes up the test.

Some language acquisition specialists believe that language ability cannot properly be tested with discrete-item tests, but instead should be tested through activities that as closely as possible parallel real life tasks that are accomplished through language (Long & Norris, 2002). But as Bachman (1990) points out, "all measures of mental ability are necessarily *indirect, incomplete, imprecise, subjective and relative*" (p. 32). The psychometrician's job is to recognize these limitations and minimize them as much as possible within the resource constraints one is faced with. Task-based testing, which tries to imitate life in the testing format, has its own limitations. Due to the holistic nature

of task-based testing, its grading tends to be more subjective and hence less reliable. Also, if a person can perform well on one task, there still remains the question of whether one is justified to then infer that the test taker has the underlying competence to do other tasks. The naturalistic format of task-based testing typically makes testing more than one task at a time unrealistic, due to time constraints.

Multiple-choice questions are very widely used and have a history of demonstrating good reliability. The ease and potential objectivity of grading them are surely the two main reasons that they continue to be one of the most common test item formats. Statistics can be run on multiple-choice test items, after they have been piloted on a sample population, to make sure that only items that are consistent with the construct remain on the test. To be consistent with the construct that the test is supposed to measure, an item should have more high scorers than low scorers getting the answer right, and items should not have distracters that appeal more to high scorers than low scorers. An item that is answered correctly by more low scorers than high scorers is measuring something other than the test construct (Allen & Yen, 1979).

Obviously the wording of a test item will be of utmost importance. As was mentioned previously, topics of general knowledge should be favored so as not to bias response rates by causing test takers' background knowledge (as opposed to linguistic ability) to play a large role in their ability to answer. Whether the question prompt does or does not use some of the same words that are said during the listening passage can have a tremendous impact on the difficulty level of a test item (Bae & Bachman, 1998). Similarities between words in question items and words in the listening passage can also

affect the difficulty level of a question item. One way to avoid these issues would be to put the questions in the L1 of the test takers. This would also keep the construct of L2 reading out of the results of an L2 listening comprehension test.

The timing of the presentation of comprehension questions can also influence the kind of listening that test takers engage in. Sherman (1997) found that recall on a listening comprehension test was best when subjects saw the comprehension questions for the first time *between* (as opposed to before or after) the two times they listened to a listening passage. Subjects did best when forced to listen in a global fashion the first time and then were allowed, the second time, to listen (strategically) for details to answer the questions that they had just viewed. This results in the subjects' highest scores. However, if the aim is to see how much of the general gist of a conversation a subject captured, the most direct way to test this would be by allowing the subject to listen only once, and then only after that presenting the subject with the questions.

It is not just the test items and the way they are responded to by the test takers that determine the validity of a test and the purposes for which it is used. The instructions and the mode of presentation can also influence the outcome of a test. For example, if the instructions to a test are written so poorly that the test takers do not fully understand them, then this detracts from the validity of the test because it systematically alters the test scores in a way that has nothing to do with the construct that is meant to be tested (in this case, listening comprehension).

This is a particularly grave danger in the case of online computer tests, where there is no proctor available with whom a test taker might consult. Also, if the test's

presentation is confusing, this will have the same effect on test scores as poorly written instructions have. A confusing computer layout can have deleterious effects on a test taker's performance (Mayer, 2001). Icons should also be considered part of a computer program's instructions and should be checked for clarity during the piloting stage (Fulcher, 2003).

When piloting a computer-delivered test, subjects should interact with the computer in as close of a way as possible to how the target population will eventually use the program, and subjects in the piloting stage should be, ideally, from the same population as the target population. If this is not possible, then the next most similar population available should be used. Although it is important to try to closely emulate the future testing situation during the piloting stage, there is also a place in earlier piloting stages for procedures such as the think-aloud protocol, in which the test taker describes to the experimenter his or her experiences of taking the test (Fulcher, 2003).

To see an example of how this might be useful, recall the recently mentioned and fairly novel idea of showing the test takers the listening comprehension questions only after they have heard a dialogue. If this format is used in a test that is being developed (as in the case of the present study), it is important to see how the subjects respond to it. One can imagine that this practice might be something of a shock to a test taker who did not expect it. Various trials of piloting should aim to find ways in which the instructions and test format could prepare the test takers for that characteristic of the test and avoid it having a negative effect on the test takers' performance.

Any unusual type of test item requires some time for learning and adaptation on the part of the test takers. If there is no opportunity to train the test takers before the test, then the test itself should include some practice items whose responses are not included in the final score. This is because the answers to the first few items that a test taker sees will reflect his or her process of adapting to the new format, which is not part of the construct that one means to measure. Also, answers to the practice items should be provided, so that the test taker can reason through the practice items and see if he or she has understood the goal of the activity. Lastly, test takers should be given sufficient time to work through this stage on their own.

Given all of these considerations, two tests with a healthy but not exhausting number of global comprehension questions—in the subjects' L1—about dialogues with rather familiar, everyday topics were developed as the pretest and posttest for the present experiment. Their exact characteristics and the piloting procedures behind their development are described in Chapter 3.

2.6.4 THE MAZE TEST

Another pretest and posttest were used in addition to the listening comprehension tests for this experiment. This section explains the rationale for having another test and for choosing the maze task as that other test. The maze task itself is also described.

There are two special challenges that listening comprehension presents to an L2 learner that do not exist in reading comprehension. One is that the listener must recognize the spoken forms of words, and the other is that the listener does not have control over

the speed at which the linear, incoming message comes. The former is an issue of modality, whereas the latter is more an issue of practice and attaining automaticity. It was of interest to the researcher to see the way in which these two factors related to each other, and so a way to separate out the two factors was sought.

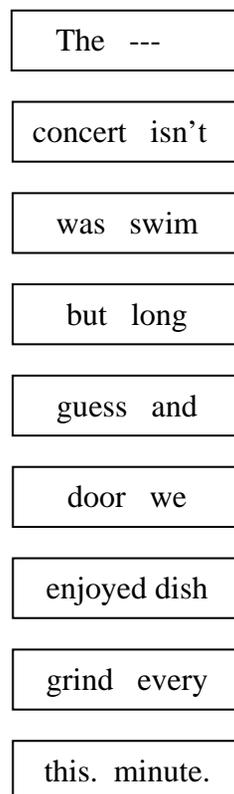
The maze task is a task that shares in common with listening comprehension the fact that words come to the subject in a linear fashion and under time pressure. However, the presentation of the words is visual rather than aural. The maze task has been found to detect the same kinds of processing difficulties as eye-tracking and production tasks (Nicol, Forster, & Veres, 1997). For these reasons, in addition to its extreme ease of online administration, it was chosen as the second type of pre- and post-testing.

The maze task is delivered on a computer. The subject is shown two words at a time (except for the first time) on a screen. For each pair of words, the subject must choose (by hitting one button or another) one of the words. The subject's task is to choose a series of words that makes a sentence. For each pair of words, only one of them can combine with the word or words that preceded it to continue a grammatical sentence. If the subject chooses the wrong word, he or she is told so, and the item is brought to an end. Then a new sentence begins (if the subject has not yet gone through all of them). When the subject chooses the right word, then the next pair of choices appears, and so on, until the end of the sentence. If there are more sentences yet to go, then a new sentence begins.

Below is an example of the series of screens that would make up one sentence in a maze task. On the first screen, represented by the first box, there is only one word, and it

is on the left. The subject would hit the button that selects the word on the left. From then on, until the end of the sentence, there are two words, one on the left and one on the right, and the subject would choose one word per screen. In order to successfully complete the sentence in this example, the subject would need to indicate the words in the following series: left—left—left—right—right—right—left—right—right, producing the sentence “The concert was long and we enjoyed every minute”.

Figure 2.1: *Series of screens for a maze item*



In creating sentences for this task, the most important and difficult part is to make sure that the incorrect choice in each pair is indeed wrong and could not possibly be a

valid continuation of the sentence. There are no other limitations on the content of the sentences, however, and so this allows the experimenter great freedom in choosing the grammatical structures and vocabulary items in the task.

The task requires word recognition and parsing. A person cannot perform the task without both understanding the word and understanding the syntax of the unfolding sentence. The task is therefore a good way of testing both grammar and vocabulary without the often clumsy formats of other ways of testing grammar, such as fill-in-the-blank or error-spotting.

Being able to test timed word recognition and parsing without requiring recognition of spoken language was an interesting opportunity in this experiment because of the population involved. Most Chileans' experience with English was traditionally through the written word and not through oral communication. College students were taught to read in English so that they could read new articles coming out in their fields of study, but traditionally little effort was invested in teaching them how to speak or to understand spoken English. Indeed, the researcher's experience teaching EFL in Chile was one of the primary inspirations of this research project. As Chileans realized the changing role of English in their professional lives and the growing importance of being able to speak it as well as to read it, many times they asked the researcher what could be done to improve their listening comprehension skills so that they might be as good as their reading skills. The maze task was a way of looking at the extent to which those two skills correlated.

2.7 SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

So far most of the discussion has covered ways in which listening comprehension might be measured. It is now time to turn to the issue of how the skill can be developed. There are two elements needed in L2 listening comprehension: one is the knowledge of the language, and the other is the ability to process a message in real time. Knowledge of the language is something that is required for all L2 skills—reading, speaking, and writing as well. Processing in real time the spoken form of language is a requirement that is especially important for listening comprehension, and it is this that is of particular interest in the present study. By crafting test and practice materials that used basic vocabulary and sentence structure, an attempt was made to take the focus of difficulty off of the level of knowledge about English and onto the actual act of processing spoken English in real time.

For an EFL learner to become better at listening comprehension, all of the stages described in Section 2.4 need to be working quickly and efficiently. Not all learners will have equal amounts of difficulty with the different steps of listening comprehension (word identification might be the challenge for one, while parsing might be the challenge for another); nor, even, will this remain constant as the same learner interacts with different aural texts. However, as has already been discussed, where a difficulty arises with one sub-skill, it may be compensated for by another. Therefore, the question to ask is how these processes working together become quicker and more efficient over time, and this is a question about how second language acquisition happens.

Chomsky's (1968) work convinced most linguists that language is not learned just like most any other skill is, but that instead, speaking is an ability that humans are uniquely programmed to master. He supported his arguments with two key observations: 1) that all normally functioning children master their mother tongue, and that 2) they do so despite getting what logically appears to be insufficient input and guidance for it.

Believing that the same language acquisition device (LAD) that enables L1 acquisition also enables L2 acquisition, given the proper circumstances, Krashen (1982) proposed the Monitor Model. This model of SLA claims that SLA will happen naturally as long as FL learners are given input that is mostly comprehensible to them and has just a little more in the input that they do not initially comprehend. Using the meaning of the message and the context, the meaning of the new part of the input will be figured out. Meanwhile, the LAD will grasp the function of the new part of the input (whether it is a new grammatical structure or new vocabulary), and this new part of the input will be thereby acquired. SLA therefore does not require the provision of grammar rules or lengthy explanations. What is more, the kind of learning that occurs with grammar rules and other explicit instruction is of an entirely different nature than the acquisition that happens through the LAD, and it is only this latter kind (acquisition) that can lead to fluid language use.

The distinction between implicit knowledge and explicit knowledge—also referred to as the distinction between procedural knowledge and declarative knowledge—and the exact nature of the relationship that the two types of knowledge have to each other is the central problem that defines various theories of SLA, and the different

answers that these theories give to the question are what distinguish the theories from one another. Krashen is alone in insisting that what starts out as explicit or declarative knowledge can never transform into implicit or procedural knowledge. Most other SLA theories describe declarative knowledge as something cumbersome to manipulate in the mind and which makes tremendous demands on the resources of short term memory, but that through enough of the proper kind of practice, rehearsal, and/or depth of processing, it can be transformed into (nearly) effortless procedural knowledge.

For McLaughlin, Rossman, and McLeod (1983), the transformation depends on the depth of processing. For O'Malley and Chamot (1990), there are two ways by which this transformation can be effected: "when there are repeated opportunities for practice with cued feedback... and when the learner transfers an abstract principle from a similar task to guide acquisition of the newest skill" (p. 215). Both of these theories suggest that the learner should not simply practice language, but that a certain kind of *thinking about* the language must take place.

The interactionist model of SLA (Gass, 1997) puts an especially heavy emphasis on the idea that a certain amount of awareness on the part of the L2 learner is required for acquisition to occur. The learner must sometimes notice a gap between the current state of his or her interlanguage and the target language (TL). That is, the learner must notice that the way a particular structure is produced by more advanced or native speakers differs from the way he or she would be or has been producing it. When this happens, there is intake. Intake is that part of the input available to a language learner that is taken in in such a way that it may alter the representations of the TL that exist in the learner's

mind. This same process can lead to the acquisition of either new grammatical structures or new vocabulary.

The interactionist model gets its name from the fact that meaningful negotiation with an interlocutor is considered the best way for the proper kind of noticing to take place so that SLA can occur. Several other theorists have written on similar ideas of the importance of getting language learners to attend to input in a way that is likely to encourage greater intake. Their work has focused less on the interactional circumstances that might bring this about and more on the way that learning materials might be presented to language learners (DeKeyser, 2001; Schmidt, 2001; VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993). VanPatten, having established earlier (1998) that it is very difficult for a language learner to pay attention to both meaning and form at the same time, has continued work on what is called “processing instruction.” This research agenda works to provide meaning-based instruction for FL students while also getting them to focus on and acquire grammatical forms.

The present study follows in the tradition of this work, asking what the best way is to present listening comprehension passages to language learners who are studying on their own so that they might receive maximum benefit from their time spent on the task. Assuming that the end goal is for language learners to be able to understand spoken L2 as it is naturally spoken by native and other fluent speakers, what presentation mode would most encourage the kind of noticing necessary for an improvement in their listening skills? Fast or slow?

The advantage that playing listening passages slowly for learners might have is that the learners might use the extra time available during playback to not only be listening for meaning but also noticing linguistic details in the input. On the other hand, it might be that what learners most need is practice in processing spoken language quickly, in which case it would be advisable to play only fast dialogues for the learners. A third possibility is that learners might be the ones who are in the best position to judge when they need some extra time for processing, and therefore, allowing them to either choose the speed of the playback or choose when to pause the playback might be the best way to help them notice details in the input.

2.8 SPEECH MODIFICATION

2.8.1 ACCENTED SPEECH

People can quickly adapt to changes in accent and other surface differences that distinguish one person's way of talking from another's. Clarke (2003) found that native English speakers' reaction time (RT) continued to decrease over 16 trials of listening to foreign-accented speech, and by the end of 16 trials was equal to RTs in response to native speech. She also found that subjects adapted to a particular type of accent, so that being trained on the foreign-accented speech of one person improved perception when hearing the speech of another person with the same (Chinese or Spanish) kind of accent. She concludes that "abstract properties of accented speech are learned during adaptation" (p. 11). This conclusion makes sense: since it is normal to hear the speech of a great variety of people, we should expect humans to be able to adapt quickly to a new person's

speech. It also fits with common sense expectations that a person, even a language learner, who is familiar with one kind of accent should be able to understand about as well the speech of a person with a similar accent.

2.8.2 TEACHER TALK

The term *teacher talk* has been used to describe the way in which language teachers speak to their students. Presumably, a language teacher should have a good sense of how to adjust his or her speech in order to help students understand. Teacher talk is described as not only being slower than regular speech, but also using simpler sentence structures, more frequent words, repetitions, elaborations, and greater pausing (Ellis, 1994; Krashen, Terrell, Ehrman, & Herzog, 1984). Slowing speech down is less fundamental to teacher talk than some of the other adjustments listed above, and there is evidence that in fact teachers do not slow down their speech significantly for students of one proficiency level as compared to another (Griffiths, 1992). Teachers may not want to slow down their rate of speech for their students for fear of either boring them or seeming to insult their intelligence.

2.9 THE EFFECT OF RATE OF SPEECH ON COMPREHENSION

Some studies have found that a slower rate of speech significantly enhances foreign language learners' comprehension (e.g., Chaudron's 1988 review of ten studies; Griffiths, 1990; Zhao, 1997); Blau (1990) found it significant only for very low levels of L2 proficiency; elsewhere, only a tendency but no significant difference was found

(Rader, 1990). Zhao's (1997) explanation for these inconsistencies is that what was considered "fast" speech in some experiments was considered slow in others. Griffiths (1990) used 100 words per minute (wpm) for slow speech and 200 wpm for fast speech; Blau (1990) used 145 wpm for slow speech and 180 wpm for fast speech; while Rader (1991) used 108-122 wpm for slow speech (in Spanish) and 153-160 wpm as fast/natural speech. Another complication in the matter of determining what is fast and what is slow speech is that rate of speech varies from speaker to speaker and from task to task (Flowerdew, 1994; Rubin, 1994). In the present experiment, slow speech was operationalized as 135 wpm, and fast speech as 180 wpm.

Zhao's (1997) study showed speed to be a significant factor in subjects' comprehension when the subjects themselves were able to determine how slow "slow" was. Subjects could choose between recordings at 100, 125, 150, 175 and 200% of the original numbers of words per minute. There was also a significant difference between listening comprehension scores between the previously mentioned condition in which subjects could choose the speed, and the condition in which subjects could not only choose the speed but also pause the recording whenever they so desired. The subjects' comprehension improved under the pause condition.

Another major difference between fast and slow speech, when produced naturally (as opposed to being manipulated by a machine), is that slow speech has more and longer pauses. Some studies have manipulated rate of speech only by manipulating the number and length of pauses, without changing the way in which the words themselves were pronounced (which requires computer manipulation). In some studies, this was found to

help L2 learners (Blau, 1990; Dunkel, 1988; Zhao, 1997), while in Voss (1979) it was found to have a disruptive influence. Importantly, it has been found that an increase in pausing can sometimes cause native speakers' comprehension to decline (Krause & Braida, 2002). Too slow of speech can cause native speakers to lose the thread of the conversation. It would be reasonable to assume that the same might happen with advanced L2 learners.

Vandergrift's (2004) objection to Zhao's (1997) study is that while slower speech may help the L2 learner understand more of a listening passage, allowing learners to slow down the speech that they are listening to could, over time, have a deleterious effect on L2 acquisition. Vandergrift argues that learners should be forced to deal with speech as it naturally occurs, and that slowed speech is too unlike natural speech to help a language learner improve his or her ability to comprehend naturally spoken language.

Jensen and Vinther (2003), aware of this dilemma, and concerned also with learners' inability to focus on both meaning and form at the same time (VanPatten, 1998), constructed a study in which language learners were exposed to repetitions of L2 input. Their 84 intermediate learners of Spanish as a FL were trained on video dialogues. In their training, they would first watch and listen to an entire section of a soap opera for language learners. Then the subjects heard short segments of the same dialogues (single utterances at a time, of 16 syllables or more), in order. They would hear each utterance three times. In one experimental group, they first heard the utterance at its original, "fast" speed; the second time slowed down; and the third time at the original speed again. In the other experimental group, only the first repetition was fast, and the other two slow. The

pretest and posttest required subjects to repeat utterances of similar lengths (again, after viewing episodes in their entirety), and responses were rated in terms of global comprehension, phonological decoding, and grammatical accuracy. Both experimental groups did better than the control group—unsurprising, since the control group received less instruction time than the others—but there were no statistical differences between their amount or types of gains. Because the experimenters had predicted differences based on the speed of delivery, they ran another round of the experiment, this time with a group that heard three repetitions of each utterance, all at the faster speed. Again, gains over the control group were found in all three areas, but with fewer gains in grammatical accuracy than had been found with the other two experimental groups.

These findings suggest that learners are able to process—perhaps after a brief period of initial adjustment—semantic and phonological information just as well at a faster yet natural speed, as at a slower rate of speech. Only grammatical information is enhanced when the input is slowed down. The fact that different experimental groups did just as well on the semantic measures, whether they were trained on fast or slow replays, suggests that increased intake of grammatical features does not necessarily mean that the listener has comprehended the message better. However, taking in more information about grammatical features helps the acquisition process. The learner notices the form; this leads to acquisition; the learner is then able to produce new forms, as seen in the posttest.

What these findings imply for the present experiment is that the subjects listening to the slow dialogues should show greater incidental learning of grammar and

vocabulary. However, it is not clear how subjects trained on fast dialogues versus subjects trained on slow dialogues might do, compared to each other, on listening comprehension of fast versus slow dialogues. Perhaps subjects trained on fast dialogues would be better, after a training period, at listening to fast dialogues than would subjects who were trained only on slow dialogues. In Jensen and Vinther (2003), none of the subjects were trained only on slow dialogues.

In order to test hypotheses about the differential effects of rate of speech on second language acquisition, an experiment is helped tremendously by using computers to adjust and control the rate of speech. The last section of this chapter covers theoretical issues that needed to be considered in the design of the ten lessons that constituted the training sessions for the present experiment.

2.10 CALL DESIGN

Any number of design features might have been considered for inclusion in the design of the computer-end of the training sessions, had this experiment's computer program been designed primarily as a teaching aid and not as an experiment in disguise. As it was, the focus was on the effect of rate of speech, and the desire was to make the lessons as simple as possible so as to minimize the possibility of introducing confounding factors into the research design. On the other hand, the subjects in the experiment were voluntary participants, and the lessons had to be made attractive and motivating enough so that a sufficient number of volunteers would stay on to the end of the experiment. Also, a decision not to "add" anything to computer lessons may not, in fact, be a neutral

decision. For example, it was not possible to put no visuals whatsoever into the lessons; the participants had to be sitting in front of a computer, and something had to be on the screen. Therefore, one very basic question to be grappled with was what would be on the screen.

2.10.1 VISUALS IN CALL

2.10.1.1 STILL PICTURES

It is standard practice to have a little picture on the screen while a listening passage plays in a CALL lesson. But what effect does this picture have on the listener's experience of the dialogue? To include a picture in a listening comprehension activity amounts to providing language learners with an advanced planner—something that has been shown to enhance language learners' comprehension by activating appropriate schemata (Chun & Plass, 1997). A picture may act like a hook on which learners can “hang meaning and make sense of the aural stream” (Meskill, 1996, p. 184).

However, not all people make use of visual cues to the same extent (Gruba, 1997). Nor do all pictures have the same effect on listeners. Merlet and Gaonac'h (1994, cited in Merlet, 2000) found that their subjects actually did worse on a test of comprehension of a spoken dialogue when there was a picture available. The authors speculated that this may have been due to cognitive overload. The pictures they used in their experiment may have been in some way misleading. Merlet (2000) later did another study in which half of the subjects saw a wordless cartoon version of the listening passage that they were tested on. This significantly improved performance over the no-

picture condition. Ginther (2002) piloted a lengthy, computer-delivered EFL listening test in which each dialogue was accompanied by a picture, and the characteristics of the pictures were manipulated systematically. Her results showed that including a picture on the screen while subjects listened to a listening comprehension passage did help their comprehension, but only when the picture reflected the content of the dialogue, as opposed to depicting the speakers.

2.10.1.2 VIDEO

Since the kind of picture that accompanies listening passages seems to influence the usefulness of the picture for the language learners, one might think instead to include a video as the visual provided during the playing of a listening passage. This could potentially, if done right, make the accompanying visual as “life-like” as possible, since most normal L1 uses of oral language are accompanied by moving action. Kellerman (1992) argues that in normal first language acquisition, seeing speakers’ gestures, lip movements, and surroundings plays a large role in development. She cites research that shows that seeing babies often fixate on speakers’ lips (Mills, 1987), while seeing-impaired babies have more difficulty distinguishing sounds than seeing babies. Watching the speakers as they speak might be closer to normal language use and thereby a more valid way of exposing FL learners to listening passages.

Another possible type of video support would be with a video that reflected the content of what was being said in the listening passage. If a video depicting the content of the listening passage is shown while students listen to a listening passage, this ought to

have an effect similar to showing a still picture reflecting the passage's content, unless the video were somehow too distracting and caused the student to stop paying attention to the linguistic input. Secules, Herron, and Tomasello's (1992) study comparing French as a FL courses that either did or did not include video found some evidence for the superiority of the video-based course. However, a second round of experimentation by the authors found that the control group that was trained using photos (as opposed to videos) actually showed better retention of vocabulary.

Shin's (1998) study comparing listening tests with or without video resulted in a significant improvement of scores for those test takers who had the version with video. Progosh's (1996) study did not compare students' outcomes, but did find that 57 out of 62 students preferred video listening comprehension quizzes to quizzes that employed audio cassettes. Thus, there is some indication that video-accompanied listening passages might be more realistic (or in some other way helpful) than listening passages that are only accompanied by pictures, and there is also reason to believe that some learners would simply prefer to see a video than a picture.

Because a video is essentially many thousands of photographs or pictures strung together, it has the potential for being a factor that is many times more complex than the practice of including still pictures in listening comprehension activities. Feak and Salehzadeh (2001) were surprised to have racial stereotypes enter in as a factor in a study that they were conducting in which they had not expected this to be an issue at all. In their work, students saw a video that included a native English speaking actress who was Asian-American. Some test takers complained about her supposed foreign accent and

how that made it harder for them to understand her, although in fact she did not have a foreign accent. The extra realism of a video brought in many issues into the testing situation that the researchers had not meant to include, and it resulted in additional complications.

Another argument to consider in favor of including videos in a listening comprehension lesson is the fact that multi-media is increasingly being expected by learners of younger generations. Multimedia has become a common feature in the lives of most people who live in the developed world. If the classroom is marked by not keeping up with the times in this way, then this may cause students to develop a negative attitude towards the classroom (Gruba, 1997). Certainly a number of researchers have found that L2 learners claim to prefer listening comprehension materials to be accompanied by multi-media (e.g., Choi, Kim, & Boo, 2003; Dunkel, 1991; Progosh, 1996). However, it should also be kept in mind that the introduction of video in teaching and testing materials means that a considerable amount of additional time and money must be spent in producing those materials (Ariew, 1987). Another problem with video is that, even more than sound files, the electronic files that contain them are so large that often they cannot be played properly over the internet.

Given the lack of overwhelming evidence in support of the usefulness of videos as opposed to pictures, and considering the difficulty involved in creating videos, as opposed to adding a still picture, it was decided that for this project, one or two simple pictures depicting the facts and actions described in the dialogues would be put on the screen to accompany each dialogue.

2.10.3 COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Theories about SLA reviewed in Section 2.7 indicate that repeated practice with input can help the processes of listening comprehension become increasingly more automatic, and as Jensen and Vinther (2003) argued, repetition of the same input can allow FL learners to focus on the input one time for meaning and another time for noticing linguistic elements. Therefore it was decided that some amount of repetition in the training sessions would be good. This had to be limited to only a first play-through and a second time repeating the dialogue, so as to avoid boring some of the participants, yet assuring that all of the participants were exposed to the dialogues an equal number of times.

After each playback of a dialogue during the training session, there were comprehension questions. It was decided to follow the same listen—see comprehension questions—answer comprehension questions format as the tests (as described in Section 2.7) so as to encourage global listening, and also so that the training sessions and the testing sessions were not entirely dissimilar (Shohamy, 2001). The first set of questions in the training session lessons were about broad topics from the listening passages so that the participants could know (after getting feedback) whether their understanding of the dialogue was correct, and so that they could, during the second listening, use their top-down listening skills to understand the dialogue even better.

2.10.4 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Other very important issues to consider in the design of listening comprehension

CALL lessons are the following: 1) the clarity of instructions (Fulcher, 2003); 2) ease of navigation (Fulcher, 2003); 3) whether iconic buttons and other navigation features are culturally biased or can be easily understood by the users (Fulcher, 2003); 4) whether the material is motivating and of interest to the users (Merlet, 2000); and 5) the intonation, tone of voice, and pausing patterns of the actors (Feak & Salehzadeh, 2001; Ferreira & Anes, 1994; Merlet, 2000). The first three issues from the list above were already discussed in Section 2.6.3, with the conclusion being that clarity would be the primary goal and would be a focus of concern during the piloting stage (the tests and the lessons were made from similar templates).

The fourth issue, motivation, is clearly a complex one. Among many possible distractions that threaten accurate comprehension for either L1 or L2 listeners are a lack of interest, inattentiveness, and strong emotional reactions (Dunkel, 1991). These distractions are more problematic for the L2 learner, whose working memory is already being seriously taxed by the process of comprehending spoken utterances in a language not yet mastered. Therefore, controversial topic matters ought to be avoided in training dialogues, while understanding at the same time that dialogues that are of no particular interest cannot maintain participants' attention. The solution sought in terms of this issue was to write dialogues that the researcher thought the potential participants might be able to relate to, and to try to pepper the storyline with an occasional joke.

The last set of factors from the list above—the intonation, tone of voice, and pausing patterns of the speakers—can also have a dramatic effect on listeners' comprehension of a listening passage, as well as on their emotional reaction to the

dialogue. Ferreira and Anes (1994) mention in their article that the issue of prosody has kept some researchers from studying spoken language processing. They say that so little is known about the effect that prosody has on comprehension that it is a strong argument for avoiding studies of this kind. Prosody is one of the few features of speech production that remains uncategorized in language production models, both monolingual (Levelt, 1989) and bilingual (de Bot, 1997). At what stage prosody informs sentence comprehension remains undefined. There is, however, no question that prosody, pausing, and intonation play important roles in spoken language processing and comprehension (Ferreira & Anes, 1994; Nicol, 1996; Rost, 2002; Rubin, 1994). Having no hard guidelines by which to judge the prosody, etc. of the dialogues' actors' performances, decisions about appropriateness were left to the researcher and the actors. This will be further explained in Chapter 3.

2.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided information about the way that listening comprehension works, especially in the L2 context, and about the effect of rate of speech on listening comprehension. This was done so as to demonstrate that legitimate arguments could be formulated in favor of hypotheses that any of the four conditions that were included in the present experiment might be the most useful condition for encouraging improvement in L2 listening comprehension.

The chapter also provided a working definition of listening comprehension on which recommendations for its assessment could be based. Basic issues in L2 assessment

were also reviewed, explaining the fundamental considerations that went into the development of the means of measurement used in this experiment. Lastly, issues concerning the development of CALL listening comprehension lessons were covered, arguing for and against certain practices in CALL design.

All of the issues covered in this chapter inform the research design, means of assessment, and CALL lesson design that form the basis of the present experiment. The next chapter provides the details of how this theory was put into practice.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the kinds of data that were collected for this study, how they were collected, and why. It begins with a review of the problem that motivated the study and the research questions that the study sought to answer. It then goes on to describe the participants and the context of the study and why these were chosen.

Next, Section 3.6 first gives an overview of the research design. Section 3.7 describes all of the instruments that were used to collect data, what kinds of items they had, and why they were made in the way they were. Section 3.8 explains the piloting that was done on the testing instruments. Section 3.9 describes the procedures used to implement the research design. The next section describes what was done with the data once they were gathered. Limitations of the study are discussed in Section 3.11. The final section concludes the chapter and prepares the reader for the next chapter, in which the results of the study are given.

3.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Many EFL students would like to have materials with which they can practice their listening comprehension skills on their own. Given trends in educational practices and the conveniences of the medium, computer presentation of this kind of material seems to be the most potentially beneficial. The question then is how exactly these materials should be crafted. First of all, should listening passages be recorded in as natural of a way as possible so that the learner can get accustomed to authentic speech?

Or should instead the dialogues be recorded with a slower and more careful speech style?

Would perhaps allowing the learner to decide these issues for him- or herself be best?

Further questions exist about other aspects of the lesson presentation. For example, what kind of visual aides should accompany the listening practice? It would be helpful to get learners' opinions about a variety of aspects of online lesson delivery.

3.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Section 3.2 described the rationale for the present study in general terms. What follows is the list of specific research questions that were formulated to guide the study and which dictated the way in which the study was designed and instrumentation crafted.

1) How does the speed of delivered speech during an FL learner's training affect acquisition? For example, do learners who hear faster speech during their training process both faster and slower speech better than learners who have been exposed mostly to slower speech?

2) What happens when FL learners are given a choice as to which speed their training materials are? Which speed do they prefer, and under what circumstances? Do they make choices such that their listening comprehension improves faster than that of other learners who are not given a choice but instead listen to only slow or only fast dialogues?

3) Are learners who are allowed to pause listening passages during their training—compared to learners who are not allowed to do this during training—able to

process those passages better so that they consequently show greater gains on measures of listening comprehension?

4) Between groups that demonstrate different speeds and/or accuracy of processing spoken language, do they also demonstrate different speeds and/or accuracy in forced (timed) processing of written language?

5) Are those FL learners who demonstrate greater comprehension of spoken language achieving this primarily through strategic listening, or is it instead that their syntactic processing and lexical access function more automatically?

6) What kind of features do learners prefer in computer-delivered FL listening lessons and tests?

Questions 1-5 investigate the mental processes involved in listening comprehension in L2 learners. The answers to these questions can inform both classroom practice and CALL design. Question 6 asks specifically about CALL design.

3.4 SETTING

The present study asks how rate of speech can influence second language acquisition over time. An ideal experimental design for looking at this question would have absolute beginners at the start of the experiment, and it would follow their progress over perhaps an entire year. However, the researcher had no way of getting such a group of participants, especially considering the numbers of subjects that would be needed in order to get enough statistical power to look at all four conditions that were of interest.

The researcher did have connections to a university-level EFL community in Chile, however, and had reason to believe that through these connections, she could get the necessary number of participants. It was in fact because of her previous work with this community that the issue of listening comprehension had become one of such interest for her. Most college-level EFL students in Chile had, at the time that the experiment was developed, a very low level of English, and to the extent that they did have some mastery over English, it was mostly in relation to the written word, whereas their listening comprehension abilities tended to be extremely low. From an experimental point of view, this was positive. Because five weeks is close to the maximum amount of time one might reasonably expect volunteers to participate in an extra-curricular study, the experimental treatment would need to have its effect within that amount of time. Therefore, one would want EFL learners with a relatively low proficiency level so that there would be a greater chance of an effect manifesting itself within the time limits. More advanced EFL learners are much less likely to show improvement with a mere three or so hours of treatment.

There were other advantages to working within the university community in Chile. One of these reasons was that it allowed the researcher to make use of an internet server housed at the university where she used to work. By putting the online course onto a Chilean server, better internet connection was likely, thus minimizing the chance that there would be problems with the implementation of the experiment from the server side of things. It also meant that the URL for the project bore the name of a Chilean university, which may have served as motivation for those participants who attended that university (University of Talca). The legitimacy that the URL lent the project, in addition

to the ability to demonstrate strong ties with Chilean professionals in the field of EFL, helped the researcher in gaining the trust of teachers and students involved in the study, and this helped in the recruitment and retention of subjects.

3.5 SUBJECTS

All told, there were 141 subjects, 86 (61%) of whom were female, who completed the online component of the study. The subjects were college students from five different campuses in Chile: 101 from Universidad de Talca (University of Talca in Talca), 24 from Universidad de Rancagua (University of Rancagua in Rancagua), 6 from Universidad de Concepción (University of Concepción in Concepción), 4 from Universidad Autónoma del Sur (Autonomous Southern University in Talca), 3 from Universidad Austral (Southern University in Valdivia), and 3 from Universidad Nacional Andrés Bello (National University of Andrés Bello, in Santiago). Table 3.1 provides information about these subjects in terms of their university, sex, and experimental group assignment. All participants were enrolled in at least one English class at their university at the time of the experiment. Data on students' ages were not collected, but the range was probably 18 to 27 years of age. Only students 18 or above were recruited.

The students from the University of Talca and the University of Rancagua were taking English classes voluntarily. At neither university is English a possible major. Their classes were four-skills type classes. Their listening comprehension skill level ranged from beginner to intermediate-mid on the ACTFL scale (<http://www.sil.org/lingualinks/>

Table 3.1: *Breakdown of subjects, by group, sex, and university attended*

Group A 39 subjects	23 females 16 males	Talca = 26
		Rancagua = 9
		Concepción = 0
		Autónoma = 2
		Austral = 2
		Andrés Bello = 0
Group B 32 subjects	17 females 15 males	Talca = 21
		Rancagua = 9
		Concepción = 1
		Autónoma = 0
		Austral = 0
		Andrés Bello = 1
Group C 32 subjects	22 females 10 males	Talca = 26
		Rancagua = 3
		Concepción = 1
		Autónoma = 1
		Austral = 0
		Andrés Bello = 1
Group D 38 subjects	24 females 14 males	Talca = 28
		Rancagua = 3
		Concepción = 4
		Autónoma = 1
		Austral = 1
		Andrés Bello = 1

languagelearning/OtherResources/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines/ACTFLGuidelinesListening.htm). The students from the three other campuses were recruited from English classes for students majoring in English. These students ranged from beginner to advanced.

As was said, these 141 participants completed the online aspect of the experiment. This means that they all completed an initial online background survey; they then took a two-part pretest; next they completed ten training sessions; and finally they took a two-part posttest. The study was structured in such a way that it was impossible for a participant to advance to the next step of the project without having completed all steps that came before it. There was another part of the study that was optional: the post-lesson surveys. Participants were invited to complete an additional survey after each of the ten training sessions. However, it was possible to skip one or all of these post-lesson surveys and continue on with the training sessions and tests.

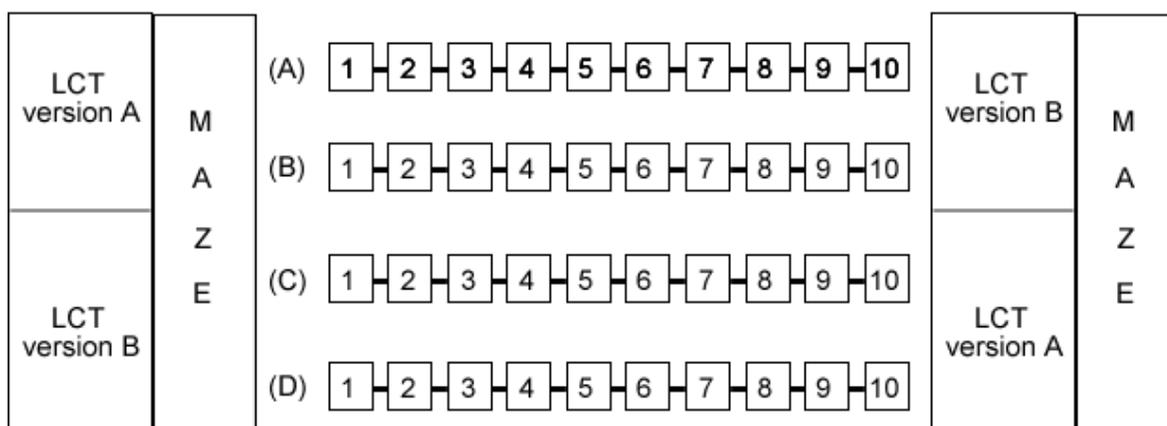
From among these 141 participants, 25 of them took part in Part II of the study as well. In Part II, the 25 participants were interviewed individually about their experience with the project and with their EFL studies in general, and they filled out a survey about their use of strategic behavior in their EFL experiences. Seven of these participants were in Group C, and there were another six participants from each of the other three experimental groups. Two of the 25 were from the Autonomous Southern University in Talca; two were from the Southern University in Valdivia, and the other 21 were students at the University of Talca.

3.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study had a mixed design, with both quantitative and qualitative aspects. Quantitative data were gathered via the pretests and posttests. This part of the study was used to measure gains in listening comprehension and control of English vocabulary and

grammar from the beginning of the experiment to the end. This part of the study was created in order to address Research Questions 1, 2, 3 and 4. Between the pretests and posttests was a ten-part training period. Participants were assigned in a semi-random fashion to one of four experimental conditions (details of group assignment are given in Section 3.9.2). The design of this part of the study is depicted in Figure 3.1. The listening comprehension test is labeled as “LCT” in the figure. Its two versions, A and B, will be explained in Section 3.7.2. The maze activity, explained in Section 3.7.3, served as the second half of the pretest and posttest.

Figure 3.1: *Research design*



Not shown in Figure 3.1 are the qualitative parts of the study. Qualitative data were gathered in a variety of forms. For one thing, all participants filled out an initial survey before taking the pretests, in which they gave background information about themselves and their English studies. This background information was gathered so as to have a better idea of what kind of subjects were involved in the study and what kind of

experiences they were bringing to the experiment. After each of the ten training sessions, the participants were invited to answer surveys about the lessons that they had just done. This part of the study was completed by most of the participants most of the time. The answers to the questions on these surveys were largely qualitative in nature, and touched primarily upon issues involved in Research Question 6 (CALL design).

Finally, an interview was conducted with and one additional survey was completed by 25 of the subjects who had also participated in all of the other steps of the experiment. In the interview, qualitative data about Research Questions 5 and 6 (use of strategies and CALL design) were gathered, and the survey provided additional data for looking at Research Question 5 (use of strategies).

3.7 INSTRUMENTATION

All of the instruments used were created specifically for this study. It was found to be necessary to do this in order to address the study's specific research questions, all of which pertain to listening comprehension, a relatively little-studied aspect of SLA (Ferreira & Anes, 1994). A description of the nature of each instrument and the purpose it was meant to fulfill is given below.

3.7.1 INITIAL SURVEY

The first instrument that participants encountered was a survey that asked them about their background with respect to studying EFL. Items included questions about how many years they had studied English, whether they had taken any English courses

outside of their regular schooling, whether they had ever traveled abroad and used English, whether they had ever taken the TOEFL exam or a similar exam (and if so, how well they had done on it), and what kinds of activities they had done in their English classes and their beliefs about the relative effectiveness of these different practices. Some of the questions were multiple-choice, and some were open-ended. The complete survey can be found in Spanish in Appendix A and its English translation in Appendix B. Participants saw and filled out the Spanish (their native language) version of the survey. This survey was written in Spanish so as to ensure that participants understood the questions and could answer fully, without having the challenge of writing in an L2 as a deterrent.

3.7.2 LISTENING COMPREHENSION PRE/POSTTESTS

Online, computer-delivered listening comprehension tests (LCT) were made especially for this experiment because the experimenter wanted to be able to differentiate between how well each subject did in listening to fast speech (180 wpm) and slow speech (135 wpm). Also necessary was to be able to compare pretest and posttest scores. Because of the likelihood of subjects remembering something about the dialogues from one test session to another, it was considered necessary that the pretest and the posttest contain different dialogues. Therefore, two versions of the LCT were made. Half of the participants got Version A as the pretest and Version B as the posttest, and the other half got Version B as the pretest and Version A as the posttest, as depicted in Figure 3.1.

Every effort was made to make the two versions of the LCT as similar to each other as possible. Both versions had four dialogues—two fast and two slow. The same template (created using Macromedia Flash®) was used for both versions, so that the only differences between them were the actual wording of the questions, the written prompt (originally in Spanish) “Listen to a conversation between X and Y” before each dialogue (where X and Y were the names of the two characters in the dialogue), the pictures that accompanied each dialogue, and the sound files themselves. See Appendix C for the layout of the tests.

Although there were four dialogues per test, there were actually eight sound files per test. Each dialogue was divided into two halves of between 51 to 82 seconds each. This was done because in the piloting phase of this experiment, described below in Section 3.8, it became clear that dialogues of much more than a minute in length began to tax some people’s short term memory. The LCT was designed to be a measurement of listening comprehension and not—or to as little degree as possible—a measure of short term memory, and so listening passages were limited to 82 seconds maximum and then, each one, followed by five comprehension questions. The scripts of the dialogues can be found in Appendix D. The comprehension questions can be found in their original Spanish in Appendix E, with their English translations in Appendix F.

The scripts of the dialogues in Appendix D also show what picture was displayed on the screen while the sound file played. One simple picture, depicting something about the topic of the dialogue, was chosen for each sound file. As discussed in Chapter 2, it was considered necessary to put something on the screen for the time that the test takers

were listening. A picture depicting the topic of the conversations was chosen, in keeping both with tradition and with research recommendations (Ginther, 2000; Merlet, 2000; Meskill, 1996).

The first two dialogues of both Version A and Version B are slow dialogues (135 wpm). The second two are fast (180 wpm). A number of things were done in order to get the actors to speak at these two speeds during the recording phase of development, including explaining the purpose of the experiment to the actors. When the actors were supposed to record a slow dialogue, they were told to speak like they would to a foreigner who could not understand English terribly well. They were told that if speaking slower meant that they pronounced the words more clearly and/or put more pauses into their speech, then that was what they should do. When the actors were supposed to record a fast dialogue, they were told to speak naturally but at a good clip.

Then, for either speed, the actors listened to a sample audio file in which people were speaking at the desired speed (135 or 180 wpm). Also before recording, the number of words per script was counted, and the time that the dialogue should last based on the word count was calculated. The actors were informed of this figure. Practice runs through the dialogue were timed so as to give an idea of how close to the speed goal they were speaking. If there was a part of the dialogue that the actors found awkward, the wording was altered, and any change in word count was used to recalculate how long the dialogue should last. After recording a good reading at very nearly the right speed, the sound file was manipulated to precisely the right speed using a 2xAV plug-in (<http://www.enounce.com/>).

Because, as was mentioned in Chapter 2, topic familiarity can affect listening comprehension (Rubin, 1994; Schmidt-Rinehart, 1994), common topics were chosen for the dialogues. Parallel dialogues were created for the two versions of the test, covering the following four themes: a) students talking about making choices on how to spend their time; b) telling about a great new store; c) talking about a new person and worrying whether that person will be as good as or as bad as the last person who had that role; and d) talking about a particular option for going out and trying to convince the interlocutor that he or she should do it too in the future.

The specific topics discussed under these themes are shown in Table 3.2, in the two right-most columns. These two columns mark the themes (a, b, c, and d); give the specific topic of each dialogue; indicate the sex of the two actors in the dialogue; and show the exact time duration of the two halves of the dialogues. The table also indicates which dialogues were recorded at 135 wpm and which dialogues were recorded at 180 wpm. Finally, the table indicates which dialogues had as one of the two actors the same woman (McBride) whose voice is heard in all ten of the training session dialogues, and which dialogues do not include her voice. The twelve other voices (besides McBride) in the dialogues belong to twelve other people, none of whom make appearances in the training dialogues. All of the actors in these sound recordings were native U.S.-born-and-raised English speakers from different parts of the country, and all of these actors had experience teaching foreign languages.

Because the tests were meant to look primarily at how well the subjects understood spoken English, as opposed to how developed their vocabulary was, the

Table 3.2: *Characteristics of the dialogues in the two versions of the LCT*

		Version A	Version B
Slow (135 wpm) dialogues	Two other actors, not McBride	Test dialogue 1 Theme a Two students talk about whether to work or vacation over the summer f—m 1:02 and 1:09	Test dialogue 5 Theme d One person telling other about a great new restaurant f—m 1:22 and 1:11
	McBride and one other actor	Test dialogue 2 Theme b One person telling friend about a great new shoe store f—f 1:14 and 1:07	Test dialogue 6 Theme c A person expresses doubt that the new secretary is good enough f—m 1:25 and 1:15
Fast (180 wpm) dialogues	McBride and one other actor	Test dialogue 3 Theme c One person tells other about the new neighbor who moved in and her concerns f—f 0:52 and 1:08	Test dialogue 7 Theme b One person tells other about a great new grocery store f—m 1:14 and 1:00
	Two other actors, not McBride	Test dialogue 4 Theme d One person tells other about a great new movie he saw f—m 1:12 and 0:54	Test dialogue 8 Theme a Two students talking about balancing school and family f—m 0:51 and 0:56

dialogues were all written with words of high frequency. Table 3.3 shows the percent of words in each dialogue that are within the top 2,000 most frequent words in English (determined using the website <http://ec.hku.hk/vocabulary/profile.htm>). The percentages reported in Table 3.3 are an average of the percentages for each half of the dialogues. Full

statistical details are provided in Appendix D, where the scripts are. Those words that did not fall within the top 2,000 most frequent word list are indicated there as well. These words are almost entirely proper names; nationalities; common non-words like “yeah,” “gosh,” and “wow;” cognates to Spanish words, such as “elegant” and “ridiculous;” other

Table 3.3: *Percent of words in the top 2,000 words in English*

Test dialogue number	Percent of words in top 2,000
1	93.8
2	94.8
3	94.7
4	84.8
5	92.9
6	92.1
7	89.7
8	93.8

very high frequency words such as “apartment” and “bicycle;” or, as can be seen in the Appendix D, were depicted by the picture that accompanied the dialogue, as in the case of “sushi” (a borrowed word in Spanish) and “groceries.” Exactly nine words from all eight dialogues do not fit one of these descriptions. (Test Dialogue 4 has such a low percentage because the conversation many times uses proper names.) Therefore, these dialogues can be said to use a vocabulary that most EFL students with already a few years of grade school English (which all Chilean college students have) should be mostly familiar with, at least in their written form.

The comprehension questions for the LCTs can be found in their original Spanish in Appendix E, with their English translations in Appendix F. Because poor listeners who

have failed to comprehend the general point of a conversation can still sometimes answer detail-oriented questions (Van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983), comprehension questions on these tests were written to ask about more global points of the dialogues. The intention was to ask only questions that anyone who could understand the conversation would be able to answer after listening to the dialogue once, which is one of the main reasons why the test was piloted extensively on native and near-native English speakers, as explained below in Section 3.8.

The LCT comprehension questions were all written in Spanish. This was done so that reading ability in English would not present itself as a confound in this test which was meant only to measure listening comprehension. All questions and instructions were proofread by native Spanish speakers.

Within the Flash programming of the tests was MySQL coding that allowed each participants' responses to be sent, along with their subject identification codes and time stamps, to a MySQL database that was housed on the same University of Talca server as the lessons and the project's homepage.

3.7.3 MAZE TASK

The maze task, described in Chapter 2, was used as the other type of pretest and posttest in this experiment. It was used as a measure of the test takers' ability to comprehend words and parse sentences in a forced/timed and linear fashion. The maze task had five practice sentences and another 20 sentences that were test items for which data were collected. The test takers were allowed to run through the practice items as

many times as they wanted before going on to the 20 test items. The 20 test items were presented in random order to the test taker.

The practice items and test items are in Appendix G. The instructions provided to the test takers can also be found in appendices—Appendix H for the original Spanish and Appendix I for an English translation of them. Five of the 20 test item sentences had subject relative clauses, and another five had object relative clauses in them. The other ten sentences had a variety of sentence structures. A few of them were quite short and simple. The words were all very high frequency English words or were cognates with Spanish words. The word list was submitted to the vocabulary profile website, <http://ec.hku.hk/vocabulary/profile.htm> (the full details of which are given in Appendix G). Of the words used in the maze task, 90.8% of them are within the 2,000 most frequently used words in English. Another 3.6% of the words are to be found on the Academic Word List (Coxhead, 1997). Most of those words, and all of the words that fell outside of these lists, are cognates of Spanish words.

The same test, with the same sentences, was used for all participants as both the pretest and the posttest. There are too many factors involved in a maze task—such as grammatical structure, vocabulary choice, and the side of the screen that the answer is found on—for a reasonable control of difficulty to be guaranteed, making parallel forms of the test, as was done with the LCT, nearly impossible. The problem of item familiarity, mentioned above in Section 3.7.2 when explaining why it was deemed necessary to make two versions of the LCT, exists with the maze task as well, but is not as serious of a problem. The LCT is made up meaningful dialogues, whose general storylines are many

times more easily remembered than a particular word choice in a sentence presented in random order in a maze task.

More serious of a threat to validity in the case of the maze task is the way in which subjects became familiar with the maze task. The maze task is an novel task that none of the subjects had encountered before. It is very likely that a subject will do better on a maze task the second time around, because from the first to the second time, he or she becomes more familiar with the task. This increased familiarity should not be mistakenly interpreted as an indication that the subject is recognizing words or parsing sentences better. However, much of the process of familiarization to the task happens as the subject goes through the practice items. To the extent that it remains a factor in the difference between pretest and posttest scores, this impact would be equal across all four experimental groups. Thus, what is important in terms of analyzing the results is any relative difference in change between experimental groups. This kind of difference between groups can be attributed to differences in the conditions for the experimental groups (that is, differences in their training sessions) and not an artifact of the maze task.

During the maze test in this experiment, when a test taker chose the wrong word in a sentence, the word "*Incorrecto*" appeared on the screen and the subject was told to press any key to continue. The subject could not return to an earlier part of the sentence or repeat the sentence. When instead a test taker chose all of the correct answers within a sentence and managed to reach the end of the sentence, the word "*¡Correcto!*" showed on the screen, and the test taker was instructed to press any key to continue on to the next item. The maze test recorded all of the tests takers' responses and the number of

milliseconds it took for each response (the RT). It was therefore possible to know exactly how many words each subject had chosen correctly. It was also possible to know how many sentences each subject completed, and which sentences these were.

The maze task as an experimental method was originally made on DMDX, a program that runs with Microsoft Windows® (Forster & Forster, 2003). A Flash version of the maze task was developed specially for this experiment. Because it was not known beforehand whether the different mode of presentation would have an effect on the way in which the subjects responded, it was decided to have a few of the subjects from the present study take the maze task on DMDX instead of online. Eleven of the 141 subjects took the maze task in DMDX format on a laptop computer in the presence of the researcher for the maze pretest. Two of those 11 also took the maze posttest on DMDX. This was done to ensure that the same kinds of answers and RT ranges were found for both formats. The same items were used and the same written instructions were shown to the test taker. Differences between this format and the Flash (online) format were: DMDX participants could ask the researcher questions; answers on DMDX were indicated by pressing the left and right SHIFT keys, while in Flash it was done using the left and right arrow keys; the Flash screen was white with mostly black lettering (but with green letters for the message “*Correcto*” and red for “*Incorrecto*”), and the DMDX screen was also white but with only black letters and a different font, and the feedback words “Correct” and “Incorrect” were written in English; and to go on to the next item, on DMDX the person had press the space bar, while on Flash, any key would do. In order to compensate for the lost time that it might take on DMDX for the subject to move his or

her hand from the space bar back to the SHIFT keys, the word “Ready” flashed on the screen for 75 ticks of the screen (which is just short of one second). Also on DMDX, at the end of each sentence, whether it ended correctly or prematurely, the subject saw “Please continue” at the bottom of the screen for about one second. This was to remind the subject to press the space bar.

All of these differences were considered extremely minor, and indeed, in the analysis, no systematic differences were detected in the error rates or RTs of those subjects who took the maze task online and those who did it in the DMDX format.

3.7.4 TRAINING LESSONS

There were ten lessons that comprised the training period of the experiment. For each lesson, the participant first heard the entire dialogue once, then was asked four multiple-choice questions, then heard the entire dialogue again, was asked another four multiple-choice questions, and then finally two open-ended questions. The same scripts and questions were used for all four experimental conditions. The only differences between the training for participants in the different groups had to do with the speed at which the sound files were recorded, the speed choice option for Condition C, and the pausing option for Condition D. That is, people in Group A heard the dialogue both times at 180 wpm. People in Group B heard the dialogue both times at 135 wpm. People in Group C heard the dialogue the first time at 180 wpm and then the second time had a choice between the faster or the slower speed. People in Group D heard the dialogues at 180 wpm both times, but the second time around, there was a pause button that they

could use to pause the playback. The pause button only worked as long as it was being clicked on.

The same procedure for recording different speeds for the lessons was used as when the dialogues for the tests were recorded. But whereas each dialogue in the tests had only one speed, each dialogue for the lessons was recorded at two different speeds. Thus, there were two versions of each lesson's dialogue, one slow and one fast. Care was taken not to change the wording of the scripts between the slow and the fast recordings. Both recordings were manipulated to precisely the right speed by using the same procedure as was used in preparing the dialogues for the tests (see Section 3.7.2).

As with the tests, all of the written prompts and questions were in Spanish. All of the lesson scripts can be found in Appendix J. In Appendix K are all of the original questions and answer options in Spanish, and in Appendix L they appear in English.

The dialogues that made up the ten lessons tell a continuing story of a woman named Karen who is hired by an educational publishing company called McBride-Will. Karen's job is to sell educational CD-ROMs for EFL. Her first task is to represent the company at an English teachers' conference in Chile. The first six lessons involve the interview process, Karen talking to her friend about the job, orientation into the new company, and purchasing a ticket to Chile. The last four dialogues take place during Karen's trip and conference in Chile.

Unlike in the tests, in the lessons there were only two answer options per multiple-choice question. After choosing an answer, the participant clicked on a button to check the answer. Then, the participant was told whether the answer was right or wrong.

Because the two answer options remained on the screen during this, the participant could see the correct answer. The participant, when ready, then clicked on another button to go on to the next question. At the end of the lesson, the subject's total score for the multiple choice questions was displayed.

Feedback was provided to the participants in this way for several reasons. For one, it is motivating for a student to know how well he or she is doing. A student can feel successful when getting the right answer, or he or she can challenge him- or herself to do better in the future when told that an answer is wrong. Feedback also adds an element of interactivity. Further, knowing that he or she got the correct answer, or being told otherwise, made sure that the participants knew what was happening in the ongoing storyline. That way, they never got too lost or confused in the story. Knowing what was happening in the ongoing story allowed the students to form schemata of the situation, and this in turn aids in listening comprehension.

All of the actors for these dialogues were native English speakers from the U.S. There were nine different actors. Karen, the main character, appeared in every dialogue. Two other characters had two different dialogues (lessons) that they appeared in. Five of the actors were female and four were male. Six of them had experience teaching foreign languages.

The lessons were meant to be practice for getting used to spoken English and were not designed to present the participants with new vocabulary. Therefore, the vocabulary used in the dialogues was vocabulary that should be familiar to EFL students who have had a couple years of English. Using once again the vocabulary profiler

website (<http://ec.hku.hk/vocabulary/profile.htm>), it was determined that 81.3% of all of the words in the scripts fell within the top 1,000 most frequently used words in English. Another 4.0% fell within the next 1,000 most frequently used English words. An additional 2.5% of the words could be found in the Academic Word List (Coxhead, 1997). Most of the rest of the 12.3% of the words were proper nouns. Eliminating plural forms of already listed singular words, as well as interjections such as “uhm,” that leaves a mere 57 words (out of a total 4,712) that do not fall into any of these word list categories:

ahold, airlines, airport, alright, announce, beaches, booth, boss, campus, candidate, CD, cell, classroom, client, clips, continent, cyber, demo, DVD, e-mail, fabulous, fascinating, favorable, figured, guy, ID, impression, impressive, interview, interviewed, kidding, lab, nervous, okay, packet, passport, polluted, pollution, presentations, professor, projector, radiation, raffle, resumé, ridiculous, smart, software, sophisticated, sponsor, sponsored, supermarkets, supervisor, tomatoes, traffic, tutor, video, weird

As can be seen, many of these words are also rather common words. More than half of them are cognates (for example, “candidate” and “favorable”) or words that have been borrowed into Spanish (such as “e-mail” and “software”). Therefore it can be said that the dialogues used mostly words that the participants should already have had knowledge of before participating in the project. Full details of the word count statistics and frequencies are provided in the appendices where the scripts are.

Like on the LCT, each dialogue was accompanied by a picture that depicted the content of the dialogue. These pictures are included in Appendix J where the scripts appear. The same picture was shown for both playbacks of the dialogue. The Macromedia Flash template that was used to create the lessons was built from the template used to make the LCT. A typical screenshot is shown in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: *Screen shot from Lesson*



3.7.5 POST-LESSON SURVEYS

At the end of each lesson, subjects were invited to fill out a survey about the lesson. The questions on the surveys were mostly formulated so as to answer Research Question 6, which asks which features participants liked about the online format. It was also an opportunity to gauge how the participants were reacting to the different speeds of the dialogues.

There were 40 separate surveys, because different versions of the surveys needed to be made to match the experiences of each different group (A, B, C, and D). For example, subjects in Group D were asked whether they used the pause button and whether they found it helpful, while members of the other groups were not asked that question. Also, there was some variety in questions between lessons. So, for example, members of Group A did not get exactly the same questions after Lesson 1 as after Lesson 2. There was, however, a large amount of overlap. All 40 of the surveys included a question about what the subject thought about the way of speaking of Karen and, in a separate question, the interlocutor. Subjects could check one or more of the following answers, “too fast,” “too slow,” “good speed,” “affected/not natural,” and “clear” (but in Spanish). There was also a space for the subjects to write in a different answer.

Other topics included what the participant thought of the pictures, the quality of sound, if there were many words that the participant did not recognize, and whether the participant was aware of using any strategies while listening to the dialogues. The subjects could fill out as little or as much of the survey as they wanted before submitting

the results. In Appendix M there is a list of every unique question asked in the surveys, and the translation is in Appendix N.

3.7.6 INTERVIEW

Twenty-five participants were interviewed. All of them were asked the questions that appear in their original Spanish in Appendix O (translated into English in Appendix P). Most of the questions were aimed at looking at Research Question 5, which concerns strategy use. The questions asked the participants about their ability in English and the ways in which they tried to improve it, and specifically, how they tried to enhance their listening comprehension skills in English. Questions 9-13, however, were about the format of the lessons and what the participant thought about that.

3.7.7 STRATEGY SURVEY

Near the end of the interviews, the 25 interviewees were given the strategy checklist that appears in Appendix Q (Appendix R for the English version). This checklist was created by including as many different kinds of strategic behaviors—both communication strategies and learning strategies—as had been described in the literature with regards to listening comprehension and which were considered to be potentially applicable to the context of the activities involved in the experiment (Bialystok, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Rost, 2002; Vandergrift, 2003; Wu, 1998). Participants were asked to indicate two things about each strategy: whether they had used that strategy at

some point during the present experiment, and whether they had used that strategy at any point during their English studies.

3.8 PILOTING

3.8.1 THE LISTENING COMPREHENSION TESTS

The two versions of the LCT went through extensive piloting and revision before the experiment was begun. Piloting was necessary to determine that the tests were indeed a good measure of English listening comprehension. The first step in this process was to run the test on native and native-like English speakers. If getting 100% on the test proved difficult for these people, then that would indicate that the instrument was testing something other than or in addition to listening comprehension.

In fact, running the test on native speakers led the researcher to the conclusion that the listening passages needed to be limited to around 80 seconds maximum. Some people could not remember the content of the dialogues past that amount of time. It was at this stage that the eight test dialogues were split into halves. This change was implemented after the second piloting session. Piloting also led, early on, to a decision to re-record one of the dialogues.

All piloting was done on a one-on-one basis. Because the instructions and test questions were in Spanish, printed translations of these were provided to the subjects who could not read Spanish. The researcher took notes as the subject worked through the test. After each piloting session, whatever changes were deemed necessary were made to the tests before the next piloting session. In this way, ambiguity in question prompts and

instructions were weeded out. Every change that was made to instructions or test questions was checked with a native Spanish speaker for accuracy.

Following Fulcher's (2003) advice, the subjects took the test under circumstances similar to the way the test would later be used in the experiment. For example, most of the subjects' procedural questions were not answered while they took the test, in order to determine how effective the instructions and layout were. After the test, however, the researcher talked to each subject about their experiences, getting feedback not only on the questions, but on the instructions and layout as well.

Once both Version A and Version B were changed enough so as to get two (near-) native English speakers in a row to score at least a 39 out of 40 (there were six subjects in the initial phase), then the tests were put online and a number of other native and near-native English speakers were asked to take the test online and report their answers to the researcher. The 14 test takers from this online phase of piloting, most of whom took both versions of the test, were invited to share their feedback with the researcher by filling out an online survey that was provided. Many did this. Others wrote personal e-mails to the researcher and/or talked to her by telephone. The two non-native English speakers in this group were Chilean born, native Spanish speakers who had both been living in the United States for over five years.

The next stage of piloting the LCT was done at a community college that had a large Hispanic population. Volunteers were recruited from ESL courses. Thirteen ESL students who were native Spanish speakers (12 from Mexico, 1 from Nicaragua) with a very wide range of English proficiency levels took the tests. Some of these volunteers

had at the time been in the United States for just a couple of months, while some of them had been in the United States for many years—one of them almost 40 years. The age range of these volunteers was from 18 to mid-50s.

Before beginning the testing activity, these Spanish-speaking volunteers were asked (in Spanish) about their time of arrival into the United States; their history of English study; how much they used English on a daily basis, where, and with whom; and how well they assessed their own English abilities, especially in terms of listening comprehension. This was done so as to determine their level of listening comprehension, in order to judge whether those with more advanced English listening comprehension skills did in fact do better on the LCT (which they did). The participants' scores from this phase of piloting ranged from 40% to 97.5%.

The project was explained cursorily to these participants in Spanish, but the only instructions that they got for the test were what they read on the screen of the test. Doing this helped to identify a few places where the instructions needed to be reworded. Each new change was programmed into the tests by the time the next subject encountered them.

As these volunteers took the listening comprehension tests, the researcher sat next to them and took notes. The researcher had a grid into which she recorded each answer for each participant. In this way, it was possible to single out troublesome test items and make some additional changes. An on-going effort was made to improve the distracters so that each one appeared to be a legitimate possible answer when the correct answer was not known by the test taker. Questions that were consistently answered wrong, especially

when the same wrong answer was chosen by many subjects, were reconsidered and checked against the native speakers' answers, to make sure that there was only one possible right answer. At the end of the test, the researcher spoke to the participants to ask for general impressions of the test, how well they felt that they had done, and suggestions for improving the test.

3.8.2 THE MAZE TASK

The maze task was run on six native English speakers, five advanced nonnative English speakers, and five of the ESL students who had also helped pilot the listening comprehension tests. Piloting for the maze task was done to make sure that 1) native English speakers could get 100% on the task (or if not, that all errors were the result of hitting the wrong button by accident and not because it was not clear which word needed to be chosen), 2) for each pair of words, only one of the words was a possible correct answer, 3) the program was working properly and encoding the necessary information about answers and RTs, and 4) the instructions were clear enough that a person working on his or her own online could understand how to do the activity. By the end of piloting, none of the last few (native Spanish-speaking) subjects needed more explanation than what was provided in the written instructions. All piloting of the maze task was done with the Flash version of the test and not the DMDX version.

3.8.3 THE DATABASE

The database that drove the online aspect of the experiment and that collected all of the answers was piloted for months before the launching of the experiment. Every phase of the project, under each of the four experimental conditions, was run through at least one time once the project was placed on the server in Chile. Recruitment of volunteers began only after it was determined that all steps in the project were functioning properly.

3.9 PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION

The instruments involved in data collection having been described, this section provides some additional information about how the actual data collection procedures worked.

3.9.1 INFORMED CONSENT

Recruitment at the five Chilean campuses listed above in Section 3.4 began in September, 2005. The researcher visited English classes and talked to potential participants in Spanish. She told them about her history teaching EFL in Chile and that she was now working on a Ph.D. in Second Language Acquisition and Teaching, for which she needed to conduct an experiment that required roughly 150 volunteer participants. Students were given a subject's disclaimer form in Spanish and were provided the URL through which they could sign on to the project.

The students were also asked to write down their names and e-mail addresses on a piece of paper if they thought that they might be interested in participating. The researcher later sent each of those students an e-mail reminding them of the project and providing a clickable link to the project's website. Students were encouraged to ask any questions that they might have about the project either during the researcher's visit to the class or later through e-mail, and all such questions were addressed.

During the researcher's visit to the classes, the students were told that the project was meant to explore online CALL design. They were not told that the project was designed to investigate the effect of rate of speech on listening comprehension development, because it was believed that participants' knowledge of that might influence their reactions to the project. They were also told that there was more than one design format being studied and that participants would be randomly assigned to a group, so that the researcher could compare participants' reactions to the different kinds of formats. The researcher referred to the experiment as an online "mini-course" in listening comprehension when she communicated with participants.

The students were told about a few of the peculiarities to expect in the project, including the maze task, the fact that all of the written instructions and questions were in Spanish, and the fact that on the test, the comprehension questions were shown only once and were shown only after (and not before) each dialogue. The students were also told that the lessons' dialogues told an on-going story about a woman named Karen (and tone of voice was used so as to call attention to the similarities with the researcher's name) who goes to Chile to sell EFL CD-ROMs. This last detail was included in the recruitment

procedure because in the researcher's experience, Chileans are more likely to be involved in an activity when they feel a personal tie to the people involved (as opposed to getting involved for the sake of science, for example).

3.9.2 THE MINI-COURSE

Participants began their participation in the project by going to the URL that the researcher had given them. All subsequent activity with the project was accomplished by always going to the same URL. The participant logged on with his or her e-mail. The website was built so that once logged on, the participant would be directed to the next step of the project. Participants could only do the next step; none of the tests or lessons, nor the initial survey, could be done out of order. The website also controlled group membership so that a person assigned to Group C, for example, would always be directed to Group C activities and never to those of another group. Participants could enter the website at any time; there was no control over the timing of the participants' activities.

Every other person was given Version A of the LCT as the pretest; the rest were given Version B. Those given Version A as the pretest were then, at the end, given Version B as the posttest, and vice versa. This was automatic. Group assignment was not. The researcher had to go to her password-protected administration page and manually assign group membership. This was done so that she could balance the groups: an attempt was made to have an equal number of high scorers, low scorers, and medium scorers in each group, as well as to have equal numbers of people who had taken Versions A and B of the pretest.

Participants could not go on to the lessons without having been assigned a group, and so it was necessary for the researcher to check the administration page very regularly. On a couple of occasions, some English teachers had taken their students to computer labs and used the project's pretest as a class activity. Group assignment during these moments of high volume were done completely randomly, assigning Group A, then B, then C, then D in succession, without checking first to see the subjects' pretest scores.

All answers to the initial survey, the pretests and posttests, and the lessons were sent automatically into tables in the database, along with time stamps, and the researcher was able to view these data from her online administration web page. The post-lesson surveys, on the other hand, were separate, and answers to these were sent, automatically, via the internet, in the form of e-mails to the researcher.

3.9.3 INTERVIEWS

An e-mail was sent out to participants as they came close to the final steps of the mini-course, asking if they would be willing to also take part in an additional interview. Those who agreed met the researcher on a one-on-one basis somewhere on their campus. These subjects had to fill out an additional consent form. The researcher prepared herself before the interviews by reviewing how well the interviewees had done on the pre- and posttest, how much they had written in response to the open-ended questions on the lessons, and what they had said in the original survey and later in the post-lesson surveys. She wrote this information on the papers on which she took notes during the interviews.

Notes were taken about all of the subjects' answers, occasionally writing down participants' answers verbatim. The list of questions (Appendix P) was adhered to very closely during the interviews, although questions were supplemented by knowledge of how the interviewee had done during the project. All but two of the interviews were conducted entirely in Spanish. Two of the participants—both English majors at the Autonomous University in Talca—spoke mostly in English with the researcher.

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS

Raw scores on the LCT were used for a number of calculations, the most basic of which was to compare pretest scores across groups on Versions A and B. This was done to verify that the averages on the two versions of the LCT were basically equal. Also, an ANOVA was used to check that any differences in the four experimental groups' pretest scores, on both the LCT and the maze task, were nonsignificant.

The principal statistical analysis done with the LCT scores was a repeated measures procedure, comparing pretest scores with posttest scores, and differentiating between scores on the slow dialogues and the fast dialogues. With group assignment as the between-subjects independent variable, change scores could be checked for significance, and the main effects of test (pretest versus posttest), speed (fast versus slow), and group assignment could be explored, along with interactions between the main effects. The results of these analyses spoke to Research Questions 1, 2, and 3.

With the maze task, it was possible not only to see the total number of words that participants chose correctly, but it was also possible to determine how many sentences

had been successfully completed. The number of sentences completed was used in calculations, as opposed to the total number of words. The reason for this is that sentence completion is a much more complex task and requires comprehension of an entire sentence, whereas each individual word choice had a 50% chance of being correct. Sentence completion was therefore considered to be a superior measure of grammatical competence.

Correlations between LCT scores and maze scores, both in terms of sentence completion and RTs, were calculated. These correlations were used to address Research Question 4. These calculations, as well as the repeated measures analyses were done only once all of the data were in.

As the project was in process, the researcher was able to monitor the participants' progress through the administration page, and the post-lesson survey answers were delivered in the form of e-mails sent automatically to the researcher. The researcher read all of these surveys as they came in. She also, during the time that the experiment was taking place, went online regularly and read the answers to the open-ended questions, of which there were two per lesson. Reading the incoming qualitative data from the experiment allowed the researcher to have an idea of the level of the participants' satisfaction with the project, as well as how well they were able to follow the dialogues that made up the training sessions.

At the close of the project, the tables generated in the online database were imported into Microsoft Access® to make a relational database. This means that all tables in the database were related to each other so that all records for any given participant

could be pulled up together. All of the post-lesson survey answers were also put into a table that was joined with the others in Access. In this way, it was possible to query the database about specific questions. Therefore, when working on an answer to Research Question 6, about participants' opinions about different aspects of the online CALL design, the researcher could determine which survey questions touched on specific themes and run a query on just those questions. This would then create another table that included all participants' answers to those questions (and nothing else). Groups of answers were read in this way, and this allowed the researcher to create categories of answers and determine what percentage of participants had answered in what ways.

Profiles were created for the ten participants whose LCT scores had climbed the most from pretest to posttest, and also for those ten whose scores had fallen the most. By means of querying the database, it was possible to review all answers given by particular individuals. By reading background information from the initial survey, reviewing the time stamps on each activity, seeing how well the participant did on each test and lesson, and reading the participant's post-lesson survey comments, it was possible to get a rather full vision of these 20 participants.

Answers to the multiple-choice questions on the lessons were checked only to see roughly how well participants were following the dialogues and to compare error rates between groups. Answers to the open-ended questions were reviewed as a further check of understanding, for one, but also to see the level of involvement that the participants had in the project. Longer, more complete answers were generally taken as indications of greater involvement with the project.

Finally, the interview notes were reviewed and answers to the strategy survey were tallied. Interview results were viewed with the aim to see if the experiences and habits of the more proficient participants differed from those of the less proficient. This was done in order to answer Research Question 5 about automatic versus conscious, strategic processing in listening comprehension. Answers to the interview questions that dealt with lesson and test design were used to address Research Question 6.

3.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This experiment had the virtue of ecological validity. Subjects participated in the experiment under the natural circumstances of their own choosing and according to the limitations of their personal situations. This carries with it the inevitable trade-off between ecological validity and control. Many participants did the tests while at public computer labs at their universities or at noisy cyber cafés. They were often faced with many strong distractions, about which some of them chose to write the researcher e-mails. One participant, when asked by the researcher in an interview if she had any idea why her posttest score had dropped so dramatically from the pretest score, explained that her younger sister kept coming into the room during the posttest and talking to her in Spanish while the dialogues were playing. Also, what equipment was used to listen to the dialogues was entirely beyond the control of the researcher and no doubt varied in quality.

This means that a fair amount of “noise”—unexplained variation—was introduced into the data because of these uncontrolled variables in the data collection

environment. The variation, however, was random, and therefore would not systematically skew the data. The damage that extra, random variation in the data would be likely to cause was lowering the statistical significance in any of the findings, but it would not alter the direction of the trends. At the same time, these circumstances made the experiment more realistic, which in turn means that any findings as a result of the study are more generalizable than the results of a strictly controlled lab experiment.

The way that the subjects participated in the experiment is very similar to the way that students might interact with any online course, and gathering information about this phenomenon was one of the major points of interest in the study. In fact, allowing participants as much freedom as they had resulted in a surprising but important finding. As will be explained in Chapter 4, the way in which participants paced their performance of the many steps in the project turned out to have an impact in their LCT gains scores.

3.12 CONCLUSION

This chapter has described how the data for this study were collected, the instruments used for it, the procedures followed, and the ways that the data were analyzed. The description included rationales for these choices, connected to the review of literature in Chapter 2 and the overall theoretical framework described in Chapter 1. The nature of the data thus explained, it is time to move on to a presentation of the results of the study, which are to be found in the next chapter and which are the basis on which all of the discussion and conclusions of Chapter 5 are made.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the analyses that were done on the present experiment's data are described and the results are presented. The chapter is structured primarily around the research questions introduced in Chapter 1, and secondarily around other important issues that came up during the analysis. Basic interpretations of the results are given. A more in-depth discussion of the implications of these results is left for Chapter 5.

4.2 GROUP EQUIVALENCE

In order to compare the effects of different types of training between groups of learners, it is important first to establish that the groups started out at more or less the same place. The first question to look at in the present study is whether the pretest scores of the participants who dropped out of the project were significantly different from those who finished every step. This is important because, if that were not the case, then one would be forced to wonder whether the project was simply too demanding for the average EFL learner, which would, in turn, indicate a serious limit to any generalizability of the results.

There were 679 participants who got at least as far as the first step of the project, which was to get online, register into the system, and fill out the initial survey. Of those, only 442 continued on to take the first part of the pretest, which was the listening comprehension test (LCT). To compare the 141 who completed every step of the project and the 301 who did not (but did take the LCT as a pretest), the pretest scores were

subjected to an independent samples t-test. The difference between the means (25.49 for finishers and 24.76 for non-finishers) was nonsignificant ($p = .57$). Therefore, the two groups can be said to be equivalent.

Table 4.1 shows how far the 442 participants got in the project. Only the participants who finished the final step, the maze posttest (labeled in the table as “Post Maze”), finished all levels of the project, and it is only these 141 subjects who are included in most of the analyses that follow.

Table 4.1: *Last steps completed by participants who did the Pre LCT*

Last step completed	Number of participants	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Pre LCT	42	9.5	9.5
Pre Maze	122	27.6	37.1
Lesson 1	32	7.2	44.3
Lesson 2	28	6.3	50.7
Lesson 3	20	4.5	55.2
Lesson 4	7	1.6	56.8
Lesson 5	15	3.4	60.2
Lesson 6	5	1.1	61.3
Lesson 7	4	0.9	62.2
Lesson 8	6	1.4	63.6
Lesson 9	6	1.4	64.9
Lesson 10	13	2.9	67.9
Post LCT	1	0.2	68.1
Post Maze	141	31.9	100
Total	442	100	

Another question about group equivalence needs to be asked, and that is whether there were similar means and standard deviations for both versions of the pre-LCT.

Version A of the LCT was taken as a pretest by 228 people. The mean was 24.72 (out of 40), and the standard deviation was 8.12. Version B was taken by 217 people. The mean was 25.07, with a standard deviation of 8.68. An independent samples t-test confirms that the two sets of results were essentially equivalent, $p = .66$. This is extremely important in order for pretests and posttests to be compared without having to adjust the raw scores. That is, because Version A and Version B of the LCT show nearly equivalent averages and standard deviations, a difference in pretest and posttest scores can be considered a real change as opposed to being the result of taking two different versions of a test.

Turning now to the 141 subjects who finished every step of the project, it is necessary to establish that the four condition groups began from basically the same starting point. A one-way ANOVA, with the pretest score on the LCT as the dependent variable and group membership as the independent variable, indicates that differences between the groups are nonsignificant: $F(3, 137) = 2.16, p = .10$. Using the same procedure but this time with the maze task pretest scores as the dependent variable also shows the initial group differences to be nonsignificant: $F(3, 134) = 1.83, p = .14$.⁵ Because of this, comparisons between the groups based on changes between their pretest and posttest scores can be made.

Table 4.2 shows the number of participants in each group and the pre-LCT score averages and standard deviations (SD). It also indicates the average scores for the slow and fast parts of the pre-LCT. Viewing the data in this way, one notes that the average for Group A is the highest and the average for Group B is the lowest. Because Group A's

⁵ The degrees of freedom are different here because maze pretest scores were lost for three subjects, due to a problem with the server.

Table 4.2: *Pretest averages and standard deviations on the LCT*

Group	Number of participants	Pre LCT average (40 possible)	Pre LCT SD	Pre Slow (20 possible)	Pre Fast (20 possible)
A	39	27.31	6.69	15.23	12.08
B	32	22.78	8.27	12.66	10.13
C	32	25.09	8.68	13.94	11.16
D	38	26.40	8.88	14.61	11.79

training was with only fast dialogues and Group B's training was with only slow dialogues, one might conjecture that the Group A scores are the highest and the Group B scores are the lowest because people who started out with better listening comprehension stayed in Group A and dropped out of Group B, and vice versa. However, not only did the already mentioned ANOVA indicate that the pretest scores for the four condition groups were statistically equivalent, another one-way ANOVA was run on all participants assigned to Group A. Taking their pre-LCT scores as the dependent variable and whether they finished the project or not as the independent variable, the differences are nonsignificant, $F(1, 116) = .90, p = .35$. Likewise, there was no significant difference between the pre-LCT scores of the finishers and non-finishers assigned to Group B: $F(1, 114) = .36, p = .55$. Therefore, the experimental groups had comparable initial profiles.

Table 4.3 shows the averages and standard deviations for each group's pretest scores on the maze task. Here it is Group D that has the highest average score and Group C that has the lowest average score. The fact that it is not the same groups that have the highest and lowest scores here as on the other pretest helps to lend credence to the idea that small group differences can be attributed to chance.

Table 4.3: *Pretest averages and standard deviations on the maze task*

Group	Pre Maze (out of 20)	Pre Maze SD
A	12.51	6.02
B	10.06	6.07
C	9.94	6.65
D	12.58	6.70

4.3 CHANGE SCORES ON THE LCT

Pre- and post-LCT scores are reported in Table 4.4. Because data of the same kind (LCT scores) were collected twice, at two different times, from the same participants, a repeated measures procedure was the most appropriate type of analysis. A general linear model repeated measures procedure with two within-subjects variables—speed (slow and fast) and test (pre- and posttest)—and one between-subjects variable—group assignment—was run in order to see what effect these variables had on the dependent variable, LCT scores. Both within-subjects variables were significant. Subjects did significantly better on the comprehension questions for the slow dialogues than for the fast dialogues, but they did, surprisingly, significantly *worse* overall on the posttest than the pretest. The between-subjects variable, group membership, was not significant. There was however a significant interaction between speed and group.

The main effect of speed was highly significant: $F(1, 137) = 134.10, p < .001$. Subjects got higher test scores on the slow dialogues. This means that the slower speed had the effect of making the dialogues more comprehensible. In Chapter 2 it was mentioned that some researchers' previous studies had failed to find a significant effect

Table 4.4: *Pre- and post-LCT averages and change scores for each group, with totals and broken down by dialogue type*

Group	Slow (out of 20)			Fast (out of 20)			Total (out of 40)		
	Pre	Post	Change	Pre	Post	Change	Pre	Post	Change
A	15.23	14.33	-0.9	12.08	10.62	-1.46	27.31	24.95	-2.36
B	12.66	11.72	-0.94	10.13	9.84	-0.29	22.78	21.56	-1.22
C	13.94	11.81	-2.13	11.16	11.13	-0.03	25.09	22.94	-2.15
D	14.61	13.71	-0.9	11.79	11.58	-0.21	26.39	25.29	-1.1

of speed on FL listening comprehension (Blau, 1990; Rader, 1990). This was clearly not the case in the present study, lending support both to the claim that the experience of listening to the slow and the fast dialogues was different, and to the claim that the test questions measured listening comprehension.

The main effect of test was also significant $F(1, 137) = 14.80, p < .001$. This means that pretest scores were significantly different from posttest scores: something changed between the pretest and the posttest, and much of the discussion in Chapter 5 is dedicated to identifying what that change was. The exact nature of this change is not immediately obvious because of the unexpected result that posttest scores were significantly lower than pretest scores. The idea that the participants somehow lost some of their listening comprehension skills during the time that they were participating in the study is rejected, because all participants were also at the same time enrolled in English classes. The initial survey indicates that none of the participants had ever lived in a place where English was spoken as the primary language. There is therefore no reason to believe that the participants were receiving less English input during the time of the study than during previous periods in their lives.

The repeated measures procedure identified one significant interaction, and that was between speed and group: $F(3, 137) = 2.94, p < .05$. Because of this significant interaction, and because the effect of speed on the four different experimental groups was at the core of some of the research questions for this experiment, repeated measures procedures were run for each of the four condition groups separately. These shall be described in the next section.

4.4 RESEARCH QUESTION 1

Research Question 1 asks how the speed of delivered speech during a FL learner's training affects acquisition. It was hypothesized that those participants whose training consisted of only fast dialogues (Group A) would show greater gains on the LCT for the fast dialogues, whereas those who were trained only on slow dialogues (Group B) would not show gains in listening comprehension for fast speech. This hypothesis was not supported. Splitting the data along group and performing repeated measures analyses for each group makes it possible to see the effect of test and speed for each group.

For Group A (trained on fast dialogues), both main effects, speed and test, were significant. For speed, $F(1, 37) = 85.94, p < .001$. This indicates that slow dialogues were easier for members of this group to listen to and comprehend than the fast dialogues, on both the pretest and the posttest. These results parallel the results found when all groups were analyzed together. For the main effect of test, $F(1, 38) = 8.97, p < .01$. This indicates a significant drop in scores from pretest to posttest. For Group A, there was no significant interaction between speed and test, $p = .50$, which means that the drop in

scores from pretest to posttest was more or less equal across types of dialogue (slow or fast).

For Group B (trained on slow dialogues), only the main effect of speed was significant, $F(1, 31) = 20.45, p < .001$. Slow dialogues were better comprehended than fast dialogues, on both the pretest and the posttest. However, the fact that there was no significant effect for test, $p = .24$, means that the pretest scores were not significantly better or worse than the posttest scores.

For Group C (able to choose the speed of the dialogue for the second listening during training sessions), both of the main effects and the interaction were significant. Speed was highly significant, $F(1, 31) = 26.29, p < .001$, showing once again that slower dialogues were easier to answer questions on than fast dialogues. The significant effect of test, $F(1, 31) = 6.05, p < .05$ indicates a significant drop in scores from pretest to posttest. Finally, the significant interaction between speed and test, $F(1, 31) = 6.64, p < .05$, indicates that the way in which scores changed from pretest to posttest was significantly different depending on the speed of the dialogue. A dramatic dip in scores happened with the slow dialogues, while fast dialogue scores remained essentially constant from pretest to posttest.

The main effect of speed for Group D (able to pause the second playback), as with all other groups, was significant, $F(1, 37) = 27.49, p < .001$. As in the case of Group B, test was not significant for Group D, $p = .21$. The interaction between speed and test was not at all significant, $p = .50$.

To conclude, the effect of speed was uniformly significant for all groups. The effect of test (pretest versus posttest) was significant for only two of the four groups. The effect of test was significant for Groups A and C; both groups did significantly worse on the posttest than on the pretest. While Groups B and D also did a little worse on the posttest, as indicated by group means, the difference was not significant. Therefore, Groups B (slow dialogues only) and D (option to pause during the second listening) did relatively better than Groups A (fast dialogues only) and C (option to choose speed second time around). Table 4.4, above, shows the average pretest and posttest scores for each group on the LCT.

The only group for which a significant interaction between test and speed was found was Group C. A lack of interaction for the other groups implies that the speed or speed options of the training did not impact how well the participants understood slow versus fast dialogues and that any benefit or harm that the training type might have had affected the participants' ability to comprehend slow and fast dialogues equally. For Group C, though, it did make a difference. Scores from pretest to posttest remained essentially the same on the fast dialogues: the average score for members of Group C on the fast dialogues on the pretest was 11.16 (out of 20), and on the posttest it was 11.13. The big change was with the slow part of the LCT. Members of Group C scored significantly lower on the slow part of the LCT posttest than on the pretest. Their average score on the slow part of the pretest was 13.94. On the posttest their scores dropped down to 11.81, on average. This can be seen in Table 4.4. In the same table one can see that the drop in scores on the fast dialogues was most dramatic for Group A. Figure 4.1 illustrates

this clearly. Research Question 1 asked whether learners who are trained on faster speech would process both faster and slower speech better than a group exposed mostly to slower speech. The answer appears to be no. This shall be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

Figure 4.1: *LCT pretest and posttest scores on the fast dialogues, for each group*

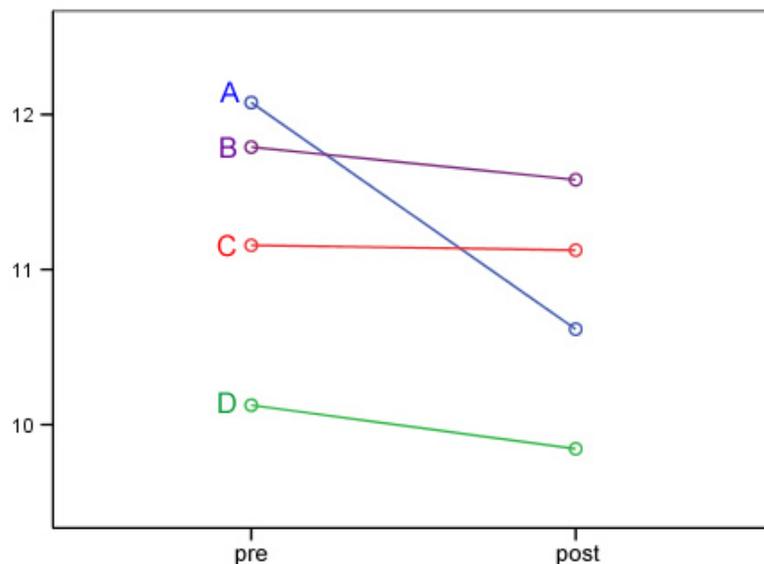
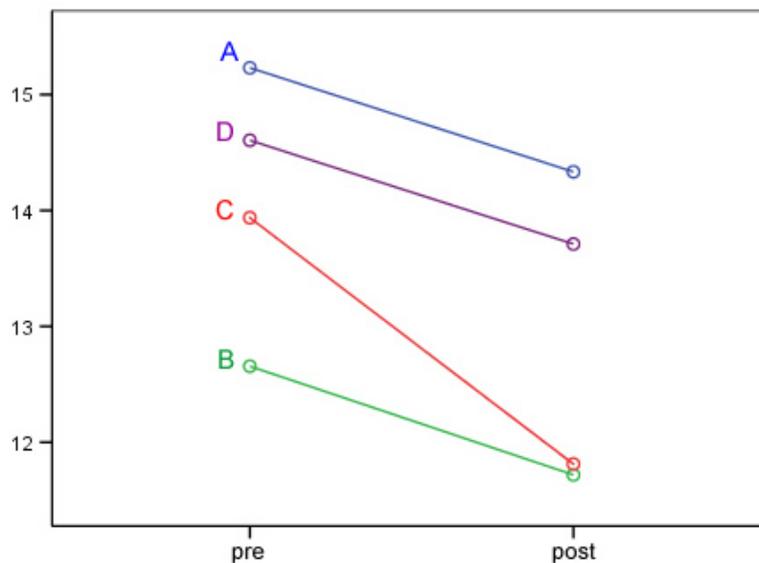


Figure 4.2 shows that the most dramatic drop in scores on the slow dialogues happened with Group C. This speaks to Research Question 2, which asked whether learners given a choice as to the speed of listening materials would make choices such that their listening comprehension improved more than their peers. It appears that being given a choice had a detrimental effect on their ability to follow dialogues delivered at a slow speed. This issue will also be explored in more detail in Chapter 5.

Figure 4.2: LCT pretest and posttest scores on the slow dialogues, for each group



4.5 SPEED CHOICES OF GROUP C PARTICIPANTS

One obvious question to ask about these differences is to what extent and in what way Group C's training actually differed from other groups. When given a choice of speed, what did the members of Group C choose? The information to answer this question comes from two sources. One source is the post-lesson surveys. Each post-lesson survey for Group C members asked which speed they chose for the second listening. Recall that for each lesson, Group C members could either choose to listen to the dialogue the second time at the same speed as the first listening (fast), or at the slower speed. There were four answers to choose from on the surveys: 1) "The same speed; it was easy to understand," 2) "The same speed even though it was a little hard to understand," 3) "Slower the second time; it is was much easier to understand that way,"

or 4) “Slower the second time, and even then it was still difficult for me” (See Appendix M for original wording in Spanish).

All post-lesson surveys were optional. That is, unlike other parts of the course, a participant could choose not to answer a post-lesson survey and still continue on with the lessons and posttests. There were 32 participants in Group C. Given a total of ten lessons, there were 320 opportunities to gather this information. Of those participants, 15 of them answered this survey question after the first lesson; 14 of them answered after the second lesson; 12 after the third and the fourth; 8 after the fifth; 6 after the seventh; and 5 for each of the rest of the lessons. (It was not consistently the same people answering every time.) Thus, only 87 answers to this question were gathered, or 27%. Table 4.5 shows the answers that were given to this question on the survey.

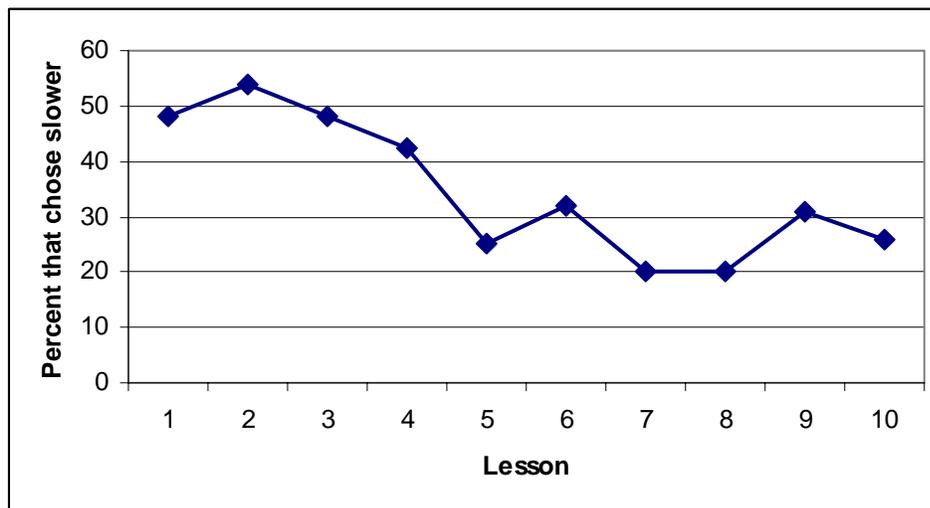
Table 4.5: *Speed choices for Group C members who answered post-lesson surveys*

Speed	Option	Explanation	Frequency	Percent
Fast	1	Fast was easy	36	41.38
Fast	2	Fast for a challenge	20	22.99
Slower	3	Slower was easier	21	24.14
Slower	4	Slower was still hard	10	11.49

As mentioned, there was another source of information as to what choice Group C members made. The online program itself marked this choice. Unfortunately, this function was not working at the beginning of the project, and so only some of the Group C members’ choices were recorded automatically. With the data from the two combined sources of information, there are 256 data points indicating Group C’s choices, as opposed to the full 320 possible. Therefore, the following reports on Group C choices are

based on only 80% of the occurrences. Figure 4.3 shows the percent of Group C members who chose the slower speed when given the option (on the second listening). From the chart it can be seen that participants chose the slow option less often as time went by.

Figure 4.3: *Percent of Group C members who chose the slow option for the second listening, for each lesson 1-10*

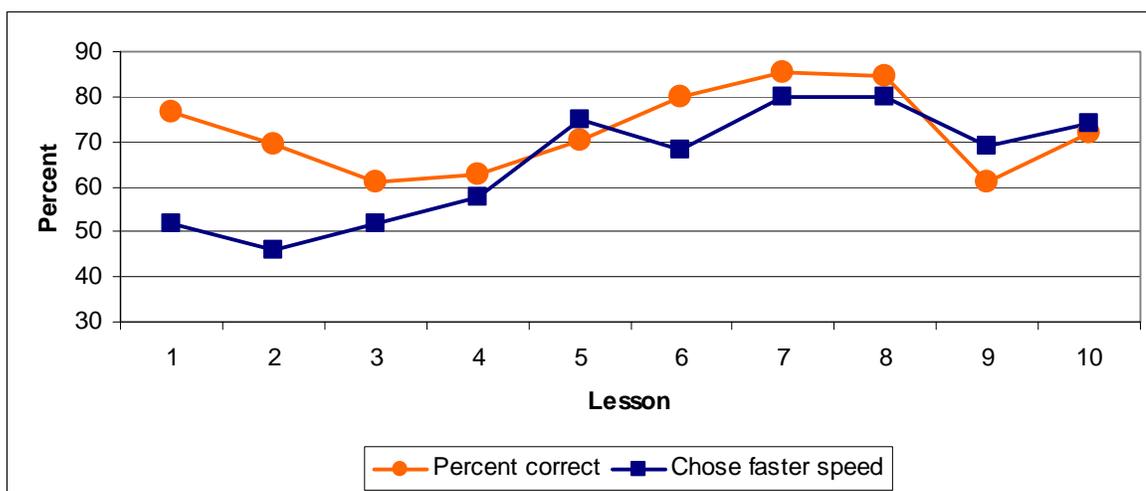


4.6 DIFFICULTY OF THE LESSONS

By examining how well participants did on the multiple-choice comprehension questions on the lessons, it can be seen that Group C members were more likely to choose the slower option when the lesson was more difficult, as indicated by how many comprehension questions participants got correct. Figure 4.4 charts two lines. The line with square markers indicates the opposite of what is shown in Figure 4.3. That is, this line shows the percent of Group C members who chose, for the second listening, to stay with the faster speed rather than go down to the slower speed. The other line in Figure

4.4, with the circular markers, indicates the average percent correct for Group C members on the lessons' multiple choice questions.

Figure 4.4: *Percent of Group C members choosing the faster dialogue, compared to average scores on the comprehension questions, per lesson*

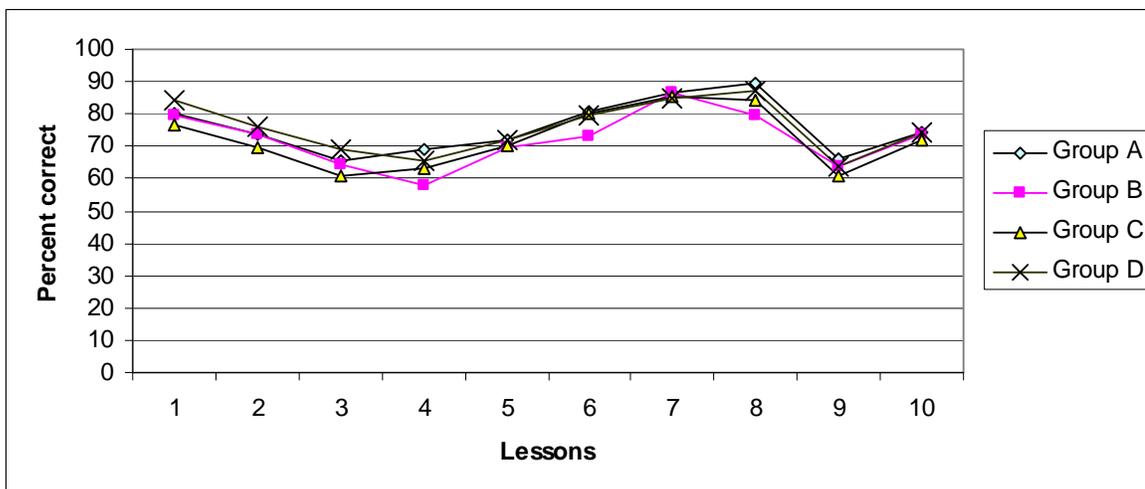


By Lesson 3, the two lines in Figure 4.4 are very similar. Using each Group C member's scores from Lesson 3 on, and comparing them to those participants' speed choices on each lesson, yields a correlation of .29, $p < .001$. This correlation was calculated using the nonparametric Spearman's rho, in order to take into account the non-normality of the data and the problem of the missing data. The significance of this correlation supports the hypothesis that participants chose the slower speed the second time around when they found the dialogue difficult to understand and/or when they missed a number of the first four comprehension questions that came before the second listening. It is further hypothesized that speed choice and percent correct on

comprehension questions did not match up more closely before Lesson 3 because participants were still experimenting with and learning about the speed option during the first two lessons.

The next question that one might ask is whether members of Group C did similarly well on the lessons as did members of other groups. In fact, the results are remarkably similar. Figure 4.5 shows the average percent correct on the comprehension questions for each group. The truly striking similarity in the groups' scores is due to two main factors. For one thing, each question had only two possible answers. For another,

Figure 4.5: *Percent correct on lessons' comprehension questions for each group*



the questions were meant to guide the participants towards comprehension, as opposed to testing them. The first four questions of every lesson were especially straight-forward and asked about the dialogue in very general terms. After answering, the participant was told whether the answer was right or wrong, and the options and the feedback were left on the

screen until the participant clicked to go on. Therefore, the participant learned more about the dialogue by running through the questions. More specific questions were left for after the second listening.

Research Question 2 had also asked which speed FL learners preferred and under what circumstances. These results suggest that they chose the slower speed when they found a dialogue more difficult to understand, and that over time, they tended more to choose the faster speed more often.

4.7 RESEARCH QUESTION 3

Research Question 3 was the following: Are learners who were allowed to pause listening passages during their training—compared to learners who were not allowed to do this during training—able to process those passages better so that they consequently show greater gains on measures of listening comprehension? The training format for members of Group D allowed pausing. This format most closely matches the training format for the members of Group A, who also listened to only fast dialogues, but with no pause option.

The two groups have exactly the same change scores on the slow part of the LCT; both groups' scores went down by .90 out of 20, less than a 5% drop. There is, however, a marked difference between Group A's change scores and Group D's change scores on the fast part of the LCT. For Group A, the drop was 1.46 out of 20, and the main effect of test was significant overall, as mentioned before, while for Group D, the drop was only .21, and the main effect of test was not, overall, significant. These facts indicate that the

two kinds of training differed from each other and that the training type for Group D was superior to that of Group A.

Information about the extent to which the pause was used by Group D members is, however, incomplete. The computer program itself did not collect data as to whether the pause button was pressed. The only source of information about this comes from the voluntary post-lesson surveys. Answers to questions about pause button usage were provided only around 68% of the time (missing data resulting from participants not answering the post-lesson survey). From the available data, participants indicated using the pause button only about 7% of the time, and six of the respondents who used the pause button indicated that they did not find it helpful. For example, one said,

Al ser un diálogo tan rápido, cuando se pulsa el botón de pausa para poder procesar mejor el diálogo, cuando se suelta se suelen perder palabras que pueden dificultar el entendimiento de lo que sigue.

(Since it's such a fast dialogue, when you press the pause button so you can better process the dialogue, when you let it go you tend to lose some words, which can make understanding the next part more difficult.)

The little use of the pause button, contrasted with the superior change scores for members of this group leaves some questions that will be more fully explored in Chapter 5.

4.8 RESEARCH QUESTION 4

Research Question 4 was the following: Between groups that demonstrate different speeds and/or accuracy of processing spoken language, do they also demonstrate

different speeds and/or accuracy in forced (timed) processing of written language? The pre-LCT scores were taken to be the measure of speed and accuracy of processing spoken language. The maze pretest scores were used as the measure of accuracy in timed lexical and syntactic processing of written language, and maze RTs were used as a measure of speed for the same. To answer this research question, then, two-tailed Pearson correlations were calculated between maze pretest scores, reaction times and pre-LCT scores.

The maze scores used for this and other calculations in the present report were the total number of sentences that a subject managed to get to the end of. It was decided to use this measure, as opposed to using the total number of words chosen correctly by the subject. Each word choice had a 50% chance of being right, whereas getting to the end of a sentence required choosing every word in the sentence correctly. It was therefore considered that this number (total number of sentences completed) was a better measure of a subject's underlying grammatical ability than the other possible way (total number of words) for calculating maze scores.

Table 4.6 reports the results of these calculations.⁶ The short answer to Research Question 4 is yes: the people who did better at listening comprehension scored higher and were faster on the maze task. The correlation between the maze scores and the scores on the fast part of the LCT is somewhat lower than that between maze scores and the scores on the slow part of the LCT. Although the maze task is in fact a “forced” task, in that

⁶ Three subjects' scores failed to be sent correctly to the database, causing the N of this part of the analysis to be 138.

Table 4.6: *Correlations between pre-LCT scores and maze pretest scores and reaction times*

	Maze sentences	Maze RT
LCT total	0.66**	-0.22**
LCT slow	0.64**	-0.22**
LCT fast	0.56**	-0.19*

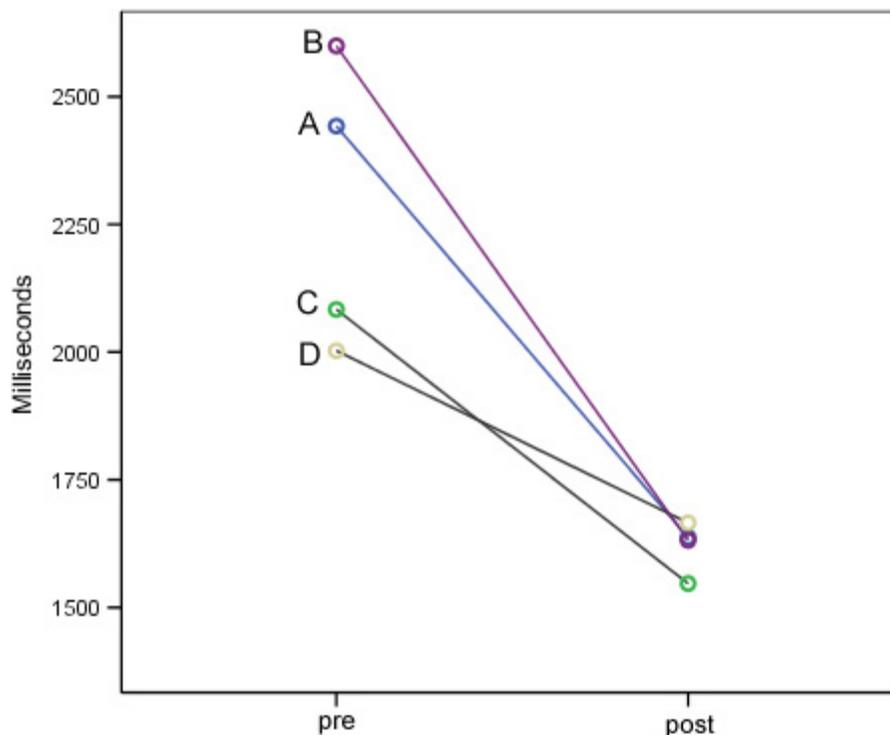
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

taking too long to respond causes a person to lose the thread of the sentence and therefore forces a person to not go too slowly, it still is up to the participant exactly how fast he or she goes, and in this version of the test, there was no time limit to participants' answers. The mean RT was very slow: 2300 ms per word pair, which calculates out to about 52 words per minute—more than twice as slow as the slow condition on the LCT and training session dialogues. Even eliminating the RTs of the ten subjects whose average RTs were more than two standard deviations above the originally calculated mean, the resulting mean RT is still very high: 2002 ms.

There was no statistically significant difference between Groups A, B, C, and D in terms of how well they did on the maze task (accuracy or RT)—neither for the pretest, as mentioned before, nor the posttest. Also, the change in RT from pretest to posttest was rather uniform between groups, as shown in Figure 4.6, and a repeated measures test showed no significant effect for group, $F(3, 131), p = .16$.

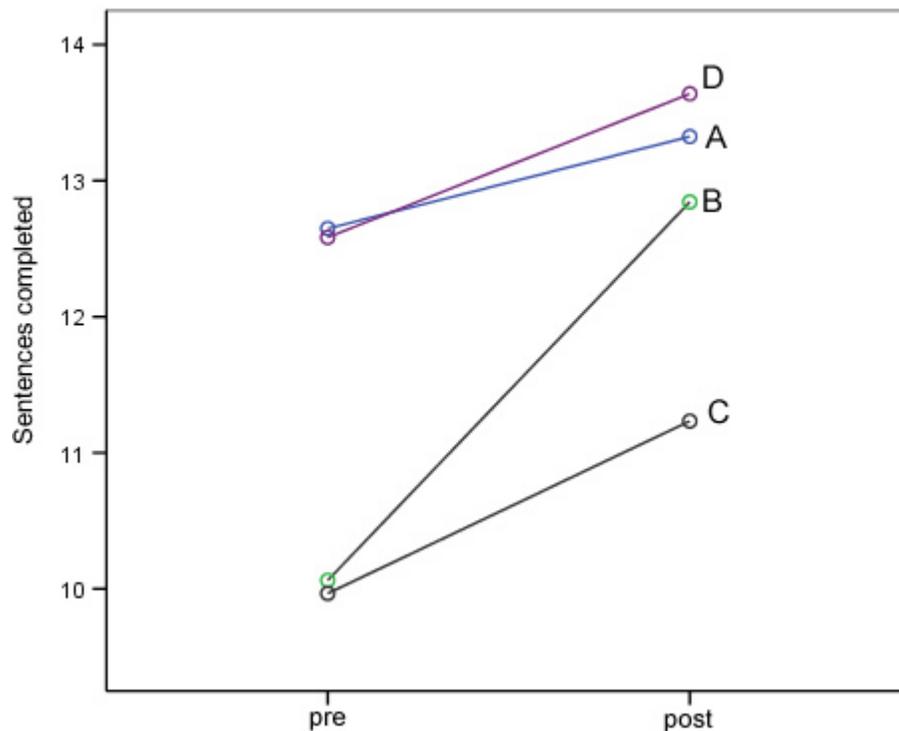
Figure 4.6: *Change in reaction time on the maze task for each group*



There is however a difference in accuracy *change* scores between the groups. A repeated measures analysis showed a main effect for test (pretest versus posttest), $F(1, 131) = 26.72$, $p < .001$, and there was also an interaction between test and group, $F(3, 131) = 2.72$, $p < .05$. Figure 4.7 depicts this interaction nicely.

As a follow-up with regards to the interaction, the data were split by group and a repeated measures procedure was run for each group. The change from pretest to posttest was insignificant for Group A, $F(1, 36) = 2.27$, $p = .14$. The results for Groups C and D were similar to each other. For Group C, test was significant $F(1, 29) = 5.59$, $p < .05$. For

Figure 4.7: Change scores in terms of sentences (out of 20) completed on the maze pretest and posttest



Group D the results came out thus: $F(1, 35) = 5.16, p < .05$. For Group B, the effect was stronger: $F(1, 31) = 13.20, p < .01$. Therefore, the members of Group A made no significant gains in completed sentences from the pretest to the posttest. The members of Groups C and D made significant gains, and the members of Group B made highly significant gains.

4.9 RESEARCH QUESTION 5

The fifth research question asks whether those FL learners who demonstrate greater comprehension of spoken language achieve this primarily through superior strategic listening, or whether instead their syntactic processing and lexical access simply

function more automatically. The data available to look at this question come primarily from a survey and an interview that were done with 25 of the participants after they had finished all steps of the online project. As with the first stage of the project, this second stage was completely voluntary. The volunteers in this subgroup did on the whole better than the average participant in the project. For example, three of them got a perfect score either on the listening comprehension pretest or posttest. Table 4.7 shows a comparison of this subgroup's scores with the whole group. The subgroup of 25 did better than the whole group on all measures, except for the pretest maze task, where the subgroup was slower. On the maze posttest, they were faster. There was, however, a range of ability levels represented in the subgroup, with LCT scores as low as 8 (out of 40) and maze scores as low as 1 (out of 20).

Table 4.7: *A comparison of the scores of the participants in Part II compared to all of the participants together*

Measure	Participants in Part II (subgroup)	All participants in Part I
Pre-LCT	26.96	25.53
Post-LCT	25.72	23.82
Maze pretest: sentences	14.08	11.38
Maze posttest: sentences	15.16	12.83
Maze pretest: RT in ms	2391	2300
Maze posttest: RT in ms	1607	1635

These 25 participants were asked the questions that can be found in Appendix P (Spanish version in Appendix O). Also during the interview, the subjects were asked to fill out the survey found in Appendix R (Spanish version, Appendix Q). On the survey, there is a variety of strategies, matching different learner types, and it is unlikely that any

one person would use all 23 of the strategies mentioned. In fact, some strategies even contradict each other (which is not to say that they could not both be used at different times). For example, one participant said that the strategy that she most used was number 9, “I rely heavily on common sense and what I know about the real world” and, she noted, consequently did more or less the opposite of Strategy 11, “I try to keep my mind free of preconceptions and just let the information come in.” Similarly, *not* doing Strategy 23, “I go with my first reaction to a question and don’t analyze my answer,” could be considered a strategy in itself—reasoning out what the answer must be, rather like Strategy 9—and indeed, one that was encouraged by the kind of questions and the structure of the lessons in the experiment.

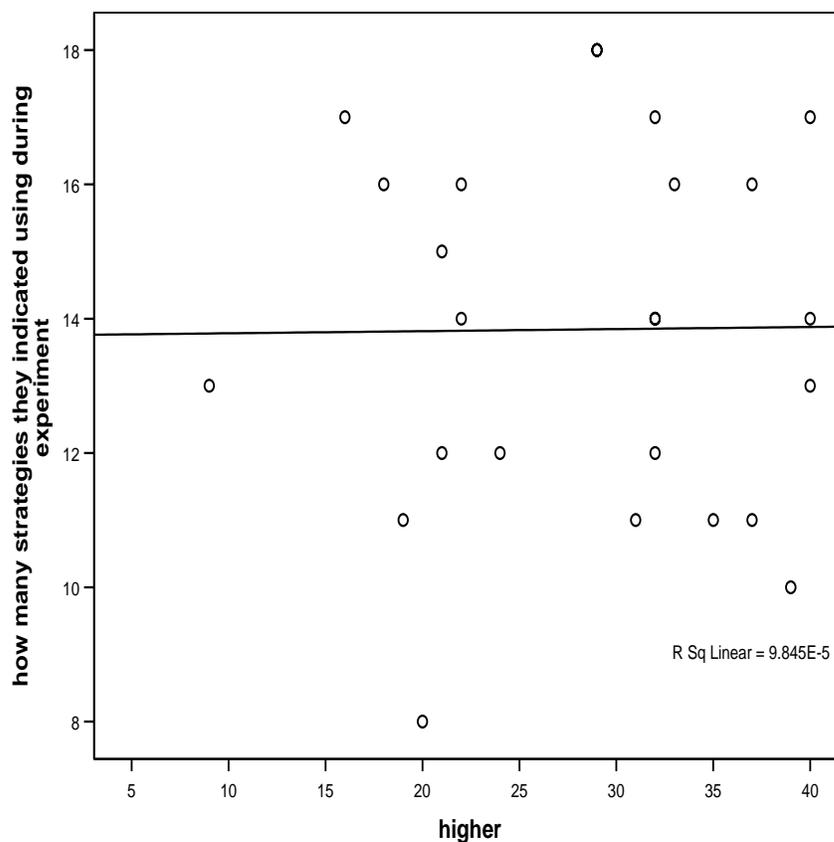
One column on the strategy survey (Appendix R) said at the top “Used at some point during this experiment,” and the other said, “Used at some point during my English-learning career.” Participants were asked to indicate which of the strategies they had used during the experiment and then again ever in their English studies. After filling out the survey, the participants were asked if they could think of any strategies that they had ever used but that did not appear on the list. Only one person added another strategy to the list, but it was, in essence, a rewording of other strategies from the list. He wrote, “*Capturo las palabras que comprendo en el caso de que el diálogo sea poco claro para mí e intento darle alguna estructura más o menos lógica*” (I collect the words that I did understand, in the case that the dialogue was not very clear to me, and I try to give it a more or less logical structure”).

There is no correlation between the number of strategies—either those used ever, or those used specifically during the experiment—and the participants’ scores—either LCT scores or LCT gain scores. Figure 4.8 shows a scatterplot with each participant’s higher score on the LCT (if the pretest score was higher, that is shown, but if the posttest was higher, that number was used) on the x-axis, and on the y-axis, the number of strategies, out of 23, that the participant indicated having used at some point during his or her participation in this project. The scatter plot clearly shows no correlation between the two measures.

There was only one strategy that was favored more by the high scorers than the low scorers, number 7, “I notice when my mind is wandering and make myself pay attention again.” The only two people who did not check having employed this strategy had both scored relatively poorly on the LCT, the pretest and posttest scores for one of them being 21 and 19, respectively, and 19 and 14 for the other (all out of 40 possible points). Both of these participants talked during the interviews about being very easily distracted. One of them, the higher scorer, was a student of medical technology and had excellent English reading skills but almost no practice in listening comprehension. The other one said that he would probably not study English at all if it were not a required class; that he had less innate talent in languages than the other people; and that he had only participated in the study as a favor to the researcher.

Another difference related to strategy use that came out between more advanced and less advanced subjects was detected in an interview question that preceded the questions about strategies. Before talking specifically about strategies, the participants

Figure 4.8: Scatterplot of subgroup participants' LCT scores and the number of strategies that they indicated using



were asked to describe what goes on in their minds when they listen to English. The question was always phrased with as few prompts as possible so as not to influence the participant's answer. If the participant claimed not to understand the question, then the experimenter would suggest that listening to English was probably different for them than listening to their first language, Spanish. When the participant agreed, then the researcher would ask them to please explain in what way it was different.

The two most advanced participants (both scored 40 out of 40 on the LCT, one spoke to the researcher in English and was an English major in college, and the other had

gone to an English immersion high school) said that in fact there was little difference between listening to English and listening to Spanish, and that they were unaware of what they did in order to understand. Both of these participants said, while looking at the strategy survey, that they found themselves using strategies less now, at their more advanced stage in L2 acquisition, than before. In fact, a number of other participants had also made that comment while looking at the survey. They meant that they used the strategies less often, as opposed to using fewer of the various strategies. Despite these two advanced participants' claims, their actual numbers of strategies reported as used during the experiment were not remarkably lower than other participants' (English major: 17 out of 23; immersion student: 10 out of 23). These two participants' comments indicate that, while they still employed some behaviors that could be called "strategic" when listening to EFL, their listening processes were largely automated and that it was for that reason that they were not consciously aware of particular steps in their listening comprehension processes.

There was another indication in the interviews that more advanced learners of EFL had listening processes that were more automatic and integrated, as opposed to broken up into discrete steps. This came out when the subjects were asked to describe their listening comprehension process. There was a dramatic difference between the gestures of the more advanced and the less advanced English learners as they answered this question. More advanced speakers tended to make gestures that outlined the shape of a sphere. As they made these gestures, they would describe the way in which their several sources of information, such as vocabulary, grammar, tone of voice, and general

background knowledge, folded into each other to make a solid whole of a mental model in their minds for what they heard. In contrast, participants who had low scores on the LCT made gestures of grasping at distinct points in the air, or they poked at different spots on one of their hands with a finger from the other, to indicate separate points. These less advanced EFL learners spoke of capturing only isolated bits of information, usually specific words, and they explained that the connections made between the points were merely guesses on their parts. A typical comment from one of these students was, “*Busco las palabras que entiendo y las inserto en el contexto,*” or “I look for words that I understand, and I insert them into the context.”

4.10 POPULAR STRATEGIES

It is informative to see which strategies were most popular among the participants. Table 4.8 lists the strategies from the checklist, in the order of how much they were used during the experiment by the participants who were interviewed. The first column lists the separate strategies and includes the number by which the strategy appeared in the original survey. The number in the center column indicates how many of the participants, out of 25, said that they had used that particular strategy at some time during the experiment. The final column, at the right, shows how many of the interviewees, out of 25, indicated having ever used that strategy during some point in their English learning careers.

Some of the more interesting results here are with respect to those strategies that were not used much, especially those that were not employed during the experiment but

Table 4.8: *Strategies used by participants during the experiment and at other times*

Strategy	Used during experiment	Used ever
10. I try to make sure that I am relaxed	24	25
7. I notice when my mind is wandering and make myself pay attention again	23	24
4. I guess the meaning of unfamiliar words	22	23
17. I try to focus on key terms	21	23
14. I listen to the speakers' tone of voice	20	23
6. I try not to translate word for word	20	22
1. I form a visual depiction of what I am hearing	18	23
8. I focus on the grammar that I understood and guess other parts of grammar that I could not catch	18	22
11. I try to keep my mind free of preconceptions and just let the information come in	18	22
15. I catch up with what is being said during the pauses	18	21
13. I try to remember where I have heard a phrase before	16	20
19. Once I have seen the comprehension questions, I remember them and listen for their answers	16	19
9. I rely heavily on common sense and what I know about the real world	15	21
22. I remember the actual sounds I heard when answering questions about the listening	15	18
16. I repeat to myself what I have heard	14	20
5. I guess what the other person will say next	13	15
12. I try to remember the situation and guess what will be said or happen next	12	14
18. I try to guess what questions I will be asked	11	15
23. I go with my first reaction to a question and don't analyze my answer	9	14
3. I write out notes while listening	8	19
21. I start thinking in English before I start a listening activity	8	11
2. I look up new words that I have heard	5	22
20. I draw or map out what I am hearing	2	8

were employed during other points in the participants' English learning experiences. The most striking contrast of this type is Strategy 2, "I look up new words that I have heard." This was used by only five of the participants during the experiment, but by 22 out of the 25 at some point. One reason for this discrepancy might be that the project did not allow the participants much down time when they could be looking up unknown words. Other English learning activities have fewer time constraints and allow the student to take some time off to look up a word. Another reason might be that the vocabulary used in the dialogues of this project was intentionally of high frequency. Therefore, when a subject did not understand a word, it might be more likely due to misunderstanding the pronunciation, as opposed to hearing a new word. If they had misunderstood pronunciation, subjects would not know what to search in the dictionary. Lastly, since the words used in the dialogues were in fact high frequency words, there was probably less of a need to look words up.

There was one source of information about participants' strategy use even for those who only participated in Part I of the experiment. After Lesson 6, all participants who took the post-lesson survey were given the following prompt: "These dialogues are on the whole longer than what one normally listens to in this kind of exercise. What strategies do you use so as not to forget the content of the conversation?" The question was open-ended. Table 4.9 shows a list of all of the strategies mentioned by the respondents.

What is listed as Strategy 11, "Make English one's own," is unusual. It was stated once this way, "*ninguna solo trato de hacer mio el ingles*" ("none, I just try to make

Table 4.9: *Strategies participants used to remember the dialogues' contents*

	Strategy	Times mentioned
1	Just concentrate	21
2	Listen globally	19
3	Listen for key words	13
4	Focus on important parts, disregard the rest	12
5	Use comprehension questions	7
6	Use second playback	5
7	Avoid translating	3
8	Take notes	3
9	Remembering the little I understand is not difficult	3
10	Visualize	2
11	Make English one's own	2
12	Translate	2

English mine”), and elsewhere,

Jajaja, no creo que haya una estrategia en sí, tal vez lo que hago es concentrarme adecuadamente desde un comienzo para comprender el tema que se discute y luego sólo me preocupo de seguir la conversación tal y como lo haría si estuviese escuchando a dos chilenos.

(Ha ha ha, I don't think I use a strategy as such, maybe what I do is concentrate enough from the beginning so that I know what they are talking about and then I just worry about following the conversation just like I would do listening to two Chileans.)

This idea of dealing with English in the same way that they deal with their native language was a very common theme that the researcher encountered in informal conversations with English students and EFL teachers in Chile during the semester that she ran the experiment. It reflects an understanding that English is a system of

communication and that it should therefore be dealt with communicatively. That this belief was dominant and frequently talked about is worth noting because this breaks dramatically with the country's long-standing tradition of using the Grammar-translation Method for teaching English as a foreign language. It appears that the most popular way of teaching EFL in Chile went from rote memorization and the grammatical analysis of decontextualized sentences to activities based on meaningful communication.

4.11 THOSE WHO GAINED AND THOSE WHO LOST ON THE LCT TESTS

So far in this chapter there has been mention of participants' higher and lower LCT and maze scores, but without looking at what kinds of gains or losses particular participants had between the pretest and posttest. This section describes the characteristics of the ten participants (from among all 141 participants) who made the greatest gains on the LCT, as well as the ten participants whose scores dropped the most. All available sources of information were taken into account to form profiles of these students. Participants' initial surveys were studied to look for patterns of previous English study and attitudes towards English as a foreign language. The subjects' pretest and posttest scores, on both the LCT and the maze task, were reviewed. Their answers to the lesson questions were also examined, especially in terms of the length and type of their answers to the open-ended questions. Their answers to post-lesson surveys (if there were any) were read. And finally, the time stamps on all of their activities were examined.

The ten participants (five females, five males) who made the greatest gains on the LCT gained anywhere from 6 to 12 points (out of 40). The standard deviation on the pretest, for all participants, was 7.95. Therefore, the gain scores represented by these ten are not terribly dramatic. However, they should be viewed in light of the fact that most participants' scores dropped. Three of these ten were from Group A; four were from Group B; one from Group C; and two from Group D. On the whole, these participants did not improve in terms of accuracy on the maze task, but only got faster. Also, they tended not to improve much on the slow part of the LCT but instead on the fast dialogues.

Where they were noteworthy was in their demonstrations of metacognitive knowledge about how language lessons work and their apparently strong beliefs about language acquisition. For example, one of them said,

Preguntas si las preguntas son fáciles o difíciles el punto es lo que uno entienda porque las preguntas son fáciles pero si uno no entiende mucho el diálogo, se hacen más difíciles. Me da la impresión que son diálogos super realistas y creo que están bien para practicar. Es una buena practica para afinar el oído, pero si uno realmente quiere aprender el idioma tiene que leer y pronunciar, eso me imagino que sería mejor, en realidad es un complemento.

(You ask if the questions are easy or difficult, the point is what one understands because the questions are easy but if one doesn't understand much of the dialogue, they're hard. I have the impression that the dialogues are very realistic and I think they are good for practicing. It's good for tuning one's ear, but if one

really wants to learn the language, one has to read and pronounce, I think that would be better, really this is a complement.)

Other comments by these ten participants included comments about the complexity of a dialogue (as opposed to monologues like news reporting), the usefulness of feedback, and comparing the process of L2 acquisition to L1 acquisition. One participant in this group asked about how the levels of difficulty were defined for the lessons. Another one spent a few lines explaining grammatically why she would add a preposition to one of the questions on the survey (written in Spanish). One of them had traveled to an English speaking country, and one had recently spent a year in Germany.

These ten participants did not show notably more enthusiasm about learning English than other participants in the study. Motivation tended to be high all around. However, five of the ten had been offered extra credit by their English teacher for completing the project.

Looking at the time stamps of these ten participants' activities, one notes that they all paced themselves. Usually these participants did only two or three activities at any one time. Two of them showed a decrease in wordiness on the open-ended questions previous to taking a break, and then showed, through a change in word count of open-ended answers, a renewed vigor after taking that break.

This contrasts dramatically to the ten participants (eight females, two males) whose LCT scores dropped the most (from 10 to 14 points) from pretest to posttest. It was striking to see how eight out of ten of them crammed the last part of the experiment

into one sitting at a computer. Table 4.10 describes the timing patterns of the eight of those participants who showed this pattern.

Table 4.10: *Timing patterns of eight participants whose LCT scores dropped dramatically*

Change	Timing
-13	Lesson 6 to the end, in one 3-hour sitting
-12	Lesson 3 to the end, in one 4.5-hour sitting
-12	Lesson 2 to the end, in one sitting (with one 1-hr break in between), from 7:30 p.m. to almost midnight
-12	In just a few days. One time (but not last) on computer for 5 hours straight. One of the earlier finishers.
-11	Lesson 2 to the end: started at 5 p.m. and finished at 11:23 p.m.
-11	Started Lesson 1 at 4pm and ended the entire project at 7:30 p.m.
-10	Waited for a month in the middle, and then rushed at the end. The final session, which included Lesson 10, through end, lasted less than an hour
-10	Lesson 8 to end done in one evening, 9:00 to 11:00 p.m.

As for the two in this group of participants with dramatic LCT score drops who are not represented in Table 4.10, one of them (whose score dropped 14 points) actually spaced out the project activities quite well. The other (whose score dropped 12 points) was a student who worked in a laboratory. She would do the activities for the present experiment while in a horticulture laboratory, but with many interruptions, as she reported to the researcher during an interview. For example, her LCT pretest took four hours and twenty minutes, while her LCT posttest took only fifteen minutes.

These participants' post-lesson surveys and the answers to open-ended questions from the lessons convey a sense of intense enthusiasm for and involvement with the

project. For example, the wordiest of these participants' answers to the 20 open-ended questions from the lessons comprise two and a half pages, single spaced, of text in a Word document. Another participant wrote the following when asked what she would suggest that the character Karen do on her first night in Chile, in the town of Arica:

que aparte de trabajar, disfrute de lo lindo del paisaje de arica. mas que eso, que sea un trabajo equilibrado. que cuide bien sus pertenencias ya que tenemos fama de ladrones (aunque no sea asi realmente).

(Besides working, she should enjoy Arica's beautiful landscape. Other than that, that her work be balanced. that she keep an eye on her belongings, since we are known for being thieves (even though that's not really true).)

One notes in this kind of answer an involvement in the story and an interest to share information with another. Many of the answers, from this group of participants especially, were like this. These participants also wrote enthusiastic comments about the story and the dialogues' realism in the post-lesson surveys. The one consistently negative comment from these participants was that they complained more than other groups about the dialogue actors' accents and/or pronunciation.

Of these ten participants, three were members of Group A, three from Group B, one from Group C, and three from Group D. Their change scores on the maze task did not show any pattern. Some of them got faster, some did not. Some improved greatly in accuracy, some got worse. Lastly, their LCT scores tended to fall much more on the slow part of the test than on the fast part.

4.12 RESEARCH QUESTION 6

The last research question was the following: What kind of features do learners prefer in computer-delivered FL listening lessons and tests? The main source of information for answering this question is from the post-lesson surveys. These surveys asked several specific questions about participants' opinions about the lessons' formatting. The surveys also included at the bottom of each one a space for making additional comments. The other source of information is the interviews that were done with the subgroup of 25 participants.

Participants had a surprising amount to say about the format of the lessons. They had been told, during the consenting process, that the point of the experiment was to investigate different online listening exercise formats. This was said to them so as to keep them from suspecting that the experiment was investigating the effects of rate of speech on language acquisition. The fact that the participants were told that this (the lesson format) was the researcher's primary focus probably led the participants to be particularly aware of such issues and to write so extensively about them.

The rest of Section 4.12 is dedicated to describing the major themes that came out of the participants' surveys. Before launching into these other topics, it is worth noting that more than 70 comments made at the end of the surveys were to the effect that the participant really enjoyed the project, appreciated the apparent dedication on the part of the creators, and/or felt that the project was helping him or her to improve his or her listening comprehension and English acquisition in general. Similar messages were sent to the researcher via e-mail.

4.12.1 TECHNICAL ISSUES

Most of the comments made about technical issues were ones that would certainly have been better attended to had the lessons and tests been made by a professional team instead of one graduate student working on her own. Others were simply technical difficulties that would, under any circumstances, be nearly impossible to control. For instance, four people wrote that the lessons took a long time to start (all files downloaded at once, causing all of the wait time to come at the beginning).

There was a number of complaints about the sound. Some people commented that in a couple of dialogues, one person's voice was stronger than another (Lessons 2 and 5, which both had the same actors). This balance was attended to somewhat during the editing that took place during lesson production, but clearly could have been done better. Another frequent complaint about sound was that the second actress used in Lessons 1 and 4 had a shrill voice. Several people also commented that the two actresses in Lessons 1 and 4 sounded too similar.

4.12.2 VISUAL ASPECTS

Table 4.11 shows each group's answers to the question, in the survey that followed Lesson 1, of whether they found the pictures in the lessons to be distracting or helpful. Besides these responses, there were comments about the pictures in the "additional comments" sections of the post-lesson surveys. Nineteen people said that they wanted videos as opposed to pictures. Some people said that videos would make the activity more realistic, and some said that they would be able to concentrate better if they

Table 4.11: *Participants' opinions of the pictures after the first lesson*

	Distracting	Helpful
Group A	13.3%	86.7%
Group B	25.0%	75.0%
Group C	35.3%	64.7%
Group D	12.5%	87.5%

saw a video. One person mentioned that it would help him know who was talking.

The most common comment about the visual aspect of the project was that they wanted better, more detailed, or more numerous pictures. One person after Lesson 1 complained about how the pictures for that lesson did not have faces, saying that she wanted to put a face to the characters (the picture can be seen in Appendix J).

4.12.3 SPEED

Table 4.12 shows participants' answers as to how they perceived the speed, clarity, and naturalness of the voices of the actors who played Karen's various interlocutors throughout the ten lessons. The figures show, averaged over all ten lessons, what percentage of each groups' comments pertained to each of the six (non-exclusive) options for answering the question.⁷ Group B (slow dialogues only) most commonly found the dialogues to be clear and at a good speed. They were also, however, the ones to report most frequently that the dialogues were too slow. They reported least frequently that the actors' accents were difficult to understand. The opposite tendencies held true for members of Group A (fast dialogues only): they commented most often on the actors' difficult to understand accents or that the actors read too fast, and Group A was least

⁷ Thus, the columns add up to 100%, going down the column.

Table 4.12: *Participants' perceptions of actors' performances in the lessons*

	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
Accented	9.1%	3.4%	6.7%	8.5%
Clear	15.7%	27.4%	21.4%	25.9%
Good speed	36.1%	47.7%	37.8%	41.8%
Too fast	27.0%	1.2%	25.3%	18.9%
Too slow	1.5%	7.1%	0.6%	0.3%
Affected	10.4%	13.2%	8.2%	4.6%

likely to report that the actors spoke at a good pace.

Participants' ratings of the main character's voice (always the same person) were similar. Table 4.13 shows these results. The results in Table 4.13 are on the whole more positive about this actress's readings. For example, no one ever rated her speech rate as too slow. The fact that participants tended to find this reader's delivery to be clearer is likely due in part to the participants' increasing familiarity with the actress's voice. After Lesson 5, 69.5% of the participants indicated that were getting used to Karen's voice. The other 30.5% indicated that they were not. These ratios did not differ much from group to group.

Several additional comments at the end of surveys touched on the issue of speed. Eighteen people wrote in special comments saying that the dialogues were too fast. Twenty-one people wrote additional comments to complain about the actors' poor pronunciation. For example, one participant wrote about the main character (the researcher's voice), "*Su pronunciación no es muy clara, y no creo que sea por el acento, sino por una mala modulación*" ("Her pronunciation isn't very clear, and I don't think it's because of her accent but because of poor enunciation").

Table 4.13: *Participants' perceptions of main character's performances in the lessons*

	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
Accented	5.7%	2.7%	2.1%	3.5%
Clear	20.8%	33.4%	27.6%	31.8%
Good speed	50.6%	53.2%	48.5%	50.8%
Too fast	16.9%	1.0%	16.0%	10.8%
Too slow	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Affected	6.0%	9.7%	5.7%	3.1%

No comments about poor enunciation came from members of Group B (slow dialogues only). Five participants from Group B, on the other hand, wrote with complaints about a lack of intonation in the actors' reading of the dialogues. One very proficient participant from Group B who also took part in an interview talked about how unnatural the actors sounded to her, due to their slow speech and the consequential lack of emotion in their voices at times, and exaggerated emotion at other times. Still, that same participant said that that form of speech made it very easy to understand everything the actors said. Other members of Group B said that they suspected that the actors were speaking very slowly but that they appreciated it because it allowed them to easily understand what the actors were saying. Finally, one person in group C said that she would like to have an option for an even slower second dialogue.

4.12.4 LENGTH OF DIALOGUES

The length of the dialogues was considered too long by a great number of the participants. This was, aside from general praise, the most common comment made by the participants in the surveys. Furthermore, participants were specifically asked what they thought about the length of the dialogue in the surveys that followed every lesson.

Table 4.14 shows how each group answered, averaged over all lessons. (The percentages are based on group membership and add up to 100% when added across.) The participants could choose one of three answers: “it was too long,” “it was too short,” or “the length was fine” (see Appendices M and N for the original wording). Although the complaint about the length of the dialogues was frequent, the table shows that more than half the time the participants felt that the dialogue length was fine.

Table 4.14: *Average group responses as to the length of the dialogues*

Group	Fine	Too long	Too short
A	58.2%	41.8%	0.0%
B	58.1%	41.2%	0.7%
C	65.4%	34.6%	0.0%
D	71.5%	28.5%	0.0%

The dialogues were created to be long largely in order to encourage participants to practice global listening as opposed to listening for details. In typical L1 listening comprehension, listeners are only expected to understand the general message of longer conversations, as opposed to details. The participants were told this during the consenting session before they participated.

Each dialogue was a little longer than the one from the previous lesson (except in Lessons 3 and 4, which were equal in length). The first dialogue was 1:36 (96 seconds) in the fast version and 2:11 in the slow version. The dialogue for Lesson 10 was 3:48 in the fast version and 5:12 in the slow version. This certainly pushed participants to the limits of their ability to concentrate, and comments about this were made quite frequently both in the interviews and the surveys. A question in the survey after Lesson 10 asked whether

or not the participants thought that the exercises were helping them to improve their short term memory. The results are shown in Table 4.15. Group A was nearly unanimous in

Table 4.15: *Whether participants felt that the exercises were helping their short term memory*

Group	Yes	No
A	93.8%	6.2%
B	73.3%	26.7%
C	77.8%	21.2%
D	88.0%	12.0%

this belief, whereas the participants in Group B were least so. Because the question was an open-ended question, most answers were more elaborate than a simple yes or no.

Here, some members of Group B took the opportunity to complain about the excessive length of the lessons, while members of other groups did not do that. Some other participants responded enthusiastically in the positive. It seems that those who were able to be satisfied with global comprehension and not worry about specific words that they did not understand did well with the exercises. As one participant (from Group D) said, “...pero si puedo decir que el dialogo como un todo se logra entender, independiente de las palabras que entienda o no” (“...but I can say that the dialogue as a whole can be understood, independently of the words that one understands or not”). Another participant from Group B wrote the following after Lesson 7:

solo a veces me desconcentra, cuando la palabra que no hube entendido era principal para entender el resto del dialogo, pero en estos dialogos nunca me ha

pasado, puesto que encuentro que el lenguaje es bastante claro, incluso lento, lo cual hace entender a la perfección que están diciendo

(only sometimes do I get distracted, when the word that I didn't understand was a key word for understanding the rest of the dialogue, but in these dialogues it has never happened to me, and that's because the speech is very clear, even slow, which allows me to understand what they are saying perfectly)

4.12.5 PLAYBACK FEATURES

Three people said they wanted to be able to rewind the dialogues. Four people said they wanted to be able to listen to the dialogues as many times as necessary. Six people complained that they wanted to be able to skip having to listen to the dialogue a second time, and three people said that they wanted a pause button so that they could pause a lesson if they had an interruption and had to do something for a moment.

Fourteen people made specific comments about how listening twice was very useful. Many people wrote about how they understood the conversation better the second time around. Others commented on how they felt that their comprehension was improving from lesson to lesson: *“Me gusta mucho este dialogo, porque pude entender muchas cosas, eso si tengo que decir que cada vez entiendo mas los dialogos”* (“I liked this dialogue very much because I was able to understand many things. I have to say that each time I understand more and more of the dialogues”). This last quote came from a Group B member after Lesson 8. Another participant in Group A wrote, after Lesson 7: *“Cada vez se me hace más familiar la voz de Karen y me cuesta menos entender lo que*

dice, en el diálogo 6 respondí acertadamente las 8 preguntas tal como en este último”

(“Karen’s voice is becoming each time more familiar and it is less difficult to understand what she says, for dialogue 6 I answered all 8 of the [comprehension] questions correctly, like on this last one too”).

Many participants wrote in the surveys or in e-mails sent directly to the researcher that they would like to see the dialogues in written form at some point. Others suggested that dictionaries or some form of gloss would be helpful.

4.12.6 QUESTION FORMAT

Looking at the last quote, one sees that the participant took the number of comprehension questions answered correctly to be an indicator of how well he was following the conversation. The comprehension questions in the training sessions (as opposed to the test questions) were written, however, only in part to give the participants an idea of how well they understood the conversation. The main purpose behind the questions was to help the participants understand the conversation better and not miss out on any important details in the continuing story that was unfolding through the dialogues from one lesson to another. This guiding function of the questions was mentioned to the participants during the initial explanation given by the researcher in person (when performing the consenting procedure).

After each lesson, the optional survey asked whether the participant had found the comprehension questions too easy, too difficult, or “helped me in processing the information” (see Appendices M and N for the original text). Table 4.16 shows the

percentage of people from each group who selected these answers, as averaged over all ten lessons. All groups responded at least at 83% of the time that they felt that the comprehension questions were useful. The Group A members were the most likely

Table 4.16: *Average group responses as to the appropriateness and usefulness of the comprehension questions*

Group	Difficult	Easy	Helpful
A	8.9%	6.6%	84.5%
B	4.4%	5.7%	89.9%
C	6.0%	11.0%	83.0%
D	6.2%	8.1%	85.7%

to find the questions too difficult, and the Group C members were the most likely to find the questions too easy. The differences between the groups' assessments, however, are not great.

In Section 4.6 it was mentioned that all groups did equally well on the comprehension questions during the training sessions, and it seems that for the most part the comprehension questions did not serve as very good indicators of the participants' level of comprehension. This fact was not lost on many of the participants, and it disturbed quite a number of them. There were several comments about the fact that it was possible to get most of the comprehension questions correct even when one did not understand much of the conversation, simply by using logic and an understanding of the conversation's context. Participants who demonstrated higher listening comprehension skills (given their LCT scores) demanded more difficult and more numerous comprehension questions. Participants who had lower English listening comprehension

skills also seemed disturbed by the ease of the questions. This sentiment is expressed well by a Group A member after Lesson 1:

a pesar que hubo bastantes palabras que no fui capas de detectar, las preguntas estaban dirigidas como para colocarte en contexto, eso quizás no sea adecuado porque no muestra lo que realmente entendiste, te conduce como por un tunel sin bifurcación.

(despite the fact that there were many words that I could not identify, the questions were directed so as to put you in the context, maybe that isn't really a good idea because it doesn't show what you really understood, it's like it leads you down a tunnel without bifurcations.)

Two people wrote to say that there should have been an "I don't know" option for each question on the tests instead of forcing the students to answer. That same complaint was voiced many times in informal communication to the researcher about the test questions (which were more difficult).

Several people, in the surveys, in person (in unofficial communication about the project), and during the interviews, said that they did not understand what the purpose of the open-ended questions at the end of each lesson was. Most disturbing about these questions, it seems, was that they usually did not have a right or wrong answer.

The multiple-choice questions clearly did have a right or wrong answer, and during the training sessions the participants were given immediate feedback on how well they did. Some participants commented on appreciating the immediate feedback. It is

likely that almost all participants appreciated it, whether or not they made a comment about it.

In the survey following Lesson 3, the participants were asked what they thought about having the questions written in Spanish and not English. Thirty-one people said that they thought that it was good. The reasons that they gave were 1) being able to concentrate on listening and not having to spend time interpreting questions written in English, 2) being sure that they were answering the right questions, and 3) the importance of being able to switch easily between the two languages. Seventeen people said that the questions should be in English so as to provide more practice with English. The rest of the participants talked about the pros and cons of the practice, often saying that Spanish questions were a better option for beginning students.

In the survey after Lesson 4, the participants were asked, “What do you think of the practice of seeing each question only once and only after already hearing the dialogue?” Having been prepared for this practice by what was said during the initial in-person explanation of the project, most participants responded positively to this practice, saying things such as, “*Es una buena práctica, por que permite al usuario poner énfasis en el diálogo en general, y no sólo enfocarse en las preguntas específicas,*” (“It’s a good practice, because it allows the user to put emphasis on the dialogue in general, and not just focus on the specific questions”).

Table 4.17 shows a tabulation of the answers to this question. It is interesting to note that the members of Group A were the most dependent upon or at least most appreciative of the clarifying function that the comprehension questions served: a chance

to discuss the dialogue in one's native language and get instant feedback on one's answers. Group A also stands out as having the least number of members comment on the benefits of the course's format that pushes participants towards more global listening (Comment 2 from Table 4.17). Comment 3 shows that the members of Group B were the most sensitive to the lengthiness of the lessons. Comment 10 shows a general concern for being given a chance to do as well as possible: several participants lamented the fact that

Table 4.17: *Participants' opinions about seeing comprehension questions only once and only after hearing the dialogue*

	Comment	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
1	This practice helps to clarify the dialogues	62.5%	26.3%	38.9%	19.2%
2	It encourages global listening and is more natural	6.3%	36.8%	33.3%	46.1%
3	The two sets of questions are a good way to break up the lesson	0	10.5%	0	3.9%
4	It is good for learning to switch between languages	6.3%	0	0	0
5	It is good for beginners	6.3%	5.3%	11.1%	3.9%
6	The increase in lesson difficulty should be more gradual	0	0	5.6%	0
7	The dialogue should only play once	0	5.3%	5.6%	3.9%
8	Translation represents an extra burden	0	0	0	3.9%
9	It is harder because the questions' vocabulary doesn't match the dialogues	6.3%	5.3%	0	0
10	Seeing the questions before hearing the dialogue would increase participants' scores	12.5%	10.5%	5.6%	19.2%

they could not do as well as they would have had they seen the questions before listening to the dialogues. Participants in Group C reported the least interest in this issue.

4.12.7 TOPIC AND PLOT OF THE DIALOGUES

In the survey after Lesson 9, participants were asked what other kind of conversation, besides the kinds that they had heard during the project, they would like to hear for practicing their listening comprehension. Many participants responded that they felt that there was already a good range. “*Me parece que las lecciones sobre temas triviales son las adecuadas, ya que es la forma en que se relacionan las personas*” (“It seems to me that lessons about trivial topics are good, since that is the way people relate to each other”). Some suggested other situations typically found in language courses, such as a conversation between a waiter and a customer. Ten people commented that they enjoyed the fact that each conversation was different and that they never knew exactly what to expect in the next lesson. One participant said, “*La verdad, no lo sé, ya que lo mejor de estas lecciones es el factor sorpresa. Nunca sabes que clase de conversación tendrás que escuchar*” (“The truth is, I don’t know, because the best part of these lessons is the element of surprise. You never know what kind of conversation you’re going to have to listen to”).

There was a fair amount of use of the term *interactive*. Some people commented that they enjoyed the fact that the lessons were interactive. Others said that they would like them to be more interactive. Only one person gave an example of how that might be:

by being able to speak to the characters through a microphone. Another handful of participants said that they would like to have songs included in the lessons.

Most suggestions, however, were for more “youthful” topics. There were some complaints that the themes were too serious and that they, the participants, would like to hear conversations more typical of teenagers and young adults. They wanted to hear more informal conversations between friends, and two people suggested conversations between a boyfriend and a girlfriend. Another two said that it would be fun to hear a fight or an argument.

Participants found the dialogues to be on the whole realistic, and they found this to be an important characteristic of the dialogues. “*Me gustaría que los diálogos fueran reales, quiero decir, con personajes reales, de carne y hueso, para sentir de una forma más natural el desenvolvimiento o desarrollo de una conversación entre dos nativos del idioma*” (“I would like for the dialogues to be real, I mean, with real people, of flesh and blood, to get a better sense of the natural development or unraveling of a conversation between two native speakers”). Table 4.18 shows the groups’ average answers to the question of whether the participants found the dialogues to be realistic. The percentages shown in the table are averaged across Lessons 2 through 9 (the question was not asked after either Lesson 1 or Lesson 10). Group B, no doubt because they only heard slowed-down versions of the dialogues, had the greatest tendency to find the dialogues to be unrealistic. Still, they found them to be realistic almost 90 percent of the time. Sixteen people wrote additional comments specifically to state that they were happy with how realistic the conversations seemed, for example: “*Encontre súper creíble la entrevista y*

Table 4.18: *Whether the participants found the dialogues to be realistic*

Group	No	Yes
A	5.7%	94.3%
B	10.2%	89.8%
C	7.0%	93.0%
D	5.6%	94.4%

me agrado las preguntas realistas que le hicieron a Karen (“I found the interview to be very believable and I liked the realistic questions that they asked Karen”).

This last comment was after Lesson 3, the job interview. A number of participants were interested in this lesson because of the type of questions included in the dialogue. People made comments that the questions that were asked in the dialogue were not the kinds of questions that would be asked during a job interview in Chile. These comments were made noting with interest the cultural differences.

Cultural themes that were responded to even more enthusiastically were those that had to do with Chile. Many participants wrote to say that they were happy that the main character, Karen, went to Chile. One participant said that he would have liked to have heard even more about Chile and not have had so many dialogues take place first in the United States. There were a number of comments to the effect that the familiar topic of Chile made the conversations easier to follow. There were also many comments about how the participants were motivated when they heard that the character Karen was trying to learn Spanish.

The researcher had lived previously in Chile and so was able to make the Chilean characters in the dialogues fairly believable. She also attempted to imitate the Chilean sense of humor in the dialogues to some degree. Always at least one participant made a

comment on each thing that was intended to be funny or about the peculiarities of the different Chilean characters, especially in the case of the receptionist who tried to get a free CD-ROM from Karen (Lesson 8). Others said about that same character that they could not believe that a receptionist in a hotel in Arica would speak such good English. Interestingly enough, a few times people poked some fun at the “typical Latino” accent of some of the characters, even though all of the actors were native English speakers and made no attempt to change their regular accents.

Eight participants specifically commented on how they liked that the lessons made a continuing story. Some of them mentioned that it helped them to follow the dialogues. It is the researcher’s opinion that the continuing storyline played a major role in recruiting and maintaining participants, because the storyline (and its obvious parallels with the researcher’s own life) caused the participants to feel a personal connection with the activities. One outstanding (male) participant wrote the following:

Cuando hay un diálogo largo me identifico con un personaje, en este caso [Karen] (mmm, aunque sea mujer...) debido a que es ella la que está experimentando cosas nuevas. De esta forma no me pierdo en la conversación e incluso puedo anticipar ciertos patrones de comportamiento.

(When there is a long dialogue, I identify with a character, in this case Karen (mmm, even though she is a woman...) since she is the one who is having new experiences. That way I don’t get lost in the conversation, I can even anticipate certain patterns of behavior.)

Most of the participants seemed to get involved in the story. This is best seen in

the answers that they gave to the two open-ended questions at the end of each lesson, for example in the sincerity of the advice in the following quote (giving advice to Karen once she has arrived in Arica, her first city in Chile):

Le sugeriría que fuera a recorrer el entorno, de todas formas si llegó al hotel sola no creo que sea muy recomendable salir. Pero si no está muy cansada podría bajar a cenar en el restorán del hotel, aunque podría ir a cualquier parte a cenar, siempre y cuando sea un lugar seguro.

(I would tell her to walk around the vicinity, although if she went to the hotel alone, it wouldn't be a very good idea to go out. But if she is not very tired, she could go downstairs and have dinner in the hotel's restaurant, although she could go anywhere for dinner, as long as it was a safe place.)

Many comments were made about the behavior and form of speech of the characters in the dialogue, completely beyond linguistic details having to do with L2 acquisition. One participant had this to say about Karen's sales pitch:

Su técnica es muy buena, parece que está teniendo una conversación y no vendiendo, además entiende las necesidades de los profesores, ella trabajo siendo una, así que su llegada a los clientes puede ser más rápida y mejor.

(Her technique is very good, it sounds like she is having a conversation and not like she is trying to sell something, also, she understands teachers' needs, since she worked as one, and so her ability to connect with clients can be faster and better.)

One final example shows some of the participants' ability to be really involved in the story. The following quote was in response to a question of how the participant imagined the travel agent from Lesson 6.

si lo veo sicologicamente, creo que es una muelleer muy simpatica, un poco habladora, pero muy agradable y si veo fisicamente, me la imagino con el pelo crespo. estatura media, un tono pelirrojo en el cabello. tez clara, ojos cafes.

(If I imagine it psychologically, I think she is a very nice woman, a bit chatty, but quite likeable, and if I see physically, I imagine her having curly hair. medium height, a reddish color in her hair. fair skin, and brown eyes.)

4.12.8 LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Those who felt that the lessons were at a good level of difficulty for their own stage of English learning expressed excitement. Often participants would say that they were happy with a particular lesson because they had understood that one more than others. Participants who said that they understood very little or almost nothing expressed sadness.

Table 4.19 shows the participants' perceptions of how many words they understood in the dialogues. To the question "Were there many words in the dialogue that you did not recognize?" participants could answer "no," "some," or "many." As can be seen, the members of Group A were the most likely to answer that there were many words that they did not recognize, while Group B members were the least likely to give this answer.

Table 4.19: *Participants' self reports of how many words they failed to recognize in the dialogues, averaged over all lessons*

Group	None	Some	Many
A	8.1%	52.1%	39.8%
B	24.6%	56.5%	18.9%
C	18.9%	59.5%	21.6%
D	28.6%	44.6%	26.8%

Quite a lot of people made comments about how they enjoyed being able to do an activity that was not connected to or a preprogrammed part of their classes, but which still allowed them to see how much English they could understand. A question as to how they felt about the lack of connection between the project and the participants' English classes was asked to all the participants in the interviews, and they all expressed the same feeling.

A few people had the assumption that they were put into a particular group according to their level, and they wondered why they were put in the level that they were put in. This question more often came up not in the surveys or interviews, but in communication made outside of the regular structure of the experiment.

Eight people wrote in their surveys that there should have been more of an obvious progression of difficulty throughout the lessons, either in terms of the dialogues or in terms of the questions. On the other hand, two people talked about how they found that each lesson was more and more difficult, but that they understood that that must have been the plan.

4.12.9 SUMMARY

To summarize the findings in answer to Research Question 6, the participants wanted realistic conversations with a great deal of visual support. They wanted to hear about characters similar to themselves and their friends, and they wanted to see the characters living or traveling within their own country. They wanted the storyline to be engaging and believable. They wanted the lessons to be just at their level, starting out as fairly easy to understand and then progressively pushing them a little more. The participants enjoyed being forced to push their abilities in order to follow the conversation, but they wanted to be able to have supports, such as written texts or dictionaries, available when necessary.

4.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

While the members of all groups had similar likes, dislikes, and suggestions about the lesson formats, there were some differences in the way they experienced the lessons. Members of Group A (fast dialogues only) were the most likely to be frustrated with the speed or lack of clarity of the actors' voices, while members of Group B (slow dialogues only) were the most likely to complain about poor acting and excessively long dialogue lengths. Group A participants commented the most on the benefits of L1 comprehension questions and feedback, as well as the pictures. All of these indicate that the participants in Group A were the most challenged and that they learned to make maximum benefit of the other aids to comprehension (such as pictures and comprehension checks). It will be argued in the next chapter that their increasing reliance on these other aids were the

reason why their LCT scores fell the most dramatically on the fast dialogues and why they were the only group to make no significant gains on the maze task.

In contrast, the participants in Group B were the least challenged by the dialogues in the training sessions. Because the language was clearer to them, they could concentrate on the language itself, and this may be why members of this group made the most gains on the maze task.

Members of Groups C and D had lesson formats that were in between the extremes of Groups A and B. Members of Group C could choose slower speeds. Because they were the only participants for whom dialogue speed was directly pointed out, they probably came to view the reasons for listening to slow versus fast dialogues in a way that was different from members of other training groups, and it will be further argued in Chapter 5 that this might be a reason for the Group C members' dramatic drop on the slow part of the LCT.

Members of Group D had the option to pause the playback of the dialogue during the second listening of each lesson. This option was used only sometimes. Still, the members of this group fared better than members of Group A, particularly in terms of how they did on the fast part of the LCT test.

Participants of the experiment used the strategies available to them when necessary, both based on what the lesson formats offered, as well as other, more general learning strategies. While all participants used some strategies now and then, the process was more seamless and difficult to analyze for the more advanced participants. For the participants whose English listening comprehension was poor, it was a matter of doing

whatever they could with the little that was available to them, and that process tended, for the less advanced participants, to have much less directly to do with language and much more to do with other skills and aids. All of these themes will be examined in greater detail and synthesized in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was two-fold. The central question that the research investigated was what effect different rates of speech and playback options have on the development of EFL listening comprehension and on the use of communication and learning strategies. At the same time the study looked into many issues of online course design and implementation. Specifically, the study posed the following six research questions:

1) How does the speed of delivered speech during an FL learner's training affect acquisition? For example, do learners who hear faster speech during their training process both faster and slower speech better than learners who have been exposed mostly to slower speech?

2) What happens when FL learners are given a choice as to which speed their training materials are? Which speed do they prefer, and under what circumstances? Do they make choices such that their listening comprehension improves faster than that of other learners who are not given a choice but instead listen to only slow or only fast dialogues?

3) Are learners who are allowed to pause listening passages during their training—compared to learners who are not allowed to do this during training—able to process those passages better so that they consequently show greater gains on measures of listening comprehension?

4) Between groups that demonstrate different speeds and/or accuracy of processing spoken language, do they also demonstrate different speeds and/or accuracy in forced (timed) processing of written language?

5) Are those FL learners who demonstrate greater comprehension of spoken language achieving this primarily through strategic listening, or is it instead that their syntactic processing and lexical access function more automatically?

6) What kind of features do learners prefer in computer-delivered FL listening lessons and tests?

In order to answer these questions, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Pretest and posttest scores were obtained from 141 participants. Listening comprehension pretests measured comprehension of both fast (180 wpm) and slow (135 wpm) dialogues, and a maze task measured accuracy and reaction times in online written sentence comprehension. Responses to both open-ended and multiple-choice comprehension questions on each of the ten training sessions were collected. Also, post-lesson surveys were filled out by a majority of the subjects, and follow-up interviews were conducted with 25 participants.

This chapter reviews the highlights of the findings that were reported in Chapter 4 and discusses how they can be interpreted. The chapter explores possible explanations for the drop from pretest to posttest scores on the LCT and what this says about the nature of second language acquisition. Each group's change scores on the LCT are reviewed and interpreted, followed by a discussion of their performance on the maze

task. This then is used to look at the special cases of the twenty people whose scores changed the most from listening comprehension pretest to posttest. Also discussed are the issues of strategy use in Section 5.7, automaticity in Section 5.8, and CALL design in Section 5.9.

Implications of the findings are then drawn from the preceding discussion. Limitations to the study are pointed out in Section 5.11. The limitations inform some of the suggestions for future research, while other proposed future research ideas are creative extensions of the present study. One of the most developed suggestions is a description of how an adaptation of a project similar to this study could serve as a model for a language department's ongoing materials development. Some final words summarize and conclude the chapter.

5.2 THE DROP IN SCORES ON THE LCT

The same listening comprehension test was used as the pretest and the posttest in this experiment. Half of the participants got Version A as the pretest and Version B as the posttest, and the other half got Version B first and then Version A. Gains were expected on the LCT, for a few reasons. For one, the training sessions in the mini-course were designed to help participants' listening comprehension. The additional time spent on the task should have had a beneficiary effect on the participants. They were also becoming more familiar with the American accents in the online project, especially with the main character's voice. Because Chilean EFL students are more commonly trained on British-accented material and on material that is spoken in a slower and more careful way than

the materials used for conditions A, C, and D of this experiment, there should have been notable improvements in the participants' ability to understand the dialogues, especially with (for participants in Groups A, C, and D) the fast dialogues on the LCT. Furthermore, all participants were taking regular English classes during the time of the experiment, and for that reason as well should have been improving in listening comprehension and other English skills. One expects currently-enrolled and studying English students to do better on a test of English listening comprehension their second time around, all other things being equal. The subjects in this experiment, however, did worse on the post-LCT than the pre-LCT. This suggests that "all other things" were not equal. It is argued below that changes in motivation and attentional focus of the participants can explain the surprising drop in LCT scores.

5.2.1 MOTIVATION AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE POSTTEST

Only about two-thirds (65.1%) of those who originally logged onto the project and filled out the initial survey got as far as taking the pre-LCT, and only about one-third (31.9%) of those who took that pretest managed to finish every step of the project. These are high dropout rates in one sense. However, given the circumstances of the project, it could be argued that in fact the dropout rate was low. Dropout rates for online courses are notoriously high (Yukselturk, 2006). This is true even in the case of paid, for-credit classes. The activities in the present project were not required for any class; nor did the participants pay for the class (which can encourage participation because it makes people feel that they need to get their money's worth); nor did they receive any remuneration for

their participation. The project lasted a relatively long time and had several steps to it, and for every step of the project, the participant had to be on a computer with a good internet connection and with the ability to download and listen to sound files.

What was it, then, that motivated the 141 people who finished every step of the project to do so? There are several possible reasons, and likely more than one of them applied to most participants. The primary reason to participate, for the majority of the participants, was that they believed that it was helping them improve their listening comprehension skills in English. This belief was frequently expressed in the surveys, interviews, as well as in unsolicited e-mails and spoken comments directed to the researcher. Another reason for participating was out of interest—many subjects found the storyline entertaining, the layout attractive, and the activity novel. This was also indicated in the surveys and interviews and in the way that many participants answered the open-ended questions in the lessons. Other participants said that they were interested to hear authentic, American-accented speech. Many of the participants were motivated in large part to help the researcher finish her study. Again, this came through via interviews, surveys, and other forms of communication from the participants. This feeling of generosity was probably especially strong for those at the University of Talca, because they knew that the researcher had worked at that institute, the project was housed on the university's server, and many of them saw the researcher on their campus on a regular basis.

Almost a third of the participants were University of Talca students who were offered extra credit by their English teachers. Although these students were warned by

their teachers against having responses that showed that they were not putting forth a sincere effort, at the same time, their scores on the project's lessons and tests did not affect how much extra credit they would earn for class.

These reasons for participating were not always enough to keep everyone motivated for the entire duration of the project. This is why two-thirds of the people who took the pretest failed to make it as far as the posttest. Even for those who did manage to finish the project, it appears that—and this is important in explaining the overall drop in scores from pretest to posttest—motivation waned over the course of the project. The participants had been told during the consenting period that only those people who finished every step would be of use to the researcher. Thus, the participants who intended to help the researcher, as well as the participants who were receiving extra credit, had to push themselves to finish the project. By the time participants reached the posttests, they probably were quite fatigued. Many participants told the researcher this in the interview and in informal communication. It is proposed here that waning motivation was the primary reason why scores tended to drop from pretest to posttest on the LCT. This explanation relies on informed conjectures about the participants' thoughts and feelings about the project and how these changed over time. What follows is an attempt to construct what the participants were thinking and feeling—as it pertains to motivation—at different points during their participation.

Participants took the pretest right after filling out the initial demographic survey. Probably they were motivated by the novelty of the program and still energized and excited to participate in a new project that, they knew, someone had traveled all the way

from the United States in order to put into action. They also acted on their previously formed schemata about what to do with tests, meaning that they tried their hardest to do well on the pretest (Shohamy, 2001). However, when they finished the pretest, they were not told their scores.⁸ They were in a position to realize that their test scores would have no impact on them, in terms of a grade or anything else.

In contrast, participants were given feedback on the lessons. They were told whether they got the multiple-choice questions right or not. Many participants wrote in the post-lesson surveys that they appreciated the feedback. The fact that there was no feedback on the open-ended questions may be one of the reasons why many participants disliked these questions. Some participants in the interviews and the surveys said that they did not understand the point of the open-ended questions.

When the participants got to the post-LCT, they knew from their experience with the pre-LCT that they would not be told their score. This probably made this activity much less interesting to them, because it told them nothing about themselves. The often motivating effect of knowing that one is being observed (the Hawthorne Effect) had also lost its influence. The participants had grown used to sending their scores to the database, without receiving a response back from the researcher. The majority of the participants never spoke to the researcher again, and many never even saw her again after the consenting process. Probably their feeling of a personal connection with the project was less than at the beginning, and this also may have made their LCT results seem less important.

⁸ Although all participants had been told during the consenting process that they could write the researcher to ask for their scores, no participant ever did.

By the time of the posttest, it is likely that the main motivation for some of the participants was simply to finish. Those who did the project for extra credit were given dates by which they had to have all steps completed, and many of them rushed to finish at the end. Those who were consciously trying to help the researcher have enough data were likewise aware of the date by which the project was going to be taken off line, and many of them finished close to this date.

After having gone through ten lessons during which they heard the continuing adventures of Karen in Chile, the posttest may have seemed like a disappointment. The dialogues in the LCT were not, unlike the lessons' dialogues, written to be particularly interesting, but instead were written to be of a rather generic format and on topics of general knowledge. This was done so that no one group would have an unfair advantage in understanding the dialogues because of knowing more about the dialogue's topic (Rubin, 1994).

Switching back to listening about unknown⁹ characters' fairly neutral conversations, after getting used to an ongoing storyline that tried to be somewhat funny probably lowered the test takers' motivation quite a bit. The lessons had been written to be amusing according to the Chilean sense of humor and contained stories that the participants could relate to. The researcher had done a fair amount of explaining culture and anecdotes in preparing the actors to play these parts. This contrasts with the test dialogues, which were not created in order to appeal particularly to Chileans' sense of humor and which had stories that had a much more North American feel to them. In fact,

⁹ Although the character Karen appeared in half of the LCT dialogues, no reference to her activities in the lessons' storyline were made in the LCT dialogues.

the stories for the LCT were written as caricatures of the actors' real lives. While this enabled the actors to act their parts more realistically, it may have also caused the LCT dialogues to be less accessible to the participants. Since typical Anglo scenarios are not unusual in EFL materials, this fact may not have bothered or distracted the participants at all when they took the pretest, but because it clashed with what they had grown accustomed to through the lessons, it may have disturbed them during the posttest.

There are other discontinuities between the lessons and the posttests that probably also had a disruptive influence on the test takers by either lowering their motivation or by confusing them. Although the visual format of the LCT was very similar to that of the lessons, the LCT procedures differed from the lesson procedures in several key ways, the most important of which was that the dialogues were not repeated in the tests, as they were during the lessons. Also, the test dialogues were much shorter. Test dialogues were between 0:51 and 1:25, whereas the lesson dialogues increased gradually from 1:26 for the fast and 2:11 for the slow dialogues in Lesson 1, all the way up to 3:38 (fast)/5:12 (slow) on Dialogue 10. If the test takers were momentarily distracted during the short LCT dialogues, they would miss a large portion of the dialogue. Longer dialogues often have multiple cues in them to tell a listener what is happening, while short dialogues are more likely to have a limited number of cues for each bit of information (Oxford, 1990), and so the participants who had become accustomed to relying on the multiple cues available in the lesson dialogues might for that reason have found the LCT dialogues more difficult to follow. Additionally, the lesson questions, being meant to guide the learners, as opposed to testing them, were on the whole easier and more general, whereas

the test questions were somewhat more specific and meant to be more challenging. They also had four possible answers as opposed to two. This added difficulty may have been demotivating to the participants. Also, and very importantly, because test dialogues were about new situations involving characters not yet introduced to the listener, the test takers were robbed of much of the background knowledge that they had been taking to the listening process during the training sessions.

5.2.2 INTERPRETATIONS OF THE LCT SCORES

All of the above factors put together can help explain why the posttest scores were generally lower than the pretest scores. There is no way to know how much of a drop in scores these factors may have caused. It may be that if it were possible to factor out this effect, all four experimental groups would show some gains on the LCT. It is also possible that only Groups B and D would show gains on the LCT. It is not possible to determine the exact effect of the posttest circumstances without conducting further research.

In comparing the performance of Groups A, B, C, and D in the present experiment, effects must be understood in terms of the different change scores relative to each other. In the following discussion of LCT change scores, it is assumed that all four experimental groups were affected equally by the motivational factors described in the previous section. Therefore, where no drop in score occurred, the participants are thought to have actually benefited from the training. That is to say that what is being proposed here is that those participants (Groups B and D) who were able to do as well on the

posttest as on the pretest, despite the less favorable conditions at posttest time, would have, under other testing circumstances, shown gains in listening comprehension. This is, of course, only a hypothesis, and future research will need to be conducted in order to explore the validity of this and alternative hypotheses.

5.3 GROUP DIFFERENCES WITH RESPECT TO THE LCT

What happened with the LCT scores was, in a nutshell, the following. The group trained on only fast dialogues (Group A) had a significant drop in LCT scores in general, while the group that was allowed to choose the speed on the second playback (Group C) had a significant drop in LCT scores on the slow dialogues and virtually no drop in LCT scores on the fast dialogues, resulting in a significant interaction between test and speed. Groups B (only slow dialogues) and D (given the ability to pause the second playback) did not have significant drops in LCT scores from pretest to posttest.

5.3.1 GROUP A

Group A was the group that was trained only on fast dialogues. The dialogues that they listened to during the training sessions were even slightly faster than how native speakers usually speak to each other (Rubin, 1994), and the members of Group A were offered no way to slow down, pause, repeat, or in any other way manipulate the playback of the dialogues. It is argued here that Group A's experience of the lessons was that of being challenged at a very high level throughout their training sessions and that this produced anxiety in many of these participants.

Group A was the group that, on the post-lesson surveys¹⁰, least often rated the actors as speaking at a good speed or speaking clearly. They most frequently indicated on the surveys that the speakers spoke too quickly. Members of this group, more often than others, indicated that there were many words in the dialogues that they failed to understand. Group A members generally found the dialogues to be too fast and to have several unknown or incomprehensible words.

Members of Group A, even more than the members of Group B, indicated on the surveys that the dialogues were too long (41.8%). This might be explained by the strain on their short term memory. Holding onto information about the dialogue's meaning while new information was coming in and needing to be processed was something that must have pushed these participants' short term memory to its limits. Group A members indicated more than anyone (93.8%) that they believed that lessons were helping to improve their short term memory.

Members of this group commented much less than others on how the lessons encouraged global listening. This is probably because for them there was no choice; they had to listen globally and did not have enough time or attentional resources to listen to the dialogues for details. Reasons for assuming that this was what was happening with Group A are several. For one, the processes involved in FL listening comprehension work slower and put a greater strain on working memory in less advanced learners (Miyake & Friedman, 1998). Strained working memory in turn has a deleterious effect on comprehension (Carpenter, et al, 1994). Therefore it is reasonable to assume that Group

¹⁰ Survey answers referred to here are reported in Tables 4.11 through 4.19.

A members were forced to simply catch the general idea of the dialogues and interpret them semantically. When language learners are focused on the meaning of a message, often they are not able to at the same time take note of specific word choices or fully parse the input (Swain, 1985; VanPatten, 2004).

Because they were challenged in these ways, it is likely that people in Group A compensated by using to a greater extent strategic behaviors that could help them understand what was being said in the dialogues. There is evidence that that is indeed what happened with this group. For example, this group commented much more than any of the other groups on the usefulness of the comprehension questions in helping them orient themselves in the dialogues. Because the comprehension questions were in the participants' native language and had only two choices, they were a feature of the lessons that a struggling listener could use to fill in the gaps left by spotty listening comprehension. Because feedback was given after each answer, even when the participants answered the comprehension questions incorrectly, they served to tell the participant more about what was happening in the dialogues. Most (86.7%) members of Group A indicated also that they found the pictures to be helpful. The pictures also provided the participants with information about the dialogues' contents. These responses indicate that the members of Group A used strategic means (such as using the comprehension questions and the pictures) to understand the dialogues during the training sessions.

This evidence suggests that Group A participants came to rely on strategies more than any of the other groups. During the training period, they learned to make strategic

use of 1) knowledge of the ongoing storyline, 2) the comprehension questions that were written in their native language and that had more of a guiding—as opposed to testing—function, 3) the lengthiness of the lessons’ dialogues which allowed for multiple cues as to what was going on in the dialogue, 4) the pictures, and 5) not being asked more specific comprehension questions until after listening to the dialogue a second time. If this indeed was the kind of activity that Group A members were getting better at throughout the training, then the training would not have provided the Group A members with much of an opportunity to improve their syntactic processing of incoming spoken language because they spent their training time operating at a semantic level of comprehension and focusing on non-linguistic cues. Because all of the above-listed aids to comprehension, other than the pictures, were absent in the testing context, Group A members would find themselves exercising ineffective strategies during the test and would therefore not comprehend much of the dialogues. Their incomprehension could further be exacerbated by the anxiety that would result from realizing how little they were understanding on the posttest. This series of conditions would cause them to perform worse on the posttest than if they had not gone through the training session and picked up these new listening habits. It is assumed that the effect that this negative transfer of strategic behavior had on members of Group A was in addition to the effect of lowered motivation described earlier. This negative transfer, plus the fact that Group A honed more their strategic skills than their parsing skills during the training session, accounts for why Group A showed the greatest overall drop in LCT scores.

5.3.2 GROUP B

Group B was the group that was trained only on slow dialogues. The drop in their LCT scores was not statistically significant, which means that if indeed scores were generally lowered because of motivational factors, members of Group B improved in listening comprehension. According to what was said in surveys and even more so in the interviews, members of this group sometimes found the slow dialogues in the training sessions a bit boring. They commented in the space for “additional comments” on the post-lesson surveys, far more than other participants, about the excessive length of the dialogues (and indeed, the slower dialogues were longer). On the survey questions that asked about the length of the dialogues, 41.2% of the time Group B participants indicated that the dialogues were too long. They were also the participants who most often indicated that the actors’ performances in the lesson dialogues seemed affected or unnatural and that the dialogues themselves seemed unrealistic. This is a logical response. When one forces oneself to speak at a slower than normal rate, one finds that alternative, less natural-sounding intonation must be used. Still, the opinion that the dialogues sounded unnatural was not widespread; the readings were rated “unnatural” only 9.7% of the time for the character Karen and only 13.2% for the other actors, and the dialogues were judged as “unrealistic” by only 10.2% of the group.

Several times participants in Group B commented that, although they assumed that the dialogues had been slowed down somewhat from what would be more natural, they preferred it that way. On the survey questions about the speed of the readings, the members of Group B were the ones who most frequently indicated that the actors were

reading at a good speed. They were also the ones who least frequently complained that some actors had an accent that was difficult to understand.

In answer to the question of whether they felt that the lessons were helping to improve their short term memory, Group B had the highest number of negative responses. It seems that listening to dialogues that were very slow and clear posed no major strains on the participants' short term memory. The dialogues went slowly enough that Group B participants understood most of what they heard. Not being overtaxed in this way, they had additional resources to spare to attend to not only meaning but to form as well, which is rarely the case for beginners (VanPatten, 1998). Because they were able to focus on both form and meaning, more of the input was potential intake for these participants (Gass, 1997); that is to say that these circumstances were particularly good ones for second language acquisition.

Thus, the evidence suggests that the experience for the participants in Group B was sometimes a little "slow," perhaps, but helpful. If, as was suggested earlier, no drop in LCT scores under the circumstances can actually be taken as an indication of improvement, then the Group B participants can be said to have improved their listening skills during the training sessions, and it can be further asserted that those gains transferred over to fast dialogues as well, even though Group B was trained only on slow dialogues. There is thus no evidence to support Vandergrift's (2004) worry that training language learners on slower dialogues would make them unable to comprehend quicker speech. On the contrary, it might be that listening to the slowed-down version of the dialogues helped to teach these participants about the sound of spoken English so that

when they heard the faster speech on the posttest, they were in a better position than before to comprehend it.

5.3.3. GROUP C

Group C was the group that listened to the fast dialogues the first time and then for the second playback, had the choice of either listening to it again at the same speed or listening to it at the slower speed. Groups C's scores dropped significantly, almost entirely because of the change in scores on the slow dialogues. As shown in Table 4.4, the drop in scores on slow dialogues for Group C was more dramatic than any other drop in scores between pretest and posttest. There was a significant interaction between speed and test for Group C, and not for any other group.

Group C members had more control over their experience of the lessons than other participants did. If they found the first playing of the dialogue difficult to understand, they knew that they could listen to it a second time at a slower speed. Feedback to their answers on the first set of comprehension questions helped them to know if they had caught the general gist of the conversation. If so, they could listen to the conversation the second time also at the faster speed and continue listening for global comprehension. If they had failed to understand the conversation well the first time, they could listen the second time at the slower speed, presumably concentrating on the parts that they had missed.

The slow dialogues on the post-LCT, however, must have seemed quite strange to them. This slower speed had become defined for them as the remedial speed for going

back and catching originally lost details. The different nature of fast versus slow dialogues had been brought to their attention during the training session, and the appearance of slow dialogues on the posttest must have struck them as very odd. The surprise itself could have been enough of a distraction as to cause some Group C test takers to fail to listen well during the relatively brief LCT dialogues. Thinking about the oddity of the slower speed (and probably thinking in the L1) would keep them from concentrating on and comprehending the brief dialogues. This would cause their scores on this part of the test to go down. The fast dialogues followed the slow dialogues on the LCT. By the time that the fast dialogues played, the test takers would have had time to refocus. Members of Group C did not show a drop in scores on the fast dialogues. Assuming there was a general tendency for scores to be lower on the post-LCT because of motivational factors, this could be taken to indicate improvement in listening comprehension on the fast dialogues.

Finally, it is interesting to note that Group C members were the least represented in either the group of the ten participants whose LCT scores went up the most from pretest to posttest or the ten whose scores went down the most. All of the other groups had two, three, or four members in both groups of dramatic change scores, but Group C only had one in each group. It might be that Group C members used their speed options to make the training sessions maximally comfortable for them. When given control over their own learning trajectory, learners typically stop short of pushing themselves as hard or as far as a teacher would (Robinson, 1991). This keeps the participants from making

dramatic leaps, but it also keeps them from becoming completely unmotivated due to exhaustion.

5.3.4 GROUP D

Group D was the group that had, on the second playback, the option of pausing, but all dialogues in their training sessions were at the faster speed. Information about the extent to which the participants took advantage of the pause button is limited to participants answering post-lesson survey questions about it, which accounts for only about 68% of the Group D lessons. Those answers indicate that the pause button was used infrequently: only around 7% of the time. Certainly, what can be said about what the people in Group D did involves more guessing than for the other experimental groups. If data were available for all participants, it might be that the pause was used much less or much more than 7%. Supposing, though, that 7% is a more or less accurate number, this means that more than 90% of the time, the input that the members of Group D got was the same as what Group A members got. Yet, their change scores are quite different. Group D members' scores dropped the least of any of the groups, and the drop was nonsignificant. The only difference between their training was that Group D had an option that Group A did not.

Having the pausing option available to them could have contributed to a greater sense of being in control than what the Group A members experienced. This could, in turn, have affected Group D's performance in a positive way: "Social learning theory posits that people's judgment about their potential ability to perform well or to *cope* in a

situation actually affects their efforts to try the task, and their subsequent actual success or failure at the task” (Robinson, 1991, p. 157). Another theory, choice theory (Glasser, 1988), further posits that students will be more involved and learn better when their learning environments provide them with a sense of having some control over their own circumstances.

5.3.5 SUMMARY

Groups A and C did significantly worse on the LCT posttest than on the pretest. Group C did significantly worse only on the slow part of the LCT posttest, and Group C was the only group for which there was a significant interaction between test and speed. What has been argued in Section 5.3 is that Group A had, during the time of the training, become dependent on strategies that were no longer available during the posttest. For Group C, slow dialogues had, over the course of the training period, become a marked condition, and when they were heard on the posttest, participants were distracted and for this reason unable to concentrate enough to do well on that part of the posttest.

For Group B, the slower speed of the training dialogues allowed them not only to practice and improve their listening comprehension skills but also to take in more information about vocabulary and grammar. This benefited their acquisition of English in general, which in turn helped their listening comprehension skills, on top of the fact that they had received additional listening practice through the training sessions.

Some Group D members benefited from the ability to pause the dialogue when necessary. For all participants in this group, whether they availed themselves of the pause

button or not, a certain sense of control or the ability to take control caused enough of a shift in their attitude towards the training sessions and the tests that they were able to perform much better on the posttest than their counterparts in Group A.

If the motivational factors described in Section 5.2 affected all groups equally (and there is no indication in the data that it would be otherwise), then the nonsignificant change scores for Groups B and D can be interpreted to indicate *gains* in listening comprehension. This also holds in the case of the fast dialogues with Group C. Only Group A shows a failure to have benefited from the training. This might be connected with an overall sense of anxiety that many of them reported feeling throughout the training, caused by the excessive speed of the dialogues.

5.4 MAZE SCORE DIFFERENCES

The maze task followed the LCT, both for the pretest and the posttest. Despite the fact that low motivation is assumed to have had a major impact on the post-LCT scores, maze scores showed not a drop but a gain overall. Why is this? There are four reasons that can explain this difference. One reason is that the maze is a novel task. None of the participants had ever experienced it before the pretest, and for all of them, the posttest was only the second time they did a maze task. Participants were bound to improve their technique the second time around. Because participants did not practice the maze task between the pretest and the posttest, there was little possibility of a negative transfer of habits formed during the training sessions, as happened with Group A on the LCT. A third reason for the overall improvement is that because this was a novel task, it was

more motivating for the participants. A great many participants expressed enjoying the task, and none of them expressed the opposite. Therefore they were more motivated when they did the maze task than when they did the post-LCT, which had dialogues that the participants did not find to be particularly interesting. Another motivating characteristic of the maze task that the LCT did not have is that participants instantly knew whether their answers were right or wrong as soon as they pressed any button during the activity, and instant feedback can be very motivating.

The maze task required participants to lexically and syntactically process sentences. Like listening comprehension, the maze task must be done in a linear and unidirectional fashion. Unlike listening comprehension, it is done with written instead of aural input. Also unlike listening comprehension, a test taker must use syntactic analyses of the sentences and cannot rely on semantics alone.

All groups got faster on the maze task for the posttest. There were no significant differences between the experimental groups in terms of speed or gains in speed. In terms of accuracy (being able to finish sentences in the task), Group A did not improve significantly, but the other groups did, with an especially strong effect for Group B. This phenomenon might be explained in one of two ways. One possible interpretation is that the members of Group A, during the training sessions, were challenged to such a degree by the rapid pace of the dialogues that they listened at a mostly lexical/semantic level, piecing together interpretations of the spoken messages through the individual words that they understood and picking up very little of the grammatical aspects of the input. In doing this, they were relying heavily on and developing more fully compensatory

strategies and less on the actual linguistic input itself. This would explain why members of Group A did not make significant improvements on a task like the maze task, which requires use of precisely the kinds of skills that they were not focusing on during their training.

Participants in Groups C and D, on the other hand, were able to control the flow of the input through speed and pausing options and therefore had more opportunities than Group A for input to become intake. This is reflected in their significant gains on the maze task. Group B participants showed the greatest gains on the maze task because the input they received during training was always slow and so in all cases the participants had the opportunity not only to follow the gist of the spoken dialogues but also reflect on them and the form (as in word choice and grammatical structures) of the message.

An alternative explanation of the differences in gain scores on the maze task is the extent to which the pace of the maze task was similar to the pace of what the participants experienced during the training sessions. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the speed at which the participants in this project did the maze task was very slow: around two seconds per word pair. When doing the maze task, participants were not terribly rushed, but instead took their time and thought deeply about the grammar and vocabulary items, and not just about the meaning of the sentences. This was most like the training sessions for Group B, in which they listened to slow dialogues that allowed them to listen not only for meaning but to also pay attention to form, and this was least like Group A's training, during which the participants had to simply catch whatever words and other cues they could in order to understand what was being said, without an opportunity to think more deeply about

sentence structure or vocabulary. Thus, by this interpretation, Group B gained the most on the maze task because the maze was the most like the task that they had been trained on, and Group A gained the least, because the maze was the least like the task that they had been trained on. Groups C and D fell in the middle both in terms of similarity of tasks and gain scores. This second interpretation does not necessarily contradict the first interpretation (that by noticing more, Group B made real gains in SLA, while Group A made the least because they had the fewest opportunities for noticing); both interpretations could be right.

5.5 GAIN SCORES ON THE LCT AND THE MAZE TASK, TAKEN TOGETHER

The change scores on the LCT can be summarized as follows:

- $(B = D) > (C = A)$

and the change scores on the maze task can be summarized as

- $B > (D = C) > A.$

Therefore, one thing that is clear from the above is that Group B fared the best and Group A fared the worst on the tests. The interpretation of this that is offered here is that the members of Group A had the least control and the least opportunity to process the dialogues and therefore benefited the least from the training. On the other hand, Group D members, although getting basically the same materials in their training, were aided by the ability to pause when necessary and the resulting feeling of having control over their conditions. They suffered from less anxiety during the training and consequently did better than Group A on both the LCT and the maze task. Group B members also

benefited from the training. Although not getting the most exciting materials, the slower speed allowed them to pick up and reflect on information about the input, which resulted in more of the input becoming uptake. That is, the awareness of structure and vocabulary in the input affected their developing interlanguage. For this reason, they did particularly well on the maze task, in which they were required to choose words based on their ability to parse the sentence that was unfolding on the screen. Finally, Group C members' results were mixed, doing fine on the fast dialogues on the posttest but showing problems with the slow dialogues. These problems were probably the result of the distraction that came from the surprise of encountering slow dialogues on a posttest.

The contention that the Group A participants were forced into listening to the training dialogues at a purely semantic, less analytical level (listening only for meaning, relying on compensatory strategies, and not being as conscious of grammatical details or word choices) fits with the findings of Jensen and Vinther (2003). In their experiment, gains were found evenly across experimental groups in terms of global comprehension and phonological decoding, but the group that was exposed to only fast (natural speed) playbacks and never slowed-down playbacks failed to show improvements in terms of grammatical accuracy, whereas all other groups did.

The results of Groups C (speed choice) and D (pausing) suggest that giving learners some level of control over the playbacks in listening comprehension practice can be beneficial. The apparent negative effect for Group C—that their scores dropped on the slow dialogues—is more an artifact of the test and might have been avoided by providing practice dialogues before the graded dialogues. The fact that fewer members of Group C

made large gains or large losses on the LCT, as compared to other groups suggests that, although student control can be beneficial, it is also true that people tend to make greater strides when pushed by a coach and not left merely to their own devices. The fact that the pause option appears to have had a positive effect on members of Group D, even when they did not use the option very often, suggests that the illusion of control and choice may be a beneficial impression to create on learners (Glasser, 1988).

In Section 5.2.2 it was suggested that participants were sufficiently less motivated to perform well on the LCT by the time of their posttest that getting equivalent scores on the pretest and posttest could be taken to indicate that the training had been of some benefit. By this logic, a drop in LCT scores is not interpreted as a *loss* in listening comprehension skills but instead simply indicates less improvement than with other training groups. With this in mind, Research Questions 1, 2 and 3 can be addressed. To answer the first, the results indicate that slower and clearer speech can be beneficial to language learners' acquisition and development of listening comprehension skills, and these benefits can be transferred over to listening to fast speech as well.

Research Question 2 asked what happens when learners have the option to choose the speed of playback, as in the case of Group C. Learners chose the slower speed when they experienced greater difficulty in understanding the dialogues, and they chose this option less often as time went by. The data indicate that Group C members benefited from the training sessions with respect to their ability to understand fast dialogues, but were so distracted by the, to them, peculiar presence of slow dialogues on the posttest that they actually did worse on these. Because only around one-fourth of the participants

in Group C chose the slower speed during the second half of the training period (from Lesson 5, on), these participants' experience of the training sessions was very similar to that of Group A, because they too were listening to two fast dialogues per lesson. Again, having the option to control one's experience (by choosing the slower speed if they wanted to) probably served to lower Group C participants' anxiety level, and consequently, the people in Group C fared better on the fast dialogue part of the post-LCT than did the people in Group A.

The answer to Research Question 3 is less clear. It remains to be determined definitively whether the ability to pause listening passages allows trainees to be able to process those passages better (as indicated by Zhao, 1997), although there is some evidence for this conclusion. It also appears that giving learners the option to pause can help them have a better sense of control, which can then encourage better performance.

An alternative to this interpretation of the data would be to claim that in fact no improvement was made in listening comprehension skills during the study and that the only change in performance and ability were correctly reflected by the test where it showed drops in scores. These drops could be the result of the training that created anxiety in the participants and/or had negative effects on participants' ability to cope with the kind of task found on the LCT. This interpretation, however, does not match with what the participants themselves reported in the surveys and interviews, and does not explain why Group B participants made strong gains on the maze task.

5.6 LARGE GAIN SCORE DIFFERENCES

The most important and dramatic lesson to be drawn by examining the profiles of the ten participants whose scores went up the most from listening comprehension pretest to posttest and those ten whose scores dropped the most is that cramming a lot of lessons into a small space of time and then taking a test at the end almost always resulted in poor performance. Interestingly, though, it would seem that these participants were experiencing what Egbert (2005) and others call *flow*. This term refers to the state in which things “click” and the participant loses his or her sense of time. Egbert’s (2005) article about the phenomenon claims that this is an ideal state for language learners because it will lead to greater time on task, which should then lead to more language acquisition. The findings of the present study do not necessarily contradict this claim, but may instead apply only to the effect of fatigue at test time. One of the top score gainers had followed the same pattern as those whose scores dropped dramatically—cramming most activities into one long session—but with one important difference, and that is that he took a half-hour break before going on to the posttest. Therefore it can be concluded that taking breaks is extremely important for optimal performance.

Those who made large gains tended to make gains on the fast part of the LCT, whereas those whose scores went down dramatically did worse mostly on the slow part of the LCT. It could be argued that the gains were real gains in listening comprehension, whereas the drops were more the result of fatigue and a loss of motivation and not really of listening comprehension skill. This is because the fast dialogues were more difficult to comprehend, and therefore should have been the site of greatest gains when real learning

was happening. On the other hand, slow dialogues (especially the blander ones on the tests that involved characters that the test takers were not familiar with) were considered less interesting. Listening to relatively boring and less natural-sounding dialogues is precisely the kind of situation in which tired, unmotivated learners who are struggling to finish a project are most likely to lose their concentration, which would then result in missing part of what was said in the dialogues, which in turn would cause the test taker to answer fewer of the comprehension questions correctly.

Those whose LCT scores improved a lot also tended to get faster on the maze. It is to be expected that the participants would be faster on the maze: as explained in Chapter 3, doing such a novel task a second time should be easier, and therefore faster. For all groups, the change in speed was significant. That is, in general, participants got faster. However, the participants whose LCT scores dropped dramatically did not, on the whole, do the maze faster the second time. This is further support for the claim that they were tired, unmotivated, and not trying very hard.

It is interesting to note that fully half of the top score gainers were students who were offered extra credit by their teachers for doing the project, while only one of the 10 in the other group (large LCT losses) was. This might be simply because students who did a lengthy project for extra credit were a more motivated group, but it might also be that these participants felt more observed than others and so were especially motivated to perform well.

5.7 STRATEGY USE

As far as can be determined, all participants used, at least to some extent, behaviors that could be labeled as learning strategies. When participants were given the opportunity to identify in their own words strategies that they used in order to remember the contents of the dialogues, the most common answer was to say that they simply made sure to concentrate while listening. The next three most frequently mentioned strategies were to listen globally, to listen for key words, and to focus on the important parts and disregard the rest. These match up with the strategies that were most frequently indicated as being used by the participants who were interviewed after completing the project. “I try to make sure that I am relaxed,” “I notice when my mind is wandering and make myself pay attention again,” and “I try to focus on key terms” were among the top four strategies that the 25 interviewed participants claimed to use. The overlap in answers between the surveys and the interviews is substantial, especially considering the fact that the survey question was an open-ended question, whereas the interviewees were given a checklist. Additionally, the survey question asked how participants *remembered* the contents of the dialogues, while the checklist used in the interviews was meant to capture how they *comprehended* the dialogues.

All of the most popular strategies, as indicated in the surveys and interviews, are examples of a listener monitoring and controlling his or her attentional resources. These findings fit the results of previous research (O’Malley, et al, 1989). These same kinds of strategies can be employed by people listening to their L1 and, many of them, when doing other tasks. It is for this lack of distinction or uniqueness that Dörnyei (2005)

proposed that the concept *strategies* be discarded in favor of the concept of *self-regulation*, as has been done in other fields. Putting it in these terms, one is not misled into thinking that a language learner has gone from one kind of listening (or whatever language activity it is that is engaged in) to a distinct mode of strategy use. Instead, one understands the learner's behavior as moving up and down a scale of greater or lesser self-regulation that is characterized by differing degrees of metacognitive awareness. This fits with how some learners themselves experience it. To repeat a quote (in response to the survey question about strategies) from the previous chapter:

Jajaja, no creo que haya una estrategia en sí, tal vez lo que hago es concentrarme adecuadamente desde un comienzo para comprender el tema que se discute y luego sólo me preocupo de seguir la conversación tal y como lo haría si estuviese escuchando a dos chilenos.

(Ha ha ha, I don't think I use a strategy as such, maybe what I do is concentrate enough from the beginning so that I know what they are talking about and then I just worry about following the conversation just like I would do listening to two Chileans.)

There are other activities, or strategies, that are not simply regulating one's language processing activity through metacognitive awareness but are more compensatory behaviors that rely on nonlinguistic information to supplement linguistic input. This mostly involves using contextual cues such as available visuals and general world knowledge. Because of the compensatory nature of these activities, they might be better categorized as communication strategies rather than learning strategies, but, like

the other behaviors mentioned above, are not distinct from what one often does in L1 listening as well. These behaviors may, however, also be categorized as self-regulatory because they involve monitoring one's own thought process by directing one's attention.

As explained above, the data indicate that participants in Group A made the greatest use of this kind of compensatory behavior or strategy use because their training session dialogues (fast only) presented the greatest challenge. Not being able to understand as much from the linguistic input, they seem to have relied more heavily than other participants on nonlinguistic cues. However, this did little to help them improve their ability to recognize spoken words and parse sentences, and it proved detrimental at posttest time, when they found themselves faced with a task where many of their learned strategic habits were no longer of use to them.

Self-regulation is needed by the distracted listener. Members of Group A may have been distracted more than other participants because they appear to have felt more anxiety during the training sessions. Thoughts of anxiety can distract one from one's present task. By this same reasoning, one can assume that less proficient learners run a greater risk of having distracting thoughts. These distracting thoughts could be reflections on how little the learner is understanding and how difficult listening comprehension is in a FL. More proficient learners are less likely to have these distracting thoughts. They also have less of a need for compensatory behaviors than beginning language learners. Automatically comprehending more and at the same time being distracted less, more advanced language learners will be less aware of having to regulate themselves as they listen in the L2. This can explain why the most advanced participants who were

interviewed for this study were not able to describe exactly what they did when they listened to English as a foreign language. They experienced L2 listening comprehension as something automatic. In contrast, less advanced language learners must struggle to keep focused because their working memory is overloaded, and they risk frustration from how incompletely they can make sense of the incoming message. “Language presents multiple sources of information, both linguistic and nonlinguistic, and part of effective language processing is being able to attend to the required information without being distracted by irrelevant or misleading cues” (Bialystok, 1990, p. 125).

In other studies it was concluded that there is no specific set of learning strategies favored by good language learners and further, that good language learners do not necessarily use a greater number of strategies (Dörnyei, 2005). Instead, good language learners are better at knowing which strategies most serve their personal learning style and when to apply them (Chamot, Kupper, & Impink-Hernandez, 1988). These conclusions are supported by the findings of the present study. The number of strategies used by participants in this study did not correlate to their proficiency level, but the participants who did very poorly on the LCT appeared not to regulate their own attentional resources in the same way that other participants did.

5.8 AUTOMATICITY

More advanced language learners can recognize a greater number of L2 forms (such as specific words and grammatical structures), and they also recognize them more quickly (Miyake & Friedman, 1998). Research Question 4 asked the following, “Between

groups that demonstrate different speeds and/or accuracy of processing spoken language, do they also demonstrate different speeds and/or accuracy in forced (timed) processing of written language?” The answer to this question, as discussed in Chapter 4, is positive, as evidenced by a significant correlation between speed and accuracy on the maze task and LCT scores.

Because more advanced language learners process language more quickly, they are simply less challenged by the L2 listening comprehension process. Being less challenged, they are less in need of self-regulatory or compensatory behaviors. Therefore the answer to Research Question 5—are those FL learners who demonstrate greater comprehension of spoken language achieving this primarily through strategic listening, or is it instead that their syntactic processing and lexical access function more automatically?—is decidedly the latter. Language learners with better listening comprehension process language more automatically. This is true, although it is also true that learners who practice better self-regulation are more effective at directing their attention to the most useful parts of input, which also results in improved listening comprehension.

5.9 CALL DESIGN

Research Question 6 asked what kind of features learners prefer in computer-delivered FL listening lessons and tests. It was found that learners wanted realistic dialogues that involved people like themselves talking about issues of interest to them. Good visual support was also important to the participants, with many of them wishing

that there had been videos in the lessons and tests instead of only pictures accompanying the dialogues. The more entertaining the lessons, the more they liked them. Dialogues that were too long and that pushed their short term memory to its maximum frustrated participants. The more closely that the dialogue matched a learner's own particular level, the more it was enjoyed.

Some participants did not feel comfortable with open-ended questions. This type of question (in an educational context) was unfamiliar to most of the participants, and so they did not know how to respond. Some participants said that they did not understand what the point of questions with no right or wrong answer was. There was also a resistance to being forced to choose one of the answers on the LCT when the test taker did not know the answer. This too is likely a result of the participants' educational experiences; in Chile it is common practice to deduct points on a test for an incorrect answer.

From the above, it can be seen that the participants tended to react negatively to unfamiliar features of the online mini-course. Other features of the lessons and tests in this project which might have been predicted to be (more) problematic for the participants, did not in the end present great problems for the learners. Features of this type include the timing of the comprehension questions and the length of the dialogues (averaged over the four groups, the participants said the dialogues were too long only 36.5% of the time). The learners were warned about and given brief explanations for these features during the consenting process. The participants would probably have had

more positive reactions to the open-ended questions and the forced choice on the tests had they been given explanations for these as well during the consenting process.

5.10 IMPLICATIONS

The findings from this study have four major implications that will be discussed below. The first three concern, in turn, rate of speech, metacognition and training, and motivation. These are discussed both in terms of classroom applications and for implementing in CALL materials. Lastly there is a discussion about the importance of matching testing to training.

5.10.1 RATE OF SPEECH

The data from the present experiment suggest that listening to slowed down, clearer speech can have beneficial effects on language learners. The results from the LCT and the maze task have been interpreted as indicating that slowed-down, clear speech can allow language learners to notice more about the input, which in turns leads to greater second language acquisition. Slowed down speech can make easier all of the linguistic stages of listening comprehension outlined in Chapter 2: sound identification, lexical access, and parsing. Because slower speech allows a higher rate of success with these processes, a language learner's experience with slower speech constitutes more actual practice with these processes than a language learner's experience with fast speech. In fast speech, sounds and words are identified less frequently, and often the parsing stage is largely circumvented (Ferreira, Bailey, & Ferraro, 2002). Therefore, the sound recordings

that FL students are exposed to (in CALL and other situations), as well as classroom speech that they hear, should typically be slow and clear enough so that it is easily understood by the students.

Learners would not, however, be best served by hearing the L2 spoken only slowly and clearly, to the exclusion of natural speech. Learners should be exposed to a variety of speaking styles and accents so that they can become accustomed to them and so that they can practice adjusting to new accents and manners of speech. Clarke's (2003) research showed that native speakers become accustomed to accented speech within 14 trials and can transfer that ability to similarly accented speech of other speakers. This means both that adjustment is possible and also that it takes some time and practice. It is likely that nonnative speakers of a language would take longer to adjust to new accents, since they are dealing with the added difficulties of comprehension in an L2.

When an L2 learner listens to an accent that is new to him or her, he or she will initially have difficulty understanding what is being said. Adjustment to the new accent and understanding the message is possible only if the L2 learner is already familiar with the words and grammatical structures being employed in the spoken message. The LCT and maze task results for Group B suggest that acquisition of vocabulary and grammar is more easily achieved while listening to slower, clearer speech. Therefore second language learners should be exposed to a good deal of the slower, clearer speech, especially at the beginning, but there should also be a fair amount of aural input that uses naturally fast speech with a variety of accents, in order to accustom the learners to different accents and ways of speaking. Listening passages with more challenging rates

of speech and/or accents are not the proper occasion for exposing learners to new vocabulary and challenging sentence structures, but instead should be used to reinforce and review already familiar material, so that the focus of the activity can be mostly on becoming accustomed to the different styles of speech. These suggestions hold for both classrooms and CALL materials.

There is a risk that by speaking more slowly and clearly than usual, speakers may talk in a way that sounds ridiculous, condescending, or false. Mastering a balance between sounding clear and sounding unnatural takes practice. The researcher, who began this study because of her belief in the importance of making classroom speech easily comprehended by language learners, apparently had mastered this technique more than the other actors involved in this study. Her character, Karen, appeared in every training dialogue and yet was never rated as speaking too slowly by any of the participants. In contrast, the other actors were, on average, rated as speaking too slowly by 7% of the Group B members (less so by other groups). Learning how to speak relatively slowly and clearly and yet speak in a way that seems natural and communicative ought to be a goal for basic-level FL teachers.

5.10.2 MOTIVATION

Students must be motivated to learn. What is interesting to one group may not be interesting to another group. The participants in the present study showed a strong preference for materials that related directly to their lives, both in terms of the aspects of the project that they said that they liked and in terms of the criticisms that they made of

the project and their suggestions for improvement. This suggests that learning materials can be most useful when they are made for specific populations.

If learners can be entertained while they are learning, they are going to be more attracted to the learning activity. Producers of educational software have always been aware of this and have tried to merge education with fun within the framework of “edutainment,” often with only very limited success (Purushotma, 2005). It is important to keep in mind that what is entertaining to a learner who is working with a computer-delivered lesson is not always the flashiest format or the most difficult-to-program effects. Simply providing materials that are on a topic of interest to the learner can be very motivating, as the present study, with its relatively simple formatting, proves.

Therefore, greatest care should be taken to present material that is relevant and interesting to the target population, before even worrying about other, also entertaining but costlier and more difficult to attain features, such as videos and voice recognition. CALL design has a potential for almost limitless complication and cost (Colpaert, 2006). The most fundamental characteristics of a CALL lesson, such as lesson topics and exercise formatting, need to be given their due attention, because no technologically impressive feature is worth much if the basic material that it supports is not well done.

Technological features in CALL should be researched well so that CALL programmers make worthwhile investments of time and money. The present study suggests that even simple and easy-to-program features can have a large impact on user affect. For example, Group D is thought to have done better than Group A simply because they had available an option to control their learning environment. This had a

beneficial effect on Group D participants even though they actually made use of the option infrequently.

5.10.3 METACOGNITION, TRAINING, AND STUDENT CONTROL

Participants who made the greatest gains on the LCT showed very high levels of metacognitive awareness about SLA. At the other extreme, the only two participant who were interviewed and claimed not to regulate and (when necessary) refocus their thought processes performed particularly poorly on the LCT. Higher levels of metacognitive awareness therefore appear to be correlated with success in the current project. This is probably due to two main factors: student autonomy and the role of attention and noticing in SLA.

Student autonomy, as experienced by the participants in this project, requires even greater levels of self-regulation than a classroom FL learning situation. FL learners must make use of metacognition—an awareness of one's own thought processes and cognition—to realize when they are losing focus on learning activities and to decide what to do about it. A learner who can do this on his or her own is in a position to benefit from a self-study situation like the present project; a learner who cannot do this well will find it difficult to stay focused on the activity and will not gain as much from it.

The above pertains to learning in general. About SLA specifically it has been established that learners need to focus their attention on features of the L2 in order for these to be acquired (Gass, 1998; Schmidt, 2001; VanPatten, 2004). The findings of the present study suggest that conditions that allow for more noticing and attention on the

part of the learners (that is, the clearer and slower rate of speech in Group B's input) can lead to greater gains in SLA.

Metacognition can be taught to and/or raised in FL learners to their benefit (Thompson & Rubin, 1996). Successful activities for raising metacognition in L2 learners have also been used by the language department of the online institute the Open University in the UK (Hauck, 2006). These include activities that directly ask learners to think about their strengths and how they would apply them to specific problems (language learning-related and otherwise). Activities for raising metacognition in any L2 learning situation would have to be crafted so as to fit the institutional constraints of the particular class they were made for and to match the needs and characteristics of the learners who used them. Some institutions will be in a better situation to spend time specifically on the raising of metacognitive awareness, whereas in other situations, this kind of training will have to be slipped into the regular language lessons.

For example, the way in which activities are designed may lead language learners naturally to be more aware of their mental processes. Including in the instructions to an activity directives for listening more globally, reinforced by particular kinds of questions (not overly detail-oriented), can bring to the language learner's awareness new concepts (in this case, *global listening*), which in turn could give the learner new insight on language processing and language learning. This then would be one way of raising students' metacognitive awareness without taking time out for a lesson specifically about that topic.

It is probable that the way in which the purpose of this study was explained to the participants, as well as this study's initial and post-lesson surveys, helped to raise participants' awareness of how they used their own abilities to perform the activities required of them. In this way, the current project was similar to aspects of online language courses at the Open University, described above (Hauck, 2006). This is another example of how metacognitive skills can be encouraged in FL learners and how this goal can be integrated into the main parts of a language lesson.

Merely putting a new concept or opportunity in a learner's road, however, does not guarantee that it will be used to the greatest benefit. For example, the members of Group C were given the chance to choose the speed at which they listened to some of their practice activities, and while this seems to have raised their awareness about differences in rate of speech, it actually caused the slow part of their posttest scores to drop significantly. The results of the experiment imply that the activities helped them in their listening to fast dialogues, however, which is arguably the more important (because more authentic) kind of listening for testing purposes and non-classroom L2 use. As argued earlier, Group C's drop in scores on the slow part of the posttest was probably due to changeable artifacts of the test format. Nonetheless, this case raises concerns for what kinds of bad habits language learners may develop when given options in their practice activities but without guidance.

There was another way in which the freedom that was given to the participants of this project resulted in significant LCT score drops. Those participants who crammed too many of the activities into one long work session tended to have lower scores on the

posttest than on the pretest. This means that controlling to some degree the rate at which students go through the lessons in a course can help the students perform better.

Balancing this control over the students with allowing the students flexibility in their scheduling is something that needs to be finely tuned according to the context of the course and the population involved.

Explaining to language learners the potential benefits and drawbacks of various aspects of learning materials' design could help to raise the learners' metacognitive awareness, while at the same time avoiding misuse of the materials and the development of poor study habits. The way in which a learner makes use of different kinds of controls or help options in CALL and other kinds of language learning materials depends on the learner's beliefs about learning and his or her previous educational experiences (Ehrman, 1990). These will vary from population to population, which means that learning materials need to be crafted for and tested on the specific populations that will use them.

Fitting language lessons and pedagogical materials to the needs of the learners is of utmost importance (Bell, 2003). Chappelle and Jamieson's recent work (2006) on the effectiveness of CALL activities shows how the same CALL program that is very successful in one context may fail to meet the needs of students in another context. Some aspects of the current project were found to produce distress in a number of the participants because they did not match with the participants' experience with learning materials. Examples of these are the open-ended questions and the forced choice on the multiple-choice test questions—features that would probably not bother most students

brought up in the US educational system. Details such as these need to be considered in the design of learning materials in general and CALL materials specifically.

On the other hand, the participants seemed to adapt quickly to some of the less common aspects of the project when they had been told about them in advance and given a reason for their presence. This implies that learning materials need not necessarily be created to meet the expectations of the learner, but that learners can be trained to use and see the usefulness of new features in learning materials. This is at least true for students who are at the post-secondary level.

Language learners who are more aware of their own learning styles are in a better position to make good use of whatever options are available to them in their study materials (Soo, 1999). In CALL, such options may include things like choosing the playback speed or using a pause button, as in the present experiment, or other things such as taking advantage of help screens and glossaries (Chun & Plass, 1997). Students using less technologically-dependent materials also have many options available to them, including dictionaries and books with explicit grammar instruction. The results from the study with respect to Group D suggest that the mere availability of some options may enhance learners' performance.

5.10.4 MATCHING TESTING WITH TRAINING

In the present study, it appears that differences between the LCT and the lessons in the training period may have had a heavy impact on how well different groups did on the posttest. The explanation offered for Group A's worsened performance on the post-

LCT is that members of that group became dependent upon cues that were available during the training sessions but absent during the posttest. The other group whose LCT scores dropped significantly is Group C, but this group's change score drop is limited to the slow dialogues and is interpreted as having a different cause. Most likely, the surprise of hearing slow dialogues on the post-LCT simply distracted Group C members so much that they failed to listen properly during the first one or two (slow) dialogues and for this reason answered fewer of the comprehension questions correctly.

These two cases show that a mismatch between training materials and test formats can have a negative effect on learners. This has several implications. One fact that it points to is that learners need a variety of tasks as learning activities, so that they are more likely to have experience with the kind of task that they might encounter on tests, and also so that they do not form habits that help them under the particular circumstances of their classroom (or CALL) experiences but cause them difficulty in a testing situation or an encounter with an L2 speaker outside of the sheltered learning environment.

These results of the study also highlight the way in which seemingly small characteristics of the learning environment can have major impacts on the way in which students operate, as Shohamy (2001) makes clear. This is an especially important fact to keep in mind in the development of CALL materials, because there is no live, trained professional around to notice the development of peculiar learning patterns in the students (Fulcher, 2003). Because of this, piloting is more important in the development of CALL materials and computer-mediated tests than in the development of traditional teaching materials.

The problems caused by the mismatch between training and testing methods reemphasize the basic issues of validity in the planning of assessment and the interpretation of test scores. Because seemingly small differences in training can have a dramatic impact on test outcomes, it is important to employ multiple methods of assessment. This can be addressed by having a variety of test items and/or through deriving grades or assessment scores not only through traditional tests but through other sources of information as well, including interviews, compositions, portfolios, and so on (Shohamy, 1998, 2001). When creating assessment materials, the many influences on performance need to be considered. In listening comprehension, this involves a great many factors—critical, intertextual, strategic, contextualized, affective, social, cross-cultural, and individualized—that affect the employment of both bottom-up and top-down processes (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). All of these factors contribute to communicative competence, and none of them can be separated cleanly away from the others, even in the somewhat unnatural context of a testing situation.

5.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As mentioned at the end of Chapter 3, this study has the virtue of ecological validity but also suffers from a number of problems as a result of not being tightly controlled. Like many FL classes, this study lumped together learners of rather different proficiency levels. The study allowed participants to do the activities whenever they wanted to and required them to use the equipment that was available to them. These factors introduced quite a bit of additional variation into the data. So too did the fact that

the participants came from a number of different classes, majors, and institutes, and that the motivation for participating varied among the subjects, with some subjects participating for extra credit, and others doing it entirely on their own.

There was relatively little motivation for the subjects of this experiment to do their best on the posttest. Unlike most classroom or course-related settings, the participants were not being graded on their performance on the posttest. It has been assumed that this and some other motivational factors described in Section 5.2 explain why posttest scores tended to go down for all groups. Even if this assumption is accepted, it cannot be known how much of a drop in scores these factors caused. It is possible that if this effect could be factored out of the LCT change scores, then all groups would have shown some gains; it is also possible that only Groups B and D would show gains. This leaves only the differences between the groups' performance as evidence of the relative effectiveness of the different training methods under investigation. The discussion has relied on the assumption that motivational factors affected all groups equally, and conclusions about the effect of rate of speech on listening comprehension can still be detected by examining the differences between the groups' gain scores.

It could be argued that no gains in SLA or listening comprehension were realized during the course of the study and that the only effect that the experience of the training session had on the participants was to instill in some of them (those in Groups A and C) some bad habits and disruptive expectations. Further studies would be needed to disprove this possibility, and these shall be explained in the Section 5.12, Suggestions for Future Research. Another possibility that is considered unlikely but that cannot be entirely

discounted without further research is the possibility that motivational factors influenced the four groups in a systematically different way at posttest time. If this were the case, then the differences in their gain scores could be due mostly or entirely to differences in motivation and not differences in SLA or the honing of listening comprehension skills.

Another limitation of this experiment is the fact that the maze task was not normed. The maze task has been demonstrated to detect processing difficulties in ways similar to other tasks, such as production tasks and eye-tracking (Nicol, et al, 1997), but it is not known exactly how this means of detecting processing errors matches up with other, more traditional methods of measuring FL proficiency. The differences in the experimental groups' gain scores says something about the participants' ability to process grammar and vocabulary, but to what extent the changes are artifices of the testing method cannot be known. The claims of the study would be greatly enhanced if it could be shown that the maze task correlated highly with other measures of processing L2 grammar and vocabulary.

Finally, discussion of the effectiveness of the training style that members of Group D received relies on fairly incomplete information about how often and in what way those participants made use of the pause button. Conclusions about the usefulness of such a feature would be stronger if based on a research design that 1) allowed more information about this, and 2) had a pause button that worked without causing the participants to lose some of the words surrounding pauses.

5.12 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

A number of the suggestions for future research given below entail exploring the same issues as the present study but with greater control over certain parts of the experiment. A second category of suggestions for future research has to do with the working memory capacity and proficiency levels of the participants. A third area of future research that could further develop some of the ideas presented here has to do with metacognition and strategy training as these interact with CALL design. Lastly, suggestions are given for how the on-going development and testing of teaching materials could be integrated into many levels of a FL department's programs.

5.12.1 GREATER CONTROL OVER THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The most important way to improve on this study would be to eliminate, as much as possible, the factor of lowered motivation at posttest time. If this study were run again with students who had greater motivation to do well on the post-LCT, the test scores would be more reliable. The problems with motivation could be controlled by informing participants of their test grades, integrating the entire project into a for-credit class, and making the timing of the activities more regular.

It was mentioned in Chapter 3 that the ideal situation for this study would have been to start with absolute beginners and to track their progress over a much longer period. Doing a study in this way—especially in terms of making the experiment last a longer period of time—would help tremendously in determining to what extent the group differences were a reflection of differences in second language acquisition and increased

skill in listening comprehension, versus to what extent the group differences reflected practice effects or differences in the motivation of the participants at posttest time. It takes a long time to become proficient in a FL, and it typically takes many lessons to effect a change in FL proficiency enough so that it could be detected by a test. On the other hand, some of the factors of affect that are believed to have influenced test scores in this study can change dramatically in a short amount of time. The longer a study like this could last, the greater the potential for changes in FL proficiency, and therefore the greater would be the chance that differences in test scores due to FL proficiency would be much larger than fluctuations in test scores due to motivational and mood factors. Because beginners make larger, more easily detectable leaps in FL proficiency than do advanced learners (given the same amount of time), beginners' advancement in FL listening comprehension in a study like this would more dramatic and therefore more separable from fluctuations in test scores due to the other factors.

In the current study, information about how and how often the pause button was used by Group D members was incomplete. Another study should be done with conditions like A (only fast dialogues) and D (fast dialogues but with the option to pause) of the present study, but with more detailed data collected about how, and to what extent, the participants in the Group D-like condition used the pause button. It would also be necessary to program the pause option so that using it did not cause the participants to miss out on some of the words of the dialogue. The idea behind the study would be to see whether learners could use the pause to their advantage so that they had extra time to

process difficult passages, and whether this would lead to greater gains in second language acquisition and/or listening comprehension skills.

In any future study that followed up on the relative benefits of the kinds of training conditions of the present study, either the maze should be better normed, or different or additional means of measuring L2 vocabulary and grammar should be used, so as to strengthen any claims that are made about gains in this area. Lastly, any replication of this study would be much improved by a tighter control over the conditions under which the participants did the activities. Having equipment of a more uniform quality and ensuring that the activities were done in a fairly distraction-free environment would do much to remove random variation, which can obscure the results of an experiment. Greater control over the frequency and speed with which participants complete the activities would remove the very significant confounding variable of lesson timing and would allow a closer look at the effects of the other factors.

5.12.2 WORKING MEMORY CAPACITY AND PROFICIENCY LEVELS

If the study were to be done again, it would be worthwhile to get measures of the participants' working memory capacity, as was done in Payne and Ross (2005). Working memory capacity has been shown to be a strong predictor of second language acquisition. Because much of the usefulness of slowed speech is hypothesized to be a result of working memory constraints, one would expect a significant interaction between working memory capacity and the relative benefits of different speeds of playback as investigated in the present study. A study like this could look both at how fast versus slow dialogues

affected language learners with different working memory capacities, and it could also investigate what the preferences of these students were. Would learners automatically choose the options most fitting to their abilities and working memory capabilities?

It would also be informative to conduct a study like this with participants at different, well-defined proficiency levels. In this study, subjects of different proficiency levels were mixed in together, with lower proficiency levels being the most common. If the participants' language proficiency had been determined at the start of the experiment, a comparison could be done as to how beginning, intermediate, and advanced FL learners respond to the four experimental conditions.

5.12.3 METACOGNITION AND STRATEGY TRAINING

Explaining the purpose of some aspects of lesson design might allow students to take greater advantage of the features of the lessons. It would be interesting to do a study, for example, in which all participants had the option of pausing playback of listening materials but one group of the participants was trained as to the purpose and potential benefits of the pause option while the other was not. Probably in most cases, learners would benefit from understanding the idea behind the design of learning materials. However, this would not be true for all design aspects nor for all populations of learners. Because there is an enormous potential for variation on how effective this kind of training could be, depending on the learning context, this would be an excellent site for action research (Freeman, 1998). A teacher working alone or with others in his or her program could experiment with varying levels of training for the students in order to determine the

types and amount of student training that would put students in the best position to take advantage of the materials made available to them.

5.12.4 INTEGRATING ON-GOING CALL MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT INTO A FL PROGRAM

There are many language programs that have their own banks of online language activities for practice. An excellent example of this is in the case of the University of Concepción in Chile (Bañados, 2006), which has many EFL listening activities recorded by actual exchange students at their campus. A program such as this is in a position to get feedback from its students and make changes to the activities accordingly. This then is another situation in which action research could be conducted. Asking for feedback in the present study seemed to have a beneficial effect on the participants: they were made aware of lesson design; they were thinking about the usefulness of the features made available; and they felt that their feedback was valued. Asking for and responding to students' feedback with respect to the program made available by a language department where learners are studying ought to have a beneficial effect on student motivation. Action research might confirm this, or it might identify ways in which such a policy could backfire.

A foreign language department that could control the online practice activities available to its students and get constant feedback from its users would be in an excellent position to provide very relevant and useful learning materials for its members. This ought to increase motivation and interest in the students. Teachers could find innovative

ways to have their students make their own contributions to the pool of activities. This again could be very motivating to the students and could enhance metacognitive awareness on the part of the students as a result of their reflecting on what would make for a good lesson. Alternatively, or in addition to that, graduate students doing their student teaching in the program would have plentiful opportunities to be involved in the development of these materials. This would provide many opportunities for the graduate students to reflect on and experiment with material design and pedagogical goals.

Getting students (both the language learners and the graduate students) as well as the faculty to create some of their own material would fit absolutely with the current trend in society in which authorship has moved from the hands of a limited number of official entities to something that all people in modern society may participate in (“Among the audience,” 2006). This trend can be seen in the proliferation of blogs, wikis, podcasts and personal home pages. The explosion of popularity in these activities means that the kind of project suggested here ought to have a very strong appeal to students of newer generations. The question of how exactly to hold the attention of students who are “digital natives”¹¹ is of great concern to educators who note that young people brought up with the popular technologies of today actually have different thought patterns than the people who established most of the traditional classroom activities used in language education today (Thorne & Payne, 2005).

An ever-evolving bank of online activities like this would have the advantage of being necessarily pertinent to the population that it served. It would have a great many

¹¹ This term originated with Prensky (2001).

potential benefits for all involved, but there would also be many possible areas for failure, frustration, the clashing of wills, and so on. Therefore, if a system like this were to be put into place, it would behoove the participants involved, but also be extremely beneficial to other professionals interested in the model, for the people in that foreign language (or ESL) program to conduct action research throughout the development and evolution of it.

5.13 CONCLUSION

The major findings of this study are related to rate of speech and its effect on listening comprehension, strategy use, testing, and CALL lesson design. First of all, slower and clearer speech input appears to help language learners in their acquisition of the L2. For learners trained on mostly slower dialogues, these gains can transfer over to listening to fast speech as well. However, training should not use slower and clearer speech exclusively. Learners need exposure to a variety of speaking styles so that they can adapt to their features.

As for strategy use, two main conclusions were supported by the data. First, that variation in type and number of compensatory communication strategies—which are used more frequently by learners who are less proficient in the L2—does not indicate which learners are better or more advanced. On the other hand, it was found that more successful language learners have a higher degree of metacognitive awareness and practice greater self-regulation in their L2 activities.

The results of this study showed in a dramatic way something that was already known about the link between teaching and testing: the extent to which testing methods

match teaching methods can have a strong impact on test results. How knowledge of this fact should be translated to practice depends largely on what population is being dealt with, its context of learning, and its language use needs. Throughout the development of lesson plans and language assessment, one needs to constantly ask, “How does this reflect the way in which this population needs to be able to use this language?”

Another way in which lesson design needs to match the population it is intended for is in terms of subject matter. What will be relevant and of interest to one population will not be the same for another. Study and teaching materials must be both interesting and relevant to learners. This is an even more fundamental issue than the question of whether to include certain features that are possible with CALL, such as videos.

Of the many possible CALL features, those that give a learner a sense of control over his or her learning environment are some of the most important ones to provide. A sense of control improves a learner’s attitude, which can in turn improve his performance, both at the moment of study as well as (and as a consequence of the former) over the long run. Learners do not, however, benefit from being given absolute control over the circumstances of their lessons. For example, this study clearly found that learners benefited more from lessons when they were evenly distributed over time, as opposed to several lessons presented within a short period of time, as some learners chose to do it.

Those learners who are mature enough to understand and respond accordingly will benefit from having explained to them some of the reasons for why a lesson or test is constructed the way it is. Learners will adapt to something if they see a reason for it. This

fact goes along with what was said above in the context of strategies. Greater metacognitive awareness can aid self-regulation of one's behavior and thought processes, which can in turn promote L2 acquisition.

Some processes of L2 acquisition function in more or less the same way for all learners. The first finding, that slower and clearer spoken input can aid a learner in his or her SLA, should apply to all learners who are still at a level where much remains to be acquired of L2 vocabulary and syntax. The second finding, about strategy use, also speaks to cognitive processes and is expected to pertain to L2 learners across the board. The rest of the findings listed above also point out factors that can have a significant impact on language learners, and they indicate something of the nature of the impact, but they must all be interpreted in terms of the specific population that they are applied to. For example, not all FL learners would benefit equally from an orientation in how best to use CALL materials.

Largely for this reason, Section 5.12 suggests areas for future research where more needs to be known about the needs of specific populations. That section also sketches out the way in which a language department could use some of the findings of this thesis to develop CALL activities tailored to the specific needs and interests of the population it serves, created by the very population using it and updated in a continually evolving way. This model could be integrated into the educational programs already in existence in a way that would enhance those programs while fitting with the interests, abilities and characteristics of the emerging generation of digital natives.

In short, FL lessons should match its users' needs and interests as closely as possible. This study has helped to clarify how listening passages can be adjusted so as to best benefit FL learners listening to them. It has also shown how all aspects of an online course—including rate of speech, but also the instructions, visual aides, reading passages, intonation, subject matter, question format, quality of internet connection and equipment, timing, and participants' energy levels and motivation for participation—can influence outcomes. Identifying these many sources of variation can help guide future research, software development, and choices pertaining to the adoption of instructional materials.

APPENDIX A: INITIAL SURVEY, IN SPANISH

Nombre _____

Apellidos _____

¿En qué instituto estudias ahora? _____

¿Hace cuántos años que estudias inglés? _____

De 1-10 (1=muy mala, 10=sobresaliente), ¿cómo calificas la calidad de enseñanza de inglés en tu colegio?

¿Has tomado clases de inglés fuera de tu escuela (como por ejemplo lecciones particulares)?

Sí

No

¿Has usado un CD-ROM o algún programa de computador o algún sitio web para estudiar inglés?

Sí

No

Si sí, descríbelo _____

¿Qué tipos de actividades has hecho en tus clases de inglés (en el colegio y después)?
Indica los tipos de actividades que has hecho y con qué frecuencia las hacían en tus clases.

	nunca	a veces	con frecuencia	casi siempre
Actuar conversaciones preescritas				
Estudiar la gramática, ver reglas de gramática y practicar estructuras				
Trabajar en grupos pequeños para realizar diferentes tareas				
Memorizar y recitar				

Escribir y presentar mini dramas de tu propia creación				
Otros				

¿Cuáles de estos te parecen ser buenas actividades? ¿Cuáles te parecen malas maneras de estudiar un idioma?

Quando escuchas música en inglés, ¿tratas de entender la letra?

Sí

No

Si sí, ¿cómo lo haces? _____

Quando ves la televisión o películas en inglés, ¿a veces tratas de entender lo que dicen sin la ayuda de los subtítulos?

Sí

No

¿Puedes hacerlo?

Sí

No

¿Has viajado a lugares donde tuviste que comunicarte en inglés?

Sí

No

De una escala de 1-10 (1=no me importa nada, 10=es lo más importante para mí), ¿cuánto te importa mejorar tu inglés?

De una escala de 1-10 (1=nada, 10=fluyente), ¿cómo calificas tu habilidad de entender el inglés hablado cuando es hablado por hablantes nativos?

De una escala de 1-10 (1=nada, 10=fluyente), ¿cómo calificas tu habilidad de leer en inglés?

¿Alguna vez has estudiado para el TOEFL u otro examen internacional de suficiencia de inglés?

Sí

No

Alguna vez ¿has dado un examen de ese tipo?

Sí

No

Si sí, ¿cómo te fue? _____

APPENDIX B: INITIAL SURVEY, ENGLISH TRANSLATION

First name: _____

Family names: _____

What institute do you currently study in? _____

How many years have you studied English? {drop-down menu of 1 to 20}

From 1-10 (1=very bad, 10=outstanding), how would you rate the quality of English instruction at your grade school? {drop-down menu of 1 to 10}

¿Have you taken English classes outside of your school (like, for example, private lessons)?

Yes

No

Have you used a CD-ROM, computer program, or website for studying English?

Yes

No

If so, describe it: _____

What kinds of activities have you done in your English classes (in grade school and afterwards)? Indicate the types of activities that you have done and how often you did them in class.

	never	sometimes	often	almost always
Act out pre-written conversations				
Study grammar, look at grammar rules, and practice structures				
Work in small groups				
Memorize and recite				
Write and present skits of your own				

Other:					
--------	--	--	--	--	--

Which of these seem to you to be good activities? Which seem to be bad ways of studying a language?

When you listen to music in English, do you try to understand the lyrics?

Yes

No

If so, how do you do it? _____

When you watch television or movies in English, do you try to understand what they are saying without the help of subtitles?

Yes

No

Can you?

Yes

No

Have you ever traveled somewhere where you had to communicate in English?

Yes

No

On a scale of 1-10 (1=I don't care at all, 10=it's the most important thing for me), how much do you care about bettering your English? {drop-down menu of 1 to 10}

On a scale of 1-10 (1=nothing, 10=fluent), how do you rate your ability to understand English spoken by native speakers of English? {drop-down menu of 1 to 10}

On a scale of 1-10 (1=nothing, 10=fluent), how do you rate your ability to read in English? {drop-down menu of 1 to 10}

Have you ever studied for the TOEFL or any other international placement exam of English?

Yes

No

Have you ever taken this type of exam?

Yes

No

If so, how did you do? _____

APPENDIX C: LISTENING COMPREHENSION TEST PROCEDURES AND LAYOUT

Instructions are provided, in both the original Spanish and in translation.

SCREEN 1

At the top left, there is a speaker icon, and underneath, it says “Probar audio” (*Test audio*).

In the center of the screen it says, “BIENVENIDO. Haz clic en el parlante arriba a la izquierda para asegurarte que puedas oír el sonido. Luego, haz clic en ‘Comenzar.’”
 “WELCOME. Click on the speaker at the top left to make sure that you can hear the sound. Then, click on ‘Begin.’”

There is a button at the bottom of the screen that says “Comenzar,” (“Begin”). The test taker needs to click on that button in order to go to the next screen.

SCREEN 2

“DIÁLOGO 1. El examen tiene cuatro diálogos. Ahora escucharás diálogo 1. Después del diálogo, se harán cinco preguntas. Luego, escucharás la segunda mitad del diálogo, y contestarás cinco preguntas más.”

“DIALOGUE 1. The test has four dialogues. Now you will hear dialogue 1. After the dialogue, there will be five questions. Then you will hear the second half of the dialogue, and you will answer another five questions.”

There is a “continue” button at bottom that the test taker needs to click on in order to go to the next screen.

SCREEN 3

Next to a speaker icon at the top left it says, “Haz clic en el parlante cuando estés listo a escuchar el diálogo.” (*Click on the speaker when you are ready to hear the dialogue.*)

Next to the picture that goes with the dialogue (provided in the appendices where each dialogue’s script is written out), it says, “Escucha el diálogo entre [Cindy] y [Greg.]” (“Listen to the dialogue between [Cindy] and [Greg.]” (*The names change depending on the characters’ names in each dialogue.*))

There is a “continue” button at the bottom of the screen. This button does not work until the entire dialogue has played, at which point the letters go from gray to black.



Screen shot of Screen 3

SCREEN 4

“PREGUNTAS. A continuación, vas a ver 5 preguntas de comprensión. Contéstalas según lo que entendiste del diálogo.”

“*QUESTIONS. Next, you will see five comprehension questions. Answer them according to what you understood from the dialogue.*”

Pressing the “continue” button takes the test taker to the next screen.

SCREENS 5-9

One question per screen appears. Clicking on the “send” (“Enviar,” in Spanish) button after clicking on one of the four answers takes the test taker to the next screen. The button does not work if no answer has been chosen. A test taker can change the answer before clicking on the “send” button.

SCREEN 10

Screen 10 is much like Screen 3. There is a speaker icon with the same message next to it. Next to the picture, it says, “Escucha el resto del diálogo entre Cindy and Greg” (*“Listen to the rest of the dialogue between Cindy and Greg.”*)

In the case of Test Dialogues 1 and 7 it says in Spanish “*You will hear one line repeated from the first half of the dialogue*” because it was felt that this was necessary in order for the listener to understand the starting point of the second half of the dialogue.

Again, the “continue” button works only after the whole dialogue has played through.

SCREENS 11-15

Just as Screens 5-9.

NEXT THREE DIALOGUES

One screen before each new set simply says, “DIÁLOGO 2,” (*“DIALOGUE 2”* or whatever the number is).

Dialogues 2-4 proceed as Dialogue 1 did.

SCREEN 55

It says “Enviando resultados...” (*“Sending results...”*) as the data (the test taker’s answers) are sent to the database. When successful, it proceeds automatically to Screen 56.

In the case of failure, the participant is shown a screen where it explains that there was a server error, and the participant is asked to contact Kara McBride via her e-mail.

SCREEN 56

There, it says, “FIN. ¡Gracias por tu participación! La segunda parte del pretest es una actividad ‘laberinto.’ En esa sección, no necesitas escuchar diálogos; es sólo leer y jugar con 25 oraciones escritas en inglés. Cuando estés listo a hacer esa actividad, vé a [la](#)

[página de ingresar](#). Puedes hacerlo ahora o más tarde. Por favor, trata de hacerlo dentro de tres días. Cualquier consulta, escribe a kmcbride@u.arizona.edu.”

“END. Thank you for your participation! The second part of the pretest is a ‘maze’ activity. In this section, you do not need to listen to dialogues; it is just reading and playing with 25 written sentences in English. When you are ready to do that activity, go to [the login page](#). You can do it now, or later. Please try to do it within the next three days. If you have any questions, write to kmcbride@u.arizona.edu.”

At the end of the experiment, the message was adapted to put it in terms of a posttest.

APPENDIX D: SCRIPTS OF DIALOGUES IN LISTENING COMPREHENSION
TESTS, DIALOGUE PICTURES, AND WORD FREQUENCIES

Test dialogue 1 (slow), Part I
From Test A



C: Hi, Greg.

G: Hi, Cindy. How are you?

C: Good, thanks. So what's this I hear you're going to Spain for the summer?

G: Yes, we are going with my wife to visit her family in Spain.

C: Wow, that's great. But isn't it going to be hard to travel with two children?

G: Oh, yeah! There are a lot of things that I have to worry about that I wouldn't have to

worry about without kids. But it's worth it. A lot of people in the family haven't seen the new baby.

C: Oh, yeah, that'll be so fun!

G: So, how about you, Cindy? What are your summer plans?

C: Mmm... I'm not totally sure yet. I've got a job for the end of the summer, but I'm not sure what I'm going to do during the first month and a half.

G: Go on vacation!

C: Yeah, but that's expensive.

G: Not as expensive when you don't have two children to take with you.

C: True.

G: Besides, there are a lot of beautiful places to visit near here.

Test Dialogue 1, Part I, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	159	86.8852%
1001 - 2000 words	11	6.0109%
AWL words	1	0.5464%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	12	6.5574%

1 - 1000: a about and are as be beautiful besides but children do don end expensive family first for go going good got great half hard have haven hear her here how i in isn it ll m month my near new not of oh on people places plans re s seen so summer sure t take that the there things this to totally travel true two ve visit we what when wife with without worth wouldn yes yet you your

1001 - 2000: baby during fun hi lot thanks worry

AWL: job

UWL: (none)

Off-list: cindy greg kids mmm spain vacation wow yeah



Test Dialogue 1, Part II

G: There are a lot of beautiful places to visit near here.

C: Yeah, although actually, I was kind of thinking of going home to visit my family.

G: Where do you live again?

C: New York.

G: New York, well, that's kind of far.

C: Yeah, so I guess if I go there, I'll fly. But then I won't have a car to get around.

G: When was the last time you were in New York?

C: For Christmas break.

G: Oh, so not that long ago.

C: Half a year!

G: Yeah, not that long ago. Heck, my wife hasn't been home to Spain for three years.

C: Three years? I can't imagine! Doesn't she miss home?

G: Well, yes and no. This is her home now, and she's pretty happy here. And when you have children, where you live feels like home.

C: Well, I'm still the baby of the family, and I kind of miss home.

G: That settles it! You have to go back to New York at the beginning of the summer.

Test Dialogue 1, Part II, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	157	91.8129%
1001 - 2000 words	5	2.9240%
AWL words	0	0.0000%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	9	5.2632%

1 - 1000: a actually again ago although and are around at back beautiful been beginning break but can car children do doesn family far feels fly for get go going half happy hasn have her here home i if in is it kind last like live ll long m miss my near new no not now of oh places pretty s settles she so still summer t that the then there thinking this three time to visit was well were when where wife won year years yes you

1001 - 2000: baby christmas guess imagine lot

AWL: (none)

UWL: (none)

Off-list: heck spain yeah york

Test Dialogue 2 (slow), Part I
From Test A



K: Hi, Brittany. You look happy!

B: Oh, I am, I am! I just came back from this wonderful shoe store that was having an incredible sale.

K: Oh... I remember you said you loved going shoe shopping.

B: It's one of my favorite things to do.

K: What's the store?

B: It's called DSW. It's a new store. They just opened up in the new mall on the north side of town.

K: Oh, I see. I've never been to that mall. Isn't it pretty far?

B: It's pretty far from where you live, but it's not that far from where I live.

K: And did you go to the mall just to go to the shoe store?

B: No, which made my discovery even more wonderful. I didn't expect to see such a fantastic store.

K: Is it fantastic because of the selection or because of the prices?

B: Both!

K: And I assume you bought some shoes...

B: Oh, yes! The shoes I'm wearing right now—I got these for working.

K: They're quite elegant.

Test Dialogue 2, Part I, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	156	89.6552%
1001 - 2000 words	7	4.0230%
AWL words	2	1.1494%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	9	5.1724%

1 - 1000: a am an and back because been both bought but called came did didn discovery do even expect far favorite for from go going got happy having i in is isn it just live look loved m made more my never new no north not now of oh on one opened or pretty prices quite re remember right s said sale see side some store such t that the these they things this to town up ve was wearing what where which wonderful working yes you

1001 - 2000: hi shoe shoes shopping

AWL: assume selection

UWL: (none)

Off-list: brittany dsw elegant fantastic incredible mall

Test Dialogue 2, Part II



B: And I got another pair of shoes for walking.

K: Walking shoes—that's a good thing to have.

B: And I got another pair of shoes that I can wear to my best friend's wedding next month, which is just so great. I wasn't sure where I was going to find shoes to wear with the dress that I bought for the wedding. And now my problem is solved.

K: Maybe you should buy your best friend a pair of shoes for her wedding.

B: Hmm... that's not a bad idea, but I already got her another present.

K: Yeah, you should probably get her something her husband can enjoy too.

B: Exactly.

K: So... is that it?

B: What?

K: Is that all the shoes you bought?

B: Oh, no. I got another pair of shoes for the next time I'm out in the country.

K: Brittany, are you serious? You got a pair of shoes for being in the country?

B: Oh, yeah! You can't wear city shoes when you're in the country.

Test Dialogue 2, Part II, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	146	85.8824%
1001 - 2000 words	17	10.0000%
AWL words	0	0.0000%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	7	4.1176%

1 - 1000: a all already and another are bad being best bought but buy can city country dress enjoy find for friend get going good got great have her husband i idea in is it just m maybe month my next no not now of oh out present problem re s serious should so something sure t that the thing time to too walking was wasn wear what when where which with you your

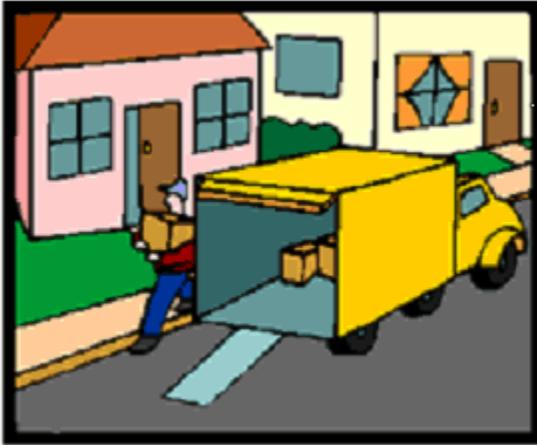
1001 - 2000: exactly pair probably shoes solved

AWL: (none)

UWL: (none)

Off-list: brittany hmm wedding yeah

Test Dialogue 3 (fast), Part I
From Test A



T: Hi, Karen, how are you?

K: Pretty good, and yourself? What's new?

T: Well, I was just at home and I saw that there was someone new moving in.

K: Oh, into that apartment next to yours?

T: Yeah.

K: That was empty a long time.

T: Yeah, it was, and I liked it that way.

K: Well, yeah, the neighbor you had before was a real jerk. Was he kicked out, or did he just move?

T: I think he just moved. I was so happy when he did. I was about to move out myself. I couldn't stand all his noise!

K: So what about your new neighbor? Is it a man or a woman?

T: A woman.

K: Did you talk to her?

T: No, she looked so busy. And there were a couple people helping her move.

K: Did she have a lot of stuff?

T: Yeah, she really did. Just boxes and boxes of stuff. Who knows what all that stuff was! I didn't even see them moving in any furniture when I went by. Just boxes, and more boxes.

Test Dialogue 3, Part I, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	157	90.2299%
1001 - 2000 words	9	5.1724%
AWL words	1	0.5747%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	7	4.0230%

1 - 1000: a about all and any are at before boxes by couldn did didn even furniture good had happy have he helping her his home how i in into is it just knows liked long looked man more move moved moving myself neighbor new next no of oh or out people pretty real really s saw see she so someone stand t talk that the them there think time to was way well went were what when who woman you your yours yourself

1001 - 2000: busy empty hi kicked lot noise stuff

AWL: couple

UWL: (none)

Off-list: apartment jerk karen yeah

Test Dialogue 3, Part II



K: Any pets?

T: Not that I saw. And believe me, I was looking to see if there was any indication. That dog that my last neighbor had nearly drove me insane with its constant barking.

K: So, probably no pets.

T: Well, it's hard to tell.

K: If she does have a pet, do you think she's probably a cat person, or a dog person?

T: I think a cat person, but I just don't know.

K: People can surprise you.

T: Tell me about it!

K: Well, look on the positive side. Maybe she'll be nice.

T: I'm not going to bet on it.

K: Why?

T: I don't know, I've just had such bad luck with neighbors in the past.

K: Well, if I moved in next door to you, do you think we'd be friends, or do you think you would just distrust me because I was your neighbor?

T: Well, Karen, it's hard to say. Now that I think about it, I'm not sure what kind of neighbor you would be!

K: Hmm, well then!

T: No, I'm just kidding. I'm sure I would eventually stop being suspicious.

K: I think you should go over to her apartment and welcome her to the neighborhood.

T: You think so?

K: Yeah, that way you can talk to her directly and find out what kind of person she is.

T: Hmm, that's probably a good idea.

Test Dialogue 3, Part II, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	207	89.2241%
1001 - 2000 words	11	4.7414%
AWL words	4	1.7241%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	10	4.3103%

1 - 1000: a about and any bad be because being believe but can d directly do does dog don door drove find friends go going good had hard have her i idea if in is it its just kind know last ll look looking m maybe me moved my nearly neighbor neighborhood neighbors next no not now of on or out over past people person s saw say see she should side so stop such sure surprise t talk tell that the then there think to ve was way we welcome well what why with would you your

1001 - 2000: cat luck nice pet pets probably suspicious

AWL: constant eventually indication positive

UWL: (none)

Off-list: apartment barking bet distrust hmm insane karen kidding yeah

Test Dialogue 4A (fast), Part I
From Test A



L: Hey, Mary, how are you?

M: Great, Lance, and you?

L: Oh, pretty good. Got any plans for the weekend?

M: Well, Shawn and I were planning on seeing a movie tonight, but I'm not sure what we'll go see.

L: Oh, well if you haven't seen "American Ride," you've got to go see that movie.

M: Oh, really? "American Ride"? Can't say I've heard about it before. What's it about?

L: It's about this young guy who buys a motorcycle and drives all over the United States. He meets all these crazy characters and has all these great adventures. And you get to see a lot of places in the country and how each one is so totally different from the others. And meanwhile the main character is trying to figure out the meaning of life, and what it's all about, and why the United States is the way it is. Oh, and see, the guy's name is Hans, and he's from Germany, so it's funny to see this German guy in Texas and Alabama. And later on, he goes to Alaska.

M: Oh yeah? He drives to Alaska on his motorcycle?

L: Yeah, and he has mechanical problems on the way, and it's really cold.

M: Is the movie German or American?

L: It's American, and I don't think the actor was really German either, but it's hilarious, and you and Shawn should definitely go see it.

Test Dialogue 4, Part I, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	209	85.3061%
1001 - 2000 words	6	2.4490%
AWL words	1	0.4082%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	29	11.8367%

WITH THE NAMES OF PEOPLE AND PLACES AND NATIONALITIES
REMOVED:

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	209	91.6667%
1001 - 2000 words	6	2.6316%
AWL words	1	0.4386%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	12	5.2632%

1 - 1000: a about actor adventures all and any are before but buys can character characters cold country different don drives each either figure for from get go goes good got great has haven he heard his how i if in is it later life ll m main meaning meets name not of oh on one or others out over places planning plans pretty problems really ride s say see seeing seen should so states sure t that the these think this to totally trying united ve was way we weekend well were what who why you young

1001 - 2000: funny hey lot meanwhile mechanical tonight

AWL: definitely

UWL: (none)

Off-list: alabama alaska american crazy german germany guy hans hilarious lance mary motorcycle movie shawn texas yeah

Test Dialogue 4, Part II



M: Where's it playing?

L: Uh, it's at the mall.

M: Oh, wait, that movie theater is really expensive.

L: Yeah, but all movie theaters are expensive.

M: No, no. You know they have that dollar theater on the east side. What's the name of it? Uh, Goodwill Theaters, I

think. It's over on Dodge Street.

L: Yeah, but that's really far, and who knows what movies they'll be playing.

M: Oh, I don't know. I've seen some pretty good movies there.

L: Yeah, but you've got to see "American Ride."

M: Well, maybe eventually it'll show at the dollar theater, and I can see it then.

L: You don't know what you're missing out on. I really think this movie is one of the best movies I've seen in a long time.

M: Gee, you're pretty serious about this movie!

L: Yeah, and I don't go to movies just to go to movies. I go to see good movies.

M: Oh, after this hard week I've had, I don't care that much about how great the movie is. I just want to relax and be entertained.

Test Dialogue 4, Part II, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	161	84.2932%
1001 - 2000 words	1	0.5236%
AWL words	2	1.0471%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	27	14.1361%

1 - 1000: a about after all and are at be best but can care dollar don east expensive far go good got great had hard have how i in is it just know knows ll long maybe missing much name no of oh on one out over playing pretty re really ride s see seen serious show side some street t that the then there they think this time to ve wait want week well what where who you

1001 - 2000: entertained

AWL: eventually relax

UWL:

Off-list: american dodge gee goodwill mall movie movies theater theaters uh yeah

Test Dialogue 5 (slow), Part I
From Test B



L: Hi, Sam! I have to tell you about this wonderful restaurant I went to last night.

S: Oh yeah? What's the name of it?

L: It's called Sushi Ten.

S: Sushi Ten. So is it a Japanese place?

L: Yes.

S: Oh, well, I don't really like Japanese food.

L: Then you haven't been to this place! It's out of this world!

S: Is it a new restaurant?

L: No, I think it's been around for a while. And it's extremely popular. We had to wait half an hour just to get a seat, and we went on a Wednesday!

S: That is popular.

L: And you wouldn't believe how many people we knew who were there. I saw Mr. Adamson and his wife there.

S: From work?

L: Yeah, and I saw some other people I know.

S: Gosh, a lot of people go out on a Wednesday night, huh?

L: Well, you just have to try this place. Their menu is about six pages long! There are so many choices.

S: How did you decide what to order?

L: Actually, I just asked for whatever the people around me were eating.

S: I think that's what I would have to do too.

Test Dialogue 5, Part I, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	180	91.8367%
1001 - 2000 words	5	2.5510%
AWL words	0	0.0000%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	11	5.6122%

1 - 1000: a about actually an and are around asked been believe called choices decide did do don eating food for from get go had half have haven his hour how i is it just knew know last like long many me mr name new night no of oh on order other out pages people place popular really s saw seat six so some t tell ten that the their then there think this to too try wait we wednesday well went were what whatever while who wife wonderful work world would wouldn yes you

1001 - 2000: extremely hi lot restaurant

AWL: (none)

UWL: (none)

Off-list: adamson gosh huh japanese menu sam sushi yeah

Test Dialogue 5, Part II



L: And I ate all these incredible dishes I had never had before.

S: Yeah, but it's sushi. That's raw fish, yech!

L: You really have to try it.

S: Maybe some day.

L: I was thinking of suggesting that we all go there when we have our end of the year

party.

S: You want to take everyone in the office to have sushi? Somehow I don't think they would all go for that.

L: Oh no? What would you suggest?

S: You know, like a place that serves American food.

L: I don't know, Sam. I think you would be surprised. In some ways sushi has become an American food.

S: That's ridiculous.

L: Society is really changing, and so are the public's preferences. If you saw how popular this place was...

S: Lisa, I think you're confusing fashion with a deeper societal change. I don't think that sushi has become the new American food. I think it's just something that is popular right now.

Test Dialogue 5, Part II, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	145	88.4146%
1001 - 2000 words	5	3.0488%
AWL words	0	0.0000%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	14	8.5366%

1 - 1000: a all an and are ate be become before but change changing day deeper don end everyone fish food for go had has have how i if in is it just know like maybe never new no now of office oh our party place popular public re really right s saw serves so society some somehow something suggest suggesting surprised t take that the there these they think thinking this to try want was ways we what when with would year you

1001 - 2000: confusing dishes fashion preferences raw

AWL: (none)

UWL: (none)

Off-list: american incredible lisa ridiculous sam societal sushi yeah yech

Test Dialogue 6 (slow), Part I
From Test B



B: Hi, Karen. How are you?

K: Fine. And you, Brian? You look a little irritated.

B: I am, actually. I just had a talk with this new secretary of ours. Have you met her?

K: The new secretary? No... actually, can't say that I have.

B: Yeah... I don't think she's very good.

K: Why, what does she do?

B: She talks on the telephone all the time. And they're personal calls... to her son, I think.

K: Well, you know, Brian, mothers have to talk to their children during the day.

B: But it's not appropriate for her to be talking to her son on the phone when I have something that I need her to do.

K: Mmm, yeah.

B: And then, I asked her to make some copies for me, and she had trouble figuring out the photocopier machine.

K: Well, she's new to the job, Brian. You have to give her some time.

B: But if she doesn't even know how to work a photocopier machine, what's she doing getting hired as a secretary?

K: Isn't she, actually, just a temporary secretary while Diane is away on sick leave?

B: Is she?

K: I think so.

Test Dialogue 6, Part I, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	172	88.6598%
1001 - 2000 words	7	3.6082%
AWL words	3	1.5464%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	12	6.1856%

1 - 1000: a actually all am and are as asked away be but calls can children day do does doesn't doing don even fine for getting give good had have her how i if is isn it just know leave little look machine make me met mothers need new no not of on ours out personal re s say secretary she so some something son t talk talking talks that the their then they think this time to trouble very well what when while why with work you

1001 - 2000: copies during hi hired phone sick telephone

AWL: appropriate job temporary

UWL: (none)

Off-list: brian diane figuring irritated karen mmm photocopy yeah

Test Dialogue 6, Part II



K: I think Diane got sick and had to take a couple months off from work, but she's planning on coming back.

B: Oh, that's terrible. Do you know what Diane has?

K: No, I don't. It's sort of like a rumor around the office. I'm not completely sure if it's true or not.

B: Oh, I hope she's okay.

K: Yeah.

B: Do you have Diane's home phone? Maybe we could call her and find out if she's okay.

K: I don't think I do, but maybe Mary does.

B: We should ask. I would be really glad if Diane comes back instead of having this incompetent new person around forever.

K: Oh, okay, back to that.

B: Yes, back to that. There's something else, too.

K: What's that?

B: She didn't make any coffee in the morning.

K: Well, maybe making coffee isn't one of her official responsibilities.

B: Oh, come on. Someone in the office has to make the coffee, and the secretary is the most obvious person to do it.

Test Dialogue 6, Part II, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	153	87.9310%
1001 - 2000 words	7	4.0230%
AWL words	2	1.1494%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	12	6.8966%

1 - 1000: a and any around ask back be but call come comes coming completely could didn do does don else find from glad got had has have having her home hope i if in instead is isn it know like m make making maybe months morning most new no not of off office official oh on one or out person planning really s secretary she should someone something sort sure t take that the there think this to too true we well what work would yes you

1001 - 2000: coffee phone responsibilities sick terrible

AWL: couple obvious

UWL: (none)

Off-list: diane forever incompetent mary okay rumor yeah

Test Dialogue 7 (fast), Part I
From Test B



A: So, Karen, have you heard about the new grocery store on Speedway and Swan?

K: Speedway and Swan? No, I haven't. What's it called?

A: It's called Sunflower, and it's great. You should go.

K: Why? What's so great about a new grocery store?

A: It's got really great prices and an amazing selection with a lot of specialty foods.

K: Oh yeah?

A: Yeah, like the other day I decided to make my wife an authentic French dinner, and I was able to get all the ingredients at Sunflower, including this one kind of cheese that's normally quite difficult to find.

K: I need a husband who cooks me French cuisine.

A: Well, not everyone can be as special as I am.

K: That's what your wife tells me. But, so anyway, this place is cheap, too, huh?

A: Yeah, really cheap. Like they had salmon on sale for only five dollars a pound.

K: What? That's outrageous. I don't think I've ever heard of salmon selling for so little. Have you eaten any of it? Do you suppose it's okay? It's probably not that fresh.

A: I don't know. I bought some the last time I was there and it seemed fine to me.

K: Hmm.

A: Their vegetables are also just incredibly cheap.

K: Do they have a wide selection?

A: Yes, they do. But I think that on the vegetables maybe they're not quite as fresh as some places. You have to eat whatever you buy there within a couple days, or it'll go bad.

Test Dialogue 7, Part I, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	219	84.5560%
1001 - 2000 words	8	3.0888%
AWL words	4	1.5444%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	28	10.8108%

1 - 1000: a able about all also am an and any anyway are as at bad be bought but buy called can day days decided difficult do dollars don eat eaten ever everyone find fine five foods for fresh get go got great had have haven heard husband i including is it just kind know last like little ll make maybe me my need new no not of oh on one only or other place places pound prices quite re really s sale seemed selling should so some special store suppose t tells that the their there they think this time to too ve was well what whatever who why wide wife with within yes you your

1001 - 2000: cheap cheese cooks dinner lot probably

AWL: couple normally selection

UWL: (none)

Off-list: amazing authentic cuisine french grocery hmm huh incredibly ingredients karen okay outrageous salmon specialty speedway sunflower swan vegetables yeah

Test Dialogue 7, Part II



A: But I think that on the vegetables maybe they're not quite as fresh as some places. You have to eat whatever you buy there within a couple days, or it'll go bad.

K: Oh well, come on, that's no good.

A: But they're perfectly fine for the first few days.

K: But then you have to go there every few days. Speedway and Swan is pretty far

for me to go, just to buy some vegetables that are only going to be good for two days.

A: It's not that far from you. You live just two blocks from Speedway. And Swan is just a mile or two further down.

K: That's if you go by car, but I almost always go by bike.

A: Don't you have a car?

K: Yeah, but I really prefer not to drive it. Gas is so expensive these days, and I think my car just isn't that reliable.

A: So you normally walk to the grocery store?

K: No, I ride my bike.

A: How do you carry all your groceries on your bike?

K: I put them in my backpack.

A: Well, still, you can't take that many things with you. You must have to go to the grocery store many times a week.

K: Yes, that's true, but, it's okay with me.

Test Dialogue 7, Part II, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	198	90.4110%
1001 - 2000 words	3	1.3699%
AWL words	3	1.3699%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	15	6.8493%

1 - 1000: a all almost always and are as bad be but buy by can car carry come days do don down drive eat every expensive far few fine first for fresh from further gas go going good have how i if in is isn it just live ll many maybe me mile must my no not oh on only or places pretty put quite re really ride s so some still store t take that the them then there these they things think times to true two walk week well whatever with within yes you your

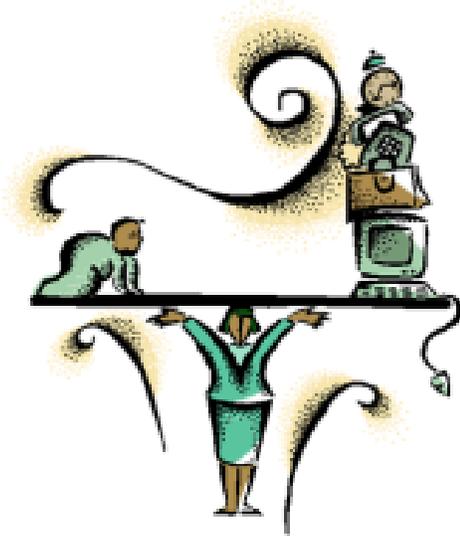
1001 - 2000: blocks perfectly prefer

AWL: couple normally reliable

UWL: (none)

Off-list: backpack bike groceries grocery okay speedway swan vegetables yeah

Test Dialogue 8 (fast), Part I
From Test B



N: Hi Alan how's it going?

A: Oh okay how about you? You look pretty tired.

N: Yeah well trying to balance work, school, and family is pretty tough.

A: Tell me about it. It's really hard to find time for everything especially for us parents.

N: How's your wife doing?

A: She's great. You know we're going to have a second baby.

N: Wow. That's great Congratulations. No I didn't know. When's she due?

A: In October.

N: Oh that's wonderful. You have to tell Sharon that I said congratulations. So has she been staying home?

A: No, she's been working part time. This fall she's going to take a leave from work.

N: Uh huh.

A: And her mom is going to come down for a few weeks.

N: That's really important. I don't know what I would do if my mom didn't live close by.

A: She lives in town, does she?

N: No, but she lives in Nogales, only about an hour away.

A: So she comes up pretty frequently?

N: Yeah, she does. She's great. She's really good with the baby.

A: And I'm sure she's thrilled to be able to spend time with her granddaughter.

N: Of course!

Test Dialogue 8, Part I, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	181	89.1626%
1001 - 2000 words	12	5.9113%
AWL words	0	0.0000%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	10	4.9261%

1 - 1000: a able about an and away be been but by close come comes course didn do does doing don down due everything fall family few find for from going good great hard has have her home hour how i if important in is it know leave live lives look m me mom my no october of oh only part pretty re really s said school second she so spend staying sure t take tell that the this time to town trying up us we weeks well what when wife with wonderful work working would you your

1001 - 2000: baby balance congratulations especially frequently granddaughter hi parents tired tough

AWL: (none)

UWL: (none)

Off-list: allan huh nogales okay sharon thrilled uh wow yeah

Test Dialogue 8, Part II



A: So are you ready for the big test on Wednesday?

N: Not really. Are you?

A: No I'm not. I've got a lab report to write before then, so I'm concentrating on that first.

N: What class is the lab report for?

A: Chemistry.

N: How's your chemistry class? Do you like it?

A: It's okay. The teacher's really good, really clear. I like sitting in the class and listening to lectures. But the lab part of the class is a lot harder for me. Are you taking chemistry?

N: No. I'm an English major, and people in English don't have to take classes in chemistry.

A: Oh well it's not so bad except for these stupid labs and the lab reports. That's the hard part for me and it can take so much time to do.

N: Well, good luck with that.

A: Thanks.

N: So, listen, a few of us from class were thinking about getting together and forming a study group for Wednesday's test. Do you want to join us?

A: Yes, definitely. I'd really like to study with someone else for this exam. Do you know when you'll get together?

N: No, we haven't decided for sure. Why don't I call you in a couple of days and I'll let you know.

A: Yeah, that would be great. Would you do that? I would really appreciate it.

N: No problem. And I have your number.

Test Dialogue 8, Part II, vocabulary profile

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	218	90.8333%
1001 - 2000 words	4	1.6667%
AWL words	6	2.5000%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	12	5.0000%

1 - 1000: a about an and are bad be before big but call can class classes clear d days decided do don else english except few first for forming from get getting good got great group hard harder have haven how i in is it join know let like listen listening ll m me much no not number of oh on part people problem ready really report reports s sitting so someone study sure t take taking teacher test that the then these thinking this time to together us ve want we wednesday well were what when why with would write yes you your

1001 - 2000: lot luck stupid thanks

AWL: appreciate concentrating couple definitely lectures major

UWL: (none)

Off-list: chemistry exam lab labs okay yeah

APPENDIX E: LCT COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS IN SPANISH

Correct answers are marked with an asterisk.

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 1, PART I

1 Greg y Cindy están hablando de sus planes para...
el fin de semana

*el verano

las vacaciones de primavera

No lo dicen

2 Muchas personas en la familia de Greg no han conocido a...

su esposa

*su bebé

la parte española de la familia

su hija adoptada

3 ¿Por qué duda Cindy en viajar?

No quiere dejar su casa sola

Tiene miedo de viajar

Está esperando que su novio la visite

*Es costoso

4 ¿Qué va a hacer Cindy a finales del verano?

Va a ir a España

*Va a trabajar

Va a visitar a sus padres

Va a tener un hijo

5 Greg le sugirió a Cindy también que ella...

vaya a España

*viaje en la región donde viven

les diga a sus padres que vayan a visitarla

vaya a Nueva York, pero en otra estación del año

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 1, PART II

6 ¿Cómo reacciona Greg cuando Cindy le dice que es de Nueva York?

Le pregunta si es de la ciudad o simplemente del estado

Le pregunta si no es muy peligroso allá

Dice que siempre ha querido viajar a Nueva York

*Dice que Nueva York queda muy lejos de allá

7 ¿Cuál es una de las desventajas que Cindy nombra de ir a Nueva York por avión?

El aeropuerto queda muy lejos

La alta seguridad en los aeropuertos

*No tener un auto allá

Cindy tiene miedo de volar

8 ¿Hace cuánto que Cindy no está en Nueva York?

Hace años, y le parece mucho

*Hace medio año, y le parece mucho

Hace años, y no tiene muchas ganas de regresar

No recuerda

9 ¿Cómo explica Greg que, a pesar de llevar mucho tiempo fuera de España, su esposa se siente bien?

Su esposa siempre quiso vivir en los EE.UU.

Los padres de la esposa de Greg van a visitarla con frecuencia

*Cuando está con sus hijos, uno se siente en casa

Siente que tiene más oportunidades en los EE.UU.

10. Cindy dice que, a diferencia a la esposa de Greg, echa mucho de menos la casa de su familia. ¿Cómo lo explica?

Su hermana acaba de tener un hijo

Su familia es muy unida

No le gusta donde vive ahora

*Ella es la menor de su familia

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 2, PART I

11 ¿Sabía Karen del amor por los zapatos que tiene Brittany?

Sí. Karen es la persona que introdujo a Brittany a este pasatiempo

*Sí, Brittany se lo había mencionado antes

Sí, fueron de compras juntas

No. Karen pensaba que a Brittany no le importaban tales cosas

12 ¿Dónde está la zapatería?

En otra ciudad

*En el centro comercial

Cerca del correo

En el centro

13 ¿Cómo supo Brittany de la zapatería?

Vio un anuncio

Su amiga se lo contó

*Encontró la zapatería por accidente
 Recibió un aviso por correo electrónico

14 ¿Por qué le gusta a Brittany esa zapatería?
 *Porque tienen buena selección y buenos precios
 Porque todo es increíblemente barato
 Porque tiene zapatos de las modas más nuevas
 Porque todas las zapaterías son buenas, según ella

15 ¿Qué zapatos nuevos está llevando Brittany?
 Los que son para la boda
 Los que compró para su amiga
 *Los que son para trabajar
 Los que son para andar en velero

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 2, PART II

16 ¿Cuál es el problema que dice Brittany que su visita a la zapatería le solucionó?
 Antes, no conocía una buena zapatería en esa ciudad
 Antes, no sabía qué regalarle a su amiga
 *Antes, no sabía qué zapatos llevar a la boda
 Antes, no tenía buenos zapatos para caminar

17 ¿Cuánto costaron los zapatos para la boda?
 Menos que los zapatos para el trabajo
 Más que los zapatos para el campo
 Más que todos los otros zapatos juntos
 *No lo dice

18 Según Karen, ¿por qué es mejor no regalarle zapatos a la amiga de Brittany?
 *Porque debe ser un regalo que le guste al novio también
 Porque su amiga tiene demasiados zapatos
 Porque no sabe qué talla calza
 Porque quizás no le importen los zapatos tanto a ella como a Brittany

19 ¿Por qué se sorprende Karen al final de la conversación?
 Porque Brittany va a regresar a la tienda mañana
 Porque Brittany quiere devolver los zapatos
 *Porque Brittany compró zapatos hasta para el campo
 Porque Brittany compró zapatos para su amiga

20 ¿Cuál es la actitud de Karen frente a lo que Brittany le cuenta?
 Envidia
 *Sorpresa a que Brittany tenga tanto entusiasmo

Preocupación por su amiga

Asco

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 3, PART I

21 ¿Qué relación tiene Karen con Kelly?

Son vecinas

Son ex vecinas

*Son amigas

Son hermanas

22 ¿Cuándo se fue el viejo vecino?

*Hace tiempo

Se iba mientras la nueva persona llegaba

Cuando el dueño de la casa lo botó

No se fue; la nueva persona va a vivir con él

23 ¿Por qué no habló Kelly con su nueva vecina?

Porque Kelly temía que le pidiera que le ayudara

Porque el viejo vecino estaba hablando con esa mujer

Por su perro

*Porque la mujer estaba muy ocupada

24 ¿Conocía Kelly ya a la nueva vecina?

*No. La vio por primera vez cuando llegó con sus cosas

Kelly no está segura; tiene la impresión de haberla conocido antes

Sí, esta mujer era amiga del viejo vecino

Sí, esta mujer salía con su ex novio

25 ¿Qué es lo que la nueva vecina más tenía?

Perros y más perros

Zapatos y más zapatos

Muebles y más muebles

*Cajas y más cajas

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 3, PART II

26 ¿Por qué Kelly se preocupa por las mascotas?

Porque tiene miedo de los perros

Porque el perro del nuevo vecino le dio un susto al gato de Kelly

Porque el perro del nuevo vecino se veía peligroso

*Porque el perro del viejo vecino ladraba mucho

27 ¿Por qué tiene Kelly tantas sospechas de la nueva vecina?

Porque la nueva vecina no le habló
 Porque cree que la nueva persona tiene conexión con el viejo vecino
 Porque la nueva vecina tiene un perro
 *Porque ha tenido mala suerte en el pasado con los vecinos

28 ¿Qué dice Kelly del tipo de vecina que Karen sería?
 Que Karen es la única persona que le podría ser buen vecino
 Que es mejor que Karen no sea su vecina
 *Que tendría sospechas al principio
 Habla de un tiempo cuando sí fueron vecinas

29 ¿Cuál de estas razones es una por las cuales Kelly menciona por qué el viejo vecino no le gustaba?
 Sus amigos eran personajes sospechosos
 Cocinaba comida que apeataba
 *Era ruidoso
 Le hablaba constantemente a Kelly

30 ¿Por qué Karen le sugiere a Kelly que hable con la nueva vecina?
 Para pedirle que sea respetuosa
 *Para saber qué tipo de persona es
 Para ofrecerle ayuda
 Para saber si tiene mascotas

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 4, PART I

31 ¿Cómo se llama la película?
 “Hace Frío en Alaska”
 “Mi Motocicleta y Yo”
 “Orgullo americano”
 *“Viaje americano”

32 ¿Qué dice Mary inicialmente de la película que Lance le recomienda?
 *Que no había escuchado nada de la película
 Que su amigo Shawn había dicho que era mala
 Que la película ha ganado varios premios
 No muestra interés en la película

33 La película es la historia de...
 un estadounidense en Alemania
 *un alemán en los EE.UU.
 una familia alemana que repara motocicletas
 un estadounidense que regresa a EE.UU. después de mucho tiempo en Alemania

34 ¿Cómo describe Lance la película?

Conmovedora

Intelectual

Estética

*Cómica

35 Lance no cree que el actor principal de la película sea...

*alemán

muy serio

inglés

muy bueno

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 4, PART II

36 ¿Qué dice Lance de las películas que tienen en el Cine Goodwill?

*Que no son muy buenas

Que son muy caras

Que siempre tienen subtítulos

Dice que no ha escuchado de ese teatro

37 Lance insiste que él va al cine para...

apoyar el arte

*ver obras de calidad

reírse

aprender más de la cultura

38 ¿Con quién fue Lance cuando vio la película?

Con Shawn

Con su primo

Con un alemán

No lo dice

39 Al final, Mary...

invita a Lance que vaya con ella y su amigo

dice que la película parece ser demasiado seria

*dice que no le importa tanto la calidad de la película

dice que quizás esa noche no vaya al cine

40 ¿Por qué dice Mary que le da lo mismo ver cualquier película?

Porque son todas iguales

Porque su amigo es el que va a decidir

*Porque solamente quiere relajarse

Porque Hollywood es corrupto

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 5, PART I

1 ¿Por qué a Sam no le interesa ir al restaurante que Lisa le recomienda?

Porque no le gusta ir a lugares simplemente porque son populares

*Porque no le gusta la comida japonesa

Porque le parece muy caro

Porque es vegetariano

2 ¿Cómo se enteró Lisa de la existencia de ese restaurante?

Ganó una cena gratis de la radio

Fue con un colega japonés

Su novio es cocinero allá

*No lo dice

3 ¿Qué dice Lisa para mostrar que el restaurante es muy popular?

Comenta que ciertos actores famosos van allá con frecuencia

Comenta que el restaurante ganó una mención del diario local

*Comenta que tuvo que esperar media hora para tener mesa allá

Comenta que su cocinero antes trabajaba en un restaurante famoso en Nueva York

4 ¿A quién vio Lisa en el restaurante?

A una actriz muy popular

*A alguien que trabaja con Sam y Lisa

A la esposa de Sam

A un grupo de amigos de Sam

5 ¿Cómo decidió Lisa lo que iba a comer cuando estaba en el restaurante?

Le preguntó al mesero

Por las fotos del menú

*Miró lo que comían los demás

Escogió el plato con el nombre que más sonaba como "Lisa"

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 5, PART II

6 ¿Qué evento sugiere Lisa?

Que Sam vaya con ella al restaurante

*Que hagan la fiesta del fin de año en ese restaurante

Que pidan "entrega a domicilio" de sushi en la oficina

Que los dos escriban un artículo sobre los cambios en los gustos americanos

7 ¿Qué tipo de restaurante le parece apropiado a Sam para la fiesta con sus colegas?

*Un restaurante con comida americana

Un restaurante menos caro

Un restaurante donde no haya problema en conseguir una mesa
El restaurante adonde siempre van todos los años

8 ¿Qué es ridículo de lo que dice Lisa, según Sam?

Que el sushi sea delicioso

*Que el sushi sea una comida americana

Que el sushi no presente ninguna amenaza a la salud de uno

Que comer sushi le haga más inteligente a uno

9 ¿Qué piensa Sam de las fiestas que tienen en la oficina?

Las odia

Dice que contribuyen mucho a reforzar las relaciones en la oficina

Dice que sería mejor hacerlas fuera de la oficina

*No hace ningún comentario directo sobre el asunto

10 ¿De qué confusión sufre Lisa, según Sam?

Confunde el buen sabor con la moda

Confunde lo sano con lo delicioso

Confunde precios altos con alta calidad

*Confunde lo que está de moda en este momento con cambios profundos en la sociedad

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 6, PART I

11 ¿Qué tipo de relación tienen Karen y Brian?

*Trabajan juntos

Karen es la mamá de Brian

Son novios

Karen es la secretaria de Brian

12 ¿Qué piensa Karen de la nueva secretaria?

Cree que quizás nunca aprenda el manejo de la oficina

Cree que la nueva secretaria es bastante competente

*Todavía no la ha conocido

A Karen le gusta aún menos que a Brian

13 ¿Con quién habla la nueva secretaria por teléfono?

Sólo con personas importantes

Con su novio

Con su madre

*Con su hijo

14 ¿Qué pasó con la nueva secretaria y la fotocopidora?

Dijo que no era su trabajo hacer fotocopias

*No sabía cómo usar la máquina

Les cobró a los demás por hacerles fotocopias
Usó la máquina para hacer copias para su uso personal

15 ¿Por qué cree Karen que esa mujer no es realmente la nueva secretaria?
*Cree que la contrataron sólo como un reemplazo temporario
Cree que Brian estaba hablando con la persona equivocada
Cree que Brian entendió mal cuál era el puesto de esa mujer
Dice que es imposible que contrataran a una persona tan incompetente

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 6, PART II

16 ¿Por qué Diane no ha trabajado últimamente?
Dejó el puesto
La despidieron
*Está enferma
Nunca trabajó allí

17 ¿Por qué quiere Brian llamar a Diane?
Porque ella lo llamó a él
Para recordarle de su cita
Para quejarse
*Para saber si Diane piensa regresar a la oficina

18 ¿Por qué Brian no llamó a Diane de inmediato?
Porque la secretaria estaba usando el teléfono
*Porque no sabe su número
Porque Diane está en el hospital
Porque Diane probablemente se negaría a hablar con él

19 ¿Quién hacía el café en la oficina antes?
*Diane
Karen
Brian
Mary

20 ¿Cómo se puede describir el rol de Karen en esta conversación?
Le da a Brian aún más razones por qué desconfiar de la secretaria
*Le sugiere a Brian que quizás su reacción sea exagerada
Cree que todo lo que dice Brian es sólo un rumor
Le recuerda a Brian que la nueva secretaria está muy enferma

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 7, PART I

21 ¿Para quién cocinó Alex una cena francesa?

Para su hermana

*Para su esposa

Para una colega

Para Karen

22 ¿Qué ingrediente francés tenían en el supermercado que normalmente es difícil de encontrar?

Un tipo de pan

*Un tipo de queso

Un tipo de aceituna

Un corte especial de carne

23 ¿De qué producto da Alex el precio?

El queso

*Pescado

El pan

Carne

24 ¿Qué tipo de selección de verduras tienen allá?

Mucha selección y todo muy fresco

Todo muy fresco pero no mucha selección

*Mucha selección pero no todo está tan fresco

Todo baratísimo pero muy poca selección

25 ¿Por qué compra Alex las verduras allá a pesar del hecho de que no están tan frescas?

Porque al final las cocina

*Porque igual duran un par de días

Porque sólo compra cebollas y papas

Normalmente compra sus verduras en otro lugar

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 7, PART II

26 ¿Por qué no le interesa mucho a Karen ir al nuevo supermercado?

Porque es un poco caro

Porque no le gusta esa compañía

*Porque las verduras de allá no están tan frescas

Porque no cocina cosas que requieran ingredientes especiales

27 Alex dice que el supermercado no queda lejos de la casa de Karen, pero Karen no está de acuerdo. ¿Por qué?

Porque está cerca de la casa de Alex, no de Karen

*Porque Karen no va al supermercado en auto
 Porque, como dijo Alex, no hay distancia demasiado grande para comprar buena comida
 Porque Karen no entendió bien dónde está el supermercado

28 ¿Cuál es una razón que Karen da para no manejar su auto mucho?
 Porque no tiene auto
 Para bajar de peso
 *Por los precios de gasolina
 Tuvo un accidente y ahora tiene miedo de manejar

29 ¿Dónde lleva Karen sus compras cuando regresa a casa?
 En cestas en su bicicleta
 En la mano
 *En su mochila
 No lo dice

30 ¿Quién va al supermercado varias veces por semana, y por qué?
 Alex, porque necesita que todo esté fresco
 Alex, porque decide el menú del día según el humor de su esposa
 Karen, porque le gusta ver el precio especial del día
 *Karen, porque sólo puede comprar lo que cabe en su mochila

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 8, PART I

31 ¿Qué causa menciona Nolvía para verse tan cansada?
 *El conflicto entre sus estudios, su trabajo y la familia
 Ha estado enferma
 Se preocupa por el examen del miércoles
 Ha tenido dificultades buscando trabajo

32 Éste será...
 el primer hijo de Alan
 *el segundo hijo de Alan
 el octavo hijo de Alan
 el primer hijo para Alan, aunque vive con los tres hijos de su esposa

33 ¿Dónde vive la mamá de Nolvía?
 Con Nolvía y su familia
 En la misma ciudad donde Nolvía y su familia viven
 *En una ciudad cercana
 No lo dicen

34 ¿Cuándo nacerá el segundo hijo de Alan?
 El bebé acaba de nacer

En un par semanas

*En octubre

No lo dice

35 ¿Qué dice Nolvía de las visitas de los padres/abuelos?

Que es mejor cuando su madre no viaje con su padre

Que Alan y su esposa deben pedir que sus padres los visiten

*Que no sabe qué haría sin la ayuda de su madre

Que se pregunta si su madre no se está esforzando demasiado por ellos

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 8, PART II

36 ¿Cuál clase están tomando juntos Alan y Nolvía?

Química

Inglés

El Desarrollo de la Familia

*No lo dicen

37 ¿Por qué planifican reunirse?

Para que Alan pueda conocer a la mamá de Nolvía

Para que Nolvía pueda conocer a la esposa y a la hija de Alan

*Para estudiar juntos

Para escribir un reporte de laboratorio juntos

38 ¿Con qué le desea Nolvía buena suerte a Alan?

Con su suegra

*Con su reporte de laboratorio

Con su clase de inglés

Con el tráfico

39 ¿Por qué Nolvía lo invita a Alan a estudiar?

*Porque ya hay un grupo con quien estudiar

Porque ella ya ha estudiado mucho

Porque él está muy bien preparado para el examen

Porque Alan le ofreció ayuda a ella

40 Parece que Alan...

*quiere estudiar con el grupo

va a estudiar con el grupo sólo para salir de su casa

va a estudiar con el grupo sólo para hacerles el favor

va a estudiar solo

APPENDIX F: LCT COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS, ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Correct answers are marked with an asterisk.

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 1, PART I

1. Greg and Cindy are talking about their plans for...

the weekend

*the summer

spring break

They don't say

2. Many people in Greg's family haven't met...

his wife

*his baby

the Spanish part of the family

his adopted daughter

3. Why does Cindy doubt that she should travel?

She doesn't want to leave her house unattended

She is afraid of traveling

She hoping that her boyfriend will come to visit her

*It's costly

4. What is Cindy going to do at the end of summer?

She is going to go to Spain

*She is going to work

She is going to visit her parents

She is going to have a baby

5. Greg suggested that Cindy also...

go to Spain

*travel in the area where they live

tell her parents that they come visit her

go to NY, but during another part of the year

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 1, PART II

6. How does Greg react when Cindy tells him that she is from NY?

He asks her if she is from the city or just from the state of New York

He asks if it isn't rather dangerous there

He says he's always wanted to travel to New York

*He says that NY is very far from there

7. What is one of the disadvantages in going to NY by plane that Cindy mentions?

The airport is far away
 Airports' high security
 *Not having a car there
 Cindy is afraid of flying

8. How long has it been since Cindy was last in NY?

It's been years, and that seems like a long time to her
 *It's been half a year, and that seems like a long time to her
 It's been years, and she's not terribly interested in returning
 She doesn't remember

9. How does Greg explain that, despite being away from Spain a long time, his wife feels fine?

His wife always wanted to live in the US
 Greg's wife's parents visit her frequently
 *When a person feels at home when with one's children
 She feels she has more opportunities in the US

10. Cindy says that, unlike Greg's wife, she misses home a lot. How does she explain this?

Her sister just had a baby
 Her family is very close
 She doesn't like where she lives now
 *She is the youngest in her family

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 2, PART I

11. Did Karen know about Brittany's love of shoes?

Yes, Karen is the one who got her into the habit
 *Yes, Brittany had mentioned it to her before
 Yes, they went shoe shopping together
 No. Karen thought Brittany didn't care much about such things

12. Where is the shoe store?

In another city
 *In the mall
 Near the post office
 Downtown

13. How did Brittany find out about the shoe store?

She saw an ad
 Her friend told her about it
 *She found the shoe store by accident
 She received a notice on a listserv

14. Why does Brittany like the store?
 Because it has a good selection and good prices
 *Because all of their shoes are incredibly cheap
 Because they have all the latest styles
 Because, according to her, all shoe stores are good

15. What new shoes is Brittany wearing now?
 The ones for the wedding
 The ones she bought for her friend
 *Her shoes for working
 The ones for sailing

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 2, PART II

16. What problem does Brittany say her trip to the shoe store solved?
 Before, she didn't know any good shoe stores in town
 Before, she didn't know what to buy her friend
 *Before, she didn't know what shoes to wear to the wedding
 Before, she didn't have any good walking shoes

17. How much did the wedding shoes cost?
 Less than the work shoes
 More than the shoes for the country
 More than all the rest of the shoes together
 *It doesn't say

18. According to Karen, why is it better not to give shoes to Brittany's friend?
 *Because the gift should be something that the groom likes too
 Because her friend has too many shoes
 Because she doesn't know her shoe size
 Because maybe her friend isn't as into shoes as Brittany is

19. Why does Karen express surprise near the end of the conversation?
 Because Brittany is going back to the store tomorrow
 *Because Brittany wants to return the shoes
 Because Brittany even bought shoes for going out to the country
 Because Brittany bought shoes for her friend

20. What is Karen's attitude about what Brittany tells her?

Envy

*Surprise that Brittany is as enthusiastic as she is

Worry for her friend

Disgust

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 3, PART I

21. What relation does Karen have to Kelly?

They're neighbors

They're ex-neighbors

*They're friends

They are sisters

22. When did the old neighbor leave?

*A while ago

He was leaving while the new person was arriving

When the landlord kicked him out

He didn't leave; the new neighbor is moving in with him

23. Why didn't Kelly talk to the new neighbor?

Because Kelly was afraid she'd be asked to help

Because the old neighbor was talking to her

Because of her dog

*Because the woman was very busy

24. Did Kelly already know the new neighbor?

*No. She saw her for the first time when she arrived with all her things.

Kelly isn't sure; she has the impression of having met her before.

Yes, this woman was friends with the old neighbor.

Yes, this woman went out with her ex-boyfriend

25. What was it that the new neighbor had a huge amount of, according to Kelly?

Dogs and more dogs

Shoes and more shoes

Furniture and more furniture

*Boxes and more boxes

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 3, PART II

26. Why is Kelly worried about pets?

Because she is afraid of dogs

Because the new neighbor's dog scared her cat

Because the new neighbor's dog looks dangerous

*Because the old neighbor's dog barked a lot

27. Why is Kelly so suspicious of the new neighbor?

Because the new neighbor didn't talk to her

Because she thinks that the new person is connected to the old neighbor

Because the new neighbor has a dog

*Because she has had bad luck with neighbors in the past

28. What does Kelly say about the kind of neighbor Karen would be?

She says that Karen is the only person she could like as a neighbor

That it's better that they not be neighbors

*That she would be suspicious of her at first

She mentions a time when they were neighbors

29. Which of these is a reason that Kelly mentions about why she didn't like the old neighbor?

His friends were suspicious types

He cooked food that smelled bad

He was very noisy

He talked constantly to Kelly

30. Why does Karen suggest to Kelly that she talk to her new neighbor?

To ask her that she be respectful

*To know what kind of person she is

To offer her help

To know if she has any pets

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 4, PART I

31. What is the name of the movie?

"It's Cold in Alaska"

"Me and My Motorcycle"

"American Pride"

*"American Ride"

32. What does Mary initially say about the movie that Lance recommends to her?

*She says she hasn't heard anything about the movie

That her friend Shawn said it was very bad

That the movie has won many awards

She shows no interest in the movie

33. The movie is a story about...

an American in Germany

*a German in the US
 a German family that repairs motorcycles
 an American who returns to the US after a long time in Germany

34. How does Lance describe the movie?

Moving
 Intellectual
 Artful
 *Funny

35. Lance doesn't think that the main character is...

German
 very serious
 British
 *very good

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 4, PART II

36. What does Lance say about the movies that they have at the Goodwill Theater?

*That they're not very good
 That they are very expensive
 That they always have subtitles
 He says he hasn't heard of that theater

37. Lance insists that he goes to the movies to...

support the arts
 *see works of quality
 laugh
 learn more about culture

38. Who did Lance go see the movie with?

With Shawn
 With his cousin
 With a German guy
 *It doesn't say

39. At the end, Mary...

invites Lance to go with her and her friend
 says that the movie seems too serious
 *says that she doesn't care so much about the quality of the movie
 says that maybe tonight she won't go to the movies

40. Why does Mary say that she doesn't care much about what movie she sees?

Because they are all the same

Because her friend is the one who will decide which one they see
 *Because all she wants to do is relax
 Because Hollywood is corrupt

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 5, PART I

1. Why is Sam not interested in going to the restaurant that Lisa recommends to him?

Because he doesn't like to go to places just because they are popular
 *Because he doesn't like Japanese food
 Because it seems too expensive to him
 Because he's a vegetarian

2. How did Lisa find out about the restaurant?

She won a free dinner from the radio
 She went with a Japanese colleague
 Her boyfriend is a cook there
 *It doesn't say

3. What does Lisa say to prove that the restaurant is very popular?

She says that famous actors are known to frequent the place
 *She says that they had to wait half an hour just to get a table
 She says that their cook used to work in a famous restaurant in NY
 She says that the restaurant won a mention in the local newspaper

4. Who did Lisa see in the restaurant?

A famous actress
 *Someone who works with Sam and Lisa
 Sam's wife
 A group of Sam's friends

5. How did Lisa decide what to eat when she was at the restaurant?

She asked the waiter
 By the pictures in the menu
 *She looked at what people near her were eating
 She chose the dish that sounded most like "Lisa"

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 5, PART II

6. What event does Lisa suggest?

That Sam and she go to the restaurant together
 *That they have an end-of-the-year party there
 That they order sushi delivered to their office
 That the two of them write an article together about the changes in American taste

7. What kind of restaurant seems appropriate to Sam for having their party with their work mates?

*A restaurant with American food

A less expensive restaurant

A restaurant where it's not difficult to get a table

The same restaurant where they go every year

8. What, of what Lisa says, is ridiculous, according to Sam?

That sushi is delicious

*That sushi is an American food

That sushi is no health threat

That eating sushi can make a person smarter

9. What does Sam think about their office parties?

He hates them

He thinks they strengthen office relations

He thinks they ought to have them somewhere other than the office

* He doesn't make any direct comment about them

10. What, according to Sam, is Lisa confused about?

She confuses good taste with fashion

She confuses healthy with delicious

She confuses high prices with quality

*She confuses fashion with profound societal changes

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 6, PART I

11. What kind of relationship does Karen have to Brian?

* They work together

Karen is Brian's mother

Boyfriend and girlfriend

Karen is Brian's secretary

12. What does Karen think of the new secretary?

She thinks maybe she'll never learn how to run the office

She thinks the secretary is quite competent

* She hasn't met the new secretary yet

She likes her even less than Brian does

13. Who does the new secretary talk to on the phone?

She doesn't talk on the phone

Only important people

Diane

* Her son

14. What happened with the new secretary and the photocopier machine?

She said it wasn't her job to make copies

* She didn't know how to make copies

She charged the coworkers money to make copies

She used the machine to make copies for her own personal use

15. Why does Karen think that this woman isn't really the new secretary?

* She thinks she was hired as a temporary replacement.

She thinks Brian was talking to the wrong person.

She thinks Brian misunderstood what the woman's job was.

She thinks it's impossible that they hired someone so incompetent

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 6, PART II

16. Why has Diane not been at work recently?

She quit her job

She got fired

* She's sick

She never worked at that office

17. Why does Brian want to call Diane?

Because she called him

To remind her of her appointment

To complain to her.

* To find out if she is planning on returning.

18. Why can't Brian call Diane right away?

Because the secretary is using the phone.

* He doesn't know her phone number.

Because Diane is in the hospital.

Because Diane would probably refuse to talk to him.

19. Who used to make the coffee at the office?

* Diane.

Karen.

Brian.

Mary.

20. What is Karen's role in this conversation?

She provides Brian with more reasons to distrust the secretary.

* She suggests to Brian that he may be overreacting.

She thinks that everything Brian says is just rumor.
She reminds Brian that the new secretary is very sick.

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 7, PART I

21. Who did Alex cook a French dinner for?

His sister

* His wife

A work mate

Karen

22. What French ingredient did they have in the supermarket that is normally difficult to find?

A type of bread

* A type of cheese

A type of olives

A special cut of meat

23. What item did Alex name the price on?

Cheese

* Fish

Bread

Meat

24. Why kind of vegetable selection does the supermarket have?

A lot of selection and everything is very fresh

Everything is very fresh, but there isn't a lot of selection

* A lot of selection, but it isn't all that fresh

The only comment about this is that it is all very cheap

25. Why does Alex buy vegetables there even though they aren't so fresh?

Because in the end he cooks everything

* Because they still are good for a couple days

He only buys onions and potatoes there

Normally he buys his vegetables in another place

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 7, PART II

26. Why does going to the new supermarket not interest Karen very much?

Because it's a little expensive

Because she doesn't like that company

* Because the vegetables aren't that fresh

Because she doesn't cook things that require special ingredients

27. Alex says that the supermarket isn't far from Karen's house, but Karen doesn't agree. Why not?

Because it's close to Alex's house, not hers

* Because Karen doesn't go to the supermarket by car

Because, as Alex said, no distance is too far to go to buy good food

Because Karen misunderstood where the supermarket was

28. What is one reason Karen gives for not driving her car much?

She doesn't have a car

To lose weight

* Gas is so expensive

She had an accident and now she is afraid of driving

29. Where does Karen carry her purchases when she does home?

In baskets on her bike

In her hands

* In her backpack

It doesn't say

30. Who goes to the supermarket many times a week?

Alex because he needs that everything be fresh

Alex because he decides the menu of the day according to his wife's mood

Karen because she likes to check out the daily sales

* Karen because she can only buy what fits in her backpack

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 8, PART I

31. What is Nolvía's explanation for why she looks so tired?

* Trying to balance school, work and the family

She's been sick

She's worried about the test on Wednesday

She has had difficulty looking for work

32. This will be...

Alan's first child.

* Alan's second child

Alan's eighth child

Alan's first child, although he lives with his wife's three other children

33. Where does Nolvía's mother live?

With Nolvía and her family.

In the same town as Nolvía and her family

* In a nearby town

The don't say

34. When is Alan's second child due?

The baby was just born

In a couple weeks

* In October

He doesn't say

35. What does Nolvía say about the parents/grandparents visiting?

It's better when her mother comes without her father

Alan and his wife should ask that their parents visit

* She doesn't know what she would do without her mother's help

She wonders if her mother isn't doing too much for them

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE 8, PART II

36. What class do Alan and Nolvía have together?

Chemistry

English

Parenting

* They don't say

37. Why are they making plans to get together?

So Alan can meet Nolvía's mother

So Nolvía can meet Alan's wife and child

* To study together

To write a lab report together

38. What does Novia wish Alan luck on?

With his mother-in-law

* His lab report

With his English class

With traffic

39. Why does Nolvía invite Alan to study?

* She already has plans to study with some other people

She has already studied a lot for the exam.

He is well prepared for the exam

Because he offers to help her with chemistry

40. It seems that Alan...

*wants to study with the group

is going to study with the group just to get out of his house
is going to study with the group just to be nice
is going to study alone

APPENDIX G: ITEMS ON MAZE TASK

Practice items:

The
and student
ocean took
the dress
test. organic.

The
me day
extreme was
sunny smile
car and
photo. warm.

The
country yours
that baby
we salad
visited August
sorry is
beautiful. rationalize.

The
president or
green visited
our exclamation
always. offices.

The
of student
is republic
drove ready
sing to
go. in.

Test items:

The
girl enter
winter that
kissed over

the forget
you boy
see is
named talk
learn. Mary.

The
should sister
that big
green likes
me observe
is minus
coming study
inflation to
visit. didn't.

The
friend went
that the
vision called
primary me
interpret yesterday
tragic told
yes me
the return
news. free.

The
bought woman
that she
surprising we
helped operate
left window
this desert
bag send
explore. here.

The
actor of
window that
off the
musician have
married energy
is tornado

traveling forget
milk to
Rome. on.

The
arrive uncle
circle that
flower visited
us answer
sent kilometer
bring us
this calculator
very they
nice and
again. photo.

The
professor wrote
her that
pencil recommended
you talk
direction is
publishing relax
child a
new weren't
sincerely. book.

The
French please
woman him
egg that
he ready
no met
version offered
to we
give pink
turn him
French month
lessons. because.

The
for children
that his
we who

invited person
 reason to
 the baseball
 an party
 played it
 happily. our.

The
 my lawyer
 any that
 keep they
 building hired
 hair wanted
 to fear
 change hotel
 the sleep
 terms those
 tree of
 multiply the
 far. contract.

The
 of young
 if couple
 decided coffee
 to said
 buy newspaper
 come a
 house. when.

The
 their man
 fat visited
 his leave
 some family
 in walk
 Europe. even.

The
 criminal ours
 interesting believes
 his didn't
 those luck
 transparent is

shop finally
bicycle. changing.

The
doctor me
insect recommended
fell more
exercise your
and traditions
and a
healthier we
registered. diet.

The
first an
none time
we institution
went ready
play there
hello we
animal thought
dish it
was head
really end
wonderful. friend.

The
these moment
try you
he think
ride you've
won't finished
you should
find the
asked more
work any
to constitution
do. but.

The
two our
me men
elephant talked
for exited

a cable
 long has
 already time
 at option
 under the
 us. café.

The
 washes family
 if used
 to please
 herself go
 to machine
 the were
 beach through
 had every
 cheap. summer.

The
 an boys
 didn't door
 wake black
 up bell
 until thousand
 west. noon.

The
 people she
 wrong in
 this stopped
 city the
 secretary care
 about busy
 from the
 environment. full.

The
 people could
 loud in
 yes Chile
 speak few
 fell. Spanish.

The

sky we
why is
isn't. blue.

The
of test
maternal is
not look
could. difficult.

The
class are
short begins
at piece
A.D. 10:00.

The
girl it
forest likes
apples. begins.

APPENDIX H: MAZE INSTRUCTIONS

SCREEN 1

At the top it says, “¡Bienvenido al laberinto!” (*Welcome to the maze!*) Below, there is a picture of a maze. Then it says, “Para comenzar, haz clic con el ratón sobre esta parte de la pantalla. Luego, aprieta cualquier tecla (menos ‘ENTER’) para continuar.”

“To begin, clic on this part of the screen with your mouse. Then, press any key on the keyboard (except ‘ENTER’) to continue.”

SCREEN 2

“Instrucciones: En este ejercicio, verás varias oraciones en inglés, palabra por palabra. Usarás las palabras para construir oraciones en inglés.

“En la primera pantalla, verás una sola palabra. En las siguientes pantallas, verás dos palabras. Una de estas dos palabras hace una secuencia gramatical cuando se combina con la palabra anterior, y la otra palabra, no. Tú tienes que escoger la alternativa que continúe la oración.

“A continuación, verás un ejemplo...”

Then it says in bold, “Aprieta cualquier tecla para continuar. (Pero no uses el ratón.)”

“Instructions: For this exercise, you will see several sentences in English, word by word. You will use the words to construct sentences in English.

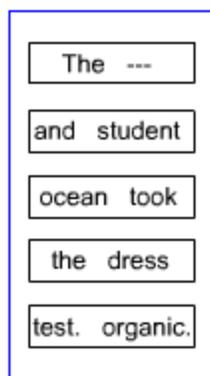
“On the first screen, you will see only one word. On the following screens, you will see two words. One of the words makes continues the sentence grammatically when combined with the previous word, and the other word does not. You have to choose the word that can continue the sentence.

“Let’s look at an example...”

“Hit any key to continue. (But don’t use the mouse.)”

SCREEN 3

At the top it says “EJEMPLO” (EXAMPLE). On the left the words in boxes, as shown, appear. To the right it says,



En este ejemplo, verías cinco pantallas distintas. La serie correcta de respuestas sería IDDII (izquierda—derecha—derecha—izquierda—izquierda), produciendo la oración, “The student took the test.”

(In this example, you would see five different screens. The correct series of answers is LRLL (left—right—right—left—left), producing the sentence, ‘The student took the test.’)

At the bottom of the screen it says in bold, “Aprieta cualquier tecla para continuar. (Pero no uses el ratón.)”

“Hit any key to continue. (But don’t use the mouse.)”

SCREEN FOUR

“¿Cómo indicar una respuesta? Si la palabra a la izquierda es la palabra correcta, aprieta la tecla con la flecha izquierda. Si la palabra a la derecha es la correcta, aprieta la flecha derecha.”

(How can I indicate my answer? If the word on the left is the correct word, press the left arrow key. If the word on the right is the correct one, press the right arrow key.)

Below this, there is a picture of a computer’s arrow keys, with red circles around the left and right arrow keys.

At the bottom of the screen it says in bold, “Aprieta cualquier tecla para continuar. (Pero no uses el ratón.)”

“Hit any key to continue. (But don’t use the mouse.)”

SCREEN FIVE

In large letters at the top it says, “Los primeros son para practicar.” Below it says, “La primera palabra siempre va a ser ‘The’ a la izquierda. Siempre empiezas con la flecha izquierda.” At the bottom it says, “Aprieta cualquier tecla para continuar. (Pero no uses el ratón.)”

(The first ones are for practicing. The first word will always be ‘The’ on the left. You always start with the left arrow key. Hit any key to continue. (But don’t use the mouse.))

AFTER THE FIVE PRACTICE ITEMS

It says in large letters at the top, “Fin de la práctica.” Below, it says, “Para continuar con la prueba, aprieta cualquier tecla, pero no uses el ratón

“...a menos que todavía no entiendas y necesites hacer la práctica de nuevo, haz clic en estas palabras:

“¡No entiendo! Quiero hacer la práctica de nuevo.”

(End of the practice. To continue the test, hit any key, but don’t use the mouse... Unless you still don’t understand and need to do the practice over again. In this case, click on the words below:

I don’t understand! I want to do the practice over again.)

NEXT TO LAST SCREEN

It says “Enviando resultados...” (“*Sending results...*”) as the data are sent to the database. When successful, it proceeds automatically to the next screen.

In the case of failure, the participant is shown a screen where it explains that there was a server error, and the participant is asked to contact Kara McBride via her e-mail.

LAST SCREEN

“¡Gracias! Cuando estés listo a empezar con las lecciones, vé a [la página de ingresar](#). Puedes hacerlo ahora o más tarde. Por favor, trata de hacerlo dentro de tres días. Cualquier consulta, escribe a kmcbride@u.arizona.edu.”

(Thank you! When you are ready to start the lessons, go to [the login page](#). You can do it now, or later. Please try to do it within the next three days. Please direct any questions or inquiries to kmcbride@u.arizona.edu.)

APPENDIX I: LESSON PROCEDURES AND LAYOUT

INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED IN BOTH THE ORIGINAL SPANISH AND IN TRANSLATION

SCREEN 1

At the top left, there is a speaker icon, and underneath, it says “Probar audio” (*Test audio*).

It says, “BIENVENIDO. Primero haz clic en el “Probar audio” para asegurarte que puedas oír el sonido. Puedes probar el audio todas las veces que quieras. Luego, haz clic en ‘Comenzar.’”

“WELCOME. First click on the “Test audio” to make sure that you can hear the sounds. Then, click on ‘Begin.’”

At the bottom left, here and on all screens, it says, “[Lección 2: La entrevista]” (*Lesson 2: The interview*), or whatever is appropriate, according to the number and title of the lesson.

There is a button at the bottom of the screen that says “Comenzar,” (*“Begin”*).

SCREEN 2

“EL DIÁLOGO. Ahora escucharás un diálogo entero. Después del diálogo, habrá cuatro preguntas. Luego, escucharás el diálogo otra vez, y contestarás cuatro preguntas más.”

“THE DIALOGUE. Now you will listen to a dialogue in its entirety. After the dialogue, there will be four questions. Then you will hear the dialogue again, and you will answer another four questions.”

There is a “continue” button at bottom that the test taker needs to click on in order to go to the next screen.

SCREEN 3

Next to a speaker icon at the top left it says, “Haz clic en el parlante cuando estés listo a escuchar el diálogo.” (*Click on the speaker when you are ready to hear the dialogue.*)

There is a “continue” button at the bottom of the screen. This button does not work until the entire dialogue has played, at which point the letters go from gray to black.

SCREENS 4-7

One question per screen appears, as shown below. At the bottom of the screen it says “Haz clic en tu respuesta” (*Click on your answer.*) Clicking on the “check answer” (“verificar,” in Spanish) button after clicking on one of the two answers causes either “Correcto” or “Incorrecto” (“*Correct*” or “*Incorrect*”) to show up where “Click on your answer” was before. The “check answer” button does not work if no answer has been chosen. Once an answer is given and checked, then instead of the “check answer” button, there is a “continue” button that, when clicked on, will take the participant to the next screen. A test taker can change the answer before clicking on the “check answer” button.



The screenshot shows a quiz interface with a blue header and footer. The main content area is white with a light blue border. The question is: "1. ¿Qué experiencia laboral previa menciona Karen?". There are two radio button options: "Administración" (unselected) and "Enseñanza" (selected). At the bottom of the question area, it says "Haz clic en 'Verificar'". The footer contains "Lección 2: La entrevista" on the left and a "Verificar" button on the right.

SCREEN 8 FOR GROUPS A & B

Screen 8 is just like 3.

.....

SCREEN 8 FOR GROUP C

It says “¿Quieres escuchar el mismo diálogo con la misma velocidad? ¿O prefieres escuchar una versión más lenta?”

“Would you like to hear the same dialogue at the same speed? Or would you prefer to hear a slower version?”

And there are two radio buttons to click on. One says “La misma velocidad” (*the same speed*) and the other says “Más lenta” (*slower*).

SCREEN 8 FOR GROUP D

This is just like screen 3, except that at the top left there is a green pause button, and under the instructions for the speaker icon, it says “Puedes usar el botón verde a la derecha para pausar el sonido, pero tienes que seguir apretándolo para que siga en pausa” (*You can use the green button at the right to pause the sound, but you have to keep pressing it for it to stay paused.*)

SCREEN 9 FOR GROUP C

This looks just like Screen 3, regardless of which speed the participant chooses.

SCREENS 10-13 FOR GROUPS A, B AND D / SCREENS 11-14 FOR GROUP C

These screens work just like Screens 4-7 above.

SCREEN 14 FOR GROUPS A, B AND D / SCREEN 15 FOR GROUP C

In large letters it says “DOS PREGUNTAS MÁS” and then below it says “Contesta las siguientes preguntas abiertas según tu interpretación del diálogo.” (*TWO MORE QUESTIONS. Answer the following open-ended questions according to your interpretation of the dialogue.*)

Clicking on the “continue” button takes the participant to the next screen.

NEXT TWO SCREENS

The open-ended questions are shown one per screen. There is a text box for the participant to write in his or her answer. There is no limit to the length of the answer. Clicking on the “continue” button takes the participant to the next screen. There need not be any text in the text box for the “continue” button to work.

NEXT SCREEN

On the screen it says “Enviando resultados...” (Sending results...) while these are sent to the database. When successful, it automatically goes to the next screen.

In the case of failure, the participant is shown a screen where it explains that there was a server error, and the participant is asked to contact Kara McBride via her e-mail.

NEXT SCREEN

On this screen, it says, “Resultados de las preguntas de opción múltiple” (*Results from the multiple-choice questions*). Below it says “Todos correctos” (*total correct*) next to the number of questions (out of 8) answered correctly, and “Todos incorrectos” (*total wrong*) next to the number of questions answered incorrectly.

Clicking on the “continue” button takes the participant to the next screen.

FINAL SCREEN

“FIN. ¡Gracias por tu participación! Has terminado [2] de 10 lecciones. Por favor, trata de hacer la próxima dentro del plazo de cuatro días. Si ahora te encuentras con un par de minutos más, te rogamos que llenes una [encuesta](#) para decir lo que pensaste de la lección.”

“END. Thank you for your participation! You have finished [2] out of 10 lessons. Please try to do the next one within four days. If you happen to have a few extra minutes, we ask you to fill out a [survey](#) to say what you thought of the lesson.”

The word “survey” (encuesta) is underlined and written in blue, and when clicked on, takes the participant to the appropriate survey for the lesson and group.

For Lesson 10, procedures for the posttest are explained.

APPENDIX J: SCRIPTS FOR DIALOGUES IN LESSONS 1-10, PICTURES, AND
VOCABULARY PROFILES

SCRIPT FOR LESSON 1: KAREN VA A UNA ENTREVISTA (KAREN GOES TO AN INTERVIEW)



Lesson #1 Talking to secretary “I’m here for an interview”
288 words.

(sound of door knock)

Karen: Hello. Excuse me.

Secretary: Yes, please come in. How can I help you?

Karen: Hi. My name is Karen Fischer. I have an interview at 2:00 with Mr. Welsch. I’m a little bit early.

Secretary: Ok... let me see here. Yes, uh huh. There you are. Karen Fischer. You’re here for a job interview.

Karen: That’s right.

Secretary: So how are you? Are you nervous?

Karen: A little bit, yes.

Secretary: Well, Mr. Welsch is a very nice person, so you don’t have to worry about that.

Karen: That’s good to hear. ...Have you had a lot of interviews today?

Secretary: Not today. But we had some yesterday and the day before. Maybe 8 total, with you.

Karen: Eight... hmm.

Secretary: I think actually that you are the last person he is going to interview.

Karen: I see.

Secretary: Right now I need to have you fill out a few forms, if you don't mind.

Karen: Oh, sure.

Secretary: On this form, you need to put your name and address, as well as your phone number, your cell phone too, if you have one, and your email address.

Karen: Okay, that's easy.

Secretary: On this other form we would like you to write down your employment history. Start with your most recent job. ...are you currently employed?

Karen: Yes, I am. I am working at the university right now.

Secretary: Oh really? What are you doing there?

Karen: I'm working on materials development for the Department of English.

Secretary: Well, it sounds like you are a good candidate for the job, Ms. Fischer!

Karen: That's nice of you to say.

Secretary: Do you need a pen?

Karen: No, that's okay, I have one. Can I just sit over there while I fill out these forms?

Secretary: Yes, and I'll let you know when Mr. Welsch is ready for you.

Karen: Okay. Thanks very much.

VOCABULARY PROFILE OF LESSON 1 SCRIPT

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	258	86.8687%
1001 - 2000 words	13	4.3771%
AWL words	3	1.0101%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	23	7.7441%

1 - 1000: a about actually address am an and are as at before but can come currently day department development do doing don down early easy eight employed employment english few fill for form forms going good had have he hear help here history how i if in is it just know last let like little ll m materials maybe me mind most mr ms much my name need no not now number of oh on one other out over person please put re ready really recent right s say see sit so some sounds start sure t that the there these think this to today too total university very we well what when while with working would write yes yesterday you your

1001 - 2000: bit excuse hello hi lot nice pen phone thanks worry

AWL: job

UWL: (none)

Off-list: candidate cell email fischer hmm huh interview interviews karen nervous ok okay uh Welsch

SCRIPT FOR LESSON 2: LA ENTREVISTA (THE INTERVIEW)



Welsch: Hello. You must be Karen Fischer.

Karen: Yes, I am. And you must be Mr. Welsch.

Welsch: That's right. Please... have a seat.

Karen: Thank you.

Welsch: So... you have a very impressive resume, Ms. Fischer. I see you are currently working at the university in materials development.

Karen: That's right.

Welsch: It says here that you are developing language lessons for the computer.

Karen: Yes.

Welsch: So can you tell me, Ms. Fischer, why you are interested in leaving that job and joining our company?

Karen: Well, the project that I'm working on is going to end in a few months.

Welsch: I see.

Karen: But I have become very interested in the field and would like to continue in it.

Welsch: But right now you are developing software. If you worked for us, you would be selling software that someone else has made.

Karen: Yes, I understand that. I think that my experience developing software has allowed me to understand the whole process much better and understand what makes software good or not. I've also been working recently on testing the programs on

students, and I've learned a great deal from that process. And that means then that I can talk to clients and explain the product in a convincing manner.

Welsch: Yes, that certainly would be an advantage.

Also, since I was an English teacher for a number of years, I would be able to explain the product in terms that teachers understand and can relate to.

Welsch: Right. I was going to ask you about that as well. You have worked as a teacher. Why don't you want to go back to teaching?

Karen: Oh, well, I can't travel as much if I am a teacher.

Welsch: Okay. So you are attracted to the job because of the travel. That means you are definitely in a position to travel frequently.

Karen: Absolutely.

Welsch: Do you have a lot of international travel experience?

Karen: Yes, I do. I've traveled to Asia twice. I went to Japan once and Korea the other time.

Welsch: I see! Well, for this job, at least initially, we would be sending you most likely to South America.

Karen: That sounds fascinating. I have always wanted to go to South America.

Welsch: Do you speak Spanish?

Karen: I studied a little bit in high school. I think I could get around okay with the Spanish that I know. And of course I would study some more.

Welsch: Yes, that's what we would expect. Do you know much about South America?

Karen: Well, I have a friend who used to live in Chile. She told me it was a fascinating country...

VOCABULARY PROFILE FOR LESSON 2

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	385	89.7436%
1001 - 2000 words	10	2.3310%
AWL words	10	2.3310%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	24	5.5944%

1 - 1000: a able about advantage allowed also always am an and are around as ask at back be because become been better but can certainly company continue could country course currently deal developing development do don else end english expect experience explain few field for friend from get go going good great has have here high i if in interested is it joining know language learned least leaving like likely little live m made makes manner materials me means months more most mr ms much must my not now number of oh on once or other our please position product recently relate right s says school seat see selling sending she since so some someone sounds south speak students studied study t talk teacher teachers teaching tell terms testing that the then think this time to told travel traveled twice understand university us used ve very want wanted was we well went what who whole why with worked working would years yes you

1001 - 2000: absolutely attracted bit frequently hello international lessons lot programs thank

AWL: computer convincing definitely initially job process project

UWL: (none)

Off-list: america asia chile clients fascinating fischer impressive japan korea okay resume software spanish welsch

SCRIPT FOR LESSON 3: KAREN CONVERSA CON SU AMIGA (KAREN HAS A CHAT WITH HER FRIEND)



(Phone rings)

Friend: Hello?

Karen: Hi, Anne! This is Karen. How are you? I just got out of my interview.

Friend: How'd it go? What did they say?

Karen: I think it went okay. They told me they were going to call me probably tomorrow, after they talked with my current boss.

Friend: You told them it was okay for them to do that?

Karen: Oh, yeah. Actually, it was my boss who told me about this job.

Friend: Oh, okay. So... did you like the people? Did they ask you tough questions?

Karen: The people seemed okay. The secretary was really nice. The guy who interviewed me seemed very serious but okay.

Friend: Is that bad? Do you think you didn't make a very good impression on him?

Karen: No, I think it's okay. I think he liked me okay. Just that's the way he is. We talked about traveling a lot.

Friend: Oh yeah? Where are they going to send you? Paris? London? Rome?

Karen: No, actually, it looks like they want to send me to South America.

Friend: Oh, wow! Can I go with you?

Karen: I think you should, yeah, do you have a passport?

Friend: Hey, you know, I'll get one. And I speak Spanish.

Karen: Great. Now all we need is for me to get the job.

Friend: Oh, come on, you know you will. You're perfect for the job.

Karen: I'm trying not to fall in love with this job too much, because what happens if I don't get it? Then I'll be so disappointed.

Friend: You have to have positive thoughts. Come on, just imagine that it will work out, and it will!

Karen: Oh, okay, I didn't realize it was that simple.

Friend: It's not that simple. Sometimes it's very hard to believe in yourself.

Karen: True... So anyway, what's new in your life?

Friend: Nothing at all. It rained today... My friend had a job interview... I'm planning on getting a passport as soon as I get off the phone... You know.

Karen: So are you going to go to Sally's on Saturday?

Friend: For the dinner? Are you kidding? I wouldn't miss it.

Karen: Yeah, Sally's an excellent cook.

Friend: Do you know what the occasion is?

Karen: No, do you?

Friend: No, I'm not sure. Maybe her husband got promoted or something.

Karen: I haven't seen him in ages.

Friend: Well now you get to on Saturday.

Karen: Yep, and by then I will be able to announce my fabulous new job.

Friend: Exactly.

VOCABULARY PROFILE FOR LESSON 3

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	350	85.3659%
1001 - 2000 words	17	4.1463%
AWL words	8	1.9512%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	35	8.5366%

1 - 1000: a able about actually after ages all an and anyway are as ask at bad be because believe but by call can come current d did didn do don fall for friend get getting go going good got great had happens hard have haven he her him how husband i if in is it just know life like liked ll looks love m make maybe me miss much my need new no not nothing now occasion of off oh on one or out people planning questions re realize really s saturday say secretary seemed seen send serious should simple so something sometimes soon south speak sure t talked that the them then they think this thoughts to today told too traveling true trying very want was way we well went were what where who will with work wouldn you your yourself

1001 - 2000: cook dinner disappointed exactly excellent hello hey hi imagine lot nice perfect phone probably rained tomorrow tough

AWL: job positive promoted

UWL: (none)

Off-list: america anne announce boss fabulous guy impression interview interviewed karen kidding london okay paris passport rome sally spanish wow yeah yep

SCRIPT FOR LESSON 4: CONVERSACIÓN CON LA SECRETARIA
(CONVERSATION WITH THE SECRETARY)



Secretary: So, Miss Fischer, you must be very excited.

Karen: Yes, I am! I'm just so glad this worked out. This job is just perfect for me.

Secretary: Well, the people here are very excited about being able to work with you too.

Karen: Thanks. That's so nice of you to say. So... this meeting...

Secretary: Yes, well, ideally it wouldn't be just you and Mr. Welsch but also the HR director and the sales manager.

Karen: Of course.

Secretary: And they can all get together this Thursday afternoon. Is there any way you could come at that time?

Karen: Sure, I don't think that will be any problem at all. My current boss, Robert, is very supportive, and I am sure he will let me take some time off.

Secretary: That's wonderful. I doubt everyone would be so lucky.

Karen: Well, this project we're working on has an end date that is coming soon, and Robert knows that everyone needs to be looking elsewhere.

Secretary: Oh, sure. And when exactly would you be able to start working with us?

Karen: Really I think I could work it out to start working as soon as you all are ready for me.

Secretary: That would be immediately.

Karen: Great.

Secretary: Well then, we'll just start on Thursday filling out all the necessary documents. So please bring your ID, your passport – I assume you already have a passport?

Karen: Oh yes, definitely.

Secretary: Good, because that will be getting some use in the near future.

Karen: Do you have any idea how soon I might be traveling?

Secretary: You'll have to go through a fairly extensive training period at first, of course.

Karen: (quickly, in the pause) Sure.

Secretary: I'm not sure exactly how long that will last. That will be one of the things you will talk about on Thursday. But it may be as soon as a month.

Karen: How exciting! I better start learning Spanish right away!

Secretary: Yes, in fact that is one of the things they will want to be talking to you about. We need to get you in some Spanish classes.

Karen: Oh, okay.

Secretary: Those will be paid for, but the class time will be on your own schedule.

Karen: Oh... okay... that seems fair.

Secretary: Good. ...Do you have any particular preferred school or teacher, or...?

Karen: Well, I thought maybe I would just use one of the company's CD-ROMs.

Secretary: Yes, the CD-ROMs are excellent, and we will provide you with one, of course. But that isn't going to be enough, and we need to get you into some classes right away. We have some private tutors to suggest if you don't already have someone in mind.

Karen: Oh, no, I'm open.

Secretary: Okay then. That's something else for you to settle on Thursday.

VOCABULARY PROFILE FOR LESSON 4

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	414	90.5908%
1001 - 2000 words	17	3.7199%
AWL words	7	1.5317%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	19	4.1575%

1 - 1000: a able about all already also am an and any are as at away be because being better bring but can class classes come coming company could course current date director do don doubt else elsewhere end enough everyone extensive fact fair fairly filling first for future get getting glad go going good great has have he here how i idea if in into is isn it just knows last learning let ll long looking m may maybe me meeting might mind miss month mr must my near necessary need needs no not of off oh on one open or out own paid particular people please private problem provide re ready really right s sales say school seems settle so some someone something soon start suggest supportive sure t take talk talking teacher that the then there they things think this those thought through thursday time to together too training traveling us use very want way we well when will with wonderful work worked working would wouldn't yes you your

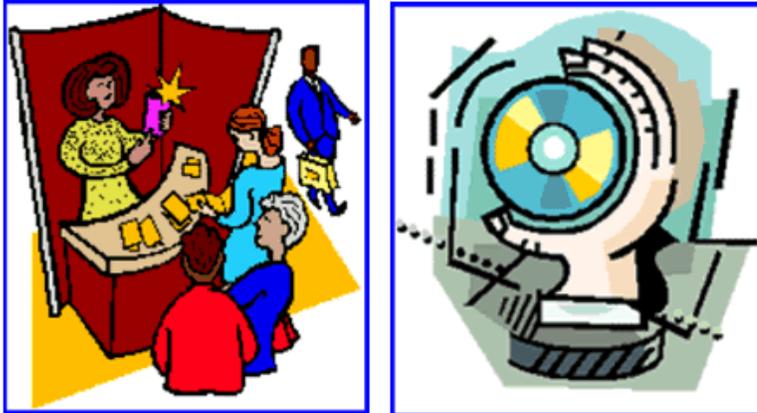
1001 - 2000: afternoon exactly excellent excited exciting ideally immediately lucky manager nice pause perfect preferred quickly thanks

AWL: assume definitely documents job period project schedule

UWL: (none)

Off-list: boss cd fischer hr id okay passport robert roms spanish tutors welsch

SCRIPT FOR LESSON 5: ORIENTACIÓN (ORIENTATION)



Welsch: Ah, Ms. Fischer. Come in, sit down. So nice to see you again.

Karen: Oh, thank you. Yes, I must say, it's very nice to see you again too!

Welsch: Do you mind if I call you Karen?

Karen: No, not at all, please.

Welsch: Excellent. And please, call me Doug.

Karen: Doug...

Welsch: Yes. Well, Karen, let me just say that we are excited to have you on our team, as we are sure you will make an important addition. We want to get you up to speed on our product line and sales procedures as soon as possible, and we would like to send you to a conference that is taking place in just over a month and a half in Arica, Chile. You said you have never been to Chile?

Karen: No, I haven't.

Welsch: Well, it's not a particularly dangerous country, and I hear that Arica is a very beautiful city. It's in the north, in the desert, but they say that it's like spring time all year round there.

Karen: Sounds wonderful. What's the conference?

Welsch: The Ninth International Conference for English Teachers.

Karen: Mmm hmm.

Welsch: So we would like to get you a booth there and set you up for selling software. There will be representatives from most major universities, as well as a number of other smaller schools and institutes. And our understanding is that Chile is a ripe market. They have good availability of computers, but not really so much software over there.

Karen: So most people are familiar with computers?

Welsch: Oh yeah... maybe just as much as here.

Karen: Oh, okay, I didn't know that.

Welsch: Yes. They are a fairly sophisticated market. So you need to do a few demonstrations as well. We will see about scheduling some product demonstrations for you to do at the conference.

Karen: Will I have to speak Spanish?

Welsch: At the conference? I can't imagine. It's a conference for English teachers, after all.

Karen: Yeah, that's good.

Welsch: I need to mention too that this is an international conference, so there will be people from other countries, Brazil, Peru, and so on, and we want you to make every effort possible to make contacts with people outside of Chile as well.

Karen: Okay.

Welsch: Tell them that you are the McBride-Will representative for South America and that you plan to be traveling around the continent quite a bit. Make sure you get people's cards so that you can send them an email after the conference and offer to do a demonstration at their institution.

Karen: So we do demonstrations for particular institutions?

Welsch: Yes, that's right. We find that that gets us a very strong response. But let's talk about that after covering the conference.

Karen: Sure.

Welsch: We have demo CDs that we hand out.

Karen: Okay.

Welsch: Demo CDs are your hook into meeting people. We want you to talk to each person who wants a CD. Find out where they are, what they do, and how they can help you make a sale.

VOCABULARY PROFILE FOR LESSON 5

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	427	85.4000%
1001 - 2000 words	12	2.4000%
AWL words	25	5.0000%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	36	7.2000%

1 - 1000: a about addition after again all an and are around as at be beautiful been but call can city come countries country covering dangerous desert didn do down each effort english every fairly familiar few find for from get gets good half hand have haven hear help here how i if important in into is it just know let like line make market maybe me meeting mention mind month most ms much must need never ninth no north not number of offer oh on other our out outside over particular particularly people person place plan please possible product quite really representative representatives right round s said sale sales say schools see selling send set sit smaller so some soon sounds south speak speed spring strong sure t taking talk teachers tell that the their them there they this time to too traveling understanding universities up us very want wants we well what where who will with wonderful would year yes you your

1001 - 2000: bit cards excellent excited hook imagine international nice ripe thank

AWL: availability computers conference contacts demonstration demonstrations institutes institution institutions major procedures response scheduling team

UWL: (none)

Off-list: ah america arica booth brazil cd cds chile continent demo doug email fischer hmm karen mcbride mmm okay people peru software sophisticated spanish yeah

LESSON 6: CONVERSACIÓN CON LA AGENTE DE VIAJES: (CONVERSATION WITH THE TRAVEL AGENT)



Brring! (phone)

Gail: Herod's travel. This is Gail speaking.

Karen: Gail, hi. My name is Karen Fischer. I work for McBride-Will Publishers..

Gail: Oh, yes. They're very good customers of ours. You're working for them?

Karen: Yes.

Gail: Are you new?

Karen: Yes, I am.

Gail: Well, great! Where are they sending you to?

Karen: Chile!

Gail: Chile? My goodness. Santiago, Chile...

Karen: No, actually, I'm not going to the capital. I'm going to a city in the north called Arica.

Gail: Sorry, Arica, did you say?

Karen: That's right. A-R-I-C-A. Arica. Can you get me there?

Gail: But of course! Now, you'll have to fly to Santiago first anyway, though.

Karen: Yeah, I figured that.

Gail: Unless...

Karen: Yeah?

Gail: Is it very far north, do you know?

Karen: Yeah, right up top.

Gail: ...You're not kidding! I'm looking at a map of Chile right now. And I'm wondering if we couldn't fly you into Lima first... and then connect you down.

Karen: That'd be kind of fun. Then I'd be able to say that I'd been to *two* new countries.

Gail: There you go. ...Is the company going to be sending you on a lot of trips?

Karen: That's my understanding.

Gail: So what dates are we looking at here?

Karen: Oh, right. I'd like to arrive August 11th and leave August 16th.

Gail: Uh huh... let me see... Okay... we're looking at... \$1700 if we fly you into Santiago and have you connect on Lan Chile to Arica. ... Let me just check... through Peru... oh, no, that looks like actually it's going to be much more expensive.

Karen: Oh is it?

Gail: Yeah.

Karen: Too bad.

Gail: You know what's really too bad is to spend all that money and go that far and not be able to travel around a little too.

Karen: Yeah, that's kind of weird.

Gail: Once you get some more experience, you're going to have to see if you can't figure out how to do that kind of thing.

Karen: Good idea.

Gail: And get them to send you to Rio.

Karen: Rio.

Gail: Rio de Janeiro, honey, in Brazil. That's where they ought to be sending you!

Karen: Have you ever been there?

Gail: Yes, I have, and I would highly recommend it for.. well, for just about anyone, but especially a young woman like yourself.

Karen: Oh, well...

Gail: I'm sure they read books there.

Karen: What's that?

Gail: I'm saying, they must want to buy some books, and so you can go with McBride-Will and have them pay for it, sell a few books, and check out the beaches of Rio.

Karen: It sounds like you know a lot about traveling.

Gail: Hey, I'm an expert. ... You know what, it looks like we can get you a better price if we send you on American Airlines... Er... I tell you what. I'll look around, spend some time on the computer, and see if I can't get you an even better price. But we're probably looking at about \$1700. Okay?

Karen: Okay.

Gail: Why don't you just give me a phone number I can contact you at, and I'll get right on this. I should be able to get back to you early this afternoon.

VOCABULARY PROFILE FOR LESSON 6

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	465	87.0787%
1001 - 2000 words	18	3.3708%
AWL words	4	0.7491%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	47	8.8015%

1 - 1000: a able about actually all am an and anyone anyway are around arrive at august back bad be been better books but buy c called can capital city company couldn countries course d dates did do don down early even ever expensive experience far few figure first fly for get give go going good goodness great have here highly how i idea if in into is it just kind know leave let like little ll look looking looks m me money more much must my name new no north not now number of oh on once ought ours out pay price r re read really right s say saying see sell send sending should so some sounds speaking spend sure t tell th that the them then there they thing this though through time to too top travel traveling two understanding unless up very want we well what where why will with woman wondering work working would yes you young yourself

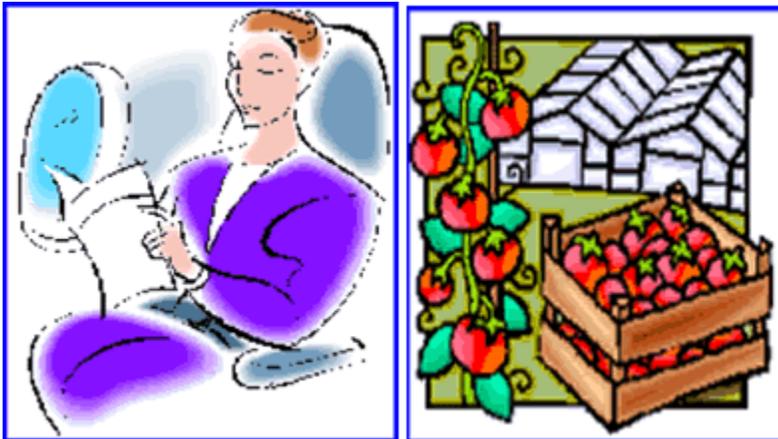
1001 - 2000: afternoon check connect customers especially fun hey hi lot map phone probably recommend sorry trips

AWL: computer contact expert publishers

UWL: (none)

Off-list: airlines american arica beaches brazil chile de er figured fischer gail herod honey huh janeiro karen kidding lan lima mcbride okay peru rio santiago uh weird yeah

LESSON 7: CONVERSACIÓN EN EL AVIÓN (CONVERSATION ON THE PLANE)



Karen: Hola. ¿Cómo está usted?

Professor: Fine, thank you, and you.

Karen: Oh, you speak English?

Professor: Yes, I do. I lived in the United States for a while.

Karen: Oh really? But you're from Chile?

Professor: Yes.

Karen: Where in the US did you live?

Professor: I lived in Texas. I got my masters degree there.

Karen: Oh yeah? At the University of Texas?

Professor: No, Texas A & M University.

Karen: Did you like it there?

Professor: Yes, it was very nice. I found the people to be very friendly and professional.

Karen: That's good to hear. What did you get your masters in?

Professor: Tomatoes.

Karen: Tomatoes?

Professor: Yes. I grow them. I make them grow better.

Karen: Ah...

Professor: That's very important in Chile, you know. Agricultural exports are very important to our economy. Did you know how much Chilean produce you've probably eaten?

Karen: Yes, I've noticed that there is a lot of Chilean produce in the American supermarkets. Especially in the winter time.

Professor: Of course. Because that is our summer.

Karen: Right, right...

Professor: I produced a very special method of making tomatoes which can cause them to grow under less favorable conditions, for example when there is too much sun.

Karen: Too much sun?

Professor: Yes, this is a problem that we have in South America, particularly in my country. We receive too much radiation, and this can cause plants to grow improperly and the fruit to burn before it is ready to eat.

Karen: Wow. Really? So what do you do about that?

Professor: There are a number of different methods. We have to strategically water the plants at the correct time, and it is possible to have near the plants structures or taller plants so that there is shade and the plants do not receive direct sunlight too much of the time.

Karen: And so do you consult with agricultural companies?

Professor: Oh, yes. I do that, and I am also a professor in Chile, so I spend most of my time teaching class and conducting research. The reason why I was in the United States now was that I was attending a conference. It was a very interesting conference.

Karen: That's great.

Professor: And you? Why are you going to Chile? I assume you are an American, correct?

Karen: Yes, I'm from the U.S. Actually... I'm going to a conference too. In Chile!

Professor: Wow, that is very interesting. Where will you be going?

Karen: Arica?

Professor: Ah, you are lucky. Arica is a beautiful city. It's in the north. Have you ever been in Chile before?

Karen: No, I haven't, and so I am very excited to have this opportunity. This is actually the first time I'll have ever been in South America.

Professor: Oh, you should have someone show you around.

Karen: Yeah.

Professor: Are you going to spend any time in Santiago?

Karen: No, actually. It's too bad, but I take a plane more or less right after getting into Santiago, and I head straight to Arica for this conference.

Professor: Well, really you are lucky, because Arica is a much more pleasant city than Santiago. Santiago is very polluted and there is too much traffic.

Karen: Really? I didn't know that.

Professor: Yes, we have a real problem with pollution in our capital. So... anyway, you didn't tell me what kind of conference you are going to.

Karen: Oh, it's a conference for English teachers!

Professor: Oh, you are an English teacher! How is my English?

VOCABULARY PROFILE FOR LESON 7:

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	484	86.7384%
1001 - 2000 words	18	3.2258%
AWL words	17	3.0466%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	39	6.9892%

1 - 1000: a about actually after also am an and any anyway are around at bad be beautiful because been before better burn but can capital cause city class companies conditions country course degree did didn different direct do eat eaten english ever example fine first for found friendly from get getting going good got great grow have haven head hear how i important improperly in interesting into is it kind know less like live lived ll m make making masters me more most much my near no north not noticed now number of oh opportunity or our particularly people plants pleasant possible problem produce produced re ready real really reason receive right s should show so someone south speak special spend states summer sun sunlight t take teacher teachers teaching tell than that the them there this time to too u under united university us ve very was water we well what when where which while why will winter with yes you your

1001 - 2000: agricultural attending correct especially excited fruit lot lucky nice plane probably shade straight taller thank

AWL: assume conducting conference consult economy exports method methods professional research strategically structures

UWL: (none)

Off-list: ah america american arica chile chilean favorable polluted pollution professor radiation santiago supermarkets texas tomatoes traffic wow yeah

SCRIPT FOR LESSON 8:



Receptionist: Good afternoon

Karen: Good afternoon.

Receptionist: Checking in?

Karen: Yes. Name's Fischer. F-i-s-c-h-e-r.

Receptionist: ...Karen?

Karen: That's right.

Receptionist: (checking on computer) I see you're staying here for 5 nights...

Karen: That's right.

Receptionist: Single room.

Karen: Yes.

Receptionist: All right... (typing into computer) I just need a credit card from you.

Karen: Here you go.

Receptionist: Thank you.

Receptionist: So what brings you to Arica?

Karen: I'm going to a conference. The Ninth International Conference for English Teachers. It's at the University of Tarapaca

Receptionist: Tarapacá.

Karen: Oh, is that how you pronounce it? Ha, ha, it kind of sounds like a bird call ¡Tarapacá!

Receptionist: I think it's an Aymara word, but I'm not really sure what it means.

Karen: Well can you tell me how to get there? Is it far?

Receptionist: The university? No, it's not far. It only takes 10 or 15 minutes by bus. The bus leaves right outside the hotel.

Karen: Can I go there by taxi?

Receptionist: Yes, of course.

Karen: I think I would rather do that. The company will pay for the taxi anyway, I see they're not that expensive. I took a taxi from the airport.

Receptionist: No, taxis aren't so expensive. And we can call a taxi for you from the hotel.

Karen: That'll be great. But I'm not going until tomorrow morning.

Receptionist: Of course. And would you like a wake-up call, then?

Karen: Yes, that would be nice. Let's say for seven.

Receptionist: Seven o'clock. Very well. So... are you an English teacher?

Karen: Sorry? Oh, no, I'm not. I mean, I was, but now I am working for a publishing company.

Receptionist: I love English.

Karen: Well, your English is excellent.

Receptionist: Thanks! So what books are you selling?

Karen: Actually, I'm not selling books; I'm selling educational CDs.

Receptionist: Oh yeah? Do you have a sample of one of your CDs that you could show me?

Karen: Er... maybe. I'll have to see if I have any left over after I give them to my potential clients.

Receptionist: Yeah, see if you don't have any extras. Because if you do, I would love to see one.

Karen: I'll try to remember.

Receptionist: Thank you! So... do you need any help getting your bags to your room?

Karen: No, I think I'm okay. Thanks very much anyway.

Receptionist: Are you sure? Pablo here can help you.

Karen: Well... alright. I guess I could use some help. ...Hola, Pablo.

VOCABULARY PROFILE FOR LESSON 8

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	340	85.2130%
1001 - 2000 words	31	7.7694%
AWL words	7	1.7544%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	21	5.2632%

1 - 1000: a actually after all am an and any anyway are aren at be because bird books brings but by c call can company could course do don e english expensive f far for from get getting give go going good great h have help here how i if in into is it just kind leaves left let like ll love m maybe me mean means minutes morning much my name need nights ninth no not now o of oh on one only or outside over pay r rather re really remember right room s say see selling seven show single so some sounds staying sure t takes teacher teachers tell that the them then there they think to took try typing university until up use very was we well what will word working would yes you your

1001 - 2000: afternoon bags bus card checking clock educational excellent extras guess hotel international nice pronounce sample sorry taxi taxis thank thanks tomorrow wake

AWL: computer conference credit potential publishing

UWL: (none)

Off-list: airport alright arica aymara cds clients er fischer ha hola karen okay pablo
tarapac tarapaca yeah

SCRIPT FOR LESSON 9: INSCRIBIÉNDOSE EN EL CONGRESO (REGISTERING AT THE CONFERENCE)



Karen: Hello, my name is Karen Fisher. I have one of the commercial booths here at the conference.

Joe: Hold on one moment, please. Let me look you up... Could you give me your name again, please?

Karen: Fisher. Karen Fisher. I am representing McBride-Will Publishers.

Joe: Oh... uh. I'm very sorry, but I don't see your name here.

Karen: Are you kidding? But we registered for the conference months ago! Could you please look up my registration again?

Joe: Sure, I'd be glad to... but... no, I'm sorry. Your name is not in the system.

Karen: This is ridiculous!

Joe: Do you have the receipt for the registration?

Karen: Yes, it's right here.

Joe: Hmm. Well, there's definitely some problem here. Would mind waiting for a moment? I'll go ask my supervisor about this.

Karen: Sure.

(half whispering, to self) ...Man, I can't believe this! What I am supposed to do? Just hang out in Chile and try to sell the CDs on the street? I could go to the market place and

try to sell them there. Yeah, that's a good idea. I'll just stand next to the guys selling fish...

Joe: What's that?

Karen: Oh, you're back. Hi.

Joe: Hello. I'm sorry to keep you waiting. We found your registration. We had your last name as McBride-Will and the company name as Fisher! Our apologies! Could you sign here, please...

Karen: Yes, sure.

Joe: And this is for you...

Karen: What's this?

Joe: It's the registration packet. In here you can find all kinds of information. We have the schedule, which has information about all of the presentations and a list of all the participants. It's also got some good information about Arica, including where you can go to check your email.

Karen: Oh great.

Joe: Yeah, that is pretty important to a lot of people.

Karen: Yeah, when you're away from your computer you really realize just how dependent you are on email.

Joe: There is a computer lab here on campus where participants can go, but the time is rather restricted there. On this sheet here, we've listed a couple cyber cafés where you can go.

Karen: Uh huh.

Joe: In the packet we've also included of course information about your booth, times for set up, close down, hours of operation, the names and contact information of all the other companies that are set up, and so forth.

Karen: Sounds great.

Joe: And *this* is very important. This is your ID. This will let you get in and out of the conference area and the display area. You want to keep ahold of that. There is a fee for replacing it.

Karen: Oh, gee, sounds important.

Joe: Were you wanting to take part in any of the special activities?

Karen: Special activities?

Joe: Yes, let's see... Here, on this sheet you can see a list of them. We have sponsored coffee hours...

Karen: Sponsored?

Joe: Yes, the participants have coffee breaks every two hours, and each coffee break is sponsored by one of the companies. For example the first one today is sponsored by Longman Publishers.

Karen: Longman! Our competition!

Joe: Exactly. So there are a couple of coffee breaks still not taken, and I'm wondering if McBride-Will wouldn't like to sponsor one. It's a great way to get your name mentioned, and you can also do a raffle or some other special activity if you want during that time.

Karen: Gee, I don't know.

Joe: Well think about it and come back here and let me know if you decide to do one of these.

Karen: Okay, thanks, I'll think about it.

VOCABULARY PROFILE FOR LESSON 9:

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	495	83.0537%
1001 - 2000 words	29	4.8658%
AWL words	25	4.1946%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	47	7.8859%

1 - 1000: a about activities activity again ago all also am and any are as ask at away back be believe break breaks but by can close come companies company could course d decide dependent do don down each every example find first fish for forth found from get give glad go good got great had hang has have here hold hours how i idea if important in included including is it just keep kinds know last let like ll look m man market me mentioned mind moment months my name names next no not of oh on one operation or other our out part people place please pretty problem rather re realize really receipt representing right s see sell selling set sign so some sounds special stand still street supposed sure system t take taken that the them there these think this time times to today try two up ve very waiting want wanting way we well were what when where which will wondering would wouldn yes you your

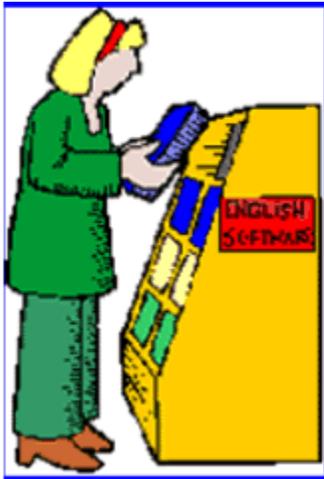
1001 - 2000: apologies check coffee commercial competition during exactly hello hi information list listed lot replacing sheet sorry thanks

AWL: area computer conference contact couple definitely display fee participants publishers registered registration restricted schedule

UWL: (none)

Off-list: ahold arica booth booths caf campus cds chile cyber email fisher gee guys hmmm huh id karen kidding lab longman mcbride okay packet presentations raffle ridiculous sponsor sponsored supervisor uh yeah

SCRIPT FOR LESSON 10: TRABAJANDO (WORKING)



Karen: Hi. If there are any questions I can answer for you, just let me know.

Client: Yes... I would like to know, is your program meant for individual study... or is it meant for using in class?

Karen: It can be used either way. The lessons are designed to parallel the lessons in the McBride-Will English series...

Client: Oh yes, our school uses that book.

Karen: Do you? That's great. What kind of school do you work at?

Client: It's a school called Inglês Pra Você. It's a private institute in Brazil. We teach adults mostly, but we deal with all ages.

Karen: What size classes do you have?

Client: Typically about ten to fifteen students per class. Or that's what we prefer. Sometimes we have to go with fewer.

Karen: And are you more interested in material to use in class...?

Client: Yes, that is of interest to us. None of our teachers are native English speakers and sometimes we feel that we need to provide our students with more opportunities to hear English spoken by native English speakers but at a level that they can understand.

Karen: Our series offers short DVD clips that come with a teacher's manual with suggestions on how to use the clips in interactive exercises in the classrooms.

Client: I would like to see that.

Karen: Excellent. Please take one of our demo CDs. It includes a video of one of these clips being used as a group activity. You can also see sample follow-up activities that the students can do on the computer. Do you have smart classrooms?

Client: ...What is that? Smart classrooms?

Karen: Oh, like do you have computers in your classrooms?

Client: In some classrooms we have one, with a projector so that everyone can see what's on the screen. This is the kind of classroom that we would like software for. We also have a computer lab, but we don't use that for class time. We use that for self study time. The students go in there to practice on their own. For that, we have plenty of software already.

Karen: Yes, most educational software is created with what could be called the "student-tutor model." There's room for just *one* student and no teacher. There's no interaction at all. We at McBride-Will believe that language education should be interactive and communicative. We believe that technology should be used to *enhance* human communication. That is what language is all about, after all.

Client: Exactly! Exactly. It's exciting to hear a representative from a software company saying that. I have been pretty disappointed with most of the English-as-a-foreign-language software that I have seen.

Karen: Yes, well, some of those programs allow students to practice certain skills over and over, some of that has its place.

Client: Yes, yes. It has its place. That's why we have our computer lab, so that students can go in and practice this kind of thing.

Karen: But for the classroom...

Client: But for the classroom, yes, you really need something quite different.

Karen: That's what we specialize in.

Client: I'm very interested.

Karen: I'm doing a product demonstration at 3:00.

Client: Are you? Okay!

Karen: Yes, so come back then, and you will be able to see what kinds of activities our DVDs have to offer. And like I said, there is more of that on the demo CD. Let me give you my card... and do you have a card you could leave with me?

Client: Yes, here you go...

Karen: Oh, Belo Horizonte.

Client: It's right in the middle of Brazil.

Karen: I should mention too... as you can see on my card, I'm the sales representative for South America, and I will be traveling in the area quite a bit. I expect to be in Brazil in October. We could arrange for me to go to your institute and either do further product demonstrations, or depending on where we are by that time, help your school get set up with our software and train the teachers.

Client: Very well, Ms. Fischer. I like that idea very much. So I will be seeing you again here at 3:00 and then probably again in October at my school!

Karen: Belo Horizonte. Does that mean beautiful horizon?

Client: Yes, it does. And it's true. So you see, you must come and visit our school!

VOCABULARY PROFILE FOR LESSON 10

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 1000 words	622	86.2691%
1001 - 2000 words	30	4.1609%
AWL words	24	3.3287%
UWL words	0	0.0000%
Off-list words	45	6.2413%

1 - 1000: a able about activities activity after again ages all allow already also and answer any are as at back be beautiful been being believe book but by called can certain class classes come company could deal depending different do does doing don either english everyone exercises expect feel fewer fifteen follow for foreign from further get give go

great group has have hear help here how human i idea if in includes interest interested is
 it its just kind kinds know language leave let level like m material me mean meant
 mention middle more most mostly ms much must my native need no none october of
 offer offers oh on one opportunities or our over own per place please pretty private
 product provide questions quite really representative right room s said sales saying school
 see seeing seen set short should size so some something sometimes south speakers
 specialize spoken student students study suggestions t take teach teacher teachers ten that
 the their then there these they thing this those time to too train traveling true understand
 up us use used uses using very visit way we well what where why will with work would
 yes you your

1001 - 2000: arrange bit card disappointed education educational exactly excellent
 exciting hi horizon lessons model plenty practice prefer probably program programs
 sample screen self skills typically

AWL: adults area communication communicative computer computers created
 demonstration demonstrations designed enhance individual institute interaction
 interactive manual parallel series technology

UWL: (none)

Off-list: america belo brazil cd cds classroom classrooms clips demo dvd dvds fischer
 horizonte ingl lab mcbride okay pra projector smart software tutor video voc

APPENDIX K: LESSON QUESTIONS IN SPANISH

Correct answers are marked with an asterisk.

LESSON 1, FIRST HALF

1. Karen está en esa oficina para...
visitar a su amiga
*tener una entrevista de trabajo
2. Actualmente Karen
*tiene trabajo
no tiene trabajo
3. Antes de hacer la entrevista con Mr. Welsch, Karen tiene que hacer una entrevista con la secretaria
*llenar formularios
4. Hasta el momento, Karen es la única persona con entrevista para el trabajo
*la octava persona con entrevista para el trabajo

LESSON 1, SECOND HALF

5. La persona que va a entrevistar a Karen
*se llama Mr. Welsch
es mujer
6. La secretaria dice que Mr. Welsch es muy ocupado
*muy simpático
7. En los formularios, Karen tiene que poner
*su historia de empleo
nombres de referencia
8. ¿Qué hace Karen para el Departamento de Inglés en la Universidad?
Enseña inglés
*Crea materiales pedagógicos

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 1

9. ¿Crees tú que Karen le dio una buena impresión a la secretaria? ¿Por qué sí o por qué no?

10. ¿Qué tipo de trabajo puede ser que Karen está solicitando?

LESSON 2, FIRST HALF

1. ¿Qué experiencia laboral previa menciona Karen?

Administración

*Enseñanza

2. ¿Qué dice Karen con respecto a su español?

Antes enseñaba español en la escuela secundaria

*Habla lo suficiente para sobrevivir

3. ¿A dónde ha viajado Karen antes?

*Japón y Corea

Canadá y el Caribe

4. ¿Conoce Karen Chile?

Estuvo una vez de vacaciones en Chile en la escuela secundaria

*Nunca ha estado, pero su amiga dice que es un lugar fascinante

LESSON 2, SECOND HALF

5. ¿Qué dice Karen que es la razón de porqué está solicitando este trabajo?

Porque este trabajo paga más

*Porque el proyecto en el cual está involucrada pronto terminará

6. ¿Qué diferencia hay entre su trabajo actual y el al cual está solicitando?

*En su trabajo actual, escribe materiales pedagógicos; en el nuevo, vendería materiales pedagógicos

En su trabajo actual, está programando; en el nuevo, escribiría los materiales

7. ¿Qué ha hecho Karen últimamente como parte de su trabajo?

*Ha probado la eficacia de los exámenes con estudiantes

Ha enseñado inglés como segundo idioma

8. ¿Cuál desventaja hay con un trabajo como profesora que Karen menciona?

Los estudiantes son muy difíciles de controlar

*No puede viajar tanto

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 2

9. ¿Qué parte de la experiencia laboral de Karen le va a servir para parecer el mejor candidato?

10. Describe el tono con que hablan Karen y el Señor Welsch.

LESSON 3, FIRST HALF

1. ¿Qué van a hacer las personas de la compañía antes de la próxima vez que hablen con Karen?

Terminar con las otras entrevistas

*Hablar con su jefe actual

2. ¿Por qué se preocupó la amiga de que quizás Karen no hubiera dejado buena impresión?

*Porque Karen dijo que el Señor Welsch parecía muy serio

Por algo que dijo la secretaria

3. ¿Qué consejo le da la amiga a Karen?

*Piensa positivo

Llama la compañía mañana

4. ¿Cuál es la razón principal que Karen da por querer ir a la casa de Sally?

*Sally cocina muy bien

Hace mucho tiempo que no ve a Sally y a su esposo

LESSON 3, SECOND HALF

5. ¿Quién originalmente le avisó a Karen del puesto?

Su amiga con quien está hablando por teléfono

*Su jefe actual

6. ¿Qué preocupación expresa Karen con respecto al puesto?

*Teme querer el puesto demasiado

Teme enamorarse de alguien y luego no querer viajar

7. ¿Cuál es una de las cosas que la amiga dice que hay de nuevo en su vida?

*Llovió hoy

Habló hoy con su amiga mutua, Sally

8. ¿Qué dice Karen del esposo de Sally?

Él va a estar feliz cuando sepa de su nuevo trabajo
 *Hace mucho tiempo que no lo ve

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 3

9. ¿Cómo describes tú el tipo de conversación que Karen tuvo con su amiga?
10. ¿Crees tú que es probable que Karen y su amiga viajen juntas si le dan el puesto a Karen? ¿Por qué sí o por qué no?

LESSON 4, FIRST HALF

1. ¿Con quiénes se va a reunir Karen el jueves?
 Con Mr. Welsch y la secretaria
 *Con Mr. Welsch, el Director de Recursos Humanos, y el Director de Ventas
2. ¿Cuándo quiere la compañía que Karen empiece?
 *De inmediato
 En dos semanas
3. ¿Qué tiene que ocurrir antes de que Karen empiece sus viajes?
 *Tiene que terminar el entrenamiento
 Tiene que terminar un proyecto con su trabajo actual
4. ¿Qué pensaba Karen sobre cómo iba a aprender español?
 *Pensaba usar un CD-ROM hecho por la compañía
 Pensaba estudiar con su tutor preferido

LESSON 4, SECOND HALF

5. ¿Por qué cree Karen que su jefe le va a permitir ir a la reunión del jueves?
 Porque él es amigo de Mr. Welsch
 *Porque él entiende que Karen necesita un trabajo
6. ¿Qué tiene que llevar Karen el jueves?
 *Su carnet
 Otra copia de su curriculum
7. ¿Qué hará la compañía para ayudarle a Karen con su español?
 Puede o usar un CD-ROM o tomar clases
 *Las clases son gratis, pero ella tiene que usar su propio tiempo para hacerlas
8. Cuando Karen dice, “Oh, no, I’m open,” al final, ¿qué quiere decir?

Que no le importa la hora de la reunión del jueves

*Que no le importa quién sea su tutor

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 4

9. Si fueras Karen, ¿qué pensarías después de esa conversación?

10. ¿Cuáles sugerencias adicionales le harías a un estadounidense que está preparándose para ir a Sudamérica?

LESSON 5, FIRST HALF

1. ¿Cuándo es el congreso adonde Karen irá?

En una semana y media

*En un mes y medio

2. ¿Qué tipo de congreso es?

*Para profesores de inglés

Para administradores de universidades

3. ¿Cómo va a participar en el congreso Karen?

Enseñará una corta lección de muestra

*Hará demostraciones de su producto

4. ¿Qué es el propósito de regalar CDs de muestra?

Para mostrar la generosidad de la compañía

*Porque así es más fácil hablar con la gente

LESSON 5, SECOND HALF

5. ¿Qué dice Mr. Welsch sobre Chile?

*Que no es un país muy peligroso

Que es invierno en Chile cuando es verano en EE.UU.

6. ¿Por qué es Chile, según Doug, un buen mercado para su producto?

Por el Tratado de Libre Comercio

*Porque en Chile hay muchos computadores pero no hay tanto software

7. ¿Qué dice Doug sobre Brasil, Perú y otros países?

*Que Karen debe ofrecer visitar a la gente en esos países

Que Karen debe averiguar si hay gente de esos países en el congreso

8. ¿Por qué necesita Karen conseguir las tarjetas de la otra gente?
 Para que pueda mandarle CDs de muestra
 *Para mandarles mensaje por correo electrónico más tarde

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 5

9. ¿Qué imaginas tú será el próximo paso en el entrenamiento profesional de Karen?
10. ¿Cuáles otros trucos podría usar Karen para ganar la atención de clientes potenciales en el congreso?

LESSON 6, FIRST HALF

1. ¿Por qué llamó Karen a esa agencia de viajes?
 Porque ya ha trabajado con Gail antes
 *Porque es la agencia oficial del editorial donde Karen trabaja
2. ¿Por qué hablaron Gail y Karen de Perú?
 *Porque Gail pensó que Karen podría hacer escala en Lima en vez de Santiago
 Porque el último viaje que Gail reservó fue un viaje a Perú
3. ¿Aproximadamente cuánto iba a costar el pasaje?
 US \$700
 *US \$1700
4. ¿Cuál es la mejor ciudad que visitar, según Gail?
 *Río de Janeiro
 Paris

LESSON 6, SECOND HALF

5. ¿Qué is McBride-Will?
 El nombre de la agencia de viajes donde Gail trabaja
 *El nombre de la editorial donde Karen trabaja
6. ¿Por qué dice Gail que la gente de Río probablemente lee libros?
 Porque así Karen puede conocer a gente inteligente
 *Porque Karen le podría venderle libros
7. ¿Ha estado Gail en Río?
 *Sí

No

8. ¿Por qué Gail va a llamar a Karen en la tarde?

*Para decirle si ha encontrado un mejor precio
Para avisarle cuando tenga el pasaje comprado

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 6

9. Describe como te imaginas a Gail.

10. ¿Te parece que Gail es buena agente? ¿Por qué sí o por qué no?

LESSON 7, FIRST HALF

1. ¿En cuál estado vivió el profesor?

*En Tejas
En California

2. ¿En cuál planta se especializa el profesor?

La manzana
*El tomate

3. ¿Por qué estuvo el profesor en EE.UU.?

Para visitar a familia
*Para asistir a un congreso

4. ¿Qué dice el profesor en cuanto al hecho de que Karen no va a pasar tiempo en Santiago?

*Dice que tiene suerte porque Santiago está demasiado contaminado
Se ofrece como guía por si algún día regresa a Chile

LESSON 7, SECOND HALF

5. ¿Cómo describió el profesor a la gente de la universidad en Tejas donde estudió?

Amistosa y generosa
*Amistosa y profesional

6. ¿Contra cuál problema lucha el profesor?

Sequías
*Radiación

7. ¿Qué otro trabajo tiene el profesor?

*Consultor

Autor

8. ¿Qué otro problema, más que la contaminación, tiene Santiago, según lo que dijo el profesor?

*Tráfico

Crimen

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 7

9. Describe la actitud del profesor hacia Karen.

10. ¿Crees tú que Karen y el profesor seguirán conversando durante la mayoría del vuelo?

LESSON 8, FIRST HALF

1. ¿Qué dijo Karen del nombre Tarapacá?

*Que suena como un pájaro cantando

Preguntó si era un nombre indígena

2. ¿Cómo sugiere la recepcionista que Karen vaya a la Universidad?

A pie

*Por micro

3. ¿Qué favor le pide la recepcionista a Karen?

*Que le regale un CD-ROM

Que le hable siempre en inglés

4. ¿Cómo se llama el botones?

*Pablo

No hay botones

LESSON 8, SECOND HALF

5. ¿Cómo llegó Karen del aeropuerto al hotel?

Alguien del hotel la recogió

*Tomó un taxi

6. Karen decide que prefiere ir a la Universidad por taxi. ¿Qué comentario hace sobre los taxis cuando lo decide?

Que los taxis de Chile no parecen ser tan peligrosos como los taxis de México

*Que la editorial va a pagar los costos de su transporte

7. ¿A qué hora se va a levantar Karen mañana?

A las 5:00

*A las 7:00

8. ¿Qué dice Karen del inglés de la recepcionista?

Que se entiende muy bien

*Que es excelente

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 8

9. ¿Qué le sugerirías a Karen que haga su primera noche en Arica?

10. Describe como crees que Karen se siente en ese momento.

LESSON 9, FIRST HALF

1. ¿Cuál problema encuentra Karen al principio?

*No pueden encontrar su nombre

Dicen que no ha pagado la registración

2. ¿Qué hace Karen cuando el hombre se va para hablar con su supervisor?

Habla con otra persona en la cola

*Se habla sola

3. ¿Qué dice Karen que echa de menos?

El tipo de organización que tienen en los EE.UU.

*Su correo electrónico

4. Al final, Karen dice que tiene que pensar sobre algo. ¿Qué es?

*Si su compañía quiere patrocinar un “coffee break”

Si quiere registrarse para asistir a los “coffee breaks”

LESSON 9, SECOND HALF

5. ¿Por qué no pudieron encontrar el nombre de Karen al principio?

Estaba registrada bajo el nombre de su jefe

*Le tenían el apellido como McBride-Will

6. Cuando Karen se habla a sí misma, ¿dónde dice que va a ir a vender sus CDs?

*En el mercado

El el centro comercial

7. ¿Qué pasa si pierde su tarjeta de identidad?

Tiene que hacer la registraci3n de nuevo

*Tiene que pagar por reemplazarla

8. ¿Quién patriciona el primer coffee break del día?

*La mayor competencia de McBride-Will

La Universidad de Tarapacá

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 9

9. ¿Qué pasa en este diálogo que muestra que Karen está nerviosa?

10. ¿Crees tú que es buena idea que McBride-Will patricione una actividad en el congreso? ¿Por qué sí o por qué no?

LESSON 10, FIRST HALF

1. ¿Dónde trabaja el cliente?

En una universidad

*En un instituto privado

2. ¿Cuál texto de inglés usa el instituto del cliente?

Una variedad de libros

*La serie de la editorial de Karen

3. ¿Cuál razón menciona el cliente por querer más materiales en inglés?

*Porque sus profesores no son hablantes nativos de inglés

Porque acaban de construir un laboratorio de computadores

4. ¿Qué significa “Smart classroom”?

Clases avanzadas

*Salas con computadores

LESSON 10, SECOND HALF

5. ¿Qué edad tienen los alumnos de Inglês Pra Você?

*Hay de todas edades

Solamente adultos estudian allá

6. ¿Cuál defecto tiene la mayoría de los programas de inglés, según el cliente?

No hay buenos programas para estudiantes más avanzados

*No permiten interacción entre más de un estudiante, ni con el profesor

7. ¿Qué van a hacer Karen y el cliente a las 3:00?

*Juntarse para una demostración del software de McBride-Will

Juntarse para que Karen conozca a la jefa del cliente

8. ¿Obtuvo Karen la tarjeta del cliente?

*Sí, y es así que Karen se entera de que el cliente trabaja en Belo Horizonte

No, pero el cliente le va a dar una a las 3:00

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 10

9. ¿Qué piensas de la técnica que tiene Karen para hablar con clientes potenciales? ¿Le tendrías consejos para mejorarse?

10. ¿Te parece que el cliente le habla sinceramente a Karen? ¿Cuáles indicaciones hay de que sí o de que no?

APPENDIX L: LESSON QUESTIONS, ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Correct answers are marked with an asterisk.

LESSON 1, FIRST HALF

1. Karen is in the office to
visit a friend

*have a job interview

2. Karen currently

*has a job

does not a job

3. Before the interview with Mr. Welsch, Karen has to
have an interview with the secretary

*fill forms out

4. So far Karen is

the only who is interviewing for the job

*the eighth person interviewing for the job

LESSON 1, SECOND HALF

5. The person who is going to interview Karen

*is named Mr. Welsch

is a woman

6. The secretary says that Mr. Welsch is
very busy

*very nice

7. On the forms, Karen has to put

*her employment history

references

8. What does Karen do in the English Department at the University?

She teaches English

*She creates teaching materials

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 1

9. Do you think Karen gave the secretary a good impression of herself? Why or why not?

10. What kind of job might Karen be applying for?

LESSON 2, FIRST HALF

1. What previous work experience does Karen mention?

Administration

*Teaching

2. What does Karen say about her Spanish?

She used to teach it in high school

*She speaks enough to get by

3. Where has Karen traveled to before?

*Japan and Korea

Canada and the Caribbean

4. Is Karen familiar with Chile?

She went there once on vacation during high school

*She has never been there, but her friend says that it is a fascinating place

LESSON 2, SECOND HALF

5. Why does Karen say that she is applying for this job?

Because this job pays more

*Because the project that she is involved in will end soon

6. What is the difference between her current job and the job that she is applying for?

*In her current job, she writes teaching materials; in the new one, she would sell teaching materials

7. What has Karen done recently as part of her job?

*She has piloted the exams on students

She has taught English as a second language

8. What disadvantage to teaching does Karen mention?

The students aren't very easy to control

*One can't travel as much

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 2

9. What part of Karen's work experience will help her seem the best candidate?
10. Describe the tone of voice that Karen and Mr. Welsch speak in.

LESSON 3, FIRST HALF

1. What are the people at the company going to do before they talk to Karen again?

Finish up with all of the interviews

*Talk with her current boss

2. Why was Karen's friend worried that perhaps Karen hadn't given a good first impression?

*Because Karen said that Mr. Welsch seemed very serious

Because of something that the secretary said

3. What advice did the friend give Karen?

*Think positively

Call the company tomorrow

4. What is the main reason why Karen wants to go to Sally's house?

*Sally cooks very well

It's been a long time since she has seen Sally and her husband

LESSON 3, SECOND HALF

5. Who originally told Karen about the job opening?

The friend she is talking on the phone with

*Her current boss

6. What worry does Karen express about the job?

*She fears wanting the job too much

She is worried that she will fall in love with someone and then not want to travel

7. What is one thing that the friend lists as being new in her life?

*It rained today

She spoke with their mutual friend Sally

8. What did Karen say about Sally's husband?

He will be happy when he hears about the new job

*It's been a long time since she has seen him

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 3

9. How would you describe the type of conversation that Karen had with her friend?
10. Do you think that it is likely that Karen and her friend will travel together if Karen gets the job? Why or why not?

LESSON 4, FIRST HALF

1. Who is Karen going to meet with on Thursday?
With Mr. Welsch and the secretary
*With Mr. Welsch, the Director of Human Resources, and the Head of Sales
2. When does the company want Karen to start?
*Immediately
In two weeks
3. What happens before Karen begins her travels?
*She has to finish training
She has to finish the project that she is working on at her current job
4. How was Karen thinking that she would learn Spanish?
*She planned to use a CD-ROM made by the company
She planned to study with her favorite tutor

LESSON 4, SECOND HALF

5. Why does Karen believe that her boss will let her go to the meeting on Thursday?
Because he is a friend of Mr. Welsch
*Because he understands that Karen needs a job
6. What does Karen have to take with her on Thursday?
*Her ID
Another copy of her resumé
7. What will the company do to help Karen learn Spanish?
She can either use a CD-ROM or take classes
*The classes are free, but she has to do them on her own time
8. When Karen says, “Oh, no, I’m open,” at the end, what does she mean?
That she doesn’t care when they meet on Thursday
*That she doesn’t care who her tutor is

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 4

9. If you were Karen, what would you think after that conversation?
10. What additional advice would you give someone from the United States who was getting ready to go to South America?

LESSON 5, FIRST HALF

1. When is the conference that Karen will attend?
In a week and a half
*In a month and a half
2. What type of conference is it?
*For teachers of English
For university administrators
3. In what way will Karen participate in the conference?
She will teach a short demo class
*She will demonstrate her product
4. What is the point of giving away sample CDs?
To show the company's generosity
*Because that makes it easier to talk to people

LESSON 5, SECOND HALF

5. What does Mr. Welsch say about Chile?
*That it isn't a very dangerous country
That it is winter in Chile when it is summer in the United States
6. Why is Chile, according to Doug, a good market for their product?
Because of the Free Trade Agreement
*Because in Chile they have a lot of computers but not a lot of software
7. What does Doug say about Brazil, Peru and other countries?
*That Karen ought to offer to visit people in those countries
That Karen should find out if there are people from those countries going to the conference
8. Why does Karen need to get other peoples' business cards?
So she can send them sample CDs
*So she can send them e-mails later on

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 5

9. What do you imagine will be the next step in Karen's professional training?
10. What other tricks could Karen use to get the attention of potential clients at the conference?

LESSON 6, FIRST HALF

1. Why did Karen call that travel agency?
Because she has worked with Gail before
*Because it is the official agency of the publisher where Karen works
2. Why did Gail mention Peru to Karen?
*Because Gail thought that Karen could switch planes in Lima instead of Santiago
Because the last trip that Gail reserved was a trip to Peru
3. About how much is the ticket going to cost?
US \$700
*US \$1700
4. What is the best city to visit, according to Gail?
*Rio
Paris

LESSON 6, SECOND HALF

5. What is McBride-Will?
The name of the travel agency where Gail works
*The name of the publisher where Karen works
6. Why does Gail say that people probably read books in Rio?
Because that way Karen can meet intelligent people
*Because Karen could sell them books
7. Has Gail been to Rio?
*Yes
No
8. Why will Gail call Karen in the afternoon?
*To tell her if she has found a better price
To let her know when she has bought the ticket

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 6

9. Describe how you imagine Gail to be.
10. Do you think that Gail is a good agent? Why or why not?

LESSON 7, FIRST HALF

1. What state did the professor live in?
*Texas
California
2. What plant is the professor's specialty?
Apples
*Tomatoes
3. Why was the professor in the United States?
To visit his family
*To attend a conference
4. What does the professor say about Karen not spending time in Santiago?
*He says that she is lucky because Santiago is too polluted
He offers to be her guide if one day she returns to Chile

LESSON 7, SECOND HALF

5. How does the professor describe the people at the university in Texas where he studied?
Friendly and generous
*Friendly and professional
6. What problem does the professor work to fight?
Drought
*Radiation
7. What other job does the professor have?
*Consultant
Writer
8. What other problem, besides pollution, does Santiago have, according to the professor?
*Traffic
Crime

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 7

9. Describe the professor's attitude towards Karen.
10. Do you think that Karen and the professor will continue talking during most of the flight?

LESSON 8, FIRST HALF

1. What did Karen say about the name Tarapaca?
*That it sounds like a bird singing
She asked if it was an indigenous name
2. How does the receptionist suggest that Karen go to the university?
By foot
*By bus
3. What favor does the receptionist ask of Karen?
*That she give her a CD-ROM
The she always speak to her in English
4. What is the bellhop's name?
*Pablo
There is no bellhop

LESSON 8, SECOND HALF

5. How did Karen get from the airport to the hotel?
Someone from the hotel picked her up
*She took a taxi
6. Karen decides that she prefers to go to the university by taxi. What comment does she make about the taxis when she decides this?
That the taxis in Chile don't seem to be as dangerous as the taxis in Mexico
*That the publisher will pay her transportation expenses
7. What time does Karen want to wake up tomorrow?
At 5:00
*At 7:00
8. What does Karen say about the receptionist's English?
That it is easy to understand

*That it is excellent

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 8

9. What would you suggest to Karen that she do her first night in Arica?

10. Describe how you imagine that Karen feels at that moment.

LESSON 9, FIRST HALF

1. What problem does Karen run into at the beginning?

*They can't find her name

They say she hasn't paid registration

2. What does Karen do when the man goes off to talk to his supervisor?

She talks to another person in line

*She talks to herself

3. What does Karen say she misses?

The kind of organization that they have in the U.S.

*Her e-mail

4. At the end, Karen says she has to think about something. What is it?

*If her company is going to sponsor a "coffee break"

If she is going to register to go to the "coffee breaks"

LESSON 9, SECOND HALF

5. Why couldn't they find Karen's name at first?

She was registered under her boss's name

*That had her last name as being McBride-Will

6. When Karen talks to herself, where does she say she will go to sell her CDs?

*At the market

At the mall

7. What happens if she loses her ID?

She has to register again

*She has to pay for a new one

8. Who is sponsoring the first coffee break of the day?

*McBride-Will's biggest competitor

The University of Tarapaca

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 9

9. What happens in this dialogue that shows that Karen is nervous?
10. Do you think that it is a good idea that McBride-Will sponsor an activity at the conference? Why or why not?

LESSON 10, FIRST HALF

1. Where does the client work?
At a university
*At a private institute
2. Which English textbook does the client's institute use?
A variety of books
*The series that Karen's company publishes
3. What reason does the client give for wanting more materials in English?
*Because their teachers are not native English speakers
Because they have just built a language lab

LESSON 10, SECOND HALF

5. What age are the students of Inglês Pra Você?
*All ages
Only adult students
6. What problem do most English programs have, according to the client?
There aren't any good programs for more advanced learners
*They don't allow for interaction between students or with the instructor
7. What are Karen and the client going to do at 3:00?
*Get together for a demonstration of the McBride-Will software
Get together so that Karen can meet the client's boss
8. Did Karen get the client's business card?
*Yes, and that is how she found out that he works in Belo Horizonte
No, but the client is going to give her one at 3:00

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 10

9. What do you think about Karen's technique for talking to potential clients? Would you have any advice for how she could improve?

10. Does it seem to you that the client is speaking sincerely with Karen? What indications are there that he does or does not?

APPENDIX M: POST-LESSON SURVEY QUESTIONS IN SPANISH

Where there is a blank space (_____), that means that the survey answerer could write in his or her answer.

QUESTIONS ASKED TO MEMBERS OF ALL GROUPS AT LEAST ONCE

¿Qué pensaste de la duración del diálogo?

Manejable

Muy largo

Muy corto

¿Qué pensaste de la forma de hablar de [la secretaria]?

(Haz tic en todas que se apliquen)

Muy rápida

Lenta

Buena velocidad

Algo afectada/ no natural

Pronunciación clara

Tiene un acento que es difícil de entender

Otra reacción; favor de explicar: _____

¿Qué pensaste de la forma de hablar de Karen?

(Haz tic en todas que se apliquen)

Muy rápida

Lenta

Buena velocidad

Algo afectada/ no natural

Pronunciación clara

Tiene un acento que es difícil de entender

Otro; favor de explicar: _____

¿Qué pensaste de las preguntas?

Me ayudaron a procesar la información

Demasiado difíciles

Demasiado fáciles

¿Cómo te pareció el diálogo la primera vez?

Muy fácil de entender

Un desafío, pero entendí

Difícil de entender

No entendí casi nada

¿Qué pensaste de los dibujos?

Me ayudaron
Me distrajerón
Otra reacción, favor de especificar: _____

¿Pudiste mantener la atención durante el diálogo?
Sí
No

¿Te olvidaste de parte de la información mientras escuchabas?
Sí
No

¿Había muchas palabras que no reconociste?
Muchas
Algunas
No

En el espacio abajo, escribe cualquier comentario adicional sobre las lecciones que te gustaría compartir con el diseñador. Puedes comentar más sobre las preguntas de arriba, o puedes hablar de otro tema. _____

¿Tuviste que esperar mucho tiempo para que el archivo apareciera en la pantalla?
Sí
No

¿Qué tal la calidad de sonido?
Buena
Regular
Mala

¿Te pareció una conversación realista?
Sí
No
Si no, ¿por qué? _____

¿Qué piensas de la práctica de escuchar en inglés y leer y contestar en castellano?

¿Qué piensas de la práctica de ver cada pregunta solamente una vez y sólo después de escuchar el diálogo? _____

Ahora que has escuchado la voz de Karen muchas veces, ¿te parece que entiendes su voz mejor que las otras?

Sí

No, no especialmente

Comentario: _____

Estos diálogos son por lo general más largos que lo que uno normalmente escucha en este tipo de ejercicio. ¿Cuáles estrategias usas para no olvidarte del contenido de la conversación? _____

¿Qué haces cuando hay una parte que no entiendes?

(Haz tic en todas que se apliquen)

Trato de acordarme de la palabra para luego buscarla en un diccionario

No me preocupo y sigo escuchando el diálogo

Me desconcentra

No sé. Nunca me fijé en mi reacción

En esta serie de diálogos eso nunca me ha ocurrido

Trato de imaginarme lo que era por el contexto

Otra reacción; favor de explicar: _____

¿Has encontrado algo de humor en estos diálogos? _____

Describe los cambios que mejorarían esta serie de lecciones. _____

En esta serie de lecciones, escuchaste entrevistas, conversaciones telefónicas, y otras. Describe el tipo de situación que te gustaría escuchar para practicar tu comprensión auditiva. _____

En este diálogo [10], dos profesionales hablan de su especialidad. Probablemente había partes que no entendiste. ¿Cuál fue tu reacción a esta situación? _____

En estos ejercicios, uno escucha diálogos largos. ¿Crees tú que este tipo de ejercicio te puede ayudar a entrenar tu memoria de corto plazo? _____

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP C ONLY

¿Decidiste escuchar la segunda vez a la misma velocidad, o más lento?

A la misma velocidad; era fácil de entender

A la misma velocidad, aunque me fue algo de un desafío de entender

Más lento la segunda vez, y así fue mucho más fácil de entender

Más lento la segunda vez, pero aun así me costó entenderlo

Si pudieras escuchar el diálogo una tercera vez, ¿a qué velocidad te gustaría escucharlo?
A la velocidad más lenta
A la misma velocidad como la primera vez
Escuchar una tercera vez no me ayudaría

QUESTION FOR GROUP D ONLY

¿Usaste la pausa la segunda vez?
No; no me pareció necesario
No porque no entendí cómo funcionaba
¿Qué pausa?
Sí, y me ayudó a entender el diálogo mejor
Sí, pero hizo que el diálogo fuera más confuso así

APPENDIX N: POST-LESSON SURVEYS, ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Where there is a blank space (_____), that means that the survey answerer could write in his or her answer.

QUESTIONS ASKED TO MEMBERS OF ALL GROUPS AT LEAST ONCE

What did you think about the length of the dialogue?

Manageable

Very long

Very short

What did you think about the [secretary's] way of speaking? (Check all that apply)

Very fast

Slow

Good speed

Someone affected/not natural

Clear pronunciation

He/she has an accent that it's difficult to understand

Another reaction; please explain: _____

What did you think of Karen's way of speaking? (Check all that apply)

Very fast

Slow

Good speed

Someone affected/not natural

Clear pronunciation

He/she has an accent that it's difficult to understand

Another reaction; please explain: _____

What did you think of the questions?

They helped me to a process the information

Too hard

Too easy

How did dialogue seem to you the first time?

Very easy to understand

A challenge, but I understood

Hard to understand

I understood almost nothing

What did you think of the pictures?

They helped me

They distracted me

Another reaction; please explain: _____

Were you able to maintain attention during the dialogue?

Yes

No

Did you forget some of the information while you were listening?

Yes

No

Were there many words that you did not recognize?

Many

Some

No

In the space below, write any additional comments about the lessons that you would like to share with the designer. You can comment further about the questions above, or you can talk about something else. _____

Did you have to wait a long time for the file to appear on the screen?

Yes

No

How was the sound quality?

Good

So-so

Poor

Did this strike you as a realistic conversation?

Yes

No

If not, why not? _____

What do you think of the practice of listening in English and reading and answering in Spanish? _____

What do you think of the practice of seeing each question only once and only after hearing the dialogue? _____

Now that you have heard Karen's voice many times, does it seem to you that you understand her voice better than others?

Yes

No, not especially

Commentary: _____

These dialogues are on the whole longer than what would normally be in this kind of exercise. What strategies do you use in order not to forget the content of the conversation? _____

What do you do when there is a word that you don't understand? (Check all that apply)

I tried to remember the words so that I can look it up later in a dictionary

I don't worry about it and I keep listening to the dialogue

I become distracted

I don't know. I never noticed my reaction

In this series of dialogues that has never happened to me

I tried to imagine what it was given the context

Another reaction; please explain: _____

Have you found that these dialogues have a sense of humor? _____

Describe the changes that would better this series of lessons. _____

In this series of lessons, you listen to interviews, telephone conversations, and others.

Describe the type of situation that you would like to hear for practicing your listening comprehension. _____

In this dialog [10], to professional talk about their specialty. Probably there were many parts that you did not understand. What was your reaction to this situation?

In these exercises, one listens to long dialogues. Do you think that this kind of exercise helps train your short-term memory? _____

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP C ONLY

Did you decide to listen the second time to the same speed, or slower?

The same speed; it was easy to understand

The same speed, even though it was something of a challenge to understand

Slower the second time, and that way it was much easier to understand

Slower the second time, but even then it was still difficult to understand

If you could listen to the dialogue of third time, at what speed would you like to hear it?

At the slower speed

At the faster speed like the first time

Listening a third time would not help me

QUESTION FOR GROUP D ONLY

Did you use the pause the second time?

No; it didn't seem necessary

No, because I didn't understand how it worked

What pause?

Yes, and it helps me to understand the dialogue better

Yes, but it made the dialogue harder to understand that way

APPENDIX O: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN SPANISH

1. ¿Qué nivel de inglés tienes? ¿Cuál clase? ¿Cuál es tu especialidad?
2. ¿Haces mucho fuera de tus clases para estudiar inglés?
3. ¿Por qué quieres aprender inglés?
4. ¿Tienes un talento especial para aprender idiomas?
5. ¿Cuál área es la más difícil para ti: el hablar, el escribir, el leer, o el entender el inglés hablado?
6. ¿Qué parte de la comprensión auditiva más te da problemas? ¿la gramática? el vocabulario? los acentos de los que hablan? la velocidad?
7. ¿Qué haces tú para mejorar tu habilidad de entender el inglés hablado?
8. No hay conexión entre estas lecciones y lo que haces en tu clase de inglés. ¿Cómo te afecta eso?
9. ¿Son los ejercicios en computadora más fáciles que sus lecciones en otras partes de tu curso? ¿O son más difíciles?
10. ¿Cuáles aspectos de las lecciones en computadora te parecen bien?
11. ¿Cuáles aspectos de las lecciones en computadora no te gustan?
12. ¿Cómo se podría cambiar el formato de las lecciones para que fueran más didácticas?
13. Describe cómo tú lo hiciste para entender los diálogos. ¿Qué pasa en tu mente cuando escuchas inglés?
14. ¿Te encontraste a veces no prestando atención? ¿Sintiéndote frustrado? ¿Qué hiciste para remediar esas situaciones?
15. Mira esta lista de estrategias del aprendizaje. Verás que para cada estrategia, hay un espacio donde indicar si alguna vez has usado esa estrategia, y si la usas para otros ejercicios y/o para los ejercicios de comprensión oral que estás haciendo en computadora como parte de mi estudio. Pon un tic in la primera columna si usas tal estrategia para tu aprendizaje en general del inglés, y pon un tic en la segunda

columna si has usado esa estrategia mientras hacías uno de los ejercicios en computadora en conexión con este estudio.

16. (Luego) ¿Cuándo empezaste a usar estas estrategias? ¿Cómo se te ocurrió? ¿Cuál de éstas es tu favorita?
17. ¿Hay alguna estrategia que uses que no aparezca en la lista? ¿Cuál es tu favorita?

APPENDIX P: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS, ENGLISH TRANSLATION

1. What is your English level? What class are you enrolled in? What is your major?
2. Do you do much outside of English class to improve your English? If so, what?
3. Why do you want to learn English?
4. Do you have a special talent for learning languages?
5. What is the hardest area for you: listening, speaking, reading, writing?
6. What makes listening hard for you? Is it grammar? Vocabulary? People's accents? How fast they talk?
7. How do you try to improve your listening comprehension?
8. How do you feel about the lack of connection between these lessons and what you do in your English class?
9. Are the computer lessons harder or easier than other materials that you use in your English class?
10. What aspects of the computer lessons do you like?
11. What aspects of the computer lessons do you dislike?
12. How could the format of the lessons be changed in order to make them more useful to you?
13. Describe what you did in order to understand the dialogues. What happens in your mind when you listen to English.
14. Did you ever find yourself not paying attention, or getting frustrated? How did you get yourself back on track?
15. Look at this list of learning strategies. You will notice that for each strategy, there is room to tick off for either or both of two columns. Put a tick in column one if you use this strategy for your English learning in general. Put a tick in column two if you have used this strategy while doing the listening comprehension activities associated with this study.
16. [Afterwards] When did you start using these strategies? How did the idea occur to you to use them? Which one of these is your favorite one?

17. Are there any strategies that you use that do not appear on this list? Which one is your favorite?

APPENDIX Q: STRATEGY CHECKLIST IN SPANISH

Estrategia	Usada durante algún momento del proyecto	Usada en algún momento de mi proceso de aprender inglés
1. Visualizo lo que escucho		
2. Busco en el diccionario las nuevas palabras que escucho		
3. Tomo apuntes mientras escucho		
4. Trato de adivinar el significado de palabras desconocidas		
5. Me imagino lo que la otra persona va a decir más adelante		
6. Trato de no traducir palabra por palabra		
7. Me doy cuenta de cuando mi mente empieza a despistarse y me esfuerzo a poner atención nuevamente		
8. Me fijo en la gramática que entendí y trato de adivinar cómo eran las otras partes que no capté		
9. Confío plenamente en mi sentido común y lo que sé del mundo real		
10. Trato de mantenerme relajado		
11. Trato de librar me mente de prejuicios y simplemente dejar que la información entre		
12. Trato de anticipar lo que dirán o harán a continuación		
13. Trato de recordar dónde he escuchado una frase o palabra antes		
14. Me fijo en el tono de voz de el que habla		
15. Ordeno mis ideas durante las pausas de la conversación		
16. Repito para mí mismo lo que he escuchado		
17. Me enfoco en las palabras claves		
18. Trato de adivinar las preguntas que me van a hacer		

19. Una vez que veo las preguntas de comprensión, me las acuerdo y busco sus respuestas mientras escucho		
20. Dibujo o hago un mapa de lo que escucho		
21. Empiezo a pensar en inglés antes de comenzar una actividad de comprensión auditiva en inglés		
22. Me acuerdo de los sonido de lo que escuché mientras contesto las preguntas		
23. Voy con mi primera reacción y no analizo mi respuesta		

APPENDIX R: STRATEGY CHECKLIST, ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Strategy	Used at some point during this experiment	Used at some point in my English-learning career
1. I form a visual depiction of what I am hearing		
2. I look up new words that I have heard		
3. I write out notes while listening		
4. I guess the meaning of unfamiliar words		
5. I guess what the other person will say next		
6. I try not to translate word for word		
7. I notice when my mind is wandering and make myself pay attention again		
8. I focus on the grammar that I understood and guess other parts of grammar that I could not catch		
9. I rely heavily on common sense and what I know about the real world		
10. I try to make sure that I am relaxed		
11. I try to keep my mind free of preconceptions and just let the information come in		
12. I try to remember the situation and guess what will be said or happen next		
13. I try to remember where I have heard a phrase before		
14. I listen to the speakers' tone of voice		
15. I catch up with what is being said during the		

pauses		
16. I repeat to myself what I have heard		
17. I try to focus on key terms		
18. I try to guess what questions I will be asked		
19. Once I have seen the comprehension questions, I remember them and listen for their answers		
20. I draw or map out what I am hearing		
21. I start thinking in English before I start a listening activity		
22. I remember the actual sounds I heard when answering questions about the listening		
23. I go with my first reaction to a question and don't analyze my answer		

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