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The Effect of Applying the Note-Taking Strategy on Improving the Auditory Comprehension Skills in the English Language Among University Students

A B S T R A C T

The improvement of students' listening skills and note-taking strategy has a variety of effects on whether or not students succeed in their courses. Given the lecture's primary role in education, these academic abilities must be examined in terms of university students, who are expected to perform academic abilities to the highest degree. Thus, the purpose of this research is to determine how university students in English Language Teaching Departments take notes in class and how this affects their auditory comprehension skills. The questionnaire was used in obtaining the results of the study while the sample of this study consists of 60 Kurdistan university students in the English language during the academic year 2022-2023. The study found that the majority of students believe that taking notes is more beneficial than memorization for improving their ability to answer questions. According to the data, more than 70% of students acknowledged that they relied on memory to complete assignments while 60% of students stated that they lacked the time to take in-depth notes. Only 26.7% of students agreed with the conclusion that taking notes while reading interferes with their ability to concentrate. According to the results the individuals should try and practice building cognitive skills such as taking notes at all levels of their educational careers. Language teachers should use note-taking strategies to improve the listening abilities of their students. Teachers are recommended to look for creative teaching methods and practical teaching tools that promote more student involvement with the subject matter.

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تأثير تطبيق استراتيجيات تدوين الملاحظات في تحسين مهارات الفهم السمعي في اللغة الانكليزية لدى طلاب الجامعة

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الخلاصة:

إن تحسين مهارات الاستماع لدى الطلاب واستراتيجية تدوين الملاحظات له مجموعة متنوعة من التأثيرات على ما إذا كان الطلاب ينجحون في دوراتهم أم لا. نظرا للدور الأساسي للمحاضرة في التعليم، يجب فحص

هذه القدرات الأكاديمية من حيث طلاب الجامعات الذين يتوقع منهم أداء القدرات الأكاديمية إلى أعلى درجة. وتهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على كيفية قيام طلبة الجامعات في أقسام تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية بإجراءات تدوين الملاحظات في صفوفهم وأثرها في تحسين مهارات الفهم السمعي. تم استخدام الاستبانة في الحصول على نتائج الدراسة بحيث تتكون عينة هذه الدراسة من 60 طالبا وطالبة من جامعة كردستان في اللغة الانكليزية خلال العام الدراسي 2022-2023. وجدت الدراسة أن غالبية الطلاب يعتقدون أن تدوين الملاحظات أكثر فائدة من الحفظ لتحسين قدرتهم على الإجابة على الأسئلة. وفقا للبيانات، أقر أكثر من 70% من الطلاب بأنهم يعتمدون على الذاكرة لإكمال المهام بينما ذكر 60% من الطلاب أنهم يفتقرون إلى الوقت لتدوين الملاحظات المتعمقة. وافق 26.7% فقط من الطلاب على الاستنتاج القائل بأن تدوين الملاحظات أثناء القراءة يتعارض مع قدرتهم على التركيز. وفقا للنتائج، يجب على الأفراد محاولة ممارسة بناء المهارات المعرفية مثل تدوين الملاحظات على جميع مستويات حياتهم التعليمية. يجب على معلمي اللغة استخدام استراتيجيات تدوين الملاحظات لتحسين قدرات الاستماع لدى طلابهم. ينصح المعلمون بالبحث عن طرق تدريس إبداعية وأدوات تدريس عملية تعزز مشاركة الطلاب في الموضوع.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تدوين الملاحظات، المهارات السمعية، اللغة الإنجليزية، استراتيجية التعلم

1. Introduction

Taking notes is regarded as an intellectual skill required for furthering one's academic pursuits. It may be difficult for non-native speakers learning a foreign language to take notes while listening to lectures; therefore, non-native students should be given training in listening and note-taking strategies to help them improve as note-takers and listeners in general (Ipek, 2017:206).

Furthermore, note-taking strategy has been predicted as a type of method in preserving course contents. Taking notes is also one of the generative abilities that provides a practical framework for improved learning and retention. Being certified with this skill is dependent on the discerning viewpoints of the executives, who are referred to as students attending classes and wishing to acquire the selective knowledge they require (Bergil, 2019:120). Meanwhile, English language skills are divided into four categories: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Reading and listening are considered receptive skills, whereas speaking and writing are productive abilities. Listening skills are regarded as the most important of these four abilities for learning a new language because they allow you to comprehend the speaker's intended meaning (Htay, 2020:52).

It is claimed that taking notes is helpful for remembering the lecture material as well as enhancing problem solving and self-explanation, which in return improves learning and comprehension overall (Alzu'bi, 2019: 863). Thus, this study aims at investigating the impact of using a note-taking strategy on improving auditory comprehension skills in the English language among university students.

1.1 Research Problem

The majority of students who join in English language program face a number of difficulties, particularly with their listening and speaking skills. The main factor is the lack of a suitable environment for practicing and using these languages outside the course. Additionally, the majority of students acknowledge that they struggle to recall information and comprehend what they hear during the auditory comprehension test because they are terrified of taking the listening examination module. Moreover, some academics contend that these difficulties stem from a lack of vocabulary and poor speech techniques (Htay, 2020:52).

Although numerous studies have been done in the English language-learning context to examine the efficacy of employing various strategies to enhance listening comprehension, the fundamental issue of students' weaknesses in listening comprehension has not yet been resolved (Poorahmadi, 2017:110).

Thus, this study aims at answering the following main question:

"What is the effect of applying the note-taking strategy on improving the auditory comprehension skills in the English language among university students?"

In addition, the sub-divided questions can be posed:

- 1- Does taking notes affect students' listening comprehension abilities?
- 2- How do students perceive the impact of taking notes while listening?

1.2 Study's Significance

The significance of this study arises from the importance of the auditory comprehension skills, mainly because in the study of English language, listening comprehension is seen as a crucial skill, which have an impact on the improvement of learners' language abilities in general. Additionally, being familiar with various listening methods and strategies may be able to help students find solutions to any problems that may emerge, such as note-taking strategy, which

calls for reading, information selection, summarizing, and recording the knowledge (Poorahmadi, 2017: 109).

Based on the above, the Note-taking strategies and the challenges associated with them attract investigation because of the significance of Note-taking on the fundamental and basic abilities of students in receiving and digesting the contents of courses, such as enhancing auditory skills. This study also offers an active tool and experimental findings to be applied in future research.

2. Background Review

Taking notes is one of the crucial tools for improving students' comprehension. The process of taking notes helps one absorb what is being said while identifying and remembering key points. Students can review a note more easily when it is arranged. It also aids in helping students retain the concept of the note. For future review, a well-organized note will be useful, and reviewing the note that explains the concept is a vital to enhancing comprehension (Maulidia et al., 2021:53).

One might take notes on a daily basis by writing down a phone number, an address, or a shopping list. Writing down notes is a broad method of storing knowledge for later use and helping yourself to remember it. Note taking is a task that is carried out in diverse contexts and with various objectives. However, various skills are needed to take notes during a lecture, a meeting, or a talk. Additionally, whether non-native English speakers choose to enroll in English-speaking universities or take internationally popular exams like TOEFL or IELTS is seen as an essential component of competency for these students (Ipek, 2017:206).

Many professors do not emphasize the value of taking notes during lectures at college and university levels. Even juniors and seniors, struggle with taking notes properly during their study. Many students take inadequate notes, especially in lectures when they would only record approximately 25% of the notes. The ability to take notes properly and efficiently will probably help students perform better in the course as a whole (Salame & Thompson, 2020:2).

Numerous methods have been developed to enhance this critical linguistic competency. One of these methods, on which the current study focuses, is taking notes. One of the primary benefits of taking notes is that it allows students to actively participate in a lecture by listening to the lecturer for key information and then recording it in their own words. Furthermore, students who actively listen and take notes are better able to process significant information cognitively,

which aids in their understanding of the material they are studying (Salame & Thompson, 2020:2).

The issue is that for many university students, taking notes just serves as a substitute for actively processing the data and comprehending what is being stated in the lectures. According to recent study, learning is severely impacted by taking exact notes from lectures, but learning is positively impacted by prior knowledge. Therefore, taking notes requires one to listen, pay attention, and digest information then write the note down, which many students could find it challenging. On the other hand, reading, writing, listening, and speaking are the four main parts of English language proficiency. Since it enables you to understand the speaker's intended meaning, listening comprehension is regarded as the most important of these four skills for learning a new language such as the English Language (Htay, 2020:52).

Listening suggests a psychological process of taking in, paying attention to, and creating meaning from spoken words. In order to receive communications successfully, one must have the ability to listen. It takes a lot of focus and energy to listen well since it involves wanting to understand the other person, having a respectful and accepting attitude, and being willing to try to see things from their perspective (Hurtado, 2020:1). In addition, listening can be viewed as an essential skill for speaking or writing because learning cannot start unless the entry has been understood at the proper level. A listener receives speech sounds and attempts to assign meaning to spoken words during the active and interactive process of listening. In order to respond to oral communication successfully, the listener strives to comprehend the intended message of the text (Hurtado, 2020:3).

Taking notes has the potential to improve knowledge by improving attention mechanisms and involving students' cognitive processes of coding, integrating, synthesising, and transforming input information. The second advantage of taking notes is that they can serve as an external source of information, allowing for a review and evocation of what has been heard (Hurtado, 2020:5).

To sum up, knowing that effective listening contributes to greater communication, the English language learner deliberately searches for the optimal approach to handle this cognitive activity. Considering that both short-term and long-term memory are involved in English learning, taking notes can be seen as a crucial tactic for both teachers and students. The act of retaining the relevant information nearby while feeling untroubled and comfortable is referred to as a note-taking approach. Taking notes while listening is used to achieve a number of

objectives, including knowledge acquisition, long-term memory development, and event preservation. Moreover, both English teachers and their counterparts believe that taking notes is a recognized, successful method for improving students' recollection (Poorahmadi, 2017: 111).

3. Research Methodology

Based on the forgoing, this study is developed in order to determine the effect of applying note-taking strategy on improving the auditory comprehension skills among English language students using a descriptive analytical approach. Primary data was obtained by forming a questionnaire targeting a random sample of undergraduate students (n=60), who are engaged in an English language program during the academic year (2022/2023) among private Kurdistan universities from different degrees.

With the aim to answer the study questions, the questionnaire was designed by extrapolating a group of previous studies related to the subject of the study (Htay, 2020; Salame & Thompson, 2020).

The questionnaire consisted of two sections; the first section includes demographic data such as gender, grade, and GPA of the students. The second section deals with the student's perceptions on the effect of note-taking while listening in the English Language departments in kurdistan universities. Lastly, in order to show the results in an understandable way, data were evaluated, categorized, and processed using a statistical tool (SPSS).

4. Results

4.1 Correlation Coefficient

Table (1): Correlation Matrix

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9
Q1	1	0.071	-0.065	0.033	0.063	0.115	0.159	-0.086	-0.020
Q2	0.071	1	0.037	-0.167	-.362 ^{**}	.274 [*]	0.081	-0.253	0.148
Q3	-0.065	0.037	1	-0.011	-0.133	0.100	0.160	-0.059	0.137
Q4	0.033	-0.167	-0.011	1	0.120	-0.098	-0.186	0.102	-0.127
Q5	0.063	-.362 ^{**}	-0.133	0.120	1	-0.052	0.222	0.152	-.262 [*]
Q6	0.115	.274 [*]	0.100	-0.098	-0.052	1	-0.151	-0.008	0.254

Q7	0.159	0.081	0.160	-0.186	0.222	-0.151	1	-0.143	-0.204
Q8	-0.086	-0.253	-0.059	0.102	0.152	-0.008	-0.143	1	-0.201
Q9	-0.020	0.148	0.137	-0.127	-.262-*	0.254	-0.204	-0.201	1

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

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

According to the table above, the correlation coefficient between the questions ranges from 0.008 to 0.362. The study discovered a significant relationship between Q2 (relying on memory rather than taking notes) and Q5 (relying on notes to answer test questions), Q2 (relying on memory rather than taking notes) and Q6 (taking notes makes me listen carefully), Q5 (relying on notes to answer test questions), and Q9 (taking notes disturbs my concentration while doing listening text). The lowest relationship exists between Q6 (Taking notes makes me listen carefully) and Q8 (Taking notes makes the text more difficult for me), while the highest relationship exists between Q2 (Relying on my memory rather than taking notes) and Q5 (Relying on my memory rather than taking notes).

Descriptive Statistics (Demographics Variables)

Table (2): Gender Characteristics

	Frequency	Percent
Male	30	50.0
Female	30	50.0
Total	60	100.0

In Table (2), the sample was divided into two groups based on gender; the sample had an equal number of males and females; males made up 50% of the total sample size. Female respondents constituted 50% of the total sample size.

Table (3): Grade Characteristics

	Frequency	Percent
1st	7	11.7
2nd	17	28.3
3rd	14	23.3

4th	22	36.7
Total	60	100.0

Table (3) divides the participants into four groups based on their grade level. The first category is students in first grade, who made up 11.7% of the total sample size and had the lowest percentage of respondents. The second group of students in the second grade accounted for 28.3% of the total sample size. Students in the third grade accounted for 23.3% of the total. Finally, students in their final year of university accounted for 36.7% of the total size and were the most popular among total respondents.

Table (4): GPA Characteristics

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 2.99	18	30.0
3-3.49	20	33.3
More than 3.50	22	36.7
Total	60	100.0

Table (4) divides the participants into three groups based on their GPA. The first category includes students with a GPA of less than 2.99, who account for 30% of the total sample size and have the lowest percentage of respondents. Students with a GPA between 3 and 3.49 make up the second group of respondents, accounting for 33.3% of the total sample size. Finally, students with a GPA of more than 3.50 accounted for 36.7% of the total size and were the most popular among total respondents.

4.3 Descriptive Summary

The descriptive statistics (means and standard deviation) of the responses and their ranks, obtained using a five-point Likert scale, were calculated using SPSS. Means between (1 and 1.80) were considered very low, those between (1.81 and 2.60) low, those between (2.61-3.40) medium, those between (3.41-4.20) high, and those between (4.21-5.00) very high.

Table (5): Students perceptions on the effect of note-taking while listening

No	Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Natural	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std. deviation	Practices degree
1	Taking notes is more beneficial in answering questions than not taking notes.	0 (0)	1 (1.7%)	6 (10%)	36 (60%)	17 (28.3%)	4.15	0.659	High
2	Rather than taking notes, I'm relying on my memory.	5 (8.3%)	20 (33.3%)	23 (38%)	11 (18.3%)	1 (1.7%)	2.72	0.922	Medium
3	Taking notes allows you to cover the entire context of the questions.	1 (1.7%)	8 (13.3%)	37 (61.7%)	13 (21.7%)	1 (1.7%)	3.08	0.696	Medium
4	Having sufficient time to take thorough notes	12 (20%)	24 (40%)	8 (13.3%)	14 (23.3%)	2 (3.3%)	2.50	1.157	Low
5	Using the notes to answer test questions	0 (0)	3 (5%)	14 (23.3%)	35 (58.3)	8 (13.3%)	3.80	0.732	High
6	Taking notes makes me listen carefully	1 (1.7%)	4 (6.7%)	19 (31.7%)	26 (43.3%)	10 (16.7)	3.67	0.896	High
7	Taking notes is more useful in answering detailed questions.	0 (0)	1 (1.7%)	10 (16.7%)	33 (55%)	16 (26.7%)	4.07	0.710	High

8	Taking notes makes the text more difficult for me to understand.	9 (15%)	35 (58.3%)	13 (21.7)	2 (3.3)	1 (1.7)	2.18	0.792	Low
9	Taking notes interferes with my concentration while listening to a text.	3 (5%)	13 (21.7%)	31 (51.7%)	9 (15%)	4 (6.7%)	2.97	0.920	Medium
Total							3.24	0.266	Medium

The arithmetic means that the measure (students' perceptions of the effect of note-taking while listening) is Medium with the mean (3.24), as shown in the above table. It can also be seen that question (1) represents the highest agreed-to mean statement (4.15, Std. = 0.659) and was followed by question (7) with a mean (4.07, Std.= 0.710), thirdly, question (5) with a mean (3.80, Std.= 0.732), fourth, the question (6) with a mean (3.67, Std.= 0.896), fifth, question (3) with a mean (3.08, Std.= 0.6

The first statement's results revealed that the majority of students (88.3%, 53 replies) concurred that taking notes is more useful for improving your ability to answer questions than taking notes. Additionally, the descriptive statistics reveal that item 1 had the highest mean (M=4.15) and the lowest standard deviation (SD=0.659), indicating that the majority of respondents had similar opinions on the item. Among the students, only 20% said they relied more on recollection than notes (item 2). In response to question 4, more than half of the students (60%, 36 respondents) said they did not have enough time to take thorough notes. For item 5, the mean value is 3.80 and the Std. deviation is 0.732, indicating that the majority of students have a similar perspective on the item. However, the majority of students (71.6%, 43 responses) stated that they relied on their notes to answer the test questions. Another favorable perspective on taking notes is that 60% of students believed that doing so made them pay closer attention (item 6). The majority of students (81.7%, 49 replies) felt that taking notes helped them answer questions in-depth. Since the standard deviation is 0.710 and the mean value is 4.07, most students have comparably favorable opinions about item 7. More than half of the students (73.3%, 44 replies) disputed that taking

notes makes it harder for them to understand the text, according to item 8. Only 26.7% of the students, or 16 respondents, disagreed with the last statement's conclusion that taking notes while reading literature interferes with their ability to focus.

According to the findings of this study on students' perceptions of the impact of taking notes while listening, the vast majority of students believe that taking notes can help them improve their listening comprehension. This finding is comparable to Dunkel's (1988) claim. He noticed that students see taking notes as a way to help them remember the lecturer's material. Additionally, the majority of students demonstrated a notable propensity for taking notes when responding in-depth to questions. As a result, it can be compared to Hale and Courtney's (1994) claims. They emphasised that if students are asked about specific facts, they may find taking notes useful. However, data collected for items 3 and 9 show that some students struggled to manage listening and taking notes at the same time. This result supported Ferris and Tagg's (1996) claim that international students frequently complain about difficulties with listening comprehension, poor note-taking abilities, and other related issues.

The results of this study are very consistent with the results of Htay (2020) study which found that the majority of students agreed that taking notes is more helpful than taking notes for enhancing your capacity to respond to inquiries. The majority of pupils lacked the time necessary to take in-depth notes. The majority of students admitted that they used their notes to help them answer the test questions, though. More than half of students stated that taking notes caused them to pay closer attention, which is another positive aspect of note-taking. The majority of students also said that taking notes enabled them to provide thorough answers to queries. The claim that taking notes makes it more difficult for them to comprehend the text was refuted by more than half of the students. The last statement's conclusion that taking notes while reading literature interferes with their capacity to concentrate was disputed by only a few of the students.

In addition to documenting information and/or assisting with reflection activities, the note-taking process, as highlighted by Bergil (2020), must be viewed as an essential component of getting and taking information, also known as the information transmission process. The note-taking strategy is important in learning the English language and particularly in listening ability (Hurtado, 2020), as it enables the implementation of complex cognitive processes such as attention, evocation, cognitive processes of coding, integration, and concretization, allowing a selection of pertinent information from what is heard.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The majority of students who enroll in English language programs struggle with a variety of skills, including speaking and listening. The primary cause is the absence of a conducive environment for using and practicing these languages outside of class. The majority of students also admit that they have trouble remembering information and understanding what they hear during the auditory comprehension test because they are frightened of taking the listening exam module. The objective of the study is to answer the main question which is "What is the effect of applying the note-taking strategy on improving the auditory comprehension skills in the English language among university students?"

The purpose of this study, which takes a descriptive-analytical method, is to ascertain the impact of note-taking on the development of auditory comprehension skills in English language learners. A questionnaire was created with the goal of gathering primary data from undergraduate students (n=60) from private Kurdistan institutions who are enrolled in English language courses for the academic year (2022/2023).

The majority of students, according to the results, think that taking notes is more helpful than memorizing information for enhancing their capacity to respond to questions. More than 70% of students admitted to relying on memory to answer questions, and more than half of students (60%) claimed they lacked the time to take thorough notes. The conclusion that taking notes while reading interferes with their capacity to focus was agreed upon by only 26.7% of students. Based on the conclusions reached by the study, the study came out with the following recommendations:

- According to the study's findings, efforts and practices to develop cognitive skills, such as taking notes, should be made by people not only as they pursue bachelor's degrees but also at all other levels of their educational careers.
- To enhance the development of their pupils' listening skills, language teachers should adopt note-taking techniques.
- As listening is the foundation for learning and developing other skills, it is crucial that kids freely seek out and employ techniques, including the use of symbols, pictures, and abbreviations.
- Teachers are advised to look for innovative teaching strategies and useful teaching aids that encourage increased student engagement with the material, such as the note-taking technique.
- In order for students to be able to use the note-taking strategy, the teacher must go through an instructional process in which they can learn about the key points to focus on, how to synthesise

information, how to use abbreviations, how to order sequences, and how to manage the notes for subsequent activities.

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Appendix

The Effect of Note-Taking Strategy on Improving the Auditory Comprehension Skills Among University Students

The aim of this questionnaire is to gather different types of information about the effect of Note-taking strategy on improving the auditory comprehension skills in the English language among university students, which can contribute to the students' success in their courses.

I respectfully request that you read the questionnaire and respond to each section by selecting the best fitting answer. It is critical that you answer all of the questions honestly, keeping in mind that your responses will only be used for scientific research purposes and that your answers will be kept confidential.

Yours sincerely

Researcher

Part One: Demographic Data (Personal Information)

1. Gender

- Male
- Female

2. Grade

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th

3. GPA:

- Less than 2.99
- 3-3.49
- More than 3.50

Part Two: Questionnaire Questions

The Students perceptions on the effect of note-taking while listening

No.	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Natural	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Taking notes is more beneficial in answering questions than not taking notes.					
2	Rather than taking notes, I'm relying on my memory.					
3	Taking notes allows you to cover the entire context of the questions.					
4	Having sufficient time to take thorough notes					
5	Using the notes to answer test questions					
6	Taking notes makes me listen carefully					
7	Taking notes is more useful in answering detailed questions.					
8	Taking notes makes the text more difficult for me to understand.					
9	Taking notes interferes with my concentration while listening to a text.					