

Student Work

6-1-1992

An Investigative Study of the Listening Skills of Mentor Teachers and First Year Teachers

David Fringer

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork>

Recommended Citation

Fringer, David, "An Investigative Study of the Listening Skills of Mentor Teachers and First Year Teachers" (1992). *Student Work*. 2603.
<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork/2603>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by
DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student
Work by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For
more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.



AN INVESTIGATIVE STUDY OF THE LISTENING SKILLS OF
MENTOR TEACHERS AND FIRST YEAR TEACHERS

A Thesis

Presented to the

College of Education

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

David Fringer

June 1992

UMI Number: EP74147

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI EP74147

Published by ProQuest LLC (2015). Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.

Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code



ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the faculty of the Graduate College, University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Committee

Name	Department
<i>Blaine E. Ward</i>	<i>Ed Admin</i>
<i>James Muck</i>	<i>Teacher Education</i>
<i>Paul Amelgenitt</i>	<i>Teacher Education</i>

Ronald J. Grandgenitt, Ed.D.
Chair

6-29-92
Date

ABSTRACT

This study was initiated to determine if there was a difference between first year and mentor teachers in perceived and actual listening skills. First year teachers were teachers who were completing their first year as a licensed teacher. Mentor teachers were teachers with at least three years of teaching experience who were selected by their district to act as a mentor for a first year teacher.

In this study, 20 first year teachers were compared to 69 mentor teachers. The subjects were asked to predict their scores on the Brown-Carlsen listening test. All subjects were then given the Brown-Carlsen listening comprehension test which is a test of actual listening ability. The participants were compared on all of the subtests as well as cumulatively for their perceived and actual scores. Only the cumulative scores were used for hypotheses testing.

The results of this study indicates that there is no difference in perceived or actual listening skills between groups. A t-test at the .05 level was used to make this determination. This study indicates the need to further

examine the listening ability of teachers. The major implication of this study is the need to determine what level of listening comprehension is needed to be an effective teacher. In addition, some significant differences on subtests indicates the need for further research.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
1. Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem	4
Statement of Sub-problems	4
Hypothesis	4
Significance of the Problem	5
Design and Procedures	6
Assumptions	6
Definitions of Terms	7
Limitations	8
Summary	8
2. Review of Related Literature	10
General Literature Review	10
Related Literature Review	13
Summary	14
3. Methodology and Procedures	15
Subjects	15
Research Instrument	16
Research Design and Procedures	17
Hypothesis and Analysis of Data	18
Summary	19

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont.)

Chapter	Page
4. Results	21
Sub-Hypothesis One Results	21
Sub-Hypothesis Two Results	28
Summary of Results	36
5. Discussion of Results	37
Restatement of the Problem	37
Restatement of the Hypotheses	38
Description of Procedures Used	38
Principal Findings	39
Auxiliary Observations	41
Conclusions	44
Implications of the Study	44
Recommendations for Further Research	45
Concluding Remarks	46
Bibliography	48
Appendixes	
Appendix A: University of Nebraska Institutional Review Board Exemption Form	

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
TABLE 1: Comparison of Perceived Scores on Sub-Section "A" of the Brown-Carlson listening test	23
TABLE 2: Comparison of Perceived Scores on Sub-Section "B" of the Brown-Carlson listening test	24
TABLE 3: Comparison of Perceived Scores on Sub-Section "C" of the Brown-Carlson listening test	25
TABLE 4: Comparison of Perceived Scores on Sub-Section "D" of the Brown-Carlson listening test	26
TABLE 5: Comparison of Perceived Scores on Sub-Section "E" of the Brown-Carlson listening test	27
TABLE 6: Comparison of Perceived Scores on the Brown-Carlson listening test	28
TABLE 7: Comparison of Actual Scores on Sub-Section "A" of the Brown-Carlson listening test	29

LIST OF TABLES (cont.)

	Page
TABLE 8: Comparison of Actual Scores on Sub-Section "B" of the Brown-Carlson listening test	30
TABLE 9: Comparison of Actual Scores on Sub-Section "C" of the Brown-Carlson listening test	31
TABLE 10: Comparison of Actual Scores on Sub-Section "D" of the Brown-Carlson listening test	32
TABLE 11: Comparison of Actual Scores on Sub-Section "E" of the Brown-Carlson listening test	33
TABLE 12: Comparison of Actual Scores on the Brown-Carlson listening test	34

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Effective listening may be one of the least developed skills in all professions, even though the ability to listen is critical in all professional endeavors. Reports indicate that 60 percent of all misunderstandings can be traced to poor listening skills (Montgomery, 1981). Teaching in particular relies on communication for product delivery. Because listening skills are given so little attention in pre-service teacher education programs, teachers may not learn, or are left to learn, effective listening on their own.

Overall, people spend one-half of the communicative day listening (Hirsch, 1979). Teachers who are constantly interacting with people and information, may exceed one-half of their day in listening-related activities. Teachers are being asked to incorporate non-traditional teaching methods into the curriculum. New methods such as cooperative learning require additional listening skills on the part of teacher and student. In order for a teacher to be an effective facilitator of a cooperative learning environment,

s/he must possess effective listening skills.

Teachers are also being asked to use new technology in their classrooms. Research suggests that listening ability and listening training had strongly influenced the ability to be productive with new technology (Papa & Glenn, 1988). Implementation and evaluation of these new technologies is left largely up to the teacher. Therefore, effective listening skills are essential for teachers to use technology in the classroom effectively.

Business and education professionals are beginning to realize that inefficient listening is costly in wasted money, misused time, deflated moral, and alienated relationships (Wolvin & Coakley, 1985). For teachers, the efficient use of time and the development of good relationships is of paramount importance for effectiveness on the job. The time a student spends in school is limited by convention and convenience. If even a small amount of time is wasted, the amount of learning may decrease, as might the effectiveness of the teacher. If a relationship between teacher and student is damaged by poor listening skills, the overall

effectiveness of that teacher is probably damaged as well.

Two key teacher roles are affected by listening. First, a teacher must assess a student's ability before prescribing learning activities. While assessment includes many skills, listening should be considered a key skill. Secondly, teachers must evaluate the learning which has taken place in their classroom. Evaluation includes many skills; however, the teacher's ability to listen effectively to student concerns, problems, and responses is critical to good evaluation.

When reviewing the current body of literature, one finds limited data on the listening skills of teachers. The majority of the research is concerned with the listening skills of business employees (Wolvin & Coakley, 1985). Listening is established as a critical skill for teachers, yet little data exists on their ability to listen effectively. The listening skills of teachers seemed like an area worthy of investigation. Do first year and experienced teachers differ in their perceived and actual ability to listen? This study has attempted to determine if there is a

difference between first year and experienced teachers in the area of listening comprehension.

Statement of the Problem

Is there a difference between mentor teachers and first year teachers related to their perceived and actual listening ability, as measured by the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test?

Statement of Sub-problems

Sub-problem 1: Is there a difference between mentor teachers and first year teachers in the area of perceived listening ability?

Sub-problem 2: Is there a difference between mentor teachers and first year teachers in the area of actual listening ability?

Hypothesis

There will be a difference between first year teachers and mentor teachers as to their perceived and actual listening abilities as measured by performance on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test.

Sub-hypothesis 1: There will be a difference in responses

between mentor teachers' and first year teachers' perceived listening abilities as measured by their estimated scores on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test.

Sub-hypothesis 2: There will be a difference in responses between mentor teachers' and first year teachers' actual listening abilities as measured by performance by the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test.

Significance of the Problem

Effective listening is a topic which needs to be addressed by training and in-service education of teaching professionals. Many times, the longer an individual has been teaching, complacency blinds the teacher to methods which would improve teaching effectiveness. Teaching is one profession where communication skills are absolutely essential to effective job performance. Listening is therefore seen as an area worthy of investigation for teachers.

The study of first year and mentor teachers in the University of Nebraska at Omaha Mentor Program may identify the need for further pre-service and in-service training of

teachers listening skills.

Design and Procedures

To study the differences in perceived and actual listening ability of mentor teachers and first year teachers, several steps were initiated. First, consent for the study was granted by the University of Nebraska at Omaha Mentor Program and the University of Nebraska Institutional Review Board (see appendix A). Second, a sample of 20 first year teachers participating in the University of Nebraska at Omaha Mentor Program volunteered to participate in the study. Third, the first year teachers were asked to predict how well they would score on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test. Fourth, the first year teachers completed the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test. Fifth, the perceived and actual scores were compared to similar data collected by Grandgenett, Fringer, & Grandgenett (1992) in an investigative study of the listening skills of mentor teachers.

Assumptions

Several assumptions were made prior to conducting this

research.

Assumption 1: It was assumed that all subjects had similar education and training in the area of listening skills.

Assumption 2: It was assumed that the testing conditions were similar for all participants.

Assumption 3: It was assumed that the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test was an accurate device to measure differences in listening ability.

Definition of Terms

Listening - To put intelligent meaning to sound.

Listening Comprehension - To understand the meaning of sounds. In this study listening comprehension was measured by the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test (Brown & Carlson, 1955).

Mentor Teacher - A teacher with a minimum of three years experience who was selected to act as a counselor and guide for a first year teacher.

First Year Teacher - A person who was currently employed in his/her first year as a certified teacher.

Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test - There are

five sub-tests: (1) Immediate Recall, (2) Following Directions, (3) Recognizing Transitions, (4) Recognizing Word Meanings, and (5) Lecture Comprehension. The test was a measure of actual listening ability, and has been used extensively in research (Brown & Carlsen, 1955; Roberts, 1985).

Perceived Listening Ability - The subject's own estimated score on the Brown-Carlsen listening comprehension test.

Limitations of the Study

This study was successful in collecting and analyzing data about first year and mentor teachers; however, this study was not without limitations. The use of volunteers was recognized as a limitation. Because of the characteristics of the population sampled, it was difficult to randomly select participants for this study. The participants were selected from a group with clearly defined parameters, and the sample is thought to be representative of the population of first year and mentor teachers.

Summary

This chapter identified listening abilities of teachers

as an area worthy of investigation. The problems identified for this study, as well as the research hypotheses, have been discussed. The significance of listening as a problem was identified and the research design and procedures were outlined. Assumptions for the study and a definition of key terms were included in this chapter.

The second chapter reviews related literature which establishes listening as an important skill for teachers. The third chapter describes the methodology and procedures used in this study. The fourth chapter reports on the results of the study by analyzing the Brown-Carlson listening test cumulative and sub-section scores of the first year and mentor teachers. The final chapter includes a discussion of the results, principal findings, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Relevant Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a framework for comparing the listening skills of mentor teachers and first year teachers. Various books and articles written about listening skills indicate the need for further research in this area. Few studies that evaluate listening as a single skill and used teachers as subjects could be located. The literature at this time focuses primarily on the relationship between listening skills and job performance in business. It is assumed that listening skills which have proven critical in business, are also essential for effective teaching.

General Literature Review

Listening, which plays such an important role in the communication process, has received relatively little attention from educational researchers. This lack of attention is surprising considering the amount of attention listening receives in standard communication textbooks. Research has indicated that as much as one-half of a

communicative day is spent listening (Wolvin & Coakley, 1982). However, Bostrom (1988) indicates that less is known about listening than any other part of the communication process.

Bostrom (1988) has stated that the understanding of listening has not increased significantly over the last twenty years. He attributes this to researchers showing little interest in listening. Most of the listening process "has eluded clear definition and understanding" (Bostrom & Waldhart, 1980 p. 224). Furthermore, there is not even a widely accepted definition of listening skills. Wolvin and Coakley (1982) argue that, even after forty years of study, listening research is still in its infancy.

Many authors suggest that listening is important for success in professional occupations (Wolff, Marsnik, Tacey, and Nichols, 1983; Wolvin & Coakley, 1982); few studies confirm these suggestions. The studies which do exist focus on the amount of time certain professionals spend listening. Few studies have been directed at teachers, while business employees have been most often used as subjects.

Wolvin and Coakley (1982) contend that workers spend thirty percent of their time listening while executives spend sixty percent. Just as important is the identification of listening as the most often mentioned critical employment skill (Wolvin & Coakley, 1985). The amount of time employees spend listening has made organizations aware of the importance of good listening skills. Wolvin and Coakley (1985) show that supervisors "are beginning to realize that inefficient listening is costly . . . in wasted money, misused time, . . . and alienated relationships (p. 76)". Wolvin and Coakley's observations are very significant for teachers. Teachers who are poor listeners may be wasting time and alienating themselves from their students.

Though listening is an important part of job performance for teachers, it is interesting to find that there are few training programs to help teachers become better listeners. Most of the programs which have been developed include listening as one of many communication skills (Lundsteen, 1984; Vander Kolk, 1975). Only a small minority of training programs focus on listening (Wolvin, 1985; Lundgren, 1974).

Related Literature Review

In a recent study of business employees, Gillaspie (1991) found that there were significant differences in the listening abilities of sub-groups of business employees. "Managers show a significant difference in both projected and actual scores as compared to professional/technical and clerical employees as measured by the Brown-Carlson listening test." (Gillaspie, 1991 p. 25)

In a continuation of Gillaspie's work, Grandgenett et al. (1992) compared mentor teachers to the business employees, in hopes of securing better collaboration between groups in the area of listening training. One of the results of that study was that business managers and mentor teachers function at about the same level of listening proficiency (Grandgenett et al. 1992). There were significant differences in listening ability between mentor teachers and the clerical and professional/technical business employees. (Grandgenett et al. 1992).

The limited amount of research available on listening skills includes little work other than Gillaspie (1991) and

Grandgenett et al. (1992) in perceived listening ability. The comparison of the experienced subject to the novice subject is also relatively unresearched, as no studies could be located which used this methodology.

Summary

This chapter outlines some of the current research in listening skills. There is limited empirical research regarding the listening skills of teachers. The research proposed in this study attempts to expand on the current literature. As indicated by the review of relevant literature, there is a lack of knowledge regarding the listening skills of teachers. Comparing the listening skills of first year teachers to what is known about the listening skills of mentor teachers will assist in the development of baseline information for use in further studies.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology and Procedures

This study was initiated to compare the listening skills of mentor teachers and first year teachers. After completion of data gathering and analysis, the mentor teachers were compared to first year teachers. Data collected by Grandgenett et al. (1992) in a related study of mentor teachers were used for the comparisons. Permission for the study was granted by the University of Nebraska Institutional Review Board (see appendix A), and the University of Nebraska at Omaha Mentor Program. This chapter discusses methods and procedures used to compare the listening skills of first year and mentor teachers.

Subjects

This study used 20 first year teachers participating in the mentor program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The University of Nebraska at Omaha Mentor Program is a joint effort between the University and five Omaha area school districts. First year teachers hired by these districts are paired with experienced teachers in the same district. The

purpose of the program is to facilitate the first year teacher's transition into the profession. The Mentor Program provided an ample pool of prospective first year teachers for this study. A sample of 20 first year teachers from the population of 72 first year teachers volunteered for this study. The investigator then arranged times to administer the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test in group settings.

The mentor teachers used for the comparisons were also participants in the University of Nebraska at Omaha Mentor Program and volunteered to participate in the study. Grandgenett et al. (1992) tested 69 of the 71 mentor teachers in a related study using the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test. All mentor teachers had at least three years of teaching experience and were chosen by their districts to act as mentors for first year teachers.

Research Instrument

The Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test is the first standardized listening test. Since it was first administered over thirty-five years ago, the test "has

probably gone through more trials, revisions, and refinements than most tests" (Brown, 1985 p. 4). Brown (1985) has demonstrated that this test measures a skill not correlated with reading ability, intelligence, or scholastic achievement. Other research indicates that the measure is both reliable and appropriate as a test of listening skills.

The Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test contains seventy-six items grouped into five parts: immediate recall - 17 questions, following directions - 20 questions, recognizing transitions - 8 questions, recognizing word meanings - 10 questions, and lecture comprehension - 21 questions. According to The Fifth Mental Measurements Yearbook, the reliability of the Brown-Carlson is .86 (Buros, 1959).

Research Design and Procedures

This study investigated the difference between first year teachers and mentor teachers in the areas of perceived listening ability and actual listening ability. The data on the mentor teachers were provided by a related study of the mentor teachers in the University of Nebraska at Omaha Mentor

Program (Grandgenett et al., 1992). Prior to administration of the test, the first year teachers were asked to predict how they would score on each sub-section of the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test. The teachers were then asked to predict their overall score on the Brown-Carlson. The scale used to predict scores ranged from zero to one-hundred percent.

The Brown-Carlson was administered by audio tape. All necessary precautions were taken to insure a fair testing environment for all subjects. The first year teachers were tested in four separate groups during March and April of 1992. The mentor teachers were tested by Grandgenett et al. (1992) in October of 1991.

Hypothesis and Analysis of Data

There were two hypotheses tested with the data.

Sub-hypothesis 1: Is there a difference between mentor teachers' and first year teachers' perceived listening abilities as measured by their predicted score on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test?

Sub-hypothesis 2: Is there a difference between mentor

teachers' and first year teachers' actual listening abilities as measured by performance on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test?

The statistical procedures focused on testing the two sub-hypotheses. The means for each sub-section as well as the cumulative means were calculated for both perceived and actual listening scores. A t-test with a two tailed probability at the .05 level was used to test the two research hypotheses and determine the significance of differences between group means on each sub-test, and the cumulative mean scores on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test.

Summary

In this chapter the methodology of the study was described in four sections: (1) subjects, (2) research instrument, (3) research design and procedures, and (4) hypothesis and analysis of data. These sections discussed the proposed methodology which supports the general research question: Is there a significant difference between mentor teachers' and first year teachers' perceived and actual

listening abilities?

CHAPTER 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a significant difference between the first year teachers' and mentor teachers' perceived and actual listening abilities.

As discussed in Chapter Three, this study employed the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test to gather data about the listening abilities of first year and mentor teachers.

This chapter is divided into two sections. Each section statistically examines each sub-test and the cumulative scores which pertain to the two sub-hypotheses.

Sub-Hypothesis One Results

In examination of first year teachers as compared to mentor teachers the first hypothesis tested was:

Sub-Hypothesis 1: Is there a difference between mentor teachers' and first year teachers' perceived listening abilities as measured by their estimated scores on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test (BCLCT)?

This sub-hypothesis was analyzed by testing the

difference in mean predicted scores between first year and mentor teachers. A standard t-test was performed for the predicted score on each sub-test and the cumulative predicted score; however, only the mean cumulative scores were used for hypothesis testing. The results are reported in tables 1-6.

In comparing perceived scores of first year teachers to mentor teachers on sub-section A, immediate recall, of the BCLCT, the first year teacher group mean was 81.70 while the mentor teacher group mean was 66.30. The t-test value for the projected results in sub-section A, was -4.81 which is significant at the .001 level. There was a significant difference in responses between first year and mentor teachers on sub-section A, immediate recall, $p < .001$ (see table 1).

Table 1
Comparison of Mean Perceived Scores for Mentor Teachers
and First Year Teachers on Section "A",
Immediate Recall, of the BCLCT

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	2-tail Prob.
Mentor Teachers	69	66.30	14.19		
First Year Teachers	20	81.70	12.09	-4.81	<.000**

**** signifies significance at $p < .001$**

In comparing perceived scores of first year teachers to mentor teachers on sub-section B, following directions, of the BCLCT, the first year teacher group mean was 66.75 while the mentor teacher group mean was 73.16. The t-test value for the projected results in sub-section B was 1.98 which was not significant at the .05 level. There was not a significant difference in responses between first year and mentor teachers on sub-section B, following directions, $p < .056$ (see table 2).

Table 2
Comparison of Mean Perceived Scores for Mentor Teachers
and First Year Teachers on Section "B",
Following Directions, of the BCLCT

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	2-tail Prob.
Mentor Teachers	69	73.16	14.02	1.98	.056
First Year Teachers	20	66.75	12.38		

In comparing perceived scores of first year teachers to mentor teachers on sub-section C, recognizing transitions, of the BCLCT, the first year teacher group mean was 69.25 while the mentor teacher group mean was 70.15. The t-test value for the projected results in sub-section C was .30 which was not significant at the .05 level. There was not a significant difference in responses between first year and mentor teachers on sub-section C, recognizing transitions, $p < .766$ (see table 3).

Table 3
Comparison of Mean Perceived Scores for Mentor Teachers
and First Year Teachers on Section "C",
Recognizing Transitions, of the BCLCT

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	2-tail Prob.
Mentor Teachers	69	70.15	14.85	.30	.766
First Year Teachers	20	69.25	10.67		

In comparing perceived scores of first year teachers to mentor teachers on sub-section D, recognizing word meanings, of the BCLCT, the first year teacher group mean was 81.50 while the mentor teacher group mean was 74.26. The t-test value for the projected results in sub-section D was -2.59 which was significant at the .05 level. There was a significant difference in responses between first year and mentor teachers on sub-section D, recognizing word meanings, $p < .013$ (see table 4).

Table 4
Comparison of Mean Perceived Scores for Mentor Teachers
and First Year Teachers on Section "D",
Recognizing Word Meanings, of the BCLCT

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	2-tail Prob.
Mentor Teachers	69	74.26	15.20	-2.59	.013*
First Year Teachers	20	81.50	9.47		

* signifies significance at $p < .05$

In comparing perceived scores of first year teachers to mentor teachers on sub-section E, lecture comprehension, of the BCLCT, the first year teacher group mean was 59.75 while the mentor teacher group mean was 63.17. The t-test value for the projected results in sub-section E was .72 which was not significant at the .05 level. There was not a significant difference in responses between first year and mentor teachers on sub-section E, lecture comprehension, $p < .478$ (see table 5).

Table 5
Comparison of Mean Perceived Scores for Mentor Teachers
and First Year Teachers on Section "E",
Lecture Comprehension, of the BCLCT

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	2-tail Prob.
Mentor Teachers	69	63.17	19.68	.72	.478
First Year Teachers	20	59.75	18.53		

In comparing perceived scores of first year teachers to mentor teachers on the BCLCT, the first year teachers cumulative group mean was 72.25 while the mentor teachers group mean was 69.29. The t-test value for the cumulative projected results was -1.26 which was not significant at the .05 level. There was not a significant difference in mean cumulative responses between first year and mentor teachers, $p < .213$ (see table 6.). Thus, initial results for sub-hypothesis one demonstrated no significant differences in responses between first year and mentor teachers regarding their perceived listening abilities.

Table 6
Comparison of Mean Perceived Scores for Mentor Teachers
and First Year Teachers on the Brown-Carlson
Listening Comprehension Test

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	2-tail Prob.
Mentor Teachers	69	69.29	11.97		
First Year Teachers	20	72.25	8.27	-1.26	.213

Sub-Hypothesis Two Results

In continuation of the results of this study, the second sub-hypothesis was:

Sub-hypothesis 2: Is there a difference between mentor teachers' and first year teachers' actual listening abilities as measured by the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test? This sub-hypothesis was analyzed by testing the difference in mean actual scores between first year and mentor teachers. A standard t-test was performed for the actual score on each sub-test and the cumulative actual score; however, only the mean cumulative scores were

used for hypothesis testing. The results are reported in tables 7-12.

In comparing actual scores of first year teachers to mentor teachers on sub-section A, immediate recall, the first year teachers group mean was 78.65 while the mentor teachers group mean was 72.16. The t-test value for the actual scores in sub-section A, immediate recall, was -2.47 which is significant at the .05 level. There was a significant difference in responses between first year and mentor teachers on sub-section A, immediate recall, $p < .019$ (see table 7).

Table 7
Comparison of Mean Actual Scores for Mentor Teachers and
First Year Teachers on Section "A",
Immediate Recall, of the BCLCT

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	2-tail Prob.
Mentor Teachers	69	72.17	11.28	-2.47	0.19*
First Year Teachers	20	78.65	10.04		

* signifies significance at $p < .05$

In comparing actual scores of first year teachers to mentor teachers on sub-section B, following directions, the first year teachers group mean was 81.25 while the mentor teachers group mean was 75.39. The t-test value for the actual scores in sub-section B was -2.16 which was significant at the .05 level. There was a significant difference in responses between first year and mentor teachers on sub-section B, immediate recall, $p < .035$ (see table 8).

Table 8
Comparison of Mean Actual Scores for Mentor Teachers and
First Year Teachers on Section "B",
Following Directions, of the BCLCT

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	2-tail Prob.
Mentor Teachers	69	75.39	15.94	-2.16	.035*
First Year Teachers	20	81.25	8.57		

* signifies significance at $p < .05$

In comparing actual scores of first year teachers to mentor teachers on sub-section C, recognizing transitions,

the first year teachers group mean was 77.80 while the mentor teachers group mean was 81.42. The t-test value for the actual scores in sub-section C was .86 which was not significant at the .05 level. There was not a significant difference in responses between first year and mentor teachers on sub-section C, recognizing transitions, $p < .400$ (see table 9).

Table 9
Comparison of Mean Actual Scores for Mentor Teachers and First Year Teachers on Section "C", Recognizing Transitions, of the BCLCT

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	2-tail Prob.
Mentor Teachers	69	81.42	12.75	.86	.400
First Year Teachers	20	77.80	17.63		

In comparing actual scores of first year teachers to mentor teachers on sub-section D, recognizing word meanings, the first year teachers group mean was 75.95 while the mentor teachers group mean was 82.39. The t-test value for the

actual scores in sub-section D was 2.40 which was significant at the .05 level. There was a significant difference in responses between first year and mentor teachers on sub-section D, recognizing word meanings, $p < .023$ (see table 10).

Table 10
Comparison of Mean Actual Scores for Mentor Teachers and
First Year Teachers on Section "D",
Recognizing Word Meanings, of the BCLCT

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	2-tail Prob.
Mentor Teachers	69	82.39	9.63	2.40	.023*
First Year Teachers	20	75.95	10.84		

* signifies significance at $p < .05$

In comparing actual scores of first year teachers to mentor teachers on sub-section E, lecture comprehension, the first year teachers group mean was 58.50 while the mentor teachers group mean was 63.51. The t-test value for the actual scores in sub-section E was 1.47 which was not significant at the .05 level. There was not a significant difference in responses between first year and mentor

teachers on sub-section E, lecture comprehension, $p < .150$ (see table 11).

Table 11
Comparison of Mean Actual Scores for Mentor Teachers and
First Year Teachers on Section "E",
Lecture Comprehension, of the BCLCT

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	2-tail Prob.
Mentor Teachers	69	63.51	14.61	1.47	.150
First Year Teachers	20	58.50	13.03		

In comparing cumulative actual scores of first year teachers to mentor teachers, the first year teachers group mean was 73.80 while the mentor teachers group mean was 72.68. The t-test value for the cumulative actual scores was $-.58$, which was not significant at the $.05$ level. There was not a significant difference in cumulative responses between first year and mentor teachers, $p < .562$ (see table 12). Thus, initial results for sub-hypothesis two demonstrated no significant differences in responses between first year and

mentor teachers regarding their actual listening abilities as measured by the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test.

Table 12
Comparison of Mean Actual Scores for Mentor Teachers and
First Year Teachers on the Brown-Carlson
Listening Comprehension Test

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	2-tail Prob.
Mentor Teachers	69	72.68	9.59	-.58	.562
First Year Teachers	20	73.80	6.83		

Overall Results Summary

There were several findings that were illustrated by the overall test results:

1) The first year teachers' mean perceived score of 81.70 on section "A", immediate recall, of the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test was significantly higher than the 66.30 of the mentor teachers.

2) The first year teachers' mean perceived score of 81.50 on section "D", recognizing word meanings, of the

Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test was significantly higher than the 74.26 of the mentor teachers.

3) The first year teachers' mean actual score of 78.65 on section "A", following directions, of the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test was significantly higher than the 72.17 of the mentor teachers.

4) The first year teachers' mean actual score of 81.25 on section "B", immediate recall, of the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test was significantly higher than the 75.39 of the mentor teachers.

5) The first year teachers' mean actual score of 75.95 on section "D", recognizing word meanings, of the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test was significantly lower than the 82.39 of the mentor teachers.

6) There was no significant difference between first year and mentor teachers' mean perceived scores on sections "B"- following directions, "C"- recognizing transitions, and "E"- lecture comprehension as measured by their estimated scores on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test.

7) There was no significant difference between first

year and mentor teachers' mean actual scores on sections "C"- recognizing transitions, and "E"- lecture comprehension as measured by their actual scores on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test.

8) There was no significant difference between first year teachers' and mentor teachers' perceived and actual listening abilities, as measured by cumulative scores on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test.

Summary of Results

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a significant difference between first year and mentor teachers' perceived and actual listening abilities. Analysis of the two sub-hypotheses tested the difference in mean scores using a standard t-test. The statistical analysis showed no difference in perceived or actual cumulative scores.

Implications of these results are discussed in Chapter Five. In addition, recommendations for further research are included in that chapter as well.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion of Results

This chapter discusses the results as they relate to the problem identified in Chapter One. Chapter Five is divided into nine sections: (1) restatement of the problem, (2) restatement of the hypotheses, (3) description of the procedures used, (4) principal findings, (5) auxiliary observations, (6) conclusions, (7) limitations of the study, (8) implications of the study, and (9) recommendations for further research.

Restatement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine if there were differences between first year teachers and mentor teachers in the areas of perceived and actual listening abilities.

The first sub-problem was: Is there a significant difference in perceived listening ability between first year teachers and mentor teachers? The second sub-problem was: Is there a significant difference in actual listening ability between first year teachers and mentor teachers?

Restatement of the Hypotheses

The hypothesis stated that there would be a significant difference between groups as to perceived and actual listening ability as measured by performance on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test.

Sub-Hypothesis one stated that there would be a difference between mentor teachers' and first year teachers' perceived listening abilities as measured by their estimated scores on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test.

Sub-Hypothesis two stated that there would be a difference between mentor teachers' and first year teachers' actual listening abilities as measured by their performance on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test.

Description of Procedures Used

This study investigated the difference in listening skill between two groups participating in the University of Nebraska at Omaha Mentor Program. Mentor teachers were defined as teachers with three or more years of teaching experience who have been selected by their district to act as a mentors for first year teachers. First year teachers' were

defined as teachers currently in their initial year of employment as a certified teacher.

Data from an investigative study of the listening skills of mentor teachers were obtained from a related study (Grandgenett et al., 1992). Twenty, first year teachers volunteered to take the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test. Prior to testing, the teachers were asked to predict their scores on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test. In order to test the desired number of subjects, the test was administered several times using a standard procedure. The statistical procedures for this study focused on testing two the hypotheses. A standard t-test was used to determine the level of significance of the difference in group means. The level of significance selected for this study was .05.

Principal Findings

Following the statistical analysis of the differences in mean scores between first year and mentor teaches, the principal findings on each sub-hypothesis are as follows:

Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this study was that there would be a difference between first year and mentor teachers' perceived and actual listening abilities as measured by the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test. This hypothesis could not be accepted as there was no statistical difference in mean scores for the cumulative perceived or actual Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test scores. In addition, two sub-hypothesis were tested.

Sub-hypothesis 1: Is there a difference between mentor teachers' and first year teachers' perceived listening abilities as measured by their estimated scores on the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test.

Sub-hypothesis 1 could not be accepted as there were no statistical differences in projected cumulative mean scores.

Sub-hypothesis 2: Is there a difference between mentor teachers' and first year teachers' actual listening abilities as measured by performance by the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test.

Sub-hypothesis 2 could not be accepted as there was no

statistical difference in actual cumulative mean scores.

Auxiliary Observations

In addition to testing the hypotheses, the data were also analyzed regarding performance of the two groups on each sub-test of the Brown-Carlson listening comprehension test. This analysis of data may suggest areas for further research.

The first year teachers' perceived scores on section "A", immediate recall, were significantly greater than those of the mentor teachers. This suggests that the first year teachers may be more confident in their ability to immediately recall information presented to them orally. This result might be explained by the first year teachers' more recent practice in the college classroom. Such a hypothesis should be examined in further research focusing directly on this aspect of listening.

The first year teachers perceived scores on section "D", recognizing word meanings, were significantly greater than those of the mentor teachers. This suggests that the first year teachers may be more confident than the mentor teachers in their ability to recognize the differences in the usage of

synonyms. This hypothesis could be the focus of further research which targets this particular component of listening skill.

The first year teachers' actual scores on section "A", immediate recall, were significantly greater than those of the mentor teachers. This result suggests that the first year teachers may be better at listening to information which demands quick and accurate recall. Another explanation might be the first year teachers' recent practice of this skill in the college classroom.

The first year teachers actual scores on section "B", following directions' were significantly higher than those of the mentor teachers. This data implies that the first year teachers may be better than the mentor teachers at following a series of complicated oral directions. The effect of more recent practice in the college classroom could be an explanation as well. This hypothesis should be the focus of further research into this aspect of listening ability.

The first year teachers' scores on section "D", recognizing word meanings, were significantly lower than

those of the mentor teachers. This result could indicate that the mentor teachers may be actually more skilled than the first year teachers at recognizing the meaning of synonymous words used in different sentences. This result could be the focus of research in this area of listening. The differences in sub-test results may also be attributed to the sample of teachers selected for this study.

There was no significant difference between first year and mentor teachers' perceived listening abilities on sections, "B"- following directions, "C"- recognizing transitions, and "E"- lecture comprehension. This result implies that first year and mentor teachers' seemed to have about the same level of confidence in their abilities in the areas of following directions, recognizing transitions, and lecture comprehension.

There was no significant difference between first year and mentor teachers' actual scores on sections "C", recognizing transitions, and "E", lecture comprehension. This result illustrates that first year and mentor teachers' seems to function at relatively the same skill level in the

areas of listening to recognize transitions and listening to lectures for comprehension.

Conclusions

The results of this study suggest the following conclusion: There was no significant difference between first year teachers and mentor teachers in the areas of perceived and actual listening ability.

In addition to the hypotheses testing, the study suggest several areas worthy of further investigation. There was a significant difference between first year teachers' and mentor teachers' perceived listening abilities in the areas of immediate recall, and recognizing word meanings. This result suggests that further research in this area may be warranted. There was a significant difference between first year teachers' and mentor teachers' actual listening abilities in the areas of immediate recall, following directions, and recognizing word meanings. These results indicate the need for further study.

Implications of the Study

The investigation of the listening skills of first year

and mentor teachers indicates that mentor teachers and first year teachers function at about the same level of listening proficiency. The results of this study implies that overall listening comprehension may not improve as a result of teaching experience. Teaching is a profession in which listening is critical to successful job performance. Further investigation should focus on determining if the level of listening ability demonstrated by the first year and mentor teachers is sufficient for their profession.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations are made regarding additional research on this topic:

- (1) The investigation of what level of listening ability is required to be successful as a teacher is critical.
- (2) Further research to examine the sub-test differences in the areas of immediate recall, following directions, and recognizing word meanings is indicated.
- (3) The comparison of teachers to other professionals

in the area of listening ability is suggested by this research.

(4) The comparison of teachers to other educational professionals (i.e. administrators, counselors, etc.) in the area of listening ability is suggested by this study.

(5) Replication of this study should be completed using other samples of first year and mentor teachers.

Concluding Remarks

This study has shown that there is no difference between first year and mentor teachers' in the areas of perceived and actual listening abilities. As discussed in Chapter Two, listening has been directly related to success at work. Nixon & West, (1989) as well as Hirsch, (1979) have shown that people in general spend over one-half of their day listening. Wolvin & Coakley (1985) report that inefficient listening wastes money, misuses time, deflates moral, and alienates relationships. Teachers can ill afford any of these problems related to poor listening.

Teachers are challenged each day to prescribe, implement, and evaluate instruction. Increasing the

teachers' ability to listen effectively should increase the effectiveness of both new and experienced teachers. The enhancement of listening skills should be considered when decisions are made about pre-service and in-service teacher education programs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bostrom, R., and Waldhart, E. (1980). Components of Listening Behavior: The Role of Short Term Memory. Human Communications Research, 6, 221-227
- Bostrom, R. (1988). Input! The Process of Listening. Northbrook, IL: Waveland Press.
- Brown, J., and Carlsen, G. (1955). Brown-Carlsen Listening Comprehension Test. New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & World Inc.
- Brown, J. (1985). The Brown-Carlsen listening comprehension test, paper presented at the Speech Communication Association Convention. November, 1985.
- Buros, O. (Ed.) (1959). The Fifth Mental Measurements Yearbook. Highland Park, NJ: The Gryphon Press.
- Gillaspie, K. (1991). An investigative study of the listening skills of managers, professional technical, and clerical employees at Central States Health & Life Company of Omaha, Omaha, NE: University of Nebraska at Omaha.
- Grandgenett, D., Fringer, D., and Grandgenett, N. (1992). An Investigative Study of the Listening Skills of Mentor Teachers and Business Employees. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- Hirsch, R. (1979). Listening: A Way to Process Information Aurally. Dubuque, IA: Gorsuch Scarisbrick.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (cont.)

- Lundgren, R. E. (1974). Effects of listening training on teacher listening and discussion skills. California Journal of Educational Research, 25:4, 205-218.
- Lundsteen, S.W. (1984). How to assess your listening needs. Curriculum Review, 23:1, 22-23.
- Montgomery, R. (1981). Listening Made Easy. New York: American Management Associations.
- Nixon & West, (1989). Listening, Vital to communication. Bulletin of The Association for Business Communication, 52:2, 15-17.
- Papa, M. and Glenn, E. (1988, Fall). Listening Ability and Performance with New Technology. The Journal of Business Communication. 25:4, 5-15.
- Roberts, C. (1985). A User's Response to the Use of Listening Assessment Instruments. A paper presented at The Speech Communication Association Convention. November, 1985.
- Vander Kolk, C. J. (1975). Developing teacher effectiveness through interpersonal skill training. College Student Journal, 9:3, 251-255.
- Wolff, F., Marsnik, N., Tacey, W., and Nichols, R. (1983). Perceptive Listening. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (cont.)

Wolvin, A., and Coakley, C. (1982). Listening. Dubuque, IA:
William C. Brown Company.

Wolvin, A., and Coakley, C. (1985). Listening. (2nd ed.)
Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown Company.

APPENDIX



University of Nebraska Medical Center
Eppley Science Hall 3018
600 South 42nd Street
Omaha, NE 68198-6810
402/559-6463
Fax 402/559-7845

February 3, 1992

David W. Fringer
Teacher Education
College of Education
9692 Ames Avenue
Omaha, NE 68134

IRB #: 179-92-EX

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: An Investigative Study of the Listening Skills of Mentor
Teachers and First Year Teachers

Dear Mr. Fringer:

The IRB has reviewed your Exemption Information Form for the above-titled research project. According to the information provided this project is exempt under 45 CFR 46:101B. You are therefore authorized to begin the research.

It is understood this project will be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines. It is also understood that the IRB will be immediately notified of any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project.

Sincerely,

Ernest D. Prentice, Ph.D.
Vice Chairman, IRB

EDP/lmc



University of Nebraska Medical Center
Eppley Science Hall 3018
600 South 42nd Street
Omaha, NE 68198-6810
(402) 559-6463
Fax (402) 559-7845

EXEMPTION FORM

SECTION I: APPLICATION DATA

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL: An Investigative Study of the Listening Skills of
Mentor Teachers and First Year Teachers

STARTING DATE: February 15, 1992

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: David W. Fringer

SECONDARY INVESTIGATOR(S): N/A

DEPARTMENT/COLLEGE: Teacher Education / College of Education

ADDRESS: 9692 Ames Ave. Omaha, NE ZIP CODE: 68134

TELEPHONE: Home 572-4128 Work 554-2391

SECTION 2: CERTIFICATION

CERTIFICATION OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Signature certifies that the research project as described will be conducted in full compliance with University of Nebraska Regulations governing human subject research as stated in the IRB Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects. It is understood that the IRB will be notified of any proposed changes which may affect the exempt status of the research.

David Fringer
Signature of Principal Investigator

1-27-92
Date

Graduate Teaching Assistant UNO College of Education
Position

ADVISOR APPROVAL: Student investigators are required to obtain approval from their advisor. Signature of approval certifies the research proposal has been approved and recommended for submission to the IRB.

Donald J. Grandgenett
Signature of Advisor

January 27, 1992
Date

Dr. Donald Grandgenett

Printed Name of Advisor

The IRB requires submission of an original and one (1) copy of the Exemption Form.

SECTION 3: REVIEW INFORMATION

In order to determine whether your proposal qualifies for exempt status under 45 CFR 46:101(b), the IRB requests submission of the following information. Each subpart must be titled as described below and addressed in the listed sequence.

- I. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY.** State concisely and realistically what the research in this proposal is intended to accomplish.
- II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SUBJECT POPULATION.** Address the following questions in sequence using the listed subheadings.
 - a. **AGE RANGE.** What is the age range of the subjects?
 - b. **SEX.** What is the sex of the subjects?
 - c. **NUMBER.** What is the anticipated number of subjects?
 - d. **SELECTION CRITERIA.** What are the subject selection criteria?
- III. METHOD OF SUBJECT SELECTION.** Describe the method(s) to be employed in the identification/recruitment of prospective subjects.
- IV. STUDY SITE.** State the location(s) where the study will be conducted. Attach letters of approval from any non-University of Nebraska study site.
- V. DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES.** Describe all procedures to be applied to subjects. Attach one copy of all surveys, questionnaires, and educational tests.
- VI. CONFIDENTIALITY.** Describe how and the extent to which confidentiality of data will be maintained.
- VII. INFORMED CONSENT.** Some technically exempt research projects ethically require informed consent (written or oral). If, in the investigator's opinion, the study requires informed consent, the method used to obtain informed consent should be described and any written consent forms submitted. If the study does not require consent, it should be so stated and justified.
- VIII. JUSTIFICATION OF EXEMPTION.** The exempt category (1-6) under which the proposal is submitted should be stated and justified.

SECTION 4: CATEGORIES OF RESEARCH THAT QUALIFY FOR EXEMPT STATUS

Research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the categories specified by Federal Regulations 45 CFR 46:101(b) are exempt from the requirements of 45 CFR 46. Only an Exemption Form must be submitted and approved by the IRB. The exempt categories do not, however, apply to research involving deception of subjects (the researcher deceives the subject with regard to the purpose of the research and/or the results of the subject's actions in the study), sensitive behavioral research, or to research involving pregnant women, prisoners, mentally incompetent people and other subject populations determined to be vulnerable.

Exempt Categories:

1. Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as: (i) research on regular or special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.
Educational research protocols are exempt providing **all** of the following conditions are met:
 - a. All of the research is conducted in a commonly accepted educational setting (e.g., public school).
 - b. The research involves normal educational practices (e.g., comparison of instructional techniques).
 - c. The study procedures do not represent a significant deviation in time or effort requirements from those educational practices already existent at the study site.
 - d. The study procedures involve no increase in the level of risk or discomfort attendant normal, routine educational practices.
 - e. The study procedures do not involve sensitive subjects (e.g., sex education).
 - f. Provisions are made to ensure the existence of a non-coercive environment for those students who choose not to participate.
 - g. The school or other institution grants written approval for the research to be conducted.

NOTE: When an educational research project meets **all** of the above-listed conditions the IRB does not require parental consent. The investigator and/or the school system may, however, decide that parental consent should be obtained. Verbal child assent should be obtained. Educational projects that do not meet the above-listed conditions are not exempt and must be reviewed by either the expedited or full Board method.
2. Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, **unless:** (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; **and** (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Institutional Review Board
EXEMPTION FORM

Section 3: Review Information

I. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a significant difference between the perceived and actual listening skills of first year teachers and mentor teachers.

II. Characteristics of the Subject Population

- a. Age Range: The participants will all be licensed teachers over 21 years of age.
- b. Sex: Both male and female teachers will be asked to participate in the study.
- c. Number: 20-30 participants are anticipated for this study.
- d. Selection Criteria: First year teachers participating in the UNO F.I.R.S.T. Grant Mentoring Program will be asked to voluntarily submit to the testing.

III. Method of Subject Selection

A letter will be mailed to all first year teachers in the UNO F.I.R.S.T. Grant Mentoring Program. The letter will outline the purpose of the study and ask participants to submit to testing at a predetermined date.

IV. Study Site

The testing will be conducted on March 17, 1991, at a site to be determined. The testing will take place following a workshop for the Mentor Project Participants.

V. Description of Procedures

Each participant will be asked to estimate their score on each section of the Brown-Carlsen listening comprehension test. The Brown-Carlsen will then be administered by audio tape. The estimated and perceived scores will be compared to those of mentor teachers obtained in an earlier study.

VI. Confidentiality

Individual names and schools will not be used to report the results. Only group scores will be analyzed and reported. All testing material will be kept strictly confidential by the investigator.

VII. Informed Consent

This study is exempt from informed consent as participants' names and schools will not be used in discussing results.

VIII. Justification of Exemption

1. Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as: (i) research on regular or special education instructional strategies.

2. Research involving the use of educational tests and subjects which cannot be identified.