Intensive English Language Institute
Listening Assessment—Fall 2021

The IELI faculty examined the results of two assessment exercises collected near the end of the Fall Semester 2021 from the one and only section of IELI 2410—Comprehending Lecture Discourse—that was offered that semester. The purpose of the assessment was to determine whether students had met program exit criteria for the program's listening strand, and to review the assessment instrument for doing so.

Procedures

Samples were gathered from two separate lectures that were representative of the types of lectures students had engaged with during this course. Lecture 1 was on *Directed Looking*, a method of looking at visual art. Lecture 2 was a lecture on the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain. Both lectures were delivered by the course's instructor.

Lecture 1: Samples were available for 7 of the 8 students enrolled in the course during the Fall 2021 semester. Six of the students listened to the lecture live and submitted written notes at the end of the class session; one student, who was absent on the day of the live lecture accessed an audio recording of the lecture remotely and submitted notes via CANVAS (a learning management system). In both cases, the lecture was accompanied by a PowerPoint presenting the items of art referred to during the lecture. The only text on the PowerPoint slides was a caption under each work of art indicating title, artist, medium, and dimensions of the work. Samples from Lecture 1 were used to assess Outcomes 1-2. (See Table 2)

Lecture 2: Samples were available for the same 7 students who also engaged with Lecture 1. All 7 students were present for the live lecture. They listened and took notes on the lecture, and after the lecture, they discussed their notes with their peers and had an opportunity to clean up their rough notes before taking a picture of the notes and uploading them to CANVAS. On the next class meeting, students were presented with the task of writing a 1-2 paragraph summary of the main ideas and significant details from the lecture based only on the notes they had taken during the previous class. These summaries were used to assess Outcome 3. (See Table 2)

Student products from the two lectures were independently rated by two faculty members; each of the three student learning outcomes received a separate score of either 2, 1, 0 or N/A in accordance with the scale shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Rating Scale for Achievement of Outcomes

Rating	Explanation
2	Both raters agreed the student's response to the task showed evidence that the outcome had been achieved.
1	Only one rater agreed the student's response to the task showed evidence that the outcome had been achieved.
0	Both raters agreed the student's response to the task failed to show evidence that the outcome had been achieved.
N/A	Not applicable. The rater felt it was not possible to determine whether the stated outcome had been achieved.

Results

Table 2 shows the extent to which the three outcomes listed in the table were judged to have been achieved. For example, for Outcome 1: "Recognition of various organizational features and discourse structures of the lecture …" – six students received a rating of "2," (i.e., both raters agreed the student had achieved the

outcome). Only one student received a rating of "1," (i.e., one rater agreed the student had achieved the outcome and the other rater did not), and no student received a rating of "0."

The pattern of ratings displayed in Table 2 give an indication of the degree of agreement between raters. In particular, column "0" can be seen as reflecting prefect agreement between raters that a criterion has NOT been met. Conversely column "2" can be seen as reflecting prefect agreement between raters that a criterion HAS been met. Taken together, the raters in this assessment exercise agreed on 19/21 paired ratings (i.e., 90% of the time).

Table 2: Number of Students Receiving 2, 1, 0 for Each Outcome

	Outcomes	2	1	0
Lecture 1	1. Recognition of various organizational features and discourse structures of the lecture including: • discourse markers (e.g., topic & subtopic announcements, examples, supporting information, returns to topic after digression) • organizational sequences (e.g., definition, classification, concept explanation, problem/solution) • discourse features to be ignored (e.g., digressions, postponements)	6	1	0
Lecture 1	2. Ability to take notes that reflect organization and content of the lecture. Notes may employ... • key word outlines • bulleted lists • visual representations • other self-developed systems	6	0	1*
Lecture 2	3. Understanding of lecture content by completing tasks such as... • filling in and making concept maps • answering questions • applying the content to situations • summarizing the content	6	1	n/a

Interpretation

This assessment provides robust evidence that all three learning outcomes for the listening strand of the program were largely met by 6 of the 7 students exiting the course at the end of Fall Semester 2021. There is some evidence that one of the 7 students may not have fully achieved Outcome 2. This is reflected in the cell of the table (marked with an asterisk) which indicates that 1 student received a "0" on Outcome 2, (i.e., had not demonstrated an ability to take structured notes). Further, Outcomes 1 and 3 may have only been weakly met by one or two students as indicated by the fact that only one of two raters was able to judge these outcomes as having been met.

Closer examination of individual cases indicated that the same student who failed to achieve Objective 2 also showed only weak evidence of having achieved Outcome 1. Nevertheless, that student was able to meet Outcome 3, which it might be reasonably argued, is the most important of the three outcomes since it involves the ability to use information attended to in a lecture, rather than simply demonstrating metacognitive awareness (Outcome 1) or organizational skill in note-taking (Outcome 2).

One other student failed to convince both raters that he/she had demonstrated achievement of Outcome 3, specifically, the ability to summarize the content of a lecture, although one of the raters WAS satisfied the outcome had been achieved.

Follow-Up Discussion

Following the assessment exercise, the IELI faculty discussed the appropriateness of the listening passage used to assess Outcomes 1 & 2, specifically, whether the pace of delivery adequately reflected the usual pacing of a university lecture. The IELI faculty agreed to revisit this question for the purpose of further refining the assessment process. (It should probably also be noted, that writing ability and not merely listening comprehension is implicated in summary writing, which could somewhat complicate assessment of Outcome 3.)