

Giving more Voice to Post-graduate Students' ESP Lecture Comprehension Needs

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Abstract

The present paper reports on a small investigation that took place in the author's teaching environment to highlight her students' academic lecture comprehension needs related to the new subject matter of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The aim of this research endeavour was to ponder over students' perspective of the difficulties emerging from, and strategies needed for lecture comprehension, in a way to improve the author's lecturing practice and ensure better academic achievement in the ESP subject. To this end, 26 Algerian post-graduate students in Didactics of English submitted written feedback about the ESP-subject lectures (including their difficulties and learning strategies). Additionally, the author's lecturing strategies and perspective of learners' academic lacks helped complete such learning/teaching situation. The findings revealed that students' difficulties in ESP lecture comprehension were due to the complex skills required of them while listening to the lectures besides their unfamiliarity with the *new* ESP topics and terminology. To grasp better, student participants demanded more emphasis on some lecturing strategies (such as, pre-lecturing revision/reminder, while-lecturing explanation/repetition, and final recapitulation/comprehension check) while projecting a preference for particular visual supplements to oral lecturing (i.e., the whiteboard, handouts, additional reading materials). Because student participants showed little inclination towards note-taking from the lecturer's speech and PowerPoint slides, the paper concluded with suggestions for pedagogical treatment to such difficult-to-attain academic lecture comprehension/listening strategies.

Keywords: Academic lecture comprehension, English for Academic purposes, learning needs/strategies, lecture/listening comprehension strategies, teaching situation analysis

Cite as: KHIATI, N. (2019). Giving more Voice to Post-graduate Students' ESP Lecture Comprehension Needs. *Arab World English Journal*, 10 (4) 167-179.

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol10no4.13>