

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the research findings in five sections accompanied by a discussion of the findings. The first three sections present the listening comprehension levels under the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques among all subjects, among the good listeners, and among the poor listeners. The result of the data analysis on question types of local and global questions among all subjects is presented next. Following are the findings on the subjects' attitudes towards the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques. At the end of the chapter, the discussion of the results is presented. The findings are classified into five main sections as follow:

1. A comparison between the levels of listening comprehension of all subjects under the use of the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques.
2. A comparison between the levels of listening comprehension of the good listeners under the use of the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques.
3. A comparison between the levels of listening comprehension of the poor listeners under the use of the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques.
4. A comparison between the levels of listening comprehension of all subjects obtained from local questions and global questions under the use of the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques.
5. The subjects' attitudes towards the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques.

The findings of the five sections are presented in the order shown above; the information of the first three sections is presented through the same pattern, that is, the difference of all subjects on all texts and on each text, followed by that between the good listeners and the poor listeners. The effects of the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques on question types, local questions and global questions, will be shown in the fourth section. The subjects' attitudes towards the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques are presented in the last section. The data analyses are presented as follows:

#### 4.5 Listening Comprehension Levels of All Subjects from All Texts

The first research question of this study emphasizes the effects of the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques on listening comprehension of all subjects. To find out how the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques affect subjects' listening ability, the mean scores of the listening comprehension levels of all subjects in the two main groups were analyzed. The results of the difference between the mean scores of all subjects from all texts are presented in Table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1**

Listening Comprehension Levels of All Subjects from All Texts

Group	Total scores	Mean scores	S.D.	df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
A	40	20.14	6.986	28	.898	.377
B	40	19.28	6.709	28		

\* Significant at 0.05 level

According to Table 4.1, the data showed that there was no significant difference in the listening comprehension levels of all subjects in Group A and B. That is, both groups had the little different performance doing the listening tests. Although the mean scores of Group A (20.14) were higher than that of Group B (19.28), there was no statistically significant difference at 0.05 level ( $t = .898$ ,  $p$

= .377). This indicated that the English listening comprehension ability of both groups was not different although they took two different techniques, the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques, doing the listening tests.

#### 4.2 Listening Comprehension Levels of All Subjects from Each Text

To further investigate the effects of the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques on English listening comprehension of all subjects from each of the four texts, the mean scores of each text were analyzed. The results are presented in Table 4.2 below.

**Table 4.2**

Listening Comprehension Levels of All Subjects from Each Text

Text	Total scores	Group A		Group B		df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean scores	S.D.	Mean scores	S.D.			
1	7	5.00	1.832	4.59	1.524	28	1.072	.293
2	10	4.67	2.067	4.17	1.769	28	1.238	.226
3	11	5.95	2.494	5.97	2.921	28	-.041	.967
4	12	4.52	1.902	4.55	2.324	28	-.092	.928

\* Significant at 0.05 level

With regard to the analyzed data in Table 4.2, both Group A and B did nearly the same on all texts especially text No.3 and No.4 (Text 1,  $t = 1.072$ ,  $p = .293$ ; Text 2,  $t = 1.238$ ,  $p = .226$ ; Text 3,  $t = -.041$ ,  $p = .967$ ; Text 4,  $t = -.092$ ,  $p = .928$ ). In other words, the mean scores of all subjects from each listening text were not found significantly difference. The results revealed that the listening comprehension levels of all subjects were generally the same. Hence, it is quite obvious that the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques did not show a different effect on subjects' listening comprehension in every text.

In brief, in the listening comprehension of all subjects, the results showed that there were no significant differences between the mean scores of all subjects in any of

the individual listening text or in the total of all four listening texts. This means that all subjects performed no difference after doing the pre-listening question technique as they did after doing the post-listening question technique.

### 4.3 Listening Comprehension Levels of Good Listeners from All Texts

In order to find out how the good listeners performed when exposed to the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques, the mean scores of the good listeners in each group were analyzed and a t-test was employed to compare the mean scores. The results are presented in Table 4.3 below.

**Table 4.3**

Listening Comprehension Levels of Good Listeners from All Texts

Good listeners	Total scores	Mean scores	S.D.	df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Group A	40	26.63	4.868	7	-.131	.900
Group B	40	26.88	1.747	7		

\* Significant at 0.05 level

The data shown in Table 4.3 indicated that the listening comprehension levels of the good listeners in both groups were similar with the mean scores of 26.63 and 26.88 in Group A and B respectively. There was no statistically significant difference between the mean scores obtained from the good listeners in both groups at 0.05 level ( $t = -.131$ ,  $p = .900$ ). This suggested that neither the pre-listening question technique nor the post-listening question technique influenced the levels of listening comprehension among the good listeners to a different degree.

#### 4.4 Listening Comprehension Levels of Good Listeners from Each Text

The mean scores of the good listeners from each text were analyzed and a t-test was employed to test the different levels of listening comprehension. The findings are shown in Table 4.4 below.

**Table 4.4**

Listening Comprehension Levels of Good Listeners from Each Text

Good listeners	Total scores	Group A		Group B		df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean scores	S.D.	Mean scores	S.D.			
Text 1	7	6.13	1.126	5.75	1.389	7	.552	.598
Text 2	10	6.31	1.850	5.19	1.361	7	1.396	.205
Text 3	11	7.69	1.907	9.19	.998	7	-2.084	.076
Text 4	12	6.50	1.512	6.75	1.581	7	-.357	.732

\* Significant at 0.05 level

With respect to Table 4.4, the results showed no significant difference at a level of 0.05 in all texts (Text 1,  $t = .552$ ,  $p = .598$ ; Text 2,  $t = 1.396$ ,  $p = .205$ ; Text 3,  $t = -2.084$ ,  $p = .076$ ; Text 4,  $t = -.357$ ,  $p = .732$ ). It can thus be interpreted that the levels of listening comprehension of the good listeners were generally the same in every text. It is clear that each method of the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques showed an equivalent effect on listening comprehension of the good listeners in every text.

#### 4.5 Listening Comprehension Levels of Poor Listeners from All Texts

The mean scores of the poor listeners are analyzed and a t-test was used to find out whether there was a significant difference between each group. The results are demonstrated in Table 4.5 below.

**Table 4.5**

Listening Comprehension Levels of Poor Listeners from All Texts

Poor listeners	Total scores	Mean scores	S.D.	df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Group A	40	12.44	2.847	7	.068	.948
Group B	40	12.31	4.855	7		

\*Significant at 0.05 level

As shown in Table 4.5, there were no statistically significant differences between the poor listeners in each group ( $t = .068$ ,  $p = .948$ ). Hence, it suggested that although the poor listeners used two different techniques for doing the listening tests, their listening comprehension levels were approximately equal. The result seemed to show that each technique did not differently affect listening comprehension of the poor listeners.

#### 4.6 Listening Comprehension Levels of Poor Listeners from Each Text

The test results of each text were also examined to find out how the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques affect the listening comprehension of the poor listeners. The findings represented by the mean scores are shown in Table 4.6 below.

**Table 4.6**

Listening Comprehension Levels of Poor Listeners from Each Text

Poor listeners	Total scores	Group A		Group B		df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean scores	S.D.	Mean scores	S.D.			
Text 1	7	3.25	1.282	3.63	1.506	7	-.704	.504
Text 2	10	3.06	1.148	3.19	1.624	7	-.173	.868
Text 3	11	3.63	1.302	2.63	1.706	7	1.239	.255
Text 4	12	2.50	.926	2.88	1.458	7	-.704	.504

\* Significant at 0.05 level

From these findings, the mean scores of the poor listeners were nearly the same in every text. There were no significant differences in all texts (Text 1,  $t = -.704$ ,  $p = .504$ ; Text 2,  $t = -.173$ ,  $p = .868$ ; Text 3,  $t = 1.239$ ,  $p = .255$ ; Text 4,  $t = -.704$ ,  $p = .504$ ). This revealed that the poor listeners in both groups produced similar results in all texts. Thus, the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques did not differently affect the listening comprehension of the poor listeners in every text.

#### **4.9 Listening Comprehension Levels of All Subjects from Each Question Type**

In order to see the details of the effects of the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques on the subjects' responding to local questions and global questions, the mean scores of all subjects in each group gained from each question type were compared. The results are presented in Table 4.7 below.

**Table 4.7**

Listening Comprehension Levels of All Subjects from Each Question Type

Question Types	Total scores	Group A		Group B		df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean scores	S.D.	Mean scores	S.D.			
Local question	27	14.28	5.351	12.14	5.230	28	2.636	.014**
Global question	13	5.86	1.941	7.14	2.28	28	- 3.053	.005**

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

From the data reported in Table 4.7, the results showed that there were significant differences in the mean scores between the two groups for local questions and global questions. It was found that the mean scores for local questions obtained by subjects in Group A were significantly higher than those in Group B ( $t = 2.636$ ,  $p = .014$ ). In contrast, the subjects in Group B could comprehend global questions significantly better than those in Group A ( $t = - 3.053$ ,  $p = .005$ ). It could be noted that in general the pre-listening question technique was more suitable to use with local questions while the post-listening question technique worked better with global questions.

#### **4.8 Listening Comprehension Levels of All Subjects from Each Question Type in Each Text**

To further investigate the effects of the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques in responding to local questions and global questions of Group A and B in each text, the mean scores of all subjects in each question type obtained from each text were analyzed and compared. The results of the difference between the mean scores are shown in Table 4.8 below.



**Table 4.8**

Listening Comprehension Levels of All Subjects from Each Question Type in Each Text

Text	Question Types	Total scores	Group A		Group B		df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Mean scores	S.D.	Mean scores	S.D.			
1	Local Question	5	3.62	1.425	2.90	1.423	28	2.131	.042*
	Global Question	2	1.38	.561	1.69	.541	28	-2.346	.026*
2	Local Question	7	2.78	1.550	2.10	1.365	28	2.175	.038*
	Global Question	3	1.90	.817	2.07	.923	28	-.796	.433
3	Local Question	7	3.74	1.735	3.59	2.027	28	.460	.649
	Global Question	4	2.21	.978	2.38	1.115	28	-.926	.362
4	Local Question	8	4.14	1.726	3.55	1.901	28	1.714	.098
	Global Question	4	0.38	.561	1	.964	28	-3.186	.004**

\* Significant at 0.05 level

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

With regard to the data in Table 4.8, the statistics showed that the subjects in Group A could better comprehend local questions than those in Group B whereas the subjects in Group B were able to answer global questions better than those in Group A in every text. There were significant differences in Text 1 (local questions,  $t = 2.131$ ,  $p = .042$ ; global questions,  $t = -2.346$ ,  $p = .026$ ) Text 2 (local questions,  $t = 2.175$ ,  $p = .038$ ) and Text 4 (global questions,  $t = -3.186$ ,  $p = .004$ ). Although some texts were not found to have produced significant differences (Text 2, global questions,  $t = -.796$ ,  $p = .433$ ; Text 3, local questions,  $t = .460$ ,  $p = .649$ , global questions,  $t = -.926$ ,  $p = .362$ ; Text 4, local questions,  $t = 1.714$ ,  $p = .098$ ), the findings were in accord with the proposition that the pre-listening question technique enhances subjects to respond to local questions while the post-listening question technique helps subjects to answer global questions.

#### 4.9 Subjects' Attitudes towards the Pre-Listening Question Technique

To survey subjects' opinions towards the pre-listening question technique, all subjects from Group A were asked to respond to the questionnaire about the pre-listening question technique at the end of the experiment. Their attitudes were coded and analyzed for the mean scores and standard deviations using SPSS/PC program. The mean scores of the responses on the pre-listening question technique are shown in Table 4.9 below.

**Table 4.9**

Attitudes towards the Pre- Listening Question Technique

Compared with my past experience on listening, the teacher's use of the pre-listening question technique makes me.....	Mean scores	S.D.	Levels of agreement
1. Better understand the listening text.	3.93	.651	Agree
2. Finish doing the tests quickly.	3.59	.628	Agree
3. Activate my prior knowledge about the story.	3.66	.614	Agree
4. Active to search for answers while listening.	3.86	.639	Agree
5. Guess what the story is before listening.	4.10	.673	Agree
6. Get useful ideas from the questions.	3.93	.651	Agree
7. Choose to listen to only the most important information for doing the test.	3.93	.884	Agree
8. Know what I have to concentrate on.	4.14	.875	Agree
9. Feel interested in listening to the listening text.	4.07	.799	Agree
10. Learn something from vocabulary presented in questions.	4.03	.823	Agree
11. Have time to prepare before listening.	4.10	.900	Agree
Average Mean Scores (N=29)	3.94	.324	Agree

Regarding the items of the pre-listening question technique, they could be grouped into three aspects of subjects' attitudes: items which presented the advantages of the pre-listening question technique in increasing listening comprehension (items 1, 2, 4, 9, 10, 11), activating background knowledge to the topic (items 3, 5, 6), and using a selective strategy in listening (item 7, 8).

According to the data gained from this questionnaire, the results showed that all subjects agreed in all items of the questionnaire. They all agreed that the method of the pre-listening question technique enhanced their listening comprehension. With regard to item 1 ( $\bar{X} = 3.93$ ), the subjects agreed that they could better understand the listening text under the use of the pre-listening question technique. With item 2 ( $\bar{X} = 3.59$ ), the subjects agreed that the pre-listening question technique helped them finish the test quickly. Most of them also felt that they were active to search for answers while listening if they used the pre-listening question technique ( $\bar{X}$  for item 4 = 3.86) and they felt interested in listening to the listening text as well ( $\bar{X}$  for item 9 = 4.07). In addition, they agreed that they could learn something from vocabulary presented in questions ( $\bar{X}$  for item 10 = 4.03) and they had time to prepare before listening ( $\bar{X}$  for item 11 = 4.10) by the use of the pre-listening question technique.

With regard to items 3, 5, 6, it was found that these three items are related to the effect of the pre-listening question technique in terms of student's background knowledge. Most subjects suggested that this method helped to activate their prior knowledge about the story ( $\bar{X}$  for item 3 = 3.66). The pre-listening question technique also helped them to guess what the story was before listening ( $\bar{X}$  for item 5 = 4.10) and they could get useful ideas from the questions ( $\bar{X}$  for item 6 = 3.93).

Moreover, most of them agreed with items 7, 8 concerning the use of a selective strategy in listening. The subjects agreed that the pre-listening question technique helped them to listen to the most important information for answering the questions ( $\bar{X}$  for item 7 = 3.93) and enabled them to know what they should concentrate on ( $\bar{X}$  for item 8 = 4.14).

The results from the findings shown above presented the level of agreement in all items of the questionnaire. This reflected that the pre-listening question technique was considered to please the subjects. According to Best (1997), the range of the

attitude means between 3.6668-5.0 represents positive attitudes, 2.3334 – 3.6667 represents neutral attitudes, and 1.0-2.3333 represents negative attitudes. Since the average mean scores of subjects' responses to the items of the pre-listening question technique in this study were 3.94, this obviously suggested that their attitudes were positive towards this method following Best's criteria.

The findings above revealed that the subjects expressed positive attitudes to the use of the pre-listening question technique. The subjects agreed that this method provided them with several benefits. Most of them were satisfied with this method and viewed it as a useful technique for enhancing their listening comprehension, activating their background knowledge, and helping them to use a selective strategy.

#### **4.10 Subjects' Attitudes towards the Post-Listening Question Technique**

To survey the subjects' opinions towards the post-listening question technique, all subjects from Group B were asked to respond to the questionnaire about the post-listening question technique at the end of the experiment. Their attitudes were coded and analyzed for the mean scores and standard deviations using SPSS/PC program. The mean scores of the responses on the post-listening question technique are shown in Table 4.10 below.

**Table 4.10**

Attitudes towards the Post- Listening Question Technique

Compared with my past experience on listening, the teacher's use of the post-listening question technique makes me .....	Mean scores	S.D.	Levels of agreement
1. Concentrate specially on the whole text while listening.	4.14	.639	Agree
2. Finish doing the tests quickly.	3.10	.557	Not sure
3. Catch the important details of listening texts.	2.90	.618	Not sure
4. Write many detailed information about the story in my paper.	3.17	.711	Not sure
5. Try to stimulate myself to pay attention to the story.	3.93	.704	Agree
6. Try to think what questions should be while listening in order to know the guideline of the answers.	3.79	.774	Agree
7. Listen and get all points of the listening.	2.86	.875	Not sure
8. Do the listening tests well.	2.97	.906	Not sure
9. More interested in listening to the story.	3.72	.841	Agree
10. Understand overall meaning of the story.	3.69	.850	Agree
Average Mean Scores (N=29)	3.43	.387	Agree

According to the subjects' responses to the post-listening question technique questionnaire, it was found that their responses to some items could be defined as "agreement" whereas some were "not sure". Regarding the subjects' responses, they agreed with items 1, 5, 6, 9, 10. For item 1, subjects agreed that the post-listening question technique made them concentrate specially on the whole text while listening to the texts ( $\bar{X} = 4.14$ ) and they all agreed that the post-listening question technique enabled them to stimulate themselves to pay attention to the listening texts ( $\bar{X}$  for item 5 = 3.93). In addition, the post-listening question technique made them try to think what questions there would be while listening to the texts in order to know the

guideline of the answers ( $\bar{X}$  for item 6 = 3.79). Moreover, most of them felt that they become more interested in listening to the story ( $\bar{X}$  for item 9 = 3.72). The post-listening question technique also enabled them to understand the overall meaning of the story ( $\bar{X}$  for item 10 = 3.69).

However, some items were considered at the level of “unsure” under the use of the post-listening question technique (items 2, 3, 4, 7, 8). That is, it revealed that subjects were not sure if the post-listening question technique could make them finish doing the tests quickly ( $\bar{X}$  for item 2 = 3.10), if the post-listening question technique enabled them to catch the important details of listening texts ( $\bar{X}$  for item 3 = 2.90), if the post-listening question technique could help them to write a lot of detailed information about the story in their paper ( $\bar{X}$  for item 4 = 3.17), if the post-listening question technique could help them to listen and get all points of the listening ( $\bar{X}$  for item 7 = 2.86), and if the post-listening question technique could enable them to do the listening tests well ( $\bar{X}$  for item 8 = 2.97).

From the above results, the mean scores of subjects’ attitudes towards the post-listening question technique range from 2.90 to 4.14 which fall into the levels of “unsure” and “agree”. Although the total average mean scores in this questionnaire were defined at the level of agreement (the average mean scores = 3.43), this represents a neutral attitude according to Best (1977). It is reasonable to conclude that the subjects possessed the neutral attitudes towards the post-listening question technique.

To conclude, it can be seen that although attitudes towards the pre-listening question technique and the post-listening question technique were in the same direction of agreement, the pre-listening question technique attracted a degree of positive attitudes while the attitudes towards the post-listening question technique were neutral.

## **4.11 Discussion of Results**

As stated at the beginning, there are 4 main sections of the comparisons of listening comprehension levels following the use of the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques, and a section of subjects' attitudes towards each technique. Based on these findings, the results on subjects' listening comprehension, and the results on subjects' attitudes are discussed as follow.

### **4.11.1 Subjects' Listening Comprehension following the Use of the Pre-Listening Question and the Post-Listening Question Techniques**

According to the results as a whole, it has been demonstrated that the pre-listening question technique does not give a net advantage over the post-listening question technique. The results of the analysis showed that the differences of the mean scores between the two groups are not significant when all texts were compared as well as when each text is compared individually and there are no significant differences among the good listeners and among the poor listeners. This was observed across the texts and across the subjects' levels. Thus, since the listening comprehension test results after using the pre-listening question technique were as good as those after using the post-listening question technique, each technique did not affect subjects' performance differently. It can be concluded that neither technique had a different effect on the subjects' listening comprehension.

This result seems to agree with the study of Buck (1990), whose findings suggested that knowing the questions before listening did not affect the students. Their listening comprehension was the same, no matter whether they were given questions before or after listening. This finding is also in accordance with previously discussed findings of Sherman (1997), who studied the effects of question positions on listening comprehension. One of her results demonstrated that the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques produced almost exactly the same results. They showed no different effects on English listening comprehension.

To summarize, there was no significant difference on the listening comprehension levels in the three comparisons: all subjects, the good listeners, and the poor listeners. There could be two possible reasons for this: one is that no one technique particularly outperformed than the other since each technique has different advantages and the other is that the subjects may not have been familiar with the content of the listening texts (Hotel reservation, Ann Web interview, Wilar the crocodile man, and Sue's story).

First, as mentioned in chapter 1, each technique of setting questions, pre-listening and post-listening, has different advantages enabling subjects to answer the questions correctly. From this result, then, it might be argued that subjects benefit from each method equally resulting in approximately equal amounts of listening achievement.

With regard to the advantages of the pre-listening question technique, Brown and Yule (1983) stated that giving students questions before listening provides them with a purpose for listening. This purpose affects both the level of their motivation and the listening strategies they choose. As both motivation and strategies directly influence the degree of comprehension, Brown and Yule suggested that tests of listening ability ought to provide a listening purpose. Thus, if students are given the questions before listening, this should establish their listening purpose leading to students' motivation and their use of listening strategies. They also added that the pre-listening question technique provided student motivation which encourages students to get the necessary information to answer the questions. Buck (1990) agreed with this opinion that giving the questions before listening creates a purpose which helps students choose appropriate listening strategies. That is, the listening purpose helps students to decide what to concentrate on and how to listen (Bacon, 1991). In other words, this method enables students to use selective strategies (Boonyakarn and Syananondh, 1991). By reading the questions before listening, students are encouraged to find answers to those questions. The pre-listening question technique could serve a useful guide for students to focus on significant information and filter out unnecessary information. That is, the pre-listening question technique prepares students' minds to absorb information that seems relevant to those questions. Additionally, the pre-listening question technique helps to give some sorts of



preparation for content so that students know what to expect (Thompson, 1995). Students know what they have to seek from the listening text and questions give an indication on what students are going to hear. For example, when students are asked a question like 'where are they going to be?' students then try to listen out for the expression of place. Moreover, the pre-listening question technique provides students with opportunities to build up their expectations about the incoming input and activate students' prior knowledge (Lingzhu, 2003). Furthermore, Willis (1981) stated that the pre-listening question technique makes listening tasks similar to real life where listeners usually know some information before listening to the texts. In real life, when listeners meet someone, or speak to a friend in the street, or go to a lecturer, they usually know what they will hear or can predict what will be said to them. The pre-listening question technique could provide students with some information that they should know before listening, like listening in real life, and this helps students to eliminate ambiguous interpretations.

Unlike the pre-listening question technique, the post-listening question technique has different advantages. Underwood (1989) noted that this technique encourages students to understand the global meaning of the listening text. This is because students have to concentrate on all parts of the listening text since they can not predict to which part they should pay more attention and to which part they should not. As a result, students have to listen to the listening text with their full attention. Weir (1993) gave a similar opinion that the post-listening question technique helps students to extract the main ideas and important details from spoken input. Students should take notes while listening to the text and then answer questions after they have finished listening. She further elaborated that this listening procedure encourages students to understand the overall meaning of the listening text and enables students to answer questions correctly.

Second, subjects' unfamiliarity with the content of the listening texts could be an important reason why they were able to perform similarly in listening comprehension with either the pre-listening question technique or the post-listening question technique. Buck (1990) claimed that when the topics were not familiar to the students, they could not relate the questions given before listening to the listening texts. Students, then, are unable to gain advantage from the pre-listening question

technique. The pre-listening question technique, thus, does not provide a helpful device to subjects as they should in this research study. Buck further explained that students do not think about questions while listening although they mostly claimed that they had actively searched for the information to answer the questions. Students scan the questions without really registering what they are asking. According to Collins (1993), students need to relate what they are going to hear to what they already know in order to understand the listening text. Therefore, if the texts are unfamiliar to the students, then, they can hardly relate their background knowledge to the new topic. Further, the texts which are not related to the students' background knowledge would not motivate their interest in doing a test (Buck, 1990). Because of this, students might neglect the questions given to them before listening. As a result, the questions would not provide them with necessary background knowledge to be used in dealing with the content of the text. This could be a vital reason in the findings of this research as to why the pre-listening question and the post-listening question techniques did not differently affect subjects' listening comprehension. That is, if students were unfamiliar with the content of the texts, the questions given before listening might be overlooked. Accordingly, either using the pre-listening question technique or the post-listening question technique, students did not perform the listening comprehension tests differently. It could be assumed that as the listening comprehension test performance following the pre-listening question technique and the post-listening question technique produced broadly the same results, the pre-listening question technique did not influence subjects' comprehension more than the post-listening question technique or alternatively that the listening texts were unfamiliar to the subjects in terms of the content, or that both of these reasons influenced the equivalence of the results.

#### **4.11.2 Subjects' Listening Comprehension Obtained from Question Types**

When explored in detail, the findings presented some interesting issues worth discussing. In the analysis of the findings regarding the question types, it was found that subjects performed better on items referring to local information than global

information when they were treated under the use of the pre-listening question technique. In contrast, subjects got higher levels in listening comprehension on global questions when they answered questions in the post-listening question technique. These results seemed to suggest that question types of local questions and global questions yield different levels of listening performance when they are located in different positions of the pre-listening question technique and the post-listening question technique. One possible explanation for the above results is that since global questions require subjects to understand texts as a whole, the post-listening question technique would be more helpful to subjects than the pre-listening question technique. This is because the post-listening question technique enables subjects to understand the overall meaning of the listening text (Weir, 1993). Bradney (2004) similarly suggested that questions should be given after listening unless the students tend to concentrate on specific pieces of information rather than identifying the overall intent or meaning. That is, the pre-listening question technique can be disadvantageous for overall comprehension. Ur (1984) also maintained that questions demanding global comprehension of an entire text should be asked at the end of listening. This supported Underwood (1989)'s view that if the questions are given after the text, students will have to listen more carefully to the whole text because they do not know what the questions are until the end. This might be the reason why subjects using the post-listening question technique in this research were able to get the right answers for global questions which required an understanding of the entire text. Shohamy and Inbar (1991), in their study of the effect of text and question types on listening comprehension, found that global questions are more difficult than local questions because students performed better on local questions than on global questions. It was apparently more difficult to answer the global questions which required generalizing, inferring, and synthesizing the information than to answer the local questions which only required students to pick up specific details. However, the findings of this study suggest that placing global questions after listening might help increase students' listening comprehension.

Unlike global questions, local questions only require students to pick up specific details, and students may get the correct answers even if they do not understand the entire text. Hence, students answering questions with the pre-listening

question technique are more likely to get the correct answers for local questions than for global questions especially when they try to concentrate on specific details without understanding the entire text. As Boonyakan and Syananondh (1991) remarked, by using the pre-listening question technique, students tried to concentrate on important data and they are guided to listen out for particular information. From the findings of this research, it might be assumed that subjects use a selective strategy when doing a listening test and this kind of strategy enables subjects to answer local questions. Obviously, the results seem to show that the ability to answer local questions is more likely to be promoted by the use of the pre-listening question technique, while global questions presented the most appropriate test for the effect on comprehension of the post-listening question technique.

Although some research studies in the area of reading skill found the post-reading question technique effective (Jangjop, 1978; Chumsamarn, 1988; Dowaliby, 1990, and Kakhong, 2002), it is rather difficult to say how far the observed effects are paralleled in listening skill. Also, the results of this research study might not be generalized to reading skill since the nature of reading and listening is different. A reader can choose a comfortable reading speed while a listener cannot (Underwood, 1989). In addition, listeners, unlike readers, cannot review and reevaluate information presented to them. They must get the comprehension of the text as they listen to it, retain information in memory, integrate it with what follows, and continually adjust their understanding of what they hear in the light of prior knowledge and of incoming information. Listeners have no chance to rewind a tape and listen again whereas words in a written text remain on the page and readers can glance back every time they want. The manner of processing language in the two skills, thus, makes listening comprehension different from reading comprehension in a number of important ways.

#### **4.11.3 Subjects' Attitudes towards the Pre-Listening Question Technique**

Subjects' attitude was another aspect on which this study focused. It tried to establish what subjects think about the pre-listening question technique and the post-listening question technique. The findings in respect of the pre-listening question

technique indicate that this technique has a positive effect on subjects' attitudes. Subjects thought that they gain benefit from this technique. They mostly stated that the pre-listening question technique could not only enhance their comprehension and activate their prior knowledge, but also encourage them to use a selective strategy. Most of them agreed that the pre-listening question technique provided a great deal of information and established purposes for listening. This agreed with Buck (1990)'s findings that most students believed that the pre-listening question technique enhances their listening comprehension. They thought that reading questions before listening helped them understand the subject matter centered on the questions and gave helpful hints to the content of the story. Sherman (1997)'s findings also showed similar results. She found that most students thought of the pre-listening question technique as a better approach than the post-listening question technique. The pre-listening question technique was generally seen as helpful, providing information, stimulating them to search for answers, and removing stress. These characteristics of subjects' opinions about the pre-listening question technique suggest that their use of the pre-listening question technique could enhance listening comprehension. The positive attitude towards the pre-listening question technique in this study could be explained in relation to the effectiveness of the pre-listening tasks in listening activities which help reduce subjects' anxiety before listening. According to Bradney (2004), the pre-listening tasks are helpful in preparing students to listen to the listening texts and decreasing their stress. This seems to be borne out by students' opinion that a pre-listening task in the form of questions was helpful to them. However, this research finding that subjects' global comprehension might be hindered by the use of the pre-listening question technique should be borne in mind. To combat this tendency, listening questions should probably not be placed in the pre-listening phase but should be replaced by other pre-listening activities such as brainstorming, discussion, or vocabulary explanation. These warm-up activities may draw students' attention to what they are to listen to and motivate them to listen actively.

#### **4.11.4 Subjects' Attitudes towards the Post-Listening Question Technique**

The subjects, on the other hand, had a neutral attitude towards the post-listening question technique which was generally seen as requiring heavy concentration, activating subjects' attention, stimulating them to think of questions, and encouraging them to understand overall meaning. However, it was found that few subjects saw this method as helpful to them in finishing the tests quickly, catching important details and writing them down, and understanding all points in a listening text. Accordingly, this technique received a less positive rating. Interestingly, since all agreed that this method enables them to understand the global meaning of the listening text and to concentrate on the whole text, the findings are consistent with subjects' listening comprehension in which subjects would be able to answer global questions which require subjects to understand the overall meaning of the text. It could be explained that when subjects have to concentrate on all parts of the listening texts without knowing what to concentrate on, they are encouraged to understand the global meaning of the listening text (Weir, 1993).

As a whole, an examination of the responses from the questionnaire revealed that subjects were in favor of the pre-listening question technique. The finding is consistent with the results from the studies conducted by Buck (1990) and Sherman (1997), in which they found that students considered the pre-listening question technique as a good method. However, it is interesting that subjects' attitudes towards the pre-listening question technique did not correspond to subjects' test performance since their test scores were broadly equivalent to the test scores of subjects who experienced the post-listening question technique. This might suggest that since the results of listening comprehension following the administration of the pre-listening question technique are as good as those following the post-listening question technique, subjects saw the pre-listening question technique as mentally facilitating. Subjects have therefore shown a preference for the pre-listening question technique as a mean of facilitating listening comprehension whilst their test performance does not reflect any actual positive effect as against the use of the post-listening question technique. This is in a line with the finding of Buck (1990) in which he found that

students felt that the pre-listening question technique aided their comprehension while their test scores did not demonstrate a significant difference from the test scores of the post-listening question technique. In summary, it seems that the pre-listening question technique seems to have a positive psychological value for subjects but does not have any actual positive effect on their levels of comprehension.

In conclusion, it was found that the two techniques, the pre-listening question technique and the post-listening question technique had no different effect on the subjects' listening performance as reflected by their levels of comprehension in comparisons based on all subjects, and those limited to the good listeners, and the poor listeners. However, based on the scores achieved on each question type, it is interesting to note that the pre-listening question technique and the post-listening question technique differently affect each question type, namely local and global questions. It appears that subjects could better understand local meaning when questions were given to them before listening while subjects could get higher scores on global questions when questions were given to them after listening. This suggests that the pre-listening question technique and the post-listening question technique influenced local questions and global questions in different manners. Furthermore, when looking at the subjects' attitudes towards the pre-listening question technique and the post-listening question technique, the subjects in the current study preferred to use the pre-listening question technique. However, a comparison of the questionnaire findings and the test results revealed that the frequent positive attitudes towards the pre-listening question technique were not parallel with the comprehension test scores which were equivalent to the test scores achieved following the post-listening question technique. Therefore, it could be stated that subjects saw the pre-listening question technique as a mentally effective whilst in practice its effect was equivalent to that of the post-listening question technique.