



DEVELOPING STUDENTS' LISTENING STRATEGIES

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Abstract

Over the past few decades, there has been a growing interest in studying how people can improve listening techniques. In this research, we investigate the use of listening strategies among ten intermediate and pre-intermediate students in order to discover active listening techniques, examine them, and give feedback on the use of strategies. The study was begun by gathering data about participants (level, observation in a classroom), questioned in terms of fundamental listening techniques and have been taken listening tests every week. At the end of the month, the author had conducted the lesson and at that, time students were aware of the theme and vocabulary; they have had already background knowledge on the listening. After the lesson, students had given their own opinion and the way of using listening strategies, and they said about which of these techniques were convenient to use for them and which was more productive in the developing listening strategies. The author concluded that there seem to be no clear facts and ideas to using one strategy in listening tasks, all four of them plays an important role, and according to students' opinions, as a result of background knowledge and knowing more vocabulary and more practice can also impact on developing listening strategies.

Keywords: metacognitive, cognitive, socio-affective strategies, active listening, university students.

Introduction

The first verbal ability that humans learn is listening. The various definitions of listening vary, maybe as a result of its prominent position among language abilities. But generally speaking, listening entails transmitting a message, receiving it, and understanding it (Ozbay, 2005). To truly establish communication, listening entails making an effort to receive and analyze messages from the other person rather than simply observing them.

By listening, humans can become both individuals and social actors by hearing, perceiving, recognizing, meeting others, thinking, and understanding. Listening has been recognized as a fundamental linguistic skill as the most important means of learning throughout all stages of human development and growth (Karadüz, 2010).





Listening is also essential in learning because people make sense of all the sounds they hear throughout their lives and store them in their memory as an important part of their accumulated experiences and knowledge

Over time, listening plays a larger and larger part in all of a person's native language acquisition experiences. According to research by Lyman Steal at the University of Minnesota, listening accounts for around half of all human activities on average and 45% of communication time (Yldz, Okur, Ar, & Ylmaz, 2003). People also fulfill many of their cognitive, affective, and social needs by listening to others, including learning, getting the right amount of nutrients, communicating, speaking, and expressing emotion. Hunsaker (1990) estimated that 80% of people's knowledge is acquired by listening, which is also true for both formal and informal learning.

The amount of time students spend listening becomes even more given the prevalence of lecturing lecturers in educational institutions. According to some kids, hearing accounts for around 83% of their learning (ozbay, 2005; Petress, 1999). The following statistics effectively highlight the value of listening instruction at both home and school.

The listening acts that an individual performs to meet cognitive, affective, and social requirements throughout the formal and informal educational processes are multidimensional. Listening is a cognitive, affective, and psychomotor-based activity that, as a linguistic skill, should be carried out strategically and sophisticatedly in any mode of communication. Individuals who listen are not passive receivers who remain silent and submissive while information is communicated, but rather active receivers who express their thoughts and emotions in both verbal and nonverbal ways. Understanding thoughts expressed in speech, organizing and evaluating them, determining their interrelationships, and selecting those worth remembering are all part of listening (Ergin & Birol, 2005).

In formal educational settings, the quality of student listening has a significant impact on learning. Uninterested students listen unwillingly, wanting time to pass quickly and the class to end as soon as possible. In such cases, students become passive and, despite appearing to be listening, do not employ listening strategies that promote productive and long-term learning. When students willingly participate in lessons by listening to instructors, asking questions, and having discussions, they demonstrate active listening, which enables them to achieve more effective and longterm learning.

Literature Review

The improvement of English listening comprehension depends on many factors. Several researchers have investigated ways of developing listening strategies and





skills. This literature review is intended to give and summarize scholars' researches and build second language learners' understanding on the theme of improving listening strategies.

As Purpura mentioned, students and learners of language who actively listen use a variety of techniques, methods, and strategies to regulate and direct their listening processes in accordance with their communication objectives. The ability to listen naturally and without exerting a lot of thought or purposeful effort is known as listening skills. They are the results of acts that have been repeatedly performed in a variety of circumstances, and through extensive practice, the actions have become automated. On the other hand, listening strategies are methods of listening that are deliberate and planned in order to increase communication and comprehension while also overcoming listening challenges. Metacognitive methods are those that focus attention on the input and systematize a variety of cognitive processes. They can be applied before, during, or after listening and generally comprise planning, monitoring, and assessment procedures. Learners might employ tactics to control the communication and discourse during face-to face interactions. By getting the speakers to cooperate, strategies can have a social component and be utilized to improve the interaction process.

The literature on foreign language listening contains a long list of listening skills and strategies. Different scholars give different definitions to the study of second language listening comprehension strategies. Over 30 sub skills are presented by J. C. Richards (1983), including ones for decoding words and those required for understanding a situation. Many of these listening sub skills are comparable to Field's list of decoding and meaning-building processes, but by referring to them as processes, Field emphasizes the cognitive complexity of listening. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) propose six fundamental abilities that are essential to the listening process as guidance for teachers when planning listening tasks. In their research, it is clear that teachers can help second language learners by introducing those six core skills during the listening process. Firstly, details like names, places, or numbers should have been clearly heard. Students must pay more attention to questions and refrain from listening to unnecessary words. Furthermore, understanding the meaning of the topic and key point is also important. Finally, understanding the unheard word by relying on other knowledge and making predictions about what word comes after the verb or after the noun or what words are used depending on the topic of the speech can help students improve their listening.

Researchers agree that teaching listening strategies can help second-language listeners process oral input more easily (Vandergrift, 2004). However, the literature





has primarily focused on individual teaching strategies such as prediction, evaluation, or activation of prior knowledge. Despite this, little attention has been paid to the effectiveness of instruction involving multiple strategies (Dekeyser, 2007). Graham and Macaro (2008) conclude that, while teaching individual strategies may improve listening comprehension, it may not improve overall listening skills. As a result, some researchers have shifted their focus to investigating how to teach students a combination of listening strategies. According to Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010), one relevant issue of interest is eliciting learners' metacognitive knowledge by guiding them systematically through, for example, listening tasks.

Listening strategies are divided into four categories: cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social. Cognitive listening strategies include all mental abilities and processes associated with knowledge (Von Eckardt, 1995). Cognitive strategies for listening comprehension are important because they assist learners in monitoring and controlling their mental processing, identifying comprehension breakdowns, and connecting world knowledge to listening content. Metacognitive strategies refer to the ability to comprehend one's own method of learning and assimilation of information, thinking about one's own mental processes in a learning context (Goh & Taib, 2010). As Ross and Rost mentioned, metacognitive strategies denote the ability to reflect on and control one's own learning, and are thought to be the most reliable predictors of listening skill development in metacognition. Recent metacognition research has provided evidence that effective listening performance can occur through classroom instruction to aid learners' mental processes in coping with listening materials. These abilities are important because they manage and supervise learners' strategy use, as well as plan, monitor, and evaluate mental processes and manage difficulties while listening. Such manipulation functions assist learners in defining task objectives and proposing strategies for dealing with them. They draw the attention of learners to specific aspects of language input, such as discourse markers, content phrases, and main ideas.

Affective strategies are focusing on the management of emotions, which can be any one, positive or negative. Negative emotions, such as anxiety, can upset learners and interfere with their listening results, whereas positive emotions, such as enjoyment, relaxation, and a sense of community, can encourage consideration and peer cooperation. Meanwhile, social strategies refer to learning through intercommunication with others, such as asking for help or confirmation. These two types of listening strategies can be combined to form social-affective listening strategies, which are used to elicit the assistance of interlocutors in order to help understanding and students to overcome negative emotions such as anxiety. This





practice is also known as the cooperative listening technique, and it is frequently used for teaching a learners group (Goh & Taib, 2010).

Because of social and affective strategies are inextricably linked, they are frequently discussed together. Individual feelings and social relationships are intertwined components of the second language learning process. In comparison with cognitive and metacognitive strategies, experimental studies on these types are less common. According to research about socio-affective ability, a lack of social sympathy in the classroom frequently discourages students from asking questions during the process of listening (Serri, Boroujeni, & Hesabi, 2012). It also demonstrates that socio-affective strategies can assist learners in remaining motivated and focused, as well as controlling emotion, communicating with peers, and receiving assistance from them (McCombs, 1982, 1988). Studies on metacognitive instruction have found that visuals have a positive effect (Kim, 2004), as does the use of videotexts (Gruba, 2006) and the technology role in capability of learners to consider listening parts (Robin, 2007). These four types of listening strategies that are cognitive, metacognitive, social, and affective—help with many aspects of understanding. This level of comprehension is the result of academic debate and research, as well as listening instruction and practice.

Research on developing listening skills generally shows that doing so frequently has a good impact on comprehensibility (Rost & Ross, 1991). More subtlety is added to the above concept by a study on students' improvement of learning established on strategy training (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990), which demonstrates that such training only functions if a text is not too tough and students have some prior knowledge of the listening topic. The requirement to ascertain students' past understanding of using listening strategies before developing a training plan is highlighted in another project by Ozeki (2000), which offers a valuable insight into the teaching of strategy. Other researches have demonstrated the benefits of note-taking, selective attention, discussion with peers, modeling, and anticipation in developing students' comprehension (Vandergrift, 2003). Other areas of focus include chances to experiment with different genres and strategies, always giving feedback, the practice of goal-oriented, developing self-regulated strategies without any distraction, comprehending context-specific strategies, engaging in communication of real-life (Jou, 2010), improving a performance checklist, and concentrating on both the process and outcome of listening (Goh & Taib, 2006). (Vandergrift, 1999). The social environment of the classroom is important in developing students' motivation, effectiveness, and autonomy in listening.





As Vandergrift, O'Malley, Chamot and other researchers mentioned above in order to improve listening strategies, students should know their aims to learn the language, the differences of categories of listening strategies, use them in appropriate way, and practice more and more to be the master of language. A great understanding of learners' interactions with digital content supports educators' decisions toward successful listening strategy education

All information presented by these researchers is aimed to develop the strategies of the listening in different ways. Some of them argued that language learners can understand and develop their skills in listening with knowing and using metacognitive and cognitive strategies. But the main disadvantages of many listening strategy studies include their short duration and lack of follow-up study. Additionally, there haven't been many research up until lately that have concentrated on teaching language acquisition techniques in classroom settings. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to discover the active listening techniques that university students who excel academically utilize in their lessons and to examine these students' perceptions of active listening techniques and give suggestions on the use of listening strategies from.

Methodology

Research design

In this qualitative study, academically accomplished students of university were observed in a classroom setting and their opinions on active listening techniques and strategies were explored and also compared the use of listening strategies among two levels (students in intermediate and pre-intermediate levels). Since generalizing from data is typically outside the scope of qualitative research, the study's objective was to describe the issue rather than make generalizations about it.

Participants

10 third-year university students (i.e., average age = 20-21) took part in the present study, of which eight were female and two were male. All participants majored in education with specialist fields of Translation and Theory and they have learnt the language since they were at the age of 16. None of the participants had lived abroad, but six of them have passed the IELTS exam and took 5.5, 6 scores, and their English proficiency to be intermediate to high intermediate. Other four of them have not taken the IELTS yet and their level at English language was low intermediate or pre-intermediate.





Procedure

In the first week of the experiment, all participants were required to learn listening strategies well as much as possible while the teacher was conducting the lesson with listening techniques. During the gathering data, participants were first observed in a classroom environment, each at a different period, and information gathered. After that, participants answered questions about fundamental listening techniques and active listening strategies they have used until today. Every week university students have taken the listening test that was conducted using Cambridge books (Cambridge listening test 14). The test consisted of 40 questions, including multiple choice, matching, plan/map/diagram labelling, form/note/table/flow-chart/summary completion, sentence completion. At the end of month, the author has conducted the lesson with teaching and examining them in terms of using listening strategies. During the Integrated lessons, students have been taken listening tests depending on the subject of the units by using three strategies (cognitive, metacognitive and socio-affective listening strategies) that were taught before. While the author has been conducting the lesson, the unit was about family, relationship and childhood also. Therefore, the author has prepared the tests that connected to the unit's theme. Every student has already learnt by heart and memorized the vocabulary about family and relationship before they have come to the new topic or unit and have done some grammar tasks and reading tests also when the teacher has conducted the lesson. Also, before the author conducted the lesson for these students, she observed the students during all the lessons and had a lot of information about their interests, knowledge and about them. For these reasons, it became a little easier for the author to conduct the lesson and teach them because of background knowledge of students. While the author was teaching the listening, all students were required to use active listening skills and at the end of the lesson they were giving their own thoughts about lesson and told us what kind of strategies they used.

Firstly, the lesson began with the simply introduction of the instructor, followed by giving warm up activities about family vocabularies. Then they have spoken about their childhood with using the grammar "used to" and "would". After that at the end of the lesson students have given listening tests.

Furthermore, during content analysis, common active listening strategies used by participants were identified and main differences of using strategies by intermediate and pre-intermediate students are presented below. Participants' names have been replaced with letters to maintain confidentiality.





Result

Findings concerning the results of observations and students' thoughts are below presented under three subheadings—namely, cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies.

Findings concerning cognitive listening strategies Active listening is a cognitive process that involves a variety of cognitive behaviors. According to interview data, participating students reported using cognitive strategies such as paying attention (10 students), note-taking (10 students), integrating, inferring and recalling information (7 students), seeking the main idea and predicting (8 students), summarization and translation (6 students), and setting listening objectives (4 students) Paying attention while listening facilitates more productive lessons for participants and should be used frequently while listening, as the following comments demonstrate:

I clear my mind and intellect to focus on the instructor. If I'm not interested in listening, I'll think about something else and will not do the things that the instructor asks (Student A).

My mind is sometimes disorganized, so I can't effectively listen to my instructor. But while I'm paying attention to the class, I pay close attention to the subject (Student B).

I believe that paying attention and focusing on instructors is essential. You don't want to focus on two different things at the same time, so paying attention is significant. Otherwise, I would be unable to listen to instructors (Student C).

If the subject or the lesson really attracts my attention and there are given examples, that allows me to listen more productively and effectively (Student D who have not taken the IELTS).

In order to concentrate in class while listening, students said they needed to free their minds from thoughts unrelated to the lesson. However, they admitted that they had difficulty concentrating in class and were not fully engaged in listening for a variety of reasons, including being tired, feeling sleepy in their first class, thinking about other classes, and daydreaming. To achieve more effective and long-term learning, students frequently used the strategy of taking notes while listening. They reported attempting to learn more effectively by carefully recording ideas they deemed significant and categorizing what they learned when taking notes. Taking notes as an active listening behavior was generally described by students as providing more permanent knowledge through the use of writing. During giving students' thoughts and opinions, they described their strategic use of taking notes, as represented by the following:

While note-taking, I do not have to write all things that the speakers say, but main titles. (Student C)





I try to take notes of topics not everything that is unnecessary but have to be more attentive to asked questions. (Student E)

Sometimes I need note-taking, when the topic is unfamiliar to me. (Student F)

I do not write words what I listen, I translate and write it down in my own words. (Student H who have not taken the IELTS)

As was evident, students are obviously impacted by a teacher's instructions to take notes. Students who use the note-taking technique are expected to write down any ideas they find important and in their own terms. Students can make sure the material is repetitive and easier to retain by engaging in this practice. The responses provided by participants show that students might develop note-taking techniques that take into account the emphasis placed by their professors on particular ideas.

According to the findings, students listen strategically by integrating information and drawing inferences, attempting to make sense of what they have heard. Students who use these strategies are not passive listeners, but rather evaluators of meanings that they generate through active intellectual participation.

Seeking the main idea also plays a great role while listening. The following are participants' comments on the strategy of integrating information and inferring and trying to find the main idea of the topic and text:

I try to understand the main idea of the things that speakers talk about. But when I hear two times, I clearly understand the meaning. (Student G have not IELTS)

I compare the things that are connected to those I know and what I hear. And I make inferences. (Student I)

Findings concerning metacognitive strategies

Although listening tasks and tests provide students with valuable listening practice, the learners' experience is not complete without chances to step back from the activities to think about their learning. It is the use of metacognitive activities before, during, or after listening, as well as at appropriate times during the learning. And these are the comments about what they do in order to improve their metacognitive strategies (planning, monitoring and evaluating how they process information) that students give after the lesson that was conducted by the author.

After every lesson, I always try to listen again the tasks and try to find overlooked things and practice. (Student B) Whenever I could not listen certain word, I think it is the reason of my background knowledge and lack of practice. (Student D)

I can plan what speakers are going to do when I listen and prepare for it by considering what strategies I may need and the use of my background knowledge appropriately. (Student A).

Findings concerning socio-affective strategies.



Active listening is realized in a more careful and motivated manner when learners exhibit positive affective behaviors while listening. Individuals who are motivated and eager to listen are more active while listening, whereas those who feel pressured to listen or are shy become passive—in other words, less successful learners (Karadüz, 2010). According to students' opinions it was stated that they enjoy learning when they listen willingly, but when they feel pressured and listen in fear, they cannot learn effectively or permanently. Students demonstrated affective behaviors such as attending class on time (8 students), being motivated (6 students), being calm (4 students), enjoying the lesson or interaction with peers ($n = 5$), and being bored (3 students). These are the ideas of students in terms of the use of socialaffective listening strategies.

Even I should listen, if the lesson doesn't attract me, I won't understand anything. (Student B)

When topics that I don't like are in discussion of the class, I cannot listen to my instructor and become bored. (Student C)

I become motivated and more eager in lessons that interest me, and I enjoy listening to those instructors. (Student D)

If there are any communication activities with partners, I become easily bored and it will be difficult for me to be active in the class. (Student A)

I'm usually calm, but if I'm listening inattentively, then I get nervous with the fear that the instructor may ask me a question (Student H).

I feel myself nervous when I cannot understand. (Student F)

I will be on the lessons 10 minutes before the instructor does. (Student J)

I don't think that I can focus on the lesson if I come to class late. (Student E)

When confronted with authoritarian and stern attitudes that stifle authentic attitudes and propagate pressure, students reported being unable to develop any affective strategy. In these situations, they would rather remain silent in a panicked, anxious state devoid of self-confidence. They reported listening willingly and happily, and even feeling excited, because they felt more at ease and were allowed to be authentic, daydream, be in the moment, and participate in the process of listening with rich, genuine emotion.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to observe academically successful university students and identify the use of their listening strategies in class and also compare them in two different levels (intermediate who have IELTS certificate and preintermediate) in order to improve their listening strategies and develop a deep understanding of





whether either of these students show the same results in the use of listening techniques and which of the strategy uses most.

The results suggest that there were no big differences in the use of strategies among these two types of learners. But according to their results on the listening tasks, it shows that language learners who have IELTS achieved more success compared to other students because of the preparation for the test and more practice. Moreover, observation of the class stated that background knowledge of language learners plays important role during every lesson or activity or task. While the author has conducted the lesson, all learners have already known the theme and topic related vocabularies, pronunciation of the words, have done reading tasks and have read topic related articles, texts. For these reasons, students have showed good results on the listening tasks. But whenever teachers start to teach from new topic, they should be able to attract learners' attention and be interested in. As the students' comments on the social-affective strategies, their feelings and social relationships can impact on the learning process. Giving feedbacks, motivation, help students to control their positive and negative emotions, encouraging consideration and peer interaction, allow them to ask questions and help without any shy can easily affect them on their language learning process and also develop their other listening techniques. In the improvement of listening strategies not only listening but also other skills, teachers play a great role and it depends on their methods and ways of teaching.

According to the students' opinions mentioned above, we can see that intermediate and pre-intermediate language learners almost have used same strategies. Cognitive listening strategies are the most used techniques among students compared to others. Each level of learners can use this technique while they listen or do some listening tasks. Cognitive techniques are crucial for improving listening comprehension, because they enable learners to manage and monitor their mental thinking, recognize comprehension breakdowns, and connect background knowledge to hearing content. Furthermore, metacognitive listening strategies are mostly used during the individually learning. Intermediate language learners use this strategy most than other students because of the practice for the IELTS exams and with teachers. According to the opinions of pre-intermediate learners, because of their lack of practice and laziness of the monitoring and evaluating, they find it hard to use these techniques. They also confirmed that because of the not properly use these metacognitive strategies well, it affects their results.

Both level of learners stated that socio-affective strategies come second. It means first they need improve cognitive and metacognitive skills. It is true that we cannot do lessons in every situation, but whether we want to or not, even in a noisy situation,





even if we are not interested or distracted, we must learn to overcome easily in any situation in order to improve our level and achieve good results. Of course, everything should be equal (motivation, strict, emotions, learning, teaching).

Conclusion

In conclusion, active listening is a complex process that combines cognitive, metacognitive, and affective components. Finding and utilizing these components promotes student learning and the development of a range of social skills in organic, democratic learning environments. The review of this approach could give that the use active listening strategies between two levels of university students was not different, almost all of them have used these three techniques according to their understandings, social environment and the condition. Moreover, doing listening tasks provide university students with beneficial listening practice, the learners' experience is not complete without opportunities to step back from the activities to think about their learning process. It is the use of metacognitive activities before, during, or after listening, as well as at appropriate times during the process of learning. In addition, the use of this technique allows them to improve how processing information while evaluating an monitoring. Developing them depends on their more and more practice.

Active listening is a cognitive process that involves a variety of cognitive behaviors. According to the result, part of this qualitative study demonstrates that most students have used this one, and above-mentioned opinions stated that using cognitive listening strategies while listening facilitates lessons that are more productive for university students. To achieve more effective and long-term learning, students frequently used the strategy of cognitive. Cognitive techniques are essential for improving the comprehension of listening, because they enable learners to manage and monitor their mental thinking, recognize comprehension breakdowns, and connect background knowledge to hearing content.

Executing linguistic skills in a learning environment that prioritizes abilities over information helps people improve their emotions, thoughts, and comprehension as well as their ability to express things to others. Pupils in learning-teaching environments do not demonstrate these talents where they are kept in a passive condition. Those who are being restrained display the emotional traits of being passive and lacking trust in one's own expertise and views. Therefore, learning environments should be created in accordance with teaching strategies that encourage the development of social skills, student engagement, and task design that takes into account students' interests and aptitudes. It is crucial that all students learn how to





listen during their primary education and can do so using a variety of listening techniques. It is also crucial that learning environments include enough listening-related activities. As a result, learning environments must be built with listening spaces where people are appropriately motivated and stimulated. In order to sustain and even enhance students' attention spans, these environments should make sure that in addition to verbal stimulations, elements that appeal to other sensory channels are accommodated.

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