ESL Learners listening Performance under the Impact of Metacognitive Strategies' different Subscales

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Abstract

This paper presents a research on the employing of different metacognitive strategies by ESL learners and its impact on their listening comprehension ability on a sample of 50 ESL intermediate students from English Institute in Mysore, India. In this research two instruments were used to measure the study's variables: (1) Metacognition Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) as well as (2) the listening comprehension test from an IELTS test which comprised four parts with forty questions and thirty minutes time. The outcome showed that learners' had a medium knowledge of metacognitive listening strategies awareness. Furthermore, while personal knowledge as well as mental translation were not able to describe the actual variance in students' listening comprehension effectiveness, directed attention problem solving, along with planning and evaluation could handle explaining the significant level of variance in students' overall performance on LCT. The study suggests that learners' metacognitive awareness need to be enriched and the related strategy instruction should be employed while teaching the listening task.

Keywords: ESL learners, listening performance, metacognitive strategies subscales.

Introduction

Early studies indicated that listening is showing a great significance in English classrooms. It is clear from the studies about language acquisition that listening considerably effects on learners and plays an important role in their learning acquisition. Due to the fact that we devote about half of our conversation moments to hearing, the essential function of listening takes on both conversation and language learning can't be ignored[1]. Listening is generally an effective process which involves understanding as well as creating meaning from verbal or spoken and non-verbal concept[2]. Effective verbal exchange thus requires that learners create the listening abilities considered essential for comprehending input for any learning begin[3]. The listening understanding process consists of two steps. The first step includes receiving, memorizing, and also repeating the actual sounds while the second step is comprehension that involves the capability to describe the content of information or content to which the listener is exposed[4]. Requiring in nature, this method needs employment in a number of complex tasks which categorize between discerning sounds along with whole perception of the speaker's meaning. It demands of which listeners devote numerous psychological techniques typically termed as listening comprehension techniques considered as learner activities which cause language learning more appropriate and enjoyable[5 6]. Research proposes that this method positions a challenge that is difficult to meet for many L2 individuals, in particular in ESL settings where individuals lack adequate exposure to the target vocabulary[7,8]. O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Russo, along with Kupper categorized learning strategies into about three varieties i.

Cognitive (e.g., repeating, translation, grouping, note taking, deducting, imagery, auditory representation, key word, contextualization, elaboration, and transfer); ii. socioaffective (e.g., social-mediating activity and transacting with others); and iii. metacognitive strategies (e.g., planning for learning, thinking about the learning process as it is taking place, monitoring of one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed)[9]. Amongst these kinds, metacognitive strategies are viewed as the most crucial in enhancing learners' skills.

Metacognitiive strategies, that indicate thinking about one's individual thinking, the actual learners' level of awareness, or the grade of management over one's mind processes, play an essential function within the cognitive techniques of words as a device of communication[10,11,12]. As outlined by this particular knowledge, metacognitive strategies are greater order professional abilities that include planning, checking, or assessing and analyzing actions to control, direct, manage, and lead learning[13]. Metacognitive strategies are recognized a mental device and an indication of effective learning which possesses the position of a 7th sense[14]. Due to the impact of enhancement in cognitive psychology and linguistics, investigation reviews throughout the past twenty years, have propelled researchers to think about an organized and specific methods to listening training which containing metacognitive awareness[15-19].

Scientists through various places of the world experimented this in order to outline the attributes of strategic students and any kind of techniques those learners used in particular language

learning task[14]. For instance, Oxford[6] shows that the enhancement of learners' communicative skills and language mastery is connected to the strategy the learner utilize. Al-Shaboul, Asassfeh, and Al-Shaboul bring consideration that EFL students could possibly prefer some strategies more than others[20]. This causes an attention in connection with recognition of widely used strategies and less widely used ones and their effects on progressing language acquisition. The highest inclination of EFL students in Jordan was the metacognitive techniques. Bremner's investigation on Hong Kong students' techniques use implies the students are mostly interested in metacognitive techniques more than memory use kinds[21].

Metacognitive strategies, currently being the most crucial in progressing learner's abilities, stimulate thinking and have the effect to lead and enhance the learning process[22,23]. This opinion is covered by Goh that contends that learner's metacognitive consciousness relates effectively with the successful achievement happening in most learning context[24]. In the particular framework of second language learning, and relevant to listening in particular, Goh and Yusnita declared the direct and constructive effect of listening strategies over the listening overall comprehension[25].

Based on Yang theory, teaching listeners about the function of metacognition within second language listening aids to deal with the listening task better, distinguish between successful listeners through unsuccessful participants[26]. According to this reason, Coskun done a good experimental research on a small sample of 40 male as well as female Turkish EFL beginners to test the influence of five weeks metacognitive listening strategy instruction course upon listening understanding or comprehension the outcome demonstrated a considerably better outcome by the trial batch[5]. The outcomes confirmed considerably greater execution with the experimental class, implying which metacognitive strategy instruction is incorporated in normal listening classes to promote EFL listening overall execution. Bozorgian examined twenty-eight, Iranian, high-basic levels EFL listeners who participated in a strategy-based method containing: advance organization directed attention, selective attention, as well as self-management[27]. The actual strategy-based method has been applied to four listening instruction concentrating on enhancing listeners' comprehension of IELTS listening scrolls. Pretest as well as post-test comparisons disclosed that low proficiency listeners present greater enhancement than high proficiency types on the IELTS listening exam. The result covers the effect of metacognitive training to strengthing listeners and enhancing the actual listening comprehension capability.

Sheorey and Mokhtari considered metacognitive strategy knowledge as preparing and deliberately performing proper activities to attain a specific aim[28]. Actually metacognitive strategies are utilized to handle the entire acquisition procedure. It provides identifying one's own learning style performance and requires, planning for L2 a second language task, collecting and organizing resources, arranging a research space and a schedule, checking mistakes, as well as evaluating and analyzing task achievement, and assessing the accomplishment of any kind of learning method. Purpura discovered that metacognitive strategies had an important, constructive, straight impact on applying cognitive strategy, preparing distinct data that metacognitive use comes with an executive perform in comparison to cognitive strategy use in task achievement[29]. Researches of EFL learners in several countries such as South Africa and Turkey discovered that metacognitive strategies in many cases are usually powerful evaluators of second language proficiency[30,31]. According to metacognitive description, the awareness of metacognitive listening strategies contains the actual language learners to achieve the scope of their understanding of the actual methods under their convenience, and to what extent they are able to manage and handle the listening comprehension task[32].

Previous research works name metacognitive strategies in various ways such: skill-requirement analysis, arousal of proper listening process, producing proper estimation, overseeing comprehension, and assessing achievement of the acquired strategy. For Vandergrift, those are viewed landmarks which could distinguish professional from the unprofessional listeners[33]. Vandergrift, Goh, Mareschal and Tafaghodtari viewed metacognitive awareness of listening to categorize the learners' comprehension awareness, their recognition of listening requirements, their cognitive targets, and the strategy and approaches they apply to containing problem solving, organizing and planning as well as evaluation, mental interpretation, personal awareness, and focused attention[32].

Problem-solving contains several strategies which listeners apply to create inference and to observe these inferences. Planning and evaluating strategies are the kinds of strategies which listeners employ to get ready for hearing and to assess the outcomes of their own listening attempts[34]. Mental translations are some kinds of methods that learners need to prevent whenever they intend to be professional listeners[35]. Personal knowledge strategies contain learners' awareness and points of view concerning the difficulty of the listening activity and their own self-confidence about second language listening[36]. Directed attention presents strategies and methods that learners employ to focus and stay on listening activity[37]. Goh declared that still more investigate is required to study the impact of metacognitive listening strategies on listening comprehension in different situations[19].

So, the present research anticipates there should be a significant relationship between metacognitive listening strategies and listening achievement. In associated with theoretical states and information from earlier researches, this study work on these questions: i. What kinds of metacognitive listening strategies are mostly used by the ESL learners of this study? ii. Is there any correlation between the use of metacognitive listening strategies and intermediate ESL students' listening achievement?

Material and Methods

Participants: This study was done on 50 ESL intermediate students (both male and female) from English Institute in Mysore, India. The average age of participants were 18 years old, all were native speakers of Kannada language (the local language of the state) who were attending the English class for five to six years. According to the institute's report, their proficiency levels were upper intermediate.

Instruments: In the present research two instruments were applied: i. Vandergrift, et al.'s[32] Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) and ii. a listening proficiency test from IELTS. First item was used to "designed for researchers and instructors to assess the extent to which language learners are aware of and can regulate the process of L2 listening comprehension" Vandergrift, et al[32]. It contains 21 items, that per is scored and rated on a five-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree- 5=strongly agree). This scale includes five components of metacognitive awareness: i. problem-solving; ii. planning and evaluation; iii. mental translation; iv. person knowledge; and v. directed attention -represented by 6, 5, 3, 3, and 4 items, respectively. In this study the coefficient of determination of MALQ was calculated by 0.662.

The second instrument, which was used to examine the participants' listening comprehension performance, was the listening comprehension of an IELTS test which comprised four parts with forty questions that lasted for thirty minutes.

Data Collection: The data for this research were collected from an English institute in Mysore city, India. Students regularly attend the class and were aware of the aim of this study. Also they were assured that their participation and their answers would be confidential. The participants had 45 minutes totally to go through the whole task: 30 minutes for listening task and 15 minutes for the MALQ.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19 was used for analyzing the research data.

Analyzing: Finding the level of participants' Metacognition Listening Strategies Awareness

In this study the descriptive statistical method was used to find the level of participants' metacognitive strategies awareness, the students' responses were measured at the degree of MALQ, and its particular subscales (table 1). As it is cleared from the table, the total level of participants' metacognitive listening strategies awareness was 3.057 which show a good level of metacognitive awareness. Among the different subscales of MALQ, the highest mean was 3.44, which was dedicated to problem solving; it shows that this subscale is the most popular strategy which students of this study used. In contrast the lowest was 1.18, dedicated to personal knowledge. The mean of listening performance was 3.18.

Correlation between the subscales of Metacognitive Listening Strategies Awareness and students' Listening Comprehension

The correlation analysis was used to answer the second question that was arisen to find the connection between the Listening performance and metacognitive listening strategies awareness.

The outcomes (table 2) shows a significant correlation ($r = 0.695$) between students' listening performance and total MALQ. In addition, there was a significant correlation between students' listening performance and the MALQ's subscales. The correlations were, directed attention ($r = 0.704$), problem solving ($r = 0.679$), and planning evaluation ($r = 0.372$). The insignificant correlations were related to personal knowledge($r= 0.085$) and mental translation ($r= -0.125$).

Moreover, it is obvious from the table that there is a significant correlation between the subscales of MALQ. As it's recognized from the table that, there is a significant correlation between PS (problem solving) and DA (directed attention) ($r=0.538$) and also there is another significant correlation between DA (directed attention) and PE (personal evaluation) which $r=0.149$.

Table-1
Descriptive statistics of students' performance on MALQ and its subscales (N=50)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
LC	50	1.33	5.00	3.18	0.852
MALQ1	50	2.10	4.15	3.05	0.461
PS	50	1.67	4.50	3.44	0.599
PE	50	1.00	3.40	1.48	0.426
PK	50	1.00	1.67	1.18	0.215
DA	50	2.25	4.50	3.25	0.53
MT	50	2.00	9.00	2.60	0.98
Valid N (listwise)	50				

Table-2
Inter - correlation among variables

		LC	PS	DA	PK	PE	MT	MALQ
					Correlations			
LC	Pearson Correlation	1	0.679**	0.704**	0.085	0.372**	-0.125	0.695**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.557	0.008	0.388	0.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
PS	Pearson Correlation	0.679**	1	0.538**	-0.055	0.137	-0.167	0.705**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		.000	0.703	0.341	0.248	0.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
DA	Pearson Correlation	0.704**	0.538**	1	0.149	0.299*	0.085	0.786**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.301	0.035	.556	0.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
PK	Pearson Correlation	0.085	-0.055	0.149	1	0.084	-0.055	0.113
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.557	0.703	0.301		0.562	0.703	0.434
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
PE	Pearson Correlation	0.372**	0.137	0.299*	0.084	1	-0.095	0.483**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.008	0.341	0.035	0.562		0.510	0.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
MT	Pearson Correlation	-0.125	-0.167	0.085	-0.055	-0.095	1	0.361*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.388	0.248	0.556	0.703	0.510		0.010
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
MALQ	Pearson Correlation	0.695**	0.705**	0.786**	0.113	0.483**	0.361*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.434	0.000	0.010	
	N	50	50	50	50	50	50	50

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table-3
Stepwise linear regressions predicting listening comprehension and MALQ

Model	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Regression Residual total	5 44 49	4.709 0.274	17.20	0.000[a]	0.662	0.623

Regarding to investigate the ratio of variance in listening comprehension explainable by MALQ, the outcome shows there is significant correlation between listening comprehension and MALQ (p-value = 0. 000 < 0. 05). The outcome of linear regression (table 3) shows clearly that 66.2% of the MALQ can predict listening comprehension.

Results and Discussion

This research investigated the connection between general fundamental ESL learners' listening performance and their metacognitive strategy awareness. Outcomes showed that learners have an overall acceptable degree of metacognitive strategy awareness. Moreover, the result declares that a limit amount of metacognitive strategy awareness is needed for learners of second language to enable them to control their learning method as well as they are able to handle a particular language skill[6]. The result also is similar to Vandergrift's declaration which metacognitive strategy awareness is a topic that a significant difference is placed between high professional

and professional and also low professional second language listeners due to the fact that metacognitive awareness aids to make the listening task much less difficult, toward a better listening comprehension potential along with a greater language skill[30,38]. Our outcomes disclosed which our participants had variability in employing different strategies which lead to their listening comprehension. Therefore, their better performance was connected with employing their directed attention. A general fulfillment is related to students' utilization of directed attention techniques. Hence, students were able to redirecting their own concentrate whenever distracted. In addition they were eager to concentrate more precisely to handle the problems in comprehending text and don't stop trying. The next prominent metacognitive subscale which effected on students performance was related to their ability in problem solving. This process means that the participants rely on their repertoire connected with vocabulary and major text concept and include their own knowledge and experience as well as their common knowledge and focus in text comprehension in order to guess the meaning of unfamiliar vocabularies. Towards basic

comprehension of the text, the learners monitor personal inference of context and in addition evaluate it to text emerging comprehension. Regarding to planning and evaluation subscale, the students of the present research had an effective knowledge of planning as well as methods and strategies. For instance, they are interested in enhancing listening strategies, manipulating related text, creating aims with listening task, examining their own satisfaction with the growing comprehension, moreover, immediately they can assess the effectiveness of using listening strategy. However, participants' weakness in using the strategies was related to their personal knowledge manifested in evaluating the comprehended hardness in listening. In addition they also had problems in evaluating and controlling their confidence and stress relevant to their listening comprehension. From a greater aspect, our outcomes disclosed that the various metacognitive's subscales have different effects towards the listening performance of ESL learners. Therefore, DA, PE, PS as well as had a considerable variance effect in ESL learners' listening comprehension than PK and MT.

Conclusion

The presented research discusses the relationship between students' listening performance and their metacognitive listening strategy awareness. The outcomes showed that students had an average degree of metacognitive strategy awareness. Additionally, they reveal that student' adjustment of those strategies differs through various subscales (PS, PE, MT, PK and DA). The strategy which learners' mostly employed was in connection with Directed attention (DA) and the lowest was connected with individual or personal knowledge (PK). The most effective subgroup of metacognitive strategies which associated with learners' listening comprehension is realized as Directed attention (DA).

The study showed that some metacognitive subgroups are related to students' listening comprehension more than others, to be clearer the predictability of students' performance in listening task was highly dependent to Directed attention (DA), problem solving (PS), and planning and evaluation (PA). According to the result of this research, the most students' weak point in listening comprehension refers to their two metacognitive subscales which are personal knowledge (PK) and mental translation (MT). The ESL teachers should be aware of this result and try to improve these two metacognitive subscales by innovative methods. The Personal knowledge is the information and awareness that a person have about him and also others as a cognitive activity which happens in his mind. So, the teachers should increase this metacognitive subscale by explaining the cognitive and metacognitive process and also comparing students' performance together and show them how their performance are different from each other. Regarding to mental translation metacognitive ability, it seems that some serious studies should be done on this topic. Due to the fact that this subscale is a two-folded one, teachers can't suggest students to translate every word in their mind literally, because the

students won't be able to understand the concept and also may waste their time while taking listening comprehension test. On the other hand, while ESL students have lack of exposure to native English language, so it is not easy for them to immediately translate the utterances conceptually. Moreover, some ESL students believed that, they need to translate the words in their mind because they memorize them word by word already. Owing to the previous report, teachers should fundamentally work on students learning methods. In conclusion, this study demonstrated the high level dependability of ESL listening comprehension performance to their metacognitive awareness. So, integrating the metacognitive instruction is highly recommended to the ESL teacher regarding to improve students' listening comprehension. Finally, the importance of studying on the effects of metacognitive awareness on other skills is also considerable.

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