METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS STRATEGIES
FOR LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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5.2 Enhanced Executive Summary

Language educators tend to focus extensively on reading and writing skills. Listening activities are often carried out only to test the students' abilities which may lead to their anxiety and apprehension (Vandergrift, 1999). Generally, many students face difficulty in their listening assessments. Students need to apply certain mental steps or operations in listening to encounter their listening problems. These mental steps are referred to as strategies to assist the learners to achieve a reasonable listening comprehension (Goh, 2002).This study is designed to identify the students' levels of Metacognitive Awareness Strategies for performing their listening tasks and to examine the influence of the strategies on their test scores. The study was conducted in two stages of Pre-test and Post-test, where100 participants were selected based on a convenience sampling. After submitting their Pre and Post-tests, they were required to complete a Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ), developed by Vandergrift et al. (2006). Overall, the findings show an increase in the percentage of correct answers for the listening comprehension task, based on the MCQ given. The study findings reveal that metacognitive strategy awareness has a positive effect on students' test scores. ESL teachers can enhance the use of MALQ strategies for listening comprehension. Further research is necessary to study how metacognitive strategies affect the students' listening performance, as well as, to conduct interventions that will encourage metacognitive awareness.

5.3 Introduction

Listening Comprehension is an important component of language learning that requires a great deal of mental activity on the part of the listener (Vandergrift, 1999). It plays a critical role in facilitating language learning as it provides four advantages that include: cognitive, efficiency, utility, and affective advantage (Gary, 1975 as cited in Vandergrift, 1999). Awareness and the use of listening strategies can help students to learn a highly integrative skill for listening comprehension. However, more often than not, language educators have the tendency to focus on reading and writing skills when teaching English as a Second Language. In some cases, listening activities are often carried out as tests or assessments to evaluate the students' abilities for listening comprehension, which may lead to anxiety and apprehension (Vandergiff, 1999). When students are faced with difficulty in listening tasks, their anxiety and apprehension may cause high failure rates in listening assessments. The deficiency in the development of listening skills would negatively influence the students' reading and writing skills (Oxford, 1993; Vandergiff, 1997).

Metacognitive awareness strategies are useful for students to accomplish their listening tasks. Students need to apply certain mental steps or operations in listening to encounter their listening problems. These mental steps are referred to as strategies to assist the learners to achieve a reasonable listening comprehension (Goh, 2002). However, not many learners are aware of how this mental mechanism is functioning and the appropriate coping strategies needed to accomplish the listening tasks especially in ESL (English as a Second Language) classrooms. Without such understanding, students may face limitations in completing their listening tasks and thus, affecting their performances in language learning. In addition, the learners may have limited success in listening due to the challenges in constructing meaning of words. Therefore, a study on listening strategies can be useful for educators to address the problems of listening comprehension. In fact, Metacognitive awareness strategies have been used to support and improve students' listening

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5.4 Brief Literature Review

5.4.1 Listening Comprehension in English Learning

Developing listening skills is the most essential in language learning to improve other three language skills (Kim, 2014). In fact, Thanh Huy (2015) stated that research on listening strategy use to facilitate listening comprehension process has attracted growing interests in second or foreign language learning as listening skill is one of the most challenging language skills that learners need to acquire. Steinberg (2007) described listening process as "the ability of one individual perceiving another via sense, aural organs, assigning a meaning to the message and comprehending it". To improve listening process, many studies have shown that students can actually be taught strategies to enhance their performance on listening tasks. For example, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) concluded that strategy instruction for academic listening could be effective in enhancing initial learning when teachers pair the learning strategy instruction with listening tasks. Instruction on strategies can also help students to improve their performance on listening tasks.

5.4.2 Challenges of Listening Comprehension among Language Learners

Horwitz (2001) suggested that there is a positive correlation between anxiety and students' poor performance in language learning. Therefore, most studies on foreign and second language anxiety which concentrated on oral anxiety have been shifted towards listening skill, which is a significant part of language learning (Kimura, 2008). Yagang (1993) in Yilmaz and Yavuz (2015) reported that listening process consists of four main variables such as the speaker, listener, message and physical setting. Thus, problems may occur during listening process as many factors may impact the learners' listening performance. Goh (2000) further stated that the common issues faced by many learners during listening process in the order of frequency are quickly forgetting what is heard, not recognizing the words they know, understanding the message but not the intended message, neglecting the message but not the intended message, neglecting next part while thinking about meaning,

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