

THE STRATEGY OF LISTENING IN LEARNING ENGLISH

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Abstract:

Understanding the nuances of effective listening strategies is crucial for mastering the English language. This article explores the significance of cognitive, and affective strategies in the context of English language acquisition. Cognitive strategies focus on the active processing of auditory information, helping learners decipher meanings, recognize patterns, and infer implied messages. Metacognitive strategies involve the ability to monitor and regulate one's own comprehension, encouraging learners to assess their understanding, identify obstacles, and adjust their listening approach accordingly. Affective strategies address the emotional and motivational factors that influence listening proficiency, emphasizing the importance of building confidence, managing anxiety, and maintaining a positive attitude towards language learning. By delving into these three distinct categories of listening strategies, this article offers valuable insights into optimizing the acquisition and comprehension of English through strategic listening practices.

Key words: strategy, learning English, proficiency, listening abilities, communication ability, listening practices, language acquisition

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Introduction

Language acquisition is a multifaceted process that extends beyond mere mastery of grammatical rules and vocabulary. Proficiency in a language is intimately connected to one's ability to comprehend and effectively communicate through active listening. For learners of English as a second language, the art of listening becomes a pivotal aspect of the journey towards linguistic competence. This thesis delves into the strategic role of listening in the process of learning English, aiming to unravel the complexities, challenges, and potential solutions that arise in this crucial dimension of language acquisition.

The thesis explores the various strategies employed by English language learners to enhance their listening skills. It investigates the impact of these strategies on comprehension, retention, and subsequent language development. Additionally, the study aims to shed light on the challenges encountered by learners in the process of refining their listening abilities, considering factors such as linguistic diversity, accent variations, and the influence of cultural context.

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Understanding the strategic aspects of listening in English language learning is not only pertinent for learners themselves but also holds implications for educators, curriculum developers, and language teaching methodologies. By unraveling the intricacies of effective listening strategies, this research endeavors to contribute valuable insights to the pedagogical approaches employed in English as a second language (ESL) instruction

Literature review

Language proficiency encompasses four areas: Listening, reading, speaking, and writing. According to Feyten, listening provides more than 45% of our total communication ability, followed by speaking (30%), reading (16%), and writing (9%). Listening is an extremely important skill for non-native English speakers because listening is their first encounter with the language as they work toward becoming literate in English [5, 1].

Listening stands between writing, reading, and speaking as practical skills used in daily life. Learning listening will assist us improving another targeted skill considerably. People demand to hear several types of English repeatedly and continuously if they want to communicate appropriately, meaningfully, and naturally. Listening provides language input because it refers to receptive skills. [3, 1]. The listening strategies are divided into four main types: cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and memory strategies.

Cognitive strategies, which make use of learners' knowledge in processing text meaning, provide greater depth of interaction with the text, including the ability to ignore irrelevant information. Compared with metacognitive strategies, however, these skill types are considered less efficient as they involve lower processing practices such as translation, repetition, and summary. Within this awareness, there has been an appeal for more research into the relationship between learner knowledge and mental translation [2, 2].

Related to the cognitive advantage is the efficiency advantage; language learning is more efficient if learners are not required to immediately produce large portions of the language material to which they are exposed. This allows for more meaningful language use early in the course of instruction, as learners are able to employ the limited resources available in short-term memory to the task of deriving and retaining meaning. Furthermore, emphasizing the development of listening comprehension at the outset of instruction is more efficient because students are exposed to controlled, "comprehensible" input from various sources, rather than from the imperfect utterances of classmates. Recall here that the discussion is limited to the comprehension of language input, not the issue of "ingrained errors" that many instructors erroneously believe to derive from student-student L2 interaction. Controlled listening input in the initial stages of study provides a more realistic and natural model than peer/classmate speech, which may be poorly formed, poorly pronounced, or require an inordinate amount of class time to comprehend [6, 258].

It was Flavell who first coined the term 'metacognition', and defined 'metacognitive knowledge' as «consisting primarily of an understanding or perception of the ways in which different factors act and interact to affect the course and outcome of the cognitive enterprise». As he put it, "metacognition is thinking about thinking». Wenden supposed that metacognition includes metacognitive knowledge and regulatory skills. Metacognitive knowledge involves knowledge about person (beliefs about attributes, learning styles, abilities, what learners know and do not know, and consciousness of one's progress), task (what learners know about demands and goals of the task, the ability to choose and

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assess the information) and strategy (knowing about what strategies should be used compatible to different types of tasks and a general knowledge about language learning). Regulatory skills are pre-planning (setting goals, selecting methods and materials, evaluating proficiency level and predicting the difficulty) and planning-in-action (monitoring, checking outcomes and improving plans). Oxford believes, «Metacognitive strategies help learners manage: (1) themselves as learners, (2) the general learning process, and (3) specific learning tasks". In Oxford's taxonomy metacognitive strategies include centering learning, arranging and planning learning, and evaluating learning. In another categorization, O'Malley and Chamot divided learning metacognitive strategies into three groups of planning, monitoring, and evaluating [4, 192].

Affective strategies are concerned with managing emotions that can be either negative or positive. Negative emotions such as anxiety might cause learners to feel upset and interfere with listening results, while positive emotions such as relaxation, enjoyment, and a cohesive sense of community can encourage concentration and peer corporation [2, 2].

Samida stated that affective strategy aimed to help students gaining control over their emotions, motivations, attitudes, and values. This strategy associated with learners' emotional enhancement such as persistence and confidence which helps learners to involve themselves actively in language learning, and lowering anxiety levels by laughing at their own mistakes in a typical example. There are three sets in affective strategies: lowering listeners' anxiety, encouraging themselves, and taking their emotional temperature. First strategy lowering listeners' anxiety by using progressive relaxation enables listeners to keep calm while listening. Second is encouraging themselves by making positive statement to help listeners increase their confidence in finishing a listening task. Last, in taking their emotional temperature there are two specific listening strategies; listening to the body and discussing with someone. Those could help learners recognize their feelings and exchange their feelings with friends. For example, listener tries to listens their favorite music before practicing [1, 90].

Memory strategies. Listeners link mental messages and use sounds and images. Linking mental messages enables the listener to group streams of speech together and to set new words into a context. Using sounds and images of a conversation include activities such as using keywords, which is the process of listening to sentences to understand the overall conversation. For example, listeners connect new language information to ideas already in their memory (e.g., peanut butter and jelly). Thus, they are able to group acoustic inputs into meaningful units, over-learn information with structured reviewing until it is natural and automatic, and use mechanical techniques such as writing words on cards in order to memorize them [5, 21].

In summary, this thesis underscores the paramount importance of cultivating a multifaceted strategy for effective listening in the process of learning the English language. Through a nuanced exploration of cognitive, metacognitive, and affective strategies, we illuminate the intricate web of skills and considerations involved in honing one's auditory comprehension abilities.

Cognitive strategies form a foundational pillar, enabling learners to actively process auditory information. By decoding meanings, recognizing patterns, and deciphering implied messages, individuals equip themselves with the tools necessary to navigate the intricacies of the English language. Metacognitive strategies, in turn, empower learners to monitor and regulate their

comprehension actively. This involves a continuous cycle of self-assessment, obstacle identification, and adaptive adjustments in their listening approach, fostering a dynamic and reflective learning process.

Affective strategies delve into the emotional and motivational dimensions that significantly impact listening proficiency. Emphasizing the cultivation of confidence, anxiety management, and maintaining a positive attitude towards language learning, these strategies acknowledge the psychological intricacies involved in the language acquisition journey. By addressing these affective elements, learners create an environment conducive to optimal listening skills development.

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