

TEACHING LISTENING FROM A DISCOURSE PERSPECTIVE (METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY)

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ABSTRACT

Listening is a process of activities hearing speech symbols by full attention, understanding, appreciation, and interpretation to acquire communication meaning that is delivered by the speaker through speech. Listening constitutes quite important activities in learning language. It is the basis of the learning process as a child learns language from his mother. By using metacognitive strategy, it can help students to compensate their bottom up listening processing and give students an overview of the listening process. This strategy also builds the character of the students to become competence, independent, self-confidence, creative, and responsibility that is related to character building in education in Indonesia. The strategy include extract an important detail from ongoing speech, identify the gist of a segment and then predict what will come next in a segment.

INTRODUCTION

Language learning is largely a process of developing automatic cognitive skills. Teachers should be aware of the cognitive processes involved in listening and provide learners an opportunity for meaningful practice. Listening is a communicative behavior, in which listeners try to construct a reasonable interpretation of a text for some communicative purposes (Haris, 1986).

Listening provides a foundation for all aspects of language and cognitive development, and it plays a life-long role in the processes of learning and communication essential to productive participation in life. A study by Wilt, found that people listen 45 percent of the time they spend communicating, is still widely cited. Wilt found that 30 percent of communication time was spent speaking, 16 percent reading, and 9 percent writing. That finding confirmed Rankin's findings that people spent 70 percent of their waking time communicating and those three-fourths of this time were spent listening.

Listening is the first step for the students when they want to understand language especially English. Listening is receptive skill and it is very important skill in foreign language classrooms because it provides input for the learners; by listening the students can produce language such as speaking and writing by vocabulary that they obtain from listening.

Listening process has both top-down listening process that involves activation of schematic knowledge and contextual knowledge and bottom-up listening process involves prior knowledge of the language system such as phonology, grammar, and vocabulary.

By using metacognitive strategy, it can help students to compensate their bottom up listening processing and give students an overview of the listening process. This strategy also builds the character of the students to become competence, independent, self-confidence, creative, and responsibility that is related to character building in education in Indonesia. The strategy include extract an important detail from ongoing speech, identify the gist of a segment and then predict what will come next in a segment.

Metacognitive is also a type of strategy that students can use to enhance second language listening, it involves the planning, regulating, monitoring, and management of listening. This Metacognitive strategy also allowed students for prediction, monitoring of errors or breakdowns, and for evaluation, so that, it is very useful in teaching listening from a discourse perspective.

THEORETICAL BASIS

Definition of Listening

Listening is a process of activities hearing speech symbols by full attention, understanding, appreciation, and interpretation to acquire communication meaning that is delivered by the speaker through speech. Listening constitutes quite important activities in learning language. It is the basis of the learning process as a child learns language from his mother.

Jeremy Harmer said in his book *“How to Teach English”* that Listening is good for students’ pronunciation because the more the students hear and understand English being spoken, the more they absorb appropriate pitch and intonation, stress and the sounds of both individual words and those which blend together in connected speech. Listening texts are good pronunciation models, and the more students listen, the better they get not only at understanding speech, but also at speaking themselves. Indeed, it is worth remembering that successful spoken communication depends not just on ability to speak but also on the effectiveness of the way of listen.

Definition of Metacognitive Strategies

In terms of metacognitive awareness and knowledge and to help students become aware of metacognitive strategies, the first step for students is to ask themselves the following two key questions.

1. What do I want out of this? (What are my motives?)
 2. How do I propose going about getting there? (What are my strategies?)
- (Biggs & Moore, 1993)

Metacognitive strategies deal with pre-assessment and pre-planning, on-line planning and evaluation, and post-evaluation of language learning activities, and language use events. Such strategies allow learners to control their own cognition by coordinating the planning, organizing, and evaluating of the learning process. Metacognitive strategies aimed at planning a summary and evaluating the results both while in the process of constructing the marginal entry and after finishing the writing of it.

Metacognitive strategies is one of language learning strategies in teaching English and considered as the most essential ones in developing learners' skills (Anderson, 1991). It is also help the students to make language learning more successful, self-directed, and enjoyable (Oxford: 1989, p. 235). Metacognitive consists of 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.

O'Malley et al. (1985) emphasized that learners without metacognitive approaches have no direction or ability to monitor their progress, accomplishments, and future learning directions. On the other hand, learners who have developed their metacognitive awareness are likely to become more autonomous language learners (Hauck, 2005).

Metacognitive Strategies and Listening

Goh (2002) emphasizes the importance of metacognitive strategies by arguing that learners' metacognitive awareness is related to effective learning in all learning contexts. Goh and Yusnita (2006) draw attention to the specific context of L2 listening and claim that strategies have a direct and positive influence on listening performance. Yang (2009) also indicates that one of the distinctive features differentiating successful listeners from unsuccessful ones is their use of metacognitive strategies and he supports the idea that teaching the role of metacognition in L2 listening helps listeners to approach the listening task more effectively.

Teaching Listening from a Discourse Perspective

Top-down listening processes involve activation of schematic knowledge and contextual knowledge. In schematic knowledge there is a formal schema which consists of knowledge about how discourse is organized with respect to different

genres, different topics, or different purposes such as transactional versus interactional, including relevant socio cultural knowledge. Top-down listening activities include putting a series of pictures or sequence of events in order, listening to conversations and identifying where they take place, reading information about a topic then listening to find whether or not the same points are mentioned, or inferring the relationships between the people involved.

The bottom-up processing of oral discourse is where the physical signals or clues come from. It is generally acknowledged that this level cannot operate with any accuracy or efficiency on its own and that it requires the benefit of and interaction with top-down information to make discourse comprehensible to the listener.

Both top-down and bottom-up listening skills should be integrated and explicitly treated pedagogically to improve L2 listening comprehension. The discourse level is in fact where top-down and bottom-up listening intersect and where complex and simultaneous processing of background information, contextual information, and linguistic information permit comprehension and interpretation to take place.

SAMPLE MATERIALS

Script: News_ Information Society

This is "News Words"

The BBC's Clare Arthurs talks about words and phrases commonly used in news reports Today's phrase: 'information society'.

When you hear the term 'information society', you might guess that people are talking about the internet and the level of access people have to information. And that's quite close. An 'information society' has information and communication at its heart, where once it might have had industrial development, or agriculture.

According to the United Nations it's important to understand the 'information society' because it affects the way we live, how we learn and work and how we relate to each other.

The term is used in the news because the ability to get information, whether you get it from a computer, a telephone, or your radio, throws up a number of interesting issues.

When the internet or telecommunications are in the news, you'll hear stories about who controls access to networks, how they're being developed and how much they cost.

The 'information society' also has implications for countries where there are fewer political freedoms. How is access to information controlled? And how does this affect economic and political development?

You might also hear of 'the digital divide'. What do you think is the best way to bridge

the gap between those who have access to new technology and those who don't?

Source: <http://http-ws.bbc.co.uk.edgesuite.net>

ENGLISH LISTENING MATERIALS

www.haarr.wordpress.com

Topic : Information Society

Type : News / Story

Exercise : 1. finding out the main topic
2. Finding out the meaning of certain words/phrases in Indonesian
3. Answering and finding specific information related with news

A sample of exercises:

Listen to the news carefully and then answer the following questions!

1. What does the woman talk about?
2. When people hear about information society, what might they guess?
3. Based on the news you have heard, where can you get information?
4. According to the United Nations, It is important to understand the information society. Why?
5. The following words are in the news. Find out their meanings In Indonesian!
 - a. term
 - b. guess
 - c. access
 - d. according to
 - e. United Nations
 - f. political freedom
 - g. digital divide
 - h. to bridge the gap

(source: <http://http-ws.bbc.co.uk.edgesuite.net>)

TEACHING/LEARNING PROCEDURES

In this section shows the teaching/learning procedures of teaching listening from a discourse perspective using metacognitive strategies. There are some steps in the teaching/learning process, as follows:

A. Pre-Listening

In this section starts with a prediction question such as “what will the speakers talk about in this news?” after giving students the chance to listen to the beginning of the text or think about their earlier knowledge in order to make guesses. The teacher encourages students to predict the answers not only for this prediction question, but also for all the other following exercises.

Pre-listening deals with *planning* as the first part of metacognitive strategies where the teacher draws attention to an appropriate action plan to deal with difficulties that may hinder the students from completing a task successfully. At this stage, students make predictions about what to listen for and, subsequently, to focus attention on meaning while listening.

B. Whilst-Listening

Ideally the listening tasks we design for them should guide them through the text and should be graded so that the first listening task they do is quite easy and helps them to get a general understanding of the text. Here are the steps for whilst-listening:

1. Teacher asks the students to finding out the main topic of the news that they have listened before. Sometimes a single question at this stage will be enough, not putting the students under too much pressure.
2. Finding out the meaning of certain words/phrases in Indonesian. The students listen should demand a greater and more detailed understanding of the text. Teacher makes sure though that the task doesn't demand too much of a response. Writing long responses as they listen can be very demanding and is a separate skill in itself, so keep the tasks to single words, ticking or some sort of graphical response.
3. Answering and finding specific information related with news
4. Teacher asks the students for checking their own answers or could lead students towards some more subtle interpretations of the text.

This stage deals with *monitoring* category where students check consistency with their predictions as the second part of metacognitive strategies.

C. Post-listening

There are two common forms that post-listening tasks can take. These are reactions to the content of the text, and analysis of the linguistic features used to express the content.

1. Reaction to the text, this could be discussion as a response to what we've heard - do they agree or disagree or even believe what they have heard? - Or it could be some kind of reuse of the information they have heard.
2. Analysis of language. The second of these two post-listening task types involves focusing students on linguistic features of the text. It could take the form of an analysis of verb forms from a script of the listening text or vocabulary or collocation work.

This is the *evaluation* category where students evaluate the results of decisions made during a listening task by getting involved in group or class discussions. It is also called *problem identification* category, the importance of explicitly identifying the aspect of the task that hinders completion of the listening task successfully.

REFLECTION

In order to help language learners develop awareness of the listening process and help them acquire the metacognitive knowledge leading to success in listening comprehension, teachers should guide through the following principles: planning, monitoring, and evaluating. Planning involves determining comprehension or learning objectives and deciding the means by which the objectives can be achieved. Monitoring involves checking the progress of unfolding comprehension or overall listening development plans. Evaluating involves determining the success of one's efforts at processing spoken input or the outcome of a plan for improving one's listening ability.

Metacognitive strategies do not only help learning in general but also have a lot to offer to listening comprehension specifically. Vandergrift (1997) indicates that metacognitive strategies such as analyzing the requirements of a listening task, activating the appropriate listening processes required, making appropriate predictions, monitoring their comprehension and evaluating the success of their approach cause the difference between a skilled and a less skilled listener. Similarly, Goh (2008) lists some of the positive effects of metacognitive strategy training on listening comprehension. She states that it improves students' confidence and makes them less anxious in the listening process. She also believes that weak listeners in particular benefit much from the training

CONCLUSION

To conclude, it should be noted that the traditional idea of only exposing EFL students to listening texts in listening classes should be challenged by an approach in which strategies can effectively and successfully be embedded to the listening course by means of strategy training program. It is hoped that this study will trigger more research exploring the effect of different strategy training models on students' performance in different basic skills. Studies proving the effectiveness of strategy training are likely to convince English teachers, teacher trainers, course book writers and curriculum designers to be more aware of the benefits of strategy training and include these strategies in their lessons, course books and curricula.

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