

USING METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES IN TEACHING LISTENING TO EXPLANATION TEXT

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ABSTRACT

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. 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. This study is intended to use metacognitive strategies in teaching listening and to provide English lecturers with interesting and effective teaching strategies in enhancing the students' active participation in teaching and learning process and improving students' listening ability. The students use metacognitive strategies to improve their ability in listening. This study will also give additional value to the effort of increasing the quality of teaching English particularly listening in Indonesia.

Key Words: Metacognitive Strategies, Teaching Listening, Explanation Text

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 (Harris&Palmer, 1986).

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.

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. For most people, being able to claim knowledge of a foreign language means being able to speak and listen in that language.

In relation with the teaching of EFL in indonesia, the teaching of listening focuses on understanding the utterances of the English native speakers in form of words, phrases, simple sentences, short conversation, long conversation, english songs, articles/journals, and TOEFL listening comprehension.

There are many problems that happened in the result of the teaching of listening and it is so far from satisfactory. For example many of the students think that when they are listen to the materials in listening class is very difficult to understand, they do not catch the real message what the speakers want to state in the audio. The students still get low scores on listening class. It is not only happened because of the students' ability itself but also depends on the teacher's methods and techniques in teaching listening.

Some of the teachers or lecturers using inappropriate techniques in teaching listening, so that the objectives of the study sometimes do not achieve by the students. Therefore, the researcher tried to use one new strategy in listening called metacognitive strategies to apply it in teaching and learning process of the listening and make sure that this strategy is very useful and appropriate to improve students' ability in 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.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

There are several studies about the implementation of Metacognitive Strategies. Thus in this section some related studies are elaborated briefly, to give a foundation and support for the research study.

There is empirical evidence in the literature that use of metacognitive strategies lead to better listening performance in different contexts (e.g. Vandergrift, 2003; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Thompson and Rubin, 1996). For instance, Vandergrift (2003) trained students in the use of prediction, individual planning, peer discussions, and post listening reflections that made up the metacognitive strategies in beginner elementary school and university contexts in France. Students in both groups were more focused on the advantages of predictions for successful listening, the place of collaboration with a partner for monitoring, and the confidence-building function of this approach for developing listening comprehension ability.

Vandergrift (1997) lists four strategies categories, *planning*, *monitoring*, *evaluation* and *problem identification*, which make up the basics of his model. For *planning*, he draws attention to an appropriate action plan to deal with difficulties that may hinder the listener from completing a task successfully. At this stage, he underlines the importance of prelistening activities that help students make predictions about what to listen for and, subsequently, to focus attention on meaning while listening.

In his *monitoring* category, students check consistency with their predictions. In the *evaluation* category, students evaluate the results of decisions made during a listening task by getting involved in group or class discussions. Within the *problem identification* category, he underlines the importance of explicitly identifying the aspect of the task that hinders completion of the listening task successfully. He also suggests some teaching techniques to develop students' metacognitive strategies use by illustrating some listening activities that are simple and helpful for listeners to develop their metacognition. His activities are mostly based

on the idea that the regular use of pre-listening, listening and post-listening activities is likely to promote the acquisition of metacognitive strategies.

He also suggests using a checklist including two parts as “before listening” and “after listening”. After the pre-listening activities, students complete the first part of the checklist, before listening, to evaluate whether they have followed all the necessary steps for successful listening before they begin to listen. After listening and attempting to complete the listening task, students complete the second part, which will help them to evaluate their performance in a systematic fashion, particularly if they had difficulty completing the task. This self-evaluation will help students to adjust their strategies for the following tasks. Room for a written reflection at the bottom of the instrument encourages students to personally reflect on the process, and state what they will do to improve their performance the next time.

In his study, Vandergrift (2004) employed a technique called metacognitive sequence to facilitate his subjects’ use of metacognitive strategies during listening. The results of the study show that these processes benefit the subjects through raising their awareness of the use of strategies and providing a kind of scaffolding as the subjects go through listening tasks. Vandergrift’s study seems to advocate the use of these strategies to improve learners’ comprehension as well as to motivate them to learn.

Another tool utilized in this study to incorporate metacognitive strategies into the lesson is MALQ, a 21 item questionnaire developed by Vandergrift et al. (2006), which has been used in different contexts as a consciousness-raising tool to raise students’ awareness of the process of listening, to positively influence students’ approach to listening tasks, and to increase self regulated use of comprehension strategies. The items in MALQ are related to five metacognitive factors that are listed below with related strategies. *Problem-solving*: As I listen, I compare what I understand with what I know about the topic. *Planning and evaluation*: Before I start to listen, I have a plan in my head for how I am going to listen. *Directed attention*: I focus harder on the text when I have trouble understanding. *Personal knowledge*: I find that listening in English is more difficult than reading, speaking or writing in English. *Mental translation*: I translate in my head as I listen.

This finding seems to corroborate with the reviewed studies revealing that metacognitive strategies training facilitated L2 listening comprehension and is useful for L2 listening improvement (Vandergrift, 2003; O’Malley and Chamot 1990; Thompson and Rubin; 1996; Anderson, 2002; Vandergrift, 1997; Goh, 2008). The training program followed in this study which included Vandergrift’s (1997) strategies training phases, the CALLA model and MALQ incorporated into the listening course book had a positive impact on the listening performance of EFL students.

The findings of the study have a number of implications for teachers, and thus teacher trainers whose classroom practices are interconnected. As stated at the beginning of the study, listening skills are not generally considered as skills requiring the use of strategies by most L2 learners and there seems to be a lack of awareness that these strategies facilitate the listening process (Oxford et al., 1990; Cohen, 2000; Vandergrift, 1999). Therefore, English teachers need to incorporate strategies training into their skills lessons and train students systematically about Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language), 2010, 4 (1), 35-50.43 what metacognition is, what role metacognition plays in learning, and how these strategies can be transferred to other listening tasks and even skills. For successful training of listeners, teachers should themselves be aware of the importance of strategies training in listening comprehension

and their awareness about the role training plays in learning English can be increased by teacher trainers who are aware of the benefits of metacognition.

Another study proving the effectiveness of metacognitive strategies training on L2 listening performance is that of O'Malley and Chamot (1990) whose intermediate high school ESL students received instruction in a metacognitive, a cognitive, and a socio-affective strategies. Performance on a post-listening test was compared with two other groups: the first group received instruction in a cognitive and a socio-affective strategies only, the second was a control group, and received no strategies instruction. Results revealed that in each daily test, the treatment group performed better than the control group, and that the metacognitive group had a better performance than the cognitive group on three of the four tests.

Chamot & O'Malley (1994) working on a project called Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) provided a useful framework for direct language learning strategies instruction. CALLA was developed as a metacognitive strategies training model. It helps teachers to combine language, content, and learning strategies in a carefully planned lesson. In the CALLA model, students' prior knowledge and their habit of evaluation of their own learning seem to be the major principles. This model has five instruction phases as explained below (Chamot and O'Malley, 1994, p. 43-44):

1. Preparation: Students prepare for strategies instruction by identifying their prior knowledge about and the use of specific strategies. e.g.: Setting goals and objectives, identifying the purpose of a language task, over-viewing and linking with already known materials
2. Presentation: The teacher demonstrates the new learning strategies and explains how and when to use it. e.g.: Explaining the importance of the strategies, asking students when they use the strategies
3. Practice: Students practice using the strategies with regular class activities. e.g.: Asking questions, cooperating with others, seeking practice opportunities
4. Evaluation: Students self-evaluate their use of the learning strategies and how well the strategies is working for them. e.g.: Self-monitoring, self-evaluating, evaluating their learning
5. Expansion: Students extend the usefulness of the learning strategies by applying it to new situations or learning for them. e.g.: Arranging and planning their learning.

In addition to the previous studies, Thompson and Rubin (1996) worked on the influence of metacognitive and cognitive strategies instruction on the listening comprehension performance of American university students learning Russian. The listening scores of the experiment group receiving systematic training in listening strategies were compared to the scores of a similar group who received no instruction over a two-year period. Pre- and post-tests showed that the students who received strategies instruction in listening to video-recorded texts improved significantly over those who had received no instruction at the end of two years.

The researcher believes that using Metacognitive Strategies in teaching listening to Explanation text can be used as a strategies to help the students listening effectively because they use their own strategies in listening and make the students aware of their own strengths and weaknesses in listening. Thus, the result of this study can later support or research the findings obtained from the previous study and the answers to the problem may need further confirmation that ultimately leads to a more solid foundation of a theory.

DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF EXPLANATION TEXT

Explanation is a text which tells processes relating to forming of natural, social, scientific and cultural phenomena. It is to say 'why' and 'how' about the forming of the phenomena. It is often found in science, geography and history text books.

Explanation texts are factual or literary genres used across all curriculum areas to explain the sequence, cause or theoretical understanding of a phenomenon or event. The purpose of an explanation is to provide logical, time related information to explain and describe events happening in our world.

As a genre, explanations detail and logically describe the stages in a natural (eg *the water cycle*), social (eg *making a law*) or technological (eg *brick making*) phenomenon of our world.

The Purpose of an explanation is used to tell how or why something occurs that consists of phenomenon identification and explanation sequence. It can be in the form of scientific writing and spoken presentation.

Generic Structure Of Explanation Text

1. A general statement which describes or identifies the phenomenon issues which are to explained.
2. A series of statements that tell how or why the feature or process changes. Words should show cause and effect.
3. A conclusion/application sums up the explanation and talks about its applications; may also give examples.

Language Features of Explanation Text

1. Featuring generic participant; sun, rain, etc.
2. Using chronological connection; to begin with, next, etc.
3. Technical terms - *evaporation, degradation*.
4. Action verbs and present tense - *runs, develops, becomes*.
5. Passive voice - *water is pulled up*.
6. Cause and effect terms - *because of.., due to.., therefore, as a result* to establish cause/effect sequences

The Example of Explanation Text

For Example: How something happened; why something occurred; why things are similar or different such as *Life cycle of an insect; how a dynamo works; process of making iron*.

Common example of Explanation text:

1. Sequential – details the stages in an event eg; *from apple blossom to fruit; the life cycle of a frog; oil production*.
2. Causal - details what causes the change from one stage to the next eg *how digestion happens; why tsunamis occur*.
3. Theoretical - details the possible phenomena behind a natural/created process that is not fully understood. eg *The El Niño effect*.
4. Factorial and consequential explanations explain effects and outcomes of processes and are more commonly used in upper primary and secondary contexts for example:
 - a.Science– eg *Explain the causes of climate change* (Factorial)
 - b.History– eg *Explain the causes of World War 2* (Factorial)

SAMPLE MATERIALS

A. Listening Models: An explanation text entitled **Natural disasters** by John Russell

Natural disasters take many different forms and can happen without warning. Earthquakes, floods, volcanoes, drought, typhoons and hurricanes are all natural disasters.

The earthquake of 26 December 2004 resulted in one of the worst natural disasters in living memory. It was a massive underwater quake and occurred in the Indian Ocean. This caused a huge tidal-wave (a tsunami) to cross the Indian Ocean. It destroyed coastlines, communities and brought death and destruction to many people. Thousands of people were killed as the wave travelled miles across the ocean to distant beaches. Whole families were swept out to sea or drowned as the sea invaded the land. The survivors need fresh water, food and shelter as well as medical help. People from all over the world are giving lots of money so that towns and villages can be rebuilt.

Why do earthquakes happen?

The surface of the earth has not always looked as it does today; it is moving continuously (although very slowly) and has done so for billions of years. This is one cause of earthquakes, when one section the earth (tectonic plate) collides with another. Scientists can predict where (but not when) this might happen and the area between plates is called fault line. On one fault line in Kobe, Japan in 1923 over 200,000 people were killed. However, earthquakes do not always happen on fault lines, which is why they are so dangerous and unpredictable.

Where do volcanoes happen?

Volcanoes happen where the earth's crust is thin - lava, dust and gases burst out (erupt) from beneath the earth. They can rise into a massive cone shape - like a mountain and erupt, or they can be so violent that they just explode directly from the earth with no warning. There are 1511 'active' volcanoes in the world. This means that they may still be dangerous. In 1985 the massive Colombian volcano Nevado del Ruiz erupted. The lava melted a glacier and sent tonnes of mud down the town of Armero below. Twenty thousand people died.

Can we predict earthquakes and volcanoes?

Natural disasters like volcanoes are often unpredictable. We regularly do not know when they might happen, or even where they will happen. In the future, scientists may be able to watch and predict events before they happen. This could save many lives. In South America, scientists predicted the eruption of Popocatepetl. Tens of thousands of people were safely moved just before the biggest eruption of the volcano for a thousand years. No one was hurt.

What is the difference between a Hurricane and a Tornado?

Hurricanes are extremely strong storms and often happen in the Caribbean. They cause high winds, huge waves, and heavy flooding and can be hundreds of miles across. In 1998, Hurricane Gilbert produced 160 mile an hour winds. It killed 318 people, and destroyed much of Jamaica. Tornadoes or 'twisters' are very strong spinning winds. They can move objects as big as a car and can blow buildings down. These are very common in West Africa and certain areas of the USA.

Can too much rain cause problems?

Floods happen in many countries after very heavy rainfall. When rain pours for weeks at a time, rivers overflow and people and property can be trapped or simply washed away. Since 1998, more than 30 people have drowned in floods in Britain. Flooding in Bangladesh caused 1300 deaths in 1989, another natural disaster.

.....and too little?

Another kind of natural disaster is a drought. This happens when there is no water, when it doesn't rain for a long time and rivers dry up. Plants, animals and even humans die as a result of drought, for we all need water to live. Many countries today suffer from drought. This causes crops to fail, animals to die and sadly, people to starve.

Which is the most dangerous natural disaster?

All the disasters mentioned above are very dangerous and continue to kill thousands of people each year, but they are nowhere near the most dangerous disaster to ever happen on earth. One type of event in earth's history has regularly killed millions of beings; asteroid impacts. About once every million years the earth is hit by a piece of rock and ice from space large enough to cause massive destruction (including earthquakes, volcanoes and ice ages) and sometimes to kill entire species. 65 million years ago more than half the earth's species were killed by such an impact (including all the dinosaurs). Disasters on the earth may seem dangerous, but the biggest threat to humans is likely to come from space.

B. Generic Structure:

1. Statement: write what is going to be explained/stated, for example:
Natural Disasters.
2. Explanation sequence: Present a series of events that relate to time or cause or both that explain the title. For example:
 - a. Natural disasters take many different forms and can happen without warning. Earthquakes, floods, volcanoes, drought, typhoons and hurricanes are all natural disasters.
 - b. The earthquake of 26 December 2004 resulted in one of the worst natural disasters in living memory. It was a massive underwater quake and occurred in the Indian Ocean. This caused a huge tidal-wave (a tsunami) to cross the Indian Ocean. It destroyed coastlines, communities and brought death and destruction to many people.
 - c. In 1985 the massive Colombian volcano Nevado del Ruiz erupted. The lava melted a glacier and sent tonnes of mud down the town of Armero below. Twenty thousand people died.
 - d. In 1998, Hurricane Gilbert produced 160 mile an hour winds. It killed 318 people, and destroyed much of Jamaica.
 - e. Since 1998, more than 30 people have drowned in floods in Britain. Flooding in Bangladesh caused 1300 deaths in 1989, another natural disaster.
3. Concluding Statement: include an evaluation or interesting comments on what have explained. For example:
 - a. All the disasters mentioned above are very dangerous and continue to kill thousands of people each year, but they are nowhere near the most dangerous disaster to ever happen on earth.
 - b. Disasters on the earth may seem dangerous, but the biggest threat to humans is likely to come from space.

C. Linguistic Features, as follows:

Noun groups: Living memory, coastlines, and earth's crust.

Passive Voice: 1. 65 million years ago more than half the earth's species were killed by such an impact (including all the dinosaurs).

2. Thousands of people were killed as the wave travelled miles across the ocean to distant beaches.

3. Whole families were swept out to sea or drowned as the sea invaded the land.

Adverbial Phrases: Indian Ocean, all over the world, billions of years, for a thousand years, hundreds of miles, and for weeks at a time.

Action Verbs: destroyed, killed, travelled, and swept out.

Conjunctions and Connectives: However, but, and causes.

Simple Present Tense, For Example:

1. The survivors need fresh water, food and shelter and medical help.

2. People from all over the world are giving lots of money so that towns and villages can be rebuilt.
3. There are 1511 'active' volcanoes in the world.
4. Hurricanes are extremely strong storms and often happen in the Caribbean.

Technical Languages: a huge tidal-wave (a tsunami), tectonic plate, high winds, huge waves, heavy flooding, and massive destruction.

D. Vocabulary, for example:

1. **Nouns:** Natural disasters, warning, earthquakes, floods, volcanoes, drought, typhoons, hurricanes, underwater quaeke, Indian Ocean, coatlines, communities, people, families, fresh water, food, towns, world, villages.
2. **Verbs:** take, happen, resulted, occured, destroyed, killed, travelled, swept out.
3. **Adjectives:** thin, violent, dangerous, unpredictable, high, huge, heavy, biggest.
4. **Adverbs:** continuously, very slowly, directly, regularly.

ASSESSMENT

1. On-going assessment: aim at evaluating the students' involvement and progress during the teaching and learning process
2. Performance assessment: aim at assessing the students' performance in listening skill improvement.

a. Process: answering the questions based on the recording of an explanation text.

b. Instrument (the questions):

1. Match the terms in column A with the correct definitions in column B!

1. Active	A. Sections of the earth's surface
2. Asteroid	B. Hot liquid that erupts from volcanoes
3. Cone	C. A very fast spinning wind
4. Drought	D. Places on the earth where earthquakes are more common
5. Fault line	E. When it doesn't rain for a very long time
6. Impact	F. One type of shape for a volcano
7. Lava	G. When there is too much water in a river
8. Overflow	H. When a comet hits the earth with great force
9. Tectonic plates	I. When a volcano still has the possibility to erupt
10. Tornado	J. A large piece of rock and ice floating in space

2. Answer these questions based on the text!

1. Mention forms of natural disasters!
2. What is tsunami?
3. Based on the CD you have listened, how many active volcanoes are there in the world?
4. What is the difference between a hurricane and a twister?
5. According to the speaker, what is likely the most dangerous disaster on the earth?

c. Answer Key

Match the terms in column A with the correct definitions in column B!

1. i, 2.j, 3.f, 4.e, 5.d, 6.h, 7.b, 8.g, 9.a, 10.c

Answer these questions based on the text!

1. Earthquakes, floods, volcanoes, drought, typhoons and hurricanes are all natural disasters.
2. It was a massive underwater quake and occurred in the Indian Ocean.
3. There are 1511 'active' volcanoes in the world
4. Hurricanes are extremely strong storms and often happen in the Caribbean. They cause

high winds, huge waves, and heavy flooding and can be hundreds of miles across. Tornadoes or ‘twisters’ are very strong spinning winds. They can move objects as big as a car and can blow buildings down.

5. Asteroid impacts.

TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS

In applying Metacognitive Strategies in teaching listening to Explanation Text, the writer uses some steps, as follow:

Stages	Activities
Planning 15 minutes	1) The lecturer gives some questions related to the materials by showing some pictures and hope the students guess what the topic and materials that they are going to listen to. 2) The lecturer directs the students to activate their current knowledge about the materials that they are going to listen to and plan how to accomplish the tasks. 3) The lecturer directs the students activate their vocabulary/language that may be used in the listening. 4) Students make predictions about what they are going to listen to by write their prediction about the topic.
Monitoring 70 minutes	1) The lecturer plays the recording materials once of the first part. 2) The lecturer asks the students whether their prediction is correct or not about the topic that they have listened to. 3) The lecturer plays the recording materials once of the second part. 4) The lecturer asks the students whether their prediction is correct or not about the topic that they have listened. 5) The lecturer plays the recording materials once of the third part. 6) The lecturer asks the students whether their prediction is correct or not about the topic that they have listened. 7) The lecturer plays recording materials of the whole paragraph and asks the students to check their consistency of previous prediction. 8) Students answer the questions based on the recording materials that were prepared by the lecturer according to their understanding of recording. 9) Students check the progress, comprehension, and production on the tasks.
Evaluating 15 minutes	1) The lecturer asks the students whether they want to listen more to the recording or not to check their comprehension of the materials. 2) The lecturer asks the students evaluate the results of decisions made during a listening task by getting involved in pair discussion and check their answers of the task questions. 3) The lecturer asks the students to assess how well they have accomplished the learning tasks and applied the strategies by comparing the strategies that they used to their partners. 4) Students evaluate their comprehension and decide which are the effective and appropriate strategies that they are going to be used for the next listening tasks.

CONCLUSION

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.

By using metacognitive strategies, it can help students to compensate their bottom up listening processing and give students an overview of the listening process. The strategies include extract an important detail from ongoing speech, identify the gist of a segment and then predict what will come next in a segment.

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