

LISTENING COMPREHENSION OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND/FOREIGN LANGUAGE; SOCIAL AND COGNITIVE ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT AT SECONDARY AND HIGHER SECONDARY LEVELS

Ahmed Bilal Khalid*¹, Afshan Abbasi², Iqra Batool³, Tooba Jehan⁴, Iram Sharif⁵

*¹ Lecturer English, MPhil English Linguistics, National University of Modern Languages, Rawalpindi; ² Department of English, Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur; ³ Lecturer, Department of Psychology, Thal University Bhakkar; ⁴ Consultant Clinical Psychologist MS Scholar, Air University, Islamabad; ⁵ M.Phil in English (Applied Linguistics), Minhaj University, Lahore.

*¹ahmed.bilal@numl.edu.pk, ²afshana549@gmail.com, ⁴toobajehan724@gmail.com, ⁵iramsharif309@gmail.com,

Corresponding Author: *

Received: 05 November, 2023 Revised: 24 November, 2023 Accepted: 15 December, 2023 Published: 30 December, 2023

ABSTRACT

The English teaching methods implemented in Pakistan have not successfully achieved the intended goal of communicative competency. Therefore, the circumstances and conditions surrounding the teaching of English as a language or subject in various institutions throughout Pakistan are of great importance to education specialists in the region. English is a mandatory subject at all levels of education in Pakistan, and significant emphasis is placed on it in academic programs. It is expected that Pakistani learners would naturally develop comprehensive language abilities, including listening, enabling them to effectively communicate in English and pursue professions requiring proficiency in the language. To assist language teachers in teaching listening skills at the appropriate level for their classes, this paper conducts a thorough literature review of the cognitive and social aspects of listening, which is crucial given the significance of the English language in Pakistan and the importance of listening comprehension in English language learning.

Keywords: Cognitive, social, metacognitive, the teaching of English, English as Foreign Language, EFL, ESL.

INTRODUCTION

Education specialists find the circumstances and conditions surrounding the teaching of English in institutions throughout Pakistan to be of great importance, as noted by Rahman in 2005. However, these circumstances are far from acceptable. Despite being exposed to English throughout their education, learners in Pakistan struggle to hold conversations in the language. English holds significant importance in Pakistan's educational system and is taught as a third language in some regions, with Urdu being taught as the national language after several regional languages are taught as the first language. Those folks are linguistically incompetent. Although mastering all four of these talents is necessary to

learn an SL successfully, they are unable to demonstrate any of these abilities.

It is clear from this that Pakistan's English education strategies have not been able to help learners develop their communicative ability. English is only taught through reading and writing in the Pakistani educational system, with a focus on grammar and vocabulary, while the two most important communication skills, listening and speaking, are either neglected or only partially covered. Instead, to stay current on knowledge, learners need to practise effective listening. All levels of school and college in Pakistan are required to learn English, and when academic programmes are

created, English is given special consideration. Often, the first times are set aside for English classes. As Pakistani learners would “naturally develop a flawless competency in all language abilities,” including listening, it is envisaged that “they would be effective in communicating in English and ultimately serve in many professions with proficiency in the English language”. One could question why Pakistani learners are unable to speak effectively and lack the necessary proficiency in language skills, notably listening, despite having studied English for several years. It is deemed appropriate to investigate how to teach the English language, particularly concerning listening, to support learners in acquiring this talent and doing so in a proper manner in the classroom. (Khan, 2011)

The present study conducts a thorough literature review of the development of listening competency about cognitive and social aspects of listening skills to aid the subject specialists of language in better teaching listening skills meeting the specific needs and levels of the secondary and higher secondary classes. This is because “the English language is valued in Pakistan” and because listening comprehension is important for learning any language including the English language.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE:

Communication depends on listening, and listening helps pupils learn the most. This makes listening crucial for kids to take advantage of opportunities to develop and display strong listening skills. But, listening involves much more than just hearing. One must use process-oriented techniques and skills to understand spoken language. Due to the simultaneous use of language and cognition during the listening process, effective listening skills are developed along with language skills. Effective listening skills do not develop by accident; instead, regular language activities must include active listening experiences.

Particularly language teachers must take into account the significance of active listening. Only when they consciously focus on what the speaker is saying can learners start to listen actively. The concepts or information that the pupils hear should also be instantly applied or evaluated by them. They may, for instance, take notes or agree verbally, ask or

create questions, assess the message, ascertain the speaker’s aims and motivations, and differentiate between facts and opinions.

Efficiently receiving messages requires the essential skill of listening, which involves both hearing and psychological engagement with the speaker. To effectively listen, one must possess a willingness to comprehend the speaker’s message, demonstrate a respectful and accepting attitude towards the speaker, maintain an open mind, and make an effort to understand the speaker’s perspective. In addition to the previously mentioned skills, listening also requires the listener to set aside their thoughts and goals and empathize with the speaker by attempting to understand the world from their perspective (Tyagi, 2013). The psychological processes involved in listening include receiving the message, paying attention to it, making sense of it, and responding to both verbal and nonverbal cues.

People interpret the noises they hear, pick out keywords, and create meaning as they listen. Additionally, they predict what they will learn next and compare the new information with their assumptions and a general understanding of the universe. To deal with the challenges of real-time listening, listeners employ several tactics. In the event of face-to-face engagement, they make an effort to at least partially recall what they heard and formulate a suitable answer. These actions are interconnected and occur simultaneously in the listener’s head; they are not distinct processes. Because of this, hearing is referred to as an “active skill:” even though learners’ efforts are unseen, they as listeners must put in a lot of effort to understand aural data. A message that is heard enters the sensory memory and is stored there for about a second in its original form. The brain separates it from other sounds during this time, detects English words and groups them together before either adding or erasing the input, depending on the sound’s “quality, urgency and source”. The input is temporarily stored in the short-term memory for comparison with the listener’s prior knowledge. The message may never be stored in the long-term memory once it has been comprehended by being differentiated from or associated with other pieces of information. The cognitive aspect of hearing includes the brain, memory, and voice recognition processes (Vandergrift & Goh, 2009)

The social component of listening, which explains how it has a communicative quality, is equally significant. Listeners are required to demonstrate knowledge in face-to-face interactions by nodding, using phrases like “really” and “uh-huh,” offering comments, and switching between speaking roles. Even in a less interactive setting, such as a lecture, the audience member still has “the opportunity to participate,” (ibid.) e.g., by asking questions or making remarks. The social aspects of listening also include the pragmatic features that allow listeners to infer the speaker’s intention and respond appropriately in a variety of settings, including the interpretation of gestures, body language, and other nonverbal signs (Vandergrift & Goh, 2009). In general, listening is a social and cognitive process that occurs in all languages. Yet, there are still several difficulties that non-native English speakers (NNESs) encounter while trying to understand spoken English.

“Understanding a text does not include deriving meaning from the input; rather, listeners create meaning using their understanding of the linguistic structure” (Graesser & Britton, 1996). It also helps to derive meaning from the interaction context and prior knowledge. Since understanding a text is “a dynamic process that involves creating coherent representations and inferences at various levels of the text and context, while having a finite amount of working memory available, there are memory constraints that place restrictions on this process” (Vandergrift & Goh, 2009). Understanding during conversational listening is made possible by the combined efforts of the listener and speaker who cooperate in carrying “out acts of communication” (Clark, 1996). This is the pragmatic perspective of hearing, in which high-level inferences and a goal to finish the communication exist during listening. The speaker’s intentions are one of several things that the listener must assume (Clark, 1996); (Rost, 2013).

Cognitive Aspects of Listening:

(Anderson, (1995)) “model of perceptual processing, parsing, and usage” was one of the earliest cognitive models used for research in second or foreign-language acquisition (Figure 1). This model emphasizes interactive processing occurring in short-term memory, which is relevant to this paradigm. Several studies on listening strategies have also employed this model. Additionally, another model, “the connectionist model” (Bechtel, 1991) (Figure 2), has also been utilized. It posits that processing occurs through the spreading activation of neuronal networks in the brain that are interconnected or associative. Learners require assistance in developing these networks to enable quick parallel processing when learning languages (Asemota, 2007); (Baddeley, 2000).

The ability of the brain to temporarily process and store information has been the subject of recent discussions with an emphasis on working memory. This is where the prevailing working memory model (Figure 3) does a good job of explaining brain storage (Buck, 2001); (Hulstijn, 2003). According to the prevailing model of working memory, “the Phonological Loop and the Visuospatial Sketchpad are responsible for short-term processing, while the Central Executive serves as a coordinator for cognitive processes by directing attention towards the input” (ibid.). The information that has been processed by the aforementioned processing systems is then integrated using the Episodic Buffer. Ultimately, a single mental representation is created from all of this information. According to this paradigm, audio and visual information must be combined. Since multiple modalities of input for both in-class and out-of-class listening are adopted, there can exist a connection between working and long-term memory. For that, there can also establish a new perspective on the processes that are actively involved in listening comprehension of a foreign language (Gruba, 2004).

Language comprehension model Anderson (2000)

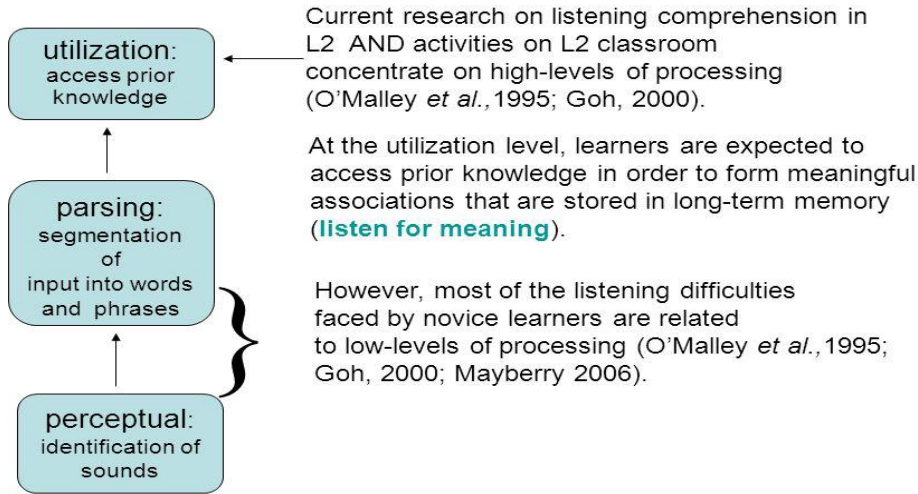


Figure 1: Language comprehension model (Inspired by Anderson, 1995)

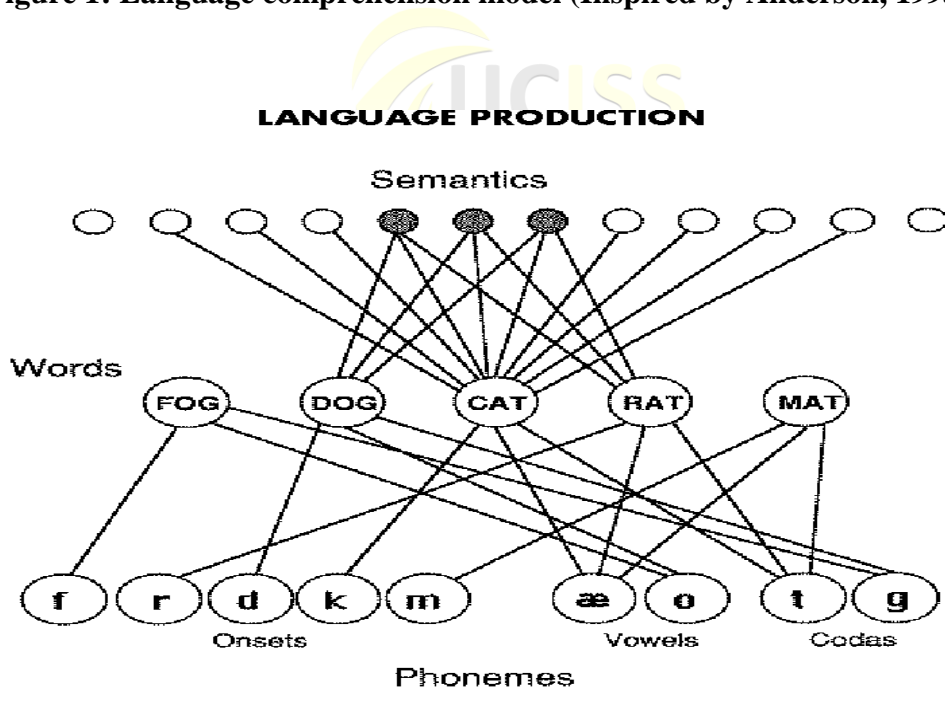
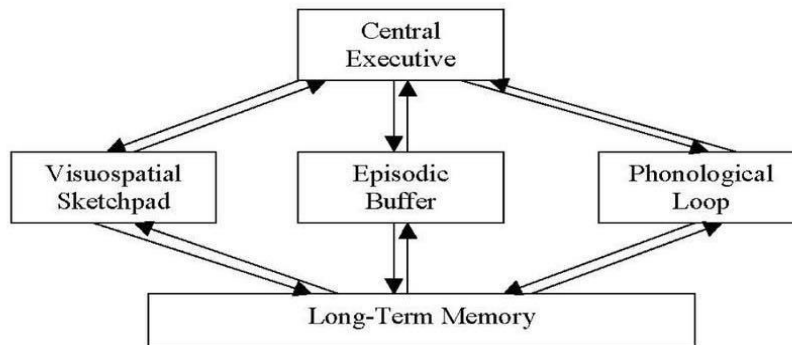


Figure 2: Connectionist Model of Language Production (Dell et al., 1999)

Working Memory Model

Baddeley and Hitch suggested that STM is not a single store but is instead made up of 4 different active stores.



Central Executive

- Control centre which acts as a processor dealing with incoming info from any sense.
- CE's role is to direct attention to particular tasks and is involved in monitoring and coordinating info.



Figure 3: Dominant model of working memory (Baddeley & Hitch, 1974)

The models for listening comprehension outlined above all share some basic concepts and implications, which are described in more detail below:

- “Paying attention to the input is crucial for information processing” (Izumi, 2003) Moreover, some decoding and signal analysis are necessary for addition to this. The spoken words must be recognised and perceived by the listeners, who must then divide each word into chunks to make sense (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005); (Sueyoshi & Hardison, 2005) Users who are proficient in a language go through this process instinctively, whereas less proficient listeners rely heavily on the careful processing of linguistic data. So, as a crucial component of hearing, learners require assistance from listening instructions to swiftly perceive and process linguistic information. When visual input such as gestures, pictures, videos, and slides are present, the ability to listen must be used to absorb the information (Sueyoshi & Hardison, 2005)
- Schemata or prior knowledge that are recovered from long-term memory are used to process new information. Top-down processing, as it is often known, is the utilisation of existing information to aid in the construction of comprehensive and accurate interpretations by learners. With this, listeners who are learning a second or foreign language “bridge comprehension gaps and build plausible interpretations”

- without heavily relying on linguistic elements (Izumi, 2003)
- iii. Parallel activities to hearing, such as reading and watching, might assist create prior knowledge. “The intertextual component of comprehension” might be referred to as this (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005)
- iv. “Prior knowledge plays a crucial role in facilitating faster processing” (Tyler, 2001) since studies have shown that when listeners have prior knowledge of a particular topic, differences in working memory usage between native and skilled non-native listeners are not statistically significant. However, learners may sometimes fail to apply prior knowledge because they are too preoccupied with decoding and processing the speech stream (ibid.).
- v. The successful processing of speech depends on how quickly linguistic information is processed. Because information is processed under intense time pressure while listening, little attentional resources are useful in this context. Automatic processing occurs while “listening to phonological and grammatical levels, and automatic lexical identification” has been found to have a significant impact on listeners’ knowledge and recall, according to research (Jefferies et al., 2004). Both quantitatively and qualitatively, automaticity differs. For example, the speed of processing differs qualitatively, and the “restructuring of information” (Tyler, 2001) is another factor.
- vi. As non-proficient listeners are paying attention with their conscious minds while they are listening, comprehension processes must be managed in their case. With the use of top-down, bottom-up, and metacognitive methods, “people

attempt to match the sounds they hear with the contents of their mental lexicon”. They focus on problem-solving and keep an eye on their interpretation in this way. Problem-solving ultimately succeeds as a result of this. In general, proficient second or foreign-language learners employ coordinated tactics.

Social Aspects of Listening:

The social features of hearing make it crucial to take communicative context into account when interpreting texts and utterances. Face-to-face communication may involve culturally specific clues, gestures, and other nonverbal indicators that can either enhance or even change the literal meanings (Harris, 2003). Listeners of a target language must be well aware of their interlocutors because they can affect understanding and restrict negotiating. This specifically occurs in listening situations when there are unequal power relationships, such as between a supervisor and subordinates (Khan, 2011). When there is a communication issue during a conversation, the listener should use effective clarification techniques that are “appropriate for the situation and interlocutor” (Carrier, 1999).

The social facets of listening are psychological and pragmatic. The application of quick and precise pragmatic knowledge falls under pragmatic comprehension. This suggests that understanding a speaker’s intentions when speaking in a specific context is more significant than an utterance’s exact meaning (Rose & Kasper, 2001). Listeners use this culturally specific information to draw conclusions and interpret the underlying meaning. Language proficiency is the ability to process linguistic and contextual information simultaneously and successfully. A listener who is less proficient in the language has much more difficulty interpreting and understanding various requests “because they do not have enough processing capacity freed up for this purpose” (Cook & Liddicoat, 2002). As understanding conversational implicatures requires that while listening understanding the speaker’s attitude and intentions is important, skilled listeners need to do so. Strong proficiency effects have an impact on accuracy,

while speed and implicature incomprehension do not. Two distinct aspects of pragmatic comprehension - understanding indicated information and processing it swiftly (Garcia, 2004)- are distinct from one another.

In language classes, where learners encounter listening anxiety and its impact on their listening skills, the psychological element of hearing is discussed. “Significant negative correlations between listening anxiety and listening comprehension scores have been found through research”, which is likely a result of the emphasis on the product rather than “the process in the teaching of second- and foreign-language listening while the main factor in listening success is motivation” (Elkhafafi, 2005) On the other hand, there is a favourable correlation between levels of intrinsic or extrinsic motivation and listening skills of foreign and second language learners using metacognitive methods. While listeners with low motivation scores tended to utilise less effective listening methods due to a lack of self-efficacy and self-confidence, “this motivation is essential to self-determined behaviour while the use of metacognitive strategies is essential to self-regulated learning” (Vandergrift, 2004)

Teaching SL/FL Listening; Various Approaches:

In the past, teaching a second or foreign language only involved explaining how to interpret written materials. The teaching of listening has traditionally been neglected since instruction has always been more concerned with simply confirming the results than with fostering the learning processes necessary for efficient comprehension. “Even when pre-listening exercises were used to activate prior information, the attention was strictly on the contents”. Because learner awareness and control over their learning are crucial, listening teaching should be designed and altered according to the needs of the learners to enable them to identify and practise the listening processes. If they are not taught how to listen, listening activities are simply a chance to evaluate their current abilities, which can cause anxiety (Vandergrift & Goh, 2009)

Two methods for teaching listening are presented in several recent studies on the teaching of a target language. One of them is a top-down strategy, and the other is a bottom-up method:

Bottom-Up Approaches:

“Bottom-up processing, which is involved in the perception of sounds and words,” (Vandergrift, 2004) is a step in the listening comprehension process that is connected to “lexical segmentation and word recognition abilities” (Vandergrift & Goh, 2009) While interpreting material, listeners draw on their background knowledge and former experiences if they have a strong enough lexical sense. The major goals of this technique are to assist learners to improve their critical perception abilities through the use of acoustic signals. Due to the lack of regular spaces that can help second and foreign language learners by “indicating the beginning and end of words like a reader of language,” (Vandergrift, 2004) word segmentation is one of the biggest obstacles they confront. They must divide sound streams into meaningful units, yet it can be challenging to identify word boundaries. Even though a word is known to language learners, they might not be able to distinguish it in “concatenated speech since word segmentation is a language-specific skill that is learned early in life” (Graham, 2006). Because these practices are deeply ingrained in the learner’s processing system, applying them to a new language is automatic. Nonetheless, despite using the native language’s segmentation technique, it might be challenging to listen to a language that has a rhythm that differs from your own (Cutler, 2000), especially for listeners with lower competence levels (Graham, 2006). To help second language learners identify word borders, prosodic characteristics of a language, such as stress and intonation, might be useful (Cutler, 2000)

It is beneficial “for learners of any age and language background to focus on pause-bounded units rather than syntactic clues for learning English because, in a stream of speech, placing word boundaries before stressed syllables aids in word identification” (Field, 2005). Because of the prosodic information that goes along with each word, using word-onset, or the initial phonemes of the word, maybe another effective method for word recognition. While this largely depends on their native language and how adept they are at doing that, late learners can segment a concatenated speech by using lexical information and stress cues.

In conclusion, the application of “segmentation cues is native language-specific and

teachable”. If learners are given the chance to gather and organise data that may be acoustic, phonemic, syllabic, morphological, or lexical, they can develop word-segmentation skills:

- An assessment of their level of comprehension is carried out, and the recording is played back as much as necessary.
- Learners simply listen to oral texts; they do not read them.
- Proofread written material;
- Acknowledge what has been comprehended; Replay a recording until learners comprehend without written assistance

Language learners will benefit from this process because they can take note of several significant associated speech occurrences, such as reduced forms, elision, assimilation, and re-syllabification. Learning about these phenomena aids in the acquisition of word-segmentation abilities. To be able to solve them independently after listening, practice replaying is important in this regard (Field, 2005). Analyzing the components of text transcription or dictation can be used to instruct learners in word recognition, although analogy exercises can also be used for this purpose (Goh, 2005). “Word recognition” can also be accomplished by listening to “i-1” level texts, or aural texts with a large percentage of well-known words. The learners notice little differences between the aural and written versions, which leads to the development of automaticity in word recognition.

Some activities can assist learners in identifying word stress and prominence within a discourse while they are processing prosody at the bottom-up level. One of these activities is to “crush words between dominant syllables to help learners understand how weak words and syllables are pronounced in natural speech”. These phonological changes, such as elision, assimilation, or liaison, can impact the comprehension of high- and low-proficiency learners (Vandergrift & Goh, 2009) Another tool that can be utilized to improve perceptual processing is the “dictogloss technique,” in which learners listen to an original text and reconstruct it, pointing out any inconsistencies between the two. This technique

forces learners to focus on hearing issues, analyze them, and weigh the reasons behind their listening failures.

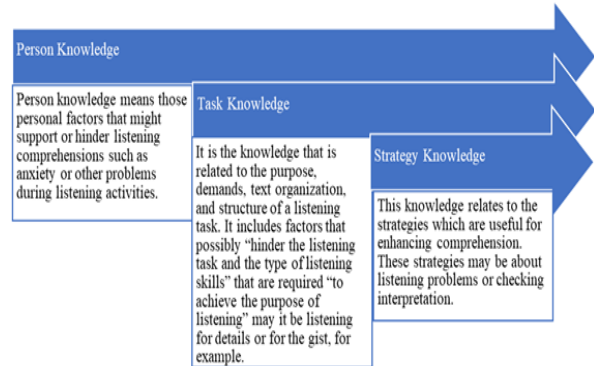


Figure 4: Types of Knowledge (Goh, 2005)

The study showed that when participants were exposed “to verbatim repetitions of dialogues recorded on videotapes played in different modes (FSS, FSF, and FFF)¹,” (Goh, 2005) the groups who heard “exact repetition and reduced speech rate” (ibid.) were better able to achieve detailed comprehension and learn phonological decoding strategies. In this study, the FFF group performed better in terms of comprehension, proving that comprehension performance need not be improved by reducing speed.(Asghar et al., 2023) It is concluded that regular listening exercises combined with instruction in listening perception aid learners in understanding all linguistic aspects.

The use of “audio and video texts” for listening practice has been greatly increased by the development of technology. Learners now can use technology on their own or in a classroom setting to listen extensively. They can freely “listen to whatever they choose and download it onto their devices for later listening”. With the aid of the most recent podcasting technology, learners can now take in a variety of media broadcasts inside or outside of the classroom.

Top-down Approaches:

By reflecting on the nature of the hearing, learners are taught how to self-regulate their listening process using this method of instruction. This

¹ F stands for fast learner and S stands for slow learner.

strategy primarily attempts to increase their metacognitive knowledge of listening, which entails knowing how many factors work and interact to affect the process and results of learning. This knowledge can be further broken down (Figure 4) into the person, task, and method knowledge, all of which help to improve self-direction.

One straightforward strategy for teachers and learners to use listening diaries is to increase learners' metacognitive knowledge (Goh, 2005). These diaries can assist learners in focusing their reflections on specific events if used in conjunction with carefully chosen prompts. They get the ability to assess their performance in this way, and after doing so, they can decide how to develop their listening abilities on their own. Another helpful strategy is for teachers to design process-oriented exercises for their learners as part of listening sessions, especially for younger learners (Goh, 2005). When small groups and teacher-led conversations take place in the classroom, learners contribute what they have written in their listening diaries as personal observations, and this collaborative interaction helps them acquire new listening techniques (Cook & Liddicoat, 2002). It is also feasible to include tasks that increase metacognitive awareness throughout the listening session, such as prediction. Through this, the learners get more motivation and a metacognitive understanding of the significance of different listening comprehension tactics while also becoming more adept at employing these strategies (Vandergrift, 2004). When learners are listening independently, using a metacognitive guide can also help them respond to prompt questions in pre- and post-listening exercises. They can assess their performance and decide which listening technique to employ in the future.

As a result, top-down teaching methods can help learners develop their metacognitive skills and learn how to employ strategies. Using self-reflective tools, such as questionnaires, improves individual metacognitive reflections and encourages the use of techniques that language learners find effective. Another test, the "Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire," or MALQ, is based on research and theory about second languages, and its results show a strong correlation with effective listening (Vandergrift, 2004). Language learners can

use this MALQ to gauge their comprehension of the listening process, or teachers can use it to assess their learner's knowledge of those processes. Researchers can utilise it to find listening-related metacognitive information. These are all different techniques for increasing metacognitive awareness and enhancing listening performance in which the listeners take a step back from actual listening, assess their listening processes, and then consider what it takes to be a good listener. (Vandergrift & Goh, 2009)

Model for Teaching Listening:

Listening is not a solitary mental activity when it comes to teaching and learning; it is an active and beneficial process. Although they are unable to influence their learners' thought processes while they are listening, teachers can provide learners with some mental exercise through specific assignments and activities or assist them in doing so (Buck, 2001); (Vandergrift, 2004). Individual listening is supported by group activities where learners concentrate on the nature of a listening assignment and the requirements of that activity. If exercises provided to them during listening sessions include the application of methods, the learners can experience listening processes for themselves. It is preferable to incorporate these strategies into a lesson plan (Vandergrift, 2004) and learners are guided to use metacognitive processes necessary for effective listening and regulating learners' comprehension at particular stages of learning (Figure 5). Particularly in second or foreign languages, this pedagogical cycle aids in the development of both top-down and bottom-up aspects of listening comprehension.

For advanced-level language learners with low or high proficiency, particularly if undergoing intensive language study, this listening technique is advantageous. Particularly language learners' ability to self-regulate, employ strategies, and possess metacognitive knowledge are improved in these pupils (Ur, 1984) which eventually increases listening success rates. This is especially true for low-proficiency learners who found the aural-written verification stage to be very beneficial in helping them successfully enhance their auditory discriminating skills. This pedagogical training produced improved word recognition abilities for high proficiency (Buck, 2001).

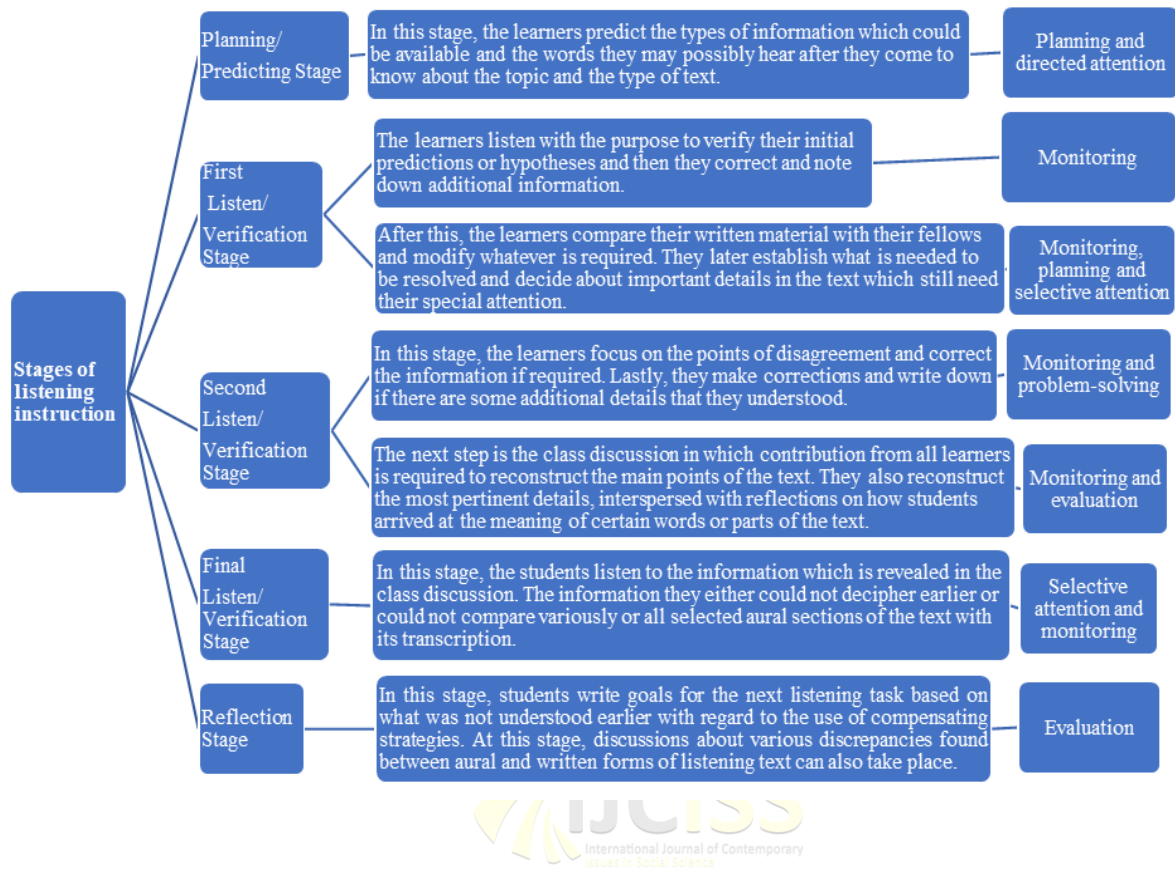


Figure 5: Listening Instruction and Related Metacognitive Processes (Buck, 2001)

Listening Assessment:

Addressing the problems with the listening assessment, in particular, those connected to task type, item type, and input modality, has constraints (Buck, 2001) Construct validity is hard for listening to because of its veiled nature. Since listening processes interact intricately with multiple types of knowledge, it is challenging to objectively confirm them. As a result, task completion is the sole way to determine whether something was understood (Buck, 2001); (Vandergrift & Goh, 2009). Further research is needed to assess and pinpoint the motivating variables that influence listeners’ choices of responding to a task. It is also necessary to identify listener variables, task types, knowledge types, and listening procedures. In general, the construct is defined with the aid of the hearing test’s objective and the intended

application of the language (Buck, 2001). Nonetheless, the use of a default listening construct is permissible if the circumstances and situations where the target language is to be employed are not explicitly defined, such as in the case of general competency exams or second or foreign language classroom assessments.

This might be used to define hearing as the capacity to analyse, comprehend, and draw conclusions (Buck, 2001). This definition is adaptable to most texts and clarifies how listeners can demonstrate their comprehension (Figure 3). Some researchers looked at the empirical evidence of any potential listening skills in academic settings to determine the construct validity of a video-based test. A model with six competencies and top-down and bottom-up processing was used to look at it. The findings showed that overtly stated and implicit

information emerged as factors rather than bottom-up and top-down factors. This was unable to produce clear results, which ultimately made it difficult to distinguish between listening activities that were happening at the same time. Furthermore, it is possible that the gap between implicit and explicit was made artificially since listeners need to comprehend the explicit to infer the implicit. This shows how difficult it is to define the listening notion empirically.

Speech rate and response mode are found to affect task and item difficulty when changes in task characteristics and task circumstances are involved. The many interactions that occur between task components make it challenging to gauge an item's difficulty level. Even if the task's one variable is changed, the task's difficulty will not necessarily change because it depends more on how the listener interacts with the task than it does on either listener's qualities. For instance, if a text's voice rate varies throughout, it may be challenging to operationalize the variable. When it comes to classroom situations, there are several problems with building validity and reliable assessment. For example, the accent and dialect may lead to biased exams against learners. Depending on the length of the lecture, the learner's level of skill, and the subject matter, taking notes during a computer-based listening test may be beneficial for the learners. By taking notes while you listen, you can adjust for memory limitations and improve the test's face validity.

The issue of item complexity has also been investigated using categorization and regression tree (CART) and multiple regression analysis (MRA). CART displays overlapped combinations of "easy tough" items while the MRA highlights the characteristics of text and its interaction with items as the key contributors to item difficulty levels. The researchers concluded that there was a correlation between the increasing item difficulty and increasing sentence length. Information density, lexical overlap with distracters, item type, and match type all had an impact on the type-token ratio (Garcia, 2004). Also, performance in the listening tests is significantly impacted by the format of the response.

CONCLUSION:

From the aforementioned literature review, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Communication depends on listening, and listening helps kids learn the most.
2. Listening is crucial if learners are to take advantage of opportunities to develop and display strong listening skills.
3. People interpret the noises they hear, pick up keywords, and create meaning as they listen.
4. They also hazard a guess as to what they will learn next and compare the new information to their assumptions and a general understanding of the world.
5. Depending on the quality, urgency, and source of the sound, the brain separates a message from other noises, detects language words, groups them together, and either adds the information to the short-term memory or deletes it.
6. The input is temporarily stored in the short-term memory for comparison with the listener's prior knowledge.
7. The message can be permanently stored in long-term memory once it has been understood by being related to or distinct from other information.
8. The cognitive aspect of hearing includes the brain, memory, and speech recognition processes.
9. In face-to-face interactions, listeners are expected to demonstrate awareness by nodding, using expressions like "really" and "uh-huh," offering comments and rotating among conversational roles.
10. The pragmatic aspects of listening, gestures, body language, and other nonverbal cues are also included in the

social aspects of listening. These elements enable listeners to infer the speaker's intent and determine an implied meaning to respond in a variety of contexts in a socially acceptable manner.

11. Listening is a cognitive and social process that is essentially the same in all languages. Non-native English speakers, however, encounter several extra challenges in their attempts to comprehend spoken English.

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