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METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY TRAINING IN LISTENING

Metacognitive Strategy Training in Listening On Undergraduate Students

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Research Report submitted

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Abstract

This qualitative report, based on an Action Research study, presents the results of a project resulting from the teacher-researcher observations of his students' performance on listening. The study was conducted with 15 pre-intermediate undergraduate students as per the CEFR at a private university in Chía, Colombia. Participants revealed difficulties when approaching listening tasks. Data were collected from a mock exam, listening strategies questionnaires, individual reflective exercises and think-aloud records. The data were analyzed through the grounded theory method. The results informed that the use of metacognitive strategies had a positive impact on the students' listening comprehension skill. The findings also revealed that the use of listening strategies modified the learners' beliefs about their listening process. The listening tasks followed a sequence of pre, during and after listening. This study suggests the implementation of the strategies in other universities and in public high schools. It also offers adaptable lessons for other teachers of English who want to use them in their education context.

Key words: Metacognitive strategies; listening skill, planning; monitoring; evaluating.

Resumen

Este reporte cualitativo, basado en un estudio de investigación-acción, presenta los resultados de un proyecto derivado de las observaciones hechas por el profesor-investigador acerca del desempeño de sus estudiantes en la comprensión de escucha. El estudio se realizó con 15 estudiantes universitarios del nivel pre-intermedio según el Marco Común Europeo para las lenguas en una universidad privada en Chía, Colombia. Los participantes revelaron dificultades al realizar actividades de escucha. Los datos fueron recogidos a partir de un examen de prueba, cuestionarios de estrategias en comprensión de escucha, ejercicios de reflexión individual y registros de pensar en voz alta. Los datos fueron analizados a través del método de la teoría fundamentada. Los resultados revelaron que el uso de estrategias meta cognitivas generó un impacto positivo en la habilidad de comprensión de escucha de los estudiantes. Los resultados también revelaron que el uso de estrategias de escucha modificó las creencias acerca de su proceso de escucha. Las actividades de escucha siguieron un modelo pedagógico para antes, durante y después de escuchar. Este estudio sugiere la aplicación de las estrategias en otras universidades y en las escuelas secundarias públicas. También ofrece lecciones que pueden ser modificadas por otros profesores de inglés que deseen usarlas en su contexto educativo.

Palabras claves: Estrategias meta cognitivas; habilidad de escucha; planificación; monitoreo; evaluación.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the study

Listening has become an essential component of many second or foreign language (L2) programs. It is one of the four skills in language acquisition and the most frequently skill used in the classroom (Thompson & Rubin, 1996; Rost, 2002). According to Mendelsohn (2000), 45% of language competence is gained through listening, 30% from speaking, 15% from reading and 10% from writing. Although listening is an important component of language learning, this skill has not been satisfactorily integrated into the curriculum and needs to receive more attention in language learning settings. Furthermore, the listening skill was for a long time relegated to a marginal place in foreign language (Macaro, 2005) and Nunan (1997) calls it as “The Cinderella skill” in second language learning. In addition, findings of Renukadevi (2014) revealed that for learners listening is more difficult than the other language skills (speaking, reading and writing).

Considering the above-mentioned facts, Richards and Renandya (2002) asserted that the listening skill has an important place in language acquisition. Similarly, Mendelsohn (2006) highlighted that listening should be considered as a *process* in the language-learning context rather than the final product of the learning process. Moreover, he stated that teachers still would rather test listening than teach it. For this reason, it is important for teachers to acknowledge the importance of providing their learners with strategies that help them improve their listening comprehension. Recent investigations demonstrate the advantages of incorporating listening activities that employ a systematic and sequential teaching of metacognitive strategies. The use of planning, monitoring and evaluating processes facilitates the development of listening comprehension. As a result, students become aware of the metacognitive processes involved in gaining more control over their listening process (Cross, 2011; Vandergrift, 2003a, 2004;

Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010). In the same way, O'Malley and Chamot (1989) advocated the view that listening comprehension is an “active and conscious process in which the listener constructs meaning by using cues from contextual information and from existing knowledge, while relying upon multiple strategic resources to fulfill the task requirement” (p. 19).

Given the importance of listening in language learning and teaching it is essential for both teachers and learners to take appropriate actions that foster understanding of the listening skill. The teacher researcher of this study considers that listening is not an easy skill to develop, but he believes that if we equip students with a repertory of metacognitive strategies for listening, learners will become more aware of their listening process. Consequently, they will be capable of employing different strategies before, during and after a listening task. The use of metacognitive strategies makes a difference between successful and less successful listeners. According to Yang (2009), successful listeners plan before the listening task, direct their attention to specific information ignoring irrelevant distractions during listening, and evaluate their performance after listening. Moreover, the use of these strategies has demonstrated to have a positive impact in the improvement of the listening comprehension (Vandergrift, 2004). Similarly, Bedoya (2012) indicated that these strategies support active student participation in listening. In sum, it can be stated that the use metacognitive strategies play an important role in the development of the listening skill.

1.2 Rationale of the study

Listening is an essential process in the development of foreign or second language competence (Dunkel, 1991; Rost, 2001; Vandergrift, 2007). Although listening has not received the same attention as reading, writing and speaking, nevertheless, there is a growing interest in listening research (Rost, 2010) because it plays an important role in language competence.

Several studies (Bolitho et al., 2003; Victori and Lockhart, 1995; Wilson, 2003) demonstrated that teaching metacognitive strategies in listening facilitates the development of the listening comprehension skill. In this sense, language teachers can help students become strategic listeners by modeling listening strategies and providing listening practice in authentic situations. In relation to this, it is indispensable that teachers not only provide students with comprehensible input of listening texts, but also train them to apply the listening strategies. As proposed by Mendelsohn (2000), training students how to listen leads to improvement in their listening ability.

Discussions about listening instruction have emphasized the role of strategy training instruction and learner metacognition in facilitating comprehension. According to Vandergrift (2004), “students need to learn to listen so that they can better listen to learn” (p. 3). Similarly, Ling-hui (2007) pointed out that “language teachers should adopt suitable ways to help learners improve their listening skills and strategies” (p. 66). Strategic learners use metacognitive strategies to plan, monitor and evaluate their listening. Vandergrift (1997) declared that successful listeners are able to cope with the demands of a listening task by applying metacognitive strategies such as activating their previous knowledge, making appropriate predictions, monitoring their comprehension, and evaluating their performance in the listening task.

Finally, based on a study performed by Rahimirad and Shams (2014), the teaching of metacognitive strategies can facilitate listening performance and develop self-regulated learning because it “provides a context for interpretation and also can assist listeners select their goals, supervise their improvement and assess learning results” (p. 2).

1.2.1 Needs analysis and problem statement

The development of the listening skill is a key factor in language learning. For this reason, researchers and teachers have shown interest in doing research in this field with the intention of encouraging the effective practice of this skill inside and outside the classroom (Bedoya, 2012). Traditionally, the teaching of listening has focused on the product rather than on its process. In this sense, students are asked to provide *correct* answers to listening exercises. Vandergrift and Goh (2009) emphasized that this type of exercises focuses on evaluating the students' listening comprehension but fails to promote interaction with the text. Listening tasks that require students produce right answers may generate anxiety for them and consequently have a negative impact on their listening comprehension.

The researcher was concerned about the fact that little emphasis was given to the teaching of listening in the classroom. According to Nunan (1997), it is evident that the teaching of this skill is still ignored in the English language teaching process despite its significance in language learning. In the same way, it was observed that little time was given to the practice of this skill in the classroom and when the students had the opportunity to do listening activities; these were based on traditional classroom exercises of listening once or twice to a text followed by providing multiple-choice responses or completing true-false exercises. Additionally, the listening skill is embedded just in the oral comprehension teaching approach. In this sense, it is expected that the students produce “right or wrong” answers without having a real interaction with the text (Mendelsohn, 1995). Therefore, little attention is given to the facilitating role of metacognitive strategies involved to guide the students in taking more responsibility over their listening process.

For this reason, it was decided to focus this study on *training* the participants of this investigation in the use of metacognitive strategies in listening. The three most important reasons are the researcher's interest on the topic, his prior research experience and his classroom observations of students' performance on listening. The researcher had shown his interest in the field of listening based on his teaching experience and bearing in mind that the research topic was relevant in his educational context. This can be evidenced in his reflective writing (see Reflective journal) proposed at the beginning point of the master's program.

On the other hand, a case study (see Case study) carried out with an advanced student in the ELT program at Universidad Industrial de Santander (UIS) intended to describe the strategies used in listening demonstrated that the participant presented a low level of listening comprehension despite the fact that her estimated level of listening comprehension was advanced. In addition, the study determined that an implementation of pedagogical strategies was suggested to equilibrate the development of the listening skill of ELT students with similar characteristics to the participant of this case study (see Classroom observation).

Finally, based on his classroom observations of students' performance on listening, the researcher wrote a journal describing the main classroom problem. Most of the students wrote; "*We don't understand what we hear in the textbooks*". This evidence shows that the participants were struggling with their listening skill.

In view of the evidence presented above it is suggested a change in the paradigm regarding the teaching of listening comprehension; in this respect, students are expected to receive training in the use of listening strategies for the purpose of gaining more control over their listening process. The results of recent studies showed that students who use listening strategies are more strategic learners than those who do not apply strategies. For this reason, it is

important that teachers help their learners acquire these strategies by exposing them to a wide range of listening tasks in order for them to learn how to employ the strategies according to the listening situation.

Participants in this study consisted of fifteen undergraduates enrolled in the level four of the English proficiency program, A2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The Preliminary English Test (PET) (see Appendix D) was used as a pre and post-test with the purpose of training the students in taking an international exam. Moreover, the university implemented this standard test to all the students enrolled in the level four of the English program. It was suggested to apply this test to the participants as a way to prepare them for the real exam at the end of the semester. In spite of the fact that the PET measured a higher level of proficiency (B1 according to the CEFR) and considering that most of the students' results were low, it can be pointed out that some participants did better in the post-test. On the other hand, it also can be observed that just two students scored lower in the post-test.

Table 1*Pre and post test results*

Participant	Pre-test score	Post-test score
1	10/25	13/25
2	N/A	9/25
3	8/25	9/25
4	14/25	N/A
5	N/A	10/25
6	9/25	14/25
7	18/25	21/25
8	10/25	8/25
9	19/25	N/A
10	13/25	15/25
11	11/25	8/25
12	9/25	9/25
13	13/25	17/25
14	10/25	N/A
15	N/A	6/26

Although the low scores in the mock test did not reveal the current level of the learner's listening comprehension, it was decided to train these students in the use of metacognitive strategies because the existing body of literature concerning this theme supports the direct and positive impact of listening strategies on the listening performance (Goh & Taib, 2006). In this respect, several studies concerning the use of metacognitive strategies were consulted with the purpose of implementing a pedagogical model of listening intended to make a positive impact in the students' listening comprehension. For example, Vandergrift (1999) stated that these metacognitive strategies help listeners to oversee, regulate, and direct their learning process. Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary and Robbins (1999) additionally argued that planning, monitoring, and evaluating strategies are vital for gaining control over the students' learning as they will know "how, why, or when to engage in specific strategic behaviors" (p, 12).

1.2.2 Justification of problem's significance

With regard to the importance of helping students learn more efficient listening skills, it is significant to implement strategies that foster the development of this skill in the classroom. Therefore, this study used the implementation of metacognitive strategies to help learners develop the listening skill in English as a foreign language. Acquiring listening strategies is vital in gaining control over the learning process (Vandergrift, 1997).

1.2.3 Strategy proposed to address problem

The goal of this project was to train students in the use of three metacognitive strategies proposed by Chamot et al. (1999) in their Metacognitive Model of Strategic Learning (MMSL). In this sense, the strategies were taught explicitly and the students applied them in the listening tasks designed for the pedagogical implementation. The use of planning, monitoring and evaluating metacognitive strategies in listening can be useful in this context because each stage of the metacognitive process promotes the development of actions necessary for the successful completion of listening tasks. In conclusion, it can be stated that successful learners are better able to plan before listening, monitor their progress while listening and check their understanding at the end of a listening activity.

1.3 Research question(s) and objective(s)

Accordingly, the study's research questions were:

- 1. To what extent does the implementation of metacognitive strategies help undergraduate students improve their listening comprehension skill?*
- 2. How does metacognitive strategy training in listening affect the students' beliefs about their listening process?*

The corresponding objectives were:

1. *To determine the influence that the use of metacognitive strategies have on students' listening comprehension.*
2. *To identify learners' beliefs about the use of metacognitive strategies in listening.*

1.4 Conclusion

As has been shown, improving the listening skill constitutes an essential component of students' English learning. It is evident that the implementation of listening activities employing metacognitive strategies in listening has a positive impact on the learners (Goh, 2008). In this sense, students who receive training in the use of listening strategies are more likely to become strategic listeners (Coskun, 2010). Under these circumstances, it is necessary to review the work in this area, especially with relation to the use of planning, monitoring and evaluation strategies as useful metacognitive processes to assist the development/fostering of listening skills in undergraduate students, to provide a sound basis for the design and implementation of the study.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework & State of the Art

2.1 Introduction

After discussing the importance of using metacognitive strategies for the development of the listening skill, it is necessary to review the specific relevant concepts such as learners' beliefs about language learning, listening comprehension in ELT (English language teaching), metacognition, metacognitive strategies for the listening skill, but especially in relation to the use of planning, monitoring and evaluating strategies as learning tools to help foster the listening skill in a L2 university context.

2.2 Theoretical framework

2.2.1 Learners' beliefs

Language learners come to the classroom with different beliefs about learning a language. According to Arnold and Brown (1999), learning outcomes are mainly influenced by beliefs and attitudes. Similarly, the learners' previous experiences as language learners and their cultural background play an important role in how they approach their learning process (Breen, 2011). Taking into consideration the complex and multidimensional nature of learner beliefs, studies conducted by Kuntz (1996); Horwitz (1999); Benson and Lor (1999) showed that the preconceived ideas hold may not only influence the way they approach L2 learning but also affect the way they respond to particular teaching methods and classroom activities.

Richards and Lockhart (1994) acknowledged that learners' beliefs refer to their perception of language learning, their expectations of the difficulties of learning a language, their preferred learning strategies and their learning motivation. Besides, these authors (as cited in Erlenawati, 2002) classify the systems of learners' belief into eight categories including beliefs

about the nature of English, the speakers of English, the four language skill (listening, speaking, reading and writing), teaching activities, language learning, appropriate classroom behavior, learners' own abilities and the goals for language learning. Consequently, this construct is pertinent for this study because the participants involved in this classroom project have previous knowledge about language learning. Therefore, one of the objectives of this study is to identify their beliefs about the usefulness of metacognitive strategies in listening.

Viáfara (2005, 2010) carried two studies in which he explored the relationship between learners' beliefs and how they approach learning. His findings suggested that the students' initial beliefs about learning change over time. This claim is supported by data collected through observations, audio recordings and interviews. Similarly, this study applied a technique of think-aloud records in which the learners expressed their thoughts about how they approached their learning process. In order to identify the learners' beliefs, this study considers this construct as the ideas and preconceptions that learners bring with them to the classroom (Castellanos, 2012).

Learner beliefs are related to some concepts such as metacognitive knowledge, mental and social realizations and self-beliefs. However, the term most used by researchers in the field of foreign and second language literature is metacognitive knowledge. (Flavell, 1987; Ryan, 1984). Flavell (1979) first coined the term metacognitive knowledge to refer to that "segment of the child's or adult's stored world knowledge that has to do with people as cognitive creatures and with diverse cognitive tasks, goals, actions and experiences" (p. 906). This author also proposed three categories of metacognitive knowledge.

The first category is *person variables*. This category involves learners' beliefs about themselves and the others. In terms of language learning, the learner is aware of his own strengths and weaknesses. According to Arciniegas (2008), the students who note their strengths

and weaknesses are able to take actions in order to improve in their weak areas. In the same way, through the implementation of metacognitive strategies in listening, this study pretends to help students develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning process.

The second category is *task variable*. It refers to the learners' assumptions of the task. In other words, the students find a learning task interesting, challenging, difficult to accomplish, etc. Madden (2008) claimed that some listening situations are not under the control of learners. Therefore, it is the role of teachers to provide their listeners with strategy training aimed at helping them cope with the listening task. In this respect, the role of the teacher researcher of this project is to promote the usage of metacognitive strategies in listening intended to achieve a positive impact on the learners' beliefs about their listening process.

The third category is *strategy variables*. This category states that choosing the most appropriate learning strategy is a condition crucial to fulfill the learning task. According to Yongqi (2003), the strategies a learner uses and its effectiveness are determined by the learner's prior knowledge, the complexity of the learning task and the learning environment. This author defines learning strategy as "a series of actions a learner takes to facilitate the completion of a learning task" (p, 2). The learner starts using the strategy when he or she analyses the task, the situation and what is available in his/her own repertoire. In the context of this study, the participants went through the same process described above. Moreover, the listening tasks were designed so that the students select the strategies before listening, monitor their performance during listening, evaluate the effectiveness of their actions after listening and decide if they need to revise the plan and actions.

2.2.2 Listening comprehension in ELT

Listening comprehension has received considerable attention in the field of second language pedagogy during the last two decades (Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Flowerdew, 1994; Rost, 1990; Underwood, 1989; Ur, 1984). In addition to this, listening plays a key role in second language acquisition (Vandergrift, 1999). According to Osada (2004), “listening comprehension is now generally acknowledged as an important facet of language learning” (p. 53). In this sense, listening is not an isolated skill, nor is a passive one. On the contrary, this skill, according to Vandergrift (1999), “involves a great deal of mental activity on the part of the listener” (p. 168). This claim favors the focus of this study, which is to train learners in the use of metacognitive strategies for developing listening comprehension. Therefore, this implies an internal process on the part of the learners, which can result in more effective listening comprehension.

Ur (1984) presented useful insights about listening comprehension. This author highlighted that every listening situation has a purpose or a “preconceived idea of what we are going to hear” (Ur, 1984, p. 3). Moreover, this author outlined that students should know about the content, situation and speaker(s) when dealing with a listening task. All these elements contradict the traditional way of teaching listening, for instance, listeners are often required to provide a response at the end of a listening activity. Most of the times learners feel that the listening activity is a failure when they get wrong answers (Ur 1984). If they are not prepared for the listening task, they will use the same ‘erroneous approach’ the next time they listen, for example, they will concentrate on trying to get the ‘right answers’ or understand word for word, instead of interacting with the text. In this sense, this study underlines the principle of teaching students how to listen by using strategies. This approach, according to Mendelsohn (1995),

“leads to better comprehension, rather than merely give students an opportunity to listen” (p. 133).

Learners can benefit from the listening activity by producing active responses during the listening passage. Ur (1984) remarked that one of the reasons why listeners present problems in listening comprehension is that “many books are made up of passages originally composed as written texts” (p. 10). She added that learners are frequently exposed to this kind of listening, and they do not know what to expect; and most listening activities conclude by asking comprehension questions. For this reason, it becomes important a change in the way listening is taught. Even though some books contain traditional listening comprehension exercises, it is the teacher’s role to adapt, modify or complement these exercises in order to meet the students’ needs and increase awareness of their own listening process.

English teachers need to change some ineffective teaching practices with regard to listening. For example, it is common to ‘test’ the students’ ability to listen. The teacher plays the audio and expects from learners correct answers. If a learner does not answer ‘correctly’ it is assumed that he or she is having problems with the skill. At this point teachers have not thought about factors which might impede better listening comprehension, for instance, noise, quality of the audio, different accents, sound discriminations and so on (Ur 1984). For this reason, teaching a listening lesson implies more than ‘playing the audio and having students answer comprehension questions’. Teachers must be aware of the factors mentioned above, and consequently, make decisions about what to teach.

Rost (2002) commented that one of the reasons why learners present difficulties in understanding and responding to a listening situation is that the guidance is not appropriate. In addition, this author stated that choosing the most appropriate input would increase students’

motivation. He added that successful experiences in language learning would lead students to wanting to learn the language. This author suggested that listening extracts should not be longer than 30 to 90 seconds, followed by reviewing and consolidating the content. This claim supports the short-term memory theory that states that a learner may not receive much benefit from continued listening without intervening tasks to help with memory consolidation. He proposed planning a listening activity following a pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening sequence. With regard to active listening strategies, Rost (2002) recommended to teach them explicitly and persistently. By doing this, teachers help learners “gain control over the listening process” (Rost, 2002, p. 21). The implementation of a pedagogical sequence of pre-listening, while-listening and after-listening is chosen for this study with the purpose of guiding students through the metacognitive strategies of planning, monitoring and evaluating, for developing listening comprehension (Vandergrift, 1999).

Richards (2005) examined a view of listening as comprehension. It refers to “accessing meaning through listening and focusing on the message rather than on form” (Richards, 2005, p. 85). This author indicated that the development of the listening skill is also fundamental in fostering other skills such as speaking and reading. Moreover, he noted that different strategies could enhance listening comprehension. They are predicting meaning, identifying key words, using background knowledge and focusing on meaning. Vandergrift (1999) argued that language learning receives great importance from listening comprehension. Teaching listening in the early stages of language acquisition benefits students in their cognitive, efficiency, utility and affective domains (Gary, 1975 as cited in Vandergrift, 1999). Vandergrift (1999) also pointed out that emphasizing on listening before speaking is the ideal procedure in teaching since learners cannot produce what they have not assimilated. The reverse process can lead to “cognitive overload”

(Vandergrift, 1999). This author suggested that teaching listening strategies would allow learners to cope with the listening situation more effectively. Vandergrift (1999), Chamot et al. (1999), O'Malley and Chamot (1990) have proposed two types of strategies in second language acquisition; cognitive and metacognitive strategies. In the former, learners "manipulate the materials to be learnt or apply a specific technique" (Vandergrift, 1999, p. 170), whereas the metacognitive strategies prepare the learners to think about how they are going to tackle the listening situation.

Taking into account the previous scholars' points of view and the experience as a learner and teacher, the researcher of this study understands listening as an 'active process'. An active process in listening comprehension implies that the learners are involved in the listening process. This point of view is contrary to passive listening, which is mechanical and effortless. Learners hear what the teacher or the audio says and they are "required to give some kind of overt, immediate response to what has been said" (Ur, 1984, p. 4). With regard to listening as an active skill, Mendelsohn (1995) emphasized that listeners go through to select and interpret information that emerges from auditory and visual clues. In agreement with this author, the researcher shares the opinion that stresses the importance of teaching students how to listen by using strategies that will lead to better comprehension. Therefore, it was decided to design three listening units in which the participants received explicit training in the use of metacognitive strategies for fostering listening comprehension.

The pedagogical intervention of this study developed and used a listening model that favored the development of the listening skill by implementing a set of tasks in each phase of the listening activities. Several studies have demonstrated that the use of strategies applied in listening tasks facilitated the development of this skill (Anderson, 2002; Goh, 2002 and 2008;

Vandergrift, 1997). The implementation of different listening strategies and the findings described in the studies discussed in the literature review are relevant to the present study. The studies showed that there was a change in the way students approached listening tasks. Moreover, Students with low levels of listening comprehension seemed to have gained more control over their listening process.

2.2.3 Metacognition and metacognitive strategies for the listening skill

Metacognition contributes to successful language learning. The role of metacognition in language learning has been studied by many language acquisition theorists. Metacognition is a mental process in which learners plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning progress (Chamot et al., 1999). In the field of second language listening, metacognition also plays an important role because it determines how well the learner will tackle the learning task (Vandergrift 1999).

In a study conducted by Goh (2008), the author examined the approaches to listening instruction. This author highlighted that although new approaches to teaching listening have appeared in the last decades, it has been observed that traditional techniques dating from the 1960's (answering comprehension questions) are still found in classrooms and textbooks. Goh suggested that after the Communicative Language Teaching appeared, more emphasis is placed on the communicative aspects of the language. With regard to teaching listening, the author argued that metacognitive strategies could help learners increase awareness on their listening, which is regulated by appropriate strategy use. She also presented findings with respect to a small number of studies that revealed that by applying listening metacognitive strategies the listener could improve their listening comprehension. Besides, the less-skilled listeners "benefit the greatest from it" (Goh, 2008, p. 196).

In a study that describes the process of designing and validating a listening questionnaire designed to assess learners' use of metacognition awareness in L2 listening, Vandergrift and his colleagues held the position that metacognition "enables learners to participate actively in regulating and managing their own learning" (Vandergrift, 2006, p. 435). The authors also outlined that metacognition affects not only the process and outcome of listening, but also tests performance, motivation and self-efficacy. These researchers presented conclusions from different studies which suggest that appropriate metacognitive strategy use in L2 listening improves this skill. They recommended that students' use of prediction, monitoring, evaluating, and problem solving in listening tasks would enable students to "develop the metacognitive knowledge critical to the development of self-regulated listening," (Vandergrift, 2006, p. 437).

Guiding students through the process of listening can be an effective way to help them develop their listening competence. Vandergrift (2003) carried out a small-scale study with students in the second semester of a French course. In this study, the students listened to a series of preplanned listening activities. Then, they reflected on its usefulness in facilitating comprehension of the listening process. His study showed that a common affective factor that hinders listening comprehension is anxiety. Students felt anxious because they could not understand every word they heard in the listening exercise. This can be attributed to the traditional way to teach listening: Listen and answer the following questions that we often find in textbooks. Teaching students how to listen without the pressure of 'getting it right' is a convenient way to teach students how to listen and what to listen for.

Goh (1998) reported in an article the use of strategies (cognitive and metacognitive) and tactics used by 16 ESL university-level learners. The tool used to collect data was retrospective verbal reports. This study revealed that the successful listeners used more strategies and tactic

than the less successful listeners did. This author defined strategy and tactics in the light of Schmeck (1998). According to Goh (1998), strategy refers to the use of a particular approach. Conversely, tactics refer to specific steps taken to assist comprehension. This author also emphasized that metacognitive strategies are used to think how information is processed and stored.

According to Chamot (2004), “learning strategies are the conscious thoughts and actions that learners take in order to achieve a learning goal” (p. 1). She added that successful learners “have metacognitive knowledge about their own thinking and learning approaches” (p. 1). In addition to this, Wenden (1998) gave emphasis to the role of metacognition in the self-regulation of learning, which is the way in which language learners plan, monitor and evaluate their learning.

Training learners in the use of metacognitive strategies for developing better listening comprehension skills has been a recent topic of research (Cross, 2011; Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010; Goh & Taib 2006; Vandergrift, 1999). In a study of implementing metacognitive strategies, Vandergrift (2002) employed three different listening tasks, followed by instruments that guided students to predict, monitor, and evaluate their own listening. According to this author, there is evidence that reflection on the processes of listening can help students develop metacognitive knowledge. For the purpose of this study, the researcher employed the three metacognitive strategies proposed by Vandergrift (2002) in his study. It is pertinent to state that the construct ‘metacognitive strategies’ is relevant for this study since previous need analyses allowed the researcher know that learners lacked knowledge of strategic learning. For this reason, the implementation of these learning strategies is a valuable tool for this project since it is expected that at the end of the implementation the learners will be better

able to take control over their learning process, particularly in the field of listening comprehension.

According to Goh (1997), teachers should guide students to think about the process of listening rather than on the content of listening. This author recommends a pedagogical sequence consisting of pre-listening, listening and after- listening. According to Goh, this can promote the acquisition of appropriate metacognitive knowledge about listening. For this study, the implementation of this pedagogical sequence can guide learners through the mental processes for successful listening comprehension. According to Vandergrift (1999), in the pre-listening phase, students plan what they will hear. In the listening phase, students monitor their comprehension and make decisions about strategy use. Finally, in the after-listening phase, students verify their initial predictions and reflect on the activity. The teaching model of pre, during and after-listening was chosen for the purpose of this study. This model benefits the teaching and the development of the metacognitive strategies because each one of the stages in the pedagogical sequence matches respectively all of the three metacognitive strategies selected for this project.

Table two shows three metacognitive strategies (Planning, monitoring, and evaluating), which combined with different specific learning strategies, will help students in their learning development. These processes are essential in helping learners gain control over their own learning. In this respect, they will know “how, why or when to engage in specific strategic behavior” (Chamot et al., 1999, p. 12). Teachers can use this repertoire of metacognitive strategies along with specific strategies to help learners become more independent and take responsibility of their learning experience.

Table 2*Learning strategies*

Process	Specific Strategy	Applicability
Planning	Activate background knowledge	Before listening, students can bring to mind information they already know about the topic.
	Make predictions	Learners think about the information they will find in the listening activity.
Monitoring	Use selective attention (key words, ideas, phrases, etc.)	Students focus their attention on specific aspects of a listening task. The most common activity for this strategy is listening for specific information.
	Take notes	Students refer back to key words and concepts they wrote down during the listening activity.
Evaluating	Verify predictions	Learners can check whether their predictions were right or not.
	Summarize	Students can create a mental, oral, or written summary after they complete a listening task.

Note. Adapted from Chamot et al, 1999

For the purpose of this research, the metacognitive strategies presented above were incorporated into the listening tasks taking into account the need to help participants improve their listening comprehension. In the planning stage, the learners plan how they are going to approach the listening task. After planning for the learning task, learners monitor how they are doing the task. In this stage, the students measure how effective their strategies are. Monitoring is a fundamental mental process used by autonomous learners. If the listening task is causing the learner a problem, the student thinks about which strategies work best. This is the most relevant part of the metacognitive model. In this stage, students verify whether the strategies used in the listening task were successful or not. The idea of teaching students use effective strategies does not mean that all students will succeed in using them, thus, it is fundamental to remind students that they can make decisions so as to make improvements on the next task.

2.3 State of the art

Several studies have been conducted in terms of using metacognitive strategies for developing listening comprehension. For instance, in a study conducted by Bozorgian (2012), a group of 28 high-intermediate Iranian learners participated in a small-scale study that looked into the impact of metacognitive instruction on listeners' comprehension. This author claimed that listening comprehension is a basic skill that foreign learners find challenging. For this reason, training learners in the use of metacognitive strategies will help to reduce the complexity of listening, and thus will "develop and facilitate the process of listening comprehension" (Bozorgian, 2012, p. 1) In his study, the author found out that the less-skilled listeners benefited from the strategy-based approach. The participants received direct guidance in the use of advance organization, directed attention, selective attention, and self-management. Four listening lessons were designed and implemented in the pedagogical implementation. The four lessons were divided into daily conversation, public speech, academic discussion and academic lecture. The audios were taken from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). The author chose this international test because the learners needed to practice this skill in order to take the test at the end of the study period. The results showed that the "less-skilled" listeners improved more than the "more-skilled" listeners in the IELTS listening test. According to Bozorgian (2012), "a strategy-based approach potentially helps listeners in general and specifically the less-skilled listeners to increase the awareness of their listening improvement" (p. 6).

In a study about using metacognitive strategies for helping less-skilled listeners, Cross (2011) described how a group of less-skilled listeners improved their listening ability through a series of five lessons on T.V items. This author mentions predicting, monitoring, problem

identification and evaluating as the metacognitive strategies applied during the implementation of his pedagogical intervention. According to Cross (2011), implementing metacognitive instruction in listening activities is essential because learners themselves are not fully aware of the importance of exploiting these strategies in L2 (Second language) learning and because not all learners really know what “listening in an L2 involves” (p. 2). The findings presented in this study show that three of four less-skilled listeners made noticeable gain across the five lessons. The author recognized that “If less skilled listeners are provided with guidance and regular opportunities to find out about and explore these key aspects, they can become more capable of controlling and evaluating their own listening development” (p. 1).

In an empirical study, Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010) investigated the effects of metacognitive strategies to teaching L2 listening. The researchers conducted their study with two groups: The experimental group and the control group. The former group listened to texts using guided instruction, whereas the control group listened to the same texts, but without any instruction on strategy use. The findings showed that the less skilled listeners in the experimental group made greater gains than their more skilled peers did. According to the authors, evidence demonstrated that skilled L2 listeners are more likely to use a repertory of strategies to regulate listening comprehension. Similarly, these authors revealed that listeners perform better in listening activities when they receive guided instruction in the use of strategies.

In another study, Goh and Taib (2006) reported a small-scale study of metacognitive strategies for school learners. During this research, the students were taught eight listening lessons that included traditional listening exercises, post listening reflections, and class discussion that focused on metacognitive strategy use. The author outlined that after the listening lessons students reported that the use of guided instruction is a facilitator in completing and

understanding listening tasks. The findings evidenced that weaker learners benefited the most from a process-based approach to listening instruction.

In the local context, some studies related to the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies have been carried out. These studies do not address the issue of listening, but focus on reading comprehension strategies. Studies conducted by Aguirre-Morales & Ramos-Holguín (2009) and Poole (2009) have explored aspects of strategic English reading among Colombian university students. Studies concerning the use of metacognitive strategies in the field of listening comprehension are limited. Nevertheless, below are presented some studies that show the effect of metacognitive strategies on language skills.

A study conducted by Velázquez and Giraldo (2011) reported on the English reading comprehension strategies used by two Colombian English pre-service teachers, one a successful reader and the other one a less successful reader. The investigators collected data using think-aloud protocols and the analysis of the data was based on the constant comparative method proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1999). Findings suggested that three main differences characterized the reading of the two TEFL readers: The number of strategies evoked, the frequency of their use and the effectiveness of the strategy used by each reader. After participants acquired the use and management of cognitive and metacognitive skills, it was evidenced that the successful reader's heightened sense of strategies and when to use them while reading seemed to make the difference between his and the less successful teacher's reading proficiency. Finally, the investigators suggested that readers, who are in the process of developing English skills and lack reading comprehension abilities, could benefit from explicit strategy training.

A study on listening comprehension strategies carried out in a Colombian University revealed that participants improved their selective listening comprehension by applying direct attention strategies and by completing a disciplined listening process, which included online-based activities. (Barbosa, 2012). With the purpose of measuring the impact on students' listening comprehension after training them in the use of metacognitive strategies, the researcher collected evidence by means of questionnaires, teacher's journal, learners' journals and artifacts. Barbosa (2012) found that the metacognitive strategies helped learners develop the listening tasks better than when they lacked awareness of them. She also stated that learners showed enhancement of cognitive and metacognitive awareness of the selective listening comprehension processes. Finally, this researcher suggested that the implementation of metacognitive strategies for online listening might bring positive outcomes in learning autonomy.

2.4 Conclusion

The theories presented above and the previous research related to these concepts have shown that the listening skill can be improved after being guided in the use of metacognitive strategies. In addition, theory reveals that skilled listeners use more metacognitive strategies than their less-skilled counterparts. (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Vandergrift, 1997). Furthermore, previous studies have demonstrated the value of using planning, monitoring and evaluating strategies as useful metacognitive processes crucial in the development of the listening skill, and the need to design a study that permits to get insights about the effectiveness of implementing listening strategies as it is explained in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Research Design

3.1 Introduction

The existing research on this topic illustrated the importance of training the students in the use of metacognitive strategies intended to help them improve their listening skill. Therefore, this study focused on teaching students how to use three metacognitive processes proposed by Chamot et al. (1999) in their Metacognitive Model of Strategic Learning. To determine the influence that the use of these metacognitive strategies had on the students' listening comprehension, the present study used a pre and final listening test, a listening strategies questionnaire, individual reflective exercises and think-aloud records.

3.2 Type of study

This study was a small-scale qualitative action research study. Hopkins (2014) describes this type of research as an informal, qualitative, formative, subjective, interpretative, reflective and experimental model of inquiry in which all participants involved in the study recognize the existence of shortcomings in their educational activities. In this sense, there is an intervention of the educational problem and some actions are taken. In the initial step, the teacher-researcher formulates an action plan, followed by carrying out an intervention. Afterwards, the outcomes or results are evaluated and finally further strategies are proposed or developed. Considering the aspects above-mentioned, the author of this project followed the principles proposed in the literature concerning the action research method.

Action research is also an approach designed to develop and improve teaching and learning (Brown, 2002). The essence of action research is teachers' solving everyday problems in schools to improve both student learning and teacher effectiveness. According to Ferrance

(2000), action research “involves people working to improve their skills, techniques, and strategies” (p. 3). Since action research has become an important premise in workplace education nowadays, it involves teachers seeking for alternatives to improve educational practices. In this case, the teacher researcher decided to carry out an action research study to help learners identify and apply some listening strategies. This study followed a systematic procedure thoroughly carried out in align with the steps of the Action Research Cycle proposed by Ferrance (2000) as shown in figure 1. It is called a cycle because each step leads to the other and the process continue until the information obtained can be analyzed for conclusions.

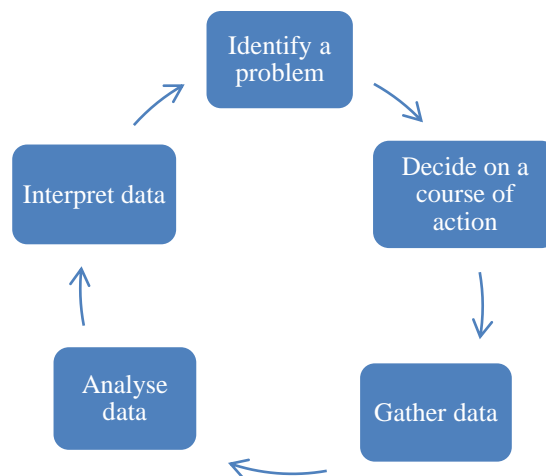


Figure 1

Steps of the Action Research Cycle

3.3 Context

The pedagogical intervention of this study was carried out at the Department of Foreign Languages of a private university. This university offers a variety of study programs including law, medicine, nursing, engineering programs, business administration, journalism, children pedagogy, and other academic programs. The Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures is

the administrative-academic unit that promotes foreign language learning in all the university. This department offers four hours a week of English language instructions. Besides, the learners have one hour per week of independent work in the virtual learning center. Students are divided into English levels based on the result from a placement test applied at the beginning of each academic term. The English syllabus is based on the topics presented in the textbooks used for each level and the most preferred teaching methodology is the eclectic approach in which the teacher decides what methodology or approach to use depending on the aims of the lesson and the learners in the group.

3.3.1 Participants

The participants of this study were fifteen undergraduates enrolled in the level four (Pre-Intermediate) of the English Proficiency Program. Their age range was between 17 and 22. The participants of this classroom-based project were enrolled in different academic programs: Social Communication and Journalism, Philosophy, Children Pedagogy, Business Administration, Economy, Chemical Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Law, and Agro- industrial Engineering. Concerning their previous English learning experiences, most of them have studied English since they were in primary school. In high school, all of them studied in private or public schools. However, English classes focused on of the teaching of grammar or vocabulary with little exposure to interaction.

With regard to their listening abilities, the participants were able understand utterances about familiar topics such as leisure activities, physical appearance and so on. However, the pretest demonstrated that they had difficulties understanding key and detailed information, interpreting and inferring information, and identifying the attitudes and opinions of the speaker.

The students expressed their interest to participate in the pedagogical implementation because it was observed that they needed to improve their listening comprehension. The starting point was the implementation of a mock exam of the PET (Preliminary English Test) at the beginning of the academic period. Although the PET is aimed at B1-level learners, the results of the test evidenced lack of listening strategies to develop a listening task. Taking into account the essential need for helping students strengthen their listening skills, it was decided to provide participants with focused training in the use of metacognitive strategies for developing listening comprehension because explicit strategies instruction may bring valuable experience for the students plus new roles in the learning process.

3.3.2 Researcher's role

The teacher performed a leading role in this study because he was in charge of implementing new learning strategies, particularly for developing listening comprehension. According to Oshi (2008), a teacher can assume the role of 'innovator' by modifying the design of classes "to meet the needs of their students' learning" (p, 9). This was the case of the teacher researcher in this study. He had to modify some components of the original lessons in order to implement the learning strategies designed for the pedagogical implementation. Before the teaching cycle, the teacher assumed the role of designer as he was developing a set of listening strategies for implementation. During the pedagogical cycle, the teacher was a facilitator as he guided students on the use of metacognitive strategies for listening. Finally, after the implementation, the teacher played the role of analyst as he developed an analysis plan for making interpretations of data (Cooper, 1990).

3.3.3 Ethical considerations

Because action research is conducted in real-life circumstances, and it involves communication among participants and researchers (O'Brien, 2001), it was important to consider some ethical considerations before the implementation of the pedagogical intervention. In order to carry out this study, it was decided to provide the administrative staff with sufficient information on what the study was about.

Equally important was to ask students to agree to take part in this research (Norton, 2009). In conducting this study, the researcher was aware of not using his authority to push students to take part in the research. Thus, it was imperative to provide students with a consent letter that contained a brief description of the project, and stated that participation was voluntary (See appendix E). On the other hand, the administrative personnel at the Department of Foreign Languages were also informed of this project (see appendix F). Although they agreed that this study was conducted, it was imperative to inform them of the possible benefits and risks of this study. In this respect, the researcher counted with the principal of the Department of Foreign Languages, as well as the English level coordinator's authorization to carry out this study at the university. In previous meetings, they have agreed not only to allow the researcher to conduct this study, but also to provide him with their experience and advice so that this project could contribute to have a positive impact on the learners and the curricula.

Anonymity and confidentiality of participants were kept safe. The participants were given a number that was used to protect their identity. The researcher did not share with anyone information provided by the participants in the data collection instruments. As for this research project the population was undergraduates, it was fundamental to maintain a positive classroom

atmosphere when conducting the research. Participants were informed in advance, what the research project was about.

3.4 Data collection instruments

Four data collection tools were used to gather data. The first tool was the listening PET test (Appendix 1). Then, a listening strategies questionnaire was used (Appendix 2), followed by an individual reflective exercise (Appendix 3). Finally, a think-aloud record was used to validate the data previously collected (Appendix 4). The questions were written in Spanish since the researcher was concerned that providing the questions in English would prevent participants from giving useful insights.

3.4.1 Descriptions and justifications

3.4.1.1 Proficiency English Test (PET) – Listening section

A mock listening exam was used as a pretest and posttest. The test chosen to evaluate the students' performance in listening comprehension was the Proficiency English Test - Listening section (See appendix A). This exam was the test that the institution applied to all the students enrolled in the level four as part of the study program and as a requirement to continue with the other English courses. This test includes multiple choices, gap-filling and true/false question types. All exercises are based on authentic situations; that is, real tasks that real native speakers would do if they were listening to a similar text. The listening tasks include listening to identify key information from short exchanges, listening to identify specific information and detailed information, listening to identify, understand and interpret information, and listening to identify the attitudes and opinions of the speaker (PET, Handbook for teachers).

3.4.1.2 *Listening strategies questionnaire*

The researcher applied the listening strategies questionnaire at the beginning and end of the study. The purpose of this questionnaire was to identify the strategies used by the students in different listening tasks. This questionnaire was adapted from the Learning Strategies Questionnaire found in The Learning Strategies Handbook (Chamot et al., 1999). At the beginning of the study, the researcher wanted to discover if the students were aware of using metacognitive strategies in their listening process. Then, after explicit guided instruction on strategy use, and after the implementation of the listening sessions, the teacher applied the same questionnaire in order to collect evidence of the students' improvement. Chamot et al. (1999) stated that questionnaires "provide systematic way of collecting information on the strategies students use" (p. 71). In this sense, the questionnaire was found to be a useful tool for helping the researcher gathers important evidence concerning the use of strategies and their impact on the students' listening comprehension.

3.4.1.3 *Individual reflective exercises*

Individual reflections were used in the middle and end stages of the study. The students completed a reflective exercise after the listening task (Vandergrift, 1999; Goh & Taib, 2006). The students reflected individually on how they dealt with the listening situation. The purpose of this questionnaire was to elicit strategy use for facilitating listening (Goh & Taib, 2006). Farch and Kasper argued that this stage is immediate retrospection, which allows individuals to report on their mental processes before they are forgotten (as cited in Goh & Taib, 2006).

3.4.1.4 *Think-aloud records*

The think-aloud instrument was used to collect evidence on the students' use of strategies while working on the listening task. According to Chamot et al. (1999), "think-aloud is a technique in which a person verbalizes his or her thought processes while working on a task". (p. 68). This data collection tool was very useful because it implied that learners engaged in a mental process while they were doing the learning task. This technique has a high degree of validity in connection with the task because it takes place in real time. The students are therefore less likely to forget their thoughts. Finally, the data collected in this record were triangulated with the records provided by the participants in the listening strategy questionnaires, and the individual reflective exercises.

3.4.2 Validation and piloting

The data were collected in three specific stages: the pre-planning stage, the while stage, and the post stage. During the first stage, two consent letters were designed and sent to (respectively) the academic coordinator of the Language Department and to the students (see Consent letters). These two letters requested authorization from the individuals to be involved in the study and, following ethical considerations, informed the participants about the type of study, the objectives, intended results, and sought evidence of their willing approval to participate. Afterwards, the pretest (6.6Appendix D:) was applied to identify the participants' listening skills difficulties.

In the while-stage, the listening strategies questionnaire and the individual reflective exercises were the main data collection instruments. The first instrument was applied at the beginning and end of the study. The reflective exercises were used to collect evidence on how participants dealt with the listening situation.

In the last stage, the think-aloud record and the posttest were implemented. The former was used to collect evidence of the participants' use of strategies once they had completed the listening task; similarly, the latter was used to observe whether the students had improved their listening skills or not.

The data collection instruments were designed under the supervision of the Action Research subject professor, who provided feedback on aspects related to the pertinence of questions, clearness of questions and instructions, avoidance of ambiguity, and time quantity.

3.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the design of this study was characterized by placing the project into a type of study that was contextualized, small-scaled, and specific based on the participants' backgrounds and needs, and the purpose of the project. This type of study was organized following a systematic design taking into consideration the permission of the English level coordinator and participants to take part willingly in the study, the role of the researcher, the planning and piloting of the data collection instruments, and the stages to implement and collect the data. Therefore, the previous studies on this topic and this research design set the grounds for a sound implementation design as is described in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Chapter Four: Pedagogical Intervention and Implementation

4.1 Introduction

Implementing the use of metacognitive strategies successfully in the classroom required two main phases: training and practice (Chamot et al., 1999). During the training phase, the listening strategies were explicitly modeled, named and explained. This stage consisted of training the participants in the use of planning, monitoring and evaluating strategies aimed at fostering the listening skill. Finally, the practice phase is the stage when the students practiced the strategies learnt and developed strategic thinking themselves.

4.2 Visions of language, learning, and curriculum

4.2.1 Vision of language

This study conceives language within a communicative approach that refers to communicative competence as the ability to use and understand language meaningfully in specific real-life situations (Hymes, 1972). Language serves as a tool for communication and listening plays an important role in language learning. In this respect, this study used the target language to foster language competence through the training and practice of listening comprehension strategies. Moreover, language is viewed as a communicative tool to produce an outcome. This important feature of language implies selecting engaging topics for learners that catch their attention and present a degree of intellectual challenge that promotes their language development (Willis & Willis, 2008). Therefore, this study used the English language as the main source for giving instructions, and teaching the listening strategies. In addition to this, all the listening exercises were based on topics identified with the themes in the course book.

4.2.2 Vision of learning

Learning is regarded as an interactive process in which participants exchange authentic and meaningful information in real-life contexts (Belchamber, 2007). In this sense, students become more aware of the steps involved in learning and they can become actively involved in controlling their own learning by using strategies (Vandergrift, 1997).

With regard to listening, Ma (2010) states that a much better understanding of the nature of the listening process have been developed recently. Nowadays, listening is regarded as “much more important in both EFL classrooms and SLA research” (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011, p. 977). It is evident, then, that listening is not a ‘passive skill’ as it has been claimed to be, as it demands a number of complicated mental processes on the part of the learner. Thus, this study sought to help learners with their listening comprehension through the modeling, training and practice of listening strategies such as making predictions, using students’ background about the topic, taking notes, using their selective attention on key words or phrases and summarizing.

4.2.3 Vision of curriculum

Curriculum is defines as a plan or intended program about what needs to take place in the course of study (Ellis, 2004). The school or university curriculum should take into account not only the study plan to be developed during the academic period, but also contain guidelines regarding the social and the students’ context. In this respect, the program must be designed considering the objectives, content and methodologies related to those contexts.

Curriculum designers need to be aware of the importance of creating programs containing a variety of learning interactions to meet the students’ needs and their learning styles (Harrison, Blakemore & Buck, 2001). For this study, the researcher revised the program and adapted it to benefit the students and fit their language needs.

In addition, the content of the program should include guidelines and principles that promote communicative competence in the target language (Walia, 2012). In this respect, this study supports the development of a communicative curriculum that provides opportunities for learners regarding the application and usage of strategies aimed at fostering their listening skill.

The EFL curriculum at the private university where this study was conducted permits the university community to confront the reality reflected in the language, preparing the student to perform professionally with excellence, as the current era of globalization requires. The design of the English program takes into account the standards for English language teaching established by the Common European Framework References (CEFR, 2011). However, the syllabus is book-based, which implies that contents, objectives and outcomes are based on the topics proposed by the New Cutting Edge Pre-intermediate book.

4.3 Instructional design

4.3.1 Lesson planning

The process of lesson planning and implementation of the listening exercises designed for this pedagogical intervention followed a model proposed by Vandergrift (1999), as shown in table 3. This author states that a successful pedagogical sequence should follow pre-listening, listening, and post-listening activities.

In the pre-listening stage, learners plan for the successful completion of the listening task. In this stage, learners make decisions about what to listen for (Vandergrift, 2012). They can predict what information they will hear. Moreover, they can use what they already know about the topic. By using these strategies, learners are better prepared to approach the listening exercise.

During listening, students monitor their comprehension. They can take notes or they might use their selective attention to focus on key words or phrases. If they find it difficult to understand what they are hearing, they can make decisions about what to focus on the next time they listen. Post-listening activities give students the chance to assess their effectiveness of the strategies used. The listening exercise described in the appendix (See Listening task model) follows the three stages mentioned early. In the pre-listening activity, students looked at the title and picture. Then, they wrote predictions about the story. During listening, students selected what information they needed to hear in order to complete the task. Students took notes of key words or phrases. In this stage, students monitored strategies to measure their effectiveness. In the post-listening stage, students evaluated their comprehension by verifying their predictions and summarizing.

Table 3

Listening Pedagogical Sequence

Sequence of listening task	Description
1. Pre-listening	Students make decisions about what to listen for. They can make predictions and use background knowledge.
2. While-listening	Students monitor their comprehension in this stage. They can take notes and use selective attention.
3. After-listening	Students evaluate their comprehension and the usefulness of the strategies applied before and during the listening. They can make summaries and verify their predictions.

Note. Adapted from: Vandergrift, 1999.

Eight listening sessions, two hours each, were implemented during the pedagogical implementation phase of the research. The materials for the lessons were designed taking into account the syllabus for the English level 4 course at the Department of Foreign Languages. The topics were selected taking into account the scope and sequence of the course book (Cutting

Edge Pre-intermediate). The listening materials were chosen from different resources such as videos from the Internet and audio from different textbooks. Each listening activity followed the pedagogical sequence of pre-listening, during listening, and post-listening. Table 4 summarizes the content of the teaching cycle.

Table 4

Content of teaching

Sequence of listening Listening activity		Pre-listening: Planning	While-listening: monitoring	After-listening evaluating
Task 1: My strange addition	Scaffolding the strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make predictions • Use background knowledge 	N/A	N/A
Task 2: It's an amazing place		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use background knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use selective attention • Take notes 	N/A
Task 3: A fishy story		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make predictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use selective attention • Take notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verify initial predictions • Make a summary
Task 4: Stories in the news	Practicing the strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make predictions • Use background knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use selective attention • Take notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a summary
Task 5: Israeli-Palestinian conflict		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use background knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a summary
Task 6: Vacation express		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make predictions • Use background knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use selective attention • Take notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a summary
Task 7: Money issues		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use background knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verify initial predictions • Make a summary
Task 8: Success		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make predictions • Use background knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use selective attention • Take notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a summary

4.3.2 Implementation

The pedagogical implementation was carried out during the first semester of 2012 – between February 7 and May 15 – according to the study's action plan and timeline chart for implementation (see Action plan and time line chart). This implementation was divided into two

phases: a learner-training phase and a practice phase. The instructional design of the listening activities was based on the need to teach the students use metacognitive strategies aimed at fostering the listening comprehension skill and the literature review made during the initial stages of the research process.

In the first phase, the teacher applied the pretest and provided learners with explicit guidance in the use of listening strategies. In the first week of the implementation, the teacher applied the mock listening test. This standardized test, which is placed B1 level - according to the Common European Framework for Languages (CEF), was used as a pretest. This test sought to assess the students' comprehension in test taking. In the second week, the students took the listening strategies questionnaire. Although these undergraduates had not received implicit instruction in the use of listening strategies, the tool intended to collect evidence of metacognitive processes employed by the participants, even though they were not aware of them.

In the second, third and fourth week, the teacher modeled planning, monitoring and evaluating strategies to the students correspondingly. The training involved three listening tasks, and each task covered a different metacognitive process. This process is known as "Scaffolding Strategies Instruction" (Chamot et al., 1999). Scaffolding refers to providing "contextual supports for meaning through the use of simplified language, teacher modeling, visuals and graphics, cooperative learning and hands-on learning" (Ovando, Collier & Combs, 2003, p. 345). In this research study, the researcher demonstrated how the strategies are used by modeling them on listening tasks (See Scaffolding strategies). For example, for the metacognitive strategy of planning the teacher taught how to make predictions. The strategy was named explicitly by saying "We make predictions when we think of the words, phrases or information that we can

expect to find during the listening task”. The main purpose of the training stage was to prepare students to apply the listening strategies later on.

In the practice phase, the students were exposed to different listening tasks with the purpose of practicing the listening strategies they had been explicitly taught in the training phase. Each listening activity consisted of a pedagogical sequence of pre, while and after listening. The tasks were intended to give participants the chance to apply the listening strategies they had learnt in the input sessions. In addition, they were asked to select the strategy that best fit each sequence of the listening activity.

Not only were the participants asked to complete the listening tasks but also they answered individual reflective exercises (See Individual reflective exercise). This tool was used for participants to share their insights regarding the listening strategies they applied before, during and after the listening exercises. Moreover, the learners shared their comments about the usefulness of the strategies and if the strategies had helped them improve their understanding of the listening material.

At the end of the practice phase, the teacher administered two data collections tools and the posttest. The tools were the think –aloud records and the listening strategies questionnaire. The posttest was the same listening comprehension test (PET) of week 1. The data collected from the tools were transcribed and analyzed in order to find evidence of the students’ use of the metacognitive strategies. Regarding the posttest, it was applied and then both results, from the first and last week of the implementation, were compared to determine if the students had improved their listening ability.

4.4 Conclusion

The intervention and implementation allowed the participants to receive explicit training in the use of listening strategies followed by putting them in practice. The listening sequence of pre, while and after listening was used as a model to integrate the metacognitive strategies presented in this study. This sequence engaged participants in mental processes believed to foster better listening comprehension skills. The listening tasks were designed to encourage the participants to plan for the successful completion of the listening activities, monitor their progress during the tasks and evaluate the outcomes of the listening exercises. Moreover, the participants engaged in process of self-reflection by thinking on what went well and what needed to be improved the next time they were doing a listening task. The results of the intervention illustrate the impact and effectiveness of metacognitive strategies as useful tools to foster foreign language university learners' listening comprehension skills, as it is discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Results and Data Analysis

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the pedagogical intervention of an action research study carried out with undergraduates at a private university during the first academic term of 2012. The results of the present study were obtained after analyzing the data collected. Procedures for analyzing data included the constant comparison of students' responses, the reduction of data employing a technique of color-coding and the identification of categories and the core category aimed at answering the research questions. The outcomes of this study suggest that after training the students in the usage of planning, monitoring and evaluating strategies, the participants gained more control over their listening process.

5.2 Data management procedures

The data collected through a mock exam of the Preliminary English Test (PET), a listening strategy questionnaire, an individual reflective exercise and a think aloud record were transcribed as Word documents. After collecting the instruments, a letter was written on the right top of each tool (for example "Participant A") with the purpose of maintaining the participants' anonymity and confidentiality. The instruments were organized into separate folders according to the date of implementation.

5.2.1 Validation

In order to make this study valid, it was important to demonstrate that the instruments used to collect data measured what they purposed to measure (Cohen, 2000). Consequently, the instruments were carefully designed and the teacher researcher ensured that the items of the learning strategies questionnaire, the individual exercises and the think-aloud records were

understood by the participants. On the other hand, the researcher ensured reliability of the instruments by deciding on the items that were asked to participants. In the same way, a method of data triangulation was used. In research terms, this concept is used to point out that “researchers should not rely on any single source of data, interview, observation, or instrument” (Mills, 2000, p. 52). For this reason, this study used multiple sources of data aimed at collecting information from different perceptions on the same situation studied (Burns, 2003). Through this approach, this study analyzed, compared and contrasted different standpoints in relation to the impact that the training of metacognitive strategies had on the students’ listening comprehension.

5.2.2 Data analysis methodology

The research method selected to explain the process of data analysis was grounded theory. This method is defined as ‘the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research’ (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 2). In addition to this, Glaser and Holton (2004) stated that grounded theory is “a set of carefully grounded concepts organized around a core category” (p.8). Mills, Bonner and Francis (2006) additionally argued that “the researcher analyzes data by constant comparison, initially of data with data, progressing to comparisons between their interpretations translated into codes and categories and more data” (p, 3). Finally, Strauss and Corbin (1990) observed that grounded theory is derived from the constant comparison process of discovering, developing, and verifying through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to the phenomenon it represents. The role of the theoretical framework is that all those other authors’ experiences in doing research on the same topic have provided the teacher researcher with the knowledge to carry out this project in order to influence these students’ learning process.

5.3 Categories

5.3.1 Introduction

With regard to the stages of data analysis, the researcher applied three methods of coding in order to illustrate the systematic process of interpreting data. These techniques were open, axial, and selective coding (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). During the coding process, the teacher-researcher looked for themes, ideas and categories (Gibbs & Taylor, 2012, para. 1) and the information obtained from the data was organized into codes. The categories, subcategories and the core category emerged from reading through the data and finding the themes that recurred in the data.

5.3.1.1 Category mapping

The first step towards data analysis was open coding. Strauss and Corbin (1990) stated that open coding is the part of the analysis concerned with identifying, naming, categorizing and describing phenomena found in the data. In the present study, this process was carried out in order to find words, phrases or ideas that could relate to the research questions. To manage data at this stage, the participants' responses from the data tools were transcribed in the left hand of the Word documents. The codes were written adjacent to the students' answers. In order to identify themes or patterns, the main ideas or words considered as relevant were highlighted using a color-coding technique.

The next step after the initial examination of data was a process of identifying recurrent information known as the axial coding stage (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). During this process, the codes were grouped and the themes or relevant information that recurred in the data formed the categories.

5.3.1.2 *Identification of core category*

The third step towards data analysis was selective coding. After identifying the categories and subcategories, one category was found to emerge with high frequency of mention, and to be connected to the other categories which were emerging. This is the core category of this study. Based on the evidence obtained from the data, the teacher-researcher made interpretations of findings and created the story line to complete the grounding theory of the study (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The final core category, the categories and subcategories emerged to provide answers to the research questions of the study.

Table 5

Final subcategories and categories after the selective coding procedure.

Question	Categories	Subcategories
1. To what extent does the implementation of metacognitive strategies help undergraduate students improve their listening comprehension skill?	The usage of listening strategies to maximize their comprehension of aural input.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employing planning strategies before listening prepare the students for the completion of a listening task • Employing monitoring strategies during the listening activity help the students measure their effectiveness while working on the task. • Employing evaluating strategies after the completion of a listening task help the students reflect on their listening process
2. How does metacognitive strategy training in listening affect the students' beliefs about their listening process?	An increase in students' awareness about their listening process after being trained in the use of metacognitive strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness on the usefulness of metacognitive strategies • Improvement of listening comprehension through the use of metacognitive strategies
Core category Improvement of listening comprehension skills of undergraduate students by employing metacognitive strategies.		

5.3.2 Analysis of categories

5.3.2.1 Description of categories

The categories and subcategories exposed in Table 5 emerged to answer the research questions. They are closely related to the inquiry about how the implementation of metacognitive strategies help undergraduate students improves their listening comprehension skill. Studies conducted by Goh and Taib (2006), Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010) demonstrated that the use of metacognitive strategies are effective for helping learners improve

their listening ability. This study, however, differs in two respects. In the former investigation, Goh and Taib chose young ELS learners whereas in the latter Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari selected high-beginner/low-intermediate adult learners of French as a second language. In contrast, this study explored pre-intermediate level, undergraduates EFL learners. From this study, it was found that the use of metacognitive strategies helped participants plan their ideas before listening, monitor how they were doing during the listening task and evaluate their outcomes by thinking how useful the strategies were. Modeling the listening strategies and having the students apply them during the pedagogical implementation helped them change their beliefs about how to approach listening activities. In this sense, some preconceived ideas about listening; for instance, students trying to understand everything, were changed. These assertions are thoroughly explained in the following sections in which and the categories the subcategories are displayed, supported with evidence and linked to the literature review.

5.3.2.1.1 The usage of listening strategies to maximize their comprehension of aural input.

This main category matches the first research question because it describes how students *improved their listening comprehension* by means of using strategies. Before the implementation of this study, the students had not received guided instruction in the use of listening strategies. Moreover, The findings in this study revealed that there is a significant relationship between the use of listening strategies and the comprehension of aural input. The participants reported that using listening strategies helped them understand the content of the listening tasks better. The results obtained showed that participants used what they learnt from the training they had received. As it was stated by Goh (1999), students who receive training in the use of metacognitive strategies are more likely to become better strategic listeners. In this sense, it is

evident that giving explicit guidance in the use of listening strategies seemed to be vital for the successful completion of the listening tasks. Therefore, it can be emphasized that guiding students in the use of listening strategies is an important condition in aiding them gain control over their listening process.

The subcategories resulting from the main category abovementioned reflect the three metacognitive strategies selected for the pedagogical implementation (planning, monitoring, and evaluating). The first subcategory, *employing planning strategies before listening prepare the students for the completion of a listening task* can be evidenced in the use of ‘making predictions’ and ‘using background knowledge’ before listening. Chamot et al. (1999) asserted that anticipating information gives the listeners “direction for doing the task because they will be attuned to certain types of information” (p, 19). Similarly, using background knowledge before listening helps the listener get ready for the task. The following samples evidence that participants used planning strategies before dealing with the listening activity.

“Antes de iniciar con escuchar (sic) hago predicciones sobre lo que creo tal vez podrían coincidir con la historia a contarse o escucharse”

“Before Listening, I make predictions of what the history can be about”

Excerpt No.1, ID # 6. Individual reflective exercise. First implementation)

“Si sé de qué tema va a ser (el audio), saco mis conocimientos previos, o si no, puedo ver alguna imagen que me haga entender mejor la información”

“If I know what the topic of the audio is about, I use my background knowledge. If not, I observe an image that makes understand the information better”

Excerpt No.2, ID # 15. Individual reflective exercise. First implementation)

“Pienso sobre que puede tratar el audio y me concentro para poder entender mucho más fácil”

“I think about what the audio could be about and I focus my attention in order to understand it better”

Excerpt No.3, ID # 7. Individual reflective exercise. Second implementation)

These examples indicate that planning before listening allowed the learners to contextualize the topic or situation addressed in the listening activities. These findings are also similar to Vandergrift's study (2002). His investigation showed that the use of pre-listening activities prepared his students for what they were going to hear. His students reported that they felt more prepared to deal with the listening activity and they had a better idea of what the topic was about. This is also evidenced in the results of this study. The participants informed that the use of planning strategies helped them approach the task from a different perspective. It is evident that having students predict information and use what they know about the topic of the listening maximized their comprehension of aural input. This statement can be observed in these participant's answers.

"Al hacer predicciones tengo una idea de los que puede ser el listening lo que me facilita la comprensión en el escucha (sic)"

"By making predictions I have an idea of what the listening is about and this facilitates my comprehension"

Excerpt No.4, ID # 6. Individual reflective exercise. First implementation)

"Al hacerme una idea del audio, resulta más fácil concentrarme en el tema y entender mejor de que se trata"

"When I have an idea of what the audio is about, then it is easier to focus on the topic and thus understand the audio"

Excerpt No.5, ID # 6. Individual reflective exercise. Second implementation)

The second subcategory, *employing monitoring strategies during the listening activity help the students measure their effectiveness while working on the task* is supported in the application of 'Using selective attention' and 'Taking notes' during the listening activities. It was observed that the participants employed monitoring strategies to evaluate their comprehension of the listening task. According to Vandergrift (2002), during the listening activity itself, students monitor their comprehension and make decisions about strategy use.

“Mientras estoy escuchando inglés, tomo notas de lo que para mí son palabras claves y que pueden ayudarme a entender mejor el ejercicio”

“While I am listening I take notes of key words crucial for understanding the listening exercise”

(Excerpt No.6, ID # 6. Individual reflective exercise. First implementation)

“Tomo notas del audio, trato de escuchar y entender parte del audio teniendo en cuenta las palabras que conozco y las que no”

“I take notes; I listen and try to understand anything about the audio taking into account the words I know”

(Excerpt No.7, ID # 8. Individual reflective exercise. First implementation)

These examples demonstrate that note taking works as an effective during-listening strategy that facilitates students focus on key words from the listening exercise. According to Liao (2012), “taking notes is the most fundamental training approach for listeners to listen actively and effectively” (P, 14). In this regard, this study showed students how to employ a strategy that can be essential while listening because it helped them keep focused and thus avoid distractions. Similarly, the use of monitoring strategies helped students focus their attention on relevant aspects while they were listening. Bozorgian (2012) also used monitoring strategies to encourage students concentrate on specific aspects of the listening exercises. These strategies are vital in aiding students pay attention to relevant information while doing the listening activity. These examples show evidence of the findings abovementioned.

“Me ayuda (la estrategia) a enfocar mi atención en lo más importante y no en todo al tiempo”

“It helps me (the listening strategy) focus my attention on the most important aspects and I do not need to pay attention to everything at the same time”

(Excerpt No.8, ID # 7. Individual reflective exercise. Second implementation)

“Me permite (la estrategia) enfocarme en lo más importante y sin querer, captar también info secundaria”

“It allows me (the listening strategy) to focus on the most important details and unintentionally understand secondary information”

(Excerpt No.9, ID # 7. Individual reflective exercise. First implementation)

Similar findings are also observed in Vandergrift's study (2002). His students demonstrated an awareness of the importance of monitoring in successful listening. His findings showed that the students found these strategies useful as they helped them focus their attention on specific information from the listening text. In this study, the participants reported that the use of monitoring strategies was important as they directed their attention to make sense of what they heard.

The implementation of monitoring strategies is a key factor in helping students increase their listening comprehension. The excerpts below illustrate this argument.

"Al saber el tema del cual va a hablarse se me facilita comprensión del mismo"
"If I know the topic of the listening activity, then I can better understand what I hear"

(Excerpt No.10, ID # 6. Individual reflective exercise. First implementation)

"Porque estoy enfocada en un tema entonces se me facilita escuchar palabras relacionadas con el tema"
"Because I am focused on a topic, then it is easy for me to understand words related to that topic"

(Excerpt No.11, ID # 10. Individual reflective exercise. Second implementation)

When students use monitoring strategies while carrying out a listening activity, they are indeed checking their progress. The evidence showed above suggest that an adequate use of the strategies result in better listening comprehension. In Bozorgian (2012), it was observed that students, who had used selective attention to monitor their listening, increased awareness of their listening improvement. In addition, Cross (2011) found that the implementation of monitoring strategies is essential because they helped learners regulate what they heard; therefore, the students became more capable of making decisions about what to pay attention to the next time they were doing a listening activity.

The third subcategory, *employing evaluating strategies after the completion of a listening task help the students reflect on their listening process* can be seen on the use of ‘Summarizing’ and ‘Verifying predictions’. According to Chamot et al. (1999), “restating the gist of the message helps you decide how well you understood” (p, 28). Once the students finished the listening task, they were asked to create a written or oral summary about the topic. Moreover, they were told to verify if their initial predictions were right or wrong. It was evident that the implementation of these strategies allowed the students evaluate their progress after they had completed the listening tasks. This was also evidenced in Vandergrift’s study (2006). He found that learners who verified their predictions to evaluate their performance after listening were able to develop metacognitive knowledge critical to the development of self-regulated listening.

“Tratar de encontrar coherencia entre lo escrito, lo comprendido y lo escuchado”

“I try to make sense of what I wrote, understood and heard”

(Excerpt No.12, ID # 2. Individual reflective exercise. Second implementation)

“Revisar si lo que había pensado del tema concuerda con lo que escuché”

“Check my initial predictions about the topic to make sure that they correspond to what I heard”

(Excerpt No.13, ID # 5. Individual reflective exercise. Second implementation)

These references evidence that the use of evaluating strategies after listening helped student reflect on how well they did during the listening task. Chamot et al. (1999) indicated that this process “allows them (listeners) to see if they carried out their plans and to check how well strategies helped” (p, 27). On the other hand, participants reported that by using the strategies after listening, they were checking understanding. This stage of the listening process is important because it determines whether the learner followed the metacognitive process or not. In Vandergrift (2003), findings suggested that reflection on the process of listening can help students develop metacognitive knowledge.

“Me ayuda a compactar todas las ideas que saque en algo más sencillo que me deja entender lo que escuche más fácil”

“It helps (evaluating) me summarize the ideas from the audio, which allow me to understand what I heard”

(Excerpt No.14, ID # 7. Individual reflective exercise. Second implementation)

5.3.2.1.2 An increase in students' awareness about their listening process after being trained in the use of metacognitive strategies.

The second main category matches the second research question because it describes how metacognitive strategy training *affects the students' beliefs* about their listening process. The results indicate that after the training in the use of metacognitive strategies, the students demonstrated an extensive awareness of learning strategies, both for assisting comprehension and developing their listening. As it was observed in Goh' study (1997), the participants reflected on specific occasions where they listened to English. They reported what they did in order to understand better. Similarly, the present study used think-aloud records to allow students report on what strategies they used before, during and after the listening task. In the study conducted by Goh (1997), the listening diaries demonstrated that the students had a high degree of metacognitive awareness. In the same way, there are evidences from this study that support Goh's findings regarding the usefulness of metacognitive strategies on developing listening competence.

With regard to the first subcategory, *increased awareness on the usefulness of metacognitive strategies*, it can be stated that participants gained more control over their listening process. According to Goh (2010), metacognitive knowledge “can lead an individual to select, evaluate, revise, or even abandon tasks, goals, and strategies; in other words, to self-regulate their learning and thinking” (P, 182). In this respect, the participants in this study were able to

choose the strategies they believed were useful in helping them complete the listening task. The students considered that making predictions and activating previous knowledge before listening helped them focus their attention on important aspects of the recording.

“Pienso que es muy útil porque recuerdo cosas que tal vez ya había olvidado y que con la predicción puedo recordarlo y desarrollarlo (el audio) mejor”

“I think it is very useful because I can recall things that I had forgotten, and thanks to my predictions I can remember and develop the listening task better”

(Excerpt No.15, ID # 6. Think-aloud records)

“El conocimiento previo del tema ayuda a abrir el campo de escucha”

“Previous knowledge about the topic helps in understanding the listening topic”

(Excerpt No.16, ID # 10. Think-aloud records)

“Me ayuda a enfocar en lo que voy a escuchar y el predecir en particular me ayuda a tener una idea general y a prestar atención a modo de reto para saber si mi predicción es correcta”

“It helps me focus on what I will hear, and making predictions help me have a general idea and challenge me to pay attention in order to know if my initial predictions were right”

Excerpt No.17, ID # 7. Individual reflective exercise. First implementation)

Moreover, the study reveals that the use of monitoring strategies during listening helped the students check their progress. They believe that taking notes and using selective attention while they were listening were very useful for several reasons. On the one hand, using selective attention was determinant during listening as this strategy helped them focus on specific details from the listening and not everything at the same time.

“Con la atención selectiva el cerebro enfoca la concentración en ciertas partes que permiten una mayor atención”

“By using selective attention, the brain focuses on specific parts (of the audio) which allow to pay attention”

(Excerpt No.18, ID # 10. Think-aloud records)

“Me ayuda a enfocar mi atención en lo más importante y no en todo al mismo tiempo”

“It helps me focus my attention on the most important details and not everything at the same

time”

(Excerpt No.19, ID # 7. Individual reflective exercise. Second implementation)

On the other hand, taking notes was a useful strategy that allowed the listener to write down important words. In this sense, an important aspect of good note taking skills is knowing what to write down. Being able to identify key words from the recording will help learners determine what should be recorded. The findings suggest that note taking was beneficial during the listening task as it helped students recall information later (Hayati & Jalilifar, 2009). Moreover, distinguishing important from unimportant information is a skill that improves with practice.

“Es importante la toma de apuntes porque si solo escuchamos puede que se nos olviden detalles importantes del listening. Para mi es útil porque me ayuda a desarrollar la idea principal”

“It’s important to take notes because if we only listen, we might forget important details. For me (the strategy) is useful because it helps me develop the main idea”

(Excerpt No.20, ID # 6. Think-aloud records)

Finally, the participants reflected on the usefulness of evaluating strategies (summarizing and verifying predictions) after listening. Evidence shows that the students assessed the effectiveness of strategy used through self-evaluation and reflection (Vandergrift, 1999).

“Después de escuchar verifico mis resultados y si están mal pues los corrijo y así se lo que debo mejorar”

“I check the outcomes after listening. If they are wrong, I try to correct them and in that way I know what I have to improve”

(Excerpt No.21, ID # 6. Think-aloud records)

“Me ayuda a analizar mis falencias y tenerlas en cuentas para mejorar y lograr un mejor resultado la próxima vez”

“It helps me identify shortcomings. I can improve the next time I listen as long as I take into account what is wrong”

(Excerpt No.22, ID # 7. Think-aloud records)

These findings suggest that the students who reflect on their listening process become more aware of the usefulness of metacognitive strategies. Similarly, In Goh's study (1997), the author found that students were aware of the metacognitive knowledge involved in the process of listening. This author suggested that it is vital to guide students to think about the process of listening rather than on the content. In this way, they can make decisions about what strategies to employ the next time they deal with a listening activity. In addition, Cross (2011), found that the implementation of monitoring strategies is essential because the learners are not fully aware of the importance of exploiting these strategies and how they affect their listening.

Concerning the second subcategory, *improvement of listening comprehension through the use of metacognitive strategies*, the present study provides evidence of the participants' enhancement of this skill. The results are similar to the assertion that the use of metacognitive strategy proved to improve students' listening skill (Dabbagh & Noshadi, 2014). These examples can confirm this claim.

"(las estrategias) me ayudaron a mejorar en la comprensión y la manera como escucho y entiendo el audio"

"The strategies helped me to enhance listening and how I listen and understand the recording"

(Excerpt No.23, ID # 8. Think-aloud records)

"Si es importante pues en muchas ocasiones puedo entender canciones o películas sin necesidad de subtítulos"

"It's very important (the use of strategies) because now I can understand songs or watch movies without subtitles"

(Excerpt No.24, ID # 12. Think-aloud records)

These excerpts prove that the work with metacognitive strategies had a positive impact on the development of the students' listening skill. In this sense, Goh (2008) stated that metacognitive instruction raise students' awareness of their listening. The assertion supports the

outcomes obtained in this study in the sense that prove the importance of providing students with guidance in the usage of listening strategies. In addition to this, Goh and Taib's study (2006) found that the use of guided instruction is a facilitator in completing and understanding listening tasks.

5.3.2.2 Core category

Finally, the core category is the result of analyzing and reducing data through the coding process. In this sense, one main category corresponding to the present study was identified as *Improvement of listening comprehension skills of undergraduate students by employing metacognitive strategies*. In this sense, this study suggests that the use of metacognitive strategies enhanced better listening comprehension skills in undergraduate students enrolled in the pre-intermediate level of the English proficiency program at a private university. The findings correspond with some studies described in the literature review. (Bozorgian, 2012; Cross, 2011; Goh & Taib, 2010; Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010). Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari's study (2010) suggested that students perform better in listening when they receive guided instruction in the use of strategies. Based on evidence provided by the participants, it can be asserted that the use of metacognitive strategies play a very important role in enhancing students' listening comprehension.

“Desarrollo mejoras en pensar muy bien antes de colocar las respuestas de listening, pues logro después de todo el proceso entender mejor”

“I think before I answer the questions in a listening task; I can understand better after following the process”

(Excerpt No.25, ID # 13. Think-aloud records)

“Debido a que ahora puedo comprender mejor el audio y por medio de estas (las estrategias) puedo establecer puntos bases para un mejor resultado”

“Now I can understand the audio much better and through the use of the strategies I make

<i>connections which lead to better results”</i>
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(Excerpt No.26, ID # 8. Think-aloud records)

<i>“Sin darme cuenta ahora uso las estrategias cada vez que escucho inglés”</i>

<i>“Without realizing it, I use the strategies every time I listen in English”</i>
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(Excerpt No.27, ID # 10. Think-aloud records)

These samples show that participants gained more control over their listening process. Moreover, the use of metacognitive strategies is fundamental in aiding them understand an English oral text (Berne, 2004; Flowerdew & Miller, 2005; Goh, 2000; Mendelsohn, 1995; Vandergrift, 2003).

To sum up, the implementation of metacognitive strategies had a positive influence on the students' listening comprehension. First, the students received explicit training in the use of planning, monitoring and evaluation strategies. This process is called “Modeling the strategies” and the objective was to teach the strategies following the listening model of pre-listening, while-listening and after-listening. Second, the strategies were put into practice and the students used the strategies that best matched the listening exercise. Finally, the students reflected on the effectiveness of the strategies and whether they had helped them improve their listening comprehension.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

6.1 Introduction

The results of this study were the product of this action research study carried out for covering a classroom problem identified in a group of undergraduate learners concerning the use of metacognitive strategies in listening. Based on classroom observations, listening was the language skill that needed to be reinforced. This section concludes the main aspects analyzed which can be useful for other teacher or teacher-researchers who are interested in helping their learners become better listeners.

In the exploration of how the implementation of metacognitive strategies helps undergraduate students improve their listening comprehension skill, and how metacognitive strategy training in listening affect the students' beliefs about their listening process, the following conclusions can be drawn. First, it can be acknowledged that the participants of this study have made significant progress in gaining control over their listening process. Second, the use of a pedagogical sequence of pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening, accompanied by the implementation of metacognitive strategies in each stage of the task, demonstrated to guide students through the mental processes for successful listening comprehension. According to Vandergrift (1999), this listening model promotes the acquisition of metacognitive strategies. Finally, it can be argued that teaching listening strategies is vital in helping students become better listeners. In other words, the training in the use of metacognitive strategies served as an aid for helping the students approach listening as a dynamic process involving the implementation of *mental processes* essential for fostering this skill.

6.2 Comparison of results with previous studies' results

In correspondence with other research studies illustrated in this study, it can be stated that the use of metacognitive processes had a positive impact on learners' listening comprehension. Studies conducted by Goh and Taib (2006), Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010) demonstrated that the use of metacognitive strategies are effective for helping learners improve their listening ability. Similarly, the participants of this study revealed that they improved their listening comprehension by applying planning, monitoring and evaluating strategies. Based on the participants' reflections, they were more prepared to deal with listening tasks. It is also important to mention that after receiving explicit training in the usage of listening strategies, the students became more active participants of their learning process. It is evident that metacognition played an important role in each phase of listening comprehension (Li, 2013).

For instance and based on the findings, by making predictions and using their background knowledge, the students could acquire planning strategies needed to get ready for the listening task (Vandergrift, 2002). Traditional classroom listening activities require students to give precise answers after listening to longer texts. For this reason, having students plan before listening was not easy at the beginning of the pedagogical implementation since it was common for them to do listening exercises that required little or zero interaction with the text, the images, the context, the background, etc.

Vandergrift (2003) stated that predictions helped his students to focus on specific information rather than trying to understand every word. This claim also corresponds with the findings obtained in this study. Participants agreed that effective listening was the result of focusing on specific information from the text and not everything at the same time. Chamot et al. (1999) emphasized that the use of planning strategies help learners reflect before beginning the

listening activity “rather than diving into the activity unprepared and with little thought as to what will happen” (p. 14).

After the learners prepared an approach to listening, they used monitoring strategies to “measure their effectiveness while working on the task” (Chamot et al., 1999, p. 20). Results of this study showed that the listening strategies of using selective attention and taking notes were useful in helping students monitor their progress while doing listening. This process was necessary to check comprehension and determine what worked well and what aspects of the listening exercise needed to be reinforced (Vandergrift, 2006). Based on the participants’ comments, they were able to keep track of the story line by paying attention to key words, phrases and ideas. The use of note taking was another important strategy while listening to the audio. The participants were able to remember more information from the audio by taking notes rather than by simply answering to questions. Similar results were obtained in Vandergrift’s study (2002) in which his participants revealed that the use of monitoring strategies were relevant in successful listening. The data gathered demonstrated that by employing monitoring strategies, the participants were more focused during listening than when they lacked strategy use.

In addition, it was evident that by evaluating their performance after listening, the students became aware of the processes involved in listening comprehension. They evaluated their progress by summarizing the information and verifying their predictions. According to the participants’ responses, they were able to recall information by producing summaries. It was found that they reflected how well they had performed in the listening task and whether the strategies had fostered listening comprehension. This idea is supported by Goh (2008) who concluded that successful listeners were able to employ different strategies. In other words, they

thought about their listening process by using metacognitive strategies. In the same way, Movahed's (2014) findings demonstrated that his students evaluated their initial predictions to see if they were true. His study also pointed out the positive effect of the metacognitive strategy instruction on students' listening performance.

All the insights provided by these learners suggest that the use of planning, monitoring and evaluating strategies are very helpful when dealing with listening tasks in English. The benefit of using listening strategies is that they help learners "oversee, regulate, or direct the language learning process" (Vandergrift, 1999, p. 170). Additionally, these findings indicate that guiding learners in the use of metacognitive strategies is an indispensable teaching and learning tool crucial in the development of listening comprehension.

6.3 Significance of the results

This private university follows national and international standards to provide undergraduates English lessons that emphasize the development of communicative competences. For this reason, it is mandatory to implement lessons that integrate the four skills. Nevertheless, it was observed by the teacher-researcher that sometimes a teaching model that integrated listening strategies was left aside in the classroom.

For this reason, this researcher recommends that the teaching of listening strategies should be integrated to the English course syllabi to provide students with guidance and opportunities for practice that enhance listening comprehension. In addition, the lesson plans should include the pedagogical model of pre, during and after-listening as this study showed that it was useful in helping students organize their thoughts, get ready for the listening task and reflect upon their listening process.

Moreover, the present study demonstrated that the metacognitive strategies implemented in the pedagogical intervention helped students approach the listening tasks better than when they lacked awareness of the use of these strategies. In this respect, it is suggested to continue the work with listening strategies since there is evidence that they play an important role in the improvement of the listening skill.

In terms of the impact of this study in the Colombian context, this study is relevant to the local context because of the similar characteristics in terms of language needs observed in the participants of this study with regard to other Colombian undergraduate students. Similarly, most of the universities in the country implement standard tests such as the one applied to the participants of this study. For this reason, teaching metacognitive strategies in the classrooms is essential for helping students improve their listening comprehension (Chamot, et al, 1999; Cross, 2011; Vandergrift, 2002; Goh & Taib, 2006; Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010).

6.4 Limitations of the present study

Before and during the development of this research study some limitations and constraints emerged. These included the researcher's lack of experience doing research and the lack of time to implement the strategies and collect data.

The first constraint was the lack of experience conducting research. This was observed at the beginning of the process when it was hard to find out a topic for the research project. Besides that, narrowing the topic was a problem, especially when the teacher researcher had a lot of ideas and topics in his mind. This constraint was overcome during the second and third semester of the research seminar. At this point, the researcher had read numerous articles and books regarding the research topic.

The second drawback emerged by the time the researcher was carrying out the pedagogical implementation and collecting data. The four-hour English class per week was not enough to cover the syllabus, let alone to develop two hours per week to implement the listening sessions. For this reason, it was necessary to design the listening tasks taking into account the content of the class. Additionally, the five listening lessons included speaking, reading and writing in order to cover the four English skills. Another difficulty was the data collection process. The instruments were applied after the class was over, and most of the participants needed to move from one classroom to another to continue their classes. For this reason, it was decided to finish the lessons 10 minutes before the appointed time so that the participants could complete the questionnaires.

6.5 Further research

After the pedagogical implementation, the researcher has identified some fields of study that deserve special attention, particularly in the area of metacognitive strategies for the improvement of the listening skill.

To begin with, it is suggested to implement the training of metacognitive strategies in other universities and with participants at higher or lower levels of proficiency. Other studies (Goh and Taib, 2006; Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari, 2010) have demonstrated that the teaching of strategies work with basic, intermediate or advanced levels of proficiency.

Furthermore, a similar study can be conducted at public schools where students have less possibility to receive training in the use of metacognitive strategies and there are little opportunities to listen to the target language. Teaching metacognitive strategies to secondary school learners can increase their confidence in the language.

Besides, it is recommended to explore the use of metacognitive strategies in speaking, reading, and writing. The use of learning strategies applies to all the four language skills. Even though recent studies have been conducted regarding the implementation of learning strategies to foster language skills, there is still a long way to go. As described in previous chapters, metacognitive processes can enhance better listening comprehension. Thus, it is probable that the use of strategies in other English skills can foster better development of the other language skills.

Finally, another suggestion for further research is to analyze the impact of listening strategies on online learning environments. Taking into account that most of today's learning takes place in online learning settings, it is suggested to carry out research projects that employ the use of digital content and the implementation of appropriate learning strategies.

6.6 Conclusion

Listening plays an important role in language competence. For this reason, it is essential to provide learners with a repertory of listening strategies necessary for the development of the listening skill. In the present study, participants were trained in the use of metacognitive strategies in listening. The decision of implementing these strategies was based on the teacher-researcher observations of his students' performance during listening tasks. Thus, this study sought to evaluate the impact on undergraduate students after training them in the usage of three metacognitive strategies: *planning, monitoring and evaluating*. The results revealed that the strategies selected for the pedagogical implementation helped learners develop better their listening comprehension. The listening tasks followed a sequence of pre, during and after listening. to sum up, the use of metacognitive strategies had a positive impact on the students' development of their listening and their beliefs about their learning process.

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Appendix A: Reflective journal

My teaching experience

My teaching experience has given me a great opportunity to discover much of me as teacher and go in more deeply into the students' attitudes towards the target language. I have taught English at a language institute and at Universidad Industrial de Santander. I have observed some negative attitudes towards the target language and sometimes towards the materials used for that purpose. One of my main concerns regarding teaching English is that the students are not fully aware of the importance of acquiring a new language. There are also several aspects to take into account when dealing with teaching a foreign language in Colombia. Generally I see a fear of learning another language. I have also noticed lack of learning strategies either by the students or by the instructors. What is more, the students don't take their learning process seriously and there is observed lack of autonomy.

The importance of doing research in listening

Second language listening comprehension is a complex process, crucial in the development of second language acquisition. Although listening plays an important role in the English learning process, it has been observed that listening is often taught badly or barely at all. Mendelson (1995) states that the cause of this might concern the use of inadequate materials. For instance, some textbooks concentrate only on literal comprehension, requiring low level of inference and basic understanding. Dunkel (1991) also points out, that inadequate teaching techniques used for the development of listening comprehension skills might also cause undesirable results, considering it is the least explicit of the four basic language skills, and, therefore, the most difficult to teach. Finally, according to Healey (2007) the lack of autonomy from the EFL learner, who is not fully aware of the importance of the listening skill, makes a lasting impact on his/her own process because it prevents him or her from adopting an active role on his/her own learning.

My research interest

Based on my previous research experience and on class observations throughout my teaching practice, I would like to continue developing my research on how to implement strategies that foster better oral comprehension skills and autonomy. One of the reasons for my choice is that listening is perhaps one of the most important skills and therefore it affects the other skills.

Relevance of the research project

The research on listening strategies seeks to have an impact on the learners of English in language institutes or in colleges. It also seeks to help students become more responsible and autonomous for their learning process.

Appendix B: A Case study

Prior research experience

Title:

Factors and strategies that affect the development of listening comprehension skills: a case study*

(*This case study was conducted during the second term of 2010*)

Authors:

Libardo Quijano Plata * *

Angie Ramirez

My previous research describes the factors and strategies used by an advanced student in the ELT program at UIS in order to develop her level of listening comprehension in the English language. The methodology of this case study considered the design and application of a listening test to measure the subject's actual level of listening comprehension.

The test included four different dimensions based on the developmental levels of listening proposed by Lawtie¹ which are literal, interpretive and critical. The fourth dimension taken into account was adapted from the *Pearson Test of English General*² aimed at determining the level of listening comprehension.

The results of this study show that the student's expected level of listening comprehension is not adequate despite the fact that the subject's estimated level of listening comprehension was advanced. The results of the listening test demonstrate that the case subject had developed a literal level of listening. It can be concluded that an implementation of pedagogical strategies is needed to equilibrate the development of linguistic abilities of the ELT students with similar characteristics to the subject of this case study.

* Final Project Paper.

** Faculty of Human Sciences, School of Languages. Advisor: Esperanza Revelo Jiménez.

¹ Lawtie, Fiona. "*English Language Arts 6 – 9: Speaking and Listening: Instructional Philosophy and Teaching Suggestions*". 2008. Web. 10 May 2010.

² Taken from: <http://www.examenglish.com/LTE/listening5.php>. Pearson Test of English General (formerly London Test): Listening level 5 practice test

Appendix C: Classroom observation

Libardo Quijano Plata

February 02, 2012

Reflective journal

Throughout a couple of classes that I have taught at this university, my students complain that they don't understand what they hear in the textbooks. Moreover, they feel frustrated when they don't fully understand a listening text. Most of them assert that the listening activity was not successful because they couldn't understand word by word. In general, they believe that acquiring listening skills is very complicated.

Listening comprehension is a complex process that requires a lot of training. I want to explore which authentic listening materials can be adapted in my lessons. In addition, I'd like to find out which listening strategies can be implemented in order to help my students improve their listening comprehension. By doing action research on listening I expect to explore the issues mentioned above. This type of research can be appropriate for my research area since it is a reflective process.

Some authors address the issue of second language listening comprehension. They all agree that it is a complex process, crucial in the development of second language acquisition. Although listening plays an important role in the English learning process, it has been observed that listening is often taught badly or barely at all. Mendelson (1995) states that the cause of this might concern the use of inadequate materials. For instance, some textbooks concentrate only on literal comprehension, requiring low level of inference and basic understanding. Dunkel (1991) also points out, that inadequate teaching techniques used for the development of listening comprehension skills might also cause undesirable results, considering it is the least explicit of the four basic language skills, and, therefore, the most difficult to teach. Finally, according to Healey (2007) the lack of autonomy from the EFL learner, who is not fully aware of the importance of the listening skill, makes a lasting impact on his/her own process because it prevents him or her from adopting an active role on his/her own learning.

Appendix D: PET Listening Test

Estimado estudiante, este examen pretende medir su nivel de comprensión auditiva en inglés. En esta parte se evalúa su habilidad para comprender material grabado, como anuncios públicos y diálogos. Debe ser capaz de comprender información sobre hechos en las grabaciones y evaluar las actitudes e intenciones de los hablantes.

Por favor responda las preguntas en las páginas siguientes (2-7). Sus respuestas serán confidencial (ninguna persona que usted conozca, o profesores tendrán acceso a este cuestionario). Usted puede decidir rehusarse a responder, participar, o abandonar el proyecto. Sin embargo, su participación voluntaria será de gran ayuda para llevar a cabo este proyecto de manera exitosa. Recuerde que este examen no tendrá incidencia en sus notas de curso.

¡Muchas gracias por su colaboración!

Libardo Quijano Plata, profesor investigador, área de inglés, Universidad de la Sabana.

INFORMACIÓN PERSONAL

Participante: _____. Grupo: _____

Fecha: _____.

INSTRUCCIONES

Este examen está dividido en cuatro (4) partes.

PARTE 1: Diálogos/monólogos cortos informales con múltiple opción y UNA SOLA respuesta correcta.

PARTE II: Entrevista con un invitado. Seis preguntas de múltiple opción y UNA SOLA respuesta correcta.


PARTE 3: Texto en forma de monólogo o anuncio para completar con una o dos palabras

PARTE 4: Dialogo informal entre dos personas. Deben decidir cuál opción es verdadera y cuál es falsa.


2

PAPER 2: LISTENING
Part 1 (questions 1–5)


3 How will the girl get home?



A ☐

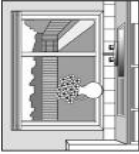


B ☐




C ☐

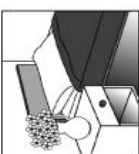
4 Which room are the flowers in?



A ☐




B ☐




C ☐


5 What is at the art gallery this week?



A ☐



B ☐



C ☐


Turn over ▶

Questions 1–7

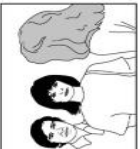
Part 1

These are seven questions in this part. For each question there are three pictures and a short recording. Choose the correct picture and put a tick (✓) in the box below it.

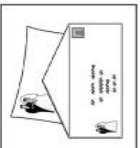
Example: How did the woman hear about the wedding?



A ☒




B ☐

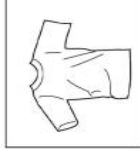


C ☐


1 What has the girl bought today?



A ☐

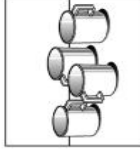


B ☐

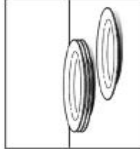


C ☐


2 What have they forgotten?



A ☐



B ☐



C ☐

2

2

Part 2

Questions 8 – 13

You will hear a radio interview with Darren Hubbard, a runner who takes part in athletics competitions. For each question, put a tick (✓) in the correct box.

- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| 8 | At the February competition, Darren | <input type="checkbox"/> A ran in a new event.
<input type="checkbox"/> B hurt himself.
<input type="checkbox"/> C came last. |
| 9 | Darren's situation began to improve when he | <input type="checkbox"/> A started a job with fewer hours.
<input type="checkbox"/> B was offered a place on the British team.
<input type="checkbox"/> C signed a contract with a sportswear company. |
| 10 | Darren got fit again quickly because he | <input type="checkbox"/> A changed the way he trained.
<input type="checkbox"/> B started to work with a new trainer.
<input type="checkbox"/> C increased the time he spends training. |
| 11 | Darren wants to win his next athletics competition so that he can | <input type="checkbox"/> A retire early.
<input type="checkbox"/> B pay for his wedding.
<input type="checkbox"/> C show people that he is fit. |
| 12 | In the next competition, Darren will run the 400-metre race on | <input type="checkbox"/> A the first day.
<input type="checkbox"/> B the second day.
<input type="checkbox"/> C the third day. |
| 13 | In the future, Darren | <input type="checkbox"/> A hopes to write about his career.
<input type="checkbox"/> B wants to change the distance he runs.
<input type="checkbox"/> C would like more people to recognise him. |

3

Turn over ►

5

2

PAPER 2: LISTENING**Part 3 (questions 14–19) and Part 4 (questions 20–25)**

Part 3		Part 4																									
Questions 14 – 19 You will hear a radio announcer giving details about a photography competition. For each question, fill in the missing information in the numbered space.		Questions 20 – 25 Look at the six sentences for this part. You will hear a boy called Jack, and a girl called Helen, talking about a rock festival. Decide if each sentence is correct or incorrect. If it is correct, put a tick (✓) in the box under A for YES . If it is not correct, put a tick (✓) in the box under B for NO .																									
Photographer of the Year Competition First prize: £2,000 and a painting of (14) by John Stevens Second prize: £1,000 and camera equipment worth £200 Competition closing date: (15) Subjects: 1 - British Nature 2 - Wild Places 3 - Animals at (16) Exhibition: Victoria Museum Countries which the exhibition will tour: UK, USA, (17) and Japan To enter, write to: Radio TYL 63 (18) Road London 6TY 9JN Tel: (19)		<table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>A</th> <th>B</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>YES</th> <th>NO</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>20 The festival was better than Jack expected it to be.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>21 Helen bought her ticket for the festival in advance.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>22 Jack was disappointed that he had to change his plans.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>23 Helen complains about having to wait a long time for food.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>24 They both say that it was the sunshine that made the afternoon enjoyable.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>25 Jack prefers listening to loud bands.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			A	B		YES	NO	20 The festival was better than Jack expected it to be.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	21 Helen bought her ticket for the festival in advance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22 Jack was disappointed that he had to change his plans.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	23 Helen complains about having to wait a long time for food.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24 They both say that it was the sunshine that made the afternoon enjoyable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	25 Jack prefers listening to loud bands.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	A	B																									
	YES	NO																									
20 The festival was better than Jack expected it to be.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																									
21 Helen bought her ticket for the festival in advance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																									
22 Jack was disappointed that he had to change his plans.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																									
23 Helen complains about having to wait a long time for food.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																									
24 They both say that it was the sunshine that made the afternoon enjoyable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																									
25 Jack prefers listening to loud bands.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																									
6		7																									

Appendix E: Listening strategy questionnaire

Estimado estudiante: El objetivo del presente cuestionario es recolectar información acerca de las estrategias que usted utiliza cuando escucha material académico en inglés.

Instrucciones: Después de leer cada ítem, responda, marcando con una equis “X”, la opción que considere más apropiada, según la siguiente escala:

1= Nunca / Casi nunca	2= Ocasionalmente	3= Por lo general	4= Siempre / Casi siempre
-----------------------	-------------------	-------------------	---------------------------

Por favor conteste todos los ítems. Selecciona una sola opción en la escala. **No hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas.** Sus respuestas serán de carácter confidencial.

¡Muchas gracias por su colaboración!

Libardo Quijano Plata, profesor investigador, área de inglés, Universidad de la Sabana.

INFORMACIÓN PERSONAL

Participante: _____. Grupo: _____

Fecha: _____.

Ítems	Nunca o casi	Ocasionalmente	Por lo general	Siempre o casi siempre
Antes de comenzar a escuchar, hago un plan de lo que necesito para cumplir con la actividad.				
Antes de comenzar a escuchar, hago uso de mi conocimiento previo sobre el tema para comprenderlo mejor.				
Antes de comenzar a escuchar, hago mis predicciones acerca de lo que va a pasar.				
Verifico mi progreso durante la actividad para darme cuenta si estoy comprendiendo lo que escucho.				
Hago anotaciones a fin de comprender mejor lo que estoy escuchando.				
Mientras escucho, me enfoco en las palabras claves o ideas más importantes.				
Escribo palabras claves del contexto para entender mejor lo que estoy escuchando.				

Al finalizar la actividad de escucha, evalúo mi desempeño para determinar si lo hice bien y en que debo mejorar.				
Después de escuchar, reviso para ver si mis predicciones acerca del tema eran ciertas o falsas.				
Hago un resumen (mental o escrito) de la información que escuché.				

Appendix F: Individual reflective exercise

Estimado estudiante, este ejercicio de reflexión busca identificar las estrategias que usted utilizó antes, durante, y después de la actividad de comprensión auditiva. Las preguntas de este cuestionario son abiertas. Usted deberá redactar su respuesta para cada pregunta.

INFORMACIÓN PERSONAL

Participante: _____. Grupo: _____.

Fecha: _____.

INSTRUCCIONES: Responda las siguientes preguntas. Recuerde que no hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas.

1. ¿Qué haces antes de comenzar a escuchar en inglés?

_____.

2. ¿Antes de comenzar a escuchar, piensas en una estrategia que te ayude a comprender lo que vas a escuchar?

3. Sí____ No____ ¿Cuál(es)?_____

3. Si respondiste afirmativamente la pregunta anterior, ¿Consideras que el uso de la(s) estrategia(as) te ayudó a comprender lo que escuchaste? Si____ No ____ Explique.

_____.

4. ¿Qué haces mientras estas escuchando en inglés?

_____.

5. ¿Piensas en una estrategia que te ayude a verificar tu progreso mientras estas escuchando?

4. Sí____ No____ ¿Cuál(es)?_____

6. Si respondiste afirmativamente la pregunta anterior, ¿Consideras que el uso de la(s) estrategia(as) te ayudó a enfocar tu atención en lo que quieras escuchar?

Si____ No ____ Explique.

_____.

7. ¿Qué haces después de terminar la actividad de comprensión auditiva?

-
-
8. ¿Piensas en una estrategia que te ayude a evaluar tu progreso después de finalizar la actividad de comprensión auditiva?

Sí____ No____ ¿Cuál(es)?_____

9. Si respondiste afirmativamente la pregunta anterior, ¿Consideras que el uso de la(s) estrategia(as) te ayudó a comprender lo que escuchaste? Si____ No ____Explique.
-
-

Appendix G: Think-Aloud Record

Participante No. _____

Fecha: _____

Tema: _____

INSTRUCCIONES: Mientras trabajas en la actividad de comprensión auditiva, comenta con tu profesor y con tus compañeros acerca de cómo estás haciendo la tarea. ¿Qué está pasando por tu mente mientras trabajas en la actividad de comprensión auditiva?

Marca con una X la(s) estrategia(a) que utilizaste hoy:	Escribe en el siguiente cuadro acerca de lo que estás pensando mientras desarrollas la actividad de escucha. La estrategia resulta útil para mí: Si _____ ¿Porque? _____ No: _____ ¿Porque? _____	
1. Antes de comenzar a escuchar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hago predicciones _____ Uso mi conocimiento previo del tema _____ 		
2. Mientras escucho: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uso atención selectiva _____ Tomo apuntes _____ 		
3. Después de escuchar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evalúo mi progreso _____ Creo resúmenes _____ Verifico mis predicciones _____ 		

Appendix H: Consentimiento informado para participar en un estudio de investigación

Chía, 15 de febrero de 2012

Señores:

Estudiantes nivel 4

Programa de proficiencia en inglés

Universidad de la Sabana

Chía

Apreciados estudiantes:

Actualmente estoy realizando una investigación titulada “Desarrollo de estrategias metacognitivas para la comprensión auditiva en inglés”. Este estudio busca determinar los posibles efectos al implementar estrategias metacognitivas, particularmente planificación, supervisión y evaluación en actividades de comprensión de escucha en el idioma Inglés, a través de una serie de actividades dirigidas hacia este propósito. Cabe anotar que dicha investigación hace parte de mi trabajo de grado de la Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés con Énfasis en Ambientes de Aprendizaje Autónomo de la Universidad de la Sabana.

Por lo anterior, comedidamente solicito su consentimiento y colaboración como participantes de mi propuesta de investigación, que se llevará a cabo durante el primer semestre académico del año 2012. Esto implica la planeación e implementación de actividades de escucha, y recolección de datos durante 10 semanas en las cuales ustedes responderán dos cuestionarios, completarán unos ejercicios de reflexión en relación con las estrategias utilizadas en las actividades de escucha, y presentarán dos exámenes de escucha, uno al comienzo y otro al final de la investigación, los cuáles no tendrá incidencia en las notas de clase.

Igualmente, se les garantizará el uso de seudónimos para mantener su identidad en el anonimato. Así mismo, la información recolectada en la investigación se mantendrá confidencial, y solo se dará a conocer los resultados de la misma en la sustentación de la tesis, así como en el reporte final del proyecto. Cabe anotar que el proyecto no tendrá incidencia alguna en las evaluaciones y notas parciales y/o finales del curso, por tal razón usted deberá firmar esta carta de consentimiento donde acepte voluntariamente participar del proyecto de investigación. Así mismo, usted puede decidir rehusarse a responder, participar, o abandonar el proyecto. Sin embargo, su participación voluntaria será de gran ayuda para llevar a cabo este proyecto de manera exitosa.

Agradezco de antemano su valioso aporte para llevar a buen término mi investigación.

Atentamente,

Acepto participar

Libardo Quijano Plata

Nombre _____

Docente investigador

Firma _____

Appendix I: Consentimiento informado para aprobación por parte de coordinadores

Chía, 20 de febrero de 2012

Señora:

Yady Lucía González Doria

Coordinadora Académica del Programa de Proficiencia en inglés

Universidad de la Sabana

Chía

Apreciada Señora:

Actualmente estoy realizando una investigación titulada “Developing Metacognitive Strategies in Listening Comprehension”, dirigida a estudiantes del Programa de inglés de la Universidad de la Sabana, la cual intenta contribuir y enriquecer los procesos de aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera y al mismo tiempo reorientar las prácticas docentes en estrategias de aprendizaje en la parte de escucha en el área de Inglés.

Este estudio busca determinar los posibles efectos al implementar estrategias Meta cognitivas, particularmente planificación, supervisión y evaluación en actividades de comprensión de escucha en el idioma Inglés, a través de una serie de actividades dirigidas hacia este propósito. Cabe anotar que dicha investigación hace parte de mi trabajo de grado de la Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés con Énfasis en Ambientes de Aprendizaje Autónomo de la Universidad de la Sabana.

Por lo anterior, comedidamente solicito su consentimiento y colaboración para realizar mi proyecto de investigación, que se llevará a cabo durante el primer semestre académico del año 2012. Esto implica la planeación e implementación de actividades de escucha, y recolección de datos durante 10 semanas en las cuales el docente investigador adaptará la planeación de clases siguiendo el syllabus del nivel 2 para los propósitos de la investigación.

Igualmente, a los participantes se les garantizará el uso de seudónimos para mantener su identidad en el anonimato. Así mismo, la información recolectada en la investigación se mantendrá confidencial, y solo se dará a conocer los resultados de la misma en la sustentación de la tesis, así como en el reporte final del proyecto. Cabe anotar que el proyecto no tendrá incidencia alguna en las evaluaciones y notas parciales y/o finales del curso, por tal razón el estudiante deberá firmar una carta de consentimiento donde acepte voluntariamente participar del proyecto de investigación.

De igual manera, me comprometo a informar semanalmente a mi coordinadora de nivel sobre las actividades que llevaré a cabo en mis grupos, esto con el fin de mantener un canal de comunicación activo donde las decisiones sean tomadas en conjunto.

Agradezco de antemano su valioso aporte para llevar a buen término esta investigación.

Cordialmente,

Libardo Quijano Plata

Docente de inglés y estudiante de Maestría en Didáctica del inglés, Universidad de la Sabana

Appendix J: Action plan and timeline chart for implementation

DATE	STEP	METACOGNITIVE PROCESS	LEARNING STRATEGIES	DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT
February 7 th	Implementation pretest			Pretest (Listening PET)
February 14 th	Scaffolding strategies	Planning	Use background knowledge Make predictions	Questionnaire: Listening Strategies
February 21 st	Scaffolding strategies	Monitoring	Take notes Use selective attention	
March 6 th	Scaffolding strategies	Evaluating	Verify predictions Summarize	
March 13 th	Listening pedagogical task 1	Planning Monitoring Evaluating	Students' own choice	Individual reflective exercise
March 20 th	Listening pedagogical task 2	Planning Monitoring Evaluating	Students' own choice	
March 27 th	Listening pedagogical task 3	Planning Monitoring Evaluating	Students' own choice	Individual reflective exercise
April 23 rd	Listening pedagogical task 4	Planning Monitoring Evaluating	Students' own choice	
May 8 th	Listening pedagogical task 5	Planning Monitoring Evaluating	Students' own choice	Listening strategies questionnaire Think-Aloud record
May 15 th	Implementation posttest	N/A	N/A	Posttest (Listening PET)

Appendix K: Scaffolding strategies

WORKSHOP 1: LEARNING METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES – PLANNING (PLANEAR)

Pre-task: When do I make plans?



Learning strategy

1. Make predictions (Hacer predicciones)

Definition: Anticipate information to prepare and give direction for the task. (Hacer una conjetura o imaginarme lo que va a pasar (en un dialogo, noticias, película, etc.)

Task 1: Watch a few moments of a TV show without sound and try to make predictions about the type of information you will hear.

My predictions:

Watch the TV show again, this time with sound. Listen to the way the character refers to her problem. Are your predictions true _____ or false _____? Put an “X”

Reflection:

Do you think that **making predictions** helped focus your attention in the video? Why / Why not? Write your answer in English or Spanish.

Learning strategy

2. Activate background knowledge (Activar tu conocimiento)

Definition: Think about and use what you already know to help you do the task (Piensa en la información que ya sabes y relaciónala con lo que quieres aprender).

Task 2: Watch the same TV show in task 1. What do you know about the topic?

What have you watched or read about the topic of the TV show in the last 24-48 hours? Write 3-5 you know about this topic:

Reflection:

Do you think that the strategy **Use Background Knowledge** about the TV show helped you understand this report? Why / Why not? Write your answer in English or Spanish.

Appendix L: Listening task model

A fishy story



Image retrieved from Good news, bad news. News stories for listening and discussion

1. Pre-listening: Make your predictions about the story:

2. While listening: You are going to hear a story about fishing. What strategies would you use in this stage of the listening task?

- Take notes
- Try to find specific information
- Pay attention to specific words, phrases, ideas, etc.
- DON'T need to understand everything.

My notes

After completing the listening tasks (Después de completar la actividad de comprensión auditiva)...

3. After listening:

Verify your predictions: Were their right? Why or why not?

Create an oral and written summary of information

4. Reflection:

Did you find easier to verify predictions and summarizing information from the story? Yes_____

No _____ and why?

Appendix M: Color coding technique

Individual reflective exercises: First implementation	
Initial codes	Participants' responses
focusing attention on key words/information	<p>“Trato de concentrarme para poder captar la mayor cantidad de información” (Participant # 7)</p> <p>“Pensar en las preguntas si es que hay, o si no, pensar en lo que voy a escuchar para concentrarme” (Participant # 14)</p>
using background knowledge about the topic	<p>“Si sé de qué tema va hacer, saco mis conocimientos previos, o si no veo alguna imagen que me haga entender mejor la información” (Participant # 15)</p>
making predictions	<p>“Si hay imagines mirarlas y analizar de que se puede tratar el texto y si no analizar el título del texto” (Participant # 4)</p> <p>“Pienso en que tema puede tratar lo que voy a escuchar y a que hay que ponerle más atención de lo que dicen” (Participant # 5)</p> <p>“Lo primero que hago es hacer predicciones en caso de que haya un título o una imagen” (Participant # 12)</p> <p>“Antes de iniciar a escuchar hago predicciones sobre lo que creo al vez podrían coincidir con la historia a escucharse” (Participant # 6)</p>
taking notes of important words/ phrases	<p>“Tomo notas de palabras claves” (Participant # 2)</p> <p>“Mientras estoy escuchado inglés, tomo nota de lo que para mí son palabras claves y que pueden ayudarme a entender mejor el ejercicio” (Participant # 6)</p> <p>“Tomo notas del audio, trato de escuchar y entender parte del audio teniendo en cuenta las palabras que conozco y las que no” (Participant # 8)</p>
evaluating comprehension	<p>“Hacer una evaluación de mi desempeño y como comprendí lo escuchado” (Participant # 10)</p> <p>“Mirar que tanto comprendí y si comprendí realmente el sentido de lo que escuche” (Participant # 7)</p> <p>“Revisar si lo que había pensado del tema concuerda con lo que escuche” (Participant # 5)</p>
usefulness of planning	<p>“Sí. Ayuda mucho porque al hacer predicciones tengo una idea</p>

strategies before listening	<p>de lo que puede ser el listening lo que me facilita la comprensión en el escucha” (Participant # 6)</p> <p>“Sí. Porque me ayuda a enfocarme en lo que voy a escuchar y el predecir en particular me ayuda a tener una idea general y a prestar atención a modo de reto para saber si mi predicción es correcta” (Participant # 7)</p> <p>“Sí. Hace el trabajo más consiente ya sea porque se tiene una idea del tema o porque se centra la información en algo” (Participant # 15)</p>
usefulness of monitoring strategies during listening	<p>“Sí. Ya que se tenía una idea previa a lo que íbamos a escuchar” (Participant # 4)</p> <p>“Sí. Me permite enfocarme en lo más importante y sin querer captar también info secundaria” (Participant # 7)</p> <p>“Sí. Porque al enfocarse en el punto o idea central se hace más fácil la comprensión” (Participant # 10)</p>
usefulness of evaluating strategies after listening	<p>“Sí. Identifico la totalidad del tema así no pueda al escuchar todo el texto” (Participant # 2)</p> <p>“Sí. Al auto enfocarse se abre la puerta para mejorar” (Participant # 10)</p> <p>“Sí. Creo que es importante siempre debe buscarse una retro-alimentación de lo que se hace” (Participant # 15)</p>

Individual reflective exercises: Second implementation	
Initial codes	Participants’ responses
focusing attention on key words/information	<p>“Centro mi atención en palabras claves” (Participant # 2)</p> <p>“Mentalizarme únicamente en lo que voy a escuchar no importa lo que esté pasando a mi alrededor” (Participant # 9)</p> <p>“Poner atención en ciertas palabras que puedan crearme una idea de lo que se trata” (Participant # 4)</p>
using background knowledge about the topic	<p>“Buscar si tengo algún conocimiento previo sobre el tema” (Participant # 15)</p>
making predictions	<p>“Pienso sobre que puede tratar el audio y me concentro para poder entender mucho más fácil” (Participant # 7)</p>

	“En la clase se realiza las predicciones que sacamos en base al título del listening” (Participant # 6)
taking notes of important words/ phrases	“Tomo apuntes. Palabras claves. Respondo al ¿Qué?, ¿Cómo?, ¿Cuándo?, ¿Dónde?” (Participant # 6)
evaluating comprehension	<p>“Tratar de encontrar coherencia entre lo escrito, lo comprendido y lo escuchado” (Participant # 2)</p> <p>“Hacer una autoevaluación de lo que aprendí y como fue mi trabajo” (Participant # 10)</p> <p>“Hablar con un compañero para saber que comprendió y evaluar o comparar” (Participant # 11)</p> <p>“Ver si los conocimientos previos facilitaron la comprensión” (Participant # 11)</p>
usefulness of planning strategies before listening	<p>“Sí. Porque al hacerme una idea del audio, resulta más fácil concentrarse en el tema y entender mejor de que se trata” (Participant # 7)</p> <p>“Sí. Aunque no me parece fundamental, porque son cosas que uno hace inconscientemente, al momento de ser consciente de aplicar las estrategias, si sirve un poco” (Participant # 9)</p> <p>“Sí. Totalmente ya que utilizo en orden todo lo que escuché y entendí para al final lograr resumirlo correctamente” (Participant # 13)</p>
usefulness of monitoring strategies during listening	<p>“Sí. Porque yo estoy enfocada en un tema entonces se me facilita escuchar palabras relacionadas con el tema” (Participant # 6)</p> <p>“Sí. Porque me ayuda a enfocar mi atención en lo más importante y no en todo al tiempo” (Participant # 7)</p> <p>“Sí. Tomar notas ayuda a comprender y enfocar la atención” (Participant # 10)</p>
usefulness of evaluating strategies after listening	<p>“Sí. Porque se retoma todo y se centra en lo no se entendió del audio# (Participant # 3)</p> <p>“Sí. Me ayuda a compactar todas las ideas que saque en algo más sencillo que me deja entender lo que escuché más fácil” (Participant # 7)</p> <p>“Sí. Porque para próximas oportunidades saber que mejorar” (Participant # 10)</p>

Think aloud records	
Initial codes	Participants' responses
usefulness of making predictions before listening	<p>“Sí. Ya que me ayuda a enfocarme más en el tema” (Participant # 4)</p> <p>“Sí. Porque pienso que es muy útil porque recuerdo cosas que tal vez ya había olvidado y que con la predicción puedo recordarlo y desarrollarlo mejor” (Participant # 6)</p> <p>“Sí. Porque de esta manera me preparo para saber las palabras que voy a escuchar, así el vocabulario se enfoca en solo un grupo de palabras y no en general” (Participant # 11)</p>
usefulness of activating previous knowledge before listening	<p>“Si es una buena estrategia porque ya sabes o ya tienes una base para saber qué es lo que vas a escuchar” (Participant # 8)</p> <p>“El conocimiento previo del tema ayuda a abrir el campo de escucha” (Participant # 10)</p> <p>“Hay una contextualización del tema para corroborar conocimiento y vocabulario” (Participant # 11)</p>
usefulness of selective attention during listening	<p>“Sí. Porque ayuda a tener en cuenta lo importante porque al concentrarse en lo principal se entiende mejor la generalidad de audio y captar más información” (Participant # 7)</p> <p>“Con la atención selectiva el cerebro enfoca la concentración en ciertas partes que permiten una mayor atención” (Participant # 10)</p>
usefulness of note taking during listening	<p>“Sí. Porque es importante la toma de apuntes porque si solo escuchamos puede que se nos olvide detalles importantes del listening. para mi es útil porque me ayuda al desarrollar mejor la idea principal” (Participant # 6)</p> <p>“Tomo nota de lo escucho para hacer una idea de lo que hablan” (Participant # 11)</p> <p>“Considero importante para armar ideas y atar cabos” (Participant # 12)</p>
usefulness of evaluating strategy use listening	<p>“Sí. Después de escuchar verifico mis resultados y si estas mal pues los corrijo y así se lo que debo mejorar” (Participant # 6)</p> <p>“Me ayuda a analizar mis falencias y tenerlas en cuenta para</p>

	<p>mejorar y lograr un mejor resultado la prox. Vez” (Participant # 7)</p> <p>“Es bueno debido a que ayuda a desarrollar mejor mis habilidades para escuchar a mejorar en lo que necesito” (Participant # 8)</p> <p>“Es importante reflexionar sobre lo entendido para así discutir y evaluar mi desempeño” (Participant # 11)</p>
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