

## Appendix B

Name: ..... Date: .....

### Performance checklist for listening comprehension

Question:	After first listening			Before second listening
	Guess?	Reason(s)?	V	Other possibilities?
<b>Where?</b> (setting?)				
<b>When?</b> (time? time of day? season?)				
<b>Who?</b> (speakers? their relationship?)				
<b>How?</b> (tone? mood?)				
<b>What?</b> (What is it about?)				
<b>Why?</b> (goal? particular circumstances?)				

V= Verification (check in this column when your guess has been verified)

What I found easy: .....

What I found difficult: .....

What I will do the next time: .....

Source: Adapted from Mendelsohn (1994: 94), Larry Vandergrift

## Appendix C

### Appendix Meta-cognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ)

Type scale	Strategy or belief/ perception	1	2	3	4	5	6
Planning-evaluation	1. Before I start to listen, I have a plan in my head for how I am going to listen.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Directed attention	2. I focus harder on the text when I have trouble understanding.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Person knowledge	3. I find that listening in French is more difficult than reading, speaking, or writing in French.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mental translation	4. I translate in my head as I listen.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Problem-solving	5. I use the words I understand to guess the meaning of the words I don't understand.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Directed attention	6. When my mind wanders, I recover my concentration right away.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Problem-solving	7. As I listen, I compare what I understand with what I know about the topic.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Person knowledge	8. I feel that listening comprehension in French is a challenge for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Problem-solving	9. I use my experience and knowledge to help me understand.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Planning/evaluation	10. Before listening, I think of similar texts that I may have listened to.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mental translation	11. I translate key words as I listen.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Directed attention	12. I try to get back on track when I lose concentration.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Problem-solving	13. As I listen, I quickly adjust my interpretation if I realize that it is not correct.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Planning/evaluation	14. After listening, I think back to how I listened, and about what I might do differently next time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Person knowledge	15. I don't feel nervous when I listen to French.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Directed attention	16. When I have difficulty understanding what I hear, I give up and stop listening.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Problem-solving	17. I use the general idea of the text to help me guess the meaning of the words that I don't understand.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mental translation	18. I translate word by word, as I listen.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Problem-solving	19. When I guess the meaning of a word, I think back to everything else that I have heard, to see if my guess makes sense.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Planning/evaluation	20. As I listen, I periodically ask myself if I am satisfied with my level of comprehension.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Planning/evaluation	21. I have a goal in mind as I listen.	1	2	3	4	5	6

462

Language Learning

Vol. 56, No. 3

- Chen, Y. (2005). *Barriers to Acquiring Listening Strategies for EFL Learners and Their Pedagogical Implications*. Retrieved 15 June from: <http://www.writing.berkeley.edu/TESI-EJ/ej32/a2.html>.
- Field, J. (1998). Skills and Strategies: Towards a News Methodology for Listening, *ELT Journal*, 52 (2), 109-118.
- Goh, C. (1997). Meta-cognitive Awareness and Second Language Listeners'. *ELT Journal*, 51 (4), 361-369.
- Goh, C., & Taib, Y. (2006). Meta-cognitive Instruction in Listening for Young Learners. *ELT Journal*, 60 (3), 221-232.
- Lynch, T. (2002). Listening: Questions of Level. In R. B. Kaplan. *The Oxford Handbook of Applied Linguistics* (pp. 39-48). Oxford: OUP.
- Nunan, D. (1999). *Second Language Teaching and Learning*. Boston: Henile & Henile Publishers.
- Mendelsohn, D. (1998). 'Teaching Listening'. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 18, 81-101.
- Vandergrift, L. (1999). Facilitating Second Language Listening Comprehension: Acquiring Successful Strategies. *ELT Journal* 53 (3), 168-176.
- Vandergrift, L. (2003). Orchestrating Strategy Use: Toward a Model of the Skilled Second Language Listener, *Language Learning*, 53 (3), 463-496.
- Vandergrift, L., Goh, C. C. M., Mareschal, C. H, & Tafaghodtari, M. H. (2006). The Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire: Development and Validation, *Language Learning*, 56 (3), 431-462.
- Victori, M., & Lockhart, W. (1995). Enhancing Metacognition in Self-directed Language Learning. *System*, 23, 223-234.
- Wenden, A. (1998). Meta-cognitive Knowledge and Language Learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 19, 515-537.
- Wilson, M. (2003). Discovery Listening: Improving Perceptual Processing. *ELT Journal*, 57, 335-343.

## Appendix A

**Table 1. Vandergrift, Goh, Mareschal, and Tafaghodtar (2006, P. 434)**

*Metacognitive knowledge about listening*

Metacognitive knowledge	Examples form listening
<p>Person knowledge</p> <p>Knowledge about how factors such as age, aptitude, gender, and learning style can influence language learning. It also includes beliefs about oneself as a learner.</p>	<p>Self-concepts and self-efficacy about listening</p> <p>Specific listening problems, causes, and possible solutions</p>
<p>Task knowledge</p> <p>Knowledge about the purpose, the demands, and the nature of learning tasks. It also includes knowledge of the procedures involved in accomplishing these tasks.</p>	<p>Mental, affective and social processes involved in listening skills (e.g., listening for details, gist) needed for completing listening tasks. Factors that influence listening (e.g., text, speaker)</p> <p>Ways of improving listening outside class</p>
<p>Strategy knowledge</p> <p>Knowledge about strategies that are likely to be effective in achieving learning goals.</p>	<p>General and specific strategies to facilitate comprehension and cope with difficulties</p> <p>Strategies appropriate for specific types of listening</p> <p>Ineffective strategies</p>

- Inform them that translation is time-consuming in listening comprehension tasks and that saving time is crucial in listening tasks.
- Inform them that translation is the strategy of the low level proficiency language learners and that it should be avoided. Learners might be encouraged not to translate the words by giving them the impression of the importance of understanding the general idea of the text.

#### **5. Assuming a problem solving approach:**

- Activate the learners' schemata.
- Make the learners aware of the significance of speed in understanding in listening comprehension. Teachers might be of a help during the listening task by giving hints to the students to adjust their probable incorrect guesses or answers.
- Inform the students that it is not necessary to understand every single word in the text and that understanding the general idea is of significant value in listening.
- Inform the students that their guesses might be wrong and that they can evaluate their guesses using the information from the other parts of the text.

Teaching listening skills is one of the most difficult tasks for any ESL teacher. This is because successful listening skills are acquired over time with lots of practice. In addition it is frustrating for students because there are no rules of listening similar to the rules of grammar. Consequently, learners confront a lot of barriers. To Chen (2005), the obstacles confronted by the learners are multifaceted and each facet carries a probable risk of comprehension failure.

She believes that listening comprehension barriers are associated with the learners' internal factors such as their emotions, listening habits, information processing capacities, level of proficiency, and the learners' beliefs about listening activities. Other barriers are concerned with the nature of listening strategies and the listening material being used. The pedagogical implications based on the research findings have demonstrated that to deal with the problems; first, they should be diagnosed. Overall, one of the tasks for instructors is to find learners' learning difficulties in strategy acquisition and help them to overcome the barriers. The pedagogical purpose, then, is to help learners recognize the problems and tackle them while they proceed towards processing autonomy in listening strategies. In this regard, the learners' awareness of their own problems in listening comprehension is of much value since they can actively help them to deal with them. Teachers are recommended to raise the learners' consciousness using the MALQ. By focusing explicitly on individuals, task, and strategy knowledge, meta-cognitive instruction will raise learners' awareness of key aspects of the listening process. This can help them develop a range of skills and strategies for listening. Such an approach using meta-cognitive instruction in listening will help learners improve their listening skills.

#### **REFERENCES**

- Bolitho, R., Carter, R., Hughes, R., Ivanic, R., Masuhara, H., & Tomlinson, B. (2003). Ten questions about Language Awareness. *ELT Journal*, 57 (3), 251-260.

texts they might have listened to before.

- Distribute a self-assessment checklist (for example, Mendelsohn 1994's checklist for listening comprehension, cited in Vandergrift 1999, *Appendix 3*) which instruct the learners to discover their own problems.
- Create self-satisfaction by asking them to fill in the checklist. Self-satisfaction can only be achieved by evaluation of one's performance.
- Address questions prior to the listening task to direct the students' attention to the goal of the task. Goal-oriented tasks will result in more successful listening.

#### **2. Directing learners' attention:**

- Convince the learners that failing to understand is OK. One of the largest inhibitors for students is often mental block. While listening, a student suddenly decides that he or she doesn't understand what is being said. At this point, many students just tune out or get caught up in an internal dialogue trying to translate a specific word. Some students convince themselves that they are not able to understand spoken English well and create problems for themselves. The key to helping such students improve their listening skills is to convince them that failing to understand is OK. This is more of an attitude adjustment than anything else, and it is easier for some students to accept than others.
- Inform the students to be attentive during listening tasks. It is a good idea for the teacher to explain to the learners that listening is different from the other skills

in that losing concentration for a second may have consequences since they will not have access to the text. Therefore, listening tasks require more attention compared with tasks related to other skills.

- Spot the learners who are intolerant of ambiguity. Those who are not tolerant of ambiguity might quit quickly when they face a problem. (There are some questionnaires which can be helpful in finding out about the learners' personality factors for example, see Ely's (1995) questionnaire of tolerance of ambiguity in Reid (1995, p. 216)

#### **3. Removing negative feeling toward listening:**

- Remove the negative feeling created by the assumption that listening comprehension is the most difficult skill in language learning through explicit instruction and using more listening tasks in classes.
- Give positive feeling toward listening tasks though having some simple and enjoyable tasks to make the students interested.
- Create a relaxing atmosphere in language classes to reduce anxiety during listening tasks which are found to be stressful activities.

#### **4. Avoiding mental translation:**

- Explain the fact that thinking in English (L2) is a practice which requires time and patience. Remind them that they should use their competence in L2 while listening and that any resort to L1 may lead to blockage. The learners can practice this by trying to decrease the rate of transfer from L1 to L2.

to Vandergrift et al. (2006), an individual's meta-cognitive knowledge includes beliefs about factors present in learning and the way these factors act and interact to affect the course and outcome of cognitive enterprises which include:

*Person knowledge:* This knowledge consists of judgments about one's learning abilities and knowledge about internal and external factors that affect the success or failure in one's learning.

*Task knowledge:* Knowledge about the purpose, demands, and nature of learning tasks which can enable an individual to take into account factors that might contribute to the difficulty of a task, including the characteristics of the oral text/message.

*Strategy knowledge:* This is useful for achieving learning goals and appears to have the greatest impact on learning by helping learners to choose the strategies that they use. Wenden (1998) has also emphasized the application of these categories of meta-cognitive knowledge to the field of L2 learning. Table 1, (*Appendix A*), gives examples of the three types of meta-cognitive knowledge that have been reported by L2 listeners. There is a general consensus among researchers in the fields of education and L2 learning about the important role that meta-cognition plays in enhancing thinking and comprehension.

Meta-cognitive instruction in listening takes different forms. Mendelsohn (1998) argues that one common approach is a sequence of activities that encourage planning, monitoring, and evaluating strategies used for the selected listening

task. Chamot (1995 cited in Goh and Taib 2006) suggested a procedure through which teachers model how they themselves use strategies when listening to a tape or watching a video with new information. Before listening, the teacher thinks aloud about what he or she already knows about the topic and what words one might expect to hear. Goh and Taib (2006) continue that after listening to a short segment of the text, the teacher thinks aloud again, describing the mental processes involved during listening, commenting also on whether the predictions have been confirmed or rejected. Finally, the teacher evaluates his or her use of strategies for the particular text. Goh (1997) proposed that the post-listening should not stop with using the information gathered from the listening passage. It should extend further to include learners' introspection of their mental processes during the listening task.

## **I**mplications for the Teachers: **Trouble Shooting Using MALQ**

The meta-cognitive awareness can be achieved through the application of Vandergrift et al. (2006) questionnaire (*Appendix B*). What follows are some suggestions for the teachers to tap the learners' listening comprehension problems and to assist learners to improve their listening skill.

### **1. Planning their listening evaluation:**

- Activate the learners' schemata by asking questions and asking them what they think the listening text might be about.
- Draw the learners' attention to similar

the present 'comprehension' approach, success in listening is measured by correct responses to questions. Teachers focus upon the outcomes of listening, rather than upon listening itself, upon product rather than process. When a learner supplies a correct answer, there is no indication as to how that answer has been arrived at: Has meaning been constructed by correctly identifying all the words in a particular piece of text, or by identifying one word and making an inspired guess? Consequently, it is beneficial to improve listening comprehension ability by investigating the problems through exploring the process of listening comprehension not the product.

### **D** Diagnostic-Oriented Approach

There is a direct relationship between the learners' awareness of their own problems and their success. Accordingly, it is worth informing learners of their own problems. This would help the teacher to diagnose the problems and make correct decisions and use correct strategies to tackle the problem. Vandergrift et al. (2006) point out that attention in listening comprehension research is increasingly being directed at learners' self-reports of their understanding and awareness of the processes involved in listening in another language. It has been argued that awareness of strategies and other variables in learning can have a positive influence on language learners' listening development (Bolitho, Carter, Hughes, Ivaniv, Masuhara, and Tomilson, 2003; Victori and Lockhart,

1995; Wilson, 2003). Lynch (2002) considers the 'solution-oriented approach' of strategy-based teaching as an alternative to the current 'problem-oriented approach'. He refers to Brown's (1986) emphasis on the need to enable teachers to identify particular patterns of behavior in listening manifested by unsuccessful listeners and to provide exercises for the students which will improve their superior patterns of behavior. For this propose, Lynch (2002) reports Tauroza's (1997) three-phase remedial technique as follows:

1. Identifying the students' listening problems
2. Finding out how many students share the problems
3. Focusing students' attention on the problem points

Field (1998) argues that from a process-oriented perspective, wrong answers can be seen to be of more significance than correct ones. Instead of judging understanding by the number of learners who answered correctly, teachers need to follow up incorrect responses in order to determine where understanding broke down and how to put things right.

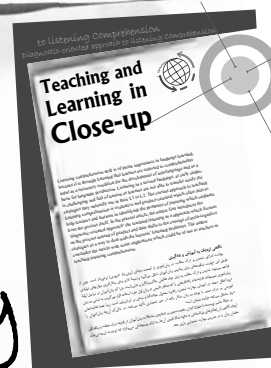
### **M**eta-Cognitive Strategies for Listening Comprehension Trouble Shooting

Meta-cognitive knowledge is defined as that segment of one's stored world knowledge that has to do with people as cognitive creatures with their diverse cognitive processes, goals, actions, and experiences (Flavell 1976, cited in Vandergrift et al. 2006, p. 433). According

to listening Comprehension  
Diagnostic-oriented approach to listening Comprehension

# Diagnostic-Oriented Approach to listening Comprehension

Naeini, Jila, Islamic Azad University  
of Aliabad Katoul  
naeini.j@gmail.com



## Introduction

Raising learners' meta-cognitive awareness about listening has been advocated for some time now (Vandergrift 2003). Vandergrift, Goh, Mareschal, and Tafaghodtari (2006) note that research on the effects of meta-cognitive instruction has provided preliminary evidence that performance, confidence, and motivation can be enhanced through classroom instruction. They developed the Meta-cognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ, Appendix C) for tapping language learners' awareness of the process of L2 listening which was built on constructs such as meta-cognition and self-regulation. However, research that elicits language learners' meta-cognitive knowledge in a systematic manner is a

relatively recent development. The purpose of the present article is to introduce and discuss the learners' problems in listening comprehension and the way they can be tackled using the notion of meta-cognitive strategies as conceptualized in MALQ.

## Difficulties in Listening Comprehension

Field (1998) asserts that learners experience difficulties at certain points of the listening text. These are dealt with through focusing on language and meaning of the text; No attention is paid to what may go wrong in the process of listening. The problem with this approach is that, if the learners confront with a similar text next time, they are likely to use the same, unsuccessful techniques. Field (1998) emphasizes that under