Learner Attitudes, Strategy Awareness and Strategy Use in Process-based Listening

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Abstract

This paper outlines how current research could improve learner attitudes and heighten listening strategy awareness when using a three-stage listening process-based framework. This listening study outlines a logical pedagogic lesson for fellow educators to implement academic listening using www.breakingnewsenglish.com (BNE) in the tertiary level classroom. The preliminary study at a Korean university describes a series of five BNE lessons which were developed using a three-stage strategy-based plan for academic listening. Metacognitive, cognitive and socio-affective tasks were integrated into pre-/while-/post-listening stages to measure if listening attitudes improved and if strategy awareness and strategy use heightened after task exposure. The data analyzed from pre-course/post-course questionnaires suggest that although individual attitudes toward listening did not improve, listening components used in this pedagogic approach could improve strategy awareness and the employment of listening strategies to help second language learners develop their listening competence.

Keywords: listening, learning strategies, process-based learning,

Introduction

"Listening is the Cinderella skill in second language learning" (Nunan, 1999, p. 199) and perhaps encapsulates the frustrations that both learners and educators encounter in being unable to evaluate or monitor progress sufficiently. Learners need tangible tasks and opportunities to understand their weaknesses when practicing listening. Furthermore, educators may feel unqualified to teach listening, as they may feel overwhelmed by the terminology or restricted by the lack of authentic texts available when teaching listening (Field, 2009). Scholars have suggested potential directives dating back to the 1980s, highlighting listening comprehension as a necessity before speaking in language learning (Nation & Newton, 2009). However, few theorists have investigated how learners use these directives to identify input, interpret messages by parsing or respond with the appropriate output (Vandergrift & Goh, 2018). Graham (2006) notes how these listening complexities result in the process being unobservable, resulting in learners being unable to understand how to approach their listening or improve their performance. Similarly, Siegel (2013) maintains that despite attempts to improve upon traditional product-based approaches, learners are not provided with clear instruction in how to improve their listening skills. Thus, thirty years of research has developed a catalog of learning strategies in listening derived from previous empirical research (Vandergrift & Goh, 2018). More specifically, a process-based listening approach using planning and reflection tasks (Goh, 2018) could be integrated into listening instruction using three conventional distinctions: metacognition (to plan, monitor and evaluate learning), cognition (processes used to acquire learning) and socio-affective approaches (involve others to enhance learning) which could help heighten strategy awareness and strategy use while improving learner attitudes toward listening (Goh, 2018).

Review of Literature

The Listening Process

The listening process can be divided into four distinct approaches: top-down/bottom-up processing, controlled and automatic processing, perception, parsing and utilization and metacognition (Vandergrift & Goh 2018). Top-down (establishing meaning using one's previous knowledge) and bottom-up (the parsing or dividing of speech) processes refer to how learners divide the input to comprehend the message. Once learners have sufficient strategies to interpret these messages, learners can then listen to texts using controlled (conscious attention to input) or automatic (pay little conscious attention to input) processing to comprehend. In turn, these processes help learners to identify, parse and interpret information that they hear more effectively.

However, research investigating bottom-up and top-down processes has shown that learners vary on their reliance and can become more reliant on one process; thus, using isolated rather than parallel approaches. For example, Goh (2000) found a majority of 40 learners relying on bottom-up processing to interpret listening input before they could engage with top-down processing sufficiently, suggesting materials should develop orchestrated opportunities to aid learners' listening comprehension (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).

Thus, process-based learning focuses on using metacognition to help learners address their difficulties. Metacognitive approaches involve knowledge of the above cognitive processes and the metacognitive capacity to monitor, regulate and orchestrate listening in the comprehension process (Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010). Thus learners are given the opportunity to think about what they are doing, why they are doing it and reflect on whether the task is being completed correctly (Vandergrift & Goh, 2018).

Process-based Listening

Field (2009) describes a standard listening framework that uses a three-stage lesson approach: pre-listening, during-listening and post-listening. Although used in more conventional comprehension approaches, the flexibility of the stages allow for teachers to adapt and use combined process-based and product-based approaches.

Nation and Newton (2009) also observe how process-based approaches can support learners by: 1. Providing reference to prior experience, 2. Guiding learners through the text, 3. Using shared learning arrangements and 4. Achieving comprehension autonomously. Thus, these approaches show how process-based approaches can support traditional product-based tasks in listening lessons.

Goh's (2018) Metacognitive Pedagogical Process-based Listening approach employs parallel top-down and bottom-up approaches through three stages that provide greater process-based scaffolding for learners. This process-based pedagogic framework provides learners with a three-stage listening lesson to plan and predict the listening (metacognitive), listen to and answer comprehension questions (cognitive), and reflect on their answers through pair sharing (socio-affective).

Figure 1: Metacognitive Pedagogical Sequence (Goh, 2018, p. 151)
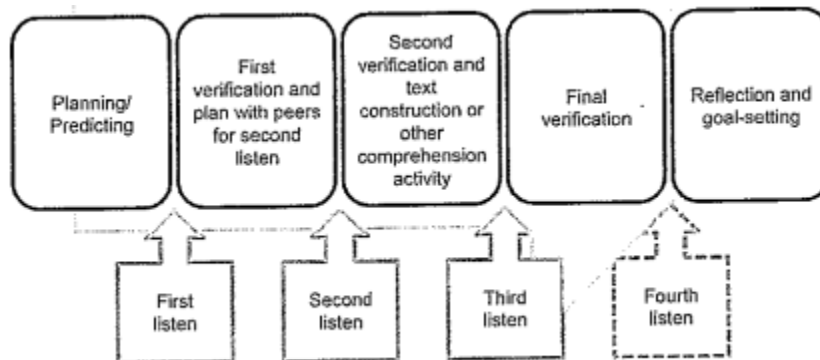
This task cycle adopts Willis' (1996) design which uses a pre-task/task/post-task framework and a language learning component (Nunn, 2006). These stages provide learners with opportunities to draw on combinative parallel approaches by using top-down familiarity and background knowledge to support their bottom-up linguistic and prosodic (intonation/stress features) cognitive requirements to understand listening texts (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). However, as these tasks are often presented as product tasks that have tangible outcomes (Nunn, 2006), learners should be cautious that they are not reliant on bottom-up approaches to achieve comprehension and, instead focus on interactively using orchestrated top-down and bottom-up processes (Field, 2009). As Siegel (2013) notes, these recent pedagogical approaches also focus more on cognitive processes and strategy use. Consequently, programs should offer learners frequent listening practices that provide orchestrated opportunities for learners to access their repertoire of strategies as required while reflecting on the process (Lee & Oxford, 2008; Siegel, 2015).

Strategy Awareness

Strategy awareness refers to familiarizing learners with the process of listening and introducing strategies that can help them to address their listening difficulties (Graham & Santos, 2015). As Graham and Santos (2015) describe, "before you can help learners to listen more effectively, it is important to make them aware of useful things they do already… in their first or second language" (p. 130).

In their study, Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010) investigated how familiarity can heighten learners' strategy awareness. Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010) monitored how five recurring metacognitive strategies in planning and evaluation, problem-solving, directed attention, mental translation and person knowledge contributed towards learners autonomously using these strategies. Although they found that learner proficiency may vary learners' active control of processes, Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010) suggest that listening instruction could provide opportunities for learners to employ the strategies they need. By introducing listening strategies in classroom tasks that reflect more closely as to what happens in real-life listening, strategy exposure in lessons could adequately scaffold learners more realistically and positively in using both conscious and unconscious approaches in cognitive and metacognitive learning (Field, 2009).

Although process-based frameworks have been welcomed by scholars, some remain skeptical about the effectiveness of these listening tasks. Confusion surrounding whether listening should be taught consciously (controlled in metacognition) or unconsciously (automatic use in cognition) adds ambiguity to how explicit directives should be in listening

practices (Lynch, 2011). Additionally, process-based approaches could be deemed inappropriate as learners focus on communicative competence rather than linguistic competence (Acar, 2006). Thus, as Vandergrift and Goh (2012) advocate, orchestration in listening practices could provide learners with opportunities to use metacognitive conscious-controlled processes to raise their awareness of using cognitive and collaborative socio-affective practices subconsciously. In turn, this can provide learners with support to improve both their communication and linguistic competence in listening lessons.

Learner Attitudes in Listening

Literature also suggests that learners often perceive frequent practices in listening as overwhelming, resulting in negative attitudes from learners' task failure (Graham, 2006).

In Liao's (2012) study, she found that Taiwanese senior high school learners encounter several listening difficulties which affects their motivation. She describes learners' experience as using a passive learning approach to listening that provides limited exposure to listening tasks in class. Thus, Liao (2012) comments that as learners are not asked to think about their listening, this may result in learners not actively trying to listen.

Similarly, Graham's (2006) study investigated listening attitudes of 595 learners. She found that many learners perceived their listening to be less than successful, identifying speed, individual words and the passive approach of listening as difficulties. Thus, Graham (2006) states how addressing the 'how' of listening, by using both top-down and bottom-up tasks, can help learners reflect more competently on how they listen effectively.

Siegel's (2013) study also reports on the learner attitudes of 54 tertiary level Japanese learners. He found that although a majority of learners enjoyed listening in English, they preferred to listen to English outside of the classroom. Additionally, Siegel (2013) found that learners lacked confidence in their listening, identifying time pressures and lack of tangible tasks as their main insecurities. Thus, these findings suggest the frustrations that learners experience result from learners being unable to notice changes in their listening progress (Siegel, 2013).

Additionally, Lee and Oxford (2008) found that proficient leaners tend to possess more positive attitudes compared to less proficient learners, as they are able to employ a wider range of strategies when listening. Therefore, as Vandergrift and Goh's (2012) orchestration hypothesis observes, raising learners' strategy awareness can help learners to access repair strategies and address their individual listening difficulties, irrespective of their level, which could result in improved attitudes towards listening. Thus, learners need to simultaneously develop positive attitudes by raising their metacognitive awareness which, in turn, heightens their strategy awareness and strategy use (Graham, 2006).

Learner Strategy Awareness and Strategy Use in Listening

Siegel (2013) identifies how traditional approaches towards listening now include metacognitive and cognitive approaches in listening for the learner to think about and develop their strategy awareness. By using this approach, learners can understand the listening process and develop their awareness of strategies they use in the listening process.

In line with including metacognitive and cognitive approaches in listening lessons, Liao's (2012) study employs a range of listening tasks that facilitate a process-based approach while modeling the listening strategies required for learners.

Table 1: (Learning Strategies and application – Liao, 2012)

	Learning Strategies and Applications (Liao, 2012)		
	Pre-Listening	**While-Listening**	**Post-Listening**
Task	- Mixed-up charades - Tune In - Film watching - Jeopardy - Vocabulary competition	- Note-taking skills - Predictions	- Review notes - Oral summary - Short dialogue - Opinion/Reasons - Alternative ending

In pre-listening, learners use background knowledge to make connections or 'tune in' to the topic. Key words are also introduced to learners to provide both top-down and bottom-up opportunities in pre-listening. Both of these tasks give learners opportunities to reflect on their previous knowledge of the topic and discuss how they will listen to the text. In while-listening, learners are presented with prediction questions to guide their comprehension through the listening text. Although a product-based task, learners can write notes and then monitor their comprehension by 'measuring' their progress with the correct answers. By adding a peer discussion, learners can check their answers together and reflect on how they achieved those answers. In post-listening, learners can evaluate and monitor their understanding through a summary discussion with their peers. Learners are then asked to give their opinions and provide reasons or alternative endings to interact with the listening text. Thus, a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches should be used in conjunction with more process-based reflection opportunities.

Methodology

Research questions

The three main research questions were:

RQ1. How do learners feel about listening in English?

RQ2: How easy or difficult are listening components for learners' to understand listening in English?

RQ3: Which listening tasks increased learners' strategy use?

Participants

The study was conducted at a private university in Korea to investigate if listening lessons could improve learners' listening attitudes and heighten their strategy awareness and strategy use. One Freshman class, consisting of 30 EAP learners (17 males and 13 females aged between 19-21 years old), attended 200 minutes of Academic English instruction per week for two 16-week semesters. Learners were Korean, Chinese and Japanese L1 speakers from predominantly middle-class backgrounds, recognized as CEFR A2 level (equivalent of

IELTS 5.0) after completing an initial university placement test for their first semester of Academic English.

In Korean education, English components are employed from an early age with many learners possessing approximately 16 years of language exposure. Learners predominantly practice speaking and writing, using rote learning for the College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT) entrance examinations with a limited focus on listening and reading skills. Similarly, Japanese learners are exposed to between six to eight years of English between schooling and after-school programs, with all three cultures often exposed to rote memorization approaches, usually at the expense of practices, resulting in learners doubting practical and interactive approaches in teaching (Swan & Smith, 2010).

Breaking News English

BNE (or www.breakingnewsenglish.com) was chosen as an appropriate resource to develop the listening program. BNE was created by Sean Banville in 2005 to provide learners with motivating and authentic materials focusing on current affairs. Banville (2005) defines BNE materials as tasks which select and employ suitable familiar task practice in all four reading, writing, speaking and listening skills while providing authentic topics of interest for learners. Banville (2005) uploads the news story recordings in British and American accents, available at different slow, medium and fast speeds, which are adapted from lower (level 0) to higher (level 6) versions for learners to choose from.

In previous research, Field (2009) has criticized the language limitations and out-of-date tendencies of textbooks. However, BNE resources provide learners with recent, authentic and informal texts. Each lesson is adapted from daily stories taken from the original VOA (Voice of America) source, to provide a current and relevant topic for learners. Additionally, as Kelsen (2016) suggests, these learning resources are of interest to learners, providing background contexts that learners can compare their existing prior knowledge with and use to interpret the listening text.

Bessette (2007) also comments on how using online resources provide learners with learner-centered tasks to heighten their own individual strategy awareness. Banville (2005) considers how recycling tasks from story to story can improve learner motivation as learners practice using a familiar outline of tasks to improve their listening attitudes while simultaneously heightening their listening strategy awareness and consequently, strategy use.

Procedure

Learners were chosen by convenience sampling as the researcher was allocated a Foundation level class for the semester. The listening project was integrated into the regular academic English course, using one 75-minute lesson per week over a period of five weeks in the second half of the course (after mid-term exams). Learners were provided with all listening materials and asked to complete the five lessons in-class to create a 10% graded listening portfolio. Materials were developed using recurring tasks integrated into a three-stage process-based lesson approach. Each task had written instructions which the teacher reinforced by providing verbal guidance during lessons. Learners were also given feedback before the next lesson and allocated five minutes at the start of the following class to collect their folder, read their feedback and decide how to implement their feedback suggestions for that week.

Lesson Pedagogy

To incorporate these components into a listening lesson, the following task and stage distinctions were made:

Table 2: (BNE Adapted Stages for a Listening Course – Goh, 2018, p. 151)

BNE Academic Listening Lesson Format (Adapted from Goh's Metacognitive Pedagogical Sequence (2018))			
Stage	**Pre-Listening (20 minute) Planning/Prediction**	**While-Listening (20 minutes) First Verification / Second Verification**	**Post-Listening (20 minutes) Final Verification/ Reflection**
Task	(A)*- Check Title (B/H)- Check Photos (J/H)- Write in 'Before Prediction' (E)- Check Vocabulary	(E)- Circle question key words (C/F/G/K)- Listen once, write answers (D/F/G/K) - Listen again, add to answer (J/L)- Check with partner - Give answers	(L)- Write summary/opinion (A/K)- Discuss answers/opinion (M) - Check Transcript (J/H)- Write in 'After Prediction'

**Letters refer to the tasks listed in the questionnaire (Appendix A - Q5)*

Pre-listening tasks

In line with Goh's (2018) planning/prediction stage, the pre-listening tasks prompted learners to think about their prior experiences and existing contextual knowledge. The lesson materials provided learners with photos and prediction boxes to activate their previous knowledge. Key vocabulary was also presented and translated by learners to provide further bottom-up scaffolding before listening to the text.

While-listening tasks

In line with Goh's (2018) first/second verification stage, learners prepared for the while-listening tasks by identifying and circling VAN (verbs/adjectives/nouns) key words from the pre-set questions. This helped learners' directed and selected attention by preparing them to first listen for gist, and then a second time for details. Learners could also discuss their answers with each other after each listening to heighten their confidence while introducing an interactive socio-affective task to this stage.

Post-listening tasks

In line with Goh's (2018) final verification and reflection stage, post-listening tasks encouraged learners to write both summary and opinion paragraphs. These monitoring and reflection tasks encouraged learners to first reflect on their own interpretation of the listening text and then reflect on what they understood from the process. Learners had the opportunity to work individually or with others, thus further lowering anxiety for individuals while sharing their interpretations with their peers.

These three stages provided learners with a balanced process-based framework to listening using a systematic metacognitive/cognitive/socio-affective approach.

Data Collection

Questionnaires

A pre-course/post-course questionnaire adapted from Liao (2012) was used to investigate learner attitudes, strategy awareness and strategy use in listening. Prompts from Liao's (2012) learning assessment were adapted to provide learners with multiple choice responses. For this study, a five-point Likert scale was used to elicit more accurate responses from participants (Dornyei, 2007). To provide triangulation, qualitative data was also collected on the questionnaire and from individual lesson journals. However, due to space constraints, this paper will present the study's quantitative results only.

Three questionnaire prompts (Appendix A) were developed to ask learners about their listening attitudes, strategy awareness and strategy use. Specifically, Question 2 asked learners to report on their listening attitudes, Question 3 elicited learner responses on their strategy awareness and Question 5 reported on changes in learners' strategy use.

Table 3: (Pre-course/Post-course Questionnaire Items)

Question	Approach
Q2. How do you feel about listening in English?	Metacognitive (Listening Attitudes)
Q3. How easy or difficult are the following to understand when listening in English?	Metacognitive (Strategy Awareness)
Q5. Which of the following do you use to help you understand better in English?	Cognitive (Strategy Use)

Both pre-course/post-course questionnaires included the same questions to compare listening attitudes, strategy awareness and strategy use over the course duration. The pre-course questionnaire was circulated in week 9 and the post-course questionnaire was circulated in week 15.

RQ1 was addressed by using Q2 responses from pre-course/post-course questionnaires to quantify learners' attitudes toward listening in English both before and after the course. The questionnaires asked learners how they felt about listening by asking respondents to choose from seven adjectives to best describe their attitudes towards listening in English.

RQ2 was addressed by using Q3 from pre-course/post-course questionnaires to quantify learners' awareness of six components found in listening texts. Learners were given a five-point Likert Scale (1=Very Difficult, 5=Very Easy) to rate how each component affects their understanding of the listening text.

RQ3 was addressed by using Q5 from pre-course/post-course questionnaires to ask learners which lesson tasks (with integrated listening strategies) they had used frequently to understand the listening text better. Learners rated six tasks used in the lesson using a five-point Likert scale (1=Never, 5= Always).

The adjectives, components and tasks were listed as items for each respective question to measure changes in learner attitudes, strategy awareness and strategy use.

Piloting and Study Limitations

The listening questionnaire was piloted with a class from the previous semester to check learners' understanding of the checklist statements and the instructions for each question. Learners were given ten minutes to complete the questionnaire and were prompted to ask clarification questions.

The questionnaire piloting resulted in some pertinent observations. Learners should be given an extra five minutes to first read the questionnaire and ask clarification questions regarding the instructions and items before being allocated another ten minutes to complete the questionnaire. Additionally, learners were unclear as to some of the descriptors (e.g. visual aids) so this has been clarified by adding an example to describe each item (e.g. pictures/transcript). It was also observed that learners did not write many comments. Therefore, learners will be allocated additional writing time, if needed, to write their comments when the questionnaire is distributed for the study.

To ensure the listening course could be implemented successfully in class with learners, a lesson was conducted to pilot the materials in week 2 of the same semester. The lesson was conducted by prompting learners to complete the tasks using the written instructions on the materials. The teacher also provided additional verbal instruction and time limits to complete each stage of the lesson.

The lesson pilot also resulted in some modifications for the main study. First, the researcher realized that learners were checking the script on their smartphones, after checking vocabulary translations in the pre-listening stage. As a result, learners will be asked to put their smartphones away after checking vocabulary in the pre-listening to ensure that the website is not accessed before or during the listening.

Secondly, learners were chosen by convenience sampling. This may affect the generalizability of the study as the participants were chosen by class group rather than by motivation. Additionally, the results reflect the findings of one university class which may be more validated if more participants from other classes and other levels (e.g. advanced) had been recruited for the study.

Lastly, listening fatigue could be a potential problem as the repetition of using five listening lessons in five consecutive weeks could prove boring or frustrating for some learners. Therefore, providing learners with immediate and retrospective feedback could alleviate some fatigue and help heighten their motivation.

Results and Discussion

Data Processing

Data collection was divided into two sections. To investigate RQ1 and RQ2, pre-course questionnaires (from 27 learners) and post-course questionnaires (from 25 learners) helped determine learner attitudes about listening and elicit reports on learners' existing strategy awareness. To investigate RQ3, learner responses about their use of tasks before and after the five listening lessons helped to determine any changes in their strategy use.

Questionnaires were collected and tallied using Microsoft Excel then calculated to show a division from 100 percent respondents to show quantitative differences between pre-course and post-course data. Questionnaire comments and tasks completed from lessons were also logged, coded and analyzed to provide further qualitative support for these findings (Dornyei, 2007), but were not used in this paper.

RQ1: Learner attitudes - How do learners feel about listening in English?

To understand how learners feel about listening in English, respondents reported on *'How do you feel about listening in English?'*. Learners were asked to describe their listening experience by choosing from seven adjectives: Enjoyable, Interesting, Useful, Necessary, Difficult, Stressful and Boring.

Table 4: Results of attitudes towards listening in pre-course and post-course

Listening Attitudes			
Listening is…	Pre-course*	Post-course*	Difference
Enjoyable	3	3	0
Interesting	5	5	0
Useful	9	8	-1
Necessary	10	7	-3
Difficult	12	14	+2
Stressful	6	6	0
Boring	2	2	0

* Learners could choose multiple answers for this question

Although *Enjoyable, Interesting, Stressful* and *Boring* remained the same throughout the course, learners felt that listening was not as *Useful* or as *Necessary* to their studies by the end of the course. Additionally, an increase in *Difficult* questions if learners felt motivated after using these learner-centered tasks.

Regarding the attitudes of learners between the pre-course and post-course duration, Table 4 shows no differences in finding the lessons *Enjoyable, Interesting*, *Stressful* or *Boring*. However, despite using more tangible tasks (Siegel, 2015) and using metacognitive strategies for learners to reflect on and recognize their learning weaknesses more predominantly (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012), learners felt that the course was more difficult than expected. It seems that the number of tasks included in each lesson could have been overwhelming for learners and instead of promoting self-efficacy, the number of tasks heightened anxiety levels further (Graham, 2006). Additionally, this change in attitudes is confirmed through a decrease in *Useful* and *Necessary* results, questioning if learners should be informed more explicitly about the task and how these strategies can help address their listening difficulties (Graham, 2006).

RQ2: Strategy Awareness - How easy or difficult are listening components for learners' to understand listening in English?

To understand learner awareness of different listening components, the second question asked *'How easy or difficult are the following to understand when listening in English?'*. Learners were asked to rate six listening components: Vocabulary, Speed, Accent/Pronunciation. Structure/Content, Background/Context and Visual Aids.

Table 5: Results of listening strategy awareness (easy) in pre-course and post-course

Strategy Awareness – Easy					
Listening Component	Very Easy	Easy	Not Easy or Difficult	Total	Difference
Vocabulary	3.3	3.3	44	44.6	**+39.4%**
	4	**24**	**56**	**84**	
Structure	7.4	18.5	40.7	66.6	**+5.4%**
	0	**24**	**48**	**72**	

White cell = pre-course   *Blue cell = post-course*

Of the six listening components, *Vocabulary* and *Structure* was favored as easier to understand by post-course. This could be a result of the repetitive structure used in all five lessons and also from the heightened confidence of learners using the words provided in the pre-listening vocabulary box for while-listening and post-listening tasks.

Table 5 shows learners identifying *Vocabulary* and *Structure* as listening components which made the text easier to understand. These listening components show a clear distinction between learners using bottom-up and top-down listening tasks (see Table 6 and Table 7). *Vocabulary* usage increased by almost 40 percent in five lessons to conform to Field's (2009) observation that learners use bottom-up tendencies more dominantly. Additionally, heightened top-down *Structure* familiarity suggests how recurring strategy frameworks could support learners in monitoring. These findings indicate that metacognitive processes could support the automaticity of certain cognitive tasks (such as *Question Comprehension)* when using a recurring lesson structure (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).

However, the other four components of *Speed, Accent, Background* and *Visual Aids* showed varying degrees of increasing difficulty for learners in post-course results.

Table 6: Results of limited listening strategy awareness (difficult) in pre-course and post-course

Strategy Awareness – Difficult				
Listening Component	Difficult	Very Difficult	Total	Difference
Speed	33.3	11.1	44.4	**-3.6%**
	40	**8**	**48**	
Accent	22.2	11.1	33.3	**-10.7%**
	36	**8**	**44**	
Background	22.2	0	22.2	**-21.8%**
	40	**4**	**44**	
Visual Aids	**14.8**	**3.7**	18.5	**-5.5%**
	12	**12**	**24**	

White cell = pre-course   *Blue cell = post-course*

For *Accent,* learners often commented about the selection of British English over American English, citing unfamiliarity as a problem in understanding the text. Additionally, as learners became more aware of the different speeds available on the BNE website, it was

requested that the 'slower' or 'slowest' speeds were played instead of 'medium'. Although contextual top-down approaches, such as background and visual aids, were provided in the photo and prediction speculation tasks, these pre-listening tasks failed to improve learner attitudes as they were unable to make contextual links to the listening content to help their comprehension.

Furthermore, the application of orchestrated approaches is questioned, showing learners possessed fewer problem solving strategies to help cope with their listening difficulties (Table 6). *Speed* and *Accent* of different texts caused concern for learners, especially if the recording did not adhere to familiar American prosodic conventions (Field 2009). Additionally, learners showed limited strategy awareness when using *Background* and *Visual Aids,* highlighting learners' hesitancy to use top-down tasks and rely on bottom-up tasks (Field, 2009). Thus, as learners chose fewer top-down tasks, this raises the concern that learners are still recognizing listening tasks in isolation rather than in tandem, indicating more strategy awareness exposure is required to successfully orchestrate these strategies in listening lessons (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).

RQ3: Strategy Use - Which listening tasks increased learners' listening strategy use?

To answer RQ3 about which listening tasks increased learners' strategy use as a result of task exposure, the third question asked *'Which of the following methods do you use to help you understand better in English?'.* Learners were asked to rate twelve listening tasks: Discuss Topic, Previous Experience, General Ideas, Specific Ideas, Check/Guess Vocabulary, Accent/Pronunciation, Expressions, Visual Aids, Make/Check Predictions, Comprehension Questions, Write Summary/Opinion, and Transcript.

Table 7: Results indicating increased strategy use in pre-course and post-course

Increased Strategy Use					
Listening Task	**Sometimes**	**Usually**	**Always**	**Total**	**Difference**
Discuss	33.3	11.1	0	44.4	**+19.6%**
	44	**20**	**0**	**64**	
General Ideas	37	37	3.7	77.7	**+6.3%**
	40	**32**	**12**	**84**	
Specific Ideas	29.6	29.6	3.7	62.9	**+25.1%**
	52	**28**	**8**	**88**	
Check/Guess Vocabulary	**29.6**	**44.4**	**7.4**	81.4	**+10.6%**
	40	**36**	**16**	**92**	
Comprehension Questions	**37**	**22.2**	**0**	59.2	**+16.8%**
	52	**20**	**4**	**76**	

White cell = pre-course   *Blue cell = post-course*

Of the twelve listening tasks used in the listening lesson (see Table 2), learners identified using *Discuss, General Ideas, Specific Ideas* and *Guess/Check Vocabulary* and *Comprehension Questions* (Table 7) more frequently by the end of the course.

The mixed attitudes of learners were further confirmed when analyzing the learner awareness of listening strategies in tasks completed. In bottom-up tasks, increased strategy

use in the areas of *Guess/Check Vocabulary* were reported, which also shows learners using lexical items as scaffolding when listening.

Additionally, the top-down socio-affective task of *Discuss* indicates an increase of 20 percent more usage by learners in post-course results which highlights the task's potential to alleviate individual anxiety fears (Graham, 2006). Therefore, strategy familiarity helped learners to employ vocabulary more easily and encourage them to discuss with others to problem solve when they were unable to answer *Comprehension Questions.*Learners also commented that they enjoyed speaking with others at the end of the second listening to compare answers and explained that they could understand the questions more easily by listening first for general ideas and then listening again for specific ideas. In line with learner trends, bottom-up tendencies in using vocabulary was perceived as valuable, with learners using lexical items in discussions to guess or infer answers to comprehension questions by the end of practices; thus alleviating learner anxiety by sharing with others (Graham, 2006).

Furthermore, the *General Ideas* and *Specific Ideas* findings show encouraging results that learners are now using more metacognitive strategies. This challenges previous research that bottom-up processing must be mastered before learners use top-down processing, highlighting that some learners might start to use more contextual top-down tasks to help activate their previous knowledge, and in turn, address their listening difficulties. Although these tasks are still being used in isolation by learners, these findings indicate that lesson familiarity could heighten their awareness, and consequently their usage, of these individual strategies, which could be orchestrated in later lessons (Vandergrift & Goh, 2018).

However, the listening tasks *Speed/Accent, Visual Aids* and *Summary/Opinion* (Table 8) showed less frequent employment by post-course with the five other listening tasks showing negligible changes.

Table 8: Results indicating reduced strategy use in pre-course and post-course

Reduced Strategy Use					
Listening Task	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Total	Difference
Speed/Accent	11.1	37	25.9	74	-10%
	8	**24**	**32**	**64**	
Summary /Opinion	18.5	40.7	33.3	92.5	-27.5%
	4	**44**	**16**	**64**	

White cell = pre-course   *Blue cell = post-course*

A correlation between learner attitudes and strategy awareness is observed in *Speed/Accent*, again confirming learner anxieties in using a British English, medium speed text. In line with Graham's (2006) findings, learners need explicit instruction in knowing 'how' listening strategies can help them attend to these speed and pronunciation difficulties. Additionally, learners could not perceive the information transfer or metacognitive value of *Summary/Opinion.* Therefore, the value of this active listening to help learners monitor and evaluate their comprehension should perhaps be reinforced when explaining the tasks to learners in lessons (Liao, 2012).

Additionally, reduced strategy awareness by learners was found in two top-down tasks. The *Speed/Accent* of texts remained problematic for learners, questioning the speed and accent selection of the BNE text. Although the researcher selected an appropriate speed and

language level for the class, the learners had been exposed to mainly American English forms, so it may be a required change to choose American or British accents dependent on the cohort's experience and choose the relevant speed dependent on the cohort's proficiency level in future lessons.

Finally, *Summary/Opinion* also presented difficulties for learners, especially if they were unable to transfer any information. Although pre-listening tasks were designed to help learners' familiarity and activate previous knowledge of the topic, if learners possessed limited topic knowledge, then it was difficult for individuals to proceed with the while-listening and post-listening stages. Therefore, obvious and explicit links between the materials given and the listening text chosen should be made, together with clearer instruction and prompts to heighten learner confidence, that could subsequently raise their awareness of how to use these listening strategies in lessons.

Conclusions

The BNE project looked at how logical pedagogic frameworks could be used to measure changing attitudes, strategy awareness and strategy use of learners in listening lessons. The results showed that although there were no significant changes in individual attitudes toward listening, individual strategy awareness and some strategy use increased. The learners were comfortable using strategies conforming to bottom-up tendencies and an increase in some top-down approaches, if repetitive and familiar in learner-centered tasks, were also reported.

However, these results question the suitability of orchestration with learners, as parallel processes were not employed in the listening lessons successfully. Although an increase in top-down strategy use was observed, further research is necessary to shift this heightened awareness toward strategy use using parallel processes to prevent learners from using these strategies in isolation.

In regard to pedagogical implications in future teaching, recurring tasks should be used in lessons to build familiar learning repertoires for learners that continue to heighten their strategy awareness and increase their strategy use. However, further research needs to be conducted to realize where the breakdown in parallel processing procedures occurs for individual learners so that more cohesive links between bottom-up and top-down directives in listening pedagogy can be identified.

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Listening Questionnaire 1

<table>
<tr><td>Learner Number:</td><td>Class: Z</td></tr>
</table>

1. What do you listen to in English? (Please ✓ your answers)

TV/Movies _____ Music/Songs _____ My Teacher ____ Textbook CD _____ Internet/Podcasts ____ BNE_____ Other (please write)_____

2. How do you feel about listening in English? It is.... (Please ✓ your answers)

Enjoyable _____   Interesting _____   Useful ____ Necessary _____ Difficult ____ Stressful___ Boring _____ Other (please write)_____

Why?: _____

3. How <u>easy or difficult</u> are the following to understand when listening in English? (Please number <u>all</u> answers)
Please number your answers, using 1 = Very Difficult / 2 = Difficult / 3 = Not Easy nor Difficult / 4 = Easy / 5 = Very Easy

A. Vocabulary (Meaning of Words)		C. Accent/Pronunciation (Understand how words are said)		E. Background/Context (Know the general topic/idea)	
B. Speed (It is not too fast/too slow)		D. Structure/Content (Recognize beginning/middle/end)		F. Visual Aids for talk (Pictures/Transcript)	

Why?: _____

4. Which of the following methods <u>do you use</u> to help you understand better when listening in English? (Please number <u>all</u> answers)
Please number your answers, using 1 = Never / 2 = Rarely / 3 = Sometimes / 4 = Usually / 5 = Always.

A. Make/Check Predictions (What is it about?)		C. Use Key Words (Check the question)		E. Write a Summary (Re-write what you hear)	
B. Vocabulary (Guess/check word meanings)		D. Answer Questions (Use facts and phrases)		F. Give an opinion (Write about your thoughts)	

Comments: _____

5. Which of the following <u>do you use</u> to help you understand better when listening in English?
Please number your answers, using 1 = Never / 2 = Rarely / 3 = Sometimes / 4 = Usually / 5 = Always.

A. Discuss/think about the topic		E. Guess/Check Vocabulary		J. Make/Check predictions	
B. Relate ideas to my previous experiences/studies		F. Use speaker's accent, speed or emphasis		K. Write Notes/Check Comprehension Questions	
C. Listen for general ideals		G. Use speaker's facial expressions/body language		L. Write a summary/opinion	
D. Listen for specific ideas		H. Use visual aids (e.g. charts/graphs) shown		M. Use the transcript	

Any other ways? _____

6. How have you studied listening in English before? (textbook, teacher, internet, TV/Movies).

_____

_____

7. How would you like to study listening in this class?
_____

_____

8. Any other comments?

_____

Thank you for your time. I hope you enjoy the course and look forward to Academic English this semester! ☺