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**An Investigation into Listening Strategies
Utilized by Secondary School Students at
Kubaysah City in Anbar**

By

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Abstract

The present study aims to investigate the listening strategies that the sixth secondary female students use in listening inside the classroom.

To achieve the aim of the study, the following hypothesis has been put forward "there are significance differences at ($\alpha = 0, 05$) between the students' mean scores of using the listening strategies: Meta-cognitive listening strategy; Cognitive listening strategy; and Memory listening strategy. To prove the hypothesis and fulfill the aim of the study, the following procedures are carried out:

- 1- Specifying the population of the study which involves all Iraqi female sixth secondary school students (scientific branch) in the public schools at kubaysah city in Anbar.
- 2- Choosing the school to conduct the study purposefully.
- 3- Explaining the items of the questionnaire to the students.
- 4- Distributing the questionnaire to the students.
- 5- Analyzing statistically the items of the questionnaire.

To collect the data of the study, a questionnaire has been designed. The total number of the participants were 46 female students at sixth grade (scientific branch) at Fatima Al- Brnawi Secondary School for Girls.

The findings of the study revealed that the students use listening strategies, and they use meta-cognitive strategy more than cognitive and memory strategies.

Keywords: Listening strategies, secondary grades, cognitive listening strategy, meta-cognitive listening strategy, memory listening strategy.

1. Statement of the Problem

Recently, the EFL teachers in Iraq are teaching the English language via communicative approach, but they do not give sufficient time to listening skills, because it takes time and effort. The researcher notices that Iraqi EFL teachers do not provide any activities to train the students how to be good listeners, they just explain the instruction which is given before any listening activity in the textbook or in the activity book, and the students depend on themselves in listening task. The researcher notices that when students enrolled at English department at university, some of them are poor listeners, thus the researcher conducted this study to explore which strategy do the students use more, and if there are differences between using the listening strategies among the 6th secondary grade.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

To the researcher's best knowledge, no similar study has been conducted on investigating EFL secondary students' using listening strategies in Kubaysah city. therefore, the present study is expected to fill a gap in the pedagogical research in Iraq.

1.3 Hypothesis of the Study

The researcher sets the following hypothesis "there are significance differences ($\alpha = 0, 05$) between the students' mean scores of using the listening strategies: Meta-cognitive listening strategy; Cognitive listening strategy; and Memory listening strategy".

1.4 Significance of the Study

The present study derives its significance from highlighting the strategies that the EFL secondary students use in listening activities, to promote these strategies and provide feedback to the students. In addition, the study hopes to aid in the following fields:

- A) The Iraqi ministry of Education: give the ministry an idea to promote the outcomes of the listening performance in Iraq.
- B) Educational supervisors and curriculum Designers: supplying them with the strategies that need to be supported, and the strategies that need to be encouraged.
- C) EFL Teachers: help them to know how the students listen to a given text, and try to use appropriate teaching listening strategies to meet students' listening strategies.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

The limitations are as follows:

- A) The study was limited to the metacognitive strategy (Pre listening, during listening, post listening), Memory listening strategy, and cognitive listening strategy.
- B) Location: the place of the school is in Kubaysah city.
- C) Time: the study was conducted in the first academic year (2017-2018).

D) Participants: the participants were from sixth secondary students Kubaysah city.

E) The tool: the researcher design a questionnaire to collect the data of the study.

2.1 Theoretical Perspective

The world becomes a small village, and the most popular language the people use is the English Language. Rankin (1928) mentions that people spend 45% of their communication time in listening, while just 30% in speaking, about 16% in reading, and the rest 9% in writing. So, it is fact that if the learners do not train how to listen, they cannot be a good speaker. The researcher in the present study notices that listening skills, and listening strategies are to somehow neglected in the Iraqi schools. Hadley (2001:129) proves that students use different strategies in learning the foreign language, because it is a complex process, and the learners are with different personalities styles and preference, thus teaching needs a multiplicity methods to face the challenges of teaching.

2.1.1 Listening Comprehension

The first theory that focuses on developing listening skills is the Total Physical Response (TPR) by James Asher (1977). In TPR, students are exposed to great quantity of language to listen before they encourage to respond orally (Brown, 2000:247).

Listening comprehension is based on the type of the conversation. In language course and planning lessons, the classification of types of oral language the monologue and dialogue. In monologues, we use language in speeches, lectures, reading, ... etc, the hearer must process long stretches of speech without interruption. In dialogues, the conversation involves social relationship (interpersonal) and factual information (transactional). In both of them the listeners may have a good background information and schemata (Ibid: 51).

2.1.2 Types of Classroom Listening Performance

Listening is more than just hearing utterance in listening, the learners receive, construct vocabularies form, and share information with others (Al-Khayyat, 2015:39).

Fujishiro (2009) conducts a questionnaire survey, which finds that e-learning has contributed in improving students' listening performances (Ibid:23). Al-Khayyat (2016:278) designs an instructional computerize program, the program includes an icon which helps students to practice listening activities which helps students to practice listening skills.

Brown (2001:255-257) mentions that there are many techniques that the students do to practice listening skills inside the classroom. The most popular are presented below:

- 1- Reactive: It is used when the teacher wants from the learners to listen to the surface structure of an utterance.

- 2- Intensive: It is used when the learners want to focus on components (Words, intonation, Phonemes, etc.)
- 3- Responsive: It is used to elicit immediate responses, such as How are you today? What was the word you said? Take a sheet of Paper.
- 4- Selective: It is used to promote selective listening skills could as students to listen for: people's name; dates; speeches; main ideas.
- 5- Extensive: It is used to develop a top-down strategy. Its performance could range from listening to lengthy lectures, to listening to a conversation and deriving a comprehensive message.

2.1.3 Listening Strategies

When examining previous research, it becomes clear that the definitions of listening strategies. Almoswai and Rashid (2017: 24) define listening strategies as the strategies that the learners use before, during and after listening activities. In the present study, the researcher presents the most used listening strategies that are used among students.

2.1.3.1 Cognitive Listening Strategies

The cognitive listening strategy is based on the main idea to comprehend the whole passage. It helps the learner to locate the theme first of all, then the rest details. Skimming is the technique that the learners use to identify the main idea quickly. Guessing the meaning is another technique that the learners use by relying on any clues. This technique helps the learners when they do not know the meaning of some

words, or they do not understand the general meaning of a sentence or paragraph (Derry and Murphy,1986. Cited in Abdulhamid, 2012:16).

2.1.3.2 Memory Listening Strategy

Memory Strategies They arrange very simple principles, such as arranging things in order or making associations. These associations must be personally meaningful to the learner. Memory strategies allow learners to store vocabulary and then retrieve it when needed for communication. help learners link one L2 item or concept with another but do not necessarily involve deep understanding. Various memory-related strategies enable learners to learn and retrieve information in an orderly string (e.g., acronyms), while other techniques create learning and retrieval via sounds (e.g., rhyming), images (e.g., a mental picture of the word itself or the meaning of the word), a combination of sounds and images (e.g., the keyword method), body movement (e.g., total physical response), mechanical means (e.g., flashcards), or location (e.g., on a page or blackboard) (Al-Khayyat, 2016:277)

2.1.3.3 Meta-Cognitive Listening Strategies

In meta-cognitive listening strategies, the learners clarify the objectives of the listening topic. It helps the listeners to return their focus when they lose it.

The learners monitor, and evaluate their action. The strategy enable the learners to know what they should do to listen effectively. In stead of

giving up, or stop listening, the learners can use this strategy to get back to the text being listen to, it is a repair strategy (Ibid: 17). EFL teachers may use many methods to enhance EFL students' listening abilities (Al-Khayyat 2015:9).

Amin et al. (2011) investigate the correlation between EFL Students' strategic listening and their listening comprehension skills. The sample of the study consisted of 8 secondary school students. The researcher uses strategic listening interview, questionnaire, and strategic listening check list, with think-aloud protocol to collect the data of the study. The results showed that there was a positive correlation between strategic listening and listening comprehension.

Jou (2010) investigates the listening strategies employed by university students. The participants were 239 university students. There researcher used a questionnaire to collect the data of the study. The results of the study showed that the participants cannot use the strategies properly and they need guide to do so.

Huy (2015) investigates students use of listening strategies. The participants were 82 EFL students. the researcher used a questionnaire and a listening comprehension test to collect the data of the study. The result. Showed that students were aware of listening strategies. They use memory strategy higher than translating and repeating strategies.

Almoswai and Rashid (2017) conduct a study to identify and classify the effectiveness of using YouTube Video on EFL Iraqi college students' performance in Grammar at Missan University. The study shows that using audio and video enhance students listening performance, and there is positive attitude towards using audio-video techniques in teaching listening and other activities.

3. Population And Participants of The Study

The population of the study is all Heet Directorate Education EFL students, during the academic year 2017-2018. The participants were 46 female students from Fatima Al-Brnawi Secondary School for Girls.

The school was chosen purposefully for the following reasons:

- 1- It is the nearest school to the researcher's resident area.
- 2- It is the only school which accept to conduct the study at its students..

The participants were chosen purposefully too, because the sixth grade students use listening activities more than other grades, and have good accumulation amount of experience in listening skills. They suppose to practice listening strategies for about 8 years.

3.1 Research Instrument

The researcher has designed a questionnaire which consisted of 15 items with three dimensions: Meta-Cognitive listening strategy, cognitive listening strategy, and memory listening strategy. The researcher asked

several questions to the target sample before conducting the research to reveal the strategies that students are aware of them. From the students' answers the researcher designed the items of the questionnaire.

3.2 Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

The validity of the questionnaire was obtained by giving it to a group of specialists at university of Anbar and Baghdad university, and also to the EFL teachers who are specialized in teaching English language for intermediate and preparatory grades for more than 10 years. Modifications have been done according to their suggestions. In addition, to examine the construct validity (the scale), it has been distributed to a pilot sample which consisted of 17 students within the population of the study (from sixth preparatory scientific grade students. After 10 days, the scale has been given to the same sample under the same conditions. Cronbach Alpha was used to reveal the reliability coefficient. The value was 0.88. Table 1 presents the results.

Table 1: The correlation coefficients of the items with the scale

No.	Strategy	No.	Item	Reliability Coefficient
1-	Metacognitive Strategy	1-	I prepare my mind to be able to concentrate.	0.78
		2-	I set a plan for how to listen to the text.	0.85
	A)PreListening Strategy	3-	I guess the theme from its title.	0.82
	B)During	4-	I focus on the information that I need.	0.80

	Listening strategy	5-	I listen to the main ideas	0.87
		6-	I write down the information I don't understand.	0.76
	C)Post Listening strategy	7-	I ask my colleges about some unknown vocabularies.	0.79
		8-	I try reflect on the information that I don't understand.	0.83
		9-	I try to recall some of the missing information that I missed during listening.	0.81
2-	Memory Listening Strategy	10-	When I listen to new vocabulary, I connect it to image to help me remember it.	0.79
		11-	I connect the new vocabularies with what I already know.	0.83
		12-	I ignore new vocabulary during listening.	0.81
3-	Cognitive Listening Strategy	13-	I concentrate on every word to understand the text.	0.84
		14-	I translate directly the words to understand better	0.82
		15-	I use previous knowledge to help me understand the topic.	0.84
			The estimated value	0.88

Table 1 shows that the estimated value is (0.88), which means that the correlation between the items is high, that is suite for the purpose of the present study.

3.3 Statistical Analysis

To analyze the collected data, the researcher utilized means and standard deviations, T-test, Cronbach Alpha Formula, and Std. Error or (SD).

4. Result of the Study

Result related to the hypothesis of the study " there are significance differences between the students' mean scores of using the listening strategies: Metacognitive listening strategy; Cognitive listening strategy; and Memory listening strategy". To prove this hypothesis, T- test was used as shown in tables 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 below:

Table 2: One Sample T- Test of mean and std. Dev. of memory listening strategy

Memory Strategy	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
	46	3.15	3.011	0.444

Table 3: The One Sample Test of test value and Confidence interval of the Difference in memory listening strategy

Test Value = 12						
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Memory Strategy	2.595	45	0.013	1.152	0.26	2.05

Tables 2 and 3 show that there is a significance differences at 0.05, which mean that the students use the memory strategy in listening activities inside the classroom.

Table 4: One Sample T- Test of mean and std. Dev. of cognitive Listening Strategy

Cognitive Strategy	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
	46	12.98	1.903	0.281

Table 5: The One Sample Test of test value and Confidence interval of the Difference of cognitive listening strategy

Test Value = 9						
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	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Cognitive Strategy	14.178	45	.000	3.978	3.41	4.54

Tables 4 and 5 show that there is a significance differences at 0.05, which mean that the students use the cognitive listening strategy in listening activities inside the classroom.

Table 6: One Sample T- Test of mean and std. Dev. of meta-cognitive listening strategy

Meta-Cognitive Strategy	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
	46	32.04	4.821	0.711

Table 7: The One Sample Test of test value and Confidence interval of the Difference of meta- cognitive listening strategy

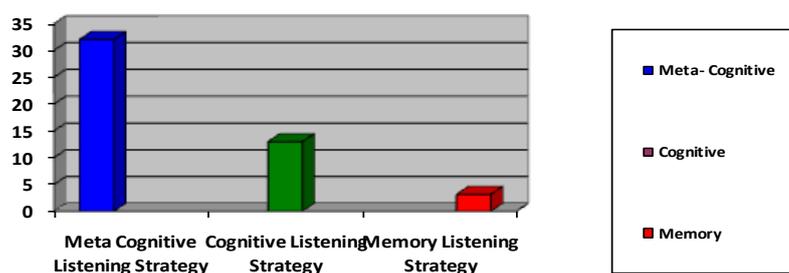
Test Value = 24						
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Meta-Cognitive Strategy	11.316	45	0.000	8.43	6.61	9.48

Tables 6 and 7 show that there is a significance differences at 0.05, which mean that the students use the meta-cognitive listening strategy in listening activities inside the classroom.

Tables 3, 5 and 7 show that there is a significance differences at 0.05, which mean that the students use the Meta-cognitive strategy in listening activities inside the classroom.

Tables 6 and 7 show that the students use meta cognitive listening strategy (mean= 32.04) more than other strategies: cognitive listening strategy (mean= 12.98), and Memory listening strategy (mean = 3.15).

Chart 1: The means of each listening strategy



5. Conclusions and Recommendations

From the results of the study, the researcher concludes that sixth secondary (scientific branch) use listening strategies: meta- cognitive, cognitive, and memory strategies when they have listening activities, and they use meta-cognitive strategies more than other strategies, this may due that meta- cognitive strategy has features that cannot be found in other strategies such as pre-listening strategy, during listening strategy, and post listening strategy. These strategies are the most helpful strategies that students use to comprehend the listening task. This results are consisted with the results of, Amin et al. (2011), and Hug (2015), and Almoswai and Rahid (2017). But it did not consist with Jou (2010).

Based on these results, the researcher puts forward the following suggestions:

- 1- To conduct the same listening strategies among sixth literary branch secondary students.
- 2- To design listening instructional programs based on some listening strategies.
- 3- To measure the correlation between listening strategies and listening comprehension.

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Dedication

**I present my modest work to the memory of the
Master of mankind.**

To my father,

To my sympathetic mother,

To my kind husband, brothers, and sisters.

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