

THE ROLE OF LISTENING STRATEGY USE IN PREDICTING LISTENING PROFICIENCY AMONG TENTH-GRADE EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT: Listening is a fundamental skill in EFL learning, yet many students face difficulties and show limited awareness of effective listening strategies. This study aimed to investigate the role of listening strategy use in predicting proficiency among tenth-grade EFL learners. This study employed a correlational quantitative design with 74 tenth-grade students using convenience sampling. Data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire to measure metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies and a standardized TOEFL Junior listening test to assess listening proficiency. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation, and regression analysis. The findings revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between the use of listening strategies and listening proficiency. However, the predictive power was relatively low, indicating that listening strategies contributed modestly to students' listening performance. Among the strategy types, socio-affective strategies were used most frequently, while cognitive and metacognitive strategies were used at moderate levels. These findings suggest that although listening strategies play an important role, listening proficiency is influenced by multiple factors. In addition, factors such as learners' motivation, prior knowledge, and exposure to English may also contribute significantly to listening achievement. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers incorporate explicit instruction of cognitive and metacognitive strategies and provide greater exposure to authentic listening materials to enhance students' listening development.

Keywords: *listening strategies; listening proficiency; socio-affective; English learning*

PERAN PENGGUNAAN STRATEGI MENYIMAK DALAM MEMPREDIKSI KEMAHIRAN MENYIMAK PADA SISWA BAHASA INGGRIS SEBAGAI BAHASA ASING (EFL) KELAS X

ABSTRAK: Menyimak merupakan keterampilan dasar dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing (EFL). Namun, banyak siswa mengalami kesulitan dan menunjukkan keterbatasan dalam kesadaran akan penggunaan strategi menyimak yang efektif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji peran penggunaan strategi menyimak dalam memprediksi kemahiran menyimak pada siswa kelas X. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuantitatif korelasional yang melibatkan 74 siswa kelas X yang dipilih melalui teknik *convenience sampling*. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner tertutup yang mengukur strategi metakognitif, kognitif, dan sosioafektif, serta tes menyimak standar *TOEFL Junior* untuk mengukur kemahiran menyimak. Data dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif, korelasi Product-Moment Pearson, dan analisis regresi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya hubungan positif yang signifikan antara penggunaan strategi menyimak dan kemahiran menyimak. Namun, daya prediksi yang dihasilkan relatif rendah, yang menunjukkan bahwa strategi menyimak hanya memberikan kontribusi terbatas terhadap kinerja menyimak siswa. Di antara jenis strategi, strategi sosioafektif paling sering digunakan, sedangkan

strategi kognitif dan metakognitif lebih jarang digunakan. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa kemahiran menyimak dipengaruhi oleh berbagai faktor. Faktor-faktor seperti motivasi, pengetahuan awal, dan paparan bahasa Inggris juga dapat berpengaruh terhadap kemampuan menyimak siswa. Oleh karena itu, disarankan agar guru mengintegrasikan pengajaran strategi kognitif dan metakognitif secara eksplisit serta meningkatkan penggunaan materi menyimak autentik untuk mendukung perkembangan kemampuan menyimak siswa.

Kata kunci: *strategi menyimak; kemampuan menyimak; sosial-afektif; pembelajaran bahasa Inggris*

INTRODUCTION

Listening is widely regarded as a foundational language skill that underpins the development of other language competencies, including speaking, reading, and writing. As noted by Wahyuni (2019), listening plays a central role in language learning due to its pervasive use in both academic and everyday contexts. It involves not only the physiological process of hearing but also the cognitive ability to identify, comprehend, and interpret spoken input. In this sense, listening extends beyond passive reception and requires active attention to the construction of meaning. Furthermore, Darweesh (2014) emphasized that both teachers and students need to acknowledge the critical role of listening comprehension in achieving academic success. For high school students in particular, listening proficiency is essential for understanding instructional content, participating in classroom interactions, and engaging in academic activities such as discussions, presentations, and seminars. It also constitutes a key component of standardized assessments, including the listening section of national examinations.

Despite its importance, many students continue to struggle with listening comprehension for various internal and external reasons. Internal factors include limited vocabulary, poor concentration, and anxiety, all of which may hinder students' ability to process spoken input effectively. For instance, nervousness can reduce and negatively affect comprehension (Darti & Asmawati, 2017), while concentration plays a significant role in determining listening success (Pratiwi & Andriyanti, 2019). External factors, such as the speaker's delivery, unfamiliar topics, and learning context, also contribute to these difficulties (Sari & Fithriyana, 2019). Students often struggle when the speaker speaks too quickly or when the content is beyond their prior knowledge, making comprehension more challenging.

In addressing these challenges, teachers play a pivotal role in developing students' listening skills by selecting appropriate instructional materials, employing effective pedagogical approaches, and implementing suitable teaching strategies. Ayu and Zuraida (2020) argue that well-designed instructional techniques can enhance students' engagement and comprehension in listening activities. However, despite their importance, the explicit teaching of listening strategies, particularly at the secondary education level, has often received limited attention in classroom practice.

Listening strategies are deliberate techniques learners use to process and comprehend spoken input (Yulisa, 2017). These strategies involve a range of cognitive and metacognitive processes that enable learners to interpret meaning, monitor understanding, and respond effectively to auditory information. Previous studies have classified listening strategies into three categories: metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective (Vandergrift, 1997). Metacognitive strategies involve planning, monitoring, and evaluating one's learning process; cognitive strategies include activities such as note-taking and identifying key words; while socio-affective strategies involve interaction with others and managing emotions during listening. Researchers such as Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) recommended integrating these strategies into classroom instruction to enhance students' listening performance.

Many studies have examined the relationship between listening strategies and listening proficiency. For example, Rizky and Angraini (2022) found that metacognitive strategies had the greatest influence on listening proficiency, whereas Maria (2018) reported that cognitive strategies played a more dominant role. In contrast, Yanti (2016) highlighted the importance of socio-affective strategies in helping students manage

anxiety and build positive attitudes toward listening. These inconsistent findings indicate that the relative contribution of different listening strategies remains inconclusive. Moreover, a preliminary study conducted through an interview with a tenth-grade English teacher at a public senior high school in Palembang revealed that, although listening is taught as part of classroom instruction, many students still lack awareness of effective listening strategies. This suggests that students may not be utilizing appropriate strategies to support their listening comprehension.

Despite the growing body of research on listening strategies, several important gaps remain. First, previous studies have produced inconsistent findings regarding which type of listening strategy most significantly influences listening proficiency, indicating a lack of consensus in the literature. Second, most existing research has primarily focused on the role of listening strategies in improving comprehension, rather than examining their predictive power for determining students' listening proficiency. Finally, studies investigating listening strategies within the Indonesian EFL high school context, especially in specific local settings such as Palembang, remain relatively scarce.

Therefore, this study seeks to address these gaps by investigating the role of listening strategy use in predicting listening proficiency among tenth-grade EFL learners. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on the predictive relationship between listening strategy use and listening proficiency, rather than merely examining their correlation. In addition, this study provides a comparative analysis of different types of listening strategies (metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective) to determine which strategy contributes most significantly to students' listening proficiency. Furthermore, it offers empirical evidence from a specific, under-researched context: Indonesian senior high school students in Palembang, thereby contributing to a more context-sensitive understanding of EFL listening development. The findings of this study are expected to provide both theoretical insights and practical implications for improving the teaching of listening strategies in EFL classrooms.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative correlational research design with an emphasis on explanatory and predictive analysis. A correlational design is appropriate for examining the degree of relationship between two or more variables without manipulating them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Fraenkel et al., 2019). Furthermore, predictive analysis allows researchers to assess the extent to which one variable predicts another (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). In this study, the design was used to examine the relationship between students' use of listening strategies and their listening proficiency, as well as to determine the predictive contribution of listening strategies to listening performance. In this study, listening strategy was treated as the independent variable, while listening proficiency served as the dependent variable. Listening strategies were categorized into metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective dimensions, whereas listening proficiency was operationalized as students' ability to comprehend spoken English as measured by a standardized listening test.

The population consisted of all tenth-grade students at a public senior high school in Palembang, totaling 329. A sample of 74 students was selected from three classes (E1, E8, and E9) using convenience sampling. This sampling method was chosen due to accessibility and practical considerations.

Data were collected using two instruments. First, students' use of listening strategies was measured using a closed-ended questionnaire adapted from Pertiwi (2017). The questionnaire consisted of 18 items distributed across three categories: five for metacognitive strategies, four for cognitive strategies, and nine for socio-affective strategies. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire demonstrated good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.84 (Field, 2018). Second, students' listening proficiency was assessed using the TOEFL Junior Listening Test, developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). The test comprised 42 multiple-choice items administered within 60 minutes. As a standardized instrument, it has been widely recognized for its validity and reliability in measuring listening comprehension among EFL learners.

The study's data were analyzed quantitatively using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were used to summarize students' use of listening strategies and listening proficiency levels. Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between variables (Pallant, 2020). Furthermore, regression analysis was performed to determine the predictive power of listening strategy use and to identify which types of strategies contributed most significantly to students' listening proficiency.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This section presents the study's results in three parts. First, it describes students' use of listening strategies and their listening proficiency using descriptive statistics. Second, it reports the Pearson product-moment correlation results to examine the relationship between the two variables. Finally, it presents the results of the regression analysis to determine the predictive power of listening strategy use on listening proficiency.

The analysis of students' listening strategy use revealed that the scores ranged from 40 to 70, with a mean score of 59.41 and a standard deviation of 6.47 (see Table 1). This indicates that, on average, students reported a relatively moderate-to-high level of strategy use. The distribution of responses further showed that students tended to employ a combination of strategies rather than relying on a single type.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of listening strategy use

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strategies	74	40	70	59.41	6.474
Valid N (listwise)	74				

Among the three categories, socio-affective strategies were used the most frequently, as reflected in the highest mean score ($M=3.67$), indicating that students focused more on managing emotions, reducing anxiety, and staying motivated (see Table 2). Meanwhile, metacognitive ($M=3.21$) and cognitive strategies ($M=3.08$) were used at a moderate level. This suggests that students tend to rely more on socio-affective strategies than on cognitive and metacognitive strategies, which are more directly related to understanding spoken input.

Table 2. Mean score of listening strategies by category

Strategy Type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
Metacognitive	74	3.21	0.58	Moderate
Cognitive	74	3.08	0.62	Moderate
Socio-affective	74	3.67	0.55	High

The results of the listening proficiency test showed that students achieved scores ranging from 55 to 100, with a mean score of 84.97 and a standard deviation of 9.58 (see Table 3). Overall, students demonstrated a relatively high level of listening proficiency.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of listening proficiency

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
Listening Proficiency	74	55	100	84.97	9.584

Further analysis of score distribution (Table 4) revealed that the majority of students were classified in the excellent category (73.7%), followed by very good (19.7%), with only a small proportion falling into lower categories. This distribution suggests that most participants possessed strong listening skills, although variation still existed among individuals.

Table 4. Distribution of listening proficiency

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	56	73.7%
Very good	15	19.7%
Good	2	2.6%
Poor	1	1.3%
Total	74	100%

The Pearson product-moment correlation analysis revealed a positive, statistically significant relationship between listening strategy use and listening proficiency. The correlation coefficient was $r = 0.253$, with a significant p -value of 0.0228 ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that students who reported higher use of listening strategies tended to achieve higher listening proficiency scores. However, the strength of the correlation is categorized as weak, suggesting that although the relationship exists, it is not particularly strong.

Table 5. The correlation between listening strategy use and listening proficiency

		X	Y
Listening Strategies	Pearson Correlation	1	.253*
	Sig. (2-Tailed)		0.30
	N	74	74
Listening Proficiency	Pearson Correlation	.253*	1
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	.030	
	N	74	74

To further examine the predictive role of listening strategies, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted. The results (Table 6) show that listening strategy use significantly predicts listening proficiency ($\beta = 0.253$, $t = 2.218$, $p = 0.030$). This indicates that listening strategies contribute statistically significantly to students' listening performance.

Table 6. The regression analysis of students' listening strategies and listening proficiency

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	62.728	10.086		6.219	.000
	strategies	.374	.169	.253	2.218	.030

a. Dependent Variable: proficiency

The model summary (Table 7) shows a correlation coefficient of $R = 0.253$ and an R^2 value of 0.064, indicating that listening strategy use accounts for 6.4% of the variance in listening proficiency. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.051 suggests a slightly lower estimate that accounts for sampling variability.

Table 7. Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.253 ^a	.064	.051	9.337

a. Predictors: (Constant) strategies
b. Dependent Variable: proficiency

These results indicate that, although listening strategies significantly predict listening proficiency, their explanatory power is relatively limited. A large proportion of the variance (93.6%) remains unexplained, suggesting that other factors, such as linguistic knowledge, background knowledge, and exposure to English, also play a substantial role. The standard error of the estimate (9.337) further indicates that there is still a noticeable difference between the predicted and actual proficiency scores, reinforcing the conclusion that listening strategy use alone is not a strong predictor.

Discussion

The findings revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between students' use of listening strategies and their listening proficiency. This indicates that learners who reported more frequent and effective use of listening strategies tended to achieve higher listening comprehension scores. This result is consistent with the theoretical framework proposed by O'Malley and Chamot (1990), which highlights the crucial role of strategic competence – particularly metacognitive processes such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating – in facilitating successful language comprehension.

However, despite its statistical significance, the magnitude of the relationship was relatively small ($R^2 = 6.4\%$), suggesting that listening strategy use accounts for only a limited proportion of the variance in the students' listening proficiency. This finding implies that listening comprehension is a multifaceted construct influenced by a range of additional factors, including vocabulary knowledge, background knowledge, language exposure, and prior learning experiences. This interpretation is consistent with previous research (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; Vandergrift & Goh, 2012), which emphasizes that listening proficiency cannot be attributed to strategy use alone but rather arises from the interaction of multiple linguistic and cognitive variables.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that students tended to rely more heavily on socioaffective strategies, such as managing anxiety and building confidence, rather than on cognitive and metacognitive strategies that are more directly related to processing and understanding spoken input. While socio-affective strategies play an important supportive

role in facilitating a positive learning environment, they may not contribute as directly to comprehension as cognitive and metacognitive strategies, which involve active information processing (Oxford, 1990). This imbalance in the use of strategies may partly explain the relatively modest predictive power observed in this study.

Importantly, these findings help clarify the inconsistencies reported in previous studies regarding which types of listening strategies are most influential. Rather than supporting the dominance of a single strategy type, the results suggest that listening proficiency is better understood as the outcome of a combination of strategies, used in an integrated and context-sensitive manner. This supports earlier findings (e.g., Bidabadi & Yamat, 2011; Yulisa, 2017) that emphasize the importance of strategic flexibility in effective listening.

In addition, the limited predictive contribution of listening strategies observed in this study highlights the need to consider contextual and experiential factors, such as students' exposure to authentic English input through activities like listening to songs, watching videos, or participating in extracurricular courses. As suggested by Brown (2007), meaningful and frequent exposure to authentic language is significant for developing listening comprehension.

Overall, these findings reinforce the importance of explicit instruction in listening strategies in EFL classrooms, particularly in fostering students' use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies that directly support comprehension. At the same time, they highlight the need to balance strategy instruction with increased opportunities for authentic language exposure and for creating a supportive, low-anxiety learning environment. In doing so, this study contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence of the predictive role of listening strategies, while also demonstrating that their influence, although significant, remains limited when considered in isolation.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study lead to several important conclusions regarding the role of listening strategy use in predicting listening proficiency among tenth-grade EFL learners. First, the results demonstrate a statistically significant positive relationship between listening strategy use and listening proficiency, indicating that students who employ listening strategies more frequently and effectively tend to achieve better listening performance. However, the relatively small effect size indicates that listening strategy use accounts for only a limited proportion of the variance in students' listening proficiency. This suggests that listening comprehension is a complex, multifactorial process influenced not only by strategic behavior but also by other factors such as vocabulary knowledge, background knowledge, language exposure, and prior learning experiences. Therefore, while listening strategies play a significant role, their predictive power remains partial when considered independently. In addition, the findings reveal that students tend to rely more heavily on socio-affective strategies, reflecting their focus on managing emotions, reducing anxiety, and maintaining motivation during listening activities. Although these strategies are beneficial in creating a supportive learning environment, the relatively limited use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies may restrict students' ability to process and interpret spoken input more effectively. This imbalance in the use of strategies may help explain the modest predictive contribution identified in this study. Overall, this study confirms that listening strategies are an important yet not exclusive factor in determining listening proficiency. It also helps clarify previous inconsistencies

in the literature by suggesting that no single strategy is solely responsible for listening success; rather, effective listening depends on the integrated, balanced use of multiple strategies. Consequently, EFL instruction should adopt a more comprehensive approach that not only promotes the explicit teaching of listening strategies, particularly cognitive and metacognitive strategies, but also enhances students' linguistic competence and provides greater exposure to authentic language input. Such an integrated approach is expected to better support the holistic, sustainable development of students' proficiency.

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