



Developing EFL learners' Listening Comprehension through Listening Strategy Instruction

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Abstract: This study investigated the impact of explicit listening strategy instruction on EFL learners' listening comprehension. It is an attempt to shed light on how explicit teaching of listening strategies can develop EFL Iraqi learners' listening comprehension. This study conducted an experimental design with pre- and post-test procedures. 60 Iraqi EFL learners in their fourth year in the Department of English Language at the university level were chosen randomly to participate in the study. The participants were assigned into two groups: experimental group (N = 30) and control group (N = 30). Unlike the latter, the former received explicit listening strategy instruction. For data collection, the Cambridge IELTS listening test was employed. The listening tests were given to both groups before and after the intervention. The experiment lasted for eight weeks i.e. two hours per week. According to the results, it has been shown that listening strategy instruction had a powerful impact on developing Iraqi EFL learners' listening comprehension. That is, the findings suggested that explicit strategy instruction improves EFL learners' listening comprehension.

Keywords: listening strategy instruction, listening comprehension, EFL Iraqi learners.

Introduction:

Language is a crucial tool for human communication. It enables us to build relationships and express emotions, thoughts, and experiences (Khanal, 2011). Due to the widespread usage of English, cultural norms and connections across borders are made possible. In order to enhance their communication abilities, teaching English to foreign language learners (henceforth FLLs) has become a focus in many countries, like Iraq (Alahmed, 2010). Since communication is a reciprocal process, it basically depends on the amount of linguistic input. In order to complete the tasks, listening comprehension (henceforth LC) involves an active and sophisticated process that relies on picking input, creating meaning, and connecting prior knowledge (O'Malley et al., 1989).

Recently, the strategies for teaching languages have shifted from teacher-centered to learner-centered. This shift is being made on the basis of the belief that raising students' levels of self-awareness regarding their learning process will improve their effectiveness in obtaining knowledge (Alahmed, 2023). In the years before the 1970s, listening was considered a receptive skill. The literature on language skills places a strong emphasis on speaking, writing, and reading, but listening

has received little focus in second language (L2) because it is thought of as a self-developed skill, despite historical evidence to the contrary (Chiang & Dunkel, 1992; Moyer, 2006; Mendelsohn, 1998).

Despite its significance in other abilities like speaking, reading, and writing, such as second language literature, LC has come under scrutiny as a critical component of language acquisition (Oxford, 1990).

Several studies have looked at L2/FL listening strategies during the last decades in a variety of contexts, giving teachers perspectives on effective and failed strategies and illustrating the distinctions between successful and unsuccessful students (e.g., Graham, 2003; O'Malley et al., 1989; Vandergrift, 1997). The development of appropriate listening strategies is necessary for learners to maximize spoken language input and overcome obstacles. Metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective categories are used by the O'Malley and Chamot paradigms (1990) and by Vandergrift (1992) to categorize listening strategies.

Language acquisition is governed by metacognitive strategies; cognitive strategies improve thinking processes, translation, and summarization; and socio-affective strategies deal with both positive and negative emotions. Comparing the strategies employed by better and less successful learners has been the main focus of research on listening strategies in L2. Cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies are currently used in teaching methods. None of these strategies, however, have been combined. While other studies concentrate on listening test strategies, certain studies emphasize metacognitive strategies. According to earlier studies, proficient learners combine these strategies to efficiently control their listening processes (Abdalhamid, 2012).

However, not much study has been done to determine how teaching the tactics affects the LC of Iraqi EFL students. In order to ascertain the effectiveness of strategy education in L2 learning generally in listening, the current study intends to assess the effects of listening strategy training on enhancing EFL learners' hearing comprehension at the college-level fourth stage.

1 Rationale of the study

Since English is a widely spoken language, English language instruction plays a crucial role in helping EFL learners develop their language skills for the purpose of communicating easily (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Since listening is one of the most challenging language skills to learn because EFL learners have problems hearing, not everyone finds learning a second language to be simple, especially in Iraq. According to earlier research (Fathi, 2019; Al-Shammari, 2020), teaching listening skills can enhance listening abilities in a variety of contexts.

It is imperative to look into the language comprehension issues faced by EFL college students, especially Iraqi students who have difficult vocabulary. The accent, the rate of speech, or the length of the listening session may be considered one of the listening problems that contribute to a failure to understand and comprehend the language. This ultimately causes one to forget what was said earlier during the listening phase and causes one to fail to pay attention to other details, and so on. In class, students always listen more than they say, according to Brown (2001). This emphasizes how important listening abilities are. It has been proposed that because listening helps us to clarify meaning, it is important both in the classroom and in daily life. As LSI is highly recommended by numerous earlier studies (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Goh, 2002; Hamouda, 2013), learners can manage their listening more successfully by employing some of it. It was chosen to conduct this study in order to teach LSI to EFL learners and identify the impact of LSI on EFL learners.

2 Significance of the study

It is expected that the findings of this study would have an impact on the teaching staff, including teachers, book designers, and learners. These findings might be useful for:

- Helping curriculum designers by providing LSI as one of the key elements of teaching listening in their curricula. Giving the ministry a recommendation on how to make people aware of the results of the listening performance in Iraq.

- Teachers can also motivate students by incorporating the right teaching methods into the learning process, which will help them develop effective listening skills. The best teaching methods should be used by EFL instructors to meet the needs of their students' listening preferences.

- Educators and researchers also need to know how to proceed with actively and deliberately instructing listening skills in the classroom. To learn more, the researcher can refer to the teacher's teaching strategies for developing LC as a source of information.

- Help EFL learners gain better LC through the use of LSI.

3 Aim of the study

The current study intends to investigate the effects of listening strategy instruction (henceforth LSI) on the listening comprehension of Iraqi EFL learners.

4 Question of the study

This study aims to address and answer the following question:

What is the effect of listening strategy instruction on developing Iraqi EFL learners' listening comprehension?

5 Hypotheses of the study

The following null hypotheses are put forth to help the current study reach its aim: The alpha level is set at 0.05.

H01: There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the EG in listening comprehension from the pretest to the posttest.

H02: There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the CG in listening comprehension from the pretest to the posttest.

H03: There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the EG and those of the CG in the listening comprehension posttest.

6 Limits of the study

- Senior students at the Department of English Language, College of Education for Humanities, University of Al-Hamdaniya.
- It focuses on imparting LSL.
- In terms of the teaching materials, YouTube videos were selected and used in teaching LSI.
- The Cambridge IELTS listening test was used to assess EFL learners' LC.
- The English proficiency level was measured using the Oxford placement test.

7 Definitions of basic terms

a) Listening comprehension

Glikjani and Sabouri (2016) define LC as "a process of receiving what the speaker says, making and showing meaning, negotiating meaning with the speaker and answering, and creating meaning by participation, creativity, and empathy".

Operational definition of LC: LC is a mental skill in which fourth-year students are able to understand, elaborate and interpret the audio recording during the listening session in the classroom and comprehend the incoming messages and speaker's intention to overcome listening difficulties.

b) Listening strategy instruction

Doughty (2003) held that "explicit instruction includes all types of instruction in which rules are explained to learners or when learners are directed to find rules by attending to forms.

Operational definition of LSI: LSI is a set of direct and intentional strategies that the researcher explicitly used and applied inside the classroom to help fourth-year students to develop their listening skill and to be effective listeners.

Theoretical background

Although listening has properly emerged as a crucial aspect of language learning, learners continue to struggle and experience a sense of helplessness in this area. In order to learn and acquire a second language, listening is regarded as a vital linguistic skill. Learning a foreign language successfully requires the use of listening as a communication tool. Speaking, reading, and writing come next after listening as the first language skills to develop (Coakley & Walvin, 1997). Scarcella and Oxford (1992) assert that listening is the language skill that is used the most frequently. The primary way to absorb concepts and information is through listening. Although listening skills have received little attention in recent years, Pahuja (1995) contends that listening skills are more active than passive.

Listeners actively participate in LC by concentrating on specific material, extrapolating its meaning, and connecting it to existing knowledge. This understanding process is aided by schema. Hearing and listening are two separate abilities. According to Nadig (2013), LC "is the various processes of understanding and making sense of spoken language. These involve knowing speech sounds, comprehending the meaning of individual words, and understanding the syntax of sentences."

Despite the frequent confusion between hearing and listening, they are not the same. Although listening is quite active, hearing is a passive process. As a process of understanding L1 and L2, listening is receptive and necessitates the interpretation of the information received. Both include hearing, but the linguistic difference suggests that one is intended while the other is merely a component. The investigation of listening instruction has gained popularity recently.

Later listening theories drew their influence from the field of cognitive psychology, which popularized the ideas of bottom-up and top-down processing and emphasized the role of prior knowledge and schema in comprehension. It became apparent that listening was an interpretive act (Richard, 2008). Teaching means giving directions, leading someone through a course, passing on knowledge, and making them comprehend. These are all aspects of teaching. Similar to language acquisition and comprehension, listening has not been well investigated. Rather than the students, the teacher needs to practice teaching listening. According to Selamat and Sidhu (2013), studies by Lynch (1998), Flowerdew and Miller (2005), and Goh (2008) have brought strategies for teaching listening to our attention. The breakthroughs in cognitive psychology also led to the publication of these findings.

According to Chamot (1995), Mendelsohn 1998, and Goh (2008), one area of cognitive psychology that has been researched is the metacognitive method. The metacognitive method, according to Mendelsohn (1998), aims to teach students how to use workable solutions to handle the demands of listening. According to Nisa (2019), it is crucial to prioritize listening skills while teaching English as a second language. Prior to learning the language, it is important to make sure learners are comfortable listening. Use authentic speech, make the most of your resources, and mix up your listening materials based on gender, age, dialect, accent, subject, speed, noise, level, and genre. Students should listen with the proper intentions and show evidence of comprehension. Never transmit language information visually first. This strategy fosters student engagement with the subject matter and strengthens their language proficiency.

In conclusion, it can be said that teaching listening necessitates an in-depth knowledge of the linguistic structure as well as the methods for understanding this skill. It also requires the teacher to pay great attention as she teaches the students how to use good listening strategies

1 Teaching listening strategy

Research on teaching and learning expanded, and foreign language teaching gained popularity in the latter half of the 1950s and early 1960s. This discipline was impacted by the rise of applied linguistics and the failure of advancements based on behaviorism. Chomsky's creative thinking in Philosophy of Mind and Linguistics led to the recognition of various approaches to instruction and

learning, which called for the creation of methodologies and their empirical testing (Beretta 1992). The Merriam Webster Dictionary (2016) defines a strategy "as a careful plan for achieving goals, usually over a long period of time. It is a plan of action designed to achieve a specific goal or series of goals". According to Antoni (2010), a teaching strategy is an overall plan for a lesson or lessons that contains the framework, expected student behaviors, and a description of the strategies required to carry out the strategy. When choosing activities and event sequences for the classroom, there are some strategies to keep in mind. To teach is to actively involve pupils in the process of learning and knowledge generation.

This system consists of facilities, teachers, and students. Every component has a particular purpose in the teaching and learning process. The instructor created the lesson plan; it is now their responsibility to develop plans for teaching and learning activities that will be successful. According to David (2011), this process is referred to as a teaching strategy. From this viewpoint, a strategy is a plan, technique, or set of actions created to accomplish a certain educational objective.

2 The necessity of explicit teaching of listening strategy

Due to the major disparities between first and second languages, teaching listening skills in a second language is essential. There are many variances in the learning process, even though there are some similarities (Clement, 2007). Babies and young children pick up vocabulary and spoken language understanding quickly, but they frequently don't receive specific instruction in listening in their mother tongue. Due to interruptions and cultural variations, this lack of instruction might make it difficult for L2 learners to comprehend auditory material. In order to improve L2 learners' LC, it is crucial to teach them listening strategies.

Learning to listen improves L2 learners' comprehension and ability to filter information. Teachers can adapt tasks for students who are having trouble acquiring listening skills according to the information provided by LC. Understanding what they listen to improves the input that can be understood, which helps language learning (Gilakjani and Sabouri, 2016). Growing student independence in LC inspires them to use spoken English and engage with native speakers, creating a more productive learning environment (Kurita, 2012).

3 Types of listening strategy

In order to understand spoken texts in context, listeners adopt listening strategies to manage their in-context interactions. Almoswai and Rashid (2017: 24) define listening strategies "as the strategies that learners use before, during, and after listening activities". Such strategies require not only the ability to process information mentally but also the ability to recognize what to do when a text is difficult to comprehend. Additionally, listening strategies were divided into three groups by O'Malley and Chamot (1990): psychological feature strategies, metacognitive strategies, and socio-affective strategies. Chamot (2004) separated top-down and bottom-up processes in psychological strategies for LC. Top-down process approaches are assessed by listening for the main concept, making predictions, drawing conclusions, and summarizing, whereas bottom-up process strategies include listening for exact details, finding cognates, and recognizing word-order patterns.

According to Bacon (1992), a comprehensive taxonomy of psychological procedures should include report, translation, elaboration, and transfer. The lengthy list of psychological strategies offered by Vandergrift (2006, 2007 and 2011) includes "inference, elaboration, report, translation, transfer, repetition, responding, grouping, note-taking, deduction or induction, and substitution. In terms of metacognitive methods, Bacon (1992) categorized them into three groups based on when they are used: before, during, and after listening. Before listening, students get ready to pay close attention and concentrate. Learners pay close attention to what they are hearing while they are listening, and they select information that will be helpful and valuable to them in the future.

Field (2010) claims the category of meta-cognitive awareness, which also includes a person's knowledge, includes meta-cognitive procedures. Regarding the final strategy, the socio-affective strategy, according to Vandergrift (2011), taking one's emotional situation into account (being aware of one's emotions while listening in order to avoid negative emotions and form the most positive emotions possible) and cooperating are additional social and affective strategies.

Following the foregoing discussion, it can be said that there are three main strategies for teaching listening:

- **Cognitive strategy:** A cognitive listening strategy is used to understand the entire passage. It aids the student in identifying the main goal before moving on to the remaining details. This strategy allows students to swiftly determine the core idea, relying on cues to guess the meaning.
- **Metacognitive strategy:** With this strategy, the listeners can choose what they want to listen to. It helps listeners restore focus when they become distracted. The students monitor and evaluate their progress. This strategy teaches the learners how to listen effectively.
- **Socio-affective strategy:** socio-affective techniques aid learners in maintaining emotional control while listening. Even though learners have no challenges with the listening materials, they may experience emotional difficulties that impede their progress.

To conclude, in order to become effective listeners, learners should use a variety of listening strategies in both the classroom and outside of it. Due to variations in cognitive capacity, learning preferences, and prior knowledge, these strategies might not be suitable for all learners.

4 Previous studies

This section summarizes and discusses some of the previous studies that were conducted by various researchers to determine how teaching listening strategies affected the LC of EFL learners.

Maryam Rahimirad's (2014) study investigated the impact of teaching metacognitive methods on the listening skills of EFL university students. After being assessed for English proficiency at a level around intermediate at the state university of Qom, 50 volunteers were chosen at random from among 60 students. In contrast to the control group ($n = 25$), the experimental group ($n = 25$) received metacognitive strategy training based on the models developed by Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010) and O'Malley and Chamot (1990). The Cambridge TOEFL listening module was used to assess the participants' LC in both groups before and after the treatment. The results of the TOEFL test showed that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group after taking a post-test.

Farzana, Malika, and Maryam (2018) investigated how Iranian EFL learners' LC was enhanced by teaching listening techniques. To accomplish this, forty Birjand University students participated in the current study. All of the participants ranged in age from 18 to 22. They were then arbitrarily divided into two groups: a control group and an experimental group. The experimental group received instruction based on a lesson plan that contained suggestions for good listening, while the control group received no treatment at all. The TOEFL listening test was used to assess their listening comprehension both before and after the treatment. The results of the Independent Samples Test revealed that teaching listening strategies had no appreciable impact on the LC of Iranian pre-intermediate EFL students.

Jalil Fathi (2019), this study looked at its aim, which is to find out how teaching listening strategies to English language learners (ELLs) in Iranian culture might improve their LC. At the Islamic University, 52 participants were ultimately selected at random from two separate groups. These two groups were split into experimental and control groups. Participants in the experimental group were given explicit instructions on how to use a strategy, but those in the control group were not. The two groups underwent the treatment, which was a pre- and post-listening test adapted from

the IELTS. The data demonstrate that teaching listening strategies is helpful for improving LC, with the experimental group performing much better than the control group.

Methodology

The major goal of this study is to find out how teaching listening strategies affects how well EFL learners can understand what they listen to. To determine the extent to which LSI influences learners' LC, this study largely focuses on LSI. The process, steps, and methods employed in the current study are covered in detail in this part in order to address the research question. The experimental design, its execution, and application, as well as the participants, are also explained in this section.

1 Population and sampling

This study was conducted at the University of Al-Hamdaniya, College of Education, Department of English Language, with 90 participants. The study was approved by the English department head and divided into three groups: pilot study participants (30), control participants (30), and experimental participants (30). All participants were at the same level of English according to the Oxford achievement test; they are at intermediate level, and the fourth stage was chosen due to a listening course in their final class. The majority of participants were male and female, aged 22 to 34, with the majority aged between 22 and 23.

2 Equivalence of the sample students

To ensure the equalization of the students in the two groups after being randomly chosen, the researcher compared the mean values of two groups randomly chosen regarding the dependent variable of the listening test. A pre-test was used to ensure equalization of sampling, and the t-test was used to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups. As shown in Table 1, there is no significant difference was found between the two groups.

Table 1: The results of the listening comprehension pretests for EG and CG

Groups	Pre-test	No	Sig. (2-tailed)
EG	14.77	30	0.344
CG	13.33	30	

3 Experimental design

This study examined the effect of LSI on LC of fourth-stage students at Al Hamdaniya University using a pretest-posttest control group design (Cohen et al., 2017). The experimental group was given LSI, beginning with an overview of the strategies and focusing on each one separately with its associated activities. The LSI was not given to the control group. The listening strategy instruction was the primary difference between the two groups, and this was evident in the variance in scores between the pre- and post-tests. Eight weeks and two hours per week were required for the experiment, which included a pretest, listening test, introduction to LSI, in-depth explanation, and posttest. The study emphasizes the importance of teaching listening strategies for improving LC.

Table 2: The experimental design

Group	Pretest	Treatment	Posttest
Experimental Group	Listening comprehension test	Listening strategy instruction	Listening comprehension test

Control Group

**No listening
strategy
instruction**

4 Instrumentation

The Cambridge IELTS 3 listening test was used in this study. Test 3 served as the pre-test, and Test 4 served as the post-test. For the LC test, a four-section listening module from the 2002 IELTS exam was employed. Each segment had 40 questions, and the tests took 30-35 minutes to complete. For final review and response transfer, participants had 10 minutes. The first two parts of the test dealt with societal requirements, whereas the last two sections dealt with circumstances involving educational or training environments. There were many question categories, such as matching, categorization, note/chart/table completion, phrase completion, multiple choice, short answer, and diagram identification.

5 Validity of the listening test

The validity of a test is determined by the extent to which it measures what it is supposed to measure and nothing else (Heaton, 2000, p. 159). So the term "validity" stands for the "degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure" (Kothari, 2009, p. 73). Face validity is used to check the listening test before applying it to learners; the term refers to how a test seems to test takers, such as its transparency or relevancy. Anastasi (1988), and Nevo (1985) defined face validity as "the degree to which respondents or users judge that the items of an assessment instrument are appropriate to the targeted construct and assessment objectives". The listening test was presented to a jury of specialists to guarantee its validity. Accordingly, the items were valued by these specialists. They read the exam items and verified their accuracy to determine whether or not they could be used in this study. The experts then decided that the test was appropriate for use in this study.

6 Reliability of the listening test

Joppe (2000) defines reliability "as the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable" (p. 1). Using test-retest reliability, which measures the consistency of the same marks or grades awarded when the same test papers are assessed by the same examiner or by other examiners on multiple occasions, the dependability of a listening test was examined on a pilot sample of students. SPSS software was used to analyze the test's outcomes after it was administered twice to the pilot group. The tests were given to 30 members of the pilot group. The assessment was deemed to be very reliable and suitable for use in the main investigation. Indicating a relatively steady coefficient, the test's average alpha coefficient was 0.99.

Data analysis

1 Parametric versus non-parametric

Before data analysis, it is crucial to determine whether the test used is parametric or non-parametric, based on predetermined assumptions. Parametric tests are hypothesis tests that provide generalizations for generating data on the mean of the primary population based on the students' t-statistic. Non-parametric tests examine the central tendency using the median value without making assumptions. Normality is the assumption that all data points are evenly spaced from the center of all scores (Alahmed, 2017). To determine normality, two ways are used: graphically and numerically. A

histogram is created to give a clear indication of the normal distribution (Field, 2009). Normality tests, such as the Shapiro-Wilk test and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, are used to evaluate the characteristics of the distribution of the data. If findings are statistically significant ($p > .05$), it suggests that the dataset does deviate from normality, and parametric tests were used. The findings showed that parametric tests were appropriate for this study.

2 Testing Hypotheses

In order to analyze the information obtained for the current investigation. The information was gathered by administering a LC test as pre- and post-tests, and it was then statistically analyzed using the SPSS program. At 0.05 alpha Cronbach, three null hypotheses were put forward. The gathered data will be statistically analyzed and assessed in order to confirm the accuracy of the current study's hypothesis.

H01: There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group in listening from the pretest to the posttest.

A comparison of the two mean LC test scores reveals a substantial difference between the pretest and posttest for the EG group, with the posttest significantly surpassing the pretest. In the pre-test and post-test, the EG's listening test mean scores were determined to be 14.77 and 22.80, respectively (see Table 3). The T-test method for paired samples can be used to assess if there is a significant difference between the EG scores on the pre-test and the post-test. The significance level of 0.05 yields a T-test value of 4.678. According to the findings, there is a statistically significant difference at the 29 degree of freedom.

Table3: The mean, SD, t-test values of the pre-test and post-test of the EG in the listening test

Test	No	Mean	SD	T-Value		Sig
				Calculated	Tabulated	
Pre-test	30	14.77	7.006	4.678	±2.045	0.000
Post-test		22.80	8.527			

“If a p-value reported from a t-test is less than 0.05, then that result is said to be statistically significant. If a p-value is greater than 0.05, then the result is insignificant” (Fisher, 1935).

H02: There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the control group in listening from the pretest to the posttest.

The mean listening scores for the CG pre-test were found to be 13.33, while the mean listening scores post-test were found to be 13.87. To determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the CG's pre- and post-test scores, the T-test method for paired samples is also used. The computed "T" value is found to be 0.329 at a significance level of 0.05 and a degree of freedom of 29. This demonstrates a slight distinction between them, and the post-test growth in terms of CG achievement scores is somewhat better than the pre-test (see Table 4). The results reject the null hypothesis, as stated in the table.

Table 4: The mean, SD, t-test values of the pre-test and post-test of the CG in the listening test

Test	No	Mean	SD	T-Value	Sig
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		Calculated	Tabulated		
Pre-test		13.33	5.821		
Post-test	30	13.87	6.469	0.329	±2.045
					0.745

H03: There is no statistically significant difference between the mean achievement scores of the experimental group and those of the control group in the listening posttest.

The mean listening scores of the EG and CG are compared in the post-test total scores. The mean score for the EG is found to be 22.80, whereas the mean score for the CG is 13.87. The "T" test formula for the two independent samples is used to determine whether there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups. The calculated "T" value, which was found to be 6.078 at the 0.05 level of significance and under 29 degrees of freedom, indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups. This explains why the EG is better than the CG (see table 5). The results disprove the null hypothesis, as stated in the table.

Table5: The mean, SD, t-test values of the post-test of both groups in the listening test

Groups	No	Mean	SD	T-Value		Sig
				Calculated	Tabulated	
EG	30	22.80	5.821	6.078	±2.045	0.000
CG	30	13.87	6.469			

3 Discussion of the results and findings

In this study, a specific statistical tool was used to analyse the data. SPSS software was used for the analysis because this study's data gathering strictly followed quantitative methodologies. To compare the results from the listening for EG and CG, as well as for the pre-test and post-test, an independent-samples t-test was used. According to the results of the statistical analysis, the participants in the EG outperformed the students in the CG on average on the English listening test, based on the aggregate scores of the post-tests. According to Fathi (2019), the participants' LC comprehension was enhanced by the LSI.

Paired sample t-tests were used to compare the listening scores of the listeners in both groups between the pre-test and post-test in order to assess the effect of the LSI on the learners' LC. Analysis employing paired sample t-tests revealed statistically significant increases in the mean LC scores for both the experimental and control groups. The mean listening test scores of EG are higher on the posttest than they were on the pretest, as described in the aforementioned analysis.

The statistics show that the mean score in EG for the listening test increased from 14.77 on the pre-test to 22.80 on the post-test, making this shift statistically significant ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$). As for the CG's listening pretest average increased from 13.33 to 13.87. Also statistically significant ($p = 0.745 > 0.05$), this is a slight rise. As for the results of the post-test of both groups, the p-value is ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$), which indicates that EG is outperforming the CG in the test. The results of this study are in line with those of Ngo (2016), Fathi (2019), and Chou (2015), who found that LSI has a beneficial impact on learners' LC. Furthermore, based on the t-value, the EG and CG of the post-test were compared. As a result, in the post-tests, the experimental group's results are generally much higher than the scores of the control group.

Conclusion

In light of the results of the current study, it can be stated that imparting explicit LSI to EFL learners is more beneficial for learning a second or foreign language. The results of this study show that the EG outperformed the CG on the posttest. It implies that explicit LSI develops EFL learners' LC. The results also demonstrate that LSI has a positive effect on participants' LC, which is another way in which they support LSI. The strategy instruction encourages learners to apply their newly gained skills to participate in a range of listening activities in the classroom. This demonstrates how important it is to incorporate listening strategies while instructing in a second or foreign language. Learners in EG who struggle with listening perform well on tests of LC and listen more effectively than learners in CG.

The study recommends that teacher training programmes should provide instructors with the essential knowledge and training they need to teach listening strategies, as well as the training they need. LSI should be introduced into English language courses and EFL teacher preparation programmes to enable students to self-learn LC. Regular listening lessons should cover listening strategies to give learners a range of possibilities. In order to assist the learners in becoming better listeners, teachers should teach listening strategies, as they frequently lack the ability to make their own listening aids. Language teachers should have access to books and resources that support the teaching of listening skills, according to textbook designers.

The pedagogical implications of the current study, according to its findings, for EFL teaching and learning are what give it its significance. In other words, this study will give Iraqi EFL teachers and learners a thorough understanding of how explicit listening strategy training affects the growth of EFL learners' LC. The study proposes suggestions for further studies to be conducted in order to verify the results and ensure that they are consistent with those of previous studies.

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