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ԹԵՄԱ՝ Strategies for Improving English Language Listening Skills

ԱՌԱՐԿԱ՝ Անգլերեն

ԿԱՏԱՐՈՂ՝ Հովհաննիսյան Սոնա

ՂԵԿԱՎԱՐ՝ Օհանյան Ավետիսյան

ՈՒՍՈՒՄՆԱԿԱՆ ՀԱՍՏԱՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ «Գյումրու թիվ 2 միջնակարգ դպրոց»ՊՈԱԿ

## Strategies for improving English language Listening Skills

This study aims to provide some innovative strategies for improving listening skill of English Language of secondary level students at district Bannu. Effective Listening in English language, guiding the students towards effective oral communication, is the problem with all the ESL students at secondary level and as such it creates problem for English language teachers. The objective of the study was to help the English language teachers and students to overcome this problem by showing the results of application of innovative strategies for improving English language listening skill. Specifically, this study aims to guide the teachers of district Bannu to bring innovation in their teaching and thus enable their students to overcome their listening problem. For this purpose, first of all, data was collected from English Language teachers of secondary level in order to know about the steps taken for the improvement of listening skill of their students. The data was collected through rating scale questionnaire. After that an experimental study was carried out for which a 10th grade class was selected. For the collection of data t-test was used. Results indicated that a visible change occurred in the listening skill of the treatment group, after the application of innovative strategies on this group. Hence it proved that the application of innovative strategies for improving listening skill had a very positive impact on the students. Keywords: Listening Skills, English Language Innovative Strategies, t-Test.

## I- Introduction

According to Eli Ilinkel (2006), TESOL has been a field that continues on changing and it will remain so in future as well. With the passage of time new areas are discovered in this field. This field is mainly concerned with what to teach and how to teach English as a second language. According to Bradley & Bryant (1983), the awareness about the Phonological aspect of the language is to understand that oral language can further be broken up into individual words. These words are then broken into syllables, and syllables in turn are then broken into individual sounds. A qualitative analyses shows that better listener focused more on key information ('selective attention'). Their general approach was much more of a 'top down' one, while less effective listeners were more reliant on strategies for word by word decoding ("bottom-up' strategies) (O Malley and Chamot, 1990). The 'top-down' process of listeningactivates previous knowledge. The listener's store of background information can relate to the context, the topic, the type of text, conventions of rhetoric and discourse organization. This prior knowledge becomes helpful in decoding a message even when the message has not been heard in its entirety (Peterson, 2001). Knowledge of facts and expectations allow prediction and inferencing that bring the listeners to a position to bypass some aspects of bottom-up processing (Chaudron and Richards, 1986). This facilitates the listeners to fill in the gaps which are often there in spontaneous unrehearsed speech. It helps them to arrive at global meanings and interpretations which do not depend on comprehension of every subsection of the message. Thus, listeners can more often get a meaning just from the context and their knowledge of key words without paying any attention to grammatical form. "Bottom-up' process, according to Peterson (2001) is the lower level process that operates to construct meaning from recognition of sounds and words, which, when judged, are fit into larger phrasal units and then are matched with related ideas which are stored in long term memory. Donald E Powers (2010) is of the opinion that to most users of the English Language what matters is the overall ability to communicate effectively in the language rather than mastering a distinct skill.

One of the key advances to come out of research into listening tactics, according to Lindsay Miller (2003), was the realization that listening exercises could be separated into three primary parts: pre-listening, whilelistening, and post-listening activities. This division has

been extremely beneficial to both students and teachers. For example, during the pre-listening stage, a teacher can initiate a brief discussion with the students in order to learn about their perspectives on the issue that he or she would be discussing. In this approach, he or she will be able to activate their world/personal knowledge on the subject. The learners can then be requested to share any information they gleaned from the text in a post-listening stage extended conversation. Between these two stages, learners can be assisted in remaining focused on their listening by carefully selecting relevant exercises that cater to the development of certain listening abilities. Lindsay Miller offers some suggestions for how to apply these divides to real information presented via technical mediums such as radio, television, and the internet/CD-ROM. Concerning the use of radio Real-time radio, according to Miller, is one of the most easily available forms of authentic listening exercise that a teacher can provide to his or her students in the classroom. Because it is less expensive, all teachers can afford it. Second, it is simple to transport to the classroom. The airwaves are loaded with programming 24 hours a day, and radio stations such as the BBC and Voice of America are always on the air. To use radio in the classroom, a teacher can choose a program that focuses on some global listening activities for his or her students. Similarly, Miller claims that activities involving television/videos in the classroom can be separated into three parts: pre- listening, while-listening, and postlistening. The usage of TV/Videos in the classroom can also provide students with valuable listening practice. They have an advantage over the radio because they can see what is going on as well as listen to the text. For enjoyment, students frequently watch movies. In a language classroom, a teacher can educate students on how to use movies to help them improve their second language listening skills. According to Miller, there has been a fast surge in the development of internet facilities and CD-ROMs. This has allowed teachers to connect students to websites where they can improve their listening skills. Computers pique the interest of children and teenagers alike. As a result, this attention can be put to good use in helping them improve their listening skills. A creative discussion regarding the news can be suggested to the learners as a strategy. Lindsay Miller's technique involving the use of radio is very practical and applicable. Although the usage of radio and television is not new, teachers in higher secondary school classrooms do not use them. The usage of a radio in the classroom would be beneficial since it will provide activities for the teachers while also breaking up the monotony. The same

routine is followed by students throughout the week, which causes monotony. As a result, the pupils will appreciate the radio listening activity. These study will use practical activities like this to demonstrate the difference between teaching with innovative tactics and teaching without them. Pre, during, and after listening to television can be very beneficial to teachers in terms of increasing students' listening skills, especially on weekends. This activity will be used in this investigation. Internet/CD-ROM activities are really beneficial, yet the majority of learners in higher secondary schools do not have access to these resources. One of the reasons why teachers don't seem to pay enough attention to listening appears to be that it is regarded a passive skill.

One of the key advances to come out of research into listening tactics, according to Lindsay Miller (2003), was the realization that listening exercises could be separated into three primary parts: pre-listening, whilelistening, and post listening activities. This division has been extremely beneficial to both students and teachers. For example, during the pre-listening stage, a teacher can initiate a brief discussion with the students in order to learn about their perspectives on the issue that he or she would be discussing. In this approach, he or she will be able to activate their world/personal knowledge on the subject. The learners can then be requested to share any information they gleaned from the text in a post-listening stage extended conversation. Between these two stages, learners can be assisted in remaining focused on their listening by carefully selecting relevant exercises that cater to the development of certain listening abilities. Lindsay Miller offers some suggestions for how to apply these divides to real information presented via technical mediums such as radio, television, and the internet/CD-ROM. Concerning the use of radio Real-time radio, according to Miller, is one of the most easily available forms of authentic listening exercise that a teacher can provide to his or her students in the classroom. Because it is less expensive, all teachers can afford it. Second, it is simple to transport to the classroom. The airwaves are loaded with programming 24 hours a day, and radio stations such as the BBC and Voice of America are always on the air. To use radio in the classroom, a teacher can choose a program that focuses on some global listening activities for his or her students. Similarly, Miller claims that activities involving television/videos in the classroom can be separated into three parts: pre- listening, while-listening, and postlistening. The usage of TV/Videos in the classroom can also provide students with valuable listening practice. They have an advantage

over the radio because they can see what is going on as well as listen to the text. For enjoyment, students frequently watch movies. In a language classroom, a teacher can educate students on how to use movies to help them improve their second language listening skills. According to Miller, there has been a fast surge in the development of internet facilities and CD-ROMs. This has allowed teachers to connect students to websites where they can improve their listening skills. Computers pique the interest of children and teenagers alike. As a result, this attention can be put to good use in helping them improve their listening skills. A creative discussion regarding the news can be suggested to the learners as a strategy. Lindsay Miller's techniques they wish to improve their pupils' listening skills. Morley's conversational styles are extremely significant, and teachers must address them with their students. Teachers must create exercises to help pupils improve their listening skills, and they must take into account Morley's principles in doing so. In this regard, the notion of relevance is critical. The "outcome" categories are intriguing, and they will be used in this study. Various approaches in L2 listening instruction, such as pre-listening, listening for the main concept, listening intensively, and making inferences, have survived the test of time and are considered very important (Eli Hinkel, 2006). According to Hinkel, a number of research published in the 1990s highlighted the difficulty that students face while dealing with comprehension issues and making inferences. In this regard, meta-cognitive and cognitive methods of good L2 listeners have piqued researchers' interest (e.g., Rost & Ross, 1991; Vandergrift 1999, 2004). Their findings suggest that meta-cognitive and cognitive methods, particularly for L2 listening comprehension, should be taught. Planning for listening, self monitoring the comprehension process, evaluating comprehension, and detecting comprehension challenges are some of the main meta-cognitive strategies extensively used in L2 listening training (e.g., Rost 2005, for a discussion). Meta-cognitive and cognitive methods, as stated in the preceding paragraph, have shown to be quite effective in other countries. If used in the Bannu district, they can also yield positive effects. According to research, children who perform better in listening comprehension do so because they have learned efficient learning practices (Oxford 1990: 8). Murphy (1985) discovered that good listeners employ a wide variety of tactics. They were also more adaptable in their approach. According to him, weaker listeners focused too much on either the text or their own world knowledge. However, as time went on, it became clear that it

was not the quantity of tactics used that mattered, but how they were implemented (Suzana Graham-2003). It has also been suggested that discussing 'excellent' or 'poor' techniques is ineffective. Less effective students frequently employ the same tactics as effective students, but in isolation from other strategies and on tasks where their use is inappropriate (Graham 1997). The work of O'Malley and colleagues, who contributed a theoretical framework to the learner techniques, led to innovation. This use of a theoretical framework was lacking in previous research (Suzana Graham-2003). They classified learner strategies as metacognitive, cognitive, or social/affective strategies and presented them as sophisticated cognitive capabilities. Meta-cognitive techniques are "... higher order executive skills that may require planning for, monitoring, or evaluating the success of a learning activity," according to the definition.

**Abstract:** The teaching of listening that merely emphasized on testing listening rather than teaching how to listen had practically held up the second semester students of English Department of Kanjuruhan University Malang from proper listening comprehension and learning participation. Lack of language proficiency involving vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar affected their ability to recognize words and their meanings in communicative use. To overcome these classroom problems, the process-based approach underlying Discovery Listening Technique combined with podcast, the internet-based listening material was applied in collaborative action research. This research was intended to know how the technique using podcast can improve listening skill of the students. The technique required the students to realize causes of their listening problems in order to find out appropriate way of improving listening comprehension. The listening skill that was specifically improved was the ability of recognizing words and their meaning in contextual use because it touched the basis of listening comprehension skill in general. It gave balance between focus on form and attention on meaning. Keywords: listening skills, Discovery Listening technique, Podcast, process-based approach

INTRODUCTION Teaching listening in the classroom has too often been associated with testing (Ur, 1984; Sheerin, 1987). Students are merely forced to answer questions of listening comprehension correctly without considering to listening strategies they may use to cope with their listening difficulties. In English Department of Kanjuruhan University of Malang, the students were drilled with recurrent listening tests, for example, the students were given repetitive tasks to complete listening tests such as TOEFL, IELTS,

and TOEIC, characterized with small number of vocabulary, weak grammar competence and pronunciation discrepancy including bad intonation and stress, the students often 'lost' when listening to English listening text in normal delivery and most of them relied on random guessing to find a correct answer. The fact noticeably indicated that their lack of language proficiency significantly influence their low listening comprehension (Meccarty, 2000; Richards, 1983). Thus, the teaching tends to apply product based approach in which students listen to text and then merely answer optional comprehension questions. That was not a single problem in the class, the emphasis of EFI, textbooks recently used in the institution had been on developing topdown listening process in which the teacher tend to use top-down strategies. There were good reasons for this given that students need to be able to listen effectively even when faced with unfamiliar vocabulary or structures. However, if the students understand very few words from the incoming signal, even proficiency about the context may not be sufficient for them to understand the context, and the students can easily get blank in meaning in the stream of fast connected speech. The preliminary study particularly discovered that thirty (76%) students found it difficult to recognize words spoken in strings of utterances. They were unable to separate sounds into words as they were not accustomed to using appropriate intonation, and stressed syllables, whereas, word recognition as one of the listening microskills is the basis for successful listening comprehension (Segalowitz & Segalowitz, 1993; Rost 2002). The application of contextual guessing during listening means that the less proficient students tend to use mere top-down processing strategies. The exceeded top-down activities provide less adequate linguistic input for the students (Hulstijn, 2001) and have actually prevented less-skilled listeners from developing conceptual frameworks and meanings efficiently (Vandergrift, 2003). Thus, the students need to be taught to improve metacognitive awareness and perceptual processing which can affect their listening comprehension through process-based approach. Vandergrift (2003) argues that process approach helps students learn how to comprehend authentic texts on topics related to student level and interest. The metacognitive strategies underlying this approach help students become more aware of their listening problems (Field, 2003; Vandergrift, 2003). Students who are conscious of their own listening problems may also be motivated to find ways of addressing them. Three principles of metacognitive strategies are planning, monitoring, and evaluating (Goh & Taib, 2006) of which through the activities



English patterns can be familiarized and linguistic proficiency can be developed. The pattern recognition and linguistic proficiency development is important in activating the schemata to comprehend incoming information (Field, 1998). As a way of raising learners' awareness about listening processes, a technique named Discovery Listening is used to show students the mental activities that they engage in to construct their understanding of listening texts. Discovery Listening Technique (DLT) use process-based approach that encourages students learn how to listen by noticing causes of listening difficulty during listening and finally raising awareness of how to cope with these difficulties found. This technique gives balance attention on meaning and form requiring students to reconstruct the texts they hear and make them more aware of perceptual difficulties during the process of comprehension (Wilson, 2003). Schmidt (1990) has drawn attention to the role of consciousness in language learning, and in particular to the role of noticing in learning. His argument is that we will not learn anything from input we hear and understand unless we notice something about input. Consciousness of features of the input can serve a trigger which activates the process of familiarizing and incorporating new linguistic features into ones language competence. To provide native English speaker voices, the DLT was supported with the use of podcast. Podcast is an Internet-based listening material in the form of mp3 file that can be easily segmented and adjusted into short sentences, clauses and phrases by making use of audio software like Sound Editor Deluxe®, Winamp®, or Audacity. Variety of interesting topics and suitability to the level of proficiency, give influential impacts to the classroom atmosphere (Peacock, 1997 cited in Erben et al., 2009; Juniardi, 2008; Robb, 2006). In relation to the previously stated problems, the aim of this study is to describe how Discovery Listening Technique using podcast can improve listening skill of the second semester English Department students of Kanjuruhan University of Malang. On a procedure of modeling Chamot (1995, cited in Goh & Taib, 2006) suggest teachers to model how they themselves use strategies when listening to a tape or watching a video with new information. Before listening, the teacher thinks aloud about what he or she already knows about the topic and what words one might expect to hear.. After listening to a short segment of the text, the teacher thinks aloud again, describing the mental processes involved during listening, commenting also on whether the predictions have been confirmed or rejected. Finally, the teacher evaluates his or her use of strategies for the particular text. Teacher modelling and

scaffolded listening practice in metacognitive processes are clearly valuable for helping students learn how to listen (Vandergrift, 2004). The techniques expose the skills involved in successful listening by making implicit processes of skilful listeners explicit to novice listeners. Students need repeated and systematic exposure to the same sequence of metacognitive strategies used by skilled listeners. However, students sometimes also express frustration at not being able to segment all the words out of the stream of sound. Lack of linguistic proficiency is main problem. Top-down processing strategies may help in recognition of some words, but listeners are not always able to recognize even the words that they do know (Field, 2003). Listeners also need judicious practice in perception skills that will help them overcome the word segmentation skills of their native language and learn to identify words in 12 connected speech (Goh, 2008; Rost, 2002). Attention to prosodic features such as stress and intonation are important for word segmentation in listening comprehension. Given that prosodic features influence how listeners chunk and interpret connected speech, attention to these features of text will be helpful for word recognition (Lynch, 1996). In her examination of prosodic cues in processing for comprehension, Harley (2000) concluded that English comprehension may be facilitated if students, regardless of age or language origin, pay attention to pause bounded units rather than syntactic cues.

**METHOD** The design of this research is Action Research which involved repeated cycles, each consisting of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The result of one cycle is used to determine the need for the following cycle, until the problems get solved by the strategy (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988) This study took place in Kanjuruhan University of Malang where the researcher had been teaching English Listening Comprehension course for two semesters. Class E of Listening Comprehension II course was chosen because the objective of its syllabus matched to the purpose of the research, practicality and opportunity. The class was dominated by 40 low-ability students that suffered difficulties to recognize English words, which hinder their listening comprehension. Data collected covered all information related to the criteria of success targeted in the research namely the improvement of student's comprehension listening in term of achievement results and their active involvement in the teaching and learning process. The data come from numerical information, like the results of tests as well as verbal information, like technique implementation, classroom atmosphere, students' attitude, and student's worksheet. The

appropriate data instruments in this action research should be able to collect data reflecting "how well the strategy can solve the problems" (Latief, 2009). Data on students' achievement and performance were collected by testing them on listening comprehension and word recognition ability at the end of a cycle. Data on student's involvement were collected by observing the students' activities in class, the implementation of the technique, students' worksheet and the classroom situation and by exploring student's attitudes toward the technique through questionnaire. The data from the observation guide were described by using categories of achievement such as very poor, poor, fair, good, and very good. The data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed qualitatively. The response on each item in the questionnaires was calculated in the percentage of students' answer.

**FINDINGS** Based on the results of the achievement test, overall progress of observation results, reflections from questionnaire, results of the field notes and results of students' worksheet, it showed that the students had successfully improved their achievement in term of word recognition skill and listening comprehension and their learning participation in term of active and positive engagement in learning process. By the end of the Cycle 2 (the sixth meetings) the students, specially the weak-ability group, gained significant improvement in the achievement, reflecting that the process of learning had effectively touched the main causes of their listening difficulties. The increased ability to recognize words and their meaning in contextual text has relevancy to the increase of their listening comprehension. Most of students already understood tasks in the worksheet easily and clearly, so that questions over the tasks had drastically reduced. Students were able to concentrate on the working of the worksheet. During discussion, they looked serious and focused on all the tasks given. They discovered their own sources of listening difficulty and found out effective learning strategy. Low proficient students became actively involved in the activities and they looked enthusiastic in the class as well as their increased achievement result. It indicated that through the three stages of DLT their listening comprehension had improved. Most of students gave positive response on the process of teaching and learning using this technique. Podcast as source of listening materials gained positive response from most of the students because repetitive and frequent practice of listening and expressing helped them become better listeners. Figure 1. Students' Progressing Mean Scores Figures 1 present the growth of the students' mean score, starting from 62 in the preliminary score and gradually increasing

72 in Cycle 1 and 79 in Cycle 2. Twenty five students scored under 75 points in Cycle 1. However, it was interesting to note that in Cycle 2 several high proficient students' results slightly decreased, displaying that nobody scored 100. In regard with the students' participation in the teaching and learning process of each cycle, the data obtained from observation showed positive results. The low proficient students' involvement in Cycle 2 gradually improved much better than in the previous cycle. The changes on the procedures in Cycle 2 display good impacts to the group. The students enthusiastically practiced saying spoken expressions they heard from the listening texts. Here it can be seen that the involvement raised higher after realizing the cause of listening problems. They realized that they suffered lack of language proficiency especially in distinguishing boundaries of words in the context of text Table 1.

Indicators	Progress percentages Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Notes
Training stage Asking question to the teacher	18.8%	20.6%	GOOD
Responding to questions by the teacher	65.8%	70%	GOOD
Clarifying what is heard unclear	24.7%	(*) 17.2%	() GOOD
Saying spoken expressions they hear with proper pronunciation	64.1%	83.6%	VERY GOOD
Practicing stage Recognizing meaning of words in context	55.5%	70.6%	GOOD
Reconstructing clauses/ sentences they hear from the podcast.	91.4%	99%	VERY GOOD
Discussing their listening difficulties with peers.	58.1%	89.6%	GOOD
Reflecting stage Stating their listening difficulties	45.2%	51.7%	GOOD
Overall results	56.99%	69.30%	GOOD

On the contrary, the high proficient students looked bored and more passive in the Cycle 2 activities. This condition can be understood since they were given similar procedures for the same skill (word recognition) in 6 consecutive meetings, so the learning challenge for them was getting lessen.

**DISCUSSION**

The findings indicate that there are a series of activities involved in the process of how the students listen to English spoken messages. These sequential activities contribute to the improvement of students' achievement test results and their positive involvement in the learning process. At the start of learning how to listen process, the students were prepared for what they will hear and what they are expected to do. A schemata building activity followed by specific instruction was done prior to the listening of the texts. The findings in Cycles 1 and 2 showed that the students' comprehension of texts progressed greater when they had adequate background proficiency about the listening texts. Schmidt-Rinehart's (1994) study concludes that background proficiency assists listener's comprehension. In

addition to the schemata building activity, there was instruction to listen for the main idea where the student had a purpose of listening and used their prior proficiency to help them understand the meaning of the text globally. The students' purpose awareness was raised by the clear instruction before first listening. This is relevant to what Vandergrift (1999) has stated. He stated that consciousness to the proficiency of text and a purpose for a text must be established in listener's mind so that the listener can make decision about what to listen for and, subsequently, focus his/her attention on meaning while listening. After the listening for gist phase, verification of understanding took place. The findings demonstrate that the students in the class responded enthusiastically to the teacher's questions. However, large number of them failed to verify their comprehension correctly, whereas others even got confused. This confusion was rendered from the situation when the language use was not familiar yet by the listener. Some aspects of language components such as stressing, intonation, tone, joined, mixed lost words might be found in texts, they then were frequently heard and drilled to create meaningful units in listener's mind. As argued by Hulstijn (2001) components of the acoustic signals helped listener understand meaning in context. Cooney et al. (2003) add that when students are taught about stress and prominence they are encouraged to guess what they did not catch during listening. In real life, indeed, listener does not have to hear all the words in a spoken sentence in detail, but in order to understand meaning the students need to know how these words sound in real spoken expressions. It was, then, realized through language familiarity activity in which the language was heard and drilled segment by segment. At the beginning meetings of the Cycle I, the fact proved that the low proficient students seemed to enter a silent period (Krashen, 1982:38) in which the process of language familiarization occurred and they responded passively to the tasks. During the process of learning in both cycles, language proficiency of the spoken texts was explored and rehearsed by the students through teacher- led drills in training stage and studentcentered practice in group discussion of the following stage. The findings show that they used bottom-up strategies when they decoded every single word of the segmented text from its sound in detail and tried to discuss the meaning with friends by pooling their proficiency of words, grammar, intonation, on syllables to reconstruct the text. Familiar topics of texts promote the use of their language proficiency as well as background proficiency. The findings are in line with Schmidt Rinehart's (1994) analysis that familiar

topics, predictable content and cultural background helped students with contextualization of the message. The more difficult listening text the harder the less skilled listeners attend to a text as O'Malley et al. (1989) suggest that attentional factors during perceptual processing are fundamental for comprehension. If attention is limited, students attending to an unfamiliar language can be expected to have difficulty in identifying and retaining important portions of the oral text. However, when a topic was unfamiliar, the students with weak listening ability used bottom-up processing ineffectively and inappropriately. They neglected the next part of a text due to merely thinking about meaning of unknown words. Goh cited in Vandergrift (2003) identified it as comprehension problem during perception phase. Besides, the student's concern with unknown sounds and words became a barrier in bottom-up processing that, according to Tyler (2001), prevents listeners from being able to recognize words automatically. The cooperative work in the DLT significantly affected students' involvement which proved that cooperation between peers eased the process of learning how to listen. It is in line with Dulay et al.'s (1982:42) statement that peer-peer interactions really stimulate learner's communicative competence more than teacher-students interaction which is common in the listening classroom nowadays. They argue that there are interlocutors effects in which some students tend to dominate while others participate passively. This condition, if not managed well, could discourage low level students. The domination should be fenced since motivation is very important in determining the success of learning Nunan (1991:45). Moreover, given an opportunity to have discussion, in this study the low proficient students practiced their bottom-up processing skill with the support of their high proficient counterparts. They tended to talk about what they heard bottom-up, by sharing or pooling proficiency, and occasionally confirming what they were doubtful about. The groups carried on practicing several words in context until the end of the text and then went back to discuss problems or gaps. At other times they discussed difficulties as they went along. The class discussion on the listening difficulty, as reflected through student's perception, effectively exposed students to factors determining their listening comprehension during listening. Extracted from their enthusiast responses, the following factors affecting listening comprehension such as lack of vocabulary, rapid input, prior proficiency, type of input, and how words sound when they are chained together were revealed. Brown (2001:252) had detected the same factors emphasizing that rate of delivery,

stress, rhythm, intonation, and interaction were common EFL learners' listening problem, The students actively involved in the activity consciously realized these listening problems through their own discovery. They, then, were encouraged to figure out appropriate learning strategy to overcome their difficulties. The first factor was vocabulary shortage. The fact that so many students reported that vocabulary affected their comprehension shows it was a dominant perception among the students. This view was also found in Goh's (1999) study. The second was related to the input. When the high proficient students reflected on their success during listening, the low proficient students often attributed comprehension failure to rapid speech rate of speaker's speech. Since English is considered a stress-timed language (Platt, Webber & Ho, 1984 cited in Goh, 1999), the students should understand its difference with Bahasa Indonesia which is syllable-timed language. Given the L1 (Bahasa Indonesia) background of the students, they might not have been used to hearing speech in which some syllables were given more stress than others. As Goh (1999) states, the students' perception of apparent fast speech therefore have resulted from the presence suprasegmental features coupled with their expectation of what they should hear, rather than the actual speech rate itself. Thus, it can be inferred here that if their expectation meets their familiarity of text, comprehension level was greater. The third factor was type of input. The students reported that type of input was an important factor in determining their level of comprehension. The students found speech easier to understand than other types of input. However, their perception is inconsistent with Goh & Taib's (2006) findings which proved that conversation was easier to understand. One reason given was the students were able to make use of other types of information from the speaker (e.g. flow of expressive intonation) to assist comprehension. In reconstructing and comparing text activities, the students became aware of common word combination, sound of words in context, familiar with grammatical points and words and knowing the importance of top-down inference in solving specific problems. of listening. By comparing their reconstructed text with the original one, specific proficiency can be learnt according to the individual student's difficulties. Therefore, by knowing these crucial factors through the discussion, the students were made significant progress in the text reconstruction intrinsically motivated to improve language proficiency. The students with low ability as the majority subjects of this research got involved in all steps actively. On the contrary, the high-ability group showed enthusiasm in the earlier

three meetings only and lessened it in the last two meetings. They seemed to get bored with the repetitive technique. Accordingly, it can be concluded that this technique may be helpful for low level students because they have opportunity to enhance their language proficiency, while for the high level students the technique may be less challenging. As implied in the findings, variety of tasks and type of inputs might be applied to avoid the students' boredom. In this case, short duration of joke and funny story podcasts in the reflection stage had been successfully applied and had encouraged more extensive listening.



## CONCLUSION

The improvement of the achievement tests and learning participation were encompassed through three stages of Discovery Listening technique namely; training, practicing and reflecting stages. In the training stage, the students were introduced to promote their language proficiency by practicing the following activities;

1) activating schemata: listening texts were easily understood when prior proficiency was known,

2) listening text for gist; specific instruction on general gist of text focused listener on contextual meaning rather than merely form,

3) confirming comprehension on the text; enthusiastic contribution encouraged positive achievement and constructive competition

4) finding out sources of listening difficulties realized during listening; the search increased metacognitive awareness,

5) listening to segmented clauses and sentences of the text where the cause of listening problems found in detail; consciousness on the language features focused listener on form 6) reproducing these segmented expressions spoken by native speakers; expressive imitation enhanced their language proficiency. In the light of this stage, the playing of podcast might be repeated according to the students' search for the source of listening difficulty in order to familiarize the students with the language in communicative use. In the practicing stage, the students performed the tasks mentioned in Discovery Listening worksheet guiding them to the understanding of listening process occurred in their minds,

1) listening for gist of text without note taking; it forced the students to understand a whole text using their background proficiency,

2) self-assessing comprehension level; it improved metacognitive awareness,

3) writing down of listening comprehension; confirmation of comprehension in written form improved language proficiency of grammar and meaning of words by using contextual clue,

- 4) listening to segmented clauses and sentences of the text by making use of individual notetaking; the focus on form encouraged them to listen in a more narrowed context of text,
- 5)reconstructing text based on the individual notes; in a group, the students were cooperated to match their own comprehension with other friends,
- 6) comparing the reconstructed text with the original one; noticing differences of language features in the text and matching them with their own perception enhanced,
- 7) discovering sources of listening difficulties and writing the reasons of miscomprehension; metacognitive awareness enhanced listening performance. The listening text from podcast was supposed to be played and segmented after the explanation of contextual clue to avoid the students from noticing and reconstructing text without understanding the meaning. The reflecting stage encouraged the students to reflect on the activities they had conducted by pooling proficiency about aspects of teaching and learning and before closing of the lesson, the students listened to a short podcast for refreshment and encouragement.

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