SỨ DỤNG CHIẾN LƯỢC TRONG LỚP HỌC KỸ NĂNG NGHE TIẾNG ANH NHƯ MỘT NGOẠI NGỮ: NĂNG LỰC NGÔN NGỮ TẠO NẾN SỰ KHẮC BIỆT

Ngô Thị Thanh Huyền, Nguyễn Vũ Thu Hà∗∗


Từ khóa: chiến lược nghe, lớp học kỹ năng nghe tiếng Anh, sự khác biệt trong việc sử dụng chiến lược.

Among English language skills, listening often poses challenges to EFL learners. Therefore, researchers, teachers and learners of EFL have been seeking various methods to improve students’ listening skill, one of which is employing listening strategies. This paper is a part of a bigger mixed-methods research which aimed at investigating listening strategies adopted by English language majored students at Hung Vuong University, who were identified as successful and unsuccessful listeners. Only quantitative data collected from students’ diaries were reported in this paper on the basis of coding scheme according to the strategy taxonomy proposed by O’Malley & Chamot (1990) and Vandergrift (1997). The results of the study indicated that the students used metacognitive and cognitive strategies more frequently than social/affective strategies. Successful listeners used fewer listening strategies but in a more flexible and effective way than their unsuccessful counterparts. The study was conducted with a small number of participants; therefore, further research studies are suggested to be carried out with larger samples to obtain better generalization.

Keywords: listening strategies, EFL listening classes; differences in strategy use.

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I. Introduction

Listening skill is widely recognized as one of the most important skills in learning English as Foreign Language (EFL); however, listening acquisition is not an easy process. That is why EFL learners have made efforts to improve their listening comprehension. One of the ways to improve learners’ listening comprehension is using various learning strategies. In the literature, listening strategy instruction has been widely recognized as an effective way in enhancing learners’ listening proficiency across a range of settings (Oxford, 1990; Vandergrift, 1997; Berne, 2004; Chamot, 2004). According to Oxford (1990), language learning strategies are defined as specific methods of approaching a problem or task, operation forms to obtain a particular goal, planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information. The employment of appropriate language learning strategies can result in improved proficiency and greater self-confidence (Vandergrift, 1997; Ngo, 2015). This seems to suggest that raising the learners’ awareness of strategy use is likely to lead to successful strategy use in order to enhance comprehensibility. However, little empirical research has been conducted to uncover the listening comprehension strategies used by Vietnamese students, especially by students at Hung Vuong University (HVU).

This paper aims to present differences in their choice of listening strategies by second-year English majors at HVU who are identified as successful listeners and unsuccessful listeners with some hope that good listeners’ listening strategies (LCs) can be refined and applied to train less effective listeners in order that they can evolve into more-proficient ones.

II. Literature review

2.1. Definition of learning strategies

Learning strategies have been defined by various researchers in the field. Most of them shared the common definition that learning strategies are specific actions conducted by the learners to make their learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations (Oxford, 1990; O’Malley and Chamot, 1990; Brown, 2000; Seigel, 2015; Ngo, 2015). Strategies are contextualized plans because they are various from context to context, from time to time, from person to person (Ngo, 2015).

2.2. Role of listening strategies in language acquisition

Listening strategies are closely related to top-down and bottom-up processes of listening in which the former refers to the use of previous knowledge of the world to acquire the oral input while the latter is associated to linguistic understandings to understand the texts (Rost, 2002).
Moreover, according to many researchers (Field, 2008; Siegel, 2015), listening strategies play a vital role in comprehending spoken texts since they assist the language learners to overcome obstacles in understanding and completing listening tasks.

Learners can understand and employ the language input better when they have both awareness of listening strategies and the capacity to apply the learning strategies (Vandergrift, 1998). In other words, the application of cognitive, metacognitive, and social/affective strategies might help learners to overcome various listening problems such as quickly forgetting information heard, not recognizing known words, inability to form a mental representation from words, etc. (Goh, 2000).

Despite the importance of learning strategies in listening acquisition, less research attention has been paid to listening strategies than reading, speaking and writing strategies (Vandergrift, 2003, cited in Ngo, 2015). This is why the present study is conducted.

2.3. Taxonomy of listening strategies as the framework of the study

Various taxonomies of learning strategies and listening strategies have been proposed by researchers in the field such as Rubin (1975), Krashen (1981), Rubin & Wenden (1987), Brown (1988), Oxford (1990), O’Malley & Chamot (1990), Stern (1992), Vandergrift (1997). The classification of learning strategies by O’Malley and Chamot (1990) and Vandergrift’s (1997) listening strategy categories were combined and adapted as the theoretical framework for the current study to construct a coding scheme for identifying listening strategies used by the participants. O’Malley & Chamot’s taxonomy is chosen for the study because it is widely recognized by researchers of learning strategies; however, the taxonomy is too general since it deals with general learning strategies. That’s why the study also employs the classification of Vandergrift’s listening strategies as it focuses on only listening strategies.

In their taxonomy, O’Malley and Chamot (1990) and Vandergrift (1997) divided listening strategies into three categories named metacognitive, cognitive and social/affective strategies. Metacognitive strategies are a term used in information-processing theory to indicate an executive function, strategies that involve planning for listening, thinking about the listening process as it is happening, monitoring of one’s production or comprehension, and evaluating listening comprehension after a listening task is completed. Cognitive strategies refer to more specific listening tasks and involve more direct manipulation of the listening material itself. Social/affective strategies mean what the listeners have to do with social-mediating activity and interacting with others (see appendix for details).
2.4. Previous studies on listening strategies

Studies have been focusing on investigating listening strategies employed by different types of learners. Murphy (1985) worked with twelve intermediate ESL tertiary students to identify types of listening strategies used and the contrast of strategy usage at various proficiency levels. Think-aloud protocol was used to obtain data which then uncovered and grouped seventeen specific strategies. The findings showed that successful and unsuccessful listeners could be distinguished by the frequency of the strategies they used. Successful listeners frequently used elaborating, inferencing, prediction, conclusion drawing than the unsuccessful counterparts.

Young (1997) also used think-aloud to investigate the sequence of listening strategies used by 18 advanced ESL learners at six colleges in Hong Kong. Results indicated that many listeners had a similar pattern of strategy use regardless of their gender and English proficiency.

Vandergrift (2003) compared listening strategies of Canadian French students ranging from more-skilled to less-skilled levels. The findings showed that the more skilled ones used more metacognitive strategies like monitoring or evaluating than the less skilled listeners while the less skilled ones were found to use more translation strategies as they were listening. The researcher concluded that there were differences in the strategy use between the more proficient learners and less proficient ones.

Ngo, N.H.T (2015) conducted a mix method study aiming at understanding insights into listening strategies of EFL learners in a Northern university in Vietnam. Listening strategy questionnaire and in-depth interviews were used to collect data from 30 sophomore students. The findings showed that the listening strategy use of students were varied according to the students’ English proficiency. Overall, students focused only on planning, selective attention and directed attention. The students in the study were also found to use social/affective strategies more frequently than other kinds of strategies. In addition, the study also indicated that the students used repeated listening and using resource strategies that were not covered in the listening strategy taxonomy.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Research question and research design

The design of the bigger research project is mixed methods in which diary, composed of multiple parts, was used as the primary data collection instrument. The first part of the diary (see appendix 2) is to answer the research question “what listening comprehension strategies are employed by the second-year English majors?” In this scientific paper, only quantitative data related to listening strategies employed by students is reported to answer the abovementioned research question.
In order to ensure the validity of the students’ diary, it was sent to two lecturers of English in the department for their review and comments in terms of statement type and wording. After that the researcher translated the guided statements into Vietnamese and they were back-translated by the two Vietnamese teachers of English. In order to check its reliability, the diary was first piloted with four participants at the beginning of the course. The wording of the diary was adjusted based on the students’ comments.

This study recognized the appropriateness of the diary to investigate listening comprehension strategies for several reasons, one of which is that diary would be suitable for receptive tasks (O’Malley and Chamot 1990). Another reason is that compared with other approaches, data collected from the diaries right after the listening lessons is likely to be accurate since there is no strain on the memory to reconstruct past thoughts (Cohen, 1998). Others lie in its strengths over other data collection techniques to have insights into individual learners’ strategy use in a small population size.

3.2. Research participants

There were 34 respondents (28 females and 6 males) taking part in the study. They are the second-year English majors at HVU. First, they were equally grouped under two proficiency levels: “good” and ‘poor’ based on the results of the listening exams in the previous semesters. The baselines for ‘good’ and ‘poor’ were mark 7 upwards and mark 4 downwards respectively. Second, they were willing to participate in the study.

Those students majoring in English were deliberately selected as the subjects of the study with an expectation that their language learning experience would help them to develop learning in general and listening comprehension strategies in particular so that these strategies could be identified and analysed to meet the study objectives.

3.3 Research instruments

Students’ diaries were used to collect the data for the study. In details, the diary with 22 theme-guided statements was used to investigate the listening comprehension strategies. The participants were asked to write up diaries right after each listening class, reporting on the strategies they had just used before, while and after listening activities (see appendix 3 for student’s diary sample). Their description of listening strategies was then coded on the basis of listening strategy taxonomy (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990; Vandergrift, 1997).

3.4. Data analysis

Data collected from diaries was coded using listening category by O’Malley & Chamot (1990) and Vandergrift (1997), then it was analyzed using SPSS. Data analysis procedures included calculating descriptive statistics and used Mann Whitney U test. Descriptive statistics including means and standard deviation scores in the form of tables, were
employed to explore the listening strategies by English major students at HVU. The Mann Whitney U tests were applied to determine whether there were any significant differences in the use of listening strategies between the students.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Findings

4.1.1. Students’ overall use of listening comprehension strategies

4.1.1.1. Students’ use of listening strategy categories

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the three strategy categories (Metacognitive, Cognitive and Social/affective) used by students. Among the three strategy categories, Metacognitive has the highest average frequency (mean score= 27.66; SD= 3.34), followed by Cognitive (mean= 16.08; SD= 3.94) and Social/affective (mean= .58; SD= .99).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy category</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>27.66</td>
<td>3.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16.08</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social/affective</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.1.2. Students’ use of individual strategies

After analysing the results from the students’ use of individual strategies within three strategy categories, some generalizations can be made as follows. First, the students reported using metacognitive strategies far more frequently than cognitive and social/affective ones. As displayed from Table 2, among the six strategies in the metacognitive category, self-monitoring (M= 7.50; SD= 1.62) was the strategy of the highest frequent use. Other strategies were used comparatively more than others are paying attention (M= 6.00; SD= 1.53); self-evaluating, problem identification (M= 4.83 respectively); planning (M= 2.58; SD=1.50) and self-management (M= 1.91; SD=1.16). Second, the results of the study indicated that the cognitive strategies were not applied very frequently. As can be shown from Table 2, the most frequently used strategy in the cognitive group was found in the use of elaboration (M= 5.41), followed by inferencing (M= 3.66). The least fell in imagery strategy (M= .58). The others (translating, transferring, grouping, taking notes and substitution) ranged from M=.66 to M= 1.50.

Another result from this study which we found particularly interesting was that Social/Affective including only ‘questioning for clarification’ (M= .58) showed the least frequently used strategy category.
Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Individual Strategies within Three Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category and Strategy</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metacognitive</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-monitoring</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7.50</td>
<td>1.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying attention</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem identification</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-evaluation</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cognitive</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inferencing</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitution</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking notes</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grouping</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarization</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagery</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social/affective</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning for clarification</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In short, the findings of this study result in the following generalizations. First, the subjects employed all three categories of strategy by O’Malley and Chamot (1990). Second, among the three categories, ‘metacognitive’ was rated as the students’ first preference, followed by ‘cognitive’ and then ‘social/affective’.

4.1.2. Difference in the use of strategy categories

The descriptive statistics showed that the unsuccessful listeners dominated their successful counterparts in the utilization of all the three strategy categories. As can be seen from table 3, the biggest variation between the unsuccessful and successful listeners was found on the metacognitive category in which the average frequency for the unsuccessful listeners was M= 28.500 compared with M= 26.833 for their successful counterparts. Next came the utilization of the cognitive category in which the average frequency for the unsuccessful listeners was M= 16.667 while that for the successful listeners was M= 15.500. The social/affective category showed the least variation between the two parties. In fact, the average frequency for the unsuccessful listeners was M= .667
whereas that for their successful counterparts was M= .500. Based on this, the conclusion is drawn that there do exist difference between the two groups of listeners in the utilization of LCSs.

However, results revealed that the differences in the use of three strategy categories between the two groups of listeners were not statistically significant (p> .005). In other words, there was little difference in the use of three strategy categories for the unsuccessful versus the successful listeners.

Table 3. Strategy Categories Used by Successful and Unsuccessful Listeners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy Category</th>
<th>Successful (N=6)</th>
<th>Unsuccessful (N=6)</th>
<th>Mann-Whitney U</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive</td>
<td>26.83</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>28.50</td>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>15.50</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>16.66</td>
<td>4.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social/Affective</td>
<td>.500</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>.667</td>
<td>.816</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.3. Difference in the use of individual strategies

The descriptive statistics shown in Table 4 reveals some differences in the individual strategy use for two groups of listeners.

In the first place, the descriptive statistics uncovered a greater variety of strategies from the unsuccessful listeners than the successful listeners. As indicated in the table, sixteen strategies were employed by the unsuccessful listeners while only fourteen strategies used by their successful counterparts. Two strategies which were not used by the successful listeners were found on translation and transfer (their average frequency was M= .000). Besides, the average frequencies of strategy categories used by the unsuccessful listeners tended to be higher than those by their successful counterparts, especially in cognitive and social/affective categories.

With regard to the metacognitive category, the successful listeners utilized planning (M= 2.833), self-management (M= 2.667) and self-evaluation (M= 5.167) more often than their unsuccessful counterparts did (M= 2.333; M= 1.167 v M= 4.500 respectively), whereas the unsuccessful listeners seemed to use the other three metacognitive strategies: paying attention (M= 6.500), self-monitoring (M= 7.833) and problem identification (M= 6.167) more frequently than the successful listeners did (M= 5.500; M= 7.167 and M= 3.500 respectively).

Regarding the cognitive category, the strategies preferred by the successful listeners were inferencing (M= 4.167), elaboration (M= 6.333), grouping (M= 1.167), and imagery (M= .833). In contrast, those preferred by unsuccessful listeners were translation (M= 1.833), note-taking (M= 1.833), summarization (M= 1.000) and transfer (M= 1.333) and substitution (M= 1.667).
As to the social/affective group, the unsuccessful listeners were superior to their successful peers in the use of questioning for clarification strategy (Successful ones: M= .500; Unsuccessful ones: M= .667).

In the second place, the results revealed that there were significant differences (p<.05) between the two parties of listeners in the use of one metacognitive strategy: problem identification (p= 0.018), and three cognitive strategies: elaboration (p= 0.026), translation (p= 0.002) and transfer (p= 0.007). As can be illustrated from the table, the successful listeners employed elaboration strategy significantly more often than the unsuccessful ones. On the other hand, the unsuccessful listeners used translation, transfer and problem identification strategies significantly more frequently than their successful counterparts did.

Table 4. Differences in the Use of Individual Strategies between Successful and Unsuccessful Listeners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category and strategy</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>Mann-Whitney U</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metacognitive</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Sus</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.833</td>
<td>1.170</td>
<td>14.500</td>
<td>0.560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uns</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.333</td>
<td>1.211</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying attention</td>
<td>Sus</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.500</td>
<td>1.049</td>
<td>12.500</td>
<td>0.360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uns</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.500</td>
<td>1.871</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-monitoring</td>
<td>Sus</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7.167</td>
<td>1.835</td>
<td>15.500</td>
<td>0.682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uns</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7.833</td>
<td>1.472</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>Sus</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.667</td>
<td>1.751</td>
<td>7.500</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uns</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.167</td>
<td>.753</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem identification</td>
<td>Sus</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.500</td>
<td>1.643</td>
<td>3.500</td>
<td>0.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uns</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.167</td>
<td>1.329</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-evaluation</td>
<td>Sus</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.167</td>
<td>1.170</td>
<td>11.500</td>
<td>0.262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uns</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.500</td>
<td>0.837</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cognitive</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inferencing</td>
<td>Sus</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.167</td>
<td>2.483</td>
<td>12.000</td>
<td>0.326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uns</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.167</td>
<td>2.041</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>Sus</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uns</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.833</td>
<td>.753</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note-taking</td>
<td>Sus</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>1.095</td>
<td>16.000</td>
<td>0.738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uns</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.833</td>
<td>2.229</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration</td>
<td>Sus</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.333</td>
<td>.816</td>
<td>4.500</td>
<td>0.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uns</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.500</td>
<td>1.378</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grouping</td>
<td>Sus</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.167</td>
<td>.753</td>
<td>15.500</td>
<td>0.652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uns</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.632</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer</td>
<td>Sus</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>1.333</td>
<td>1.033</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarization</td>
<td>Sus</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>.667</td>
<td>.516</td>
<td>13.500</td>
<td>0.336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uns</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.633</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In general, with reference to the use of strategy categories, the unsuccessful ones reported utilizing all three categories of strategy more frequently than their successful counterparts. Regarding individual strategy use, the unsuccessful listeners had a wider range of strategies and employed them more frequently than their successful peers. More importantly, significant differences between two parties of listeners were found on one metacognitive strategy, namely: problem identification and three cognitive strategies, namely: elaboration, translation and transfer. The successful listeners used elaboration strategy significantly more frequently than their unsuccessful counterparts. The unsuccessful ones used, in contrast, problem identification, translation and transfer strategies more often than their successful counterparts.

4.2. Discussion

Results revealed that ‘metacognitive’ and ‘cognitive’ have the first and second highest frequency, which demonstrated that the students in this study relied heavily on metacognitive and cognitive strategies to comprehend oral messages. These results were supported by a great deal of LLS research in the literature (e.g., O’Malley & Chamot, 1990; Goh & Foong, 1997; Vandergrift, 2003). Clearly, these strategies play crucially important roles in learning process. In fact, metacognitive and cognitive strategies are often used together, supporting each other (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990). The current study suggests that second-year English majors employed these two strategies for listening comprehension.

Social/affective is reported using less frequently compared with the other types of strategy category. It is possible due to the fact that the students were not familiar with paying attention to their own feelings and social relationships (Oxford, 1990) while performing the listening tasks. This finding contradicts the finding from study conducted by Ngo (2015) in which the participants employed social/affective strategies more often than any other strategies.

Next, most studies in this area seem to have reported a greater use of LLSs by successful students (Wharton, 2000; Green & Oxford, 1995). However, this study found a wider variety of strategies with significantly higher average frequencies employed by the unsuccessful listeners than their successful peers. This finding, to some extent, supports Tokeshi’s (2003), Kiely’s (2002) which reported that the higher level students appeared to use fewer strategies. This may be because the higher level students comprehended for the most part the literal
meaning of the utterances, unconscious strategy use was thus not available (Tokeshi, 2003), while the lower level students had "more problems to solve" (Han, 2001), and yet they failed for their inappropriate and unorchestrated application of strategies (Vann and Abraham, 1990). Although the unsuccessful listeners exhibited higher frequent use of listening strategies, their frequency of listening strategies may not necessarily mean that a given strategy use was characteristic of a particular student. “Repeated use of a strategy may just be a sign that the learner is continuing to use a given strategy unsuccessfully” (Cohen, 1998). It is therefore likely that the skillful employment of strategies may have more to do with proficiency than does reported frequency counts.

Furthermore, findings in the current research indicated no significant variation in the use of strategy categories between the two groups of listeners. However, the reverse was true for individual items. The unsuccessful listeners had significantly higher frequent use in ‘translation’ and ‘transfer’. The current study suggests that the unsuccessful listeners often use their native language, i.e. Vietnamese, and linguistic knowledge to comprehend the aural texts. However, translation strategy is a negative predictor and according to cognitive theory, with translation inserted, comprehension would increase the possibility of negative transfer from mother tongue, which distort the accurate understanding and the whole process would be slowed down (Seigel, 2015, Ngo, 2015).

Another individual strategy that unsuccessful listeners had significantly higher frequent use was ‘problem identification’. This result is not consistent with that found in O’Malley and Chamot’s study (1990) which indicated that effective learners appeared to be more adept at problem identification or the recognition and articulation of obstacles to language comprehension. This finding may demonstrate that the unsuccessful listeners deal with many difficulties during the process of listening comprehension.

Additionally, both successful and unsuccessful listeners in this study used top-down and bottom-up strategies to assist their listening comprehension. This suggests that bottom-up processing and top-down processing strategies interact with each other in order for the students to comprehend the listening texts. However, it should be strongly stressed that using the same language learning strategies used by learners who were more proficient does not guarantee that bad learners will also become successful in language learning since other factors may also play a role in success. This finding may indicate that the difference between successful and less successful learners was the degree of flexibility the learners showed when choosing strategies, and the learners’ ability to appropriately apply strategies in their own learning situation. This finding supports the study conducted by Yi (2014).
Finally, this study found a greater variety of LCSs with higher frequencies used by the unsuccessful listeners than their successful counterparts. This result implies that the students identified as unsuccessful listeners need to be taught how, when and why to use their LCSs in order that they can comprehend oral input more quickly, easier, and more effectively.

5. CONCLUSION

In general, the findings of the study illustrate that the students employed all three strategies by O’Malley & Chamot (1990) and Vandergrift (1997). In addition, the study examining the differences between successful and unsuccessful listeners indicates a number of differences in how the two groups of listeners behave. First, the unsuccessful listeners had a wider variety of listening strategies and used them more frequently than their successful counterparts. Second, despite little difference in the use of strategy categories, significant differences were found on individual strategies, i.e. ‘problem identification’, ‘elaboration’, ‘translation’ and ‘transfer’. The successful listeners used elaboration strategy more often than their unsuccessful counterparts did, while the unsuccessful listeners used problem identification, translation and transfer more often than the successful ones did.

In view of the major findings of the present study, the researchers suggest that further research needs to be replicated with bigger samples on different proficiency levels of students to explore their use of listening comprehension strategies. Moreover, the current investigation measured LCSs preferences using one instrument (i.e., the students’ diary). It is recommended that future endeavors incorporate multiple instruments (e.g., interviews, questionnaires, observation, etc.) to triangulate the data and further provide understanding of not just what and how many strategies are used, but also when, where and why they are used.

REFERENCES


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Appendix 1: Listening Strategy Taxonomy
(adapted from O’Malley & Chamot, 1990 and Vandergrift, 1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MPL</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Previewing the organizing concept or clarifying the objectives of an anticipated listening task; proposing strategies for handling it; generating a plan for the parts, sequence or main ideas or language function to be used in handling a listening task.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Metacognitive strategies involve thinking about listening process, planning for listening, monitoring and evaluating listening task.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive strategies</th>
<th>Social and affective strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| MPA  
*Paying attention*  
Deciding in advance to attend in general to a listening task and to ignore irrelevant distractors; maintaining attention while listening. |
| MSM  
*Self-management*  
Understanding the conditions that help one successfully accomplish listening tasks and arranging for the presence of those conditions; controlling one’s listening comprehension to maximize use of what is already known. |
| MSMO  
*Self-monitoring*  
Checking, verifying, or correcting one’s listening comprehension while listening. |
| MPRI  
*Problem identification*  
Explicitly identifying the central point needing resolution in a listening task or identifying an aspect of the task that hinders its successful completion. |
| MSEV  
*Self-evaluation*  
Checking the outcomes of one’s own listening comprehension against an internal measure of completeness, accuracy; checking one’s language repertoire, strategy use, or ability to perform the listening task at hand. |
| CRPT  
*Repetition*  
Repeating a chunk of language (a word or phrase) while performing a listening task. |
| CRES  
*Resourcing*  
Using available reference sources of information about the target language, including dictionaries, textbooks, and prior work. |
| CGRP  
*Grouping*  
Ordering or classifying information in a listening task based on common attributes such as words or concepts according to their meaning; recalling information based on grouping previously done. |
| CNOT  
*Note taking*  
Writing down key words and concepts in abbreviated verbal, or numerical form while listening. |
| CDED  
*Deduction/Induction*  
Consciously applying learned or self-developed rules to understand the target language. |
| CSUB  
*Substitution*  
Selecting alternative approaches, revised plans, or different words or phrases to accomplish a listening task. |
| CELA  
*Elaboration*  
Relating new information to prior knowledge; relating different parts of new information to each other; making meaningful personal associations to information presented. |
| CIMA  
*Imagery*  
Using mental or actual pictures or visuals to represent information while listening. |
| CSUM  
*Summarization*  
Making a mental or written summary of language and information presented in a listening task. |
| CTRL  
*Translation*  
Rendering ideas from one language to another in a relatively verbatim manner. |
| CTRF  
*Transfer*  
Using previously acquired linguistic knowledge to facilitate a listening task. |
| CINF  
*Inferencing*  
Using available information to guess the meanings or usage of unfamiliar language items associated with a listening task, to predict outcomes, or to fill in missing information. |

**Cognitive strategies** involve interacting with the material to be learned, manipulating the material mentally or physically, or applying a specific technique to a listening task.

**Social and affective strategies** involve interacting with another person to assist learning or using affective control to assist a listening task.
SQCL | Questioning for clarification | Asking for explanation, verification, rephrasing, or examples about the material; asking for clarification or verification about the listening task; posing questions to the self.

SCOP | Cooperation | Working together with peers to solve a problem, pool information, check a listening task, model a language activity, or get feedback on oral or written performance.

SSFT | Self-talk | Reducing anxiety by using mental techniques that make one feel competent to do the listening task.

SSFR | Self-reinforcement | Reducing anxiety by using mental techniques that make one feel competent to do the listening task.

**Appendix 2: Students’ diary protocol- Part 1**

**NHẬT KÝ DÀNH CHO SINH VIÊN**

Họ và tên: ........................................... Lớp: ..........................

1. Today, before listening, I... (Hôm nay, trước khi nghe, em đã...)

2. Today, while listening, I... (Hôm nay, trong khi nghe, em đã...)

3. Today, after listening, I... (Hôm nay, sau khi nghe, em đã...)

**Appendix 3: Student’s diary sample**