EXPLICIT STRATEGIES-BASED LISTENING INSTRUCTION *

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to find out the effects of strategies-based listening instruction integrated into the lesson material and taught separately on the students' strategy use and their listening comprehension level. This study was designed as an experimental research and pretest / post-test control group experimental design was used as the pattern. Learners' strategy use and comprehension level are the dependent variables and Strategies-Based Listening Instruction (SBI) -integrated to the listening material and taught separately- is the independent variable. The intervention study includes randomly allocated two experimental groups and two control groups, pretest of the groups to ensure parity, treatment, posttest of the groups and delayed test of the groups to see whether the effects on the dependent variable is maintained or not.

One-hundred eleven intermediate students who enrolled in English class at State College in Turkey took part in this study. Twenty-seven students from this group comprised experimental group one (strategy instruction was integrated into the curriculum for this group) and thirty students comprised experimental group two (strategy instruction was taught separately for this group) and fifty-four students served as the control group.

Results revealed that strategies-based listening instruction increased the students' strategy use and led to a statistically important improvement in their comprehension level. Also, there isn't any statistical difference between two ways of explicit strategy instruction in terms of strategy use and comprehension level. Lastly, findings suggested that impact of strategies-based listening instruction on the strategy use and comprehension level was maintained.

Keywords: Strategies-based Listening Instruction, Listening Strategies, Explicit Strategy Instruction.

1. Introduction

Listening is a difficult and complex process that requires a lot of listener's mental activity. While listening process the listener needs to discern vocabulary and grammatical structures, understand stress and intonation, realize the sounds and interpret all of them within the context of the utterance. Listeners' inadequate competence and external factors related to speaker and context like accent, speech rate and unfamiliarity of the topic increase difficulty of comprehension. This difficulty results in passive, unmotivated and ineffective listener (Vandergrift, 1999; Graham, 2006; Lynch, 2011).

Most of these ineffective listeners don't know the real problems arising during the process. One of the most important ways of struggling these problems and developing comprehension skills is to lead the learners to apply right skills and strategies. Using authentic materials, listening logs, extensive listening and strategy-based instruction are some of the methods that the teacher may put into use to improve listening instruction.

Strategies-based instruction is a student-centered approach and consists of two main components: explicit and implicit instruction. In explicit instruction, students are taught when, how and why the strategies can be used directly in a separate or integrated sessions. Explicit learning strategy instruction essentially involves the development of awareness, modeling, practice and evaluation of the strategies used, and transferring to new tasks. Many researchers agree on the importance of explicit instruction in strategy training. However, there is less agreement on the issue of whether strategies instruction should be integrated into the language curriculum or taught separately.

In the separate strategy instruction, the teacher defines the target strategy, demonstrates its use as a model, asks students to give examples of their own learning experiences, guides the group or class discussion on the rationale behind the use and effectiveness of the strategy, and encourages students to use different strategies. Another way of strategy training is to integrate the target strategies into the lesson materials. The teacher first determines the target strategies and then organizes activities within the course material to teach them.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Listening Comprehension

Listening comprehension which is very important in language learning process is the interpretation of spoken input and adjust it to the new information (Buck, 2001). While listening, listeners use automatic

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and controlled processes to construct meaning from spoken input. "Bottom-up" and "top-down" are two dimensions that are mentioned in most of the studies related to the listening comprehension.

Top-down processing means to use the context and background knowledge in understanding the message. Listeners use their existing knowledge about the topic and context to predict what they will probably hear. On the other hand, in bottom-up approach they use the spoken input itself as the basis of understanding the message. To get the whole understanding, the listener first focuses on the sounds, then combines the sounds to build up the words and puts the words together to make the sentences (Lynch and Mendelsohn, 2002). As listening is an active and difficult process, many bottom-up and top-down factors should interact with each other to comprehend the given message (Vandergrift, 2007).

During the listening process, learners may encounter many cognitive, metacognitive or affective obstacles such as losing concentration, speed of speech, inability to recognize the spoken form of the words, unknown words, unfamiliar context and accents and high level of anxiety (Field, 2008; Lynch, 2009; Chang and Read, 2007). To improve learners' listening comprehension level numerous methods and approaches like listening logs (Kemp, 2009), extensive listening (Renanda and Farrell, 2011; Seigel, 2013) and strategy-based listening program (Mendelsohn, 2006; Vandergrift, 2007) have been suggested.

As Vandergrift (2007) summarized most of the ineffective listeners have inadequate knowledge of the real problems arising during listening. One of the most important ways of struggling these problems and developing comprehension skills is to lead the learners to apply right skills and strategies effectively. This requires following a strategy-based instruction in which listeners are provided opportunities to tackle with the obstacles they encounter and control their listening process. It helps them to develop their comprehension level which enables the learners to succeed in language acquisition and reduce their anxiety.

2.2. Strategies- Based Instruction

Strategies-based listening instruction is an approach that aims to teach the learners how to listen. It includes helping the learners to be aware of the strategies they use and teaching them additional strategies that can improve their comprehension of the spoken input. Oxford (2011) suggests many ways of strategy instructions to learners: direct strategy instruction, strategy instruction integrated into the lesson material, strategy instruction in the separate courses, strategy guidance woven into language textbooks and strategy guidance implicitly.

Strategies-based listening instruction consists of two main components: explicit and implicit instruction. Explicit strategy instruction essentially involves the development of awareness, modeling, practice and evaluation of the strategies used, and transferring to new tasks (Cohen, 1996; Chamot, 2005). It includes metacognitive knowledge about what the strategy is, how and when it should be used, what's its effect on comprehension of oral input. For explicit strategy instruction teacher defines the target strategy, explains how it is used and models it through think-aloud sessions, makes the learners practice it on themselves, lets the learners evaluate effectiveness of their strategy use and gives the opportunity of using the strategy in similar tasks.

In explicit instruction, students are taught when, how and why the strategies can be used directly in a separate or integrated sessions. In the separate strategy instruction, the teacher defines the target strategy, demonstrates its use as a model, asks students to give examples of their own learning experiences, guides the group or class discussion on the rationale behind the use and effectiveness of the strategy, and encourages students to use different strategies. Those who defend this instruction way argue that the target strategies are not specific to the subject and can be adapted to different topics. It's also more useful to focus on just the target strategy rather than focusing on both the subject and the strategy (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994; Cohen, 1996).

Another way of strategy training is to integrate the target strategies into the lesson materials. The teacher first determines the target strategies and then organizes activities within the course material to teach them. Those who defend this instruction way argue that learning in a context is more effective and permanent and it will be easier to transfer the strategies taught in an authentic linguistic content to the similar topics (Macaro, 2001; Chamot & O'Malley, 1994; Cohen, 1996; Donsereau, 1985). Many researchers agree on the importance of explicit instruction in strategy training. However, there is less agreement on the issue of whether strategies instruction should be integrated into the language curriculum or taught separately (Chamot, 2005).

Graham and Macaro (2008) compared the effect of strategy instruction on intermediate level learners' listening performance and self-efficacy. They revealed that strategy-based listening instruction developed listening comprehension and learners' self-efficacy. Also, Cross (2009) studied the impact of

listening strategies on comprehension of advanced level Japanese learners. BBC news videotexts were used as the lesson material and presentation, practice and review strategies were taught explicitly to the experimental group. The control group followed regular listening schedule without any strategy instruction. Results of the study showed that strategy instruction developed the learners' comprehension level significantly.

The result of the study conducted by Carrier (2003) to find out the effect of strategy training on listening revealed a significant development in listening comprehension in favor of experimental group. During the study, the teacher modeled the listening strategies like selective attention and note-taking and the learners have the chance to practice them. Moreover, Graham (2003) investigated the effect of explicit listening strategies training on the learners' listening score in IELTS test. 40 advanced level learners attended the classes for three months. The learners were divided into two groups: the experimental group followed explicit strategies-based listening training and the control group received only listening input. The result of the study showed that explicit strategies-based listening instruction had significant effect on learners' IELTS listening scores.

These research results have revealed that strategies-based listening instruction improves learners' comprehension. However, for strategy instruction to be effective learners can transfer and use these strategies in similar situations and tasks in which they learned. Therefore, just knowing about the strategy is not adequate. Learners should know how to use them on themselves. The eventual aim of strategies-based instruction must be to ascend learners' autonomy in using the strategies for higher level (Cohen, 1998). After reviewing the related literature, it seems that further study on the effectiveness of explicit strategies-based listening instruction may be useful.

Moreover, the studies which show which way of explicit (integrated to the lesson material or separated) strategy instruction is more effective in increasing listening comprehension, learners' autonomy and strategy use is very limited. The aim of this study is to find out the effects of strategies-based listening instruction which is integrated into the lesson material and taught separately on strategy use, gaining autonomy and listening comprehension level. Specifically, we try to answer the following research questions:

1. How does the strategies-based listening instruction (SBLI) improve the learners' strategy use? Will this improvement be maintained?

2. How does SBLI improve the learners' comprehension level? Will this improvement be maintained?

3. Is there any difference between the ways of instruction (integrated or taught separately) in terms of learners' strategy use and reading comprehension level?

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The study was designed as an experimental research and pretest/post-test control group experimental design was used as the pattern. Learners' strategy use and comprehension level are the dependent variables and SBLI (integrated to the reading material and taught separately) is the independent variable. The intervention study includes randomly allocated two experimental groups and two control groups, pretest of the groups to ensure parity, treatment (24 sessions 2 sessions per week for the integrated instruction and 12 sessions for the separate instruction), posttest of the groups to see the effects on the dependent variable, delayed test of the groups to see whether the effects on the dependent variable is maintained or not.

3.2. Participants

One hundred and eleven intermediate students who enrolled in English class at State College in Turkey took part in this study. Twenty-seven students from this group comprised experimental group one (strategy instruction was integrated into the curriculum for this group), thirty students comprised experimental group two (strategy instruction was taught separately for this group) and fifty-four students served as the control group. For experimental group one objective listening strategies were incorporated into the regular classroom learning activities as two sessions for each week. On the other hand, for the experimental group two they were taught separately as one session for each week.

3.3. Instruments

English Listening Strategies Scale and Listening Comprehension Test were used to collect data for this study.

3.3.1. English Listening Strategies Scale

English Listening Strategies Scale produced by Chen, Lee and Lin (2010) is a 5-point Likert type scale with 40 items. The scale contains three dimensions, namely: (i) cognitive strategies (15 items), (ii) meta-cognitive strategies (20 items) and, (iii) socio-affective strategies (5) items. Its structural validity was analyzed in 230 students via main component analysis, and factor loads varied between .42 and .83. The Cronbach Alpha internal validity coefficients of the three dimensions varied between .72 and .84.

3.3.2. Listening Comprehension Test

The test is one of the parts of the proficiency test used by Oxford University Press. It is a multiple-choice achievement test with 20 questions about 8 different listening passages. Its structural validity was analyzed in 300 students via test and item analysis. The differentiation of the items varied between .33 and .71, and item difficulties are between .34 and .53. The KR-20 validity of the test is found to be .88.

3.4. Procedure

During the first stage of the study, the teachers who would instruct the strategies-based listening program were trained about the program and listening strategies for four sessions. After the teacher training program, English Listening Strategies Scale and Listening Comprehension Test were applied to the experimental and control groups as a pretest. Table 1 displays the results of ANOVA Analysis which was used to see if there was a difference among the groups in terms of the English Listening Strategies Scale and Listening Comprehension Test. According to the results, there wasn't any significant difference between the experimental and control groups ($p >$.05). Therefore, it could be deduced from this result that experimental and control groups were similar in terms of pre-test scores.

Table 1: Results of the ANOVA Analysis for the Listening Strategies Scale and Listening Comprehension Test Pretests Scores

	Group	*N*	*X*	*SD*		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	*Sig.*
Listening Strategies	Exp.1	27	115,40	17,70	Between G.	2309,46	3	769,822	1,943	,127
	Exp.2	30	112,26	16,99	Within G.	42390,64	107	396,174		
	Cont.1	24	111,20	12,38	Total	44700,10	110			
	Cont.2	30	103,30	27,74						
	Total	111	110,37	20,15						
Listening Comp. Test	Exp.1	27	39,81		Between G.	73,702	3	24,567	,149	,930
	Exp.2	30	38,83		Within G.	17660,532	107	165,052		
	Cont.1	24	39,37		Total	17734,234	110			
	Cont.2	30	38,66							
	Total	111	38,87							

After the application of the pretest, the instruction of the objective listening strategies to the experimental groups began. For the experimental group one the strategies were integrated into the listening activities of the book "Tactics for Listening: Expanding by Jack C Richards and Grant Trew". Experimental part of the study continued for 12 weeks, 2 hours per week. In each two-hour period, one of the listening passages was taught. For the experimental group two the strategies were taught separately as one session for each week. The procedure also lasted for 12 weeks for this group. Each session was designed according to O'Malley's strategies-based instruction procedures given in Table 2:

Table 2: O'Malley's strategies-based listening instruction (SBLI) session structure

Preparation	
Presentation	Defining and explaining the objective strategy
	Modeling the objective strategy
Practice	Group discussion
	Group work / Collaboration / Think aloud
Evaluation	Discussion of the objective strategy in the classroom
	Evaluating the effectiveness of the strategy
Expanding	Similar tasks for the assignment

After twelve-week period, English Listening Strategies Scale and Listening Comprehension Test were applied to two experimental and control groups as the posttests. The experimental process was completed by applying delayed tests to all groups two months after the instruction period. The data gathered from posttests and delayed tests were analyzed in two stages:

1) In order to prevent the effect of the pretests on the posttests and delayed tests, the significance of the differences between the means of two experimental and two control groups' posttests and delayed tests scores were adjusted using the pretests results and analyses of covariance (ANCOVA) was used,

2)   To compare the means of two experimental groups' posttests and delayed tests scores, one-way ANOVA was used.

4. Findings

4.1. Findings about Research Question 1

Research question 1: How does the strategies-based listening instruction (SBRI) improve the learners' strategy use? Will this improvement be maintained? To check for the effect size of the strategies-based instruction on the learners' strategy use, the effect size statistic was conducted which is usually assessed by eta squared.

4.1.1. Findings about posttest scores (How does the strategies-based listening instruction (SBLI) improve the learners' strategy use?)

In Table 3, the results of the covariance analysis for Listening Strategies Scale posttest scores which were adjusted according to the pretest scores were displayed. There was a statically significant difference in listening strategies mean scores of the experimental and control groups in favor of the experimental group after adjusting for pretest differences between groups. These results show that strategies-based listening instruction increases the students' cognitive, metacognitive and socio-affective strategies as a whole listening strategies use. It can be implied that the strategies-based instruction explained a very large amount of variation in listening strategy use scores of the students. In other words, the eta squared .69 demonstrated that 69 percent of the change and variation in the listening strategy use as the dependent variable is explainable by the manipulation of the treatment, namely, strategies-based instruction as the independent variable in the experimental groups.

Table 3: Results of Covariance Analysis for Listening Strategies Scale Posttest Mean Scores, Adjusted According to the Pretest Scores

Scale	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta-Squared
	Model	64969,219[a]	4	16242,304	109,77	.000	.80
Listening	Pretest	19204,428	1	19204,428	129,791	.127	.000
Strategies	Group	35262,902	3	11754,300	79,440	.000	.69
Scale	Error	15684,204	106	147,964			
	Total	80653,423	110				

4.1.2. Findings about delayed test scores (Will this improvement be maintained?)

In Table 4, the results of the covariance analysis for Listening Strategies Scale delayed test scores which were adjusted according to the pretest scores were displayed. There was a statically significant difference in listening strategies mean scores of the experimental and control groups in favor of the experimental groups after adjusting for pretest differences between groups. It can be implied that the strategies-based instruction explained a very large amount of variation in listening strategy use scores of the students. In other words, the eta squared .78 demonstrated that 78 percent of the change and variation in the listening strategy use as the dependent variable is explainable by the manipulation of the treatment, namely, strategies-based instruction as the independent variable in the experimental group.

In sum, learners who receive strategies-based instruction show a considerable improvement in their listening strategy use in contrast to the control groups. Also, according to the findings on the delayed test score this improvement was maintained.

Table 4: Results of Covariance Analysis for Listening Strategies Scale Delayed Test Mean Scores, Adjusted According to the Pretest Scores

Scale	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta-Squared
	Model	56678,193	4	14169,548	129,55	.000	.83
Listening	Pretest	19874,632	1	7047,307	64,433	.127	.63
Strategies	Group	42180,914	3	14060,304	128,55	.000	.78
Scale	Error	11593,536	106	109,372			
	Total	1734333	111				

4.2. Findings about Research Question 2

Research Question 2: How does the strategies-based listening instruction (SBLI) improve the learners' listening comprehension level? Will this improvement be maintained? To check for the effect size of the strategies-based instruction on the learners' listening comprehension level, the effect size statistic was conducted which is usually assessed by eta squared.

4.2.1.   Findings about posttest scores (How does the strategies-based listening instruction (SBLI) improve the learners' comprehension level?)

In Table 5, the results of the covariance analysis for Listening Comprehension Test posttest scores which were adjusted according to the pretest scores were displayed. There was a statically significant difference in listening comprehension test mean scores of the experimental and control groups in favor of the experimental group after adjusting for pretest differences between groups. These results show that strategies-based listening instruction increases the students' comprehension level. It can be implied that the strategies-based instruction explained a large amount of variation in listening comprehension test scores of the students. In other words, the eta squared .24 demonstrated that 24 percent of the change and variation in the listening comprehension test scores as the dependent variable is explainable by the manipulation of the treatment, namely, strategies-based instruction as the independent variable in the experimental groups.

Table 5: Results of Covariance Analysis for Listening Comprehension Test Posttest Mean Scores, Adjusted According to the Pretest Scores

Scale	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta-Squared
	Model	7112,797	4	1778,199	8,650	.000	.24
Listening	Pretest	195,071	1	195,071	0,948	.332	.009
Comp.	Group	7000,455	3	2333,485	11,351	.000	.24
Test	Error	21789,905	106	205,565			
	Total	28902,702	110				

4.2.2. Findings about delayed test scores (Will this improvement be maintained?)

In Table 6, the results of the covariance analysis for Listening Comprehension Test delayed test scores which were adjusted according to the pretest scores were displayed. There was a statically significant difference in listening comprehension test mean scores of the experimental and control groups in favor of the experimental groups after adjusting for pretest differences between groups. It can be implied that the strategies-based instruction explained a large amount of variation in listening comprehension test scores of the students. In other words, the eta squared .59 demonstrated that 59 percent of the change and variation in the listening strategy use as the dependent variable is explainable by the manipulation of the treatment, namely, strategies-based instruction as the independent variable in the experimental group.

In sum, learners who receive strategies-based instruction show a considerable improvement in their comprehension level in contrast to the control groups. Also, according to the findings on the delayed test score this improvement was maintained.

Table 6: Results of Covariance Analysis for Listening Comprehension Test Delayed Test Mean Scores, Adjusted According to the Pretest Scores

Scale	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta-Squared
	Model	310220,141	4	62044,028	230,316	.000	.91
Listening	Pretest	419,307	1	419,307	1,556	.215	.014
Comp.	Group	42163,256	3	10540,814	39,129	.000	.59
Test	Error	28554,858	106	269,385			
	Total	338775	111				

4.3. Findings about Research Question 3

Research Question 3: Is there any difference between the ways of instruction (integrated or taught separately) in terms of learners' strategy use and reading comprehension level? To compare the means of two experimental groups' posttests and delayed tests scores Independent Samples t-Test was used.

4.3.1. Findings about Posttest Scores

In table 7, the results of Independent Samples t-Test which was used to compare the means of two experimental groups' Listening Strategies Scale and Listening Comprehension Test posttest scores were shown. According to these results, there isn't any significant difference between the means of experimental groups' Listening Strategies Scale and Listening Comprehension Test posttest scores ($p > .05$). Listening Strategies Scale and Listening Comprehension Test posttest scores indicate that there isn't any significant difference between the integrated and separate instruction.

Table 7. *T-test Results of English Listening Strategies Scale and Listening Comprehension Test Posttest Means of Experimental Groups*

Factors	Group	N	X	SD	T	P
	Exp. Group l	27	144,814	12,278		
Listening Strategies	Exp. Group 2	30	143,3	10,606	.496	.619
	Exp. Group 1	27	62,40	14,167		
Listening Comprehension Test	Exp. Group 2	30	59,16	12,253	0,918	.362

4.3.2. Findings about Delayed Test Scores

In table 8, the results of Independent Samples t-Test which was used to compare the means of two experimental groups' Listening Strategies Scale and Listening Comprehension Test delayed test scores were shown. According to these results, there isn't any significant difference between the means of experimental groups' Listening Strategies Scale and Listening Comprehension Test delayed test scores (p ›.05). Listening Strategies Scale and Listening Comprehension Test delayed test scores indicate that there isn't any significant difference between the integrated and separate instruction.

Table 8. *T-test Results of English Listening Strategies Scale and Listening Comprehension Test Delayed Test Means of Experimental Groups*

Factors	Group	N	X	SD	T	P
	Exp. Group l	27	141,740	7,674		
Listening Strategies	Exp. Group 2	30	144,266	5,489	1,439	.163
	Exp. Group 1	27	61,6	15,811		
Listening Comprehension Test	Exp. Group 2	30	58,50	15,433	.763	.448

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this study was to find out the effects of explicit strategies-based listening instruction on strategy use, gaining autonomy and listening comprehension level. Also, we compared two ways of explicit strategies-based listening instruction: integrated into the lesson material and taught separately

The findings of the study show that explicit strategies-based listening instruction increases students' strategy use and comprehension level. The eta-square values show that the experimental application significantly explained the variability of the post and delayed test scores.

With this study, it was found that explicit strategies-based listening instruction has a significant effect on the two dependent variables, namely strategy use and comprehension level. According to the post and delayed test scores, after the experimental application students' strategy use considerably improved in behalf of the experimental group. This result of the study was very similar to the previous study results that had revealed strategies-based listening instruction improved the strategy use and learners' comprehension (Graham and Macaro, 2008; Carrier, 2003; Graham, 2003; Cohen, 1998).

For strategy instruction to be effective learners can transfer and use these strategies in similar situations and tasks in which they learned. Therefore, just knowing about the strategy is not adequate. Learners should know how to use them on themselves. The eventual aim of strategies-based instruction must be to ascend learners' autonomy in using the strategies for higher level (Cohen, 1998; Anderson, 2009). The goal of this kind of instruction is to help the learners become more self-aware about how they learn more effectively, realize the ways in which they enhance their own learning, become more responsible for their own learning process and become more effective learners by individualizing the process.

 With the application of the strategies-based listening instruction the study can be said to achieve this objective. The use of the strategies increases during the experimental process, and this increase continued after the application. The results of the covariance analysis confirmed that strategies-based listening instruction has 69% effects on the reading strategies use after the experimental process. This amount became 78% after the delayed test which was conducted two months later.

Many researchers agree on the importance of explicit instruction in strategy training. However, there is less agreement on the issue of whether strategies instruction should be integrated into the language curriculum or taught separately (Chamot, 2005). Different from the other studies, in this study we compare the effectiveness of two explicit strategy training in terms of strategy use and listening comprehension level. Results of the study indicate that there isn't any significant difference between the integrated and separate instruction in terms of strategy use, gaining autonomy and reading comprehension level.

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