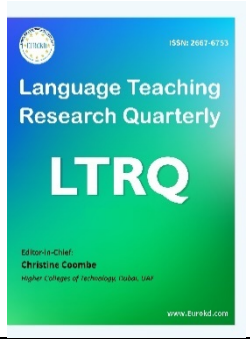

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Investigating Learners' Listening Comprehension Strategy Awareness and its Implications for Language Learning

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Abstract

In recent years, the importance of listening when becoming communicatively competent in a new language has been increasingly recognized, and authors such as Richards (2002; 2005) have responded to this awareness by producing material specifically designed to meet this need. In order to develop listening proficiency, other authors (e.g. Vandergrift, 1999) have investigated listening strategies. It is possible that other factors might also influence learners' listening competence and their strategy choices. The study reported here aimed at finding the relationship between learners' listening strategy use and listening comprehension achievement concerning their proficiency level, gender, and field of study. The population of the study included 322 university students (99 males, 223 females) at B2 level of proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference, who were studying to specialize in Nursing, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation, and Psychology in a university in İzmir, Turkey. Data were collected through a listening strategy inventory applied to measure learners' use of metacognitive, cognitive and socioaffective strategies and a listening comprehension achievement test. Statistical analyses of the data revealed statistically significant positive correlations between listening strategy use and listening comprehension achievement (higher achievers used strategies more frequently). There were also significant differences between listening comprehension achievement and listening strategy use with regard to the aforementioned variables.

Keywords: *Listening Comprehension Strategies, Metacognitive Strategies, Cognitive Strategies, Socioaffective Strategies, Listening Comprehension Achievement*

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Introduction

Historically speaking, the importance of listening was not appreciated until after the end of the 19th century, when language teaching specialists and linguists looked for more naturalistic ways to learn foreign languages during the Reform Movement Era (Richards & Rogers, 2014; Rost, 2001). Teaching listening as a separate skill became important with the outcomes of developments in psychology (behaviorism) and linguistic theories (structuralism) in language teaching methods such as the Oral Approach and the Audio-Lingual Method, as seen in the mid-20th century. Its use, however, as a part of face-to-face communication in real life situations and as a major source of "comprehensible input" (Krashen, 1985) had to wait several more decades until the concept of communication-based language learning/teaching entered academic literature.

In the past few decades, scholars have reached a consensus about what language learning is: it is considered to be learning to communicate, and this includes developing communicative competence (Hymes, 1972). Richards (1983) defines communicative competence as knowledge of different sorts of communicative strategies and/or communicative styles depending upon the situation, the task, and the roles the participants assume. In order to become communicatively competent, learners need skills, and of the skills, listening is by far the most frequently used as it carries more than 50 % of the communicative load in everyday exchange both in the use of native tongue and additional/foreign language (see Vandergrift, 2003, 2007; Vandergrift & Goh, 2009), and this situation is no different in academic contexts (Imhof, 1998). However, although listening has such an important role in developing communicative competence, it is often neglected in the language classroom: additional language learners sometimes get little assistance from the teachers or are on their own to develop their listening skills (Kök, 2018).

The Role of Strategies

In order to address this neglect, increasing the time spent on listening training is necessary (perhaps using a text such as Richards (2005), but this may not be sufficient unless listening skills are given systematic attention to develop competence. One of the ways to do this is making the learners aware of learning strategies, as they are now accepted to have the potential to be "an extremely powerful learning tool" (O'Malley et al., 1985, p. 43). Learning strategies were inspired by the efforts to define who the good language learners are in the 1970s (e.g. Rubin, 1975). Since that time, various definitions of learning strategies have been made by different scholars and sometimes, with the added outcomes of research, the definitions provided by the same researcher have changed over the years (see Anderson, 2005; Cohen, 1998; Griffiths, 2008; 2018; Oxford, 1990; 2001; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Wenden & Rubin, 1987). Richards & Schmidt (2013) define learning strategies as "the ways in which learners attempt to work out the meanings and uses of words, grammatical rules, and other aspects of the language they are learning" (p. 331).

According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990) learning strategies include "special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend" (p.1). This definition was utilized in the development of the Listening Comprehension Strategy Use Inventory (LCSUI) used in the study reported in this article, since it clearly represents the initial categorization of learning strategies

(cognitive, metacognitive, socio affective) in Wittrock's generative model (1974) and by Brown (1982 in O'Malley et al., 1985), and it best fits listening comprehension. They classify language learning strategies into three main categories: metacognitive, cognitive, and socioaffective. Metacognitive strategies are defined as "a learning strategy that involves thinking about or knowledge of the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring learning while it is taking place, or self-evaluation of learning after the task has been completed". However, cognitive strategies are defined as covering "mental manipulation or transformation of materials or tasks…to enhance comprehension, acquisition, or retention". Socioaffective strategies involve social interactions that help comprehension, learning, retention of information, and mental control over personal affect that interferes with learning (O'Malley & Chamot 1990, pp. 229-232).

Several studies have shown a positive relationship between language learning strategy use and language achievement level (e.g. Griffiths, 2003a; 2003b). In terms specifically of listening achievement, when Kök (2014) investigated the effects of explicit strategy training on listeners' comprehension, he found that treatment-group learners did better on the post-tests than control-group learners.

The Role of Learner Variables

Another area in which research has been carried out is the relationship between listening strategy use and learner variables. Hsueh-Jui (2008) investigated the interrelationship between listening comprehension strategy use and listening proficiency levels of 101 university students learning English and found that listening comprehension strategy was a good predictor of listening ability. He also suggested that strategy-based instruction in EFL classes could increase the students' strategy awareness and give them the chance to choose suitable strategies to help make learning foreign languages more effective. Lau (2017) also did research on the strategy use of "high proficiency" versus "low proficiency" Chinese secondary school students and found that high proficiency students used listening comprehension strategies more frequently and effectively than those of low proficiency. And when Kök (2018) studied the relationship between strategy use and listening comprehension proficiency of a group of English language students who were studying to be English teachers, he also found a significantly positive relationship between proficiency and strategy use.

Gender is another learner variable which has drawn research attention (for example Bacon 1992; Boyle, 1987; Burstall, 1975; Eisenstein, 1982; Farhady, 1982; Nyikos, 1990; Sunderland, 1998), but the studies that have tried to explore the relationship between gender and language learning strategy use are not common, and their results are often contradictory and inconclusive (in Griffiths, 2003a). Tran (1988), for example, studied gender differences in English language learning strategies among older Vietnamese in the US, and found that males used more varied learning strategies and had fewer problems with the learning of English than females. And when Phakiti (2003) explored gender differences in strategy use, males were found to be superior in metacognitive strategy use. On the contrary, Oxford and Nyikos (1989) and Ehrman and Oxford (1989) investigated the relationship between learning strategy and gender and found that females were better than males in the use of learning strategies. Many studies, however, have found no

significant difference in strategy use with regard to gender. For instance, when Hidayanti and Umamah (2019) did research on the relationship between the learners' choice of learning strategies and their genders and listening achievements, no significant correlations or differences were found. Similarly, when Nix, (2021) examined the relationship between listening comprehension strategy use and listening comprehension achievements concerning gender, no statistically significant differences or correlations between male and female gender were found. Alrashidi (2022) also investigated the impact of proficiency levels and gender on the use of language learning strategies and found no significant difference between male and female students or any correlations between gender and the use of listening comprehension strategies.

Overall, research indicates that there is a positive relation between language strategy use and listening comprehension achievement/proficiency. In general, the higher the use of strategies, the higher the language proficiency. However, there are still certain areas which have been understudied or should be investigated in new contexts so that their findings could contribute to the earlier ones or to studies that yielded inconclusive results. This study will try to contribute to knowledge in this area by investigating the relationship between listening comprehension strategy use (metacognitive, cognitive and socioaffective) and listening proficiency and also taking learners' gender and the major that they are studying into account.

The Study

The purpose of the research was to find a possible correlation between students' listening comprehension strategy use and their listening comprehension proficiency by taking their strategy groups (metacognitive, cognitive and socioaffective), department, and gender into account.

Research Questions

The following research questions were investigated in the present study:

RQ_1: How frequently do students use listening comprehension strategies?

RQ_2: Are there any significant correlations between learners' listening comprehension achievements and use of listening comprehension strategies?

RQ_3: Are there any significant differences between learners' listening comprehension achievements and the strategies they use most frequently?

RQ_4: Are there any significant differences between learners' listening comprehension achievements and strategy use regarding their gender and field of study?

Population

The population of the study comprises 322 students (99 male, 223 female), who were studying at the Department of Nursing (n=90), Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation (n=106) and, Psychology (n=126) in a university in İzmir, Turkey. The reason why these students were chosen as the population of the research was that they were highly motivated to learn English, in particular to develop their oral communication skills so that their graduates could find jobs abroad especially in some of the European countries. The students' ages varied between 18 through 28 averaging around 20 (see Table 1 for the departmental and gender distribution of the participants).

Table 1

Population of the Study

Department	Male	Female	Total
Psychology	37	89	126
Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation	43	63	106
Nursing	19	71	90
Total	99	223	322

Method

Data Collecting Instruments

Listening Comprehension Strategy Use Inventory (LCSUI)

Learners listening comprehension strategy use levels were measured by the Listening Comprehension Strategy Use Inventory (LCSUI) designed by the author. The inventory comprises 50 five-point Likert scale items inspired by O'Malley and Chamot (1990), Vandergrift (2003) and Vandergrift et al. (2006), and has three domains of items measuring metacognitive (26), cognitive (15), and socioaffective (9).

To get higher reliability and validity, LCSUI was developed in the mother tongue (Turkish) of the research participants (see Anderson, 2005). Answers given to the LCSUI include five alternatives supplied in the scale showing the frequency of use of strategies (A=never, B=rarely, C=sometimes, D=frequently, and E=always). After collecting data, letters (ordinals), then, were converted into numbers (A=1, B=2, C= 3, D=4 and E=5) to do the calculations in SPSS. Some of the items (five in all) in the scale were coded reversely (7 – metacognitive - mental translation; 12 and 26 - metacognitive - planning; 47 - socioaffective; 50 – metacognitive - evaluation) as one of them (item 7) was related to the other items negatively, and the remaining four (items 12, 26, 47 and 50) were negatively constructed. The median of each component (metacognitive, cognitive and socioaffective) made up the strategy use score of each participant.

During the process of validation, Cronbach alpha coefficient reliability scores were figured out for every single domain and seen to be within the tolerable limits (Cronbach's α=0.82 for metacognitive, 0.81 for cognitive and 0.60 for socioaffective; and 0.91 for the overall scale) (see Kök, 2018 for the details of LSCUI and the procedures followed in its development).

- For those international researchers who might like to use it in their studies, it was translated into English (see Appendix A). During the translation process, the following steps were followed:

- Two English instructors who were familiar with language learning strategies and the related terms translated the scale into English independently. During the translation, they were asked to make sure that the translation was equivalent to the original one linguistically, culturally and content wise.
- Two other English instructors with similar qualities back translated the English version into Turkish without seeing the original Turkish one.
- A third party faculty member who was proficient in English and language learning strategies checked the two versions of the scale, both the Turkish and English ones to reconcile any discrepancies between the translations and reach the final version in English.

- The English version was given to a group of students (n=17) who did not take the Turkish version of the scale to make sure that they had no problems understanding the scale. The students commented on some of items for clarity and ambiguity. The necessary adjustments were made to finalize the English version.
- The final English version was given to a group of third and fourth year ELT students (n=116) for revalidation

The Cronbach's α for the English version of the questionnaire was 0.87)

Listening Comprehension Tests

Participants' listening comprehension achievements were measured by a listening comprehension component of a commercially prepared English language proficiency test. The level of the proficiency was taken as B2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The test consisted of eight conversations or mini talks. Each one had five multiple choice items, (8x5=40), and lasted about 30 minutes. Before and after the exam, participants were given two minutes to preview the questions and review their answers. Each correct answer was credited 2.5 points totaling 100 points (40x2.5=100). The average alpha coefficient for reliability of the tests was found to be 0.89, suggesting a high level of reliability.

Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

While analyzing the data, SPSS 22 was used making use of such techniques as median, range, percentage, t-test, and single-factor covariance, along with correlations, one way ANOVA, and MANOVA tests. The significance threshold of all the instruments was accepted as 0.05.

Results

In order to address research question 1, when the LCSUI's metacognitive items were subjected to a median test of central tendency (as recommended for ordinal data such as produced by a Likert scale), the students reported using 15 of the items frequently (median = 4), 10 of the items sometimes (median = 3) and one of the items rarely (median=2). No items were reportedly used in the always (median = 5), or never (median = 1) range. These findings are listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Medians And Ranges of the Items in LCSUI (Metacognitive)

Item Num.	Item and its sub-group	MED	R
1	When I listen in English, I try to figure out why I listen to that particular text. (Planning: Advanced Organization)	4	4
2	I choose the technique I will use depending upon the subject and content. (Metacognitive-Planning, Advanced Organization)	4	4
4	I pay special attention to the emphasized and repeated points when listening to a text in English. (Metacognitive-Planning, Selective Attention)	4	4
7	I mentally translate what I hear into Turkish as I listen. (Negative), (Metacognitive-Mental Translation)	2	4
8	As I listen, I take notes on figures, names, dates and series of events. (Metacognitive-Planning, Selective Attention)	3	4

12	When I listen, I use the same techniques regardless of what I listen to. (Negative) (Metacognitive-Planning)	3	4
14	I question the reason(s) as to why I cannot understand a certain portion of a text as I listen in English. (Metacognitive-Evaluation)	3	4
16	If I cannot understand what I am listening to the first time, I listen again by changing my focus of attention. (Metacognitive-Problem Identification)	4	4
17	I try to figure out why I failed to understand a certain text. (Metacognitive-Problem Identification)	3	4
19	As I listen, my focal point varies depending on what I am listening to. (Metacognitive-Monitoring, Comprehension)	4	4
22	As I listen, I try to figure out the topic and supporting details. (Metacognitive-Planning, Selective Attention)	3	4
23	As I listen, I change the points I pay attention to depending on the topic. (Metacognitive-Planning, Selective Attention)	4	4
24	As I listen, I frequently question whether or not I am satisfied with my comprehension. (Metacognitive-Evaluation)	4	4
26	I try to write down everything as I listen. (Negative), (Metacognitive-Planning, Selective Attention)	4	4
30	As I listen, I try to understand details and examples that support comprehension. (Metacognitive-Planning, Selective Attention)	4	4
32	I always look at pictures, graphics and notes related to the text before I listen. (Metacognitive-Planning, selective attention)	4	4
33	While listening, I focus on problems and their solutions. (Metacognitive-Planning, Direct Attention)	3	4
36	Before listening, I try to understand what I should focus on more by checking the topic. (Metacognitive-Planning, Directed Attention)	4	4
37	I do not always focus on everything depending upon the purpose of listening. (Metacognitive-Planning, Selective attention)	3	4
38	I take notes on important points. (Metacognitive-Planning, Self-management)	3	4
39	I try to have the general idea from what I listen to. (Metacognitive-Planning, Directed attention)	4	4
41	As I listen, I try to answer the questions "who", what", "when", how", and why". (Metacognitive-Planning, Selective Attention)	3	4
43	As I listen, I focus on details that will help me understand cause and effect. (Metacognitive-Planning, Selective Attention)	4	4
46	I try to figure out the intended message from the text I listen to. (Metacognitive-Planning, Directed Attention)	4	4
49	I try to keep every single detail in my mind. (Negative), (Metacognitive-Planning, Selective Attention)	3	4
50	When I lose my concentration, I stop listening. (Negative), Metacognitive-Evaluation)	4	4

When the LCSUI's cognitive items were subjected to a median test of central tendency, the students reported using one of the items always (median = 5), 11 of the items frequently (median = 4), two of the items sometimes (median = 3), and one of the items rarely (median = 2). No items were reportedly used in the never (median = 1) range. These findings are listed in Table 3.

Table 3

Medians and Ranges of the Items in LCSUI (Cognitive)

Item Num.	Item and its sub-group	MED	R
6	When I listen, I try to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words by using familiar words. (Cognitive-Inferencing, linguistic)	4	4
9	If I cannot understand a specific part, I try to listen to it again. (Cognitive-Repetition)	5	4
10	If I cannot understand a specific part, I try to repeat what I did previously in a similar situation. (Cognitive-Elaboration, Personal)	4	4
13	When I listen in English, I make a mental map of what I will listen to. (Cognitive-Elaboration)	2	4
15	As I listen, I try to activate my prior knowledge about the text. (Cognitive-Elaboration, Personal)	4	4
20	While listening in English, I try to understand the speakers' emotions, and circumstances from their tone of voice. (Cognitive-Inferencing, Voice and Extra Linguistic)	4	4
25	While listening, I use my previous knowledge about the subject. (Cognitive-Inferencing, Personal)	4	4
27	As I listen, I try to complete what I miss using my overall comprehension of the text. (Cognitive-Elaboration, Creative Elaboration)	4	4
28	Words common to both Turkish and English help my listening comprehension. (Cognitive-Transfer) (Cognitive-Transfer)	4	4
29	While listening, I repeat certain words or sentences in order to better understand them. (Cognitive-Repetition)	4	4
31	While listening in English, I put the events and/or information on a logical line. (Cognitive-Creative Elaboration)	4	4
34	As I listen, I try to figure out the content of the text by focusing on the topic, pictures and graphics. (Cognitive-Inferencing, Between Parts)	4	4
35	After I listen, I make a mental summary of what I have heard. (Cognitive-Summarization)	3	4
40	While listening, I take notes to summarize what I comprehend. (Cognitive-Summarization)	3	4
42	While listening, I translate key words into Turkish. (Cognitive-Translation)	4	4

When the LCSUI's socioaffective items were subjected to a median test of central tendency, the students reported using four of the items frequently (median = 4), three of the items sometimes (median = 3), and two of the items rarely (median = 2). No items were reportedly used in the always (median = 5) or never (median = 1) range. These results are set out in Table 4.

Table 4

Medians and Ranges of the Items in LCSUI (Sociaffective))

Item Num.	Item and its sub-group	MED	R
3	Before I start listening, I consult with my friends to check to see whether they have any information about the topic. (Socioaffective-Social)	2	4

5	When I listen in English, I try to compare what I do with what my friends do in order to better understand. (Socioaffective-Social)	3	4
11	I understand better when I listen with my friends in the classroom. (Socioaffective-Social)	3	4
18	I share with my friends the listening techniques which help comprehension. (Socioaffective-Social)	3	4
21	If there is anything that I am not sure of while listening, being confirmed by the teacher relaxes me. (Socioaffective-Affective)	4	4
44	As I listen, stress causes me to fail to understand. (Socioaffective-Affective)	4	4
45	As I listen, I ask the teacher to clarify the points I cannot understand. (Socioaffective-Social)	4	4
47	I never cooperate with my classmates while listening. (Negative), (Socioaffective, Affective)	4	4
48	I feel nervous when I listen in English. (Negative), (Socioaffective, Affective)	2	4

The second research question asks whether there are any relationships between the listening comprehension levels of learners and their listening comprehension strategy use. Related to the first research question, using Spearman's test of correlation for non-parametric data, the following information can be provided: (See Table 5).

Table 5

Correlation Between Different Strategy Types and Listening Comprehension Proficiency

Strategy	Spearman's correlation	P Value	Significance Level
Total	.732**	.00	$p<.01$
Metacognitive	.765**	.00	$p<.01$
Cognitive	.660**	.00	$p<.01$
Socioaffective	.227**	.00	$p<.01$

As the Table shows, there are statistically significant positive correlations between students' listening comprehension and the use of listening comprehension strategies at all levels (r =.732, r =.765 r =.660 and r =.227 for total, metacognitive, cognitive and socioaffective, respectively). Therefore, students with higher listening comprehension levels have more frequent use of listening comprehension strategies and vice versa.

The third research question asks if there are any significant differences between learners' listening comprehension achievement scores and the strategies they use most frequently (see Table 6).

Table 6

ANOVA Results for Listening Comprehension Proficiency Difference Between Learners with Regard to Strategy Preference

Strategy	N	$\overline{X}$	Se	Sd	P Value	Significance Level
Metacognitive	70	73.35	1.64	13.75	.01	* p<.05
Cognitive	169	74.16	.98	12.70		
Socioaffective	83	67.33	1.61	14.65		
Total	322	72.22	.76	13.72		

To answer this question, students' raw scores taken from the answers they gave to the LCSUI and listening comprehension test were converted into standardized scores, their strongest groups in terms of strategy use were determined, and their listening comprehension proficiency levels were compared. While doing this, first, the students' number of correct answers to the listening test (X out of forty to get the raw scores) were calculated and then multiplied by 2.5 to convert them into standardized scores for easier calculations (X/40 x 2.5= standardized score X/100); secondly, the LCSUI scores of the students (Total, MC, C, SA) were listed, and the highest score was taken as that student's preference (standardized).

The results of ANOVA show that there are statistically significant differences between two groups at least at p=<.01 level (.00) (see Table 6). To determine the group which was statistically different, a post hoc test was run (see Table 7).

Table 7

Post Hoc Test Results for Listening Comprehension Proficiency Difference Between Learners with Regard to Different Strategy Use

Groups	N	$\overline{X}$ -difference	Se	P value	Significance level
Metacognitive	70	-.82	1.91	.90	p> .05
Cognitive	169				
Metacognitive	70	6.02	2.18	.02	p< .05
Socioaffective	83				
Cognitive	169	6.83	1.80	.00	p< .01
Socioaffective	83				

As Table 7 indicates, there is a statistically significant difference between learners' listening comprehension proficiency levels who are better in metacognitive and cognitive strategy use than the students who are stronger in socioaffective strategy use in favor of metacognitive and cognitive groups at $p<.05$ and $p<.01$ levels respectively. However, no statistically significant differences are observed between other groups.

As for the fourth research question, we ran two T-tests to see whether gender is a significant variable in strategy use and listening comprehension achievement (see Table 8).

Table 8

Listening Comprehension Achievement Scores and Strategy Use Differences Between Learners with Regard to Gender

	Groups	N	$\overline{X}$ -difference	Se	P value	Significance level
Listening Comprehension Achievement	Male	99	-4.84	.49	.00	$p< .01$*
	Female	223				
Metacognitive	Male	99	-.22	.57	.00	$p< .01$
	Female	223				
Cognitive	Male	99	-.19	.59	.00	$P< .01$*
	Female	223				
Socioaffective	Male	99	-.19	.57	.00	$P< .01$*
	Female	223				

First, we compared listening comprehension achievements and strategy use of learners by taking their gender into account and found that the females outperformed the males in listening comprehension and all three components of strategy use, and the differences were statistically significant.

Next we compared them by grouping them based on their academic major to examine whether the results were same (see Table 9).

Table 9

Listening Comprehension Achievement Score Differences Between Learners with Regard to Gender and Department

	Groups	N	$\overline{X}$ -difference	Se	P value	Significance level
Nursing	Male	19	-7.70	4.49	.05	$p < .05$*
	Female	71				
Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation	Male	43	-3.70	2.51	.14	p> .05
	Female	63				
Psychology	Male	37	-6.09	4.47	.03	$P < .05$*
	Female	89				

The findings reveal similar results: female participants of different departments outscored male participants in listening comprehension. Statistically significant differences were detected between the groups in favor of the female learners who were majoring in Psychology and Nursing Departments but not in Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation departments.

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate whether there was a statistically significant relationship between listening comprehension strategy use and listening comprehension achievements of a group of students who studied at the Nursing (n=126), Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation (n=106), and Psychology (n=90) departments of a foundation university in Turkey. While doing so, a number of variables were taken into account: Students total strategy use (how frequently they use these strategies), their listening comprehension proficiency, gender, and their majors. The findings revealed that there were statistically significant positive correlations between learners' listening comprehension levels and use of listening comprehension strategies at all levels (r =.732, .765 .660 and .227 for total, metacognitive, cognitive and socioaffective strategies, respectively). This corroborated other studies in the literature (Vandergrift, 2003; Vandergrift et al., 2006; Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010; In'nami & Koizumi, 2022; Lau, 2017; Kök, 2018).

When listening comprehension performance of the participants were compared taking the listening comprehension strategy preferences, namely which strategies they use most frequently (metacognitive, cognitive and socioaffective), listening comprehension proficiency of those with high metacognitive and cognitive preferences outperformed those with socioaffective strategy preference. In other words, metacognitive and cognitive strategy use is a better predictor of listening comprehension success. It added further evidence to the earlier findings that the higher the listening comprehension strategy use, the higher the listening comprehension achievements.

As for the gender difference, overall, females outperformed males in both areas: listening compression and use of listening comprehension strategies (metacognitive, cognitive, and socioaffective). In other words, female learners of English use listening comprehension strategies more frequently and comprehend what they listen to better than males. This corroborates findings in studies by Oxford and Nyikos (1989), and Ehrman and Oxford (1989).

The same comparison was made between the two groups of students with regard to their chosen departments. When their majors were taken into account, similar results were obtained. There were considerable differences in their listening comprehension achievements: Nursing (7.70), Psychology (6.09) and Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation (3.70). However, these differences were found only between the groups in the Nursing and the Psychology departments in favor of female learners at a statistically significant level. Although female learners also outperformed male learners in the Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation department, that was not realized at a statistically significant level ($p = .14$, $p > .05$). There are not many studies that have investigated the relationship between gender and listening comprehension achievements and strategy use to the best of our knowledge, and their findings are not in line with those found in the current study. The findings of earlier studies are either inconclusive (Alrashidi, 2022; Hidayanti & Umamah 2019; Nix, 2021) that is, no differences were observed between the genders, or males outperformed females (in reading comprehension) (Phakiti, 2003).

This study has a number of limitations which might direct suggestions for future research: firstly, it has a female bias as the number of female participants is considerably more than males (99 males, 223 females). Further studies with more even numbers of participants according to gender might, therefore, be useful. Secondly, the data were gathered and interpreted through a quantitative paradigm. Using different data collection instruments such formal/informal interviews, think-aloud protocols and/or diaries would have added to the accuracy and validity of the findings and provided triangulation.

Conclusions

The teaching of listening is now of more interest to researchers, syllabus designers and coursebook writers than it was in the past (Richards, 2015), as it was considered to be a passive skill for decades (Vandergrift, 2003; 2004). In line with the results of studies, books specific to skills and strategy teaching were also written. Although adult learners of foreign/additional languages already have some skills and knowledge of listening that they have brought from their L1 acquisition and learning at school, they are sometimes inadequate or they find it difficult to adjust them to the new language so they can use them in developing their additional language skills. To better help them with their efforts, skill specific coursebooks such as listening skills (Richards, 2002; 2005) were written. Besides, to make them more proficient learners, their learning (metacognitive) awareness along with awareness of learning strategies should be raised to create more effective, reflective, and autonomous learners (Brewster et al., 2003) who know how to learn (Kök, 2014; 2018). Therefore, even glossing through inventories such as the one used in this study will help learners raise their awareness of the strategies, thereby allowing them to see and understand where they are comparatively weak and need attention and help (Vandergrift et al., 2006; Griffiths, 2004; 2008).

This study supports the previous studies in which positive correlations were found between strategy use and language proficiency, and in the light of the results of this particular study and others in the literature, remembering Wenden's (1985) metaphor of *giving fish vs teaching how to catch fish*, it also suggests that strategy training should be given explicitly and be started as early as possible and never be taken for granted, thereby enabling the learners to be strategically aware and eventually helping them acquire their new language more quickly and accurately (Kök, 2013; 2018; Rost & Ross, 1991; Vandergrift, 2003; Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010).

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APPENDIX A

Directions: This inventory consists of statements designed to know you better as a learner. It is vital that you mark the statements not according to what you should do, or other people do, but according to how well each statement describes you and your behaviour. THIS **IS NOT** A TEST. The following statements therefore do not have a right or wrong answer. The answers you provide below will not affect your class assessment in any way. You may be using different strategies in accordance with your language learning experiences and needs. Learners may not need the same type of strategies. **Please, checkmark the alternative that best describes you in the following statements.**	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	FREQUENTLY	ALWAYS
1. When I listen in English, I try to figure out why I listen to that particular text.	A	B	C	D	E
2. I choose the technique I will use depending upon the subject and content.	A	B	C	D	E
3. Before I start listening, I consult with my friends to check to see whether they have any information about the topic.	A	B	C	D	E
4. I pay special attention to the emphasized and repeated points when listening to a text in English.	A	B	C	D	E
5. When I listen in English, I try to compare what I do with what my friends do in order to better understand.	A	B	C	D	E
6. When I listen, I try to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words by using familiar words.	A	B	C	D	E
7. I mentally translate what I hear into Turkish as I listen.	A	B	C	D	E
8. As I listen, I take notes on figures, names, dates and series of events.	A	B	C	D	E
9. If I cannot understand a specific part, I try to listen to it again.	A	B	C	D	E
10. If I cannot understand a specific part, I try to repeat what I did previously in a similar situation.	A	B	C	D	E
11. I understand better when I listen with my friends in classroom.	A	B	C	D	E
12. When I listen, I use the same techniques regardless of what I listen to.	A	B	C	D	E
13. When I listen in English, I make a mental map of what I will listen to.	A	B	C	D	E
14. I question the reason(s) as to why I cannot understand a certain portion of text as I listen in English.	A	B	C	D	E
15. As I listen, I try to activate my prior knowledge about the text.	A	B	C	D	E
16. If I cannot understand what I am listening to the first time, I listen again by changing my focus of attention.	A	B	C	D	E
17. I try to figure out why I failed to understand a certain text.	A	B	C	D	E

18. I share with my friends the listening techniques which help comprehension.	A	B	C	D	E
19. As I listen, my focal point varies depending on what I am listening to.	A	B	C	D	E
20. While listening in English, I try to understand the speakers' emotions, and circumstances from their tone of voice.	A	B	C	D	E
21. If there is anything that I am not sure of while listening, being confirmed by the teacher relaxes me.	A	B	C	D	E
22. As I listen, I try to figure out the topic and supporting details.	A	B	C	D	E
23. As I listen, I change the points I pay attention to depending on the topic.	A	B	C	D	E
24. As I listen, I frequently question whether or not I am satisfied with my comprehension.	A	B	C	D	E
25. While listening, I use my previous knowledge about the subject.	A	B	C	D	E
26. I try to write down everything as I listen.	A	B	C	D	E
27. As I listen, I try to complete what I miss using my overall comprehension of the text.	A	B	C	D	E
28. Words common to both Turkish and English help my listening comprehension.	A	B	C	D	E
29. While listening, I repeat certain words or sentences in order to better understand them.	A	B	C	D	E
30. As I listen, I try to understand details and examples that support comprehension.	A	B	C	D	E
31. While listening in English, I put the events and/or information on a logical line.	A	B	C	D	E
32. I always look at pictures, graphics and notes related to the text before I listen.	A	B	C	D	E
33. While listening, I focus on problems and their solutions.	A	B	C	D	E
34. As I listen, I try to figure out the content of the text by focusing on the topic, pictures and graphics.	A	B	C	D	E
35. After I listen, I make a mental summary of what I have heard.	A	B	C	D	E
36. Before listening, I try to understand what I should focus on more by checking the topic.	A	B	C	D	E
37. I do not always focus on everything depending upon the purpose of listening.	A	B	C	D	E
38. I take notes on important points.	A	B	C	D	E
39. I try to have the general idea from what I listen to.	A	B	C	D	E
40. While listening, I take notes to summarize what I comprehend.	A	B	C	D	E
41. As I listen, I try to answer the questions "who", what", "when", how", and why".	A	B	C	D	E
42. While listening, I translate key words into Turkish.	A	B	C	D	E
43. As I listen, I focus on details that will help me understand cause and effect.	A	B	C	D	E
44. As I listen, stress causes me to fail to understand.	A	B	C	D	E
45. As I listen, I ask the teacher to clarify the points I cannot understand.	A	B	C	D	E

46. I try to figure out the intended message from the text I listen to.	A	B	C	D	E
47. I never cooperate with my classmates while listening.	A	B	C	D	E
48. I feel nervous when I listen in English.	A	B	C	D	E
49. I try to keep every single detail in my mind.	A	B	C	D	E
50. When I lose my concentration, I stop listening.	A	B	C	D	E

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