

Taiwanese College Students' Use of English Listening Strategies and Self-Regulated Learning

Ching-Ying Lin

Assistant Professor,

Applied English Department

National Pingtung Institute of Commerce

Pingtung, Taiwan

cylin66@npic.edu.tw

Xin-Ni Gan

Graduate Student

Applied English Department

National Pingtung Institute of Commerce

Pingtung, Taiwan

S101321011@npic.edu.tw

Abstract: *This study, based on two questionnaires, examined the students' metacognitive awareness of listening use and their self-regulated learning at the college level. The major findings were, first, the metacognitive strategies were frequently used and the metacognitive knowledge were least used in the metacognitive awareness of listening; secondly, the students hold a moderate awareness of their self-regulated learning. Also, the students hold a preference for environment control, followed by satiation, emotional, metacognitive, commitment control. Finally, the listeners' metacognitive awareness was closely linked to their self-regulated learning. Based on the findings of the present study, several suggestions were made to help the college teachers promote the students' listening proficiency.*

Keywords: *Listening proficiency, English listening strategy, Metacognitive awareness, Self-regulated learning.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Good language learners are capable of taking charge of their language learning, and they can employ strategies effectively to learn the language in different tasks (Liao, 2009; Balehizadeh & Rahimi, 2011). Tsao (2009) demonstrated that English listening high proficiency learners believed that the listening strategies were essential in English listening comprehension. The learners who have strong intrinsic motivation are more self-regulating and tend to engage in learning and comprehending in their academic study (Pintrich & Groot, 1990). For a better understanding of the factors which influenced the self-regulation, Al-Harthy and Isaacson (2010) proved the positive effect of metacognitive self-regulation was linked to self-efficacy, task value and achievement goal orientation. EFL learners kept a moderate level of metacognitive awareness of listening strategies use, and the use of listening strategies offered the aid to learners' listening comprehension (Al-Alwan & Asassfeh & Al-Shboul, 2013). However, most Taiwanese EFL learners' English reading abilities are better than their English listening abilities (Lin, 2003;

Su, 2004). Among EFL learning strategies, the use of reading strategies was the most frequently than the rest of learning strategies use (listening strategies, vocabulary strategies and speaking strategies) in EFL learners (Wu, 2003). In order to promote Taiwanese EFL learners' English listening comprehension, the purpose of this study was to examine the metacognitive awareness of listening strategies and the self-regulated learning among Taiwanese college students. Also it was important to explore the relationship between metacognitive awareness of listening strategies and the self-regulated learning. The three major research questions are as follows: 1) What is the metacognitive awareness of listening strategies used by college students in Taiwan? 2) What is the frequency of self-regulated learning used by college students in Taiwan? 3) Is there any correlation between the use of listening strategies and self-regulated learning by college students in Taiwan?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Metacognitive Awareness of Listening Strategies

Vandergrift (2004) demonstrated that listening can be the most colleague skills to language learners in the four language skills. Listening strategies could help the language learners to enhance their proficiency levels and get better performance (Liu, 2008; Rahimi & Katal, 2012; Dousti & Abolfathiasl, 2013; Rasouli & Mollakhan & Karbalaer, 2013). Anderson (2002) described the metacognition could be divided into five major components, including preparing and planning for learning, selecting and using learning strategies, monitoring strategy use, orchestrating various strategies and evaluating strategy use and learning. Vandergrift, Goh and Mareschal (2006) believed metacognitive awareness of listening involved five factors which were problem solving, planning and evaluation, translation, personal knowledge and directed attention. Given an importance of metacognitive strategy use in listening abilities, three recent studies demonstrated that the use of metacognitive strategies assisted the language learners to get better performance in their listening proficiency (Coskun, 2010; Selamat & Sidhu, 2012; Sheshgelani & Sadeghli & Aidinlon, 2013). The benefit of the metacognitive strategy use was to make learners achieve their academic success (Selamat & Sidhu, 2012). Examining whether metacognitive strategy training had the effect on the listening performance, Coskun (2010) claimed that metacognitive strategy use is useful to improve learners' L2 listening comprehension. The results of Sheshgelani, Sadeghli and Aidinlon (2013) also acknowledged that the listening strategy training raised learners' listening proficiency levels in language learning.

Wang (2002) investigated the listening comprehension strategy use by EFL learners in Taiwan, and found that EFL learners used metacognitive strategies frequently in English listening process. The findings also showed that EFL learners preferred to use the monitoring strategy and the self-management strategy in metacognitive strategies to facilitate their listening comprehension. Bidabadi and Yamat (2013) pointed out that the directed knowledge strategies were used more frequently than other listening strategies (planning and evaluation, problem-solving, personal knowledge strategies) by EFL learners. This indicated that it was essential that EFL learners had to concentrate on the listening texts and this kind of strategy could help them get the listening

comprehension. According to Goh and Hu (2013), there was a significant relationship between learners' metacognitive awareness and their listening performance, especially listening high proficiency learners were more aware of their emotion in the listening tests than low listening proficiency learners. Mao's (2010) study focused on vocational high school students' difficulties in learning English conversation, and the findings indicated that the lack of vocabulary and the speaker's speed affected the students' listening comprehension.

2.2. Self-Regulated Learning

Self-regulated learning was an important procedure that the learners motivated themselves to make the plans to acquire the knowledge and required themselves to achieve their self-perception of victory (Zimmerman, 1990; Butler & Winne, 1995; Zimmerman, 2002; Montalvo & Torres, 2004). In Butler and Winne's (1995) study, self-regulation was a learning process which self-regulating learners comprehend the details of the tasks at first, made their own goals for their expectation, chose and employed appropriate tactic and useful strategies for learning, and monitored their task engagement. Self-regulated learners were able to get close to the success not only because they could make more effort to learn, but also because they had motivation, confidence and methods (Zimmerman, 2002). And this fostered their abilities to adapt their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to the learning process.

Several studies have examined self-regulated learning in EFL learners. He (2004) suggested that self-efficacy had an effect on self-regulation. Lin (2004) stated that teachers' autonomy support had the relationship with self-regulation and learning motivation. This referred to the students who had the strong power of making up their own mind about what to think or do could control their behaviors through monitoring the desires. Another research, Inan (2013), investigated the relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and academic achievement in a Turkish EFL setting, found that, good academic achievement was attributed to the high interest about the field, the sensitive feeling about the performance, the high intrinsic motivation, and specific goals about their future profession. The findings of Sardareh, Saad and Boroomand's study (2012) also claimed that successful learners were active in employing these self-regulated learning strategies (metacognitive self-regulation, time and study area management, effort regulation, peer learning, and help seeking).

2.3. Metacognitive Awareness of Listening and Self-Regulated Learning

Language learners can have better self-related learning abilities after their awareness of listening is increased (Vandergrift & Goh & Mareschal, 2006). Similarly, Birjandi and Rahimi (2012) emphasized that once the learners were aware of what the learning strategies and plans were appropriate to assist their listening learning process going well, the learners could turn out to be advanced learners. A number of research studies have highlighted the metacognition and self-regulated learning (Sperling & Howard & Staley, 2004; Sungur, 2007; Vrieling & Bastiaens & Stijnen, 2012). The learners who could use elaboration and organization strategies were talented to use prior knowledge, skills, experience, and belief to acquire a huge amount of

information and use it effectively (Kallay, 2012). It is obvious that self-regulation influenced learner's academic achievement and affect learner's learning method (Cohen, 2012). Baleghizadeh and Rahimi (2011) stated that the learners engaged themselves in self-regulated learning, and they gain the value from the task they did. The findings also showed that self-regulated learning had the need of learner's intrinsic motivation and the effort to unitize the metacognitive strategies.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Participants

Participants of the present study were 60 Taiwanese EFL learners in a college. The age of the participants ranged from 19-20 years. These participants came from two classes and they were all English majors.

3.2. Instruments

The two instruments used in this study were: 1) a Metacognitive Awareness of Foreign Language Listening Questionnaire (MAELLQ), and 2) a Self-Regulatory Capacity in Language Learning (SRClang). Metacognitive Awareness of Foreign Language Listening Questionnaire was to explore the participants' metacognitive awareness in English listening. A total of 30 items were involved in the MAELLQ with a 5 point Likert scale statement after each. The MAELLQ consisted of two main types of strategies: metacognitive knowledge (personal knowledge, and strategy knowledge), metacognitive strategies (planning strategies, monitoring strategy, and evaluation strategies). The Cranbach's alpha of the five factors were between .71 and .89. Self-Regulatory Capacity in Language Learning was to measure participants' self-regulated learning and it was adapted from Lin's (2009) study. According to Lin (2009), the self-regulation questionnaire included 33 items in five categories: Satiation Control, Commitment Control, Metacognitive Control, Emotion Control, and Environment Control. The scoring had the following procedure: 5= "strongly agree", 4= "agree", 3= "Neutral", 2= "disagree", 1= "strongly disagree". Cronbach's alpha internal consistency reliability of SRClang was found .95. All questionnaires were translated from English into Chinese in order to avoid any misunderstandings when the participants filled out.

3.3. Procedure

In the first step, the research got the permission to conduct this survey to the participants in two classes. In the second step, the research arranged the time with the professor to conduct this survey. In the process, all participants were required to fill out the questionnaires with their English learning experience. In the final, a total of 60 questionnaires were returned.

3.4. Data Analysis

A Statistic Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to show the descriptive statistics for the use of Metacognitive Awareness of Listening and the Self-Regulatory Capacity in Language Learning among these students. In addition, a Pearson Correlation Coefficient was to examine the relationship between Metacognitive Awareness of Listening and the Self-Regulatory Capacity in Language Learning.

4. FINDINGS

The first research question was to explore the the metacognitive awareness of listening strategies used by college students in Taiwan. A total of 3.47 showed that college students who were English major had a moderate level of metacognitive awareness in English listening. As Table 1 showed, the means of metacognitive strategy were higher than the means of metacognitive knowledge. It revealed that English majors were aware of the use of strategies about what and how to use it in the English listening. But they seldom considered about when and why they used this strategy in the listening process. Table 2 showed that “Monitoring Strategy”, “Evaluation Strategy”, and “Planning Strategy” were three top ranks of the six subtypes of metacognitive awareness of listening.

Table 1. *Two Main Types of Metacognitive Awareness of Listening*

	Categories	Means	SD	Rank
1.	Metacognitive Knowledge	3.14	.51	2
2.	Metacognitive Strategy	3.68	.38	1
	Total	3.47	.40	

Table 2. *Six Subtypes of Metacognitive Awareness of Listening*

	Categories	Means	SD	Rank
1.	Personal Knowledge	3.07	.56	5
2.	Strategy Knowledge	3.21	.61	4
3.	Planning Strategy	3.50	.52	3
4.	Monitoring Strategy	3.86	.46	1
5.	Evaluation Strategy	3.69	.43	2

The second research question was to investigate the frequency of self-regulated learning used by college students in Taiwan. A general look at Table 3 showed that the participants differently utilized all five types of self-regulated learning (satiating, commitment, metacognitive, emotional, and environment). Moreover, the total average use of self-regulated learning fell under medium level (M=3.48). The students mostly preferred environment control and least preferred commitment control. Thus, the overall observation of self-regulated learning employ by the participants revealed that the students were aware of the importance of the learning environment, but the students did not tended to go to cram schools in order to keep their grades at satisfying level.

Table 3. *Five Types of Self-Regulated Learning*

	Categories	Means	SD	Rank
1.	Satiating Control	3.52	.66	2
2.	Commitment Control	3.22	.54	5
3.	Metacognitive Control	3.25	.55	4
4.	Emotional Control	3.50	.60	3
5.	Environment Control	3.93	.46	1
	Total	3.48	.45	

The third research question was to examine the correlation between the use of listening strategies and self-regulated learning by college students in Taiwan. As Table 4 showed, by calculating the correlation, the findings revealed a significant and strong correlation between metacognitive awareness of listening and self-regulated learning.

Table 4. *The Relationship between two Variables*

		Self-Regulated Learning
Metacognitive Awareness	<i>r</i>	.74**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

5. DISCUSSION

The result of the first research question supported the findings of Coskun (2010), and Selamat & Sidhu (2012), and Sheshgelani, Sadeghli and Aidinlon (2013). Coskun (2010) in his study found that the benefit of metacognitive strategy use could change the learners into more proficiency listeners. Selamat & Sidhu (2012) reported that learners frequently employed metacognitive strategies in the listening tests. And the metacognitive strategies assisted them to get the listening comprehension to acquire the knowledge. Sheshgelani, Sadeghli and Aidinlon (2013) claimed that the students who received listening comprehension strategy training performed well over than those who did not receive the strategy training. By comparing the results of these three studies and that of the present study, it can be concluded that metacognitive strategies not only help the listeners to plan and evaluate their own listening learning, but also aid their listening comprehension.

The data above provided the value of self-regulated learning (Zimmerman, 1990; Butler & Winne, 1995; Zimmerman, 2002; Montalvo & Torres, 2004). Those studies showed that the desire of learning strengthened the learners' mind to want to acquire the knowledge and the motivation of achieving success fostered the learners' abilities to take action to get proficiency level of learning. As mentioned in previous researches, EFL learners who had strong self-regulation were active in managing their learning paces and evaluating their learning achievement (Lin, 2004; Sardareh & Saad & Boroomand, 2012; Inan, 2013).

The result of the third research question was consistent with the findings of the previous studies (Vandergrift & Goh & Mareschal, 2006; Birjandi & Rahimi, 2012). The studies emphasized the important roles of metacognition and self-regulated learning (Sperling & Howard & Staley, 2004; Sungur, 2007; Vrieling & Bastiaens & Stijnen, 2012), concluding that it was very essential for the learners who knew their advantages and limitation in listening learning would have a clear awareness of their learning achievement and use effective method to reach to the success.

6. CONCLUSION

The present stud was carried out to identify the metacognitive awareness of listening and the self-regulated learning used by college English majors and to find out whether there was any significant relationship between these two variables. The results indicated that among the two

types of metacognitive awareness of listening, the most frequently used type was metacognitive strategies, and the least frequently used one was metacognitive knowledge. The results also revealed that the participants had a strong self-regulated learning. A significant and strong relationship between metacognitive awareness of listening and self-regulated learning was observed. It implied that those with high metacognitive awareness of listening efficiently controlled their self-regulated learning.

Based on the findings above, several suggestions can be made to help college teachers to help the students to improve their listening abilities. Both Coskun (2010) and Sheshgelani, Sadeghli and Aidinlon (2013) proved the benefit of metacognitive strategy training in listening. This implied the college teachers should find out the students' listening difficulties and guide the students effective listening strategies to overcome the problems. Obviously, the previous studies claimed the importance of self-regulated learning in language learning (Zimmerman, 1990; Butler & Winne, 1995; Zimmerman, 2002; Montalvo & Torres, 2004). This indicated that the college teachers should pay attention to how English majors arranged their learning steps and what English majors used to get listening comprehension. The significant relationship between metacognitive awareness of listening and self-regulated learning showed that the college teachers should be aware of the students' English learning achievement, and help the students become proficiency listeners. The effectiveness in the metacognitive awareness of listening and the self-regulated learning will enable the students to have the comprehension and facilitate their abilities to manage the learning process in the English listening.

REFERENCES

- Aderson, N. J. (2002). The role of metacognition in second language teaching and learning. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED463659.pdf>.
- Al-Alwan, A., Asassfeh, S., & Al-Shboul, Y. (2013). EFL learners' listening comprehension and awareness of metacognitive strategies: How are they related? *International Education Studies*, 6(9), 31-39.
- Al-Harthy, I. S., & Isaacson, R. M. (2010). Goals, efficacy and metacognitive self-regulation: A path analysis. *International Journal of Education*, 2(1), 1-20.
- Baleghizadeh, S., & Rahimi, A. H. (2011). The relationship among listening performance, metacognitive strategy use and motivation from a self-determination theory perspective. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1(1), 61-67.
- Bidabadi, F. S., & Yamat, H. (2013). EFL learners' perceptions towards metacognitive strategy use in English language listening. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 13(3), 31-43.
- Birjandi, P., & Rahimi, A. H. (2012). The effect of metacognitive strategy instruction on the listening performance of EFL students. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 4(2), 495-517.
- Burler, D. L., & Winne, P. H. (1995). Feedback and self-regulated learning: A theoretical synthesis. *Review of Educational Research*, 65(3), 245-281.
- Cohen, M. T. (2012). The importance of self-regulation for college student learning. *College Student Journal*, 46(4), 892-902.

- Coskun, A. (2010). The effect of metacognitive strategy training on the listening performance of beginner students. *Novitas-Royal (Research on Youth and Language)*, 4(1), 35-50.
- Dousti, H., & Abolfathiasl, H. (2013). The effect of metacognitive listening strategy training on EFL learners' listening sub-skills performance. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature*, 2(4), 50-55.
- Goh, C. M., & Hu, G. W. (2013). Exploring the relationship between metacognitive awareness and listening performance with questionnaire data. Retrieved Feb 2013, from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09658416.2013.769558#.UsZ8FvQW1MA>
- He, T. H. (2004). The relations among trichotomous achievement goals, self-efficacy, and self-regulation in EFL sixth-grade classes in Taiwan. *Journal of National Taipei Teachers College*, 17(1), 111-134.
- Inan, B. (2013). The relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and academic achievement in a Turkish EFL setting. *Academic Journals*, 8(17), 1544-1550.
- Kallay, E. (2012). Learning strategies and metacognitive awareness as predictors of academic achievement in a sample of Romanian second-year students. *Cognition Brain, Behavior*, 16(3), 369-385.
- Liao, K. C. (2009). A study of metacognitive awareness about English listening of Taiwanese English majors. Master's thesis, National Pingtung University of Education, Pingtung, Taiwan.
- Lin, C. T. (2009). An investigation of the relationship between metalinguistic knowledge, motivation, self-regulated, self-perceived proficiency and language achievement. Master's thesis, National Taiwan Normal University, Taipei, Taiwan.
- Lin, Y. J. (2003). An analysis of EFL learners' concurrent ability: Comparisons of listening ability. Master's thesis, National Kaohsiung Normal University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan.
- Lin, X. Z. (2004). Successful EFL learners and their self-regulation: A case study of students in an advanced English program in one university. Master's thesis, Ming Chuan University, Taipei, Taiwan.
- Liu, H. J. (2008). A study of the internationalship bewtween listening strategy use, listening proficiency levels, and learning style. *Arecls*, 5, 84-104.
- Mao, C. Y. (2010). A study of restaurant management department students' difficulties in learning English conversation and their solutions. *Toko University*, 4(2), 1-13.
- Montalvo, F. T., & Torres, M. C. G. (2004). Self-regulated learning: Current and future directions. *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology*, 2(1), 1-34.
- Pintrich, P. R., & Groot, E. V. D. (1990). Motivational and self-regulated learning components of classroom academics performance. *Journal of Education Psychology*, 82(1), 33-40.
- Rahimi, M., & Katal, M. (2012). Metacognitive listening strategies awareness in learning English as a foreign language: A comparison between university and high-school students. *Elsevier*, 31, 82-89.

- Rasouli, M., & Mollakhan, K., & Karbalaer, A. (2013). The effect of metacognitive listening strategy training on listening comprehension in Iranian EFL context. *European Online Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*, 2(1), 115-128.
- Sardareh, S. A., Saad, M. R. M., & Boroomand, R. (2012). Self-regulated learning strategies (SRLS) and academic achievement in pre-university EFL learner. *California Linguistic Notes*, 37(1), 1-35.
- Selamat, S., & Sidhu, G. K. (2012). Enhancing listening comprehension" The role of metacognitive strategy instruction. Elsevier Ltd, 90, 421-430.
- Sheshgelani, A. P., Sadeghli, H., & Aidinlon, N. A. (2013). The effect of explicit listening comprehension strategy instruction on listening comprehension strategy use of Iranian EFL learners. *International J. Soc. Sci & Education*, 2(4), 1113-1121.
- Sperling, R. A., & Howard, B. C., & Staley, R. (2004). Metacognition and self-regulated learning constructs. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 10(2), 117-139.
- Su, L. W. (2004). A study of vocational high school student's EFL difficulties and the solutions-Based on national Tainan commercial and vocational senior high school. Master's thesis, National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan.
- Sungur, S. (2007). Modeling the relationship among students' motivational beliefs, metacognitive strategy use, and effort regulation. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 51(3), 315-326.
- Tsao, W. Y. (2009). The effect of computer-assisted listening comprehension tests on Tainan Marine and Fishery vocational high school students. Master's thesis, National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan.
- Vandergrift, L. (2004). Listening to learn or learning to listen? *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 24, 3-25.
- Vrieling, E. M., Bastiaens T. J., & Stijnen, S. (2012). Effect of increased self-regulated learning opportunities on student teachers' metacognitive and motivational development. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 53, 251-263.
- Wang, W. Y. (2002). Effects of gender and proficiency on listening comprehension strategy use by Taiwanese EFL senior high school students: A case from Changhua. Master's thesis, National Changhua University of Education, Changhua, Taiwan.
- Wu, C. C. (2003). A study of EFL learning strategies used by vocational high school students in Taiwan. Master's thesis, National Yunlin University of Science and Technology, Yunlin, Taiwan.
- Zimmerman, B. J. (1990). Self-regulate learning and academic achievement: An overview. *Educational Psychologist*, 25(1), 3-17.
- Zimmerman, B. J. (2002). Becoming a self-regulated learner: An overview. *Theory into Practice*, 41(2), 64-70.