



## Empowering Listening Comprehension through Pre-Listening Strategies: An Action Research Study on EFL Learners

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### ABSTRACT

Listening comprehension remains one of the most challenging language skills for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. This action research study explores the impact of pre-listening language learning strategies on the listening comprehension skills of first-semester students at Universitas Pamulang. A total of 35 students participated in a structured intervention comprising three cycles of strategy-based listening instruction. Data were collected through observation forms, researcher-practitioner journals, and semi-structured interviews. Descriptive and content analyses were employed to interpret the data. The findings reveal that the explicit teaching of pre-listening strategies significantly improved learners' motivation, comprehension, and engagement with listening tasks. Students reported increased confidence, enhanced understanding of listening texts, and reduced anxiety. Although a few learners faced challenges in recalling prior knowledge or vocabulary, the majority expressed positive attitudes toward the approach. The study highlights the value of incorporating pre-listening strategies as an integral component of EFL instruction to support listening development and learner autonomy.

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### INTRODUCTION

Listening is a foundational and highly utilized skill among the four primary language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. It plays a crucial role in language acquisition, as auditory input is essential for acquiring a new language. Research shows that listening offers the foundational exposure learners need to internalize the structures and vocabulary of the target language (Renandya & Farrell, 2011). This input enables learners to access and practice the linguistic elements needed for effective communication. According to Field (2008), listening

is a dynamic process that significantly contributes to second language development. Since it serves as the primary channel through which a language is internalized, structured listening instruction is indispensable in language education (Brown, 2011).

The process of learning a language involves all four skills, but listening stands out due to its role in providing language input. Whether one is learning their first or an additional language, listening is essential, especially in classroom settings where exposure to the target language may be limited. According to Vandergrift and Goh (2012), learners often become aware of the true importance of listening only when they are immersed in environments where the language is spoken. Nonetheless, misconceptions persist, with many equating language proficiency with speaking and writing abilities. However, inadequate listening comprehension can undermine effective communication. Indeed, listening is central to language acquisition, with learners spending a significant proportion of their study time engaged in listening tasks (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). This underscores the indispensable role of listening in the broader language learning process (Mandasari et al., 2025).

Among the four core skills, listening has seen the most noticeable transformation in language education. In the 1970s, its importance increased in tandem with the shift toward communicative competence in language teaching. The advent of Communicative Language Teaching placed listening at the heart of instructional practices, dividing it into pre-, while-, and post-listening activities to aid comprehension (Richards, 2008). By the 1990s, the focus had evolved further toward enhancing listening comprehension, confirming its centrality in second and foreign language education (Celce-Murcia et al., 2014).

Listening also differs from mere hearing. As Flowerdew and Miller (2005) note, hearing is a passive act of perceiving sound, whereas listening involves actively constructing meaning from auditory input. In language learning, this means that learners must not only hear but also interpret spoken language. This cognitive activity requires attention, interpretation, and contextual understanding. Renandya (2012) also stresses that listening, unlike hearing, requires purposeful engagement, making goal-oriented listening tasks vital to effective instruction and acquisition.

Furthermore, one of the primary motivations for learning a language is to use it in real-world social communication. Listening is often the first step in this process. Learners receive essential linguistic input through listening, forming the basis for vocabulary acquisition and grammatical development (Nation & Newton, 2009). In recent years, the role of English as a global lingua franca has increased the need for proficient listening skills, even in regions where English is not the native language (Gilakjani, 2016). This trend has made listening instruction a cornerstone of language teaching worldwide.

In many countries where English is taught as a foreign language, educational settings and classrooms hold particular significance, as they represent the primary

environments where language learners are exposed to the target language. According to Velasco et al. (2021), limited exposure to the target language in foreign language learning environments negatively affects the language acquisition process. Consequently, rather than exposing learners to the target language without any preparation, engaging them in carefully designed and regulated activities enhances the quality of the language learning environment.

Despite its critical importance, listening often receives insufficient focus in language instruction (Hsu, 2024). Recent research identifies three key factors underlying this neglect. First, listening is frequently dismissed as an implicit skill presumed to develop naturally through exposure during class, rather than a competence that can be taught explicitly over time. Second, many teachers report feeling underprepared to design and deliver effective listening lessons (Paramole et al., 2024). Third, traditional language-teaching methods lack the specificity and depth needed to foster strong listening abilities. Together, these issues impair learners' ability to process and understand spoken input. As such, enhancing listening comprehension requires an increase in deliberately structured listening practice, bolstered by targeted strategies that ensure learning is efficient and goal-oriented (Hsu, 2024).

Studies in recent years have reinforced the classroom primacy of listening. It serves as the primary conduit of linguistic information in second and foreign language environments: without comprehension of that input, progress stalls (Gonzalez Torres & Solano, 2024). Spoken communication necessitates interaction with proficient speakers, and even failed attempts at comprehension can serve as meaningful feedback and stimulus for learning (Hsu, 2024). Moreover, learners frequently find understanding native speech significantly challenging—an effort-intensive process that must be deliberately addressed through structured instruction. Finally, well-designed listening exercises draw attention to new vocabulary, grammatical frameworks, and interactive functions embedded in language use (Gonzalez Torres & Solano, 2024).

Listening lessons are most effective when divided into three sequential stages: pre listening, while listening, and post listening. Pre listening is especially crucial, setting the tone for comprehension by activating prior knowledge, introducing relevant vocabulary, and orienting learners to the context and goals of the task (Hsu, 2024). These activities encourage learners to engage intentionally with the material from the outset.

To support these stages, learners benefit from explicit instruction in listening strategies—a suite of cognitive, metacognitive, and social approaches used before, during, and after listening (Dere görü & Öz, 2021). Recent distance-learning studies have confirmed that most language learners use such strategies at moderate levels, especially during listening, and that instruction which considers gender and language context can enhance effectiveness (Dere görü & Öz, 2021). This reinforces

earlier theoretical models: listening is not a momentary reception of sound, but an intentional, multi-layered process influenced by strategic choices.

In light of this strategy-centered approach, it is vital that learners arrive at listening tasks equipped not only with relevant background knowledge and vocabulary, but also with an understanding of how to navigate the listening process itself. Instructional frameworks proposed by Oxford (2017) and Cohen (2014) have recently been tested and validated in empirical studies, demonstrating that strategy-based training enhances listening performance across classroom settings.

Thus, this study seeks to alleviate learners' struggles with listening comprehension by applying targeted strategy instruction during the pre listening phase. The anticipated outcomes may guide educators in using strategy-based techniques to enhance receptive skills, nurturing habits of active listening and supporting broader language development.

A needs-analysis in this study revealed that many learners focus predominantly on the answers or end-results of listening tasks, neglecting attention to the listening process itself. This results-oriented, outcome-heavy attitude undermines the habit-formation of active listening, and ultimately impairs the learning of all language skills. Emphasizing process over product is therefore essential to developing well-rounded communicative competence.

Pre-listening strategies aim to prepare students for the listening task, encompassing both physical and cognitive dimensions. The physical aspect of pre-listening strategies primarily involves ensuring students have healthy auditory functioning and maintaining silence in the classroom. Attention to these factors is vital for effective listening. Accordingly, this study seeks to eliminate the problems encountered by ninth-grade Anatolian High School students in their English listening skills by teaching them how to effectively apply pre-listening language learning strategies.

In this context, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the positive contributions of using pre-listening language learning strategies in English listening skill activities?
2. What are the negative aspects of using pre-listening language learning strategies in English listening skill activities?
3. How do pre-listening language learning strategies contribute to the development of English listening skills?

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This study employed an action research method, which is a qualitative research approach. Action research involves a collaborative effort between researchers and practitioner-researchers to investigate and improve learning quality or developmental processes within an educational system. This cyclical

process of analysis, implementation, and refinement offers a distinctive perspective in addressing educational problems. In this study, the focus is on students experiencing difficulties in developing listening skills during the English learning process. A series of pre-listening strategies were taught and corresponding activities implemented with the aim of improving these students' listening abilities. Accordingly, action research was utilized to facilitate the enhancement of students' listening skills. For this reason, the action research method was deemed appropriate.

### **Participants**

The study group was selected through purposive sampling, a non-random sampling method commonly used in qualitative research. The aim was to select information-rich cases for in-depth investigation aligned with the study's objectives. The participants consisted of 35 students from first semester located in Universitas Pamulang during the 2024–2025 academic year. These students were observed to have poor performance in listening activities and demonstrated low academic achievement in a listening skills practical exam conducted during the first semester of the academic year. Consequently, this group was included in the study. The characteristics of the participants involved in the action research are as follows:

- 1) They were enrolled in an English Letters of Universitas Pamulang.
- 2) The students were placed in the campus through a placement system and did not fall within a specific score range. However, results from the English proficiency placement exam administered at the beginning of the first semester indicated that the students had relatively similar academic achievement levels in English, suggesting a homogeneous distribution in terms of language proficiency.
- 3) They notably experienced difficulties in comprehending English listening texts and performing listening activities.
- 4) In addition, their scores in the listening skills practical exam during the first semester were considerably low, ranging from 15 to 50 out of 100 points.
- 5) The students reported no exposure to English outside of class, including habits such as listening to English music or watching English-language films.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

Given that the research was designed using qualitative data methods, qualitative data collection instruments were employed. According to Merriam (2009), qualitative research does not require a single prescribed method for data collection or analysis; various tools such as observation and interviews can be used either individually or in combination. However, action research is systematic in nature, requiring that data collection tools, methodology, and timing follow an organized approach. Although action researchers have some flexibility, the process

must remain methodical as action research involves planned and systematic observation. Therefore, data collection for this study was conducted in two stages. The first stage involved collecting data during the implementation of the action plans, utilizing observation forms and researcher journals as instruments. The second stage consisted of conducting interviews, where data were gathered through semi-structured interview forms.

In the development of the interview form, a thorough literature review was first conducted to identify key concepts and thematic categories relevant to the study. Subsequently, subthemes were delineated to provide in-depth data for each main theme. Open-ended and numerous questions related to these subthemes were formulated. To ensure content and construct validity—namely, the relevance and representativeness of the themes and subthemes to the questions—the instrument underwent expert review by a field specialist from Universitas Pamulang.

### **Data Analysis**

The data obtained in the study were initially coded according to the predetermined themes and subthemes identified prior to the interviews, and subjected to descriptive analysis. In addition, content analysis was performed by coding emergent themes that arose during the examination of the data. Consequently, both descriptive and content analysis techniques were employed, resulting in a mixed-methods approach to data analysis.

### **Validity and Reliability**

Krefting (1991) argued that, instead of the terms “validity” and “reliability” commonly used in quantitative research, qualitative research would be better served by concepts such as credibility, accuracy of findings, and researcher competence. In the present study, reliability was enhanced by employing methodological triangulation through the use of diverse data collection tools during and after the action research implementation process.

### **Implementation**

Within the scope of the study, a total of three distinct activities, incorporating pre-listening language learning strategies and listening exercises, were conducted through three separate action plans. The stages followed during the implementation of these action plans are illustrated as follow: In the first phase of the action cycle, the action plan included activities designed to introduce students to various pre-listening language learning strategies, encouraging them to infer and identify these strategies. During the subsequent implementation phase, students were explicitly shown pre-listening language learning strategies through the presented activities. To facilitate students’ application of these strategies, the deepening phase of the action plan engaged them with diverse listening tasks. In the monitoring phase,

students' attitudes and behaviors towards pre-listening strategies were observed throughout the implementation of the action plans. Additionally, researcher-practitioner diaries documenting students' progress and experiences during the implementation were maintained.

The final phase of the action cycle, reflection, involved conducting interviews to elicit students' opinions regarding the pre-listening language learning strategies employed in the action plans and to decide whether to proceed with further action cycles. Accordingly, three action plans were implemented in this study. The stages related to the implementation of the first action plan are presented the following: Implementation of the first action plan presents the action plan implemented to successfully complete listening activities using pre-listening language learning strategies. In the initial stage of the action plan, a brainstorming session was conducted to demonstrate to students the types of preparations that can be made before listening. Responses from the students were written on the board to ensure visibility for the entire class. Building on this, students were asked in the subsequent stage what preparations could be made related to the upcoming listening text, and time was allocated for them to make their own preliminary preparations before listening. The title and relevant images of the listening text were shown to the students, who were then asked to make predictions about the content and take notes. Following this, students were divided into small groups to discuss the text. Subsequently, they listened to the audio and checked their predictions.

During the explanation phase, the instructor shared a presentation with the students outlining the pre-listening language learning strategies. In the deepening phase, the instructor assigned a new listening task, adopting the role of a facilitator. Drawing on what they had learned in the previous phase, students carried out the necessary preparatory work before listening. The listening text was then played again, followed by a discussion based on the students' responses.

In the evaluation phase, interviews were conducted with students regarding the activities. The results indicated that participation in activities involving pre-listening language learning strategies positively influenced students' attitudes towards listening skills, leading to increased engagement and willingness to participate actively. Consequently, a second action plan was designed to enable students to learn and apply additional pre-listening language learning strategies:

The third stage illustrates the action plan implemented to diversify the range of language learning strategies that students could employ before listening and to reinforce their use of these strategies. In the initial phase of the action plan, group work was conducted to raise students' awareness of various strategies that could be utilized prior to listening. Using provided materials, students predicted the possible content of the listening text, made inferences related to the text, and engaged in group discussions.

Subsequently, the groups shared with the class the pre-listening strategies they could employ, the possible content of the listening passage, and potential vocabulary they might encounter. Following this, a presentation detailing a variety of pre-listening strategies was delivered and explained to the students. After the presentation, students were introduced to a new listening text. Prior to listening, they completed pre-listening activities by applying the strategies they had learned and made predictions about the content.

In the final phase of the action plan, students evaluated the strategies they used and the activities they completed through interview forms provided to them. Based on the feedback obtained from the students, a third action plan was designed to enable students to encounter and apply an even broader range of pre-listening language learning strategies.

The fourth stage depicts the third action plan implemented to further diversify and consolidate students' use of pre-listening language learning strategies. In the first stage, group work was organized to help students recognize the variety of strategies available for use before listening. Students used the materials provided to make predictions about the content of the listening text and discussed these predictions within their groups. The groups then shared with their classmates the strategies they might use before listening, the anticipated topic of the text, and possible vocabulary items.

Following this, a presentation on various pre-listening strategies was shown and explained to the students. Afterward, students encountered a new listening text. Before listening, they applied the strategies they had learned to complete pre-listening activities and made inferences about the text's content.

In the final stage of the action plan, students assessed the strategies they had employed and the activities they had engaged in by completing interview forms. Post-interview analysis revealed that students were able to utilize a variety of pre-listening language learning strategies; notably, some students had even developed their own unique strategies not explicitly taught in class. Based on these findings, the action plans were concluded.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

This study aimed to demonstrate the use of pre-listening language learning strategies through action plans, with the goal of eliminating the problems encountered by first and second semester students in their English listening skills and thereby enhancing their listening proficiency. Since data were collected in two phases, the research findings are also presented in two stages. The first stage includes selected excerpts from observation notes and the researcher-practitioner's diary recorded during the implementation of the action plan. The second stage



presents the frequency table derived from post-implementation interviews with students, along with representative excerpts from these interviews.

The first sub-research question, “What are the positive contributions of using pre-listening language learning strategies in English listening skill activities?” is addressed through selected examples drawn from observations, diaries, and interviews, as detailed below:

### 1) Observation Notes:

*“Students in class 539 of regular A were introduced to pre-listening language learning strategies for the first time. Although they had occasionally been given some information about language learning strategies in their English lessons, this was the first time they encountered such strategies in a systematic manner. Students’ interest and motivation towards the lesson were notably high. When first hearing the listening texts, some students expressed anxiety and admitted that they did not understand. Subsequently, they were informed about preparatory steps they could take before listening to improve comprehension. During the brainstorming activity, students suggested various ideas. They acknowledged that although they had not previously used these strategies, applying them before listening could help them develop a better understanding of the listening passage.” (02/10/2024)*

### 2) Researcher-Practitioner Journal:

*“In these lessons, students were exposed to a greater number of English listening texts, which increased their exposure to the target language. They were introduced to various pre-listening language learning strategies, which appeared to stimulate their curiosity. Additionally, images related to the listening texts provided students with contextual clues about the content. Following the presentation on pre-listening strategies, students demonstrated efforts to apply these strategies during the deepening activities. This also indicates an increase in students’ motivation.” (02/10/2024)*

Data obtained from observation notes and the researcher-practitioner journal during the implementation of the action plan indicate that students encountered these strategies for the first time. Nonetheless, they participated in the activities with considerable enthusiasm. The data collected from interviews conducted after the action plan’s implementation are summarized in the frequency table below (Table 1).

**Table 1. Interview Frequency Table and Sample Statements from Interviews**

Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency (f)
Positive Aspects of Pre-listening Language Learning Strategies	Preparing for the listening text	32
	Acquiring knowledge about the listening content	31

Learning vocabulary that may appear in the listening text	31
Recalling prior knowledge related to the listening text	30

### 3) Student Feedback:

Following the implementation of the action plan, semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain students' evaluations of the experience. The data reveal that students generally perceived pre-listening language learning strategies as effective and applicable. Many reported that these strategies facilitated their understanding and engagement with listening activities, especially during the elaboration phase following the exploration and explanation stages of instruction.

*"Learning the strategies that I can use before listening made the activities much easier for me. For instance, it helped me recall words I already knew that were relevant to the listening text. By using these strategies, I could better understand what I was expected to do during the listening tasks. Before, I used to think I would never understand any of the listening texts because they speak so fast. But now, because I tried to predict the topic or recall related words beforehand, I was able to make predictions while listening. Even though I didn't understand everything, I could make guesses, and they turned out to be correct. I completed all the follow-up activities correctly, which made me happy."* (P-2)

These reflections suggest a positive shift in learners' attitudes toward listening comprehension tasks. Students not only engaged more confidently with the input but also recognized that the application of specific strategies could lead to greater success. The data indicate that learners realized the potential of pre-listening strategies to scaffold their understanding and enhance their performance.

In response to the second sub-research question, *"What are the drawbacks of using pre-listening language learning strategies in English listening comprehension activities?"*, qualitative data were again obtained through observation notes, researcher-practitioner journal entries, and student feedback.

#### 1) Observation Notes:

*"Rather than providing a broad range of strategies during the pre-listening strategy presentation, it might be more effective to give fewer examples and encourage students to generate strategies during the activities themselves. During the brainstorming sessions, group work, and the elaboration phase, students began to independently produce their own strategies. Therefore, rather than directly providing strategies, it may be more beneficial to guide students toward discovering and articulating them independently."* (09/10/2024)

#### 2) Researcher-Practitioner Journal:

*"Students exhibited significant prejudices and anxieties regarding their listening skills. For this reason, in addition to offering pre-listening strategies, it would be advantageous to introduce affective strategies*

*aimed at reducing anxiety. Students must first learn to manage their negative emotions before effectively applying content-related strategies to the listening tasks."* (09/10/2024)

The findings gathered during the implementation process suggest that solely introducing cognitive strategies prior to listening may be insufficient. To support learners holistically, it is crucial to incorporate affective strategies that help students manage listening-related anxiety and increase their confidence.

The post-implementation interviews yielded further insight into the perceived limitations of the strategy use. Table 2 summarizes the frequency of recurring themes and includes illustrative student statements.

**Table 2. Frequency Table and Sample Student Responses Concerning the Perceived Drawbacks of Pre-Listening Language Learning Strategies**

Theme	Sub-theme	f
Drawbacks of Pre-Listening Language Learning Strategies	Perceived time consumption	2
	Difficulty recalling vocabulary	3
	Difficulty accessing prior knowledge	3

### 3) Student Feedback:

*"I don't think pre-listening strategies are necessary. It would be better to be told what to do directly during the listening activity. I don't know many words anyway. In the pre-listening activities, we were asked to recall words related to the topic, but I couldn't remember any. Also, I'm not confident in my listening skills—I just get anxious."* (P-1)

These comments illustrate that not all learners found the strategies useful. Some students, particularly those with limited vocabulary and low self-confidence, struggled to engage with the preparatory tasks. Their responses highlight the need for differentiated instructional approaches that take into account affective factors such as anxiety, as well as cognitive readiness. In this regard, the integration of emotional support strategies into listening instruction appears essential for maximizing the benefits of strategy training.

Following the implementation of the action plan, interviews were conducted with students to explore their perceptions of the potential drawbacks of pre-listening language learning strategies (see Table 2). Only a minority of the students expressed negative views regarding these strategies. A few participants reported that they perceived such strategies as time-consuming, while others mentioned difficulties in recalling relevant vocabulary or background knowledge associated with the listening texts.

In response to the third sub-question of the study —*"What is the contribution of pre-listening language learning strategies to the development of English listening skills?"*—evidence was gathered through classroom observations, reflective

journals, and follow-up interviews. Below are selected excerpts from these data sources.

**1) Observation Notes:**

*"Throughout the lesson, students engaged in a variety of activities related to pre-listening language learning strategies. The PowerPoint presentation used during these sessions was concise, clear, and engaging, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of the lesson. The instructional objectives aligned well with the course content. Activities were successfully designed to help students achieve all intended learning outcomes by the end of the two sessions. The lesson content corresponded precisely with both the set objectives and the general English curriculum."* (16/10/2024)

**2) Researcher-Practitioner's Journal:**

*"Pre-listening language learning strategies not only captured the students' interest in the listening texts but also enhanced the overall effectiveness of the activities. These strategies facilitated greater student engagement. Learners gained insight into how to transfer their prior knowledge to new listening contexts and developed ideas about how to prepare for listening tasks."* (16/10/2024)

The data obtained during the implementation of the action plan—particularly from classroom observations and the researcher's reflective journal—suggest that students performed better and were more motivated during listening activities when they employed pre-listening language learning strategies. Subsequent interviews further supported this conclusion. Frequency data derived from these interviews are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Frequency of Interview Responses and Illustrative Student Comments on the Contribution of Pre-Listening Strategies**

Theme	Sub-theme	f
Contribution of Pre-listening Language Learning Strategies	Developing positive attitudes towards listening skills	30
	Recalling prior knowledge before listening	28
	Making inferences based on visuals prior to listening	22
	Making predictions about content based on the title of the listening text	25

**3) Student Feedback:**

*"Pre-listening language learning strategies helped us become more familiar with the listening texts. They supported better pronunciation and reinforcement of learning. I believe these strategies are important because we often learn the meanings of unfamiliar words through them. While using these strategies, I felt both excited and anxious, but they positively influenced my performance. My self-confidence increased. I*

*realized that listening is not as difficult as I previously thought, and even identifying a single word while listening can be beneficial. I also learned that it's possible to predict the content of a text just from the title. I felt empowered during all the activities. I felt really good because I came to believe that everything can be overcome with motivation and willingness." (P-12)*

In post-implementation interviews, students were explicitly asked how pre-listening language learning strategies had contributed to the development of their listening skills. The majority of students reported that the difficulties they previously encountered during listening activities had been substantially reduced. They also indicated that their negative feelings toward listening tasks had diminished to some extent. Furthermore, they emphasized that they had acquired a clearer understanding of how to engage in preparatory work before listening to a text.

## Discussion

Listening comprehension in English is pivotal in the early stages of second language learning, as learners are driven by the urge to understand spoken input. Yet, developing listening skills remains difficult because it demands active meaning construction—integrating prior knowledge with new auditory input. Recent research confirms that listening requires active engagement, not passive reception (Denzler, 2024).

Earlier observations that listening skills receive insufficient classroom attention are echoed by more current studies. Qasserras (2025) highlights that listening is among the most challenging language skills to teach and learn. Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016), along with the systematic literature review by Qasserras (2025), report that language instruction still emphasizes grammar, reading, and vocabulary at the expense of focused listening comprehension.

Contemporary research underscores the value of explicit strategy instruction. Denzler (2024) asserts that teaching learners to anticipate meaning, utilize stress and intonation, and analyze visual or textual cues before listening significantly enhances comprehension. Complementarily, Qasserras (2025) and Sciedu's literature review report that structured listening lessons—preparing learners with background knowledge and vocabulary—reduce anxiety and improve engagement (Hocaoğlu & Ocak, 2024).

Moreover, metacognitive approaches such as “thinking aloud,” once described by Vandergrift (1997), have received empirical support. Velasco and Acuña (2021) found that ESL learners using metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies during listening performed better in comprehension tasks. Additionally, Hocaoğlu and Ocak's recent study (2024) confirms that structured strategy

instruction enhances listening performance while also boosting motivation and metacognitive awareness.

These findings mirror the present study's outcomes: students who applied pre-listening strategies not only achieved higher comprehension scores but also reported lower anxiety and greater enjoyment. Liao's (2003) earlier argument—that anticipating communicative intent and contextualizing listening material enhances comprehension and reduces stress—is reaffirmed in these recent studies (Denzler, 2024; Hocaoglu & Ocak, 2024).

## **CONCLUSION**

This study has demonstrated that pre-listening language learning strategies play a pivotal role in improving EFL learners' listening comprehension. Through systematic action research, it was found that students who engaged in preparatory activities before listening tasks showed greater motivation, improved understanding, and increased participation. Pre-listening strategies such as predicting content, activating prior knowledge, and introducing relevant vocabulary enabled learners to approach listening tasks more strategically and confidently. While a few students faced challenges such as difficulty recalling vocabulary or accessing background knowledge, the overall impact was largely positive. The findings support the integration of cognitive and affective strategy instruction in listening lessons to create more effective and learner-centered classrooms. Future research may explore differentiated strategy instruction and its impact on learners with varying proficiency levels and learning styles. Ultimately, this study reaffirms the importance of structured, intentional preparation in fostering deeper engagement and success in language learning.

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