Metacognitive awareness in EFL listening

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Study Programme: Double Major MA Study Programme in English Language and Literature – Teaching English As a Foreign Language

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Master's Thesis

Supervisor: Dr. Višnja Pavičić Takač, Full Professor

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Contents

Abstract

This paper explores the level of 8th grade EFL learners' level of metacognitive listening awareness and the relationship between EFL learners' listening comprehension performance and metacognitive listening awareness. The first part of the paper brings the theoretical background pertaining to listening skill, listening in a foreign language, and metacognition in listening followed by an overview of previous and similar research studies on the topic. The present study included 103 primary school 8th grade learners who took one listening comprehension test and filled out the metacognitive awareness listening questionnaire. The results show that learners possess a moderate level of metacognitive listening awareness, and that there is a positive significant and strong correlation between metacognitive listening awareness and learners' listening test performance. Although moderate level of metacognitive awareness is considered as satisfactory, learners' level of awareness in terms of some strategies was moderate to low, which shows that it is important to raise learners' awareness of different metacognitive listening strategies.

Key words: metacognitive listening, metacognitive awareness, metacognitive strategies, listening comprehension

Sažetak

Ovaj rad istražuje razinu metakognitive svjesnosti u slušanju te odnos između razine metakognitivne svjesnosti u slušanju i rezultata iz testa slušanja s razumijevanjem kod učenika osmih razreda engleskog kao stranog jezika. Prvi dio rada donosi teorijsku podlogu o vještini slušanja, slušanju u stranom jeziku i metakogniciji u slušanju nakon čega slijedi pregled prijašnjih i sličnih istraživanja na tu temu. U istraživanju je sudjelovalo 103 učenika osmih razreda koji su riješili test iz slušanja s razumijevanjem te ispunili upitnik o metakognitivnoj svjesnosti u slušanju. Rezultati pokazuju da učenici posjeduju umjerenu razinu metakognitive svjesnosti u slušanju te da je korelacija između razine metakognitivne svjesnosti u slušanju i rezultata na testu iz slušanja s razumijevanjem pozitivna, značajna i jaka. Iako se umjerena razina metakognitive svjesnosti smatra zadovoljavajućom, rezultati su pokazali umjerenu do nisku razinu svjesnosti učenika po pitanju nekih strategija što pokazuje da je važno osvještavati učenike o postojanju različitih metakognitivnih strategija u slušanju.

Ključne riječi: metakognitivno slušanje, metakognitivna svjesnost, metakognitivne strategije, slušanje s razumijevanjem

1. Introduction

Despite being one of the fundamental skills in language learning, listening skill has been the most overlooked and neglected skill of all. Since listening is a receptive skill it is usually taken for granted, thus resulting in being the least understood and researched skill. Recent developments in the field of teaching and learning foreign language listening have discovered very useful findings in the context of metacognition in foreign language listening. The findings indicate a direct connection between metacognitive listening awareness and listening comprehension performance, emphasizing the benefits of English as a Foreign language (EFL) learners with higher metacognitive listening awareness. The diploma paper begins with a thorough theoretical background of listening skill, listening in a foreign language, metacognition and its listening strategies, and is concluded with the presentation of international research studies on metacognitive listening awareness and its correlation with the EFL learners' listening comprehension.

The second part describes the present study, which investigates the level of EFL learners' listening metacognitive awareness. The second part also investigates the correlation between metacognitive listening awareness and EFL learners' listening self-assessment, as well as the correlation between metacognitive listening awareness and listeners' EFL listening performance. The hypothesis is that learners whose level of metacognitive awareness in listening is higher will score better on the listening comprehension test. The results of the research are explained in detail, and suggestions for further research are presented at the end.

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2. Theoretical background

2.1. Listening skill

2.1.1. Definition of listening skill

Listening skill is one of the four skills in foreign language learning. Listening, being one of the receptive skills along with reading skill, makes foundation for successful and prolific language learning process. Considering the fact that contemporary studies have proven that listening skill consists of a variety of different aspects, there have been many variations and difficulties with its definition.

Saricoban (1999) refers to listening as the ability used for identification and understanding what other people are saying. This definition of listening is a broad and simplified definition which does not include all the different aspects listening encompasses, but clearly puts an emphasis on the importance of listening as a necessary part of successful communication.

Goss (1982) sees listening as a process consisting of understanding what is heard, organising it into lexical elements, and allocating the meaning to those lexical elements. This perspective emphasizes linguistic and semantic processing of listening, but Purdy (1997:8) includes other elements and gives a more precise definition, which says that listening is "the active and dynamic process of attending, perceiving, interpreting, remembering, and responding to the expressed verbal and nonverbal needs, concerns, and information offered by other human beings".

Morley and Lawrence (1971 as cited in Gilakjani and Sabouri, 2016) list listening components including auditory discrimination, aural grammar, the selection and memorization of necessary information, and the connection between sound and form of meaning. This definition presents listening as a complex process consisting of elements that are not exclusively connected to linguistics, showing that listening process is much more than just understanding of the oral language.

To summarize what listening is, we need to include all the elements mentioned in the paragraphs above. Rost (2011) provides the most precise definition in which he describes listening skill as a combination of **neurological processing** (hearing, consciousness, attention), **linguistic processing** (speech perception, prosodic features, word recognition, and non-verbal cues), **semantic processing** (comprehension, knowledge activation, inferencing, and memory), and **pragmatic processing** (inferring speaker's intention, listener's use of social frames, listener's response and collaboration). These will be discussed in the following sections.

2.2.2. Neurological processing

According to Rost (2011), in the context of researching listening, the starting point needs to be based on neurological system and procedures which are present in **hearing**. Rost (2011:11) elaborates on the process of hearing, describing it as "the primary physiological system that allows for reception and conversion of sound waves". This definition of hearing clearly shows that the sense of hearing, which is usually identified with listening, is only a "subprocess" present in listening process. Rost further explains that hearing needs to be considered as a basis and antecedent for listening, and the difference between the two is essentially "a degree of intention" (2011:12). Figure 1 presents the way hearing process occurs in the neurological context of listening.

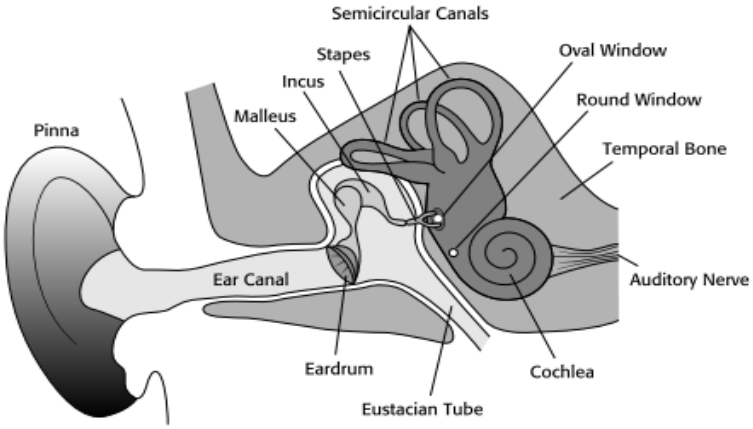

Figure 1.1 *The mechanism of hearing.*

Figure 1: The mechanism of hearing (Rost, 2011:13)

As the picture shows, sound waves go through the ear canal and thus cause the vibration of the eardrum. Vibrations are then forwarded through the middle ear, which consists of three small bones (malleus, incus, and stapes). The middle ear then provides efficient transfer of sounds to the fluids in the inner ear, from where they travel to the auditory nerve in the form of electrical pulses, and finally to the auditory cortex in the brain for further processing.

The next step in neurological processing in listening is **consciousness**. To understand what is implied by consciousness in the context of the neurology of listening, we need to take into account what consciousness is, how it is described, and what processes it encompasses. Rost (2011) presents consciousness as the primary concept used to describe the processes which activate aspects such as attention, meaning construction, memory, and learning.

Czikszentmihalyi M., Czikszentmihalyi I. (1992) and Chella and Manzotti (2007) go into detail and comment on consciousness as a flow of energy, which appears when the following two cognitive processes occur at the same time: 1) brain's identification of an outside object/event composed of self-contained properties, and 2) the process in which the brain appoints the listener as the main agent who attests this object or event. The authors emphasize that the integration of these two processes can be experienced only subjectively, because that is the nature of the consciousness.

To summarize the role of consciousness in the neurology of listening, we can say that consciousness assists us in defining the concept of context. This means that consciousness enables us to activate concepts that we form once our perception connects with an external event, and also to activate concepts referring to our subjective experience produced by our interaction with an outside event. Finally, it is consciousness that governs listener's attention to the external event.

The final factor is **attention**. Rost (2011:19) defines attention as "the focusing of consciousness on an object or train of thought, which activates parts of the cortex that are equipped to process it". According to Rost (2011), attention consists of three stages which occur almost simultaneously. The Stage 1 is called *arousal*, and refers to the process in which neurotransmitters burst throughout the brain, and activate chemicals which cause the blast of electrical activity. The Stage 2 is called *orientation*, and in this stage neurotransmitters are regulated and directed to the specific areas of the brain, where they are used for processing the stimulus. Finally, Stage 3 is *focus*, and refers to the processing of the stimulus, the process in which the part of the brain that is most active in the experience of consciousness secures the neurotransmitters onto the parts cerebral cortex, thus enabling the processing of stimulus.

Finally, changes in attention do not always occur voluntarily. For the example, in a situation where an individual watching television is being distracted by the baby crying. Crying interrupts individual's attention system regardless of whether he/she wants it or not. According to Rost (2011), this proves that while we are listening, aside from informational, there is also an emotional factor present, and we respond in accordance with our perception of relevance at a particular moment, which is why such attention shifts are expected to occur while listening.

In summary, it is of great importance for listeners to understand the segments of neurological processing. This primarily implies the correct perception on hearing which cannot be substituted for listening, but considered as a reception of an acoustic importance. Hearing, conscious perception of the external and internal (subjective) contexts, and the awareness of informational

and emotional factors of attention do not only provide listener with information on how listening occurs, but also make foundation for every listener's further comprehension of how listening skill functions.

2.2.3. Linguistic processing

Linguistic processing in listening puts an emphasis on a wide range of linguistic processes, which vary from phonological features involved in perceiving speech, word recognition, identifying units of spoken language, managing incoming speech, prosodic features to the non-verbal cues which are available to a listener.

Regarding the notion called **the perception of speech**, a listener has to have an ultimate goal of speech production, and according to Boersma (1998), the goal of speech production is to maximise communication, putting as many bits of retrievable information into every second of speech as possible.

In order to efficiently maximise recognition of what has been spoken, Rost (2011) makes mention of three types of perceptual experience which listener needs to use: *experience of articulatory causes*, *experience of psychoacoustic effects*, and *experience of linguistic intentions*. The first experience has to do with pure perception of sounds which listener experiences while listening. Rost (2011:26) explains that this experience deals with the sounds that "strike the ear", referring to the perceptual objects causing the effects of specific vocal configurations, such as the lip, tongue, and vocal tract movements. The second experience refers to the listener's identification of perceptual objects, which include auditory qualities such as the frequency, timbre, and duration of sounds that reach the ear. Finally, the third experience refers to the way listener creates an image of what speaker's linguistic goal is while speaking, and includes the perception of different levels and aspects of a language (phonemic, morphological, lexical, semantic, pragmatic).

The second feature in linguistic processing of listening is **identifying units of spoken language**. Identifying units of speech takes an essential role in managing speech in real time, which is why, according to Rost (2011), speech needs to be grouped into smaller constituents that can be worked within short-term memory.

Brazil (1995) is among the first to describe in detail how speakers put their speech together in real time, and constructs a specific approach for this process. He perceives spoken language construction in a piecemeal approach, and provides two reasons for this method. The first reason is the speaker's necessity to adapt messages in accordance with listener's response, and the second

reason is the speaker's own need to adapt his messages, which he does on the basis of own assessment about what and how he is saying, and how he is passing over those messages to the listener. According to Brazil's characterisation of the spoken language, it is much easier to understand what spoken language is like for listeners and speakers.

The next feature in linguistic processing of listening deals with **prosodic features** (intonation and stress). Intonation, being a temporal unit consisting of phrases and bound by pauses, lasts two to three seconds in length, and marks the speaker's rhythm for composing ideas (Rost, 2011). When it comes to stress, it refers to "prominence patterns of syllables within a word" (Pettinato and Verhoeven, 2008:1). However, according to Rost (2011), it is important to point out that all content words typically receive stress, but that the primary stress usually receives the last new content word. We can conclude that we emphasize a word which has not been used in discourse until a particular moment. Also, it is impossible to arrive at strict conclusions about word stressing, because according to Rost (2011), despite the fact stress can be identified on a single syllable, the beginning and the decline of stress are spread out, meaning that they encompass more than one word.

The following factor in linguistic processing is **word recognition**. According to Rost (2011), the two main synchronous tasks of the listener in word recognition are (1) identifying words and lexical phrases, and (2) activating knowledge associated with those words and phrases. However, some authors (e.g. Baddeley and Larsen, 2007 as cited in Rost, 2011) claim there are several simultaneous processes which increase reliability of word recognition: the recognition of word through the interaction of perceived sound, sequential process of speech (word by word), and finally the listener's analysis of acoustic structure which listener uses to identify the most relevant candidate/word.

Finally, the last feature in linguistic processing of listening are **the non-verbal cues** available to a listener. Non-verbal cues encompass a list of signals used in communication which help listener to interpret the information. The signals are following: *kinesic signals* – body movement, *baton signals* – hand and head movement, *directional gaze* – eye movement, and *guide signals* – systematic gestures and movements of any body part. In conclusion, non-verbal cues are used to confirm speaker's linguistic meaning, which automatically enables listener to conclude on the consistency of messages. Also, according to McCornack (1997 as cited in Rost, 2011), if the listener interprets the message as the inconsistent, there is a possible chance that listener will

perceive the speaker as being deceptive, which is why he will likely pay attention to the non-verbal cues.

We can conclude that features of linguistic processing in listening skill provide listener with crucial insights in aspects they need to recognize in order to successfully interpret linguistic information in listening. However, it is also evident that all factors in linguistic processing require knowledge and awareness of factors from already explained neurological processing. A lack of consciousness and emotional and informational attention while mastering how to establish a goal of speech, how to take the right approach while managing speech in real time, how to identify lexical phrases, and how to master non-verbal signals, will likely lead to unsuccessful linguistic processing in listener. Accordingly, this leads to conclusion that aspects from different processing are interconnected, and although some of them occur regardless of listener's effort (e.g. hearing in neurological processing), the vast majority of factors require listener's conscious effort in order to establish their understanding (e.g. identifying units of spoken language, word identification, non-verbal cues).

2.2.4. Semantic processing

Semantic processing deals with the listening process in comprehension, learning, and memory formation. It outlines the processes of comprehension, discusses the concept of knowledge activation, the process of inference, presents concepts of memory used during listening, and presents an outline of how listening relates to learning (Rost, 2011).

Sanders and Gernsbacher (2004) refer to **comprehension** as the process of structure building. According to them, concepts in listener's memory represent new information, and need to be placed into already developed mental maps. However, this can be done only if the new information relates to previous one which is already in the structure, if not, listener will have to "shift attention and attach a new substructure" (Rost, 2011:53), thus this process has been described as *the structure building*. Rost summarizes this concept by referring to the complete comprehension as the process in which listener has a clear notion in memory for all of the speaker's references.

Similarly, regarding **conceptual knowledge** in listening, the role of schema takes place. Every time we listen or observe we connect one schema to another, but since there are hundreds of thousands available schemas in our memory, we need to activate the appropriate one that will assist us in understanding (Rost, 2011).

As we can see, comprehension (the role of knowledge structures) and conceptual knowledge are connected and incorporate already developed structures (mental maps in case of comprehension, schemas in case of conceptual knowledge), and a direct connection between new concepts and the ones which are already developed. In other words, since schemas assist us in understanding, they automatically determine the level of comprehension – the more appropriate activated schema, the greater understanding.

Rost (2011:59) lists the following types of understanding: a) non-understanding (listener is unable to activate any appropriate schema to understand speaker), b) misunderstanding (listener activates schemas that have significant mismatches to speaker's schemas), c) partial understanding (listener activates schemas that include some overlap with speaker's active schemas), d) plausible understanding (listener activates schemas that include central items in speaker's discourse, though not largely shared with speaker), e) acceptable understanding (listener activates schemas that include central items in speaker's discourse, largely shared with speaker), f) complete understanding (listener activates schemas that are completely "shared" with speaker).

In **the process of inferences**, we need to take into account the fact that the speaker is usually not aware of all the intended meanings, which means that listener is forced to interpret each utterance in order to connect a series of utterances (Rost, 2011). The process of inference consists of two parts. One part has to do with language itself, while the other refers to the logic and real-world knowledge: "one part of the process of inference by the listener is achieved through conventional inferencing involving linkages within the language used and another part is achieved through problem-solving-oriented heuristic procedures involving both logic and real-world knowledge" (Rost, 2011:62).

However, when speaker makes an utterance, successive pieces of information are usually added. Rost (2011) comments on the speaker's tendency to signal the references for information and the connections between the pieces of information by using cohesion devices. These cohesion devices (anaphora, lexical substitution, conjunction and ellipsis) are in the domain of text linguistics, and according to Hoey (2005 as cited in Rost, 2011), a speaker who is a competent user of language will process these cohesion devices, which will help listener to predict the discourse structures that are expected. The examples of cohesion devices can be seen in the Figure 2.

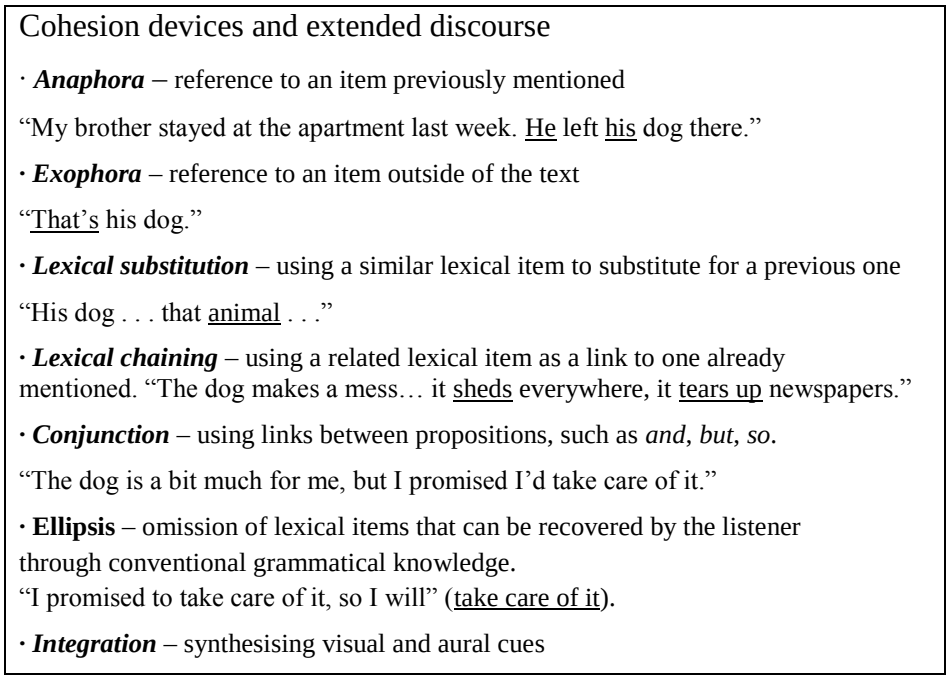

Figure 2: Cohesion devices and extended discourse (Rost, 2011:62)

We can comprehend that there is a noticeable similarity and a connection between linguistic processing factor such as identification of words and lexical phrases in the context of word recognition and semantic processing factor of inferencing. Again, as seen in the previous sections, both factors require listener's conscious effort referring to connecting what listener already knows to a word or lexical phrase to reach its understanding (linguistic processing), or connecting a series of utterances in order to achieve understanding of a discourse (semantic processing).

When presenting **the concepts of memory** used during listening, we need to account for both processes present: activating memory which already exists and forming new memory connections (Rost, 2011). Generally, there are two dimensions involved in memory: *long-term memory* and *short-term memory*. We associate long-term memory with all the knowledge and experience one person possesses (Rost, 2011), while according to Cowan (2000), short-term memory can be referred to as either a) the set of activated representations from long-term memory, or b) the focus of attention that can be held for a limited period of time.

Finally, to present an outline of **how listening relates to learning**, first the learning process needs to be defined. A simple definition of learning says that learning is "the durable modification of a concept in memory due to an experience" (Rost, 2011:73). Rost (2011) offers a cognitivist framework in which learning process requires five elements:

a) *units of learning*, which refer to words or concepts relevant to the learner and represented in long-term memory
b) *activation values* (for the units mentioned), which refers to the cognitive importance attached to a unit by the learner
c) *connection weightings*, which refer to the links of a unit to other units in memory, the stronger the link – the better chance of learning becoming permanent
d) *learning rules*, which refers to the different ways in which links can be changed or unlearned, it also includes learner's beliefs how learning can be changed
e) *emotional and motivational weighting*, which refers to all the elements of a person's state (e.g. mood, goals, location) which can influence learning process

Considering the fact that all these complex learning processes occur in a sequence, and that listening and learning encompass factors such as motivation and attention, researchers tend to agree that it is impossible to predict what a listener will learn from a listening experience.

2.2.5. Pragmatic processing

Pragmatic processing deals with the ways we infer speaker's intention via conversational conventions, and shows how the listener constructs meaning by using social frames. It also defines the concept of listener response, explains the types of responses, and details the concept of listener collaboration.

The notion of pragmatic processing in listening is described by Verschueren (2009 as cited in Rost, 2011) in which we find out that pragmatic processing refers to monitoring listener's engagement with the speaker, which includes listener's necessity to be aware of speaker's emotional shifts in his or her state.

In Figure 3 below, we can see listener roles, and as the listener becomes more active as a participant, he or she is automatically more engaged.

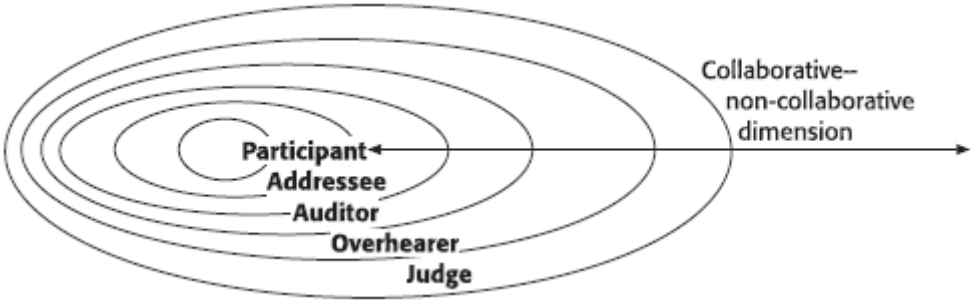

Figure 3: Listener roles (Rost, 2011:78)

Rost (2011) explains the roles as follows: *participant* (a person who is being spoken to and who has equal speaking rights), *addressee* (a person who is being spoken to, but has limited rights to response), *auditor* (audience member who is addressed directly, has very limited right to response), and *overhearer* (a person who is not being addressed, has no rights to respond), *judge* (a type of an *overhearer* who is not being spoken to, but has the right and power to intervene in the speech).

When inferring **speaker's intention**, according to Verschueren (2009 as cited in Rost, 2011), the listener needs to have an intention to complete communicational process, and to do this successfully he or she needs to take a role of an interpreter. Researchers in the area of pragmatics agree that there are four notions which help listener to understand the spoken language: a) *deixis*, b) *intention*, c) *strategy* and d) *conversational meaning*.

Deixis refers to the process of "anchoring of language to a real context" (Rost, 2011:79). This notion includes variables of time (e.g. *then, now, eventually*), space (e.g. *there, here*), objects (e.g. *that, it*), persons (e.g. *he, she, it*), and status (e.g. *sir, hey you*).

When it comes to the second notion (**intention**), Rost (2011) points out that there are two levels at which situated speech can be either succeeding or failing, and these two levels refer to speaker's subjective intention, and the objective truth value of the spoken words.

The next notion refers to the **strategy**, which is what, according to Rost (2011), makes a communication successful if speaker's and listener's strategies are congruent. Grice (1969) proposes four types of conversational maxims which help speaker and listener create an agreement:

a) The maxim of quantity (be as informative as required), e.g. *What day are you leaving for Brazil? – Monday.*
b) The maxim of quality (do not believe what you think will be false), e.g. Parent: *Do you think my son Alex has a chance to get into Harvard?* High-school teacher: *Oh, absolutely.*
c) The maxim of relevance (contribution relevant to the interaction), e.g. *How are you doing in school? - Not too well, actually. I'm failing two of my classes.*
d) The maxim of manner (brief and orderly response to question), e.g. *How is the sales department doing this year? - We're down about 10 per cent from this quarter last year, but we expect to do better in the coming quarter*

The final pragmatic notion, **conversational meaning**, although it encompasses both the speaker and the listener, emphasizes the search for the speaker's intended meaning, because according to Grice (1969), it is the speaker's intended meaning what governs human communication.

Regarding these four notions, we can infer that through deixis/deictic elements listener can interpret circumstances and different factors which take place in a particular context. Logically, the more listener interprets these variables, the greater level of comprehension is achieved. However, since the second notion of intention contains a subjective element when it comes to speaker's intention, it is expected that listener's interpretation can be imprecise and completely different from the real speaker's intention. Obviously, the difference between speaker's subjective and objective intention depends on the evidence which needs to be transparent to listener, so that he can arrive at relevant conclusion about speaker's intention. The third and fourth notions refer to both, listener and speaker. The third notion clearly shows through different maxims that speaker and listener need to understand the purpose of communication. In other words, both need to act towards aligned communicative goals. The fourth notion advises listener to account for the intention of speaker's speech acts in a particular social context, because it is the context which helps listener to interpret speaker's intention (as is the case with deictic elements as well).

Regarding listener's construction of meaning through **social frames**, a listener needs to account for the context situation (Malinowski, 1923), which means that the function of the situational and cultural context is the meaning of the utterance. In accordance with this concept, Rost (2011) offers five ways in which using social frames helps the listener understand what has been said:

1) identify prototypical elements in the text
2) assume through analogy that meaning is similar to other texts with these elements
3) if conventional meanings fail, evoke alternate texts with at least one related element
4) evoke alternative interpretations by comparing analogous experiences
5) when an acceptable understanding is reached, rekey the social frame to include the new elements

The great importance of these strategies lies in the fact that regardless of whether a linguistic message is completely clear or not, listener can still reach the meaning of the utterance. However, for this approach to function and be useful, listener needs to be familiar with the cultural context, otherwise these strategies would not be of any benefit. This leads us to conclusion that again a possible misinterpretation of the utterance is possible if speaker and listener do not share a cultural or situational context.

In the examination of **the concept of listener response**, Rost (2011) presents three types of responses in face-to-face interaction: a) uptaking of speaker's moves, b) backchanneling, and c) follow up acts. The uptaking of speaker's moves refers to speaker's expectations from listener to uptake the act in a specific way. e.g. *Can I stay at your place for a few days?* – The response to this question can be preferred (*–Yes!*) or dispreferred (*–No! –Maybe.).* Backchanneling refers to the process in which the listener, while the partner is speaking, sends back a particular message/response. Utterances can be verbal (e.g. *Yeah, right*), semi-verbal utterances (e.g. *uh-huh, hmm*), laughs/chuckles (*hhh*), and postural movements (e.g. *nod*). Follow up acts refer to "responses to a discourse exchange" (Rost, 2011:93), and both speaker and listener can provide them from the previous exchange. They can be positive (e.g. *How long are you staying with us? – Tilll next Sunday. – Great*), negative (e.g. *Are you joining us tonight? – I can't. Too much work. – I understand.*), and neutral (e.g. *How did he hurt himself? – Skateboarding. – Oh.*)

When we consider these three types of listener response, we can conclude that listener has a strong impact on the course of conversation. For example, when speaker says something, listener can show the level of (un)interest in the topic of conversation by e.g. *backchanneling* (e.g. semi-verbal utterances), or a lack of respect in a particular context by e.g. chuckling. Considering this, it can be concluded that listener's role, although may be neglected, is very important in directing the course of conversation.

Finally, in detailing the concept of **listener's collaboration**, Steil et al. (1983) argue that listener response has a role of a stage in listening, and that includes non-verbal feedback or verbal contributions (asking questions, paraphrasing). According to this concept, it is up to the listener to incorporate feedback and response in order for listening to be effective.

According to various communication-focused research, the great importance lies in the factors which promote, maintain, or erode interaction between listener and speaker, and Rost (2011) refers to these factors as benchmarks.

Greene and Burleson (2003 as cited in Rost, 2011) establish interactive behaviours and attitudes as benchmarks needed for communicative behaviour. These benchmarks include conversational appropriateness and effectiveness, memorability of the listener, communication patterns used to approach or avoid arguments, patterns for discovering motives for communicating with others, patterns of communication which demonstrate solidarity with the speaker, and patterns of responses between participants.

White and Burgoon (2006) and Giles (2009) explain that the purpose of these patterns is to train listener to counter the **accommodation** (the tendency of speaker and listener to compromise to the norm of the other), or **interaction adaption** (the display of involvement when presented with a persuasion-seeking argument).

In conclusion, Rost (2011) states that in collaborative listening, the basic purpose of listening is not comprehension, but an interactive connection with whom we speak, which enables us to find a common ground and mutually move toward goal.

2.3. Listening in a foreign language

2.3.1. Difference between first and foreign language listening

There are some obvious differences when it comes to listening in the first and foreign language. First, it is very important to mention that listening skill in the first language occurs at the same time when a learner begins to develop cognitive abilities in general. What this implies is that it is up to a foreign language learner to recognize vocabulary and grammatical forms of the foreign language. In order to successfully acquire differences between first and foreign language listening, learners need to go through the process which Churchland (1999 as cited in Poelmans, 2003) refers to as "conceptual redeployment". Conceptual redeployment can be defined as the process in which an already formed framework, which is in use during first language (listening) comprehension, begins to be used in a new domain. This shows us that foreign language listeners need to change their semantic concepts according to foreign language rules. Also, this clearly shows that learning foreign language listening is a much more conscious process than learning first language listening, because despite the fact that learner's cognitive development has already been built, learner needs to modify conceptual framework to suit a foreign language listening development.

Another important difference between the first and foreign language listening lies in the input. Since first language learners receive input while still developing cognitive abilities, i.e. while still creating phonetic categories, they are able to create new category to place the received input. On the other hand, according to Poelmans (2003), it is of great importance that the input foreign language learners receive is correct and sufficient. What this means is that the foreign language listener needs to receive exactly enough amount of input, which is in accordance with the "Input Hypothesis" provided by Krashen (1982, 1985) who notes that foreign learners in general develop language comprehension through input which is just a bit above present language proficiency. This leads us to conclusion that not every input is helpful, because if the amount of input exceeds

listener's foreign language knowledge by a lot, it will not help a listener improve his foreign language listening at all.

In conclusion, it is obvious that the formation of conceptual framework while developing cognitive abilities presents a crucial difference between the first and foreign language listeners. First language listeners create concepts while simultaneously developing cognitive abilities which enable them to deal with the input by creating phonetic categories. Foreign language listeners need to modify and adjust their already developed concepts, while being exposed to the exactly right amount of input.

2.3.3. Foreign language listening strategies

Many researchers including Azmi et al. (2014), O'Malley and Chamot (1990), and Rost and Ross (1991) agree that there are three basic types of listening comprehension strategies: cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective. According to Vandergrift (1999), strategies play a significant role for the training of listening, because not only can learners guide and assess their understanding and answers, but they can also find out which resources they possess as language learners, and what they know about their learning.

The first strategy type is cognitive strategy, and there are various definitions of cognitive strategy and its role in the process of listening and learning in general. In Gilakjani and Sabouri's (2016) view, cognitive strategy relates to the process of understanding and gathering information which is stored in either short-term or long-term memory, and which will later be used. Derry and Murphy (1986 as cited in Gilakjani and Sabouri, 2016) define cognitive strategy as a problem-solving technique used for acquisition of knowledge. Goh (1998) focuses on the cognitive strategy function and says that learners use cognitive strategies so that they can assist them in processing, storing, and recalling new information.

There are two kinds of cognitive strategies in listening: bottom-up strategies and top-down strategies. Bottom-up strategies focus on listening for particular details. They include arranging the rate of speech, repeating the oral text, and involve tasks that are focused on understanding at a sound/word level. On the other hand, top-down strategies focus on the general meaning of the text being listened. According to some researchers, (O'Malley et al., 1989, Conrad, 1985 as cited in Gilakjani and Sabouri, 2016), since these strategies include anticipating, explaining, and guessing about the topic, experienced learners use them more than beginners.

The second strategy type is metacognitive strategy. Metacognitive strategies involve thinking about a variety of factors which are segments of listening process: planning for learning, monitoring the learning task, and evaluating how well one has learned (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990 as cited in Gilakjani and Sabouri, 2016). Azmi et al. (2014) state that learners who use metacognitive strategies are not only aware when they are listening to the text, but they automatically learn how to plan, monitor, and evaluate information they receive through listening.

Vandergrift and Goh (2012) present two functions of metacognitive strategies: knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition. The first deals with learners' consciousness regarding what is happening, while the second deals with improving listeners' effectiveness in listening (i.e., what they should do in order to make their listening more effective).

More on the metacognitive strategies and their use in foreign language listening will be discussed in the chapter 2.4.2.

Finally, the third strategy type is socio-affective strategies. Vandergrift (2003) explains socio-affective strategies as techniques which listeners use in order to cooperate with others and reduce anxiety.

Since learners' social-psychological factors are in a correlation with learning situations and since there is a noteworthy relationship between low anxiety and high performance in listening (Aneiro, 1989, Gardner and MacIntyre, 1992 as cited in Gilakjani and Sabouri, 2016), it can be concluded that the use of affective strategies has a great impact on listening improvement. Also, Habte-Gabr (2006) explains that benefits learners are expected to gain from socio-affective strategy include the decrease of anxiety, increased confidence during listening activities, and increased motivation in perfecting listening skill.

2.3.4. Difficulties in foreign language listening

Azmi et al. (2014) listed six main difficulties learners experience while practicing and learning listening comprehension.

The first factor is **the quality of recorded materials**. The authors argue that some of the recorded materials used in classrooms are not high quality materials, which can significantly decrease learners' listening comprehension.

The second factor has to do with **cultural differences and knowledge**. Authors discuss and emphasize the importance of understanding cultural aspects of the language one is learning, because the lack of it can create critical comprehension problems.

The third factor is **accent**. It has been debated that accented speech (i.e., speech produced by a speaker who does not have the same native language/dialect as the listener) can lower comprehension (Derwing et al., 1998 as cited in Azmi et al., 2014). Also, Goh (1999 as cited in Gilakjani and Sabouri, 2016) comments on her research in which 66% of learners report accent as being a significant factor which affects their comprehension. Finally, Buck (2001) reports that there is a strong possibility of interrupting learners' listening comprehension if they are met with different accents of the same language (e.g. Indian English accent while learning American English).

The fourth factor is **the unfamiliar vocabulary**. Azmi et al. (2014) stress the importance of knowing the words, because that increases the motivation and interest for further listening and practicing listening comprehension. Not knowing the meaning of the words or not recognising the appropriate meaning of a word in a particular context will confuse learners and make listening comprehension difficult.

The fifth factor is **the length of listening** in which the crucial factor seems to be the listeners' level of knowledge, because according to Carroll (1977 as cited in Azmi et al., 2014), it is difficult for lower level learners to listen and complete listening tasks which are longer than three minutes. What this means is that short passages are more appropriate for lower level learners, because it reduces their tiredness.

Underwood (1989) presents the sixth factor, **the speed of listening**, and makes clear that unlike in the context of reading comprehension, listeners cannot control the speed of listening. This problem emerges in a situation in which speakers speak at a faster rate than normal, causing problems to foreign language listeners to understand.

2.4. Metacognition in listening

2.4.1. Definition of metacognition

Metacognition is the listener's awareness in terms of cognitive processes which take part in comprehension, and the capacity to monitor, regulate, and direct these cognitive processes (Goh, 2014).

Flavell (1976) states that metacognition refers to the individual's awareness of the knowledge, and to the ability to oversee cognitive activities present in the process of learning. He describes metacognition as "one's knowledge concerning one's own cognitive processes and … active monitoring and consequent regulation and orchestration of these processes in relation to the

cognitive objects or data on which they bear, usually in the service of some concrete goal or objective" (1976:232).

Similarly to Flavell's view, Wenden (1998) refers to metacognitive awareness as specialised portion of learner's acquired knowledge, and it consists of what learners know about learning.

Yore and Treagust (2006 as cited in Dabbagh, 2014) emphasize that metacognitive awareness can be acquired either consciously or unconsciously, because it can be the result of various aspects such as imitation, observation, listening to teachers, parents or peers who supply learner with useful advice on how to learn. Accordingly, they see metacognition as the knowledge of the mental processes which include conscious knowledge about learning.

There are three types of metacognitive knowledge: person, task, and strategy (Flavell, 1979). As Wenden (1991) explains, person (knowledge) refers to the learners' general knowledge on how learning occurs, and how factors such as age, aptitude, and learning style affect language learning. Also, person knowledge includes learners' knowledge about themselves as learners. Task knowledge refers to what learners know about the object and requirements of the task. Finally, strategic knowledge refers to learners' knowledge about strategies, i.e. which strategies would be the most effective one in the process of solving the task.

In the context of listening comprehension, metacognition is regarded as the knowledge of the learners' perception about themselves, their cognitive aims, their understanding of the listening task, their way of approaching to the task, and the strategies they will use to solve the task (Vandergrift et al., 2006).

Despite the fact that different linguists and researchers define metacognition in different ways, all definitions have some mutual characteristics: being able to think about own thinking, to use different listening strategies for different purposes, and to monitor and regulate our listening actions.

2.4.2. Metacognitive framework and components

Vandergrift and Goh (2012) propose a metacognitive framework which serves two significant functions in the process of language learning. Paris and Winograd (1990 as cited in Vandergrift and Goh, 2012) explain that the first function refers to the knowledge about cognition (its states and processes) or self-appraisal, while the second function refers to the control of cognition or self-management. The first function (self-appraisal) happens through our contemplations about our abilities and different ways which can be used in order to attain cognitive objective(s). The

second function (self-management) is "executive in nature" (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012:85), and helps to direct cognitive aspects dealing with problem solving.

In order to address these functions, the metacognitive framework proposed by Vandergrift and Goh utilizes the following three components: experience, knowledge, and strategies. The framework can be seen in the Figure 4.

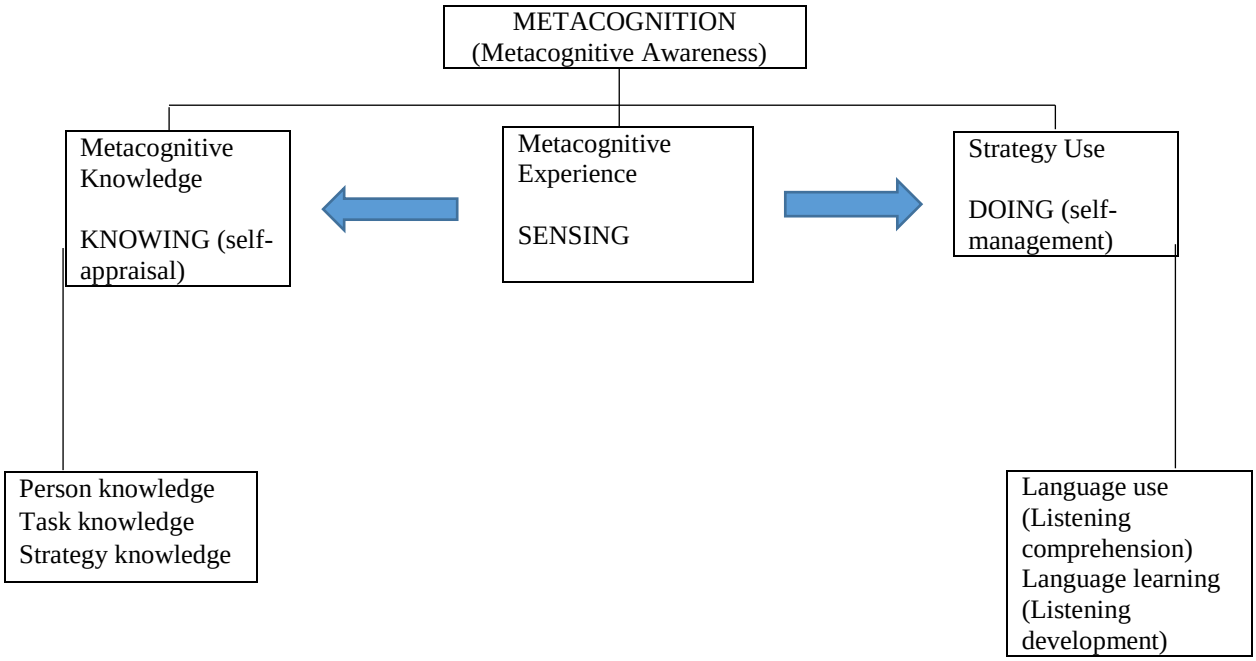

Figure 4: A Metacognitive Framework for Listening Instruction (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012:85)

Flavell (1979:906) states that cognitive processes thinking and learning go together with other "conscious cognitive and affective experiences". If we consider experience to be the major activity of thought, then according to Vandergrift and Goh (2012:86), **metacognitive experience** can also be understood as a thought which occurs to a person "during and about the main thought". Along with given definition of metacognitive experience, the authors also provide an example of metacognitive experience during listening. The example refers to a situation when learners understand they are not able to recognize the words they hear, but are able to recall a similar situation in which they succeeded in solving a word recognition problem. In a situation like that, learners may overcome the problem of not recognizing the words by using a strategy they had already used when they first experienced that situation.

However, it is important to mention that some metacognitive experiences simply do not have a continuing influence, because learners tend to ignore the unfamiliar word, and shortly after forget the perceived sounds. Still, as arrows in Figure show, metacognitive experience can be useful in that it can make an influence on other two components (strategy use and metacognitive

knowledge), provided that it leads to productive utilization of strategies, or additional understanding about the task or learners themselves (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012).

The second component is **metacognitive knowledge**. The first type of metacognitive knowledge, person knowledge, includes our knowledge about ourselves as learners, and also our beliefs about what makes learning process either successful or unsuccessful. The lack of person knowledge can lead to unsuccessful learning process, because its importance lies in the fact that "an individual's person knowledge determines his or her self-concept" (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012:86). The authors support this claim with an example, explaining that learners who experience listening problems may develop a belief that they are poor listeners, and avoid such situations. This is especially likely to happen if listeners are not aware of metacognitive experience, and ignore their listening problems, as described in the previous paragraph. Figure 5 presents the person knowledge examples provided by second (L2) and EFL learners,

TYPE	**EXAMPLES**
Person Knowledge - Knowledge of the cognitive and affective factors that facilitate one's own listening comprehension and listening development.	**Self-concept and self-efficacy about listening** • I am an anxious listener. • I can improve my listening if I try harder. • I dare to take risks. • My ability to relate to the content of the text determined the accuracy of my anticipations which in turn affected the quality of my listening. **Specific listening problems, causes, and possible solutions.** • I have problems catching the beginning of what other people say. • English sounds and pronunciation are too different from Korean. • I can "psycho" myself, talk, and comfort myself to get rid of negative feelings.

Figure 5: Person Knowledge Examples for L2 listening (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012:87)

The second type of metacognitive knowledge is task knowledge. The task knowledge refers to the knowledge about the "purpose, demands, and nature of learning tasks" (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012:86). The task knowledge deals with how to approach and complete listening task in a real-life, and also includes listener's understanding of the procedure relating to the task. However,

when discussing task knowledge in the context of listening comprehension, then it also includes the following attributes of different types of spoken texts: respective discourse structures, grammatical forms, and phonological features of words in connected speech. Figure 6 below presents the task knowledge examples from L2 and EFL learners.

TYPE	**EXAMPLES**
Task Knowledge - Knowledge of purpose and nature of the listening task, knowledge of task demands and knowledge of when deliberate effort is required.	**Mental, affective, and social processes involved** • You need to concentrate very hard if you are not strong in the language. • You need to stay calm to hear clearly. • Listening is difficult because people expect you to respond to them when they talk to you. • Pay attention to the exercise in front of us and the oral at the same time because if we get lost, we can't catch up. **Skills for completing listening tasks** • When you listen to a talk, you need to get only the general idea. • Since I now can anticipate, I am more aware of what to listen to and can pick up more of the conversations. • I find I have slow reaction to numbers. So I want to do more practice like listen more to business news or anything that contains a lot of numbers. **Factors that influence listening** • That speaker's accent is different from the one my teacher has and it makes listening challenging for me. • News reports are more difficult to follow than stories. • I need to look for key words and not let myself mire in the dialogue . . . I really need to work on this. **Ways of improving listening outside class** • I should try to talk to English speakers more. • Mobile devices are excellent for my listening development. • I think I should listen to news and watch some documentaries too ... not just listen to songs I like.

Figure 6: Task Knowledge Examples for L2 listening (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012:87-88)

The third type of metacognitive knowledge is strategy knowledge. The strategy knowledge refers to our knowledge about which strategy to use in order to achieve a specific goal, regardless of whether achieving a specific communicative context, or simply perfecting one's listening ability after a particular time of studying (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012). Figure 7 below presents strategy knowledge examples from L2 and EFL learners.

TYPE	**EXAMPLES**
Strategy Knowledge Knowledge of purpose and nature of the listening task, knowledge of task demands and knowledge of when deliberate effort is required.	**General and specific strategies to facilitate comprehension and manage learning** • If you don't understand what you hear, just effective strategies guess. • Watching English movies can help my listening, but I should try not to read the about how best to Chinese subtitles. • Predicting may not always be correct but it helps. **Strategies appropriate for specific types of listening tasks** • To get the information on train time, you need to listen to all the details carefully. • When somebody is speaking too fast, we can ask them to slow down or repeat. • During the second listen, I can keep my ears open for the things I missed but my partner caught. **Ineffective strategies** • I shall make my reaction as quickly as possible as I can. The less translation the better. • Try not to focus too hard on the text, it will only make you anxious. • My listening depends on guessing too much. If I couldn't guess the topic correctly, what would I do?

Figure 7: Strategy Knowledge Examples for L2 listening (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012:88)

Finally, the last component is **metacognitive listening strategies utilization**. In this segment we can differentiate five types of strategies proposed by Vandergrift et al. (2006): problem solving, planning and evaluation, mental translation, person knowledge, and direct attention.

According to Vandergrift et al. (2006), problem solving strategy represents a group of strategies listeners use once they are confronted with something they do not understand, i.e to guess the

meaning of what is not understood while listening. Also, this group of strategies is used to monitor those inferences.

The second type, planning and evaluation strategies, are the type of strategies listeners use when preparing themselves for listening tasks. Richards (1990) mentions that these strategies also include the aspect of evaluating the results of listeners' own effort.

Person knowledge, as has been mentioned in the paragraphs above, represents a group of strategies which include listeners' perception and attitudes about the difficulty of the listening task, and also include listeners' perception of their foreign language listening self-efficacy.

Vandergrift (2003) explains the fourth type of strategies, mental translations, as the type of strategies listeners need to avoid if they want to become skilled listeners. Mental translations include actions such as simultaneous translating while listening, translating key words while listening, and translating word by word while listening.

Finally, directed attention refers to strategies which listeners use in order to concentrate, focus on the task, ignore distractions, and maintain attention while listening (Rost 2002, Vandergrift and Goh, 2012).

In conclusion, the knowledge listeners possess about these five strategies, their purpose, function, and utilization directly refers to one's metacognitive listening awareness. Since the utilization of these strategies displays listener's level of metacognitive awareness, we can conclude that a great significance lies in their correct and well-timed application. Also, as learners acquire metacognitive knowledge and as they gain metacognitive experience, they are able to use metacognitive strategies appropriately, which will consequently help listeners to achieve the benefits of metacognition, and improve their foreign language listening competence.

2.4.3. Research studies on metacognitive awareness and listening comprehension

As instruments in researching metacognitive awareness in listening Vandergrift (2007) suggests questionnaires, listening diaries, and discussions as useful reflection activities for both listener and teacher. Questionnaires can be used in order to determine which learners possess higher degree of awareness in listening, and as a means of encouragement for learners to use strategies they consider to be most useful. Keeping language diaries also influences growth in metacognitive awareness and listening success (Goh, 2002, Valiente, 2005 as cited in Vandergrift, 2007), as well as teacher discussion, especially on the younger and beginner-level learners (Vandergrift 2002, Goh and Taib 2006). We can say that the purpose of these instruments is not only to use them for the research

purposes, but also to raise listeners' awareness by stimulating their recall of the listening experience. According to Vandergrift (2007), through stimulated recalls (discussions) of the listening experience we can follow changes in listeners' awareness. The same goes for questionnaires which, when repeated a couple of times, can provide us with the insight into listeners' awareness of the listening process.

Since this topic is relatively new and not investigated enough, there have not been any research studies done on this topic in Croatia. However, recently there have been a few international research studies conducted on the topic of metacognitive awareness in listening comprehension and its correlation. The instruments which are commonly used are Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) developed by Vandergrift et al. (2006), and a particular listening comprehension test suitable for learners' level of knowledge. MALQ consists of 21 items with five distinct strategy types relating to foreign language listening comprehension: problem solving (6 items), planning and evaluation (5 items), mental translation (3 items), person knowledge (3 items), and directed attention (4 items).

When discussing research studies on the correlation between metacognitive awareness and listening comprehension, Vandergrift et al. (2006), Al-Alwan et al. (2013), and Zeng (2012, as cited in Chang, 2013) report the same findings. These research studies prove that there is a correlation between listening comprehension success and the metacognitive listening awareness. The correlation ranged from moderate significant to strong positive significant. However, it is important to mention that the age of participants in these research studies varied from 15–16 (10^{th} graders) to 18–21 (college undergraduates), and that these learners had over eight years of experience in EFL listening.

There have also been a few research studies conducted on the effect of the metacognitive instruction on the listening performance. According to Cross (2017), Hacker et al. (2009) are the first who outlined theoretical principles of this approach in their literature on metacognition in learning. However, Vandergrift and Goh (2012) are the first ones who outlined a pedagogical approach regarding metacognitive instruction, and focused on the description of techniques which help learners increase their awareness and listening comprehension results.

A small-scale research conducted by Fahim (2014) revealed that metacognitive instruction could raise learners' metacognitive awareness, and help learners improve their listening comprehension ability. This research included 30 intermediate EFL learners who went through a ten-week long programme dealing with metacognition, emphasizing planning and evaluation, monitoring,

predicting, and problem solving. The instruments used included MALQ and a listening comprehension tests conducted before and after the programme. The comparison of the pre-test and post-test results showed that learners raised their metacognitive awareness and improved their listening comprehension ability.

Another research on the same topic was done by Coşkun (2010), who conducted a study involving two groups of learners: a control group and an experimental group. The experimental group went through a five-week intervention program in metacognition, which was a part of their listening course book. The results showed that the participants in the experimental group performed better than learners from the control group, and that the improvement in listening performance was due to the intervention program.

Results of these two studies show that metacognitive instruction has a positive effect on the learners' listening comprehension performance and their metacognitive awareness. Considering these results, we can conclude that it would be of great benefit for learners if teachers incorporated learning of metacognitive strategies through well-designed programs into their teaching. This would not only cause learners to become familiar with the concept and functions of metacognitive strategies in listening, but would also provide learners with better understanding of listening tasks and listening strategies, which would result in improving their foreign language listening skill in general.

3. The present study

3.1. Aims and Research Questions

The aim of the present study is to establish whether there is a correlation between EFL learners' listening comprehension performance and metacognitive awareness in listening. The research examines the following questions:

1) What is EFL learners' level of metacognitive listening strategies awareness?
2) Is there a correlation between EFL learners' listening self-assessment and listening comprehension test results?
3) Is there a correlation between EFL learners' listening self-assessment and metacognitive listening strategies awareness?
4) Is there a correlation between EFL learners' level of metacognitive listening strategies awareness and their listening comprehension performance?

The hypothesis is that learners whose level of metacognitive awareness in listening is higher will score better on the listening comprehension test. The higher level of metacognitive listening awareness means that they are more aware in monitoring inferences while problem solving, and planning and evaluating their own effort. It also includes greater understanding of what needs to be avoided while listening, greater perception of the difficulty of a particular task, and greater ability to focus and maintain focus on the task, despite possible distractions.

3.2. Participants

The participants of the research were 103 eighth grade primary school learners. Two classes from the Elementary School "Mladost" in Jakšić, and four classes from the Elementary School "Dobriša Cesarić" in Požega participated in the study. There were 50.5% males (52) and 49.53% (51) females from six classes. All of the learners had been learning English as a foreign language from the first grade, and the age of participants varied from 14 to 15.

3.3. Instruments

Two instruments were used in this study: a) Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (hereafter MALQ) developed by Vandergrift et al. (2006), and b) listening comprehension test developed by the British Council (http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org) and its English teaching experts. The first instrument, Vandergrift's MALQ (Appendix 2), consists of 21 items and assesses five types of metacognitive strategies in listening: problem solving (items 5, 7, 9, 13,

17, 19), planning and evaluation (items 1, 10, 14, 20, 21), mental translation (items 4, 11, 18), person knowledge (items 3, 8, 15), and directed attention (items 2, 6, 12, 16). The items are followed by a 6 point Likert-scale (from 1 being strongly disagree to 6 being strongly agree). The questionnaire was translated into Croatian by a professor of the English language and literature (native speaker of Croatian), and the 6 point Likert-scale was modified into 5-point scale in order to avoid the neutral point (1 being strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 partially agree, 4 agree, and 5 strongly agree). As determined by Cronbach's alpha, the reliability coefficient of the MALQ (.83) implies that it is a fairly reliable instrument for measuring the level of learners' metacognitive listening strategies awareness. In addition, learners were asked to assess their own listening skill in the English language. The 5-point scale varied from 1 being regarded as "insufficient", 2 "sufficient", 3 "good," 4 "very good" to 5 being "excellent".

The second instrument, listening comprehension test (hereafter LCT, Appendix 1), consisted of three different tasks: multiple choice (3 points), gap filling (18 points), and true or false task (8 points). The first two tasks were created by the British Council's English teachers, while the third task was created by the three English language teachers who teach learners who participated in the present study. All three tasks were at the A2 level of learners' language proficiency according to The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001), a guideline used to describe achievements of foreign language learners, which is accepted as the European standard for grading learners' language proficiency. The audio track of the text was provided by the British Council, and lasted one minute and forty–two seconds.

3.4. Procedure

The study was conducted during regular classes in the 2nd semester of the academic year 2016/2017. The total number of classes participating in the research was six. In order to ensure randomization, three classes (one from "Mladost" School in Jakšić, and two from "Dobriša Cesarić" School in Požega) were asked to complete the questionnaire first, and the listening comprehension test second. The other three classes were asked to first do the listening comprehension test first, and then the questionnaire. The time learners needed to complete the questionnaire was 10 minutes, during which they circled the number indicating the level of agreement or disagreement with each statement from the questionnaire. Before conducting the questionnaire, learners were given a thorough explanation on how to correctly fill in the questionnaire.

Before the listening comprehension test, learners were instructed to solve the preparation task in which they were told to match the pictures with the words below the pictures. After the preparation task, learners were given instructions on the first task, then listened to the text two times while simultaneously solving the task. The same procedure was used for the second and third task as well. The total amount of time spent on the listening comprehension test was 20 minutes. The track was played on the laptop with speakers on, in a quiet classroom environment with no distractions. Learners were informed about the purpose of the study, and were also familiar with the confidentiality. The statistical data analysis for this research was conducted in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) programme.

3.5. Results

To provide the answer to the question about learners' level of metacognitive listening strategies awareness, descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) of learners' responses were calculated at the level of MALQ and its subscales.

As we can see from Table 1, the overall level of metacognitive listening strategies awareness was 3.19 (SD = 1.06) suggesting a moderate level of awareness.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of learners' responses at the level of MALQ

	No. of items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
MALQ	21	1	5	3.19	1.06

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of learners' responses at the level of subscales

Subscale	No. of items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Planning and evaluation	5	1	5	3.13	1.00
Problem solving	6	1	5	3.72	.99
Directed attention	4	1	5	3.22	1.04
Mental translation	3	1	5	2.85	1.02
Person knowledge	3	1	5	3.03	1.06

Table 3 shows the correlation between learners' listening self-assessment and LCT scores, and the correlation between learners' listening self-assessment and MALQ. The results show that there is a positive strong and significant correlation between them.

Table 3: Correlation between learners' self-assessment in listening and LCT scores and MALQ

	LCT Scores	MALQ
Learners' listening self-assessment	.820**	.727**

**$p < .01$

Finally, Table 4 shows the correlation between learners' LCT scores and MALQ and its strategies. As we can see from Table 4, the results suggest a positive significant and strong correlation between LCT scores and MALQ. Also, there is a positive strong and significant correlation between LCT scores and three strategies: planning and evaluation, problem solving, and directed attention. However, the correlation between LCT scores and mental translation strategy is significant, but moderate to low and negatively correlated. The correlation between LCT scores and person knowledge strategy is insignificant.

Table 4: Correlation between learners' LCT scores and MALQ strategies

	MALQ	Planning and evaluation	Problem solving	Directed attention	Mental translation	Person knowledge
LCT Scores	.867**	.890**	.872**	.789**	-.318**	-0.16

**$p < .01$

3.6. Discussion

The results of the present study show that eighth grade learners possess a moderate level 3.19, (SD = 1.06) of metacognitive awareness in listening. This level can be considered as satisfactory, because according to Oxford (2002), a threshold level of metacognitive awareness is needed for learners to manage a specific learning task and language learning in general.

At the level of subscales, learners' responses reveal that the highest mean result refers to problem solving (3.72, SD = .99). This result shows that learners are aware of not only using what they already know to guess the meaning of the words they do not understand, but also of considering everything that has been heard in order to conclude whether their guess makes sense. Also, they consciously use their previous and general knowledge about the topic, as well as their experience and knowledge to understand. Learners are also able to adjust their interpretation once they realize it has not been correct, and are able to monitor their inferences. The lowest mean response refers to mental translation (2.85, SD = 1.02), the strategy which represents a type of strategy listeners

need to avoid if they want to become skilled listeners. It is not surprising that problem solving strategy receives the highest mean response, as is usually the case with MALQ research studies (e.g. Rahimi and Katal, 2012, Tavakoli et al., 2012, and Al-Alwan et al., 2013). The reason could be the fact that learners simply prioritize the purpose and the objective of the task, and do not recognize the significance of other strategies to the same extent. Also, it is somehow logical that learners focus their attention on the problem solving strategies over the others due to the fact that problem solving strategies deal with different techniques learners use to conclude about the task solution, which is the aspect that is ultimately graded. However, the mean value of the mental translation subscale indicates that learners are aware of the fact that any kind of translation should be avoided at all cost. The reason for this could lie in the correct approach to listening under the guidance of their teachers, and learners' experience in EFL listening, since these learners have been learning English as a foreign language for eight years.

Regarding the correlation between self-assessment in listening and LCT scores, the results showed positive significant and strong (r = .820) correlation, which means that the higher listening self-assessment, the better result on the LCT. Also, the correlation between self-assessment in listening and MALQ also shows a strong positive correlation (r = .727). Again, what this means is the higher self-assessment of the listening skill, the higher metacognitive listening awareness. The reason for such findings could be the fact that these learners are already experienced EFL learners, meaning that it is expected from them to be able to objectively conclude about their level of EFL listening skill. In addition to this, learners were instructed that their results on LCT and MALQ would not affect their final grade in the English language course. Also, learners were informed about confidentiality of the results and data they would provide. These two factors, along with listening experience, presumably contributed to learners' objective estimation of their EFL listening abilities.

Again, a significant strong positive correlation was established between LCT scores and the following three metacognitive listening strategies: planning and evaluation (r = .890), problem solving (r = .872), and directed attention (r = .789). These results show that 8th grade EFL learners who scored better on the LCT also used planning and evaluation strategies more often. Accordingly, this result shows that learners plan on how to listen before listening, they recall the texts which are similar to the text they are going to listen, they think about the way they listen and its possible improvements, and they reflect on their listening. Likewise, learners who scored better on the LCT used more often problem solving strategies, meaning that they use their experience in listening to consider and compare what they already know when faced with something unfamiliar.

It also means that learners are able to adjust their interpretation once they realize it has not been correct, and are able to monitor their inferences. Since problem solving and planning and evaluation contain strategies skilled listeners need to use to a great extent in order to attain a high score on the LCT, we can say that it is not surprising the correlation between those strategies and the LCT is significant strong and positive. Also, if we consider what we have already presumed that listeners tend to prioritize reaching the task objective over factors such as the awareness of the listening difficulty, different challenges listeners face while listening, the awareness of experiencing anxiety while listening etc., we can conclude that the correlation between LCT results and these two strategies is expected. Finally, learners who scored better on the LCT used more often directed attention strategies, meaning that they focus more when they face a problem while listening, they are able to maintain or retrieve concentration, they do not stop listening when faced with problems, and if they do lose focus, they are immediately trying to re-establish concentration. Since directed attention deals with techniques which help listeners to focus on the task, stay focused and overcome distractions, it is logical that successful listeners are aware of the importance of these techniques. It is merely impossible to attain a high score on the LCT without being able to establish focus, maintain the focus, and restore concentration when needed, which is why we can say that this correlation is logical.

However, a significant moderate negative correlation ($r = -.318$) was found between LCT scores and mental translation strategies. This means that learners who scored better on the LCT avoided using these strategies. According to Vandergrift (2003), mental translation is the type of strategies listeners need to avoid if they want to become skilled listeners, and this result shows that learners are moderately aware of this. It is obvious from results that better-skilled, more successful listeners avoid translation while listening. As mentioned in the paragraphs above, the reason for this result (which can and should be improved) could be the eight year of EFL listening experience. It is expected that at some point in their education listeners experienced the negative effects of e.g. word by word translation, hence they are aware it is of great importance not to translate into one's mother tongue while listening in a foreign language. Also, we can assume that their teachers' instruction during eight years of EFL education played a significant role in taking the right approach to listening, meaning that learners were taught to think in a foreign language and to process the information they hear without translating it into Croatian.

The correlation between LCT score and person knowledge strategies was insignificant. The reason for the insignificant correlation between LCT scores and person knowledge strategy could be the individual's perception of the listening difficulty. Flavell (1979) refers to this possibility as the

person knowledge dimension of intraindividual and interindividual differences. Specifically, unlike for other strategies which incorporate techniques dealing with problem solving, planning, evaluating, recovering attention etc., MALQ measures person knowledge awareness through statements about listener's view on the difficulty of the listening skill in comparison to other skills, and the amount of anxiety experienced during listening. Considering this, it is very unlikely to establish a significant correlation between LCT scores and person knowledge strategy, because each listener perceives and experiences listening differently, which is why some learners who scored over 90% on the LCT consider listening to be the most difficult skill of all, while some learners with the same score perceive it differently. On the other hand, if we consider that generally learners are not exposed to listening in English outside of the classroom, there is a fair possibility that there is no difference between less-skilled and better-skilled listeners' perception on the listening difficulty in comparison to other skills, regardless of the LCT performance.

Finally, a significant strong positive correlation was established between MALQ and LCT ($r = .867$). This result answers the final research question, and shows that learners whose level of metacognitive listening strategies awareness is higher perform better on the listening comprehension test. This result is in accordance with Vandergrift's (2003) claim that there is a significant and important difference between learners who are better-skilled and less-skilled in listening, because better-skilled learners use metacognitive strategies more frequently.

4. Conclusion

The findings of this study showed that 8th grade EFL learners possess a moderate level of metacognitive listening awareness. Considering this finding, we can arrive at the conclusion that EFL learners are able to develop metacognitive listening awareness on their own only to a certain extent, but it is fair to presume that EFL learners' level of metacognitive listening awareness would have been higher if learners had received a systematic metacognitive listening instruction.

Also, considering results which indicated that higher metacognitive listening awareness is correlated with EFL listening self-assessment and listening comprehension performance, it is possible to conclude that raising metacognitive listening awareness could enhance EFL listening comprehension. This conclusion supports the suggestion that the future step in teaching and learning EFL listening should contain metacognitive elements that would promote learners' awareness of metacognition and listening strategies. Accordingly, this would require EFL teachers to expand their knowledge and understanding of metacognitive listening strategies in order to provide EFL learners with relevant material, tasks, and activities that would contain metacognitive components.

The suggestion for further research refers to the incorporation of metacognitive instruction into teaching listening through well-designed programs over a specific period of time, and then further investigation of the metacognitive awareness in EFL listening.

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6. Appendix 1

Transcription:

Tamara: Hi, Mario. Do you want to go and watch a film?

Mario: Hi, Tamara. Sure, what's on?

Tamara: Well, there are two action films, Mr and Mrs Jones and War Games, and they're both in 3D.

Mario: I've already seen Mr and Mrs Jones. I haven't seen War Games, but I don't really want to see an action film. What else is on?

Tamara: There's that science fiction film, Robot 2075, but I've already seen it.

Mario: Is it good?

Tamara: Yes, it is, but I don't want to see it again. There's a romantic comedy called Forever.

Mario: Mmm, I'm not sure. Are there any horror films on?

Tamara: Yes, there's Midnight Moon. It's got vampires in it.

Mario: OK, sounds good. Let's go and watch Midnight Moon. What time is it on?

Tamara: It's on at 12 o'clock or at half past two.

Mario: Is it on this evening?

Tamara: Yes, at 7:30.

Mario: Perfect. Let's go at 7:30.

Tamara: OK, shall we meet at the cinema at 7:00?

Mario: Great! See you later.

Tamara: Bye.

1. Check your understanding: multiple choice

Do this exercise while you listen. Circle the correct answers.

a) Which film are Mario and Tamara going to see?

Mr and Mrs Jones	War Games	Robot 2075	King Robert V
	Forever	Midnight Moon	

b) What time does the film they want to see start?

12.00 p.m.	2.30 p.m.	5.20 p.m.	7.00 p.m.
	7.15 p.m.	7.30 p.m	

c) What time are Mario and Tamara going to meet?

12.00 p.m.	2.30 p.m.	5.20 p.m.	7.00 p.m.
	7.15 p.m.	7.30 p.m	

2. Check your understanding: gap fill

Do this exercise while you listen. Complete the gaps with the correct word.

1.) **Tamara**: Hi, Mario. Do you want to go and watch a _____ ?
Mario: Hi, Tamara. Sure, what's _____ ?

2.) **Tamara**: Well, there are two action films, *Mr and Mrs Jones* and *War Games*, and they are both in _____ .

3.) **Mario**: I've already seen *Mr and Mrs Jones*. I haven't seen *War* _____ but I don't really want to see an _____ film. What else is _____ ?

4.) **Tamara**: There's that science fiction film, *Robot 2075*, but I've already _____ it.
Mario: Is it _____ ?

5.) **Tamara**: Yes, it is, but I don't want to see it _____ . There's a _____ comedy called *Forever*.

6.) **Mario**: Mmm, I'm not sure. Are there any _____ films on?
Tamara: Yes, there's *Midnight Moon*. It's got _____ in it.

7.) **Mario**: OK, sounds good. Let's go and watch *Midnight Moon*. What _____ is it on?
Tamara: It's on at 12 o'clock or at half past _____ .
Mario: Is it on this _____ ?
Yes, at 7.30.
Mario: Perfect. Let _____ at 7:30.

8.) **Tamara**: Shall we _____ at the cinema at 7.00?
Mario: Great! See you _____ .
Tamara: Bye.

3. Listen to the text and circle *true* or *false* for these sentences.

Do this exercise while you listen. Circle the correct answers.

1 *Mr and Mrs Jones* and *War Games are both in 3D.*

- true
- false

2 Mario has already seen *Mr and Mrs Jones* and *War Games*.

- true
- false

3 Mario wants to see an action film.

- true
- false

4 Tamara thinks *Robot 2075* is a good film.

- true
- false

5 Mario and Tamara are going to watch a horror film.

- true
- false

6 There are vampires in *Robot 2075* film.

- true
- false

7 Mario and Tamara are going to watch *Midnight Moon* this evening.

- true
- false

8 Mario and Tamara will meet at the coffee shop.

- true
- false

7. Appendix 2

UPITNIK O METAKOGNITIVNOJ OSVIJEŠTENOSTI U SLUŠANJU NA ENGLESKOM JEZIKU (MALQ)

* **Upitnik je u potpunosti anoniman**.

Dob: **_____**

Spol: **M / Ž**

Od kojeg razreda učiš engleski jezik? **_____**

U sljedećem pitanju odredit ćeš vlastito poznavanje vještina engleskog jezika na sljedeći način:

1 – loše

2 – dovoljno

3 – dobro

4 – vrlo dobro

5 - izvrsno

Čitanje na engleskom jeziku.	1	2	3	4	5
Govorenje na engleskom jeziku.	1	2	3	4	5
Pisanje na engleskom jeziku.	1	2	3	4	5
Slušanje na engleskom jeziku.	1	2	3	4	5

Izjave koje slijede opisuju neke strategije i postupke prilikom slušanja s razumijevanjem na nastavi engleskog jezika. Slažeš li se s njima? Ovo nije test, nema "točnih" ili "netočnih" odgovora. Molim te da označiš svoje mišljenje nakon svake izjave. Zaokruži broj koji najbolje opisuje tvoju razinu slaganja s tom izjavom.

1 – Uopće se ne slažem

2 – Ne slažem se

3 – Djelomično se slažem

4 – Slažem se

5 – U potpunosti se slažem

Naprimjer:

Volim učiti engleski jezik. **1** **2** **3** **4** **5**

1. Prije slušanja imam plan u glavi kako ću slušati.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Kada imam problema s razumijevanjem teksta, još se više usredotočim na tekst.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Smatram da je slušanje teže nego čitanje, govorenje ili pisanje na engleskom jeziku.	1	2	3	4	5
4. U glavi si prevodim tekst dok slušam.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Koristim se riječima koje razumijem kako bih pogodio/la značenje riječi koje ne razumijem.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Kada odlutam u mislima dok slušam tekst, odmah uspijem vratiti koncentraciju.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Dok slušam, uspoređujem ono što razumijem s onime što znam o temi koju slušam.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Smatram da je slušanje s razumijevanjem na engleskom jeziku za mene izazov.	1	2	3	4	5

9. Koristim se iskustvom i znanjem kako bih razumio/la tekst koji slušam.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Prije slušanja promislim o sličnim tekstovima koje sam možda već slušao/la.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Prevodim ključne riječi dok slušam.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Kada izgubim koncentraciju, pokušavam se vratiti slušanju.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Dok slušam, brzo prilagodim svoje tumačenje teksta ukoliko shvatim da je bilo netočno.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Nakon slušanja, razmislim o tome kako sam slušao/la i što bih mogao/la učiniti drugačije sljedeći put.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Ne osjećam se uznemireno kada slušam na engleskom jeziku.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Kada imam poteškoća s razumijevanjem onoga što slušam, odustanem i prestanem slušati.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Koristim se općenitom temom teksta kako bih saznao/la značenje riječi koje ne razumijem.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Dok slušam prevodim si riječ po riječ.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Kada pogađam značenje riječi, razmislim o svemu što sam slušao/la kako bih zaključio/la ima li moje nagađanje smisla.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Dok slušam, povremeno se upitam jesam li zadovoljan/na svojom razinom razumijevanja.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Dok slušam imam na umu cilj slušanja.	1	2	3	4	5

Zahvaljujem na suradnji!