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The Relationship Between Metacognitive Awareness and Listening Comprehension Difficulties Among EFL Learners in Libyan Universities: A Case Study at Omar Al-Mukhtar University

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العلاقة بين الوعي ما وراء المعرفي وصعوبات فهم الاستماع لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في الجامعات الليبية: دراسة حالة بجامعة عمر المختار

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Abstract:
This study investigates the relationship between metacognitive awareness levels and listening difficulties among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners at Omar Al-Mukhtar University in Al-Bayda, Libya. The significance of this research stems from the scarcity of empirical studies in the Libyan context regarding the cognitive processes affecting students' listening performance. The study employed a descriptive correlational approach, utilizing a purposive sample of 48 third- and fourth-year students from the English Department at the Faculty of Arts. To collect data, the researchers utilized the Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ), which consists of 21 items across five main dimensions: Planning-Evaluation, Problem-Solving, Directed Attention, Mental Translation, and Person Knowledge. Descriptive statistical analysis revealed that the "Problem-Solving" dimension achieved the highest mean score (5.11 out of 6), indicating that students frequently attempt to compensate for comprehension gaps through contextual inference and the application of prior knowledge. Conversely, the "Directed Attention" dimension recorded the lowest mean (4.45), reflecting a significant challenge in maintaining sustained focus and recovering from distractions during listening tasks. Results also uncovered a concerning reliance on "Mental Translation" with a mean of 5.06, which is viewed as a surface-level processing strategy that hinders direct comprehension and slows down real-time linguistic processing. Furthermore, the "Planning-Evaluation" dimension showed a relatively low mean of 4.46, suggesting that students often fail to engage in strategic planning or regular performance evaluation. The study recommends integrating explicit and systematic training in metacognitive strategies within listening curricula to reduce reliance on literal translation. It also suggests developing specialized programs to enhance directed attention and strategic planning while encouraging further experimental research to measure instructional impact.

Keywords: Metacognitive Awareness, Listening Skills, Listening Difficulties, Learning Strategies, University Students, English as a Foreign Language, MALQ, Strategic Planning.

الملخص

تبحث هذه الدراسة في العلاقة بين مستويات الوعي ما وراء المعرفي وصعوبات الاستماع لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في جامعة عمر المختار بمدينة البيضاء، ليبيا. وتستمد هذه الدراسة أهميتها من ندرة البحوث التجريبية في السياق الليبي المتعلقة بالعمليات المعرفية التي تؤثر على أداء الطلاب في مهارات الاستماع. اعتمدت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي الارتباطي، حيث شملت عينة قصدية مكونة من 48 طالباً وطالبة من طلاب السنتين الثالثة والرابعة بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية الآداب. ولجمع البيانات، استخدم الباحثون مقياس الوعي ما وراء المعرفي للاستماع (*MALQ*)، المكون من 21 فقرة موزعة على خمسة أبعاد رئيسية هي: التخطيط والتقييم، وحل المشكلات، والانتباه الموجه، والترجمة الذهنية، والمعرفة الذاتية. وأظهرت نتائج التحليل الإحصائي الوصفي أن بُعد "حل المشكلات" حقق أعلى متوسط حسابي (5.11 من 6)، مما يشير إلى محاولات الطلاب المتكررة للتعويض عن نقص الفهم من خلال الاستدلال السياقي وتوظيف المعرفة السابقة. وفي المقابل، سجل بُعد "الانتباه الموجه" أدنى متوسط (4.45)، مما يعكس تحدياً كبيراً يواجهه الطلاب في الحفاظ على التركيز المستمر والاستعادة من التشتت أثناء مهام الاستماع. كما كشفت النتائج عن اعتماد مقلق على "الترجمة الذهنية" بمتوسط قدره 5.06، وهي استراتيجية معالجة سطحية تعيق الفهم المباشر وتبطئ المعالجة اللغوية الآنية. علاوة على ذلك، سجل بُعد "التخطيط والتقييم" متوسطاً منخفضاً نسبياً (4.46)، مما يشير إلى أن الطلاب غالباً ما يفشلون في الانخراط في التخطيط الاستراتيجي أو التقييم المنتظم لأدائهم. توصي الدراسة بضرورة دمج التدريب الصريح والمنهجي على استراتيجيات ما وراء المعرفة ضمن مناهج الاستماع لتقليل الاعتماد على الترجمة الحرفية. كما تقترح تطوير برامج متخصصة لتعزيز الانتباه الموجه والتخطيط الاستراتيجي، مع تشجيع المزيد من الأبحاث التجريبية لقياس أثر التدخلات التعليمية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الوعي ما وراء المعرفي، مهارات الاستماع، صعوبات الاستماع، استراتيجيات التعلم، طلاب الجامعة، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، مقياس *MALQ*، التخطيط الاستراتيجي.

1. Introduction

Listening is widely recognized as the cornerstone of second language (L2) acquisition; it is the primary and most natural channel through which learners receive the linguistic input necessary to build overall proficiency (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). Far from being a passive or mechanical reception of sounds, listening is a complex, multi-layered cognitive activity that demands conscious attention, active mental processing, and the ability to construct meaning in real-time without the luxury of pausing or rewinding. Vandergrift and Goh (2012), in their seminal work on L2 listening pedagogy, characterize listening as a dynamic, interactive process requiring the learner to continually reconstruct meaning, link incoming information with prior knowledge stored in long-term memory, and utilize both linguistic knowledge (such as grammar and vocabulary) and non-linguistic knowledge (such as context and culture) to fully comprehend the spoken message.

In the context of foreign language learning, listening presents a unique challenge because it occurs in real-time at a speed controlled by the speaker, unlike reading where the learner can control the pace (Vandergrift, 2003). This ephemeral nature of the listening process places a significant cognitive load on the learner's working memory, necessitating rapid and efficient information processing capabilities. Despite the consensus among educators and researchers regarding the critical importance of listening, many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners—particularly in Arab contexts—continue to face substantial difficulties in this vital skill. In a pioneering study on Chinese learners, Goh (2000) identified several specific cognitive problems frequently encountered by learners, including the inability to distinguish similar sounds, failure to recognize familiar words when spoken at natural speed, loss of concentration during long texts, and an inability to keep pace with native speakers.

These difficulties stem not only from a lack of linguistic knowledge but largely from the absence of effective, conscious strategies for processing auditory input. Hamouda (2013), in a comprehensive investigation of Saudi university students, emphasized that these challenges extend beyond linguistic factors to include psychological and affective dimensions, such as anxiety over incomplete comprehension, a strong tendency to translate word-for-word into the mother tongue, and frustration

when encountering complex structures. These factors create a negative cycle of avoidance and loss of confidence, hindering overall linguistic development (Hamouda, 2013).

1.1. The Concept of Metacognitive Awareness: Definition and Dimensions

Before exploring the relationship between metacognitive awareness and listening, it is essential to precisely define this pivotal concept. Metacognition is a foundational concept in cognitive psychology, first introduced by developmental psychologist John Flavell in the 1970s. Flavell (1979) defined metacognition as "knowledge and cognition about cognitive phenomena" (p. 906). Metacognitive awareness, more specifically, is defined as an individual's awareness of their own cognitive processes and their ability to control and regulate them consciously and intentionally (Schraw & Moshman, 1995).

The term is a compound of "Meta-" (meaning beyond or above) and "Cognition" (referring to mental processes like thinking and understanding). Thus, metacognitive awareness is simply "thinking about thinking." It involves the learner's ability to answer questions such as: How do I learn? Which strategies work for me and why? When should I change my approach? How do I know if I have understood? In the context of language learning, this awareness includes knowing one's linguistic strengths and weaknesses, understanding available strategies, applying the right strategy at the right time, monitoring its effectiveness, and adjusting as needed (Vandergrift et al., 2006).

Metacognitive awareness consists of two complementary components as identified by Schraw and Dennison (1994): first, Metacognitive Knowledge, which is theoretical knowledge about learning strategies and how memory works; and second, Metacognitive Regulation, which is the practical application of this knowledge through planning, monitoring, and self-evaluation. This distinction between "knowledge" and "regulation" is crucial for understanding how to develop metacognitive awareness in learners (Schraw & Dennison, 1994).

1.2 Metacognitive Awareness in L2 Listening Contexts

In recent decades, metacognitive awareness has emerged as a decisive factor in explaining the significant individual differences between successful, skilled listeners and less successful ones, even when linguistic proficiency levels are comparable. Vandergrift (2003) applied this concept specifically to listening in his theoretical model, defining it as the learner's conscious ability to manage and monitor their listening processes. This awareness encompasses three key strategic elements: Planning (setting clear goals, activating prior knowledge, and predicting content); Monitoring (checking comprehension during the task and identifying failures); and Evaluation (reflecting on performance and strategy effectiveness after the task).

Numerous empirical studies, such as those by Al-Alwan et al. (2013) in Jordan and Wallace (2022) internationally, have demonstrated a strong, statistically significant positive correlation between metacognitive awareness and listening comprehension performance. Indeed, some research suggests that metacognitive awareness may be a stronger predictor of listening success than linguistic proficiency itself (Wallace, 2022). Regionally, students at Libyan universities, specifically at Omar Al-Mukhtar University in Al-Bayda, face similar challenges due to contextual factors. Field observations indicate that many students lack a systematic awareness of how to handle listening texts effectively, relying instead on inefficient strategies such as simultaneous mental translation or passive resignation. Traditional teaching methods often prioritize theoretical aspects of language (grammar and vocabulary) over active listening skills. This situation urgently calls for empirical research to understand the nature of metacognitive awareness among these students and its relationship to their listening difficulties. This study aims to fill a clear research gap in the Libyan context, offering data-driven recommendations to improve listening instruction and foster learner autonomy.

2. Problem Statement

The problem addressed by this study lies in the evident gap between the critical importance of listening skills and the actual performance level of English language students at Omar Al-Mukhtar University. Through teaching experience and direct observation, it has been noted that most students suffer from

recurrent difficulties in comprehending spoken texts, even when the material is appropriate for their proficiency level. The core issue is not merely a deficit in linguistic skills, but a lack of strategic awareness regarding the listening process itself.

Vandergrift (2003) notes that unskilled listeners follow a haphazard approach lacking mental organization; they do not set clear goals, do not monitor their understanding, and do not evaluate their performance. Instead, they rely on unproductive strategies such as attempting to decode every word, constant literal translation, or giving up at the first sign of difficulty. This behavioral pattern leads to attentional fragmentation and a loss of the text's coherent thread, exacerbating frustration and anxiety.

In the Libyan context, preliminary evidence suggests that students face additional challenges stemming from traditional instructional methods that neglect active listening training. Furthermore, most students have never received explicit instruction in metacognitive strategies. Wallace (2022) confirmed that metacognitive awareness plays a pivotal role in explaining individual differences in listening, even among learners with similar linguistic backgrounds. Consequently, this study seeks to explore the relationship between metacognitive awareness and listening difficulties among a sample of 48 students, specifically answering questions regarding their level of awareness and the nature of their difficulties.

3. Objectives and Research Questions

Objectives: The study aims to determine the level of metacognitive awareness (using the MALQ), investigate common listening difficulties (based on Hamouda's 2013 classification), and reveal the correlational relationship between awareness and difficulties.

Research Questions:

1. What is the level of metacognitive awareness among English language students at Omar Al-Mukhtar University?
2. What are the most common listening difficulties facing the sample?
3. Is there a statistically significant correlation (at $\alpha \leq 0.05$) between metacognitive awareness and listening difficulties?

3.5 Literature Review

3.5.1 Studies on Metacognitive Awareness and Listening

Vandergrift et al. (2006) conducted a landmark study to develop and validate the Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ). Involving a large sample of French L2 learners in Canada, the study concluded that the instrument possesses excellent psychometric properties and measures five distinct dimensions: Planning-Evaluation, Problem-Solving, Directed Attention, Mental Translation, and Person Knowledge. This scale has become the standard instrument in international research and is the tool adopted in the current study (Vandergrift et al., 2006).

Earlier, Vandergrift (2003) proposed a comprehensive theoretical model of the skilled L2 listener, asserting that successful listeners systematically employ metacognitive strategies. They plan by activating prior knowledge, monitor by questioning their understanding, and evaluate performance to learn from errors. Al-Alwan et al. (2013) examined the relationship between metacognitive awareness and listening comprehension among 100 Jordanian EFL students. Results showed a strong positive correlation; students with higher awareness achieved significantly better scores. The study recommended integrating metacognitive strategy training into Arab EFL curricula. More recently, Wallace (2022) investigated individual differences in L2 listening across 250 diverse learners. The findings highlighted that metacognitive awareness was one of the strongest predictors of listening performance, even after controlling for variables like linguistic proficiency (Wallace, 2022).

3.5.2 Studies on Listening Difficulties

Goh (2000) provided a pioneering cognitive perspective on listening problems through interviews with 40 Chinese learners. She identified ten key cognitive problems, including failing to recognize known words due to pronunciation and rapid memory decay. This taxonomy remains a fundamental

reference. Hamouda (2013) conducted a comprehensive survey of listening problems among 60 Saudi university students. Difficulties were categorized into four groups: message-related, speaker-related, listener-related, and process-related. Results indicated that "speech rate," "unfamiliar vocabulary," and "lack of concentration" were the most frequent barriers (Hamouda, 2013).

In the Jordanian context, Malkawi (2010) found that students struggled with distinguishing similar sounds and understanding rapid connected speech. Similarly, Ghoneim (2013) found that Egyptian college students relied mostly on reactive strategies rather than proactive ones, underscoring the need for explicit strategy instruction.

3.5.3 Intervention Studies

Maftoon and Alamdari (2016) explored the effect of metacognitive strategy instruction on 60 Iranian learners. The experimental group showed statistically significant improvements in both metacognitive awareness and listening performance compared to the control group. Furthermore, Prasongngern and Soontornwipast (2023) found similar positive effects among 80 Thai students after a 12-week intervention, noting increased learner autonomy. These studies collectively provide a strong empirical basis for the current research.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

This study adopted a Descriptive Correlational Approach, which is most suitable for describing the current status of students' metacognitive awareness and exploring its relationship with listening difficulties without manipulating variables (Vandergrift et al., 2006).

4.2 Population and Sample

The population consisted of all English Department students at the Faculty of Arts, Omar Al-Mukhtar University, for the academic year 2024-2025. A purposive sample of 48 students was selected from advanced levels (third and fourth years), as they are expected to have had sufficient exposure to listening instruction.

4.3 Instrument

Data was collected using the Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) developed by Vandergrift et al. (2006). It consists of 21 items distributed across five dimensions:

- **Planning-Evaluation:** Setting goals and evaluating success.
- **Problem-Solving:** Using inference and compensation strategies.
- **Directed Attention:** Maintaining concentration and refocusing.
- **Mental Translation:** Relying on mother tongue translation.
- **Person Knowledge:** Self-perception of difficulty and anxiety.

A 6-point Likert scale was used. High scores in the first three and fifth dimensions indicate higher awareness, while a high score in "Mental Translation" indicates an ineffective strategy (Vandergrift et al., 2006).

4.4 Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered during regular lectures after obtaining administrative approval. Participants were assured of confidentiality. Data was analyzed to calculate means and standard deviations.

5. Raw Data Matrix (N=48)

The following table details the mean scores for each student across the five MALQ dimensions.

Student No.	Planning & Evaluation	Problem Solving	Directed Attention	Mental Translation*	Person Knowledge
1	4.4	5.0	3.8	5.0	2.3
2	4.4	4.7	4.0	3.3	4.3
3	2.8	4.0	3.3	2.7	3.3
4	5.0	5.7	4.3	4.7	4.7
5	4.0	6.0	4.8	5.7	4.7

6	4.0	4.7	4.3	5.0	5.0
7	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.7	4.0
8	5.4	5.5	4.8	5.3	5.3
9	4.6	4.8	4.8	5.0	5.0
10	6.0	6.0	5.8	5.7	6.0
11	2.0	5.5	4.3	6.0	4.7
12	3.8	4.5	5.0	5.0	4.0
13	4.6	4.3	4.3	5.7	5.0
14	5.4	5.5	4.5	6.0	5.3
15	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.7	5.7
16	6.0	5.5	5.3	5.7	6.0
17	5.2	5.2	4.0	5.7	3.3
18	4.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.0
19	4.8	5.5	5.3	4.7	5.0
20	3.6	4.2	3.8	4.3	3.7
21	5.2	5.8	4.5	5.0	5.3
22	4.4	4.8	4.3	5.3	4.7
23	5.0	5.3	4.8	5.7	5.0
24	3.2	4.0	3.5	3.7	3.0
25	4.6	5.0	4.3	5.3	5.0
26	5.6	5.8	5.0	5.7	5.7
27	4.2	5.5	4.5	6.0	4.3
28	4.8	5.2	4.8	5.0	5.0
29	3.8	4.7	4.0	4.7	4.3
30	5.0	5.5	5.0	5.3	5.3
31	4.0	4.8	4.3	5.0	4.7
32	4.6	5.0	4.8	5.7	5.0
33	4.2	4.5	4.0	5.0	4.3
34	5.4	5.7	5.3	5.3	5.7
35	3.0	4.2	3.5	3.0	3.3
36	4.8	5.2	4.8	5.3	5.0
37	5.2	5.5	5.0	5.7	5.3
38	4.4	4.8	4.3	5.0	4.7
39	4.6	5.3	4.8	5.3	5.0
40	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.7	6.0
41	3.4	4.5	3.8	4.0	3.7
42	4.6	5.2	4.5	5.3	5.0
43	5.0	5.5	5.0	5.7	5.3
44	4.2	4.7	4.0	4.7	4.3
45	4.8	5.0	4.8	5.3	5.0
46	5.2	5.8	5.0	5.7	5.7
47	4.0	4.8	4.3	5.0	4.7
48	4.4	5.2	4.5	5.3	5.0
Mean Average	**4.46**	**5.11**	**4.45**	**5.06**	**4.69**

Note: As per the scoring criteria of Vandergrift et al. (2006), a high score in "Mental Translation" indicates an ineffective strategy that hinders direct comprehension, as it reflects a lack of automated processing in the target language.

6. Results Analysis and Discussion

6.1 Descriptive Statistics

The analysis of the mean scores for the five dimensions of the Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) reveals several compelling findings. First, the "Problem-Solving" dimension achieved the highest overall mean (5.11 out of 6). This clearly indicates that students in the sample actively attempt to use contextual inference and compensation strategies when facing comprehension difficulties. They strive to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words through context and link auditory information to their prior knowledge. This is an inherently positive trend and aligns with Prasongngern and Soontornwipast's (2023) assertions regarding the value of problem-solving strategies in enhancing listening comprehension.

Second, the "Mental Translation" dimension ranked second with a mean of 5.06. This result is concerning and warrants careful interpretation. Heavy reliance on mental translation suggests that most students are still processing English through the filter of Arabic; they translate words and sentences into their native language before grasping the meaning. While this strategy may feel natural to beginners, it significantly slows down linguistic processing and impedes the development of direct comprehension. Goh (2000) confirmed that excessive reliance on translation is a major barrier to listening proficiency as it consumes limited working memory resources, leading to loss of focus and missed information.

Third, the "Person Knowledge" dimension showed a mean of 4.69. This reflects a moderate level of awareness among students regarding their personal difficulties and listening anxiety. While some students recognize that they struggle with rapid speech or specific sounds, this recognition does not always translate into strategic action to overcome these challenges, a finding consistent with Malkawi (2010).

Fourth, "Planning and Evaluation" recorded a relatively low mean of 4.46. This suggests that most students do not engage in pre-listening preparation; they rarely consider the topic beforehand or predict content. Furthermore, they seldom evaluate their performance after the task to reflect on successful strategies or recurring errors. Vandergrift (2003) emphasizes that planning and evaluation are crucial components of metacognition, transforming listening from a passive activity into a goal-directed process.

Finally, "Directed Attention" scored the lowest mean among all dimensions (4.45). This represents the most significant challenge facing the students. They struggle considerably to maintain focus throughout the listening task, especially with long or complex texts. When attention drifts or an unfamiliar word is encountered, they often give up or feel overwhelmed, unable to regain the thread of comprehension. This aligns with Ghoneim (2013), who identified attentional distraction as one of the most common problems among EFL learners in Arab contexts.

6.1.1 Graphical Representation: Distribution of Metacognitive Awareness Dimensions

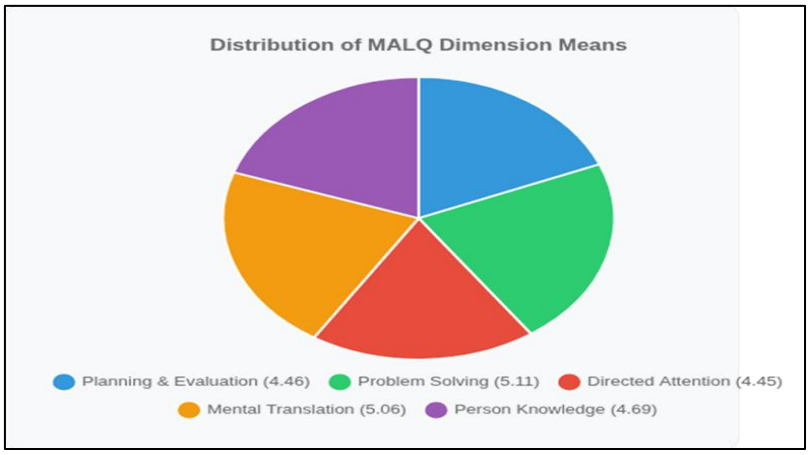

Figure (1): Relative Distribution of Metacognitive Awareness Dimensions Means (N=48).

As illustrated, "Problem-Solving" occupies the largest share, while "Directed Attention" represents the smallest, visually underscoring the disparity in metacognitive proficiency across dimensions.

6.2 Discussion in Light of Previous Studies

Comparing these results with prior literature reveals both consistency and divergence. Our findings align closely with Al-Alwan et al. (2013) regarding Jordanian students, who also relied heavily on problem-solving but lacked planning and directed attention skills. Similarly, the high reliance on mental translation echoes Hamouda (2013), who identified this as a primary barrier for Saudi students. However, contrasting evidence from Maftoon and Alamdari (2016) suggests that the low scores in planning and attention are not immutable traits but can be significantly improved through explicit instruction, supporting the view that metacognition is a teachable skill (Wallace, 2022).

6.3 Theoretical Interpretation

These results can be interpreted through Information Processing Theory and Vandergrift's (2003) model of the skilled listener. Skilled listeners process information using deep, regulatory strategies (Planning, Monitoring). In contrast, the current sample appears to operate primarily at a "surface processing" level, relying on compensatory strategies (Problem-Solving) and inefficient habits (Translation) without the overarching executive control provided by effective planning and attention management. This explains the persistence of listening difficulties despite years of study.

7. Recommendations

First: Recommendations for Teachers

- **Explicit Strategy Instruction:** Teach metacognitive strategies explicitly. Use "Think-Aloud" protocols to model how to plan before listening, monitor comprehension during the task, and evaluate performance afterward (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).
- **Reduce Reliance on Translation:** Design activities that encourage understanding the "gist" without translating every word. Use "Listening for Gist" tasks before detailed listening to encourage students to tolerate ambiguity.
- **Pre-Listening Tasks:** Dedicate sufficient time to pre-listening phases to activate prior knowledge. Use images, titles, and guiding questions to prime students mentally, facilitating prediction (Hamouda, 2013).
- **Diversify Audio Sources:** Expose students to varied sources: different accents, speeds, and topics. This enhances adaptability and Directed Attention.
- **Reflective Sessions:** Dedicate part of each class to discussing difficulties and strategies ("What worked? What didn't?"). This promotes self-awareness.

Second: Recommendations for Learners

- **Before Listening - Plan:** Ask yourself: "What is the topic? What do I already know?" This primes your brain for incoming input.
- **During Listening - Focus on Meaning:** Avoid translation. Focus on keywords and the overall message. If you miss a word, guess from context and keep going (Goh, 2000).
- **If You Lose Focus - Don't Give Up:** Distraction happens. Try to catch the thread again via keywords. Practice refocusing quickly.
- **After Listening - Evaluate:** Reflect on what was easy or hard and why. Self-evaluation is key to continuous improvement (Vandergrift, 2003).
- **Regular Practice:** Listen to English daily, even for 15 minutes, to improve attention and processing speed.

Third: Recommendations for Administration

- Develop specialized training programs for faculty on teaching listening and metacognition.
- Provide a language lab equipped with modern technology for individual listening practice.
- Integrate specific modules on metacognitive development into the listening curriculum across all levels.

8. Conclusion and Case Study

8.1 Summary of Key Findings

This empirical field study has illuminated the complex relationship between metacognitive awareness and listening difficulties among English students at Omar Al-Mukhtar University. Quantitative data from 48 students revealed a distinct imbalance in metacognitive skills. While students showed positive engagement in "Problem-Solving" (5.11), they demonstrated significant weaknesses in "Directed Attention" (4.45) and "Planning-Evaluation" (4.46). Furthermore, the alarmingly high reliance on "Mental Translation" (5.06) points to a deep-seated inefficiency in processing that hinders real-time comprehension (Vandergrift et al., 2006).

8.2 Theoretical Contribution and Alignment

These findings strongly corroborate international literature (Goh, 2000; Hamouda, 2013; Wallace, 2022), confirming that the challenges faced by Libyan students are part of a broader global pattern. The study's primary theoretical contribution lies in documenting this phenomenon within the under-researched Libyan context, providing empirical evidence that listening proficiency requires strategic, metacognitive regulation.

8.3 Practical Implications

Practically, the results call for a paradigm shift in instruction: moving from "testing" listening to "teaching" how to listen. Students must learn not just what to hear, but how to manage the listening process through explicit training in planning, monitoring, and evaluation (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).

8.4 Applied Case Study: A Field Illustration

To illustrate the gap, consider two students from the sample. Student 24 (Planning: 3.2, Attention: 3.5) remarked: "I don't know how to improve. I just guess, and when I'm wrong, I don't know why." This reflects a lack of metacognitive tools. In contrast, Student 10 (Planning: 6.0, Problem-Solving: 6.0) stated: "Before listening, I think about the topic... Afterward, I ask myself what I missed and why." This stark difference underscores that metacognitive awareness is the defining factor in listening success.

8.5 Future Research

Future research should consider experimental designs to test the efficacy of strategy training interventions in Libyan universities, expand to larger samples across different cities, and conduct longitudinal studies to track development over time.

8.6 To sum up

In conclusion, this study is a modest but essential step toward improving listening pedagogy in Libya. Investing in metacognitive development is an investment in creating autonomous, lifelong learners capable of navigating the demands of global communication.

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