

## **Schematic Approach in Listening Comprehension**

**Dr. K. Ravindran, M.A., M. Phil., Ph.D.**  
**R. Jayanthi, M.A., M.Phil., Ph. D. Research Scholar**

### **Abstract**

This article refines the main aspects of enhancing the listening skills through the strategies employed based on the scientific theory – Schema theory. This paper is also depicts the essence of the listening skills and how the listener can be improved through the stages. Schema theory gains its ground in the language processing process and leverage the long way of competence in short. The Theoretical overview and the ideas to overcome the hindrance in the listening is described in nutshell.

**Keywords:** Listening Comprehension, Schema Theory, Metacognitive theory Cognitive theory and Language learning.

The main focus of language learning has been shifted to the Listening Skill in the recent past. Since Listening Comprehension becomes main element of teaching language. Its been the long way for the learners to realize that short cuts of Language proficiency have been hidden in the Listening Comprehension and honing the listening skill. Dunkel (1986) emphasizes that simple shortcut to the language proficiency is enhancing the listening skills. Also, Zhang (2009) in his study found that listening and speaking skills are interconnected with the efficient language skill of an individual.

David Nunan (1997) referred to listening as the ‘Cinderella’ skill. But the listening has diverse role in today scenario. The stages of the language learning differ with the intellectual approach of a person and the process depends on the capability of the learner and the teacher, sometimes it will reverse. The stages of the language learning differ it process depends on the capability of the learner and the teacher, sometimes it will reverse. The time and again it is being told that the four key skills in the language submerged behind the proficiency. So the learners are given task about the listening capability in all level Language Certification courses viz, TOEFL, TESOL, IELTS.

Listening skill occupies the predominant position learning language and acquiring proficiency and it is being practised as the skill to be mastered in all level of trainings range from

Business to Psychological Training. The training is given in various placement training for the students, to realize the importance of the listening skills. In these training the students are given drills and exercise with multiple choice question.

The role of the background knowledge plays in comprehension has been formalized as ‘schema theory’ (Rumelhart, 1980). Schema theory has the notion that schemata triggers when the learners’ background knowledge to seek the relevance in the new information.

Recent studies are encouraging various theories to develop the language skills, one such theory is schema theory. It is clear in the literature that a British psychologist, Frederic Barlett coined the term ‘schema’ to refer compilation of past experiences in his well-known book, Remembering. In 1932 schema theory was introduced by Frederic Bartlett during his works on constructive memory. Three types of schema involves in the process of understanding, which are linguistic schema, formal schema, and cultural schema (Yang, 2010).

Intelligibility and linguistic inference go hand in hand, since it is said the Linguistic schema is the linguistic knowledge of the learner. All structure of the sentence, lexemes and classification of grammar are all the base of the linguistic schema. Lack of linguistic schema will have an impact in decoding and understanding a text, written or spoken. Linguistic schema is activated by the syntax, pattern of sentence, phrases, vocabulary and more.

The meaning of the sentence and its symbols are depicted in the formal schema. This unveils the knowledge about the information, difference and variety of the genre etc. The clue of about the information received may leverage the process of understanding.

The third type of schema is cultural schema. It is also called abstract schema or story schema. It is defined as the pre-existing knowledge about cultural elements of the language being acquired. Then the basic image or representation and cognitive representation of the situation are stored in the Long Term Memory (LTM) in the form of schemata or scripts for future use.

O’Malley and Charnot (1985) categorized listening strategy into three classifications as shown in Figure Metacognitive strategy, Cognitive strategy and Social strategy. It is said that the student uses cognitive strategy to learn and interpret through listening and the intelligibility level proportionate with the level of intention to understand the given task. As this is well known strategy which is flourishing in current trends to teach how to learn, gauge the learning and development through the analysis done after learning. Social strategy is just wish to equate the learning with advices of the experts and others.

The students are given right guidance to develop this skills and no practice given in the classroom environment to make aware of it and knowing the importance of their Listening. This paper has provided the easy techniques to be employed in excelling this skill. The strategic planning in each frame of listening will enable the student to learn the skills in shortest span, hence those strategies are explored and directions to use the strategies are compiled in the form an article.

Schematic Approach has the implied concepts and the strategies those are strong in applying this theory for enhancing the Listening Comprehension. The students' memory has different level of set up and organized in the way to render the details needed through Long term memory and short memory. Long term memory is activated through the concepts and content. Short term memory is with the words and linguistic inferences.

Listening strategies can be classified, based on how the listener processes the input, into two: top-down and bottom-up strategies. Top-down strategy refers to utilizing schemata (background knowledge and understanding to the world) to derive meaning from and interpret the message. This is a listener-based strategy in which the listener taps into background knowledge of the topic, the situation or context, the type of input, and the language.

Bottom-up strategy refers to deriving the meaning of the message based on the incoming language data, from sounds to words, to grammatical relationships, to meaningful units. To do this the learners need to know the code, how the sounds work, how the codes change in different ways when they are twined together. In bottom-up strategy, the learners rely on their linguistic knowledge to recognise linguistic elements.

During interaction the listener uses linguistic and nonlinguistic knowledge to construct meaning. In these processes, the oral text, in the form of stimuli, activates the schemata of the listener (Brindley & Nunan, 1992). Many researchers (Chiang and Dunkel, 1992; Jensen and Hansen 1995) confirm the effective role of schema in the LC processes. During LC processes, productive inferences are based on shared background knowledge.

Gestalt psychologists said that configuration of the mind for the given task is called schema. He has carried out series of experiment in 1954 and insisted that the pre existing knowledge has the effect on interpreting the comprehension spoken or written.

Zhu's (1997) simple definition suggests that schema is background knowledge and background information. Juan and Flor (2006: 93) point out that 'schemata, the relevant packages of prior knowledge and experience that we have in memory, can call on in the process of comprehension.' Yekovich and Walker (1988) call it as scripted knowledge. Pichard (1990)

defines schemata as our theories of the way things are, or as representations of one's background experiences and it is clear that the culture one lives in impacts schemata.

The Defense Language Institute, Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC), located in Monterey, California, is the largest school of foreign languages: thousands of military linguists enrolled in over thirty languages graduate from it every year. This institute claims the new strategy to be employed as remedial assignment for the learners who are in need to equip more skills. Modern Tools for Listening Comprehension are used in almost all the language institutions to strengthen the skills using the Youtube videos, Podcast and Mobile Apps. Now a days mobile app are more handy and the assignment are given and the monitoring and assessment is done in a better a way.

The young generation and the learning process is always redefined by the progression in scientific inventions viz, Google Classroom, blogging and Websites. The digital revolution has trodden its strong foot in the field of Education and the teaching learning is simplified. The teaching with the innovative tools fascinated the learning at one hand and complicated the self learning by browsing complex ideas.

Nugent (1982), Pezdek and Hartman (1983), and Pezdek and Stevens (1984 cited in Zarei & Gilanian, 2013). conducted studies to examine a video program with its audio and visual presentations decomposed by comparing the role of these two sources of information, individually and together. In most of the research, the integration of visual and auditory input has led to more recall than visual-only or audio-only presentations. The significant changes in the horizon of academics also have a role drifting the scenario as students' centric learning which becomes the order of the day and insisted by almost all the higher authenticated body to nurture the self learning and development.

The variety of activities can enhance of the Listening skills. Activity Based Learning (ABL) is also given prime focus in teaching listening skills. Brain storming Activities are the base for any activities in the listening. In brain storming strategies there are Vocabulary Clues, Bridging Ideas and semantic mapping. If this is done with the exact audio clippings then the result of teaching listening is entirely an ideal and complete one. The students are drawn as the experimental and control group and these strategies are administered to the experimental group students. The performance of the experimental group is higher than the Control Group. Experimental Group Students are given tasks with brain storming strategies of Vocabulary Clues, Bridging ideas and Semantic mapping. The listener activates the formal schema and gathers the information of lexical clues phoneme and the pronunciation etc. The listener's content schema is triggered by the backup knowledge and then the social schemas are being activated. Thus the schema theory and its strategies are being proved as an effective tool to

enable the students to relate and reframe the back knowledge with the new information received and once the processing is over the listener felt easy to listen and learn concepts and recall immediately.

### **Conclusion**

The great efforts have been taken by the UGC to standardize the quality of our Education System. More internet accessibility churned out the real time need of proficiency. Beyond the fluency level in the Language now there was a next step in standard and proficiency. People listen more audios, videos and realize that the right modulation, articulation of language become the necessary element for them to interact socially.

The major drift in the teaching learning process in the recent trends always adhere with the technologies and the digital platforms. Communication of the person depends mostly on his/her capability to listen things and replicate the knowledge. Listening Comprehension has scope for further research and this skill can be enhanced through different web tools approaches. Latest Technology advances torches the learning and leverage the process, Mobile Applications have widen the opportunities and listening comprehension apps are boon to the students and the learners.

---

---

### **Work Cited**

Hasan BÐLOKCUOĞLU, EUL Journal of Social Sciences (V: I) LAÜ Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi June 2014 Haziran. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/applin/10.4.418>.

Improving Academic Listening Skills of Second Language by Building up Strategy Object Mashups, S. Yamamoto (Ed.): HIMI 2014, Part I, LNCS 8521, pp. 384–395, 2014. © Springer International Publishing Switzerland 2014.

Interactive Audio Strategies for Developing Listening Skills Jorge Salazar Defense Language Institute, Foreign Language Center.CALICO Journal, Volume 7.

Nunan D. (1997), “Listening in Language Learning, The Language Teacher”, The Japan Association of Language Learning, 21(9): 47-51.

O’Malley, J. M., Chamot, U., & Küpper, L. (1989). Listening comprehension strategies in second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics*, 10(4), 418-437.

Yekovich, F. R., & Walker, C. H. (1988),“The activation and use of scripted knowledge in reading about routine activities”, In B. Britton & S. M. Glynn (Eds.), Executive control processes in reading. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associate.

Zhang, D. (2006),“Strategy Knowledge and Perceived Strategy Use: Singaporean Students’ Awareness of Listening and Speaking Strategies”,Language Awareness,15(3): 199-219.

Zhu, E. (1997),Hypermedia interface design: The effects of number of links and granularity of nodes, Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Science.

=====  
Dr. K. Ravindran  
Professor and Head (Retd.)  
Govt. Arts College  
Coimbatore

R. Jayanthi  
Research Scholar  
Bharathiar University  
Coimbatore  
[jayanthirathinavelu2011@gmail.com](mailto:jayanthirathinavelu2011@gmail.com)