

THE EFFECTS OF METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY INSTRUCTION ON ENGLISH LISTENING COMPREHENSION OF GRADE 7 STUDENTS AT A LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL IN DA NANG CITY

NGHIÊN CỨU TÁC ĐỘNG CỦA GIẢNG DẠY CHIẾN LƯỢC SIÊU NHẬN THỨC ĐỐI VỚI KỸ NĂNG NGHE HIỂU TIẾNG ANH CỦA HỌC SINH LỚP 7 TẠI MỘT TRƯỜNG TRUNG HỌC CƠ SỞ Ở THÀNH PHỐ ĐÀ NẴNG

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Abstract - Listening comprehension has long been considered challenging to language learners, and language teachers have been seeking instructional approaches to enhancing learners' strategies and performance in listening. Metacognitive strategy instruction (MSI) emerges as a critical approach to improving not only students' strategic awareness for, but also their performance in, listening comprehension. This study investigates the effects of MSI on Grade 7 students' English listening comprehension at a lower secondary school in Da Nang City. Using a mixed-methods quasi-experimental design, the study involves two groups of learners: the experimental group receiving MSI based on the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) and the control group following the regular curriculum. The findings indicate that MSI integration by means of teacher modelling, guided practice, and scaffolding can foster learners' metacognitive awareness, thus leading to increased listening comprehension. The findings provide empirical evidence for the effective integration of MSI in language classrooms.

Key words - Metacognitive strategy instruction; CALLA; English listening comprehension; English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners; lower secondary education

Tóm tắt - Nghe hiểu luôn là thách thức đối với người học tiếng, và người dạy tiếng luôn tìm kiếm các tiếp cận giảng dạy nhằm cải thiện chiến lược và hiệu quả nghe hiểu ở người học. Cách tiếp cận giảng dạy chiến lược siêu nhận thức (MSI) được xem là hiệu quả trong việc nâng cao nhận thức chiến lược và kỹ năng nghe. Nghiên cứu này xem xét tác động của giảng dạy MSI đối với kỹ năng nghe hiểu tiếng Anh của học sinh lớp 7 tại một trường THCS ở thành phố Đà Nẵng. Nghiên cứu sử dụng thiết kế bán thực nghiệm kết hợp định lượng và định tính trên hai nhóm: nhóm thực nghiệm được hướng dẫn theo chiến lược siêu nhận thức CALLA và nhóm đối chứng theo chương trình dạy thông thường. Kết quả cho thấy việc tích hợp MSI qua mô hình hóa, thực hành có hướng dẫn, và hỗ trợ từ giáo viên giúp nâng cao năng lực siêu nhận thức, qua đó cải thiện hiệu quả nghe hiểu của học sinh. Nghiên cứu cung cấp bằng chứng thực nghiệm nhằm triển khai MSI hiệu quả trong các lớp học tiếng.

Từ khóa - Giảng dạy chiến lược siêu nhận thức; CALLA; kỹ năng nghe hiểu tiếng Anh; người học tiếng Anh như một ngoại ngữ; giáo dục trung học cơ sở

1. Introduction

As a primary channel for language input and comprehension, listening has become one of the most frequently used skills in everyday communication [1]. Despite its importance, listening has been treated as a secondary skill in language teaching with the assumption that this skill can develop naturally through exposure [2], [3]. In many EFL classrooms, listening lessons are inclined to emphasise listening as a product (e.g., answering comprehension questions), rather than viewing it as the strategic processes that learners use to construct meaning from spoken input [4].

Since listening comprehension involves complex and largely implicit processes, such as decoding sounds, accessing vocabulary, and constructing meaning in real time [5], it appears that these cognitive demands necessitate explicit instructional approaches that support decoding and strategic listening [6], [4]. In this respect, metacognitive strategies, involving planning, monitoring, and evaluating, play an important role in regulating the listening process and enhancing comprehension [7], [8].

With listening comprehension being a challenge to many language learners, adopting metacognitive strategy instruction (MSI) can be seen as critical for language students in Vietnamese lower secondary classrooms. However, limited attention has been given to using MSI in teaching listening in existing local studies [9]. This gap necessitates further investigation into strategy-based listening instruction in lower secondary EFL contexts. Specifically, the present study investigates the effects of MSI on English listening comprehension among Grade 7 students at a lower secondary school in Da Nang City. To address this aim, three research questions (RQs) are formulated:

(i) What are Grade 7 EFL students' perceptions of the use of MSI in listening comprehension lessons at a lower secondary school in Da Nang City?

(ii) To what extent does MSI improve these EFL students' listening comprehension?

(iii) What benefits and challenges do these EFL teachers and students experience when applying MSI in listening comprehension lessons?

2. Literature review

MSI is an emerging topic in the field of second language listening comprehension, and has so far attracted a growing body of related research output in recent literature. For example, three studies [10] - [11] pointed out that explicit training of this approach can influence learners' listening performance and strategic awareness, though its effects vary with instructional design, learner characteristics, and learning context.

Most early empirical work focused on the impact of process-based listening instruction. Thompson and Rubin [12], for example, explored the effect of explicit cognitive and metacognitive strategy training on students' foreign language listening comprehension. It was found that the gains were not consistently reflected in formal proficiency tests; however, students who had been trained with strategy instruction did considerably well on alternative listening. Research involving younger learners has also yielded promising results. Goh and Taib [10] showed that metacognitive instruction enhanced confidence, listening competence, and awareness of the listening process in primary-level EFL learners. Other studies likewise reported higher self-monitoring, enhanced strategic actions, and increased learner dependence [13], [14].

More recent studies continue to support strategy-based listening instruction. For instance, experimental research in Iranian EFL contexts found that listening strategy instruction led to better outcomes than its conventional approach [15] while other studies commented that metacognitive lessons help learners cope with difficulties during comprehension processing and self-regulate their listening process [16], [17].

Despite these encouraging findings, there still exist several gaps in the literature. To begin with, most studies have been carried out either on adult students or tertiary-level ones, while research with a focus on lower-secondary students remains limited. As a second point, in the context of Viet Nam, there have been hardly any empirical studies on structured metacognitive listening instruction, because such studies opted for reading instead of listening [9]. Third, there has been scant attention paid to the classroom feasibility of such instructional approaches or to how their implementation would play out for teachers and students in regular school settings. In order to address these gaps, this study aims to look at the effects of MSI on English listening comprehension among seventh-grade students in a specific EFL context, a lower secondary school in Da Nang City.

3. Theoretical background

3.1. Listening in second language acquisition context

3.1.1. Listening as a fundamental component of second language acquisition

Listening has long been recognized as an essential part of second language acquisition (SLA) because it provides learners with the linguistic input necessary for language development. Through listening, students are exposed to

new vocabulary, grammatical structures, pronunciation patterns, and discourse features that gradually build language competence [18]. In EFL contexts, when classroom-based instruction is often learners' main exposure to spoken English input [1], [5], this role becomes even more critical.

That said, listening should not be considered just a passive act of hearing. Rather, it is typically viewed as a complex and active process through which learners actively construct meaning from spoken input based on their linguistic knowledge and contextual information in a constantly evolving process [5], [8]. In order to listen successfully, learners integrate multiple sources of information, including lexical, syntactic, and discourse knowledge, as well as background knowledge and situational context [5], [8].

3.1.2. Cognitive Processes in Listening

Listening comprehension, in cognitive terms, can be explained through three models, namely bottom-up, top-down, and interactive processing [19]. Bottom-up processing refers to decoding speech from smaller units to larger ones, as learners identify sounds, segment them into words and phrases, and gradually construct meaning [19]. This process allows less proficient learners to better understand pronunciation, word boundaries, and grammatical structures [20]. In contrast, top-down processing is the process that relies on learners' prior knowledge, expectations, and contextual clues to predict and interpret meaning [6]. Using their knowledge of the topic, the speaker, or the situation, students can make inferences and compensate for information that is not fully understood [21].

In practical terms, successful listening is an interactive process where bottom-up and top-down processes work together [22]. Thanks to this interconnected process, effective listeners are able to decode the verbal input while strategically using contextual information to aid comprehension [19].

3.1.3. Listening Challenges in Language Learning

Although listening is a critical skill in language learning, EFL learners often find it difficult. Challenges can derive from rapid speech, unfamiliar accents, reduced forms, limited vocabulary, and problems recognizing discourse markers, among other factors structuring spoken materials as mentioned by Graham [23]. This may lead to the fact that learners can understand single words but fail to grasp the overall meaning.

Real-time comprehension further complicates listening. Unlike reading, listening requires a high level of attention and working memory as learners have little control over input pace [4]. What is more, focusing on a single unfamiliar word or phrase can lead to missing subsequent information [8]. Poor background knowledge may also affect the interpretation of the speaker's intent [24]. These concerns de-emphasize listening instruction that is grounded in broader comprehension questions requiring strategies such as those for planning, monitoring, and regulating the listening process [8].

3.2. Metacognitive Strategies in Language Learning

3.2.1. Defining Metacognition and Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognition generally refers to the awareness and regulation of one's own thinking and learning processes [25]. Put differently, there are two interrelated dimensions in this conceptualisation: one is metacognitive knowledge, and the other is metacognitive regulation [26], [27]. While *metacognitive knowledge* is made up of explicit awareness of one's own cognitive processes, understanding of task demands, as well as strategies for tackling tasks [28], *metacognitive regulation* involves the ways learners manage their learning through processes like planning, monitoring, and evaluating [26], [27].

Metacognitive strategies are deemed essential as they enable learners to control and regulate their own learning [29]. In language learning, the use of such strategies helps learners approach tasks with clearer goals, better preparation, and greater strategic awareness. Besides, a high level of metacognitive awareness can assist learners in detecting problems and selecting appropriate strategies, thus adjusting their behavior, which makes it a critical component of effective language learning [25], [29].

3.2.2. Metacognitive Strategies in Listening Comprehension

As many would argue, metacognitive strategies assist students in managing real-time processing during listening [8], [19]. Planning allows learners to activate prior information, make predictions, and decide what to focus on. When consciously monitoring learning, students can directly observe their own comprehension; by doing so, they can search for clarification or modify attention and strategy as appropriate. Evaluation then requires students to reflect on their performance, which results in the identification of the problems that need immediate action.

These strategies help shift learners from passive listening to active regulation of comprehension. Evidence from prior studies shows that metacognitive strategies enable learners to predict content, handle uncertainty, and deal with comprehension breakdowns [8], [16], [17]. Besides, the strategies positively influence learners' confidence and autonomy, especially amongst low-skilled listeners. In other words, MSI moves beyond replacing linguistic knowledge to allow learners to employ it more effectively in real-time listening.

3.3. The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA)

The CALLA provides a framework for MSI in listening courses [7]. Rather than treating listening as a product-based activity, CALLA guides students through the listening process. By following the sequence (i.e., preparation, presentation, practice, self-evaluation, and expansion), students can plan, monitor, and reflect on their listening. This staged support is deemed useful for lower-secondary learners, who often need clear guidance before applying strategies themselves. For this reason, CALLA was adopted in the present study as the instructional framework for MSI.

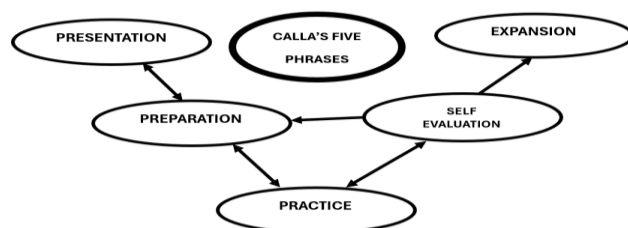


Figure 1. The application of CALLA to listening instruction (adapted from Chamot and O'Malley [7, pp. 66-72])

4. Research methodology

4.1. Research design

This study employed a mixed-methods, quasi-experimental design [30] to investigate the effects of MSI on seventh graders' English listening comprehension. While quantitative data were used to measure changes in listening performance and self-reported metacognitive awareness, qualitative evidence provided more insights into the implementation of the intervention and the participants' perspectives. In detail, the experimental group (EG) received eight weeks of CALLA-based MSI integrated into the regular listening lessons, whereas the control group (CG) followed the regular listening curriculum without explicit strategy instruction.

4.2. Participants

The study was conducted at a lower secondary school in Da Nang City and involved 70 seventh graders from two classes, with 35 students in the experimental group (EG) and 35 in the control group (CG). The students were 12 to 13 years of age and were following the *I-Learn Smart World 7* English programme prescribed by the school. These students were selected based on their comparable average listening scores recorded in the previous final examination. Convenience sampling was adopted due to the researchers' access to the school and the support of school administrators and teachers. In addition to the student participants, the study involved one EFL teacher who implemented the intervention and two EFL teachers from the same school who served as non-teaching classroom observers.

4.3. Research Instruments

To address the research questions, five main instruments were employed in this study: (i) a listening pre-test and post-test; (ii) an adapted bilingual MALQ; (iii) classroom observation checklists; (iv) semi-structured interviews with teachers; and (v) a focus group interview with students

4.3.1. Listening Tests

Listening performance was measured using pre- [31] and post-tests [32] adapted from the Cambridge YLE Flyers format and informed by the content of *I-learn Smart World 7*. Each test lasted 25-30 minutes and included 25 items across five parts: Listen and Match, Listen and Complete, Listen and Match Words to Pictures, Choose the Correct Picture, and Label the Picture with One Word. The tests were designed for Grade 7 learners whose English level was approaching the A2 level, in line with the expected proficiency level for the Vietnamese lower-

secondary English curriculum. To support content validity and comparability, two EFL teachers reviewed both tests of task format, material coverage, and perceived difficulty. In addition, the Oxford Text Checker indicated an A1-A2 lexical profile for the Part 2 scripts in both tests, providing supplementary evidence of lexical-level appropriateness. However, this text-based check was used only as supporting evidence because it did not capture audio-related factors such as speaking rate or accent.

4.3.2. *Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ)*

Metacognitive awareness was assessed using an adapted 18-item bilingual version of the MALQ. The original 21-item instrument was reduced by excluding the mental translation factor, as the intervention focused on planning, monitoring, and evaluation. The final questionnaire was designed to measure four dimensions, namely personal knowledge, directed attention, problem-solving, and planning/evaluation, using a six-point Likert scale. The English – Vietnamese version was reviewed by two EFL teachers for clarity, age appropriateness, and semantic correspondence.

4.3.3. *Qualitative Instruments*

Qualitative data were collected through classroom observations and interviews. Two classroom observations (Weeks 2 & 7) were guided by the CALLA framework [7] and key metacognitive listening processes, including planning before listening, monitoring during listening, and evaluating after listening [10]. Observation checklists also captured student engagement and teacher facilitation of MSI. The checklists include observable such indicators as setting listening goals, predicting content from pictures or keywords, checking answers while listening, revising responses, and reflecting on listening difficulties after the task. These indicators were considered suitable for Grade 7 learners because metacognitive behaviours among younger learners need to be observed through concrete classroom actions rather than through abstract self-explanation only [27]. These were followed by semi-structured interviews with two non-teaching observer teachers, who served as independent classroom observers to document strategy-related behaviours and provide supplementary implementation data. In the later phase, a focus group interview was conducted in Week 10 with six students from the EG, purposively selected to represent different proficiency levels (high-, medium-, and low-). It is important to note that the qualitative data were used to contextualise and triangulate the MALQ results and listening test scores, rather than serve as independent evidence of improvement.

4.3.4. *Research Procedure*

Data collection was conducted over ten weeks. In the first week (Week 1), the listening pre-test was given to both groups, and the MALQ baseline questionnaire was administered. From Weeks 2 to 9, the EG received CALLA-based MSI integrated into regular listening lessons, while the CG followed the standard listening curriculum without explicit strategy instruction. In the EG, students were explicitly taught how to plan before

listening, monitor comprehension during listening, and evaluate their performance after listening. Each lesson followed the CALLA sequence of preparation, presentation, practice, self-evaluation, and expansion. Week 2 focused on introducing metacognitive listening routines; Weeks 3-7 covered the five Flyers listening parts; and Weeks 8-9 involved two integrated practice lessons to promote more independent use of the strategy. The intervention was implemented by the researcher using a pre-designed CALLA lesson framework, whereas the CG completed comparable listening tasks, but the focus here was mainly on task completion and answer checking. Classroom observations in Weeks 2 and 7 were used to document how the intervention was implemented in practice. In Week 10, both groups took the listening post-test, the EG completed the post-intervention MALQ, and qualitative interviews were conducted.

4.3.5. *Data Analysis*

Quantitative data were examined using descriptive statistics, paired-samples t-tests, and independent-samples t-tests in IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 20.0) [33]. Qualitative data were analysed thematically to identify recurring patterns related to strategy use, classroom implementation, and learner responses.

4.3.6. *Reliability and Validity*

The reliability and validity of the study were supported by standardized administration, expert review of research instruments, and triangulation across qualitative and quantitative data sources. For the listening tests, validity was supported through teacher review and lexical-level checking of the Part 2 scripts. For the qualitative instruments, consistency was supported through the use of the same observation checklist across both observation points and observer briefing before each lesson. As the retained MALQ responses were anonymous and aggregated, internal consistency indices such as Cronbach's alpha could not be calculated; therefore, the questionnaire findings were interpreted descriptively as supportive self-reported evidence alongside the test-driven and qualitative data. Additionally, as the two observers did not rate the same lesson, inter-rater agreement was not estimated; observation findings were thus treated as supportive behavioural evidence [34].

5. Results and discussion

5.1. *Grade 7 EFL Students' Perceptions of the Use of MSI in Listening Comprehension Lessons*

This section addresses RQ1 by examining self-reported perceptions of seventh graders after the intervention, as reflected through the MALQ data and supported by qualitative classroom evidence.

Table 1. Statistics of the 1st MALQ Questionnaire - CG

	Personal Knowledge	Directed Attention	Problem-Solving	Planning /Evaluation
N(Valid)	35	35	35	35
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean*	4.60	2.50	3.55	2.44

As shown in Table 1, the control group (CG) had low metacognitive awareness at baseline. Personal knowledge was recorded with the highest mean ($M=4.60$), showing that students tended to perceive listening as difficult and somewhat anxiety-inducing, while directed attention ($M=2.50$) and planning/evaluation ($M=2.44$) were the lowest subscales, which indicated weak habits of concentration control, planning, and reflection. Problem-solving was relatively higher ($M=3.55$), which may suggest some reliance on guesswork, rather than a more systematic strategy use. This baseline pattern is consistent with the view that EFL listening requires a high level of attention and real-time processing [4], [8].

Table 2. Statistics of 1st and 2nd MALQ questionnaire - EG

	Personal Knowledge	Directed Attention	Problem-Solving	Planning/Evaluation	Overall MALQ
N (Valid)	35	35	35	35	35
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean (Pre)	4.419	2.629	3.381	2.389	3.111
Mean (Post)	3.200	3.821	3.990	3.251	3.616
Mean (Post-Pre)	-1.219	+1.193	+0.610	+0.863	+0.505

Note. Means estimated from aggregated Likert 1-6 percentages; SD/SE not computed due to anonymous, aggregated data.

A similar baseline pattern was found in the experimental group (EG). As shown in Table 2, the post-intervention results indicate a general improvement in students' reported perceptions of their listening comprehension and strategy use. The overall mean score increased from 3.11 to 3.62, with the largest improvement in directed attention (2.63→3.82), followed by planning/evaluation (2.39→3.25) and problem-solving (3.38→3.99). In contrast, personal knowledge dropped from 4.42 to 3.20, indicating a reduction in negative perceptions and an increase in positive ones. This shift is further supported by the selected item data in Table 3.

Table 3. Selected MALQ item-level changes in the EG

Item	Focus	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Item 1. Before I start to listen, I have a plan in my head for how I am going to listen.	Direct agreement (Agree + Strongly agree)	11.43	42.86
Item 13. I feel nervous when I listen to English.	Direct agreement (Agree + Strongly agree)	60.00	25.71
Item 14. When I have difficulty understanding what I hear, I don't give up and stop listening.	Direct disagreement (Strongly disagree + Disagree)	71.43	11.43
Item 16. When I guess the meaning of a word, I think back to everything else I have heard to see if my guess makes sense.	Direct agreement (Agree + Strongly agree)	2.86	22.85

As shown in Table 3, the proportion of students who reported a clear listening plan went from 11.43% to 42.86% in *Item 1*. Similarly, direct disagreement in *Item 14*

showed a sharp decline from 71.43% to 11.43%, suggesting that fewer students reported giving up when the listening task became difficult. A similar pattern was also observed in *Item 13*, with a significant decrease in the proportion of students who had made them nervous before applying the strategy from 60.00% to 25.71%, indicating a more positive affective response after repeated strategy practice. *Item 16* significantly rose from 2.86% to 22.85%, suggesting that more students reported checking to see whether a guessed meaning made sense. The changes point to more positive perceptions of planning, attention control, persistence, and strategy use, all measured after the intervention. These self-reported changes were partly supported by the qualitative evidence. In the early stage, students were described as being confused and dependent on teacher guidance, while showing limited use of explicit planning or monitoring behaviours. However, classroom observations showed more frequent use of planning and monitoring behaviours such as using pictures to set goals, waiting for confirmation cues, and revising first guesses by the later stage. This change was also implied through short reflections from students. For instance, one student reported they were less distracted when hearing unfamiliar words, while another disclosed learning to wait for a "confirming clue" rather than giving an impulsive response. Although these qualitative data may not on their own verify each self-reported MALQ response, they offer classroom-derived corroboration of the trends observed in more planning, monitoring, and evaluation behaviours.

The patterns mentioned above imply that students developed a more positive perception of MSI over time. From the onset, many students showed their confusion and passivity, indicating that the strategy routines were still unfamiliar and highly demanding. However, as the same routines were repeated and supported through teacher modelling, students increasingly viewed MSI as helpful rather than burdensome. This aligns with the perspective that metacognitive regulation develops progressively in a systematic manner [25], [26]. Current study findings that the increased agreement with *Item 1*, and the decline in *Items 13 and 14*, are in line with previous studies showing that metacognitive instruction can improve learners' confidence and reduce listening-related anxiety [10], [13]. In this line of thought, the improvement shown in *Item 16* is also consistent with the position that successful listeners monitor comprehension and verify tentative interpretations while listening [16], [19]. Nonetheless, because the MALQ data were self-reported and retained in aggregated form, these findings should be taken with caution.

Overall, the findings indicate that students gradually perceived MSI as a more useful and manageable support for listening, thereby addressing RQ1.

5.2. Effects of MSI on Grade 7 EFL Students' Listening Comprehension

The listening test results, as presented in Table 4, attempt to address RQ2 by showing whether support from MSI helps improve Grade 7 students' English listening comprehension, with qualitative classroom evidence providing further support.

At baseline, the CG and EG were generally comparable, as the difference between these was not statistically significant, $t(68) = -0.931, p = 0.355$. The CG did not show a statistically notable change over the intervention period, while the EG demonstrated pronounced improvements from 12.34 to 15.17, $t(34) = -4.291, p < 0.001$. The post-test comparison further showed that the EG surpassed the CG with $t(68) = -3.593, p < 0.001$, further supporting the fact that MSI is positively correlated to English listening comprehension performance in this sample. These findings align with both theoretical frameworks and prior studies that planning, monitoring, and evaluation are fundamental components of metacognitive regulation [25], [26], and that proficient listeners actively facilitate these processes to regulate their knowledge acquisition [19]. The results also reflect Chamot and O'Malley's CALLA guidelines and prior research that revealed a beneficial impact of strategy education on listening performance [12], [15]. Overall, these findings suggest that MSI contributed positively to the listening comprehension in this lower-secondary EFL context, thereby addressing RQ2.

Table 4. Summary of listening comprehension test results

Comparison	Mean 1	Mean 2	Gain/Difference	t	df	p
Baseline equivalence (CG pre-test vs. EG pre-test)	11.00	12.34	-1.34	-0.931	68	0.355
CG (Pre-test vs. Post-test)	11.00	10.43	-0.57	0.751	34	0.458
EG (Pre-test vs. Post-test)	12.34	15.17	+2.83	-4.291	34	< 0.001
Post-test comparison (CG vs. EG)	10.43	15.17	-4.74	-3.593	68	< 0.001

Note. For between-group comparisons, Mean 1 represents CG and Mean 2 EG. For within-group comparisons, Mean 1 for pre-test, Mean 2 for post-test scores.

5.3. Perceived benefits and challenges in implementing MSI in listening lessons

This section addresses RQ3 by examining the perceived benefits and challenges emerging during the implementation of MSI. Qualitative evidence came from: (i) a Week 10 focus-group interview with six students representing different progress levels from the experimental class (*high*: S1-S2; *medium*: S3-S4; *low*: S5-S6); and (ii) two semi-structured interviews following two class observations (Weeks 2 & 7) with two non-teaching observer teachers.

The qualitative findings suggest several benefits that the participants affiliated with MSI experienced in listening comprehension lessons. As the intervention progressed, students became increasingly prepared, showed better selective attention, and became less likely to panic when they missed information. Observer comments further indicated that students who engaged more with the strategy had been using visual cues before listening, and revised their initial predictions once new information emerged. Lastly, the post-listening reflection became more evidence-based, with some students using transcripts to explain their errors.

At the same time, the implementation of MSI presented several challenges. Many students struggled with the strategy routines and remained highly dependent on the teacher's instructions. Both students and observers also noted the cognitively demanding load associated with the multiple steps they need to follow within a 45-minute lesson, especially when learners have limited experience in strategic listening. With the process becoming more and more manageable, lower-performing students continued to require greater visual support and simplified procedures in instructional delivery.

Overall, the qualitative evidence suggests that MSI was generally perceived as beneficial and feasible, but most effective when gradually implemented and consistently supported by means of modelling and scaffolding. In the context of this Grade 7 EFL classroom, where students have limited exposure to spoken English beyond the classroom and are still developing confidence in listening, MSI can be a reassuring and positive tool for listening development. This accentuates the important role of the teacher in implementing strategy-based routines, which help students set listening goals, predict key information, monitor comprehension, and reflect on errors through evidence. For lower-secondary learners, these practices can be effective, yet need to be introduced gradually with clear scaffolding so that students can move from guided practice to more independent, strategic listening. These findings evidence the main benefits as well as challenges that emerged during MSI implementation, thereby addressing RQ3.

6. Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the effects of MSI on English listening comprehension of seventh graders at a lower secondary school in Da Nang City. It can be revealed from the findings that MSI can be a feasible and pedagogically meaningful approach to teaching listening in low-proficiency EFL contexts. The quantitative results indicated that the students receiving MSI performed better on listening comprehension and obtained higher metacognitive awareness compared to those not receiving the treatment. Put another way, MSI not only changed how well students performed in listening activities, but also how they approached listening in a highly cognitive manner. Qualitative evidence supported that those introduced to MSI were more focused, less anxious, and more engaged in listening activities.

Pedagogically, the findings suggest a practical way for teachers to help students with an age-appropriate form of MSI, which is through brief modelling, guided practice, and simple reflection routines in order to help them transition from teacher-supported listening behaviours toward more independent and meaningful listening.

Despite these insights, the study reveals certain limitations. The quasi-experimental design with intact classes, single MALQ administration, and qualitative data limitations altogether restrict strong causal claims. These limitations suggest that future studies may look at larger samples, multiple rounds of observation, and aligned pre-

and post-MALQ in both groups, so as to examine which specific MSI or CALLA components may yield optimal results in Vietnamese EFL contexts, especially when English is gradually shifting its role from a foreign language into a second language in Vietnam [35].

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