



# The Impact of Strategy Development on Listening As a Productive Skill in ELT: A Constructivist Approach<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Listening has failed to catch the attention it deserves in EFL classrooms despite its key role in EFL learning. Therefore, this study suggests redesigning listening tasks from a constructivist perspective to make them more effective for learners. With this purpose in mind, the question “Does constructivist listening teaching with overt strategy instruction create any difference in learner’s strategy use frequency, their reactions to listening tasks, and their listening proficiency ?” becomes the starting point for this research. In order to find the answer to this question, an experimental research design was established. Both the experiment group and control group were given surveys; a pre-test and a post-test prior to and after the treatment that involved constructivist listening tasks alongside with overt strategy instruction. The subjects of the study were twenty nine EFL students at Sinop University. The comparison of EG’s survey results after and before treatment revealed that overt strategy training alongside with constructivist listening tasks has led to an increase in the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, while it has failed to cause any change in their use of affective strategies. Similarly, the results have shown that the treatment has been successful in changing learners’ reactions to listening tasks. It can be concluded that constructivist listening teaching alongside with overt strategy training has fostered learners’ strategy use frequency and changed learners’ reactions to listening tasks in a positive way, although it has not caused any significant difference in their listening proficiency.

*Keywords:* Constructivist listening tasks, listening strategies, learner reactions.

## 1. Introduction

Listening skill, despite its essential role in foreign language learning, has been the Cinderella skill (Nunan, 1999) in EFL classrooms. Focusing on the reciprocal aspect of the listening can be the key to the effective listening teaching. Therefore, changing perception of listening from a ‘receptive’ skill to a ‘reciprocal’ one necessitates adopting a constructivist approach to the listening tasks. Similarly, raising learners’ awareness of the listening strategies can also be an instrumental way of making time and effort devoted to listening in EFL classes worthwhile. Strategy development is closely related with schemata construction process and; thus, is based on the principles of constructivism. Based on these assumptions, this study intends to suggest constructivist listening teaching in EFL classrooms by focusing on the impact of constructivist listening teaching that integrates overt listening strategy instruction on learners’ listening strategy use frequency, reactions to listening tasks and listening proficiency.

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### *1.1. Review of Literature*

Recent approaches in EFL reject the conceptualization of listening as a receptive skill; on the contrary, they suggest that listening is an interactive process (Uzakgöre, 2004) in which learners do not merely listen to the text passively, but they also react to the speaker or ask questions for clarification (Tavil, 2010) and formulate their own ideas to construct their own interpretation of meaning. Constructivist teaching requires raising learners' awareness of their own learning behaviour. The silent, rather like breathing (Morley, 2001), nature of listening particularly necessitates this "awareness-raising", because learners are not usually aware of their language behaviour during listening tasks.

The position of strategy instruction in EFL/ ESL classrooms has also been at the centre of attention. The common opinion is that strategy instruction and content teaching should go hand in hand. As such, Nunan (1997) suggests teaching listening strategies not in a fashion separated from the content teaching, but woven into the ongoing fabric of the lesson. Likewise, Peterson (2001) asserts that strategy instruction does not replace language practice, but rather is interspersed with practice throughout the course. All in all, strategy instruction can enable learners to become active constructors of their own learning environment (Mitchell & Myles, 1988), because it gives them the chance to consciously control their own learning processes.

The findings from the empirical studies that focus on the impact of strategy development on listening proficiency suggest a positive correlation between strategy use and listening proficiency (Oxford et al., 2004). For example, O'Malley, Chamot and Küpper's (1989) used verbal protocol methods to compare the effective and ineffective listening strategies of high school ESL students and to see whether the strategies matched Anderson's (1985) three theoretical phases of listening comprehension. The study revealed that while successful learners made more use of bottom up and top down processing, unsuccessful learners were only fixed on individual word meanings. Similarly, Vandergrift (2003) carried out a study to compare listening comprehension studies of seventh grade, Canadian-French students who had a different range of skills. Students were instructed to interact with the listening input. Vandergrift's study demonstrated that the more proficient learners used a greater number of metacognitive strategies compared to less proficient ones. Likewise, Cross (2009) carried out a quasi-experimental, classroom- based study to unveil the impact of listening strategy instruction on advanced level, adult Japanese EFL learners' comprehension of BBC news videotexts. The study demonstrated a significant improvement for the experimental group, although there was not a significant difference when compared with the control group, because they also improved. Another study that focuses on the relationship between strategy instruction and listening performance is Moradi's (2012) study that focused on the impact of listening strategy instruction on academic lecture comprehension skills of Iranian EFL learners. Moradi found that the strategy instruction displayed a significant difference in learners listening comprehension performance.

## **2. Methodology**

In order to investigate the relationship between constructivist listening teaching, learners' strategy use frequency and their reactions to listening tasks, an experimental research design was established. The control group and experiment group were assigned randomly among twenty nine subjects who participated in the study. Both groups took the pre-test and post-test prior to and after the treatment to observe the impact of constructivist listening teaching on listening proficiency. The treatment involved constructivist listening tasks with overt strategy instruction.

### 2.1. Participants

The subjects were twenty nine English as Foreign Language students at Sinop University Vocational High School. They had compulsory Foreign Language II course two hours a week. They had already completed one term with the Foreign Language I course. They were a mixed language ability group with different language learning backgrounds.

### 2.2 Instruments

EFL Listening Strategies Survey and Questionnaire on EFL Learner's Reactions to Listening Tasks were used as research instruments. EFL Listening Strategies Survey was developed by the researcher based on a combination of language learning strategies classification by Oxford & Chamot & O'Malley (1990). The survey consists of three sections focusing on pre, while and post stages of listening that involves cognitive, metacognitive and socioaffective listening strategies. Questionnaire on Learners' Reactions to Listening Tasks was also developed by the researcher based on a prediction of possible learner reactions to listening tasks. Both surveys were peer-reviewed and edited by respected scholars in the field.

### 2.3 Procedures

Subjects were given a pre-test focusing on their listening proficiency. As the next step, they took EFL Listening Strategies Survey and Questionnaire on EFL Learner's Reactions to Listening Tasks. The research continued with the treatment that engaged learners in constructivist listening tasks alongside with overt listening strategy training.

Constructivist listening tasks differed from traditional listening tasks in a number of ways. Firstly, learners were engaged in pre-listening activities that lasted longer than usual. In this phase, they were asked to guess the type of language that would appear in the text, and make some inferences about the identity or background of speakers. In addition, they were introduced to the lexical items and grammatical structures that would appear in the listening text. Secondly, learners were allowed to ask the teacher to stop the listening text, and ask questions and discuss the content of the listening text through their own interpretation to foster learner interaction during the while-stage of the listening task. Thirdly, the listening input was provided through videos to allow more space for learners to make inferences from the visual background of the listening text. The videos were selected from a widely-known video-sharing website that learners already frequently use. The main motive behind these attempts was to make classroom listening resemble real-life listening as much as possible.

Once the process of constructivist listening teaching that integrates overt strategy instruction was complete, subjects took the post-test; EFL Listening Strategies Survey and Questionnaire on EFL Learner's Reactions to Listening Tasks once more. Thus, the results of the first and second implementation of the questionnaires were compared to analyse the impact of the treatment on learners' strategy use and their reactions to listening tasks.

### 2.4. Data Analysis

Quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires were analysed via SPSS.

## 3. Findings

Quantitative data from the questionnaires are presented in the tables given below. The findings from only the experiment group questionnaires are provided. Based on the assumption that control group's listening strategy use frequency and reactions to listening tasks cannot have changed, because they have not been exposed to any treatment, the findings from control groups' questionnaires have not been included.

### 3.1. The Results of Experiment Group EFL Listening Strategies Survey

The findings from EFL Listening Strategies Survey are presented in three different tables, because the survey consists of three sections as pre, while and post-listening strategies. The findings from the first and second implantation of the survey are provided under two categories, which are respectively before treatment (BT) and after treatment (AT).

Table 1. Pre-listening strategy percentages of experiment group before and after the treatment

		Always		Usually		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
		BT	AT	BT	AT	BT	AT	BT	AT	BT	AT
1.	During pre-listening activity I... make sense out of the visuals about the content of the listening text.	31, 3	38, 5	50, 0	53, 8	6,3	7,7	6,3	-	6,3	-
2.	guess the vocabulary items that may appear in the listening text.	37, 5	23, 1	37, 5	69, 2	25, 0	7,7	-	-	-	-
3.	create a mental picture of the setting and the speakers to understand better.	18, 8	23, 1	25, 0	23, 1	25, 0	46, 2	18, 8	7,7	12, 5	-
4.	make sure that I can hear the listening text well.	31, 3	23, 1	56, 3	61, 5	6,3	15, 4	6,3	-	-	-
5.	eliminate stressful feelings by breathing deeply.	6,3	31, 3	31, 3	18, 8	25, 0	15, 4	31, 3	18, 8	6,3	-
6.	have a look at the whole listening activity to have an idea about what I should listen for.	25, 0	15, 4	25, 0	38, 5	37, 5	46, 2	6,3	-	6,3	-
7.	try to understand the purpose of the activity.	37, 5	46, 2	50, 0	46, 2	12, 5	7,7	-	-	-	-
8.	guess the type of language that will appear in the listening text.	18, 8	15, 4	31, 3	30, 8	31, 3	38, 5	18, 8	7,7	-	7,7
9.	visualize the setting in my mind.	18, 8	23, 1	37, 5	46, 2	25, 0	23, 1	6,3	-	12, 5	7,7
10.	guess the answers to the questions.	25, 0	23, 1	50, 0	53, 8	25, 0	15, 4	-	-	-	-
11.	search for lexical or structural clues within the listening activity to guess the answers.	31, 3	38, 5	43, 8	53, 8	12, 5	7,7	-	-	-	-
12.	discuss the possible content of the listening text with my peers.	6,3	-	31, 3	23, 1	25, 0	69, 2	25, 0	7,7	12, 5	-
13.	listen to the instructions given by the teacher carefully.	31, 3	46, 2	56, 3	46, 2	6,3	7,7	-	-	-	-
14.	ask for more details about the time, the setting, identity of the speakers involved in the text.	12, 5	30, 8	43, 8	46, 2	12, 5	15, 4	31, 3	7,7	-	-
15.	note down my guesses about the text to refer to them later.	18, 8	15, 4	37, 5	30, 8	25, 0	23, 1	18, 8	23, 1	-	7,7
16.	create some questions answers of which I expect to find the in the text.	12, 5	15, 4	31, 3	30, 8	18, 8	46, 2	31, 3	7,7	6,3	-

Out of sixteen pre-listening strategies in the questionnaire, ten of them have shown an increase after the treatment, while four of them have remained stable. Based on this information, it can be argued that the treatment has had a positive impact on subjects' pre-listening strategy use frequency in general. It is clear from the results that overt strategy instruction has encouraged learners to use pre-listening strategies more effectively and consciously. It is fair to claim that constructivist listening teaching with overt strategy instruction has promoted learners' pre-listening strategy use frequency.

Table 2. While-listening strategy percentages of experiment group before and after the treatment

		Always		Usually		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
		BT	AT	BT	AT	BT	AT	BT	AT	BT	AT
1.	During while-listening, I... try to understand each and every word.	37,5	7,7	50,0	76,9	12,5	15,4	-	-	-	-
2.	pay attention to the tone of voice, stress and intonation of the speakers.	25,0	38,5	50,0	15,4	18,8	46,2	6,3	-	-	-
3.	try to understand the underlying intentions of the speakers.	12,5	-	25,0	30,8	43,8	53,8	6,3	15,4	12,5	-
4.	try to guess the age, physical appearance and background of the speakers.	6,3	-	31,3	46,2	12,5	23,1	31,3	15,4	18,8	15,4
5.	need to listen more than twice to understand better.	31,3	7,7	50,0	69,2	12,5	23,1	6,3	-	-	-
6.	expect non-verbal support from the teacher.	25,0	15,4	18,8	38,5	18,8	30,8	25,0	7,7	12,5	7,7
7.	listen to understand the emotions and the mood of the speakers from their tone of voice.	12,5	15,4	31,3	38,5	43,8	30,8	6,3	15,4	6,3	-
8.	check up on the teachers' body language and facial expression.	43,8	15,4	18,8	61,5	18,8	23,1	18,8	-	-	-
9.	feel anxious when the instructor tells that we will listen only once.	37,5	38,5	31,3	53,8	18,8	-	6,3	-	6,3	7,7
10.	do not write the answer if I cannot hear it clearly.	18,8	15,4	37,5	30,8	31,3	38,5	6,3	7,7	6,3	7,7
11.	take notes about the topic, setting and the profiles of the speakers.	6,3	7,7	25,0	38,5	25,0	30,8	25,0	15,4	18,8	7,7
12.	do not write down the answers when I am not sure about the spelling.	12,5	15,4	31,3	30,8	25,0	46,2	-	7,7	31,3	-
13.	take short notes to have a gist of the listening text.	25,0	15,4	18,8	30,8	18,8	23,1	25,0	23,1	12,5	7,7
14.	write down my answers while the text is being played.	18,8	23,1	50,0	46,2	31,3	15,4	-	15,4	-	-
15.	write down my answers after the text is played benefiting from my notes.	6,3	23,1	43,8	30,8	12,5	15,4	31,3	23,1	6,3	7,7
16.	do not take notes, keep every detail in my mind.	6,3	7,7	31,3	15,4	18,8	30,8	18,8	7,7	25,0	38,5
17.	feel obliged to understand to understand each and every word.	25,0	38,5	31,3	23,1	37,5	23,1	7,7	6,3	7,7	-
18.	do not feel distressed when I cannot understand a few words.	6,3	15,4	37,5	23,1	31,3	23,1	6,3	15,4	18,8	23,1
19.	feel very anxious when I cannot understand a few words.	6,3	15,4	31,3	38,5	31,3	30,8	12,5	7,7	18,8	-
20.	relieve my distress by breathing deeply.	6,3	23,1	37,5	53,8	25,0	7,7	18,8	7,7	12,5	7,7
21.	motivate myself thinking that I can do better.	12,5	30,8	56,3	46,2	12,5	23,1	12,5	-	6,3	-
22.	try to have an idea about the culture of the speakers.	6,3	23,1	25,0	15,4	37,5	53,8	18,8	7,7	12,5	-
23.	try to understand the overall message of the listening text.	25,0	15,4	43,8	53,8	25,0	30,8	6,3	-	-	-
24.	try to infer the meaning from the words I hear when I cannot understand the whole text.	25,0	7,7	56,3	76,9	12,5	15,4	6,3	-	-	-
25.	trust my own interpretation of the messages of speakers.	18,8	-	43,8	53,8	31,3	38,5	6,3	-	-	7,7

26.	think back on what has been said and ask questions to understand the text.	–	15,4	43,8	38,5	43,8	30,8	–	15,4	12,5	–
27.	try to combine the ideas in my mind.	18,8	15,4	43,8	61,5	18,8	15,4	12,5	7,7	6,3	–
28.	try to the new relate information from the text to my previous knowledge.	25,0	23,1	31,3	30,8	37,5	38,5	6,3	7,7	–	–

It is understood that out of twenty eight while-listening strategies in the survey, thirteen of them have been positively influenced by treatment, while thirteen of them have remained uninfluenced by treatment. It can be argued that although strategy instruction has proved to be effective for pre-listening phase, it has failed to yield similar results for while-listening phase as seen in the results above. This may be attributed to the challenging nature of while-listening phase. One can imagine that subjects, despite being aware of the strategies, may have failed to put them into practice because of anxiety. When the while-listening strategies that have not shown any increase after treatment are analysed, it is seen that that treatment has failed to make any difference in subjects strategy use to manage their affective status, even though they were instructed on anxiety-handling strategies.

Table 3. Post-listening strategy percentages of experiment group before and after the treatment

		Always		Usually		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
		BT	AT	BT	AT	BT	AT	BT	AT	BT	AT
During post-listening activity I...											
1.	try to put together the information obtained from the listening text.	–	21,4	68,8	42,9	31,3	28,6	–	–	–	–
2.	think back on the processes I used during the main activity.	6,3	28,6	37,5	50,0	43,8	14,3	12,5	–	–	–
3.	rely on my own interpretation of the text to complete the task at hand.	18,8	7,1	43,8	57,1	25,0	21,4	6,3	7,1	6,3	–
4.	exchange ideas with my peers to confirm my interpretation.	12,5	7,1	25,0	57,1	37,5	21,4	12,5	7,1	12,5	–
5.	reflect on the listening text.	18,8	14,3	43,8	57,1	25,0	14,3	6,3	7,1	6,3	–
6.	retell the ideas in my own words.	31,3	7,1	50,0	57,1	12,5	21,4	6,3	7,1	–	–
7.	check whether my guesses about the speakers' background was right or not.	18,8	14,3	31,3	50,0	50,0	28,6	–	–	–	–
8.	discuss the interpretation of the text with my peers.	25,0	7,1	37,5	64,3	31,3	21,4	–	–	6,3	–
9.	exploit the vocabulary items and structures that appeared in the text.	31,3	21,4	31,3	35,7	31,3	28,6	6,3	7,1	–	–
10.	refer back to my notes to reinterpret the text.	18,8	–	25,0	71,4	31,3	14,3	6,3	7,1	6,3	–
11.	think on the parts of the listening text I could not understand.	18,8	42,9	50,0	28,6	25,0	7,1	6,3	14,3	–	–
12.	motivate myself to do better thinking that I performed well.	18,8	7,1	50,0	42,9	25,0	28,6	6,3	14,3	–	–
13.	analyze my strengths and weaknesses in listening skill.	37,5	14,3	37,5	50,0	25,0	14,3	–	14,3	–	–
14.	try to pinpoint the problems that hinder my listening comprehension.	12,5	7,1	62,5	35,7	18,8	35,7	6,3	7,1	–	–

15.	think of ways of overcoming my problems in listening.	12,5	14,3	31,3	64,3	50,0	14,3	-	-	6,3	-
16.	try to understand which areas I have difficulty with in listening.	31,3	35,7	43,8	50,0	18,8	7,1	-	-	6,3	-

The results show that learners' use of only six out of sixteen post-listening strategies have been fostered by the treatment, while there has not been any change in the status of six other strategies. Based on these findings, it can be argued that listening constructivist listening teaching has not yielded the expected positive impact on post-listening strategy use frequency of subjects. However, it can be argued that treatment has been effective in fostering the use some socioaffective post-listening strategies, which was one of the desired results, because constructivist listening teaching aims to promote social interaction as much as possible. In addition, some strategies, e.g., thinking on the parts of the listening text they could not understand; motivating themselves to do better thinking that they performed well; analyse their strengths and weaknesses in listening skill and trying to pinpoint the problems that hinder their listening comprehension, have been less frequently used by learners after treatment. In this respect, we can claim that treatment has not fostered post-listening strategies that require self-evaluation and motivation.

### 3.2. The Results of Experiment Group Questionnaire on Learners' Reactions to Listening Tasks

Below are the findings of EG's Questionnaire on Learners' Reactions to Listening Tasks. The percentages for each item are provided under two different categories: before treatment (BT) and after treatment (AT).

Table 4. The percentages of experiment group's reactions to listening tasks before and after treatment

	Reactions	Always		Usually		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
		BT	AT	BT	AT	BT	AT	BT	AT	BT	AT
1.	The listening tasks... trigger some mental pictures in my mind.	25,0	15,4	43,8	30,8	18,8	46,2	6,3	7,7	6,3	-
2.	allow for the construction of new schemata in my mind.	18,8	7,7	43,8	23,1	31,3	61,5	-	7,7	6,3	-
3.	help me to thrive intellectually.	18,8	7,7	37,5	46,2	37,5	30,8	-	15,4	6,3	-
4.	help me to handle anxiety with greater ease.	18,8	7,7	12,5	46,2	43,8	30,8	18,8	15,4	6,3	-
5.	make me feel more relaxed.	6,3	7,7	31,3	38,5	43,8	38,5	12,5	15,4	6,3	-
6.	give me the chance to think upon what I do.	31,3	23,1	25,0	61,5	31,3	-	6,3	15,4	6,3	-
7.	arouse my curiosity when the topic is interesting.	37,5	46,2	50,0	30,8	12,5	23,1	-	-	-	-
8.	encourage me to exchange ideas with my peers.	12,5	23,1	43,8	53,8	43,8	15,4	-	-	-	-
9.	help me interpret the listening text from my own point of view.	18,8	15,4	37,5	61,5	31,3	23,1	12,5	-	-	-
10.	give me the chance to think about the time, setting and social identities.	18,8	15,4	25,0	61,5	37,5	23,1	6,3	-	12,5	-
11.	make me listen very carefully to understand every word.	37,5	30,8	50,0	38,5	12,5	23,1	-	7,7	-	-
12.	activate my problem-solving and critical thinking skills.	37,5	-	12,5	69,2	37,5	23,1	6,3	7,7	6,3	-
13.	urge me to make inferences.	12,5	-	50,0	30,8	31,3	61,5	-	7,7	6,3	-
14.	make me feel unhappy because I can understand nothing.	18,8	7,7	18,8	30,8	25,0	38,5	12,5	23,1	25,0	-
15.	make me isolate myself from others to fully comprehend the listening text.	31,3	15,4	25,0	23,1	31,3	46,2	6,3	15,4	6,3	-
16.	give me the feeling that I am being tested, rather than learning.	18,8	7,7	31,3	46,2	18,8	23,1	25,0	7,7	6,3	15,4

17.	make me need silence to hear each and every detail of the text.	56,3	15,4	25,0	53,8	12,5	15,4	6,3	15,4	–	–
18.	make me focus on individual words rather than sentences or ideas.	25,0	23,1	50,0	53,8	25,0	15,4	–	7,7	–	–
19.	give me the feeling of being lost in the middle of nowhere.	12,5	–	18,8	7,7	25,0	46,2	12,5	23,1	31,3	23,1
20.	raises my awareness of my own learning.	31,3	15,4	43,8	76,9	25,0	7,7	–	–	–	–
21.	make me confused and anxious because it is only aural.	18,8	–	50,0	30,8	6,3	46,2	12,5	7,7	12,5	15,4
22.	are too abstract for me.	6,3	7,7	31,3	38,5	43,8	30,8	18,8	15,4	–	7,7
23.	give me the feeling that I am not learning anything.	6,3	7,7	18,8	7,7	31,3	38,5	18,8	15,4	25,0	30,8
24.	encourage me to interact with my peers.	31,3	15,4	18,8	38,5	43,8	30,8	6,3	–	–	7,7
25.	make me need support of the teacher and my peers.	12,5	15,4	56,3	38,5	18,8	46,2	6,3	–	6,3	–
26.	activate my reasoning and judging skills.	12,5	7,7	37,5	46,2	50,0	30,8	–	7,7	–	–
27.	are generally skipped by the teachers in the classroom.	6,3	–	25,0	23,1	25,0	53,8	25,0	15,4	18,8	7,7
28.	are disliked by most learners.	31,3	15,4	31,3	23,1	31,3	46,2	6,3	15,4	–	–
29.	are not very important because they do not teach anything.	–	23,1	12,5	–	31,3	30,8	12,5	15,4	43,8	30,8
30.	are very useful in terms of vocabulary and grammar teaching.	50,0	46,2	18,8	38,5	31,3	7,7	–	–	–	–
31.	are very enjoyable for me.	18,8	30,8	25,0	38,5	50,0	23,1	6,3	7,7	–	–
32.	are great opportunities for me to improve my language.	50,0	30,8	25,0	46,2	18,8	7,7	6,3	7,7	–	–
33.	make me develop some strategies.	31,3	23,1	43,8	53,8	18,8	15,4	6,3	7,7	–	–
34.	are very important.	43,8	15,4	25,0	46,2	25,0	30,8	6,3	–	–	–
35.	make me understand the importance of listening in communication.	43,8	30,8	37,5	38,5	12,5	23,1	6,3	7,7	–	–

An overall analysis of data above reveals that constructivist listening teaching has, in general, generated positive reactions to listening tasks, because a higher number of learners agreed that listening tasks activated their critical thinking skills and raised their awareness of learning after treatment. In addition, the fact that there has been an increase in the number of subjects who think that constructivist listening tasks encouraged them to interact with their peers is one of the facts that confirms the underlying assumptions of the study. Similarly, that more students confessed that constructivist listening teaching aroused their curiosity also proves that treatment has been successful in generating positive learner reactions to listening tasks. However, that more subjects thought that listening tasks made them unhappy, because they could not understand anything and gave them the feeling of being tested indicate that constructivist listening teaching has failed to change some of learners' negative reactions to listening tasks.

The results indicate that fewer subjects think that listening tasks make them listen very carefully to understand every word. It is promising to observe that treatment has helped learners understand the importance of focusing on the overall message, rather than being fixed on individual words. In line with the result that learners' awareness of learning has increased with constructivist listening teaching; fewer subjects think that listening tasks give them the feeling of not learning anything.

Having a quick look at the reactions that have not changed after treatment makes us realize that learners still find listening tasks too abstract after treatment. Similarly, the results show that treatment has failed to make learners understand the importance of listening in communication. Finally, the fact that the number of subjects who think that listening tasks make them develop strategies have not increased, supports the findings from EFL Strategies Survey results.



#### **4. Discussion**

Listening has always been the skill brushed under the carpet for the sake of developing other language skills, i.e., reading, writing or speaking. Most EFL teachers have a natural tendency to take listening for granted. However, listening deserves a better position in EFL classrooms considering the crucial role of listening in foreign language learning.

Based on the findings from EFL Listening Strategies Survey, it can be concluded that overt strategy instruction has been, to some extent, effective in improving learners' strategy use despite its limitations in some aspects, i.e., training learners in managing their affective status. Similarly, the research findings show that constructivist listening teaching has achieved in changing learners' reactions to listening tasks which were made more interactive by allowing learners to ask questions, and create their own interpretation of the text, rather than merely listen and reproduce the ideas through some exercise items on a course book. However, learners' strategy use frequency has not shown a significant difference after treatment; in truth, a considerable number of strategies remained at the same level of frequency after the treatment.

Similarly, the analysis of data from Questionnaire on Learners' Reactions to Listening Tasks revealed that constructivist listening teaching has generated positive changes in learners' reactions to listening tasks. However, it has failed to bring about a significant change in learners' reactions, which mostly supported the results of EFL Listening Strategies Survey.

#### **5. Conclusion**

The study has been successful in proving that constructivist listening teaching and overt strategy training may lead to positive changes in strategy use of learners and their reactions to listening tasks. Based on aforementioned findings of the study, it can be suggested that traditional listening tasks should be redesigned to make EFL classroom listening real-life like.

There are many ways to make listening tasks resemble real life listening. To begin with, EFL teachers can foster their learners' strategy use by overtly teaching them strategies. To name a few, they can ask them to guess the type of language that will appear in the listening text, visualize the setting in their minds, or guess the appearance, age and background of speakers. Secondly, they can use some different techniques from the ones they always use. For example, they can stop the listening text during the main listening activity and ask learners to discuss what will come next and create some questions the answers of which they expect to find in the following part of the listening activity. They can use videos within the listening tasks so that meaning will not be conveyed only through aural channel, but also through visual channel, which will aid learners' comprehension of the listening text. Thirdly, EFL teachers can be more cautious to make pre- while and post stages of listening tasks more open to student-student and student-teacher interaction. It may be a good idea to activate learners' guessing and inferencing skills by engaging learners in activities that focus on these skills.

In this way, listening tasks can be saved from being source of anxiety for learners during which learners merely listen in utter silence and try to answer some listening comprehension questions on a piece of paper without any peer interaction or visual aids.

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