The Impact of Motivational Teaching Practice on Listening Comprehension and its Associated Cognitive Load

Mehrak Rahimi and Alireza Mehri rahimi@sru.ac.ir

English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Shahid Rajaee Teacher Training University, Lavizan, 1678815811, Tehran, Iran

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Abstract

The main purpose of the present study was to investigate the impact of motivational teaching practice on EFL learners' listening comprehension and its associated cognitive load. To attain this goal, a total number of 50 students were recruited and assigned into experimental (n=25) and control (n=25) groups. Before the study, listening proficiency of both groups were assessed by listening section of Key English Test (KET). The associated cognitive load of KET was assessed by NASA Task Load Index immediately after KET administration. Listening was taught to the experimental group by motivational teaching practice, while the control group received instruction based on conventional model of teaching (pre-listening, listening, post-listening). Listening proficiency of both groups and listening cognitive load were assessed at the end of the experiment again. The data were analyzed by one-way Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). The result of ANCOVA

revealed a significant difference between the listening proficiency and its associated cognitive load after the treatment. The findings showed that teaching listening with motivational teaching practice could develop listening proficiency of the experimental group and lower their listening cognitive load significantly in comparison to the control group. The findings of the study have implications for language experts, ministry of education, and material developers to put an attempt to providing better learning conditions for EFL learners and promote their motivation to learn a foreign language for guaranteeing teaching and learning effectiveness.

Keywords: Motivation, Listening Comprehension, Cognitive Load

Introduction

Motivation- as a source of effort and energy- plays a great role in helping people achieve their goals. Indisputably, motivation is a key factor in academic success and its absence can cause lots of problems for students, teachers and the educational system, and ultimately the whole society. The importance of motivation in language learning and teaching is also evident and as a result in the past decades there has been a surge of interest in exploring factors that motivate or demotivate language learners.

Motivation as a cognitive enterprise is profoundly influenced by cognitive processes and inner reinforcers such as reasons to do something, conscious choices to act, and sustained intellectual efforts to attain a previously set goal (Williams & Burden, 1997). These cognitive processes are linked to emotional factors like enthusiasm, interest, and enjoyment from one side and contextual and environmental factors such as school setting, teachers, type of instruction and teaching content from another side. Naturally, when students

are interested in a particular topic or task they pay more attention to it and thus "become more cognitively engaged in it" (Ormrod, 2011, p.375). In the same way, students who lack interest in learning, lose their enthusiasm to learn and do difficult and challenging tasks. In addition, teachers' behaviour, teaching style, rapport with students, and classroom discipline strategies as well as type of instruction and learning tasks can influence student's interest and sustained effort in learning (Rahimi & Hosseini, 2013).

Strong motivation is highly valued in doing language tasks that are inherently difficult and challenging for language learners. Listening comprehension is repeatedly reported to be challenging for EFL learners in the literature due to personal, educational and contextual factors. While listening, the listener is expected to deal with both bottom-up and top-down information processing, and at the same time s/he should deploy listening strategies to regulate the process of listening. Time pressure, anxiety, and fear of not comprehending the aural input are also among the burdens the listeners normally bear. The whole process imposes a remarkable workload and as a result, if interest and motivation are lacking in this process, the listeners would abandon comprehending aural texts and pursue learning a foreign language by focusing more on the written input. This ultimately leads to failure in communication and losing a part of language competence. Therefore, as a cognitively difficult task, listening comprehension in a second language needs a lot of support and encouragement both intrinsically and extrinsically.

From a purely cognitive perspective, it is suggested that if learners cannot handle task complexity, their working memory is overloaded (Van Merrirnboer, Kirchner, & Kester, 2003). Memory overload causes fatigue,

inattention, and withdrawal. To overcome this load, planning appropriate instructional practice and preparing attractive listening tasks are extremely important. This means that more motivating teaching strategies should be incorporated into listening instructional. However, due to the popularity of the reductionist and linear views towards the role of motivation in language learning, comprehensive models of teaching motivation in language classes are scarce. One such model is Motivational Teaching Practice (MTP) that addresses the question of how teachers can motivate learners through creating basic motivational conditions, generating, maintaining and protecting motivation, and encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation (Dörnyei, 2001). It is suggested that the incorporation of the components of this model into the cycle of teaching can promote motivation and thus sustained effort in doing the learning task (Dörnyei, & Ushioda, 2012). It is logical to implement MTP in teaching listening comprehension and scrutinize its effects on the development of listening comprehension and managing its associated cognitive load.

Review of Literature

Listening as one of the receptive language skills, is considered as a channel through which comprehensible input is taken in (Krashen, 1985) and an asset to communication and language acquisition. Listening once was viewed as a passive skill without any specific role in language curriculum. Yet, evolutional movements within psychology coincidental with developments and progressions in language education inspired researchers and pedagogues to delve more into human cognition and how brain actively processes linguistic information of any type –written or aural. As a result, all aspects of

listening including cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions are now focused in defining listening. From this perspective listening is

a complex active process in which the listener must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation, retain what was gathered in all of the above and interpret it within the immediate as well as the larger socio-cultural context of the utterance (Vandergrift, 1999, p.168).

The core element of listening is communication and interaction between interlocutors, where in most listening situations the listener takes the dual role of listener/speaker. This dual role involves the listener in a constant effort to send and receive the message, while both bottom-up and top-down processing of information are interactively in progress, helping the person to take advantage of both linguistic and non-linguistic information to lighten and relieve the burden of decoding and encoding the aural/oral input.

During bottom up processing of linguistic information the focus is on every details of the language input (Moley, 2001) while the listener mainly deals with the units of the language and tries to build "acoustic features into phonemes, phonemes into syllables, syllables into words, words into syntactic patterns, [and] syntactic patterns into propositional (abstract) meaning" (Field, 2006, p. 20). In contrast to this data-driven information processing, listeners try to understand the purpose of the message by the help of contextual clues, the content and the setting and activating appropriate schematic knowledge. The background knowledge or schemata saved in the

memory have a key role in creating meaning while someone is reading or listening to texts.

The cognitive dimension of listening "involves discrimination, perception, and comprehension phases intermingled with the listeners' motivational and intentional investment" (Rahimi & Sayyadi, 2019, p. 383). This is from one side related to the workload that the listeners experience as a result of cognitive processes that take place in the brain, and from the other side to demotivating factors that are mainly the result of the type of instruction and listening tasks designed either by materials developers or the teachers themselves. Conventionally, the cognitive load within listening research is defined based on task difficulty. Brown (1995) for instance, has elaborated on six principles of listening cognitive load that are all related to listening texts/tasks:

- Cognitive load, principle 1. It is easier to understand any text (narrative, description, instruction, or argument) that involves FEWER rather than MORE individuals and objects.
- Cognitive load, principle 2. It is easier to understand any text (particularly narrative texts) involving individuals or objects which are clearly DISTINCT from one another.
- Cognitive load, principle 3. It is easier to understand texts (particularly description or instruction texts) involving simple spatial relationships.
- Cognitive load, principle 4. It is easier to understand texts where the order of telling matches the order of events.

- Cognitive load, principle 5. It is easier to understand a text if relatively few familiar inferences are necessary to relate each sentence to the preceding text.
- Cognitive load, principle 6. It is easier to understand a text if the information in the text is clear (not ambiguous), self-consistent and fits in readily with information you already have.
- Cognitive load, principle 7. It is easier to understand a text if the information in the text is presented through multimodal input involving both audio and visual presentations.

In this regard the features of working memory and attention are neglected. Recent propositions within the cognitive load theory, however, attribute the load of listening comprehension in a second/foreign language to the architecture of the brain where the biological and mental characteristics of the listeners are also of vital importance.

The type of knowledge people acquire is considered to be of two types: primary and secondary; while the former is acquired effortlessly and naturally, the latter requires effort, instruction and focused attention (Sweller, 2019). Based on this proposition, acquiring a second or foreign language is a type of biologically secondary knowledge. Certain structures and processes are associated with this type of knowledge acquisition including how information is stored and held in LTM, the role of instruction and explicit knowledge in language learning, random knowledge generation and testing, cognitive load issues due to limitation of working memory in instruction, and the way large quantity of knowledge is stored in LTM during instruction (Sweller, 2017).

Based on this cognitive architecture, the purpose of instruction is to facilitate the storage of relevant information in long-term memory. Learning means storing information in long-term memory. That process of storage needs to take into account the characteristics of the human cognitive system and in particular, the limitations of working memory that are directly relevant to instructional design issues

In this framework, workload takes place when the instruction does not observe the cognitive structure and brain performance of the listeners while doing listening tasks. The concept of cognitive load is associated with the capacity and duration of working memory (Baddeley, 1992) and has been found to be correlated with the amount of information, time for processing the information, task stress, and the environment where the performance is taking place.

Cognitive load is a tripartite construct consisting of intrinsic, germane, and extrinsic loads. Intrinsic cognitive load is the load of a specific topic or task that inherently exists in its nature. Germane cognitive load refers to devotion of schemata to the task. Extraneous load deals with the way the task is designed and presented. Based on this model, intrinsic load should be managed, germane load should increase and extraneous load should decrease to minimize the entire cognitive load. If the workload of the tasks increases, performance decreases and as a result task error and stress escalate (Fig 1.) (Veltman & Jansen, 2006).



Figure 1. Veltman and Jansen's Workload and Performance Interplay

It is noteworthy to mention that the only component of cognitive load that can be manipulated by external variables is the extraneous load to reduce "working memory resources devoted to extraneous issues and increasing the availability of germane resources devoted to intrinsic cognitive load" (Sweller, et al., 2011, p. 58). As for listening, that is inherently a difficult task for EFL learners, the instruction and teaching content should be designed in a way that the extraneous cognitive load decreases and as a result the listeners can manage the intrinsic load of the listening activity by activating as much as schemata required to do the task.

Considering the learning situations and learner's limited cognitive capacity, three possible instructional scenarios are possible: too much extraneous processing, too much essential processing, and not enough generative processing (Clark & Mayer, 2016). To manage these challenges, certain solutions have been proposed (Table 1)

Table 1. Approaches to Manage Challenges of Cognitive Load (Clark & Mayer, 2016,
p. 38)

Challenge	Description	Solution	Examples
Too much extraneous processing	The cognitive load caused by extraneous and essential processes exceeds mental capacity	Use instructional methods that decrease extraneous processing	 Use audio to describe complex visuals Write lean text and audio narration
Too much essential processing	The content is so complex that it exceeds cognitive capacity	Use techniques to manage content complexity	 Segment content into small chunks Use pre-training to teach concepts and facts separately
Insufficient generative processing	The learner does not engage in sufficient processing to result in learning	Incorporate techniques that promote psychological engagement	Add practice activitiesAdd relevant visuals

These approaches to manage the challenges of cognitive load are very important in designing listening instruction as the way the listening comprehension is defined and modelled and based on which listening task is presented to students may be the source of cognitive load itself. Based on Table 1, the following solutions can be provided to manage listening cognitive load:

- *Too much extraneous processing:* using listening instruction that decreases extraneous processing, i.e., alternative models to cognitive listening instruction (e.g. metacognitive listening instruction, computer-based listening instruction).
- *Too much essential processing:* using presentation/teaching techniques that decrease the cognitive load of listening task based on Brown's principles of cognitive load of listening (e.g., multimedia presentations)
- *Insufficient generative processing:* using classroom activities that promote active listening (e.g., listening strategies, group work, reflections, etc.)

Coincidental with the evolution of the theoretical bases of cognitive load in the last two decades (Sweller, Van Merriënboer, & Paas, 1998; Sweller, 2010; Sweller, 2017; Sweller, 2019) a few researchers have shown interest in understanding the predictors of workload of listening comprehension from the perspective of cognitive load theory. The cognitive correlates of listening with respect to inhibitory control, theory of mind, and comprehension monitoring after accounting for vocabulary and age were examined by Kim and Philips (2014). It is also found that listening comprehension is directly predicted by working memory, grammatical knowledge, inference, and theory of mind and is indirectly predicted by attention, vocabulary, and comprehension monitoring (Kim, 2016). Farquharson and Jiang (2018) reported that working memory and behavioural attention had direct effect on listening comprehension in comparison to reading. Rahimi and Sayyadi (2019) investigated the cognitive load of listening activities of a cognitivebased listening instruction and reported a high cognitive load for the designed listening activities.

One point that is neglected in literature of workload of listening comprehension is the type of instruction that can help learners optimize their cognitive investments while their emotions and anxieties are managed and controlled. In this respect, increasing students' motivation in listening instruction is of interest. To the best knowledge of the researches no study has been done on the application of instructional practices of motivation such as MTP to examine the effect of raised motivation on managing the workload of listening activities and sustaining doing the task. The current study thus seeks to answer the following research questions:

- 1. Does Motivational Teaching Practice have any significant impact on EFL learners' development of listening comprehension?
- 2. Does Motivational Teaching Practice have any significant impact on EFL learners' listening cognitive load?

Method

Participants

Fifty 10th grade students of a state school in Tehran were non-randomly selected and assigned into experimental (n=25) and control (n=25) groups. All participants were male and ranged in age between 15 to 16.

Instruments

Key English Test (KET)

KET was used to assess participants' listening proficiency prior and after the study. KET is an English language examination provided by Cambridge

Assessment English (previously known as Cambridge English Language Assessment and University of Cambridge ESOL examinations). It is one of the examinations in Cambridge English Qualifications – a path for improving language skills. There are 5 parts in listening section of KET and the overall time allowed for the tasks is 30 minutes. The texts are written or adapted specifically for the test and recorded in a studio to stimulate real spoken language. Five parts of the test are as follows:

Part 1 Five separate short dialogues, between two speakers, in informal and neutral contexts.

Part 2 A conversational exchange between two speakers, in an informal context.

Part 3 A conversational exchange between two speakers, possibly a phone conversation, in an informal or neutral context.

Part 4 A dialogue between two people, possibly a phone conversation, in a neutral context.

Part 5 A monologue in a neutral context, possibly a recorded message.

The Listening section is worth 25% of the total score for the exam. Each of the 25 listening questions scores 1 mark. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of KET was estimated to be .76 in this study.

NASA task load index (TLX)

NASA task load index (TLX) was used to measure work load of listening comprehension before and after the study. The NASA-TLX is one of the

most widely used instruments to assess overall subjective workload. It is a multi-dimensional instrument with six subscales: Physical Demand (PD) and Temporal Demand (TD), Mental Demand (MD), Frustration (FR), Effort (EF), and Performance (PE). It is suggested that the combination of these 6 subscales could present the overall workload experienced by the participants (Hart & Staveland, 1988). Although, recent studies have also shown that measuring mental workload with the NASA-TLX may examine each dimension rather than relying on the global score (Galy, Paxion, & Berthelon, 2018). NASA has been used in various studies and has shown high reliability indices. In the current study, its Cronbach alpha coefficient was estimated to be .81.

The teaching materials

The book for K-10 is Vision 1 (Alavimoghadam, et al. 2018) that consists of 4 units with the following themes: Saving Nature, Wonders of Creation, Value of Knowledge, and Travelling the world. The time dedicated to English class is 3 hours per week. Listening activities cover almost 25% of the materials in each lesson, following four strands organization of materials development (Rahimi & Sayyadi, 2019) proposing that "a course should include a roughly even balance of the four strands of meaning-focused input, language-focused learning, meaning-focused output and fluency activities" (Nation & Macalister, 2010, p. 51).

3.5 Procedure

In pursuit of the purpose of the study, the following steps were taken:

Two classes of K-10 were selected and assigned to be the control and experimental groups. Then the listening comprehension section of KET was assigned as the pre-test. NASA task load index (TLX) was administered sequentially to assess the associated cognitive load of KET.

All the students in two groups were exposed to the same materials and the same amount of instruction. Listening was taught to the experimental group by motivational teaching practice and the control group experienced a conventional 3-phase cycle of listening instruction, that is pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening.

The intervention

Dornyie (2001) addresses the question of how teachers can motivate learners and suggests four principal aspects for teaching motivation (Fig 1). In this process, first the teacher sets up small groups in which each member has a clearly defined role (creating the basic motivational conditions). The groups are given a task with a desired outcome and the learners are expected to achieve through working together (generating initial motivation). This in turn promotes cooperation among the learners and makes learning stimulating and enjoyable (maintaining and protecting motivation). The teacher moves among the groups, offering advice and encouragement as they work towards the goal, and the learners experience feelings of satisfaction when they complete the task (encouraging positive retrospective selfevaluation).



Figure 2. The components of motivational teaching practice in the L2 classroom (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 29, as cited in Dörnyei, 2012, p. 108).

Instruction for the Control Group

The control group received instruction based on the following three stages:

• Pre-listening, during which the teacher helped students to prepare to listen.

• While listening, during which the teacher helped students to focus their attention on the

listening text and guided the development of their understanding of it.

• Post-listening, during which the teacher helped students integrate what they had learnt from

the text into their existing knowledge.

The study lasted for 6 months. At the end of the study, both groups participated in KET and NASA task load index (TLX) as post-tests.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics of KET pre-test and post-test are depicted in Table 2.

As Table 2 shows, both groups' listening comprehension has improved at the end of the study.

Variables	Groups	Pertest		Post-test	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Part 1	Control	2.200	1.000	3.040	1.240
	Experimental	2.640	1.287	3.720	1.100
Part 2	Control	2.200	1.154	3.080	1.077
	Experimental	3.320	1.249	4.720	.842
Part 3	Control	2.440	1.157	2.440	1.157
	Experimental	3.040	1.098	3.040	1.098
Part 4	Control	2.520	1.045	3.160	1.280
	Experimental	3.040	1.059	4.360	.907
Part 5	Control	2.640	1.220	2.520	.962
	Experimental	3.120	1.166	3.560	.869
KET (Listening	Control	12.000	2.273	14.240	2.712
section)	Experimental	15.160	3.184	19.40	2.661

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for KET pre-test and post-test

The descriptive statistics of NASA TLX pre-test and post-test are depicted in Table 3.

As Table 3 shows, the associated workload of the listening test has dramatically declined after the experiment for the experimental group, while this is not the case for the control group.

Research questions

To answer research question 1 and find out if motivational teaching practice had any significant impact on the development of EFL learners' listening comprehension, Analysis of Covariance was used while KET pre-test scores were considered as a covariant in the analysis.

Variables	Groups	Pertest		Post-test	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Mental Demand	Control	96.400	5.500	92.800	5.016
	Experimental	95.000	4.082	16.800	7.483
Physical Demand	Control	94.000	8.539	93.400	7.320
	Experimental	91.600	6.075	21.600	12.559
Temporal Demand	Control	60.200	3.421	61.000	12.583
	Experimental	86.000	1.779	42.200	12.884
Performance	Control	67.200	4.975	70.000	18.200
	Experimental	69.000	3.304	21.600	12.223
Effort	Control	93.000	1.707	95.800	4.490
	Experimental	93.200	1113	35.400	18.423
Frustration	Control	94.400	1.641	95.800	4.102
	Experimental	96.800	.907	11.600	6.409
NASA TLX	Control	505.200	44.311	510.800	25.194
	Experimental	531.600	30.846	151.200	35.539

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for NASA TLX pre-test and post-test

As the result of ANCOVA shows (F = 21.903, p = .000 > .05, partial eta squared = .318), there is a significant difference between the two groups' posttest scores at the end of the study.

Examining the descriptive statistics in Table 1 shows that the control group (M = 12.000, SD = 2.273) and the experimental group (M = 15.160, SD = 3.184) had low scores in listening test prior to the experiment. However, the experimental group outperformed (M = 19.40, SD = 2.712) the control group in KET post-test (M = 14.240, SD = 2.712).

	Type III Sum					Partial Eta
Source	of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Squared
Corrected Model	434.637	2	217.319	41.733	.000	.640
Intercept	179.160	1	179.160	34.406	.000	.423
KET pre-test	101.817	1	101.817	19.553	.000	.294
Group	114.056	1	114.056	21.903	.000*	.318
Error	244.743	47	5.207			
Total	14825.000	50				
Corrected Total	679.380	49				

Table 4. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

To answer research question 2 and find out if motivational teaching practice had any significant impact on EFL learners' listening cognitive load, ANCOVA was used while NASA TLX pre-test scores were considered as the covariant in the analysis.

	Type III Sum of					Partial Eta
Source	Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Squared
Corrected Model	1618451.067	2	809225.534	874.357	.000	.974
Intercept	15202.048	1	15202.048	16.426	.000	.259
NASA pre-test	2049.067	1	2049.067	2.214	.143	.045
Group	1473751.262	1	1473751.262	1592.368	.000*	.971
Error	43498.933	47	925.509			
Total	7140000.000	50				
Corrected Total	1661950.000	49				

Table 5. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

As the result of ANCOVA shows (F = 1592.368, p= .000 >.05, partial eta squared = .971), there is a significant difference between the two groups at the end of the study. Examining the descriptive statistics in Table 2 shows that both control group (M = 505.200, SD = 44.311) and experimental group (M = 531.600, SD = 30.846) underwent a noticeably high task load prior to the experiment. However, having been exposed to the experiment, it is seen that the cognitive load of the experimental group (M = 151.200, SD = 35.539) was highly lowered, while the control group still experienced a high amount of task load (M = 510.800, SD = 25.194).

Discussion

This study aimed at examining the effect of a teaching motivation model on the development of listening comprehension of EFL learners and the way they can manage the associated cognitive load of the listening tasks.

The findings of the study primarily showed that the experimental group who received the instruction based on MTP, had improved their listening comprehension significantly in comparison to the control group who underwent a comprehension-based model of teaching listening. The reason of this finding can be attributed to the fact that MTP is a comprehensive framework for practicing different motivational techniques in an organized and coherent way. The model initiates with preparing the ground ready for a class where all the members (both teacher and the students) feel motivated to create and maintain a positive class atmosphere. This atmosphere lowers students' listening anxiety and fear, that has been found to be one of the greatest obstacles in the process of developing listening comprehension. "Learner involvement will be highest in a psychologically safe classroom

climate in which students are encouraged to express their opinions and they are protected from ridicule and embarrassment (Dörnyei, & Ushioda, 2012, p. 110). Further, in this type of instruction group work along with cooperation among classmates is highly supported. Group work inspires group members to attain shared goals and endure the hardship of the task together. By gaining support from the group they become risk takers and tolerant of challenging tasks. Gradually the hardship and tedium of listening tasks are replaced with the joy and pleasure of working together and overcoming the obstacles.

Less fear and more joy encouragelisteners to do different types of listening activities and being exposed to a variety of oral tasks. Apart from the recordings of the lessons, they are exposed to their classmates' accents, how they pronounce words, what expressions and words they use, as well as their ideas and opinions about different topics. When learners are exposed to enough listening activities, they can better develop their communicative skills and fluency, and ultimately their listening comprehension. Also, MTP provides learners with opportunities to take the initiative in their learning by analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, and performing high-order thinking skills, such as problem-solving. Deploying listening strategies helps learners keep their interest in listening tasks in spite of the difficulties and burdens they felt while doing the tasks.

The findings also showed that both groups underwent a high amount of task load before the study, while after the experiment the experimental group's listening workload diminished significantly in comparison to the control group. The learners seemed to have experienced high task loads in listening comprehension activities, which they could not control prior to the study. However, after the experiment, their listening cognitive load was highly lowered. MTP served to lower the task load through a 4-stage process in such a way that the class is changed from a mechanic teaching style to a more enabler one. In this process, having the outer (teacher, peers) and inner (low fear, positive attitudes, experiencing autonomy, using strategies) make the listening tasks less frightening and more enjoyable, and thus the extraneous load of listening has been controlled. When the extraneous cognitive load is reduced, working memory resources devoted to extraneous issues are also reduced and as a result, germane resources devoted to intrinsic cognitive load are going to increase (Sweller, et al., 2011).

MTP seems to have provided learning conditions for language listeners that freed their working memory capacity (Paas, Renkl, & Sweller, 2004) and as a result helped them process the aural information with less tension. This is actually related to the privilege that MTP has over a comprehension-based instruction by making the tasks stimulating and enjoyable and creating more self-confidence among the learners. Comprehension-based instruction (prelistening, listening, post-listening) can be anxiety-provoking due to its overemphasis on one goal, that is comprehending the text. Extraneous and intrinsic cognitive loads are reported to be high in listening tasks that are designed and taught based on this model (Rahimi & Sayyadi, 2019). Anxiety can be harmful to cognitive capacity and processing as anxious learners experience deficient information processing abilities (Ashcraft & Kirk, 2001). Therefore, models that contribute to more confidence and less anxiety work more efficiently in listening classes.

The combination of motivational techniques in MTP seems to help students manage their intrinsic load by diminishing the threat of analysing an oral text that is expressed in a foreign language. The way the tasks are presented, the rapport the students have with their teacher, and the ways the sense of autonomy and independence is created and gained cause the intrinsic load to be managed. Engaging students in tasks through motivational techniques encourages them to show more enthusiasm in doing the tasks and invest more cognitively in doing the activities, even if the tasks are difficult and daunting.

Additionally, MTP served to prepare learners in the pre-listening stage. That is to say, learners are exposed to some information about the content as well as the language form they are going to learn in a pleasant way by group work without experiencing the feeling of defeat or threat. This helps maximizing the germane load and facilitates the investment of schemata in doing the listening tasks. Germane load is related to working memory resources (Sweller, et al. 2011), and as it is related to learning outcome, its high level is favourable (Cierniak, Scheiter, & Gerjets, 2009). It is associated with task familiarity (Leppink et al., 2013) and the knowledge the learner has or need to have while doing the task. Indubitably, when students feel they are familiar with what they are going to listen, they are less nervous and more ready to accomplish their goal and complete the task with satisfaction.

Conclusions

The result of the study revealed that MTP is a suitable teaching practice for EFL learners to improve their listening comprehension and manage their workload while they are listening to foreign voices. In spite of the fact that this study was limited in duration and scope, the results clearly support earlier research on the fact that stress-free listening instruction has a positive

effect on listening comprehension of learners and establishes enjoyable class time period. By applying the principles of motivational teaching practice students become committed and motivated to learn by pursuing their goals and reaching autonomy and self-directedness in doing listening tasks. This not only improves their listening comprehension, but gradually trains their cognition and enables them to invest more cognitively in the process while less workload is being experienced.

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