

## **THE ROLE OF SPOTIFY IN DEVELOPING METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES OF LISTENING IN GENERATION Z**

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### **Abstract**

In an era marked by rapid technological advancement, honing effective listening skills is increasingly crucial for accurately absorbing information. To address this need, the current generation, particularly Gen Z'ers, can leverage contemporary applications like Spotify, a widely utilized music platform. Spotify offers global access to a vast library of music, serving as a valuable tool for enhancing listening abilities. This study investigates the impact of Spotify on the listening metacognitive strategies of Gen Z'ers at State Islamic University Antasari Banjarmasin, focusing on their independent learning practices and listening strategies while using the app. Employing Narrative Inquiry as the research method, interviews were conducted for data collection, with subsequent analysis using narrative analysis techniques. Findings revealed significant improvements in Gen Z'ers' metacognitive listening strategies across 5 categories including selective attention, directed attention, comprehension monitoring, real-time assessment of input, and comprehension evaluation after engaging with English songs utilized by participants, aiding in comprehension of complex English lyrics.

**Keywords:** Comprehensive Guide, Gen Z, Listening Strategies, Spotify

### **INTRODUCTION**

Considering how quickly technology is advancing in this day and age, learning a foreign language—especially English—is becoming more and more necessary as English is now used nearly exclusively in every social field. Given the numerous cultural distinctions among individuals worldwide, English is regarded as a universal language and a valuable tool for information communication. In Indonesia, the use of English is no longer seen as unusual. This includes the ability to listen, which is crucial for understanding the information being conveyed. Students frequently come across the use of English listening skills when watching international news on television, learning the weather, or even just listening to announcements at a transportation station. But since listening is the foundation of both communication and information reception, it is imperative that the learners should improve it.

In order to have effective communication relationships in both individual and group settings, listening skills are crucial as noted by Purdy (1997). The assumption that the only method to acquire listening skills is through formal education, such as attending school or an English language development course is common. However, there are other ways to acquire listening skills, particularly in the modern period where technology is advancing quickly. According to Tyagi (2013), listening is a language skill that involves both the speaker and the listener. It calls for a readiness to receive the information that the speaker is trying to get across as well as an understanding and appreciation of what the speaker is saying. Hearing is never done without a reason. Some watch and listen to TV shows to learn the weather forecast and determine whether to pack an umbrella or a jacket. Others just enjoy listening to music. Based on the objectives, people listen differently. They will listen more skilfully if they have a purpose.

Lynch and Mendelsohn (2010) stated that the processes of identifying the speaker's voice, the focus of the information, and the relevance of the information to the meaning of the topic being addressed are all combined into the act of listening. One of the abilities that can be challenging for some people when learning English is listening. However, hearing plays a significant part in the English language acquisition process. Rost (2009) states that listening can help us communicate effectively and help us understand the social environment around us.

As stated by Sadiku (2015), effective listening is an essential component of effective communication in society. A listener may translate sounds into words that have meanings appropriate for the situation. To effectively comprehend what is being said by the speaker, competent and nimble learners typically employ both top-down and bottom-up techniques. In a top-down process, learners rely on their prior knowledge and experience to help them make sense of what they hear, whereas in a bottom-up process, learners listen to multiple sounds and then synthesize the information sequentially for further interpretation (Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2009).

When discussing technology, one cannot avoid talking about Gen Z'ers, also known as "Digital Natives," a generation that was raised in the age of smartphones and has grown up with sophisticated computers and easy access to the internet (Seemiller and Grace, 2016). This generation, more than any other, has easy access to information via the internet, particularly when it comes to using a variety of media applications that pique their interest in everything, including the English language. According to Harmanto (2012), Gen Zers have several traits, such as being tech-savvy, gregarious, quick thinkers, and multitaskers.

These days, a plethora of applications exist that provide engaging and innovative learning experiences to develop skills. It is also usual to come across applications that serve primarily as tools for skill development rather than education. Spotify is one of the apps that offers streaming services and has millions of songs on it. Spotify is widely recognized as a music streaming service that is popular right now. According to Fleischer (2021), Spotify is the brand name of the corporation as well as the name of a streaming music service. According to Sletten (2021), Spotify is a Swedish firm that made its formal debut in 2008 to operate as an "Intelligent, Assisting, Genuine, Enthusiastic, and Lighthearted" platform that allows its professional producers to express themselves freely in art. According to Gilmour (2011), Spotify offers several intriguing capabilities, such as the ability to instantaneously download music, make custom playlists, listen on many devices, play local files, and synchronize lyrics.

In the Spotify application, podcasts are provided in both audio and visual formats, according to Clifton et al. (2020). This offers users ease and a pleasant experience. All listeners can enjoy free Spotify podcasts, and podcast enthusiasts can quickly discover any theme or subject they're interested in. According to Eriksson et al. (2019), Spotify was marketed as a service that provided instant access to a large selection of music at no cost during its initial year of debut. Spotify leads the worldwide music industry since music is its primary component (MarketLine, 2020).

Currently, Spotify is the most popular music streaming software, and Gen Zers can use it as a tool to improve their listening comprehension. Spotify offers a global music selection, with English music making up the majority of often-found tracks. Because

English songs are accompanied by rhythms and melodies that help listeners decrease feelings of boredom compared to listening to tedious dialogue talks, Purcell (1992) asserts that English songs facilitate the retention of new words and phrases. In their article "The Effectiveness of Joox Application in Teaching English," Khidayah et al. (2021) reported that using the Joox music streaming app increased students' average post-test scores relative to their pre-test scores on the English exam. They also found that using the Joox app increased students' enthusiasm and interest in learning the language. The music streaming service Spotify can be used as a vocabulary learning tool and is successful in helping students improve a variety of vocabulary skills, according to research done by Apriyanti (2024) on "The Use of Spotify as a Vocabulary Learning Tool for Individual Learners."

In their study "Students' Perception on the Use of Spotify to Improve Students' Pronunciation," Ilyas & Kaniadewi (2023) found that students concur that Spotify helps improve pronunciation, particularly because it has many features that support learning. They also contend that listening to music and paying attention to the lyrics can improve pronunciation and increase students' interest in listening to English songs. In a study conducted by Afriyuninda & Oktaviani (2021), the use of English songs as a medium for listening ability development yielded positive outcomes, as demonstrated by the results of 100 students. Jannah and Setyobudi's (2022) study, demonstrated how using Spotify music can help students focus and comprehend what they are listening to; as a result, the average score of the students they researched improved from the pre-test to the post-test stage. Because they focus on the song's lyrics, listening to English songs helps people learn new vocabulary and practice pronouncing words correctly (Abhimanyu, 2023) in addition to improving their listening skills.

Based on the previously mentioned data, researchers decided to conduct this study at State Islamic University Antasari Banjarmasin using the specifications of English education majors who have taken listening courses over the course of eight semesters. They are interested in learning more about how Gen Z listens after listening to English songs on Spotify.

Few studies have explicitly examined how Spotify, a popular audio streaming app, aids in the development of metacognitive listening strategies, even though many have examined the use of digital tools and streaming platforms in language learning. Furthermore, the research that is now available frequently focuses on general listening abilities without exploring the metacognitive processes involved, especially for Generation Z, a group that uses digital media extensively.

This study examines Spotify as a potential educational tool for improving metacognitive listening skills, in addition to being an entertainment platform. This creates a unique connection between the fields of music technology and cognitive learning. It emphasizes how regular digital involvement helps promote self-regulated learning, which includes organizing, tracking, and assessing auditory input, by concentrating on Generation Z. This novel viewpoint offers new understandings of how informal learning environments might complement the development of formal cognitive skills.

The purpose of the study examines how the Spotify app helps Generation Z listeners develop metacognitive listening strategies. In particular, it aims to investigate how Spotify's features—such as user-generated listening habits, podcast content, and

carefully selected playlists—help improve metacognitive strategies like selective attention, directed attention, comprehension monitoring, real-time assessment of input, and comprehension evaluation involved in metacognitive strategies.

## **METHOD**

The researchers chose to employ the Narrative Inquiry research methodology, which seeks to generate comprehensive data regarding the topic under investigation. A qualitative research approach called "narrative inquiry," according to Creswell (2012), focuses on individual experiences or tales. Using the data gathered, the researcher then determines the significance of these experiences. Creswell (2012) outlines the following procedures for putting Narrative Inquiry into practice: Determine the phenomenon that requires more study, choose volunteers who fit the study's phenomenon, synthesize participant narratives or experiences, recount an individual's narrative or encounter, work together with the participants and confirm the accuracy of the report. The English Language Education Department at the Faculty of Education and Teacher Training of State Islamic University Antasari Banjarmasin South Kalimantan has permitted this research can be done. This place was selected by the researchers because it meets the requirements for the necessary participants.

Since the purpose of this research is to ascertain how students use Spotify media to improve their listening skills, the participants must use the Spotify application and have an interest in listening to English songs. The five participants in this study are eighth-semester students at State Islamic University Antasari Banjarmasin who are majoring in the English Language Education Department and have completed listening courses. They are Generation Z who were born between 1997-2012 and were also chosen through the use of snowball sampling, which, according to Lopez & Whitehead (2013), is a technique in which the researcher gathers data from one or more participants, who then link the researcher with other participants through existing participants who may be related to them as friends, family, or acquaintances, so expanding the amount of data collected.

In this study, interviews were employed as the method of data collection. Interviews were conducted by the researchers with participants to elucidate their listening strategies following their use of Spotify as a learning support tool for independent study. Schostak (2006) states that the purpose of conducting interviews is to gather comprehensive data regarding a certain topic or issue, as well as to understand how a phenomenon may arise and be understood within the respondent's context. According to Swap et al. (2001), the methodology attempts to ground the particular discussion in the unique experiences of the research participants. The research has involved conducting interviews using Google Meet media.

The part of data analysis is where the collected data is processed to provide the relevant knowledge and conclusions. In narrative analysis, researchers must first gather participant stories of experiences through interviews before compiling them into narratives. Throughout the interview, the participant may give narratives about their own experiences that are centered around their reality: By setting up a meeting to conduct the interview, the researcher assisted the participants in sharing their stories (Mishler, 1986). Here, the participant and the researcher work together flexibly to comprehend the participant's account of their experience.



To minimize uncertainty in the interview and allow participants' responses to continue developing, the researchers interview an experienced interviewer (Paget, 1983). When an interview is handled and conducted skillfully, the outcomes of participants' experience storytelling can be turned into tales. Experience accounts or unprocessed interview material that has been recorded played back, and reviewed by researchers to be transcribed into a comprehensible format (Bird, 2005). Results of data sorting or separation from different word errors are contained in transcriptions. The data is then assembled and sequenced so that the data displayed only consists of conversations that can be examined further.

A process of testing, strengthening, and deepening the understanding of the happening events was involved in structuring the findings of the interview texts (Mishler, 1991). The researcher can obtain insights into how to present the participants' experiences in the text by carefully reviewing the transcripts and listening to the recorded interviews multiple times. This process reduced the transcripts' results to the essentials, which transformed the analysis into a narrative.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Findings**

These are some metacognitive strategies that students utilize in listening activities. Researchers have collected data through learner interviews about the methods they employ when listening to English music. These strategies have been proposed by students.

#### **a. Selective attention**

By paying closer attention to the details of the music they are listening to, such as the song's main idea and terminology that is deemed significant, the students are now adopting a metacognitive method in the listening activity related to Spotify.

Answered by L4, *"Yes, when listening to a song there must be important vocabulary that makes the meaning of the song clearer, so I can better understand the core message in the song."* And L5's reaction was, *"Yes since it can add a broader understanding of the meaning of the song listened to by focusing on the important vocabulary."* Based on their responses, it is evident that participants utilize selective attention as a method when using Spotify to listen to English music. They further noted that by concentrating more on key language, they were better able to comprehend the meaning of the song they were listening to.

#### **b. Directed attention**

By focusing intently on the song, they are listening to and avoiding distractions, the learners are now using a metacognitive approach in the listening exercise.

*"I usually use a headset or earphones when listening to songs because I do not want any other distractions aside from the sound of the song I am listening to,"* In general, *I avoid crowds and listen to music uninterrupted when I have the time and truly want to."* L1 responded.

L2 disclosed, *"When listening to songs I tend to focus but if I listen to songs to be a companion to do assignments or just relax, I am not too focused because I will find distractions for doing two things at once."* A third response was provided by L3: *"I listen to music when I have free time because it helps me concentrate and stay away from distractions."* To have a deeper understanding of the song I listen to, I also play it several times."

The response from L5 was, *"Yes, I do focus on the song I'm listening to when I have free time, but I don't focus on it when I'm working on an assignment or something else busy."* Through their responses, it became clear that participants were using directed attention as a strategy in their Spotify-based English listening exercises. They indicated that increasing their focus and tuning out outside distractions during the listening process improved their comprehension of the songs' meanings.

#### **c. Comprehension Monitoring**

Currently, the process by which the students verify the comprehension they gain from listening to the songs is the metacognitive strategy that they have employed in the listening task. The response from L1, *"Usually for a new song I listen to, I might just listen to the rhythm and melody to find out if the song suits my taste, if it suits my taste, I will usually listen again then while listening I gradually review my understanding of the song, also sometimes I relate the song I listen to what I feel."* From L2's standpoint, *"Yes, for songs that I want to hear, for example, I want to hear Taylor Swift's song Foolish One, I automatically want to understand the song."*

These responses indicate that participants employ comprehension monitoring techniques when using Spotify to listen to English music; these techniques help verify that the listener understands the song.

#### **d. Real-time assessment of input**

At this moment, learners are using a metacognitive method in which they are aware of difficulties they are hearing in songs and can take action to solve them. The response from L1, *"When listening to songs of course yes, because I am not a native speaker, I still often find problems in translating, especially in a song sometimes the singer does not use standard language or language that is commonly used, so usually there are singers who use slang words and abbreviations that are still unfamiliar to me, so I need to find out more about these things in search."*

Response by L2, *"About getting difficulties it is certain especially if the song heard mostly uses synonyms or antonyms that are rarely known, the solution is to look for translations on Google or Youtube into the songwriter's translation of the song heard to get the exact meaning of the song."* L3 responded by stating, *"For common vocabulary, I often do not have difficulties, but for vocabulary that I have just encountered I often have difficulty understanding, I overcome it by finding out from Google."* Another response was provided by L4. *"Of course, I do, when there is a vocabulary that is unfamiliar to me, I will immediately find out and remember the meaning which is very good for increasing my English vocabulary knowledge."*

The reply from L5 was, *"I usually use translation websites to help me find out vocabulary because when I listen to songs, I often come across vocabulary that I am not familiar with and that makes me interested in finding out."* These responses indicate that participants employed the real-time assessment of input method when engaging in listening activities to Spotify; this strategy aids participants in identifying issues when listening to English music and in making appropriate decisions about how to address them.

#### **e. Comprehension evaluation**

The learners are now using a metacognitive technique in the listening activity, which involves them reevaluating the knowledge they have learned during the song-listening

activity. This activity can be done at any moment after the learner has completed listening to the song.

L3 replied, *"Yes, after listening to the song I immediately review the lyrics to understand more about the foreign vocabulary in the song that I have listened to."* L4 provided another response, saying, *"Yes, I listened to the music again and examined my knowledge after realizing that the lyrics had some good implications when I initially heard it on playback. For instance, Selena Gomez's song 'Who Says,' encourages a lot of individuals to love who they are."*

Based on their responses, it is evident that participants employed the comprehension evaluation strategy to assess their understanding of the English song they had just finished listening to on Spotify. Specifically, participants double-checked their understanding to see if what they had understood about the song was acceptable.

## **Discussion**

### **a.**

The majority of participants reported using the metacognitive approach for selective attention, which involves concentrating on the key ideas presented in the songs they are exposed to, according to the data collected. As stated by Faradisa (2021), selective attention helps students concentrate on the key points that the speaker is trying to get over.

Students **Selective attention** pay attention to specific elements of the content they are listening to. Selective attention includes focusing on the meaning of word clusters, taking note of information structure, listening for repetition, listening for the main idea, listening for well-known or significant words, and listening for tone.

In listening, the cognitive process of concentrating on particular auditory information while blocking out other noises is known as selective attention. It is a skill that entails making conscious and unconscious decisions about what to listen to base on relevance. Selective attention is a listening technique that has three main components, they are: Impact of Hearing Impairment: The capacity to assess the acoustic environment is essential for selective attention. It may be challenging for people with hearing loss to distinguish between conflicting sound sources (Shinn-Cunningham & Best, 2008). Neurological Basis: According to Laffere et al. (2020), auditory selective attention entails focusing attention on temporal periods that are pertinent to the job at hand. Pupilometry: According to McCloy et al. (2017), measuring pupil dilation can reveal the effort required to switch auditory attention.

### **b. Directed attention**

The majority of participants claimed, based on the data in the findings, that they frequently tune out distractions and pay close attention to the music they listen to. According to Vandergrift & Goh (2012), directed attention helps students focus their attention to reduce outside distractions while they listen to the speaker's information. In order to achieve directed attention, the student tries to focus as much as possible, listens carefully to every word, and continues to listen even when there are mistakes.

When listening, directed attention entails purposefully concentrating your mental energies on a particular piece of audio. As stated by Kidd et al. (2005), it is a deliberate choice to minimize distractions and focus on a certain sound or speaker. The following summarizes directed attention as a listening technique: Active engagement is the deliberate

attempt to hear and comprehend; intentional focus is the deliberate concentration on the speaker; and spatial attention is the emphasis on a sound source in a specific location (Kidd et al., 2005). Thinking exercise: The "directed listening and thinking activity" improves critical thinking, inferential responses, and literal information processing. As stated by Wild et al. (2012), effective listening involves focusing attention on speech.

#### **c. Comprehension monitoring**

According to the data gathered, the participants acknowledged testing their comprehension while listening to the music. Vandergrift (2008) explains that the purpose of comprehension monitoring is to assist students in contrasting and making sense of the information that is presented to them by the speaker. The student checks to see how well they understood what they heard, and they pay close attention to any possible mistakes or misunderstandings in the translation.

#### **d. Real-time assessment of input**

According to the data collected, the majority of participants reported that they frequently identified comprehension issues when they were listening to an English song, but they were able to resolve them in a number of ways. Erbay & Güner (2021) With real-time evaluation, learners can keep an eye out for comprehension issues throughout listening exercises by verifying and then coming up with a solution. Real-time decision-making is required of the learner as they listen to determine which portions are essential to achieving the desired comprehension. In order to determine whether a new word has a role in the remainder of the text they are listening to, learners typically evaluate its potential.

#### **e. Comprehension evaluation**

Data from the study's conclusions showed that after listening to the English song through to the end, some participants verified their understanding again. Cao & Lin (2020) define comprehension evaluation as an autonomous learner action that involves determining if the information gained is suitable or in conflict with the context of the material being studied. This one can be completed at any time after the listening and interpretation process is complete, but it is still in a temporary state of interpretation. This section's goal is to assess the comprehension's acceptability.

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

When listening to English songs, Gen Z listens in the following ways: they frequently use selective attention when they are listening to English music. This is concentrating on the parts of the music that pique their interest—lyrics, melody, or rhythm, for example—while ignoring unimportant details. To relate to the singer's feelings or grasp the song's meaning, for instance, they might read the lyrics carefully. The term "directed attention" describes the deliberate focus and concentration of an individual on comprehending the message contained within the music. Monitoring comprehension entails regularly evaluating how well the students comprehend the song as it is being performed. The lyrics, melody, and general message of a song may be continuously assessed by Gen Zers. They may take a moment to consider difficult or foreign words, rewind or play back portions of the music to



make sure they understand or look for extra resources (such as internet lyrics or explanations) to help with understanding. Real-time Evaluation of Input: Gen Z listens to the song as it is being played and digesting aural information. They carefully listen to the lyrics, taking note of rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation, which aids in their understanding of the subtleties of the English language. To further delve into the song's content and expand their comprehension, they could employ contextual signals from the music, such as tone, mood, and genre. Comprehension Assessment: Gen Zers assess their overall comprehension and interpretation of the material by answering comprehension questions following a song. Individuals can contemplate their comprehension of the lyrics if they were able to identify the primary themes or messages of the song, and whether they felt an emotional or personal connection to the music. With this reflection, they can evaluate their listening abilities and pinpoint areas where their English language competence needs to be strengthened. Using these listening techniques helps Gen Zers improve their language abilities in a fun and interesting way, as well as their comprehension and appreciation of English songs.

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