Problematising L2 listening pedagogy: The potential of process-based listening strategy instruction in the L2 classroom

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Thesis summary

Listening is typically the first language skill to develop in first language (L1) users and has been recognized as a basic and fundamental tool for communication. Despite the importance of listening, aural abilities are often taken for granted, and many people overlook their dependency on listening and the complexities that combine to enable this multi-faceted skill. When second language (L2) students are learning their new language, listening is crucial, as it provides access to oral input and facilitates social interaction. Yet L2 students find listening challenging, and L2 teachers often lack sufficient pedagogy to help learners develop listening abilities that they can use in and beyond the classroom. In an effort to provide a pedagogic alternative to more traditional and limited L2 listening instruction, this thesis investigated the viability of listening strategy instruction (LSI) over three semesters at a private university in Japan through a qualitative action research (AR) intervention. An LSI program was planned and implemented with six classes over the course of three AR phases. Two teachers used the LSI with 121 learners throughout the project. Following each AR phase, student and teacher perceptions of the methodology were investigated via questionnaires and interviews, which were primary data collection methods. Secondary research methods (class observations, pre/post-semester test scores, and a research journal) supplemented the primary methods. Data were analyzed and triangulated for emerging themes related to participants' perceptions of LSI and the viability thereof. These data showed consistent positive perceptions of LSI on the parts of both learners and teachers, although some aspects of LSI required additional refinement. This project provided insights on LSI specific to the university context in Japan and also produced principles for LSI program planning and implementation that can inform the broader L2 education community.

Keywords: action research, listening pedagogy, second language acquisition

Dedication

To Aki, whose support, encouragement, and patience made this thesis possible. Thank you.

Acknowledgement

I would like to show my appreciation to several people who were of great help in preparing for and writing this dissertation. Particular thanks are due to Professor Anne Burns, who supervised this dissertation and provided insightful and consistent guidance. I owe additional thanks to Aki Siegel for her support during this project and tireless efforts in translating the data collection instruments. I would also like to express my gratitude to my parents, Kathy and Paul, and to my sister, Melissa, for putting me in the position to attempt this task. Finally, I would like to thank all the participants in this study, especially Sean and Peggy, for their time and efforts.

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List of abbreviations

APU = Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

BUP = bottom up processing

CA = comprehension approach

CLE = Center for Language Education

EL = extensive listening

EFL = English as a foreign language

ESL = English as a second language

L1 = first language

L2 = second language

LSI = Listening strategy instruction

TDP = top down processing

TOEFL = Test of English as a Foreign Language

TOEIC = Test of English for International Communication

RQ = research question

UIE = Upper Intermediate English

Conventions for naming participants

Upper Intermediate English Co-teacher: Sean

Peer debriefer: Peggy

Student interview participants for Phase 1 (n=7):

Edgar, Kasey, Mike, Samantha, Yancy, Yardley, Yarina

Student interview participants for Phase 2 (n=7):

Andrea, Charlene, Neil, Rhianna, Stacey, Steven, Tom

Student interview participants for Phase 3 (n=24):

Akiko, Becky, Chihiro, Diane, Evan, Fran, Gary, Hiroko, Issac, Junichiro, Kathy, Lisa, Misa, Nihiro, Oscar, Paul, Risa, Suzuka, Tia, Ursella, Violet, Wendy, Yasmin, Zelda

Chapter 1: Introduction
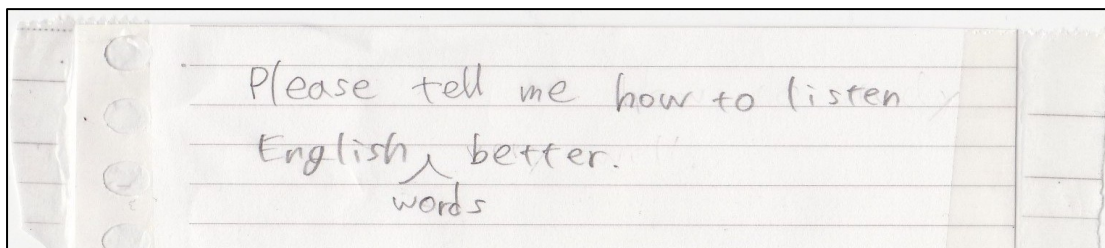
The note was anonymous but the message was clear. "Please tell me how to listen English ^ words better." In the spring of 2009, I was working as a lecturer at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) in Japan. Teaching a class focused on developing listening skills, I was in my first year at this institution. Near the end my first semester, I asked students to write comments about the course and how it could be improved. The message pictured above really made an impact on me and prompted me to reflect on the supposed 'teaching' of listening I was doing.

Throughout the listening course, I had been troubled by the repetitive classroom practices in which students listened to audio or video texts, answered discrete-item comprehension questions, after which I shared the correct answers. Then we simply repeated the same procedure with a new text the next day. After a time, I came to realize that I was doing very little 'teaching.' Instead, I was continually evaluating students' existing listening ability, but was not providing much scaffolded guidance that would help them become competent listeners. This situation led to feelings of dismay and frustration, as I realized I was being an ineffective listening teacher who was hardly teaching students "how to listen English ^ words better." Some kind of intervention was needed to address student desires about listening and to challenge the status quo of conventional pedagogy, and an idea for conducting action research in my classroom was born.

When I approached other APU teachers to ask for teaching suggestions, many admitted that they did not have any innovative ideas for listening instruction and were satisfied to conduct the course in its current fashion. This situation motivated me to consult literature on L2 listening and related instruction in search of some solutions. I was encouraged to read about

various different pedagogy options, but the notion of strategy instruction for listening enticed me most as it had several connections to my core beliefs as a teacher. These beliefs included support for process-oriented (rather than product-based) instruction, that language teachers have innate abilities that they can use to guide learners, and that students enter language courses with the intention of gaining L2 skills and strategies that are transferable beyond the classroom.

Through my reading and personal reflection, I became inspired to make an attempt to improve L2 listening instruction at APU by adopting and investigating a listening strategy instruction program. Though the literature discussed various theories of listening, models for strategy instruction, and strategy taxonomies, it was less straightforward to find practical recommendations for a coherent and systematic methodology. Thus, I decided to coordinate an action research intervention using listening strategy instruction. I identified this area as one in need of greater attention in my local context as well as one that could potentially reverberate through the broader L2 teaching and learning community and it became the motivation for this study.

1.1 Improving L2 listening pedagogy

It is widely accepted that listening skills are of vital importance to the communicative process. In fact, research shows that a considerable amount of the time adults spend communicating involves listening (45%), a percentage that dominates time spent engaged in the other three skills: writing (9%), reading (16%), speaking (30%) (Feyten, 1991; Nunan, 1998; Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). Listening becomes even more important in Western academic settings, where "close to 90% of class time in high school and college is spent listening to discussion and lectures" (Taylor, 1964, as cited in Oxford, 1993). Likewise, Dunkel (1991) mentions that "[aural comprehension] is very possibly of more use to most learners of foreign languages than is speaking competence" (p. 436). Moreover, the importance attributed to listening continues to increase in international testing, business, and communication (Richards & Burns, 2012). Given these observations, it is surprising that the

crucial and complex act of listening is typically taken for granted in many language classrooms.

Listening is an inconspicuous skill and in-depth understanding of it remains elusive (e.g., Field, 2008). Although it is a major human attribute, listening is rarely consciously acknowledged due to its ephemeral, covert nature (Buck, 2001; Field, 2008; Vandergrift, 2010). In fact, frequently the only time many people acknowledge their capacity to listen is when they are *un*able to hear something (Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002). Therefore, it is unsurprising that in L2 classrooms, listening is often given less attention than the other macro-skills. Listening has been dubbed the "Cinderella skill" (Mendelsohn, 1994), the "forgotten skill" (Burley-Allen, 1995), and an "overlooked dimension" of L2 acquisition (Feyton, 1991). It is often neglected or overlooked during social interaction and in classroom learning in general as well as in second language (L2) classrooms specifically (Nunan, 1998; Flowerdew & Miller, 2005; Field, 2008; Nation & Newton, 2009).

Outside the classroom context, in general oral communication, the speaker rather than the listener is usually the center of attention. This situation is likely to be reflected in L2 classrooms, where speaking as well as reading and writing often take priority over listening. In addition to problems with assessing listening ability, another dilemma language teachers face is a lack of a well-recognized methodology for teaching L2 listening. Of the four main language skills, reading, writing, and speaking have traditionally enjoyed more attention from language teaching methodologists; however, clear and accepted methods, models, and directions for the teaching of L2 listening are far from abundant.

Although often taken for granted, listening is typically the first language skill to develop in first language (L1) users and serves as a gateway to other skills. In an L2, it provides a valuable source of input for acquisition of the language as well as content. While it is generally recognized as one of the four main language skills, listening is often the most challenging for language

teachers to address in their classrooms and is frequently identified by L2 learners as the most difficult skill (e.g., Field, 2008; Renandya & Farrell, 2011). Due to a lack of pedagogical knowledge and options for L2 listening instruction, many teachers may rely on the status quo of 'listen, answer, check' sequences like the one in the opening anecdote, which do little to help L2 students learn 'how to' listen in their new language. Instructors may be unfamiliar with a range of activities that effectively develops the necessary sub-skills and strategies to lead to competent listening (Nemtchinova, 2013). Many teacher education courses neglect to explore listening at the theoretical level, and they typically underprepare new teachers in terms of the practical approaches, techniques, and activities that they can apply in their classrooms (Graham, Santos & Vanderplank, 2011). Further, teachers who turn to textbook teacher manuals for help may find little support for listening (Field, 2012b).

1.2 Putting theory into practice: A focus on listening strategy instruction

The purpose of this research is to contribute to the development of improved pedagogy associated with aural understanding through listening strategy instruction (LSI) both for my own teaching purposes and also as a possible illustration for other practicing teachers. As highlighted by the above anecdote, I was disenchanted by the lack of pedagogic options for L2 listening instruction. As a language teacher, I believed that listening was a crucial skill for my students and was likely the most useful for them. Yet I also felt my own teaching of listening, as well as that described in the literature and by other colleagues, was in need of enhancement. I empathized with my L2 learners as well, for I realized I was putting pressure on them in listening classes by constantly testing their present listening ability. Yet I was neglecting to help them develop their aural abilities through a systematic, consistent, and pedagogically sound methodology. This notion was crystallized in the student's comment about being taught 'how to' listen.

Therefore, reasons for this research related to my dissatisfaction with listening instruction both in my own local context and that described in the

wider field. Such pedagogy often involves a heavy emphasis on products of listening and gives little, if any, attention to the cognitive processes involved, and I was motivated to investigate a pedagogic alternative, namely LSI. The current research project, conducted at APU, a private university in Japan, aimed to address the following research questions (RQ):

1. What are learner perceptions of LSI?
2. What are teacher perceptions of LSI?
3. What factors contribute to success in a listening strategy instruction program for intermediate EFL university learners in the local APU context?

In order to create manageable parameters for this research in terms of practicality and achievability as well as to focus the research in my own local teaching context, the scope of the project was limited to upper intermediate English (UIE) level courses at APU. It was intended to better understand how the introduction LSI in this specific setting might make a difference to teaching practices and to the learning outcomes for the students involved.

Given the local nature of the investigation and its direct relationship to understanding more about teaching in my own context, I adopted an action research (AR) framework, which consisted of iterative stages of planning, action, observation, and reflection. This approach seemed relevant, both because of my interest in investigating my own practice and because recent literature has also included calls for AR on types of listening pedagogy (e.g., Macaro, 2001; Goh, 2005, 2008). Therefore, this research was not based solely on my personal interest in the topic, but also incorporated wider directions in the field related to L2 listening pedagogy. In order to recognize the various groups that were affected and influenced by this exploratory research, a qualitative AR perspective was adopted. This stance allowed for a range of participants (i.e., students, teachers, and me as the teacher-researcher) to experience and interpret the LSI intervention, and for data to be collected via several instruments: questionnaires, interviews, class observations, pre/post tests, and a research journal.

The LSI intervention took place over the course of three consecutive semesters at APU: Fall 2010, Spring 2011, and Fall 2011. During that time, six different classes studied within the LSI program, which a co-teacher and I taught. The LSI consisted of specific listening strategies selected for incorporation into UIE courses at APU. Strategies were selected based on my reading of the literature and on my and my colleagues' teaching experiences in Japan. These strategies were integrated with the existing listening materials for the UIE course and were organized into a 15-week semester. Each week's instruction centered on a different strategy and operated according to a pedagogic cycle, which was developed specifically for this LSI and consisted of the following stages: introduction/awareness raising, practice, review, and extension.

1.3 Rationale for the present LSI research

The research aimed to address a gap that exists in the pedagogical literature on listening and strategy instruction by exploring the viability of LSI as classroom practice. Its focus was to forge a stronger link between the academic literature and the everyday classroom by providing and evaluating a framework for LSI that could inform teachers and teacher educators about this methodology. It also aimed to contribute to the field by recognizing that student perspectives on pedagogy are important in determining what they want and what they expect from their teachers and listening instruction. Finally, this research was intended to contribute to the enhancement of teaching practices in my local context, the classroom lives of APU students and teachers, and potentially to the language teaching and learning lives of other teachers and their students as well.

This research distinguishes itself from other previous studies on LSI (e.g., Ozeki, 2000; Goh, 2002; Chen, 2005) in several ways. First, the three-semester (1.5 year) duration of this study was markedly longer than other LSI studies, such as Ozeki's (2000) single-semester project. This extended time period allowed for increased understanding and insights related to the sustainability and viability of the LSI. It also provided opportunities to trial the

methodology with different groups of learners at different times. Secondly, this study was conducted from an AR perspective, which recognized how a specific element of language teaching can be "problematised" (Burns, 2010a, p. 2) and investigated in the hopes of better understanding and contextual improvement. The spiraling and cyclical nature of AR ensured that each iteration of the LSI provided insights that informed subsequent implementations. Other studies have typically focused on isolated versions of LSI and have not demonstrated how a program can develop, evolve, and improve based on systematic data collection. Finally, the qualitative epistemological stance adopted for this project acknowledged learner and teacher perspectives, which offered insights on internal cognitive and metacognitive developments stimulated by the LSI. Participant viewpoints on this methodological innovation helped develop knowledge about the practicality, viability, and effectiveness of LSI.

1.4 Overview[1]

In order to set this study within its local context, this thesis begins with a description of the APU EFL program and the UIE course specifically. Chapter 2 also sets the study within the broader Asian context, which provided a further backdrop for the research. Chapter 3 moves on to discuss literature on listening, including related definitions and theories. This chapter also provides a historical overview of the evolution of L2 listening instruction and reviews previous studies on listening strategy instruction, both of which help to identify a need for the present research. A theoretical and pedagogical dilemma concerning current practices in the teaching of listening, which was targeted through the planning and intervention stages of the AR approach guiding this research project, will become evident during this discussion.

Research methodology, including the qualitative stance, the AR framework, as well as the data collection and analysis procedures and ethical considerations, is subsequently outlined in Chapter 4. Findings from the data

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[1] With one exception (i.e., problematise, which follows Burns, 2010a), standard American spelling and usage will be used throughout this thesis.

collection are displayed in Chapters 5 and 6, which present the data from iterative AR and participant-voice perspectives, respectively. The findings displayed in Chapters 5 and 6 address RQs 1 and 2, regarding student and teacher perceptions of the LSI. These data are reflected upon and interpreted in Chapter 7, which discusses data triangulation, considers standards of AR, and evaluates them in terms of the stated research questions. These reflections lead to key messages from the study specific to the local APU context, which address RQ 3 relating to methodological factors affecting the implementation of this LSI.

The final chapter considers the viability of LSI in other Japanese university settings and beyond. Pedagogic implications for teachers and teacher educators stemming from this research are offered, including a theoretical model and principles for planning and implementing LSI in other contexts. Chapter 8 also suggests avenues for future research, including research agendas for myself in my own local context, for other teacher-researchers in the Asian region, and for the broader field of L2 teaching and learning.

Chapter 2: Project Context

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the context of the project and set it against the backdrop of English language instruction in Japan as well as within the Asian region. The chapter begins with a general description of EFL education in Japan and then moves on to describe the university context in which this study took place. The UIE course is explained with specific focus on the listening component, both before and after the LSI intervention. A description of the participants in this study follows, after which the motivation for the LSI intervention is discussed through various viewpoints: my own teaching experiences, literature on listening pedagogy, and other language educators in Asia. This chapter identifies a need for improvement in L2 listening pedagogy and sets the stage for the LSI intervention, which was the focus of the research.

2.1 The state of listening instruction in Japan: Time for an upgrade

Because there are few (albeit increasing) opportunities to use English in daily life, Japan should be viewed as an English as a foreign language (EFL) context rather than an English as a second language (ESL) environment. EFL has been a component of the Japanese education system for several decades, and students in Japan complete six years of compulsory EFL study during their junior high school and high school years. Much EFL instruction during this period is teacher-centered and orchestrated using traditional EFL teaching and learning methodologies.

From a broader perspective, many students in Asian countries continue to expect a Confucian-style relationship with their instructors in which the teacher, or elder, is seen as the disseminator of knowledge to the learners, who typically function as knowledge receivers (Flowerdew & Miller, 1996). Students regularly preserve this relationship through non-participatory behavior during compulsory education. Japanese students often exemplify this behavior and are usually characterized as passive in the classroom, a demeanor in line with educational traditions that have deep respect for elders (Ozeki, 2000).

Meanwhile, the importance of test results cannot be overstated in the Japanese educational context. Many students, parents, and teachers place a high priority on and invest many resources in preparing students to pass high school and university entrance exams (Rapley, 2010; Sato, 2010). Such tests have "huge implications for [Japanese students'] futures" (Rapley, 2010, p. 34). In addition, internationally recognized standardized tests, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and tests specific to Japan (e.g., STEP Eiken) receive significant attention from stakeholders. In 2006, a listening component was added to another decisive university entrance examination, the National Center Test, a change that increased the importance of EFL listening development at the secondary level (Saito, Nagasawa & Ishikawa, 2011). The majority of these assessments rely on comprehension-based questions to evaluate listening ability. A resulting washback effect from the testing procedures to listening instruction in EFL classrooms is evident in the Japanese context (Sato, 2010). This washback effect manifests itself in the listening materials and activities that many teachers use in their classes.

At the junior high school and high school levels, oral and aural English skills are often neglected (Rapley, 2010). Instead of prioritizing communicative ability in English, classes usually consist of grammar-translation and rote memorization (Rebuck, 2008; Blyth, 2011), which are generally perceived by many EFL educators to be traditional classroom methods. The scant listening instruction and practice that is available is simplistic and undemanding to the extent that it is of little help to learners (Rebuck, 2008). Moreover, Ozeki (2000) points out that, prior to university, students in Japan are not given opportunities to develop cognitive or metacognitive strategies for dealing with a second language. That is, much of their EFL learning consists of superficial introduction to language forms and vocabulary; however, it rarely challenges them to engage independently with language on an autonomous communicative level.

At the university level, students may take EFL courses in order to meet graduation requirements, participate in study abroad programs, for general

interest, or because their majors are English or English-related. While some students are motivated to take EFL courses in university, others may be reluctant to do so because they have had unsuccessful or unpleasant experiences during pre-tertiary EFL instruction (Smiley & Masui, 2008) and therefore are anxious about enrolling in tertiary EFL classes.

2.2 Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

This study took place at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) in Beppu, Japan. The student body consists of approximately 5,000 students. Half of the students are domestic Japanese students, while the other half come from a variety of other countries. This multi-national student body makes APU a unique institution in Japan. Most of these international students hail from other Asian countries, with the largest populations coming from China, Korea, and Thailand. The multicultural nature of the campus fosters ample opportunities for intercultural communication and language exchange.

The Center for Language Education (CLE) is responsible for organizing and delivering all language classes at APU, including the EFL program, which consists of four compulsory levels: elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, and upper intermediate. Students may also elect to continue their EFL education at the advanced level. After taking a placement exam (TOEFL), students are placed in one of the compulsory levels and must complete the upper intermediate course in order to graduate. The CLE has modern facilities and resources available to conduct the EFL program. Facilities include classrooms of various sizes, smaller conference rooms for student tutorials and counseling, and well-equipped computer labs. Other resources include audio and video equipment, an online Blackboard teaching platform (version 6.2), and faculty offices.

2.3 Upper Intermediate English

This study focused on the listening component of the Upper Intermediate English A (UIE) course within the CLE's EFL curriculum. Per the course handbook (Blackwell & Haswell, 2009), UIE aims to develop learners'

listening, speaking, and writing skills. A parallel course, Upper Intermediate English B targets reading and vocabulary abilities. The UIE course meets four times per week for 90-minute sessions over a 15-week semester. Classes usually alternate between traditional classroom and computer lab environments, although teachers may adjust assigned classrooms based on their needs and those of their students. Typical classes consist of 25 students or less.

To enter UIE, students either successfully complete prerequisite CLE courses or score between 450-499 on the placement TOEFL test as first-year students. A majority of the students in UIE classes are Japanese EFL learners, although the UIE population also includes students from other Asian countries, particularly China and Korea.

Student grades are based on performance in the following areas: listening assessments (25%), speaking assessments (25%), writing assessments (20%), note taking assessments (10%), TOEFL score (10%), and participation (10%). These areas and percentages are decided by department administrators and cannot be altered by individual teachers. Work done in class is meant to help learners achieve in each of these areas.

Teaching methods include both teacher- and student-centered work. An assigned textbook, Interactions 2 (Tanaka & Baker, 2007) is used as the basis for listening and speaking work. Additional audio and video material, slideshows, worksheets, and computerized language learning materials are also part of the course. The writing component of UIE is based on scaffolded writing tasks developed in-house.

During this study, the UIE course was physically located in two types of classrooms. Twice a week, classes met in traditional classroom settings that had a teacher's desk and a blackboard at the front of the room and approximately 30 individual student desks and chairs lined up in rows. The spacious classrooms allowed for student desks to be moved into various configurations, such as pairs and circles. Temperature controls allowed the room to stay comfortable regardless of the season. These classrooms also

had a computer at the teacher's desk that was connected to a digital projector and audio equipment. This audio/visual equipment allowed all members of class to listen to and watch the LSI materials.

On the other two days of the week, classes met in "Computer Assisted Instruction", or CAI rooms. At certain times of year, particularly in summer, these classrooms could become uncomfortably hot despite opening the windows or adjusting the thermostat. These rooms also had a fixed teacher's desk that was connected to audio/visual equipment and a whiteboard at the front of the room. Approximately 18 student seats were also fixed along three classroom walls and 12 others were located at an island in the middle of the room. Each student seat had a computer that was sometimes used for individual listening, writing, or research purposes. Between every other student computer was a visual monitor that showed the teacher's computer screen. In this way, the teacher could show students videos, Power points, and other course content. These monitors were particularly useful in presenting LSI in the computer rooms, as videos and Power points were key parts of the LSI intervention.

2.3.1 Pre-intervention listening instruction in UIE: Invalid pedagogy

Prior to this study and its LSI intervention, the pedagogical approach to listening in UIE was similar to that described by Field (1998), as it focused solely on the products of listening, rather than the processes themselves (see Chapter 3, section 3.2 for a more extended discussion of pedagogical approaches). Teachers were provided with textbooks and accompanying audio materials as well as authentic video lectures and corresponding worksheets. These video lectures consisted of authentic videos, such as documentaries and informational television programs that were divided into several short segments, approximately 1-2 minutes in length. The companion video worksheets contained a combination of product-based listening comprehension questions (e.g., multiple-choice, gap-fills, and matching items).

The role of the teacher was essentially to initiate a 'listen, answer, check' sequence that focused on the answers to comprehension questions. After listening, students were encouraged to compare answers with their classmates and often to engage in topic-related extension discussion activities. Teachers were encouraged to play the textbook audio or video texts at least twice, although this practice likely varied depending on text difficulty and student needs. The pattern of 'listen, answer, check' was simply repeated until all of the day's materials were completed.

The listening pedagogy used in UIE was therefore found to be similar to those pedagogies described in the literature and embodied many related flaws (see Chapter 3, section 3.2). The main focus was on students' ability to answer comprehension questions correctly. The approach did little to help learners develop their listening processes and strategies, nor did it offer a scaffolded learning environment in which students were given step-by-step objectives that could lead to holistic listening improvement.

This notion of a 'scaffolded learning environment' relates to socio-cultural foundations stemming from Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the zone of proximal development and the notion that less skilled individuals can benefit from the guidance of more capable peers or teachers (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976). Scaffolding involves a novice developing skills that are initially beyond their present ability (Wood, et. al., 1976). Guidance and supervision are then gradually reduced in order for the novice to develop independent abilities. Although gaining attention in the field of education in general and in language learning specifically (e.g., Lantolf, 2000; Walqui, 2006), the notion of scaffolding was not an explicit part of the pre-intervention UIE listening component.

Instead, the comprehension approach used in the course limited the classroom experience to a single text (Field, 2008; Siegel, 2012). There was no development of generalizable listening processes and strategies that learners could take from the classroom and independently apply to other listening texts and genres beyond the classroom (Siegel, 2011b). Moreover,

this methodology confined learners to their present listening ability. That is, novice or weak listeners were unlikely to progress to the level of more competent listeners, and those learners who were already strong listeners had no avenues for further development. These inherent drawbacks in the methodology for the UIE listening component led me to plan and implement a possible alternative that addressed these shortcomings.

2.3.2 LSI intervention in UIE

Due to the shortcomings of the previous pedagogy for listening in UIE, I wanted to investigate whether a process-oriented and strategy-based approach to listening pedagogy was a viable alternative. In other words, I had identified what I perceived as an area of language teaching that could be done better. I wanted to "problematise" (Burns, 2010a) listening pedagogy in UIE and plan an intervention to investigate how a different methodology for listening instruction would be perceived by learners and teachers. Although I had a conceptual idea of such a course in mind, I needed to consult the literature to determine what listening processes and strategies to include and to learn more about strategy instruction frameworks. After reviewing literature on listening pedagogy, listening processes, and strategy instruction, I devised an approach to listening instruction I called process-based listening strategy instruction (LSI). This conceptualization was based on a review of existing literature and developed in consultation with other language educators within the CLE. This formative action resulted in process-based LSI, which is a methodological perspective on listening that builds L2 listening pedagogy on the following elements: listening strategies, top-down and bottom-up processing, the expert listener, and the transfer of generalizable listening processes to new listening events.

To summarize the LSI intervention, 13 different strategies were chosen, which CLE administrators and other EFL teachers within the CLE confirmed as appropriate teaching points. Each strategy was the focus of one week's instruction in UIE. The teaching cycle included: an introduction and awareness-raising stage; multiple practice opportunities; and a phase aimed

at transferring the strategy to other listening events. Theoretical background and underlying motivations for decisions made during the planning and implementation of the LSI are discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.6. The literature provided a solid base from which to make practical decisions for implementing the LSI. These practical aspects (i.e., the *action* in action research), including the complete list of strategies, the LSI teaching cycle, and the strategy instruction framework used are described in Chapter 4, section 4.3.

2.4 Participants in the LSI intervention: Language educators and students

Several designations are used to label listeners with varying degrees of aural proficiency. Before assigning any labels, however, one must assume a "normative view [that a listener] is maximally co-operative" and strives to comprehend incoming speech signals (Brown, 1986, p. 289). A number of positive terms have been used to describe listeners, including: "'competent', 'skilled', 'advanced', 'good', 'active', 'strategic', 'high-ability', 'proficient', 'effective', [and] 'successful'" (Goh, 2005, p. 64). Labels of 'expert' or 'native' listener can be added to this list as well. Antonyms of these terms include "novice" or "non-native" (Field, 2008), "beginner" (Helgesen & Brown, 2007), and "low ability" (Goh, 2005).

This collection of designations can be organized on a continuum, ranging from beginner/novice listeners at one end to native expert listeners at the other. Goals for L2 learners and their teachers are for students to progress from the beginner designation through the intermediate stage toward the expert L1 target. The expert listener is "a benchmark against which the performance of an L2 listener can be measured" (Field, 2008, p. 163). This progression is illustrated in Figure 2.1. While these adjectives and labels focus on listeners' performance, they devote little recognition to their cognitive processes (Goh, 2005). Nevertheless, teachers, students, and researchers need such terms for descriptive, evaluative, and administrative purposes. This study focuses on learners at the intermediate level, and therefore only this group of listeners is defined in more detail.

| Beginner / Novice (low listening ability in an L2) | Intermediate | Advanced / Expert non-native (high listening ability in an L2) | Expert (L1 native) |

Figure 2.1: *Common listening designations*

While definitions of beginner and expert listeners are abundant in the literature (e.g., Sheerin, 1987; Goh, 2005; Field, 2008), characteristics of intermediate listeners are rarely explained with precision. The comparative scarcity of substantial descriptions of intermediate listeners could be an indication that although authors are confident in describing the two ends of the continuum (beginner/novice and advanced/expert), there is general uncertainty about the intermediary stages of developing listeners. Among the few authors who provide some insight on intermediate listeners are Helgesen and Brown (2007), who propose that intermediate listeners understand basic personal content, combinations of basic sentences, and everyday situational listening (i.e., shopping, transportation, and short phone calls). Learners at this level use a combination of linguistic and background knowledge, although they typically rely more on the former than the latter (Mendelsohn, 1998). Intermediate listeners may find listening stressful due to their inability to comprehend rapidly and automatically (Goh & Taib, 2006). In addition, quick changes in time reference and directions in conversation may be problematic to intermediate listeners (Helgesen & Brown, 2007). As such, their listening competency may be inconsistent and incomplete at times.

While they may be capable of understanding basic personal content, intermediate listeners typically struggle with texts of increasing difficulty. Texts such as lectures, extended conversations, and lengthy explanations may prove arduous. As they progress, these learners may be in need of strategies and processes to help them overcome their obstacles. Simply learning more vocabulary, more advanced grammatical structures, or being exposed to more spoken language may not be enough to help them. They are at an opportune

stage in their language learning for strategy development: they have a solid foundation of basic L2 knowledge but struggle to engage with advanced level texts. They are in need of fresh ways of and new challenges for approaching and understanding L2 spoken input, as well as tactics for overcoming listening obstacles. As such, process-based LSI can aid listener progression from the intermediate stage to the advanced/expert L2 listener stage, although this advancement may not manifest itself within a single semester course.

Over the course of this three-semester study, 121 students from six different UIE classes participated. This population consisted of both men and women ranging in age from 18-20, with most participants being first-year students who were either in their first or second semester of university. As most of these students were Japanese, they had much in common, including educational background, personality traits, and expectations of student–teacher relationships.

In addition to the student participants, I recruited the help of the only other teacher who taught UIE for all three semesters of this project. This was done in order to involve more classes, and therefore more participants, in this study. This instructor (henceforth referred to as Sean, a pseudonym) had spent approximately five years teaching EFL at the university level in Japan when this study took place, and therefore had some experience in the context of this study. In addition, at the time of this study, he was a doctoral candidate in applied linguistics, and thus had a developing knowledge of and interest in academic research.

Sean and I agreed to use the same LSI approach and core materials for UIE listening instruction. He participated by using LSI in his classes, administering online questionnaires and pre/post tests, and recruiting students for interviews, which I conducted. He also completed classroom observation note sheets, made video recordings of classes, and participated in one-on-one interviews with me to discuss the effectiveness of and issues related to the LSI component. Sean's involvement in this project helped to address stated research questions 2 and 3 (see Chapter 1, section 1.2), those related to

teacher perceptions of and methodological factors affecting LSI. His input and cooperation were valuable because they provided a second educator's viewpoint (in addition to my own) and also offered additional data with which to compare student perceptions.

An additional language educator participated in the project in the role of "peer debriefer" (Barber & Walczak, 2009; Booth, 2012) or "critical friend" (Burns, 1999; Herr & Anderson, 2005). The purpose of a peer debriefer is to increase the credibility of findings and conclusions by allowing data to be examined by a "disinterested peer" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 308). This colleague, referred to as Peggy in this study, had a graduate degree in TESOL, more than 10 years teaching experience, and was active in the L2 research community. She had worked at APU for three years and therefore had an understanding of the research context, the English language program within the CLE, and the general student population. She was not, however, directly involved with the planning and implementation of the LSI, the data collection, or the UIE course in general. Instead, she taught on a completely different course within the CLE. This situation allowed her to bring her knowledge of the context and student body to the project without any personal attachments to or investments in the outcomes of the LSI. Thus, she had insider understanding of the general context of the study while at the same time providing an objective outsider examination of the findings. The role of the peer debriefer is discussed further in Chapter 4, section 4.2.3.

2.5 Purpose of research

The previous descriptions of the general Japanese EFL context and the specific circumstances of this research setting have offered some cursory insights into the motivation for this project. This section elaborates on three reasons why I choose to problematise this area of language teaching. The L2 listening pedagogy dilemma is portrayed from three different sources: my own experience, the literature, and L2 professionals in Asia.

2.5.1 Meeting the dilemma through personal experience

One motivation for this investigation stemmed from my own experiences as a university EFL instructor tasked with teaching listening courses. I was initially concerned to learn that there was little, if any, theoretically-based pedagogy for L2 listening development in the course design and syllabi for classes in which listening was a featured skill. Instead, simplistic and untenable approaches, such as the osmosis method and the comprehension approach (see Chapter 3, section 3.2) were commonplace. Other commentators (e.g., Mendelsohn, 1994; Field, 2008; Goh, 2010) have reported similar situations in recent EFL classes. In general, it seemed that listening instruction was organized in a haphazard manner based solely on textbook chapters, and that listening was not presented as a language skill that could be systematically developed like the skills of speaking, reading, and writing. I struggled to understand why listening pedagogy had not made advancements similar to those in other skill areas and sought a remedy for the situation. From this interventionist point of view, an AR project (see Chapter 4, section 4.2) related to listening pedagogy was a logical choice for expanding the possibilities of listening methodology at a local level, which could then inform and hopefully improve the broader situation.

2.5.2 Meeting the dilemma through academic literature

An examination of the literature on listening served to substantiate my intuitions related to listening pedagogy, as several listening methodologists and researchers have called for more attention to and better methods for teaching listening. There is a need to better understand the listening process itself (e.g., Flowerdew & Miller, 2005; Field, 2008) as well as to examine how listening is taught and to determine more effective listening pedagogy (e.g., Goh, 2005; Nation & Newton, 2009). Furthermore, commentators have identified listening as an area that is underdeveloped in terms of teacher education (e.g., Oxford, 1993; Goh, 2008; Graham, et al., 2011). There are also calls for research that focuses specifically on listening strategies and the effects LSI can have on learners (e.g., Cross, 2009; Lynch, 2009).

2.5.3 Meeting the dilemma through other L2 professionals in Asia

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the state of listening instruction in the Asian EFL context reflects that described in the literature. Within the last five years, I have attended several international conferences on language teaching in Asian countries, including Vietnam, the Philippines, Japan, and Korea. At each of these conferences, I have either attended presentations or led workshops on the teaching of L2 listening:

- Listening comprehension: The readiness of students for CAE and a need for policy changes (Hang, Nguyen & Biu, 2010, AsiaTEFL Conference, Hanoi, Vietnam)
- Developing a process-based framework for EFL listening pedagogy (Haswell & Siegel, 2010, Asian EFL Journal Annual Conference, Cebu, Philippines)
- Developing a university listening course (McAuliffe, 2010, Japan Association for Language Teaching Annual Conference, Shizuoka, Japan)
- A case study on improving Iranian high school students' listening comprehension via internet-based listening tasks (Barin, 2010, AsiaTEFL Conference, Hanoi, Vietnam)
- Listening pedagogy: New directions (Siegel, 2011c, AsiaTEFL Conference, Seoul, Korea).

During those interactions, with a number of different teachers from various locations in Asia, I learned that the issues surrounding L2 listening pedagogy, which I have described above, seem relatively consistent across the region.

These personal accounts serve to embody the theoretical concerns related to L2 listening instruction as mentioned in the literature and also to localize them in a particular geographic context. Discussion from these events also reinforced the intuitions I had related to the ways that listening was currently being dealt with in EFL classrooms. Therefore, based on my own intuition as a language educator, a review of literature on listening, and input

from other L2 professionals in Asia, I decided to systematically investigate the viability of LSI in intermediate EFL classes at one university in Japan.

2.6 Chapter summary: Fertile area for advancement

Issues related to L2 listening instruction in the UIE course at APU are emblematic of the neglected state of L2 listening pedagogy, and the inadequate methods previous adopted in UIE are far from uncommon. The state of listening pedagogy, as described in the literature and through the views of other L2 professionals, as well as from my own personal experience, is in need of new approaches that are theoretically founded, pedagogically sound, and appropriate for learners' aural development. In order to improve the status quo related to listening instruction, this project introduced process-based LSI in UIE classes, with the aim of better understanding how such methodology affected university learners and their teachers. The focus on process (rather than product) involved some modifications to the typical teacher-centered and test-preoccupied styles of language education common in the traditional Japanese education system.

Although the project was set in a local context (i.e., one Japanese university), its findings and implications may help to inform other contexts in need of additional options for L2 listening pedagogy. Before describing the research methodology upon which this project was based (see Chapter 4), it is prudent to consider what listening is, what researchers know about it, and how previous L2 educators have attempted to teach it. As such, the discussion turns next to a review of relevant literature in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: The literature on listening: What listening is and how it is taught

This chapter constructs the theoretical and conceptual framework for the study by examining past and current thinking from the literature on the topic of listening, mainly from an L2 perspective. It also examines previous research on listening strategies and instruction thereof, and in doing so, establishes a gap in the research that this project aims to address. First, however, some background literature from L1 listening is explored, which provides a basis from which to consider similarities and differences between L1 and L2 listening. The discussion moves on to theories and models of listening, which are underpinned by the notions of top-down and bottom-up processing. Next, the history of L2 listening pedagogy is reviewed, revealing various limitations at the theoretical and practical levels. The concept of process-based LSI is then introduced and its potential contribution to the current state of L2 listening pedagogy is evaluated.

3.1 An overview of L1 and L2 listening

Listening is an area in which current knowledge is insufficient for precise and accurate descriptions of what is involved in learning this skill. Yet, it has been described as the basic, most crucial skill in language learning (Nunan, 1998). From a biological perspective, tangible evidence of the central role of listening can be traced through biological structures. Before aural cognition can begin, a sound first enters the ear, causing bones to vibrate. This vibration produces stimulation of the auditory nerve, which sends signals to the brain's cortex (Rost, 1994). This series of events is predicated on the perception of meaningful sounds by the eardrums and the listener's "implicit knowledge as to which sounds and which sequences of sounds to expect" (Imhof, 2010, p. 102). Beyond the physical nature of listening, however, the understanding of subsequent interaction of cognition and psychology, along with the social elements of listening and individual listener traits, is less straightforward (Wolvin, 2010).

L1 listening is the first language skill to develop in children, and as it progresses, other language skills become accessible (Rost, 1994). However,

exactly how listening skills evolve during childhood is uncertain. Imhof (2010) asks: "Do we need to learn how to listen or would the ability to listen to sounds and languages come naturally?" (p. 97). With enough exposure to their L1, most children develop listening abilities without explicit instruction. This assumption is supported by the fact that listening is rarely the focus of specific development during compulsory schooling. Whereas young students are exposed to spoken language (i.e., songs, chants, stories told or read by their primary school teachers), the focus on listening quickly decreases in favor of reading until students enter the university system which once again centers on aural understanding through lectures (Flowerdew & Miller, 2010). Beyond the songs and stories that make up much of the aural input for primary school students, L1 listening pedagogy for learners at later stages of education is "at a standstill" (Janusik, 2010, p. 214).

A contingent of authors agree that at least some cognitive processes involved in L1 listening are not significantly different to those used when listening in L2. Buck (2001) states "there is no reason to suppose second language listening is in any fundamental way different from first language listening" (p. 48). Likewise, Field (2008) points out that listeners can adapt their existing L1 listening processes to L2. However, Field (2008) seems more cautious about the total transfer of all listening processes from L1 to L2 and believes that "*some* processes like background knowledge carry over from L1 to L2" (p. 107) (emphasis added). Færch and Kasper (1986) claim that the basic listening comprehension process is not different between L1 and L2, although they acknowledge L2 learners will "experience comprehension problems to a larger extent than native speakers" (p. 265). The views expressed by these authors suggest that L2 educators need to tap into and facilitate the transfer of L1 listening abilities to the L2 and also to develop other listening processes that are specific to the L2 system. However, listening does not usually occur in isolation from other language skills.

In many tasks, both L1 and L2 listeners rely on a combination of the four skills. Rarely is a single skill used exclusively; for example, a speaker in a conversation needs to listen in order to respond appropriately, and when

writing a letter, the writer may look back to read what has been written. In school, students are often expected to take notes, which involves listening and writing initially, and later, reading. L2 students may encounter listening cloze exercises that entail listening and reading (Buck, 2001) or tests such as TOEFL, in which students need to listen to texts and read corresponding multiple-choice answers. Although it may be convenient to discuss listening as isolated from the other main language skills, it is clear that listening has substantial connections with them, and with reading in particular.

Listening is widely recognized as the first and the fundamental language skill in the L1; interestingly, L2 learners usually rate listening as the most difficult of the four main skills (Field, 2008; Renandya & Farrell, 2011). A general assumption has been that L2 listening development occurs in the same way as in the L1 (Flowerdew & Miller, 2010); that is, through exposure to aural language, listening capacity improves. Just as L1 listening is recognized as the basic skill in language learning (Nunan, 1998), a majority of L2 educators rank listening as very important for learner development (Berne, 1998). However, "lingering ambivalence about listening practice in the classroom [exists] despite the fact that it is deemed to be very important" (Berne, 1998, p. 172). While L2 educators may have a general interest in improving their students' listening abilities, they may not know how to effectively design and execute lessons that are able to do so (Richards & Burns, 2012).

3.1.1 The meaning of listening

Regarding a definition of 'listening', various authors note the active and complex nature of the skill (e.g., Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Hasan 2000; Buck, 2001). Listening is often viewed as both active and complex because listeners must continually construct the meaning-based messages they receive. Although listening has sometimes been referred to as a passive skill (in contrast to speaking), it is "a constructive process in which the learner is an active participant" (Nunan, 1998, p. 5). The listener must construct and interpret a speaker's meaning by activating their own background and

linguistic knowledge as well as attending to the speaker's intentions (Rost, 1990). A definition recognizing the active nature of listening is in contrast to more traditional descriptions of listening that include words such as "passive" and "receptive" (Nunan, 1998; Field, 2008). Recent definitions recognize that listening is both active and complex; however, the field still lacks a generally accepted definition of what listening is (Janusik, 2010). If it were a simpler, more straightforward skill, it would be better understood by listening researchers, more easily taught by L2 educators, and more deftly acquired by L2 learners.

Listening includes attention to acoustic signals sent from a speaker through a stream of connected speech (Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Buck, 2001). The act of listening involves "a wide variety of linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge" (Feyten, 1991, p. 249). Several individual processes, including phoneme recognition, morpheme chunking, lexical recognition, and referential procedures, combine on the speech stream throughout listening (Hansen & Jensen, 1994). While some skills are linguistic in nature, visual input can also contribute to listening (Hasan, 2000; Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002), although it is not always available. Listening, then, is the successful integration and coordination of these component skills (Rost, 1994; Lynch, 2009).

The aggregate of these component elements operate in an "on-going process…[that is] continually modifying as new information becomes available" (Feyten, 1991, p. 249). Listening occurs until (and possibly even after) the acoustic signal stops; indeed, the boundary between 'listening' and thinking about or reflecting on the content a person has heard is unclear. The continuous nature of listening, combined with listeners' active attempts to comprehend input contribute to the interpretative nature of aural comprehension.

For the purposes of this study, Vandergrift's (1999) definition of listening comprehension was used because it synthesizes the main elements discussed in the literature that are necessary for successful comprehension:

> [Listening comprehension] 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 sociocultural context of the utterance (p. 168).

In addition, this definition recognizes that competent listening involves both top-down and bottom-up processing as well as cognitive operations such as activating lexical and background knowledge and taking into account the context of the listening event. These elements are crucial to our understanding of how listening occurs and are discussed in more detail below in section 3.1.

Social aspects and affective factors also influence the degree of success in listening (e.g., O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Rost, 1994). Learner attitudes, motivation levels, and physical feelings are examples of affective influences on listening (Flowerdew & Miller, 2010). Learners may also pretend to understand when they have not (Sheppard, 2013) and may be reluctant to ask for repetition or clarification. However, such aspects are excluded from the present study, which centers on cognitive and metacognitive listening strategies and how they can be developed through classroom pedagogy.

A number of factors can affect the degree of success one has when listening, both in the L1 and the L2. Obstacles that listeners, L2 listeners in particular, may face include:

- Rapid speech rates (Hasan, 2000; Lynch, 2009)
- Temporal distractions (Lynch, 2011)
- Negative reactions to speakers (Lynch, 2011)
- Inability to discern the spoken form of words they know in citation form (Goh, 2000)
- Inability to parse the speech stream into appropriate meaningful chunks (Goh, 2000)
- Inability to recognize structural speech markers (Underwood & Kenworthy, 1989)
- Listening fatigue accrued during lengthy listening passages (Rost, 1994; Hasan, 2000)

- Inadequate comprehension of an overall message despite understanding individual words (Goh, 2000)
- Inefficient and ineffective use of listening strategies (Hasan, 2000).

Listening impediments are not exclusive to L2 listeners, however, and obstacles such as regional accents and background noise also affect L1 listeners. In addition, "listening only for facts [rather than overall meaning and] wasting the advantage of thought speed over speech speed" are listening problems sometimes experienced by native listeners (Wolvin, 2010, p. 9). L1 listeners may also be influenced by individual psychological variables including learning style and apprehension (Wolvin, 2010). In order to be effective, L2 listening instructors may need techniques to diagnose and target these types of common listener problems.

This discussion of L1 and L2 listening reveals that the process of successful listening involves an elaborate and perplexing fusion of phonological, lexical, syntactic, and experiential knowledge all operating almost instantaneously. It is a fantastic achievement of both physical and cognitive elements. What is more, listening is not a skill that can be completely mastered. Instead, it continues to develop over an extensive period of time, and even L1 listeners can often benefit from listening practice (Anderson & Lynch, 1988). Listening remains a difficult concept to define and a complicated one to describe. As such, it is not surprising that teaching learners to listen in an L2 is a complicated undertaking.

3.2 How it happens: Theories of listening

Due to the internal nature of listening, the cognitive activities occurring inside the head of a listener can be opaque and complex. Besides visual signs like nodding or the furrowing of one's brow, little indication of a listener's progress is available to outside observation. Such visual indicators are results of listening but do not expose the delicate intricacies taking place as sounds transfer from ears to the mind. A number of theoretical viewpoints have been expressed to describe what happens when people listen. The conceptualizations described next help educators and psychologists envision

the way the human mind interacts with spoken language, though they are far from definitive.

3.2.1. Coming from two directions: Top-down and bottom-up processing

Two complementary views of language processing are crucial to understanding the process of aural comprehension: top-down processing (TDP) and bottom-up processing (BUP). The terms "top-down" and "bottom-up" suggest directionality of processing (Buck, 2001; Helgesen & Brown, 2007), although even research on L1 listening has struggled to determine how these processes are ordered (Hansen & Jensen, 1994). While TDP and BUP may be oversimplified and mechanistic to some extent, they are useful to our understanding of comprehension (Vandergrift, 2004) and are widely explored in the literature. Before discussing TDP and BUP in more detail, Figure 3.1 illustrates the directionality of these views of comprehension. It is interesting to note that some of Rost's (1990) terminology (i.e., letter / graphic figure) suggests written rather than spoken language. A modification in these terms to 'phoneme' or 'phonetic cluster' would perhaps be more appropriate for aural rather than reading comprehension.

Top-down processing (moving towards BUP)	Phrase / sentence	Word / lexical item
Schema (underlying structure that links parts of the text)	Formula (paragraph or other visual unit)	Letter / graphic figure
Script (a sequence of events or discrete parts of a text)	Concept (a mental representation of the current segment of text)	Bottom-up processing (moving towards TDP)
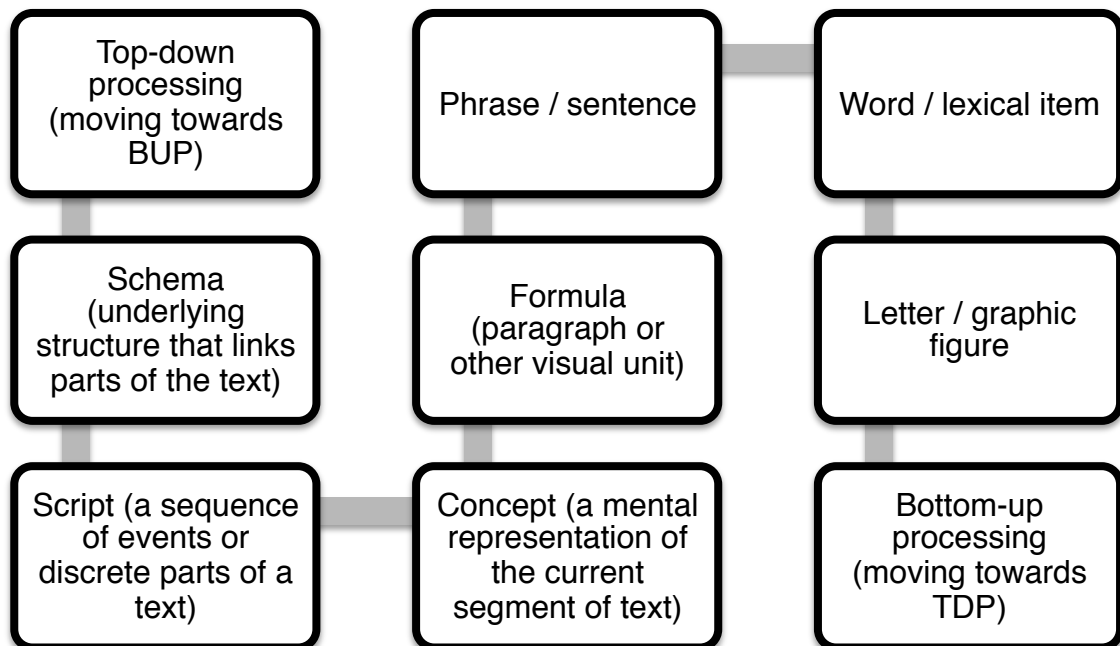
Figure 3.1: *Directionality of TDP and BUP (adapted from Rost, 1990, p. 9)*

TDP is essentially what the listener brings to the listening event in terms of life experience and world knowledge. It occurs when a listener uses "prior knowledge of context and situation in which the listening takes place to make sense of what he or she hears" (Nunan, 1999, p. 21). In other words, listeners focus on context to help scale down possible incoming message content. Elements of TDP include knowledge of "topic, genre, culture, and other schema knowledge in long-term memory…[which help] to build a conceptual framework for comprehension" (Vandergrift, 2004, p. 4). Beginning with a metaphorical whole, TDP operates from the whole to the individual sentences, clauses, words, and phonemes that form a message.

Schema, a "'package' of prior knowledge and experience that we have in memory" (Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002, p. 197), is also a crucial part of TDP. Schema consists of scripts or "typical episodes that occur in specific situations [and include] goals, participants, and procedures" as notable elements (Richards, 1983, p. 223). TDP and schema theory play an important role in listening by allowing listeners to activate background knowledge in order to predict and comprehend what they hear.

Overreliance on TDP, however, can be disadvantageous. With no checks or safeguards on TDP, listeners may apply prior knowledge and expectations inappropriately. In addition, notions like "background knowledge" can be vague and are unique to individuals (Buck, 1995; Lynch, 2009). TDP can impede as well as help listeners, particularly when they steadfastly adhere to a single hypothesis and refuse to change their expectations despite contrary linguistic input.

As an illustration of this point, consider the following situation: a woman holding hands with a young boy walks in to a restaurant. Guesswork dictates that they are likely a mother and son entering the restaurant for a meal. The woman says to a restaurant worker: "Excuse me, we need some help. This boy was walking outside and seems to have lost his parents. Can you help us?" At this point, linguistic input has proven initial predictions incorrect. While it is important for listeners to create expectations, this guesswork needs to be strictly monitored in relation to actual linguistic input. Lynch's (2009)

cautionary remarks about schema should remind L2 professionals TDP can be culturally dependent at best and glaringly misguided at worst. This anecdote reveals some weaknesses of TDP and the need for understanding of actual acoustic input. In order to mitigate potential errors in the expectations, predictions, and hypotheses of TDP, understanding of actual incoming linguistic signals through BUP is also required for successful comprehension.

BUP begins with individual pieces of information and attempts to combine them into a whole. This type of local processing occurs when listeners focus on linguistic features and determine each separate sound and word for semantic meaning or grammatical features, which are combined to generate meaning. Directionality of BUP occurs from smaller sounds to complete texts and proceeds in a linear fashion in which smaller items combine to form larger ones. It involves "perceiving and parsing the speech stream at increasingly larger levels beginning with auditory-phonetic, phonemic, syllabic, lexical, syntactic, semantic, propositional, pragmatic and interpretive" (Field, 2003, p. 326).

In particular, the acoustic, semantic, and grammatical decoding of discrete incoming signals is needed for successful BUP. This approach to listening is crucial because, without it, the entirety of listening ability would rely solely on the predictions and hypotheses associated with TDP. BUP deals with actual linguistic data that can be examined, rather than the guesswork involved in TDP. Therefore, BUP is crucial to successful listening in any context: "[BUP] is indispensible; listeners always have to do some bottom-up processing of what they hear at the acoustic level…in order to facilitate subsequent top-down processing" (Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002, p. 197).

Just as listeners need to exercise caution with TDP, they cannot rely on BUP alone. BUP largely abandons contextual influences and background knowledge, which play large roles in helping listeners interpret meaning (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Moreover, simply focusing on linguistic input nullifies the predictive benefits of TDP (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

Furthermore, listeners do not construct meaning in a linear phoneme-by-phoneme process (Anderson & Lynch, 1988). Finally, BUP has not received the prestige given to TDP; for example, time spent on pre-listening TDP activities in some listening textbooks often greatly exceeds the actual time spent listening, a situation which is "unbalanced" (Buck, 1995, p. 125). Field (2008) points to a "received view that difficulties in recognizing sounds and words in the input are of a lower order of importance [than context]" (p. 30). Although Field (2008) disagrees with this common viewpoint, he acknowledges that many in the L2 teaching field may currently hold such opinions.

It is generally agreed that listeners do not exclusively employ either TDP or BUP, and instead a combination is beneficial (e.g., Nunan, 1999; Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002; Graham & Macaro, 2008). While it may be difficult to distinguish between these two levels of processing (Brindley, 1998), both deserve attention during L2 listening instruction. Merely encouraging L2 students to guess based on context is insufficient. Rather, contextual guesswork needs to be combined with acoustic and linguistic decoding (Lynch, 2009). In other words, it is inadequate for listeners to focus solely on either individual linguistic characteristics or on broad situational features. While some commentators (e.g., O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Vandergrift, 2004) theorize that learners likely utilize more TDP or BUP depending on the task, a combination of the two clearly is necessary.

TDP has traditionally received significant attention in L2 classrooms, often resulting in a shortage of time spent on BUP (e.g., Field, 2008; Vandergrift, 2010). This overemphasis on TDP has led listening teachers to move away from the "nuts and bolts" that facilitate listening (Field, 2008, p. 30). Interestingly, the importance of TDP compared to BUP was also once very common for reading as well (e.g., Adams, 1977; Carroll & Eisterhold, 1983). However, listening teachers and methodologists are beginning to recognize that TDP and context cannot resolve all (or even most) listening problems; therefore, a more equal balance of BUP and TDP in listening

classrooms is recommended and "is fundamental to a theoretically grounded pedagogy of L2 listening comprehension" (Vandergrift, 2004, p. 5).

3.2.2 Modeling the TDP-BUP relationship

A majority of commentators on listening (e.g., Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002; Graham & Macaro, 2008) deduce that listeners use both TDP and BUP (or similar processes), although the precise relationship between them remains debatable. It is clear that TDP and BUP are crucial contributors to one's ability to successfully comprehend spoken input. Intuition would also suggest that both are necessary: the listener herself plays a role (through TDP) in interacting with the acoustic signal (accessed via BUP). The ways in which TDP and BUP converge, are sequenced, and/or overlap are described from a variety of perspectives on their role in comprehension, both those established in the literature as well as those developed through my own interpretation of the literature, from which I have developed a theoretical model presented in more detail below (see section 3.2.3).

Three major movements have attempted to describe the process of aural comprehension and the relationships between how TDP and BUP operate. The earliest of these three concepts was communication theory, which evolved from engineering and telecommunications (Lynch, 2009). The second development, information processing (IP), was based on the emerging computer age and artificial intelligence (Rost, 1994; Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002). IP models regard people as processors of input and producers of output. IP has had a significant impact on and still influences ways of understanding listening comprehension. Clark and Clark's (1977) framework, in which raw speech is transformed into constituent parts and ultimately into propositions, and Anderson's (2005) "perceptual processing, parsing, utilization" sequence are among the most well known IP models (see Table 3.1 below). A more recent development in listening theory is social constructivism, a concept in which meaning is created not only by the speaker but also by the listener as an individual within a social context (Lynch, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009). Because IP models of listening are well established

and have traditionally been more influential than the other two concepts, IP models receive further attention in this paper.

Early IP models typically consisted of stages in which the listener's cognitive activity moved from one stage to the next. IP models tended to be linear and used BUP as a foundation (Rost, 1994). Clark and Clark (1977) outlined four cognitive stages that occur during listening. What begin as unprocessed acoustic signals shift to propositional representations and finally become meaningful to the listener. Comprehension starts with BUP of phonemes, then words, and so on. In stage two, words are organized based on content and function. Steps three and four involve the formation and storage of propositions, which are defined by Flowerdew and Miller (2005) as "the smallest unit[s] of meaning to which we can assign a truth value (i.e., it can be said to be either true or false)" (p. 39). Although Clark and Clark (1977) claim these steps likely take place at the same time, other authors note the step-by-step nature implied in this model (e.g., Rost, 1994; Graham & Macaro, 2008). This framework is empirically based and includes logical explanations of psychological phenomena, even though the rigid sequencing of the stages is viewed as a weakness (Rost, 1990).

Another view of comprehension, applicable to both listening and reading comprehension, was put forth by Anderson in 1983 and has since been updated. Anderson (2005) divides comprehension into three sequential stages: perceptual processing, parsing and utilization. In perceptual processing, listeners concentrate on spoken acoustic input in which the message is originally encoded (Anderson, 2005). Listeners "[focus] attention on an oral text to the exclusion of other competing stimuli…[and]…key words or phrases that are important in the context, on pauses and acoustic emphases that may provide clues to segmentation and to meaning, or on contextual elements" (O'Malley, Chamot & Küpper, 1989, p. 419). This is the basic level of processing that occurs and relies heavily on linguistic knowledge.

The next stage, parsing, also relies on linguistic knowledge. At this stage, listeners determine intended meaning by focusing on semantic and syntactic features to transform the message from words into mental representations (Anderson, 2005). Learners are aided by knowledge of the system and rules of language as well as non-verbal signals (Rost, 1994). It is at this stage that incoming sounds are first separated into chunks and later reassembled: "During this step, listeners divide an utterance into parts and may be able to recombine and/or re-label the parts, but the intended meaning remains the same" (O'Malley, Chamot & Küpper, 1989, p. 420). To put it another way, "words are transformed into a mental representation of the combined meaning of [the] words" (Goh, 2000, p. 57). According to Field (2008), parsing happens in an "online fashion" in which the listener may begin parsing even before the input is complete (p. 187).

At this point, listeners likely have a mental image of the intended message, which is used in stage three, utilization. It is at this stage that listeners use the mental representations formed at the parsing stage to make a choice, depending on the incoming message; for example, they may store meaning in memory, obey an instruction, or respond to a question (Anderson, 2005). Only relevant prior knowledge related to the words and the situation is activated during utilization (Rost, 1994). At this stage, connections are made in long-term memory between new and existing knowledge. This stage of "spreading activation" (Buck, 2001, p. 7) is the final stage in which information shifts from short- to long-term memory. Such stimulations of long-term memory involve schema activation and development (see section 3.2.1).

Anderson (2005) points out that these stages are "partly ordered in time; however, they also partly overlap" (p. 388). Therefore, these stages share an important characteristic with Clark and Clark's (1977) sequence. That is, both theories demonstrate that elements of listening occur, at least in part, simultaneously. This observation contributes to the fascinating human trait of listening, which includes a nearly instantaneous coordination of physical and cognitive factors to create meaning from incoming sounds.

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Table 3.1: Connection of theories of listening to types of knowledge

Clark & Clark's (1977) stages of listening	*Anderson's (2005) stages of listening*	*Association with TDP / BUP*
The listener takes in raw speech and holds an image of it in short term memory.	Perceptual processing	BUP
An attempt is made to organize what was heard into constituents, identifying their content and function.	Parsing	BUP
As constituents are identified, they are used to construct propositions, grouping the propositions together to form a coherent message.	Parsing	BUP→TDP
Once the listener has identified and reconstructed the propositional meanings, these are held in long-term memory, and the form in which the message was originally received is deleted.	Utilization	TDP

These IP models have significantly influenced our understanding of listening, especially from a psychological, cognitive perspective. While social constructivist views of listening are still developing, IP models have offered detailed theories of listening comprehension. When IP models initially came about, they were based on linear, sequential patterns of input and output, similar to computer processing. This straightforward approach was criticized because it lacked social components of individuality or context. Moreover, the ideal make-up of stage models may not reflect the purpose-driven listening that occurs in everyday life (Rost, 1990). It is also unclear if the stages occur in a fixed pattern or if they happen simultaneously.

3.2.3 An additional perspective on the TDP/BUP relationship

A third possible theoretical relationship between TDP and BUP that has not been found in the literature is expressed from my own analytical perspective in Figure 3.2. From this view, both TDP and BUP deserve attention in L2

classrooms because neither approach to listening can stand alone. TDP is activated initially in order to reduce possible meanings. Once possibilities have been reduced to the most logically feasible, BUP processing assumes control. Intuitively, it seems likely that listeners already have preconceptions about what they will hear based on TDP; for example, interlocutors, locations, and situations all stimulate a listener's life experience and thus listeners form expectations about upcoming input. In other words, brains do not need to wait for the actual acoustic signals before they begin to form expectations. The brain creates hypotheses even prior to acoustic input.

This view diverges in some ways from the theories expressed by Clark and Clark (1977) and Anderson (2005), respectively. Both of their sequences start with individual parts of language (phonemes, words, et cetera) being accessed through BUP. These individual parts are then collected and arranged to construct meaning. However, those sequences show TDP stimulated only at the end of the process rather than at the beginning, where listeners may build up expectations, make predictions, and consider their surroundings. In any listening event, the listener likely builds up expectations of what they will hear, which is an element of prediction associated with narrowing interpretations; however, this initial contextual narrowing is not emphasized in the aforementioned IP models. The sequence expressed below in Figure 3.2 differs from Clark and Clark's (1977) and Anderson's (2005) representations, as it depicts the listening process starting with TDP before BUP is engaged. A final TDP step is also involved to consolidate information and evaluate comprehension.

Figure 3.2 illustrates how a combination of TDP and BUP is necessary for competent listening. It is plausible that listeners begin by using contextual aspects (e.g., participants, participant roles/relationships, physical setting) to narrow potential incoming topical and lexical items. In this way, listeners utilize their background knowledge and life experience to make listening comprehension easier. Then, listeners zoom in to attend to specific items before zooming out to take one last broad view of the listening event. These more specific BUP aspects include phoneme recognition, lexical boundaries,

and chunking. The 'bird's eye view' is used to confirm that the specific items identified match the context. If they do, comprehension occurs. If they do not, however, the listener may need to ask for restatement or clarification.
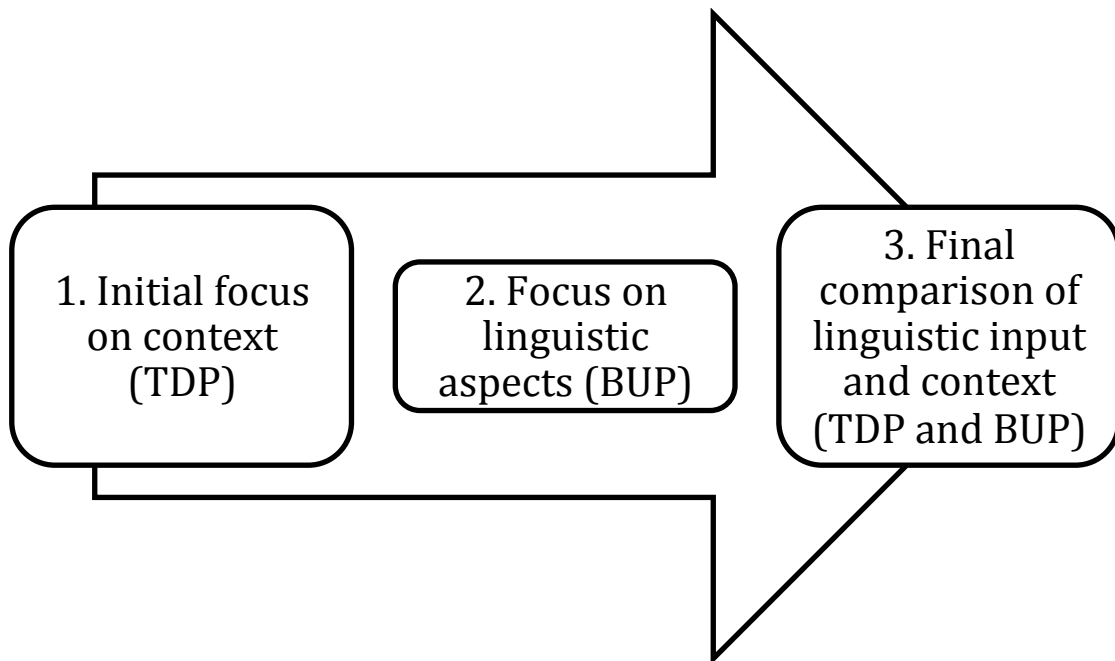
Figure 3.2: *Possible sequence of listening*

The sequence of listening depicted in Figure 3.2 sets out a theoretical model for how listening can be taught in the L2 classroom. An L2 listening instruction sequence can begin with TDP, developed through raising learner awareness about listening, tapping into life experience, and stimulating transfer of applicable L1 listening abilities to the L2 (Stage 1 above). The next step is for cognitive processes that deal with input at the local level to be activated (Stage 2). Finally, input reaches the spreading activation stage in which information and experience make connections with and are stored in long-term memory, thereby developing further a listener's background knowledge (Stage 3). The model of listening shown in Figure 3.2 was used as a theoretical foundation for the LSI developed for this project, as elements of it are explicitly linked to the process-based LSI pedagogic cycle (see Figure 3.8) and the schedule of strategies used in this study (see Table 4.2). Practical steps for operationalizing this view of listening in the L2 classroom are also expanded upon in section 3.4.

Unlike the models proposed by Clark and Clark (1977) and Anderson (2005), this model shows how listeners build up expectations based on the context in which the listening takes place; that is, the listener draws on their TDP abilities via background knowledge and life experience (Stage 1). In both of the previously described theories, listening only begins at the BUP level with actual acoustic input. Therefore, these models do not seem to represent the entire process of listening, as TDP prior to acoustic input is not recognized. Another noticeable difference between the model presented in Figure 3.2 and prior theories is the final stage (Stage 3) in which comparisons between expectations (i.e., TDP) and the linguistic input (i.e., BUP) are made and those hypotheses are accepted, modified, or rejected. This comparison stage is overlooked in the earlier models. As such, the model set out in Figure 3.2 makes an original contribution to listening and listening pedagogy by emphasizing the important role TDP plays in listening, particularly its predictive and reflective elements.

The model proposed in Figure 3.2 can be viewed as being more appropriate for L2 listening teachers than previous models, as it has direct connections to the ways in which L2 listening is often addressed in listening textbooks. Many commercial materials begin with general pre-listening schema building tasks meant to access learners' TDP abilities. These activities help to build expectations and draw on learners' world knowledge. The models by Clark and Clark (1977) and Anderson (2005) do not seem to reflect the sequence by which listening is taught via such textbooks, as their models neglect an initial TDP stage. Moreover, most materials overlook Stage 3 in which expectations are compared with actual input.

The theories mentioned above (i.e., Clark & Clark, 1977; Anderson, 2005; in Figure 3.2) supply intelligible pathways that aid our understanding of the intriguing human trait of listening, which includes a nearly instantaneous coordination of physical and cognitive factors to create incoming meaning. Yet, these theories fail to capture the rapid succession of the discrete stages. Other recent theories of listening incorporate parallel distributed processing, a notion that includes the use of multiple sources of information simultaneously

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(i.e., knowledge of language system, context, interlocutors) (Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002; Lynch, 2009). Whether TDP and BUP are employed in a linear manner or simultaneously, a challenge for L2 listeners is to develop the type of automatic aural processing they have achieved in their L1s. Automaticity of listening processes, which is "achieved by repeated use of the same process until it becomes second nature" (Field, 2008, p. 80), is mentioned often in recent literature as a target for L2 listeners (e.g., Buck, 2001; Goh, 2005). Theories of listening help us understand the cognitive activities that take place inside the heads of listeners, but theories need to be made accessible for L2 students and teachers in the form of listening pedagogy and classroom teaching and learning techniques.

3.3 Teaching trends in L2 listening

L1 listeners rarely receive direct instruction in listening; instead, they gradually accumulate aural abilities. As infants, L1 listeners develop these skills, and therefore, it was incorrectly assumed that the same holds true for L2 listeners (Field, 2008). This assumption from indirect L1 listening acquisition continues to be prevalent in many education systems, which do not teach listening explicitly (Rost, 1994). Thus, the common belief has been that listening skills will be acquired incidentally in any language.

Over the last half-century, several competing pedagogical approaches to listening have been developed (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005; Lynch, 2009), which have tended to follow popular trends in general L2 learning and teaching, such as audio-lingualism, intensive discrete-item focus, as well as sub-skill and strategy taxonomies. With greater availability from the 1960's of recorded audio materials, listening began to gain attention from L2 professionals (Field, 2012b). Pedagogic developments for listening related to these broader movements include the osmosis approach, the comprehension approach (CA), and the taxonomy-driven sub-skills approach. Commentators (e.g., Vandergrift, 2004) have noted, however, that listening research and pedagogy have developed at a slower rate than methodology for other language skills.

A major problem facing teachers is how to apply the theories previously discussed in this chapter in their listening classes. Various competing pedagogical approaches to listening have been developed and a number of these are displayed in Figure 3.3, which illustrates a roughly chronological progression of L2 listening pedagogy. None of these approaches has vanished completely from L2 education, and many are likely still in use. The first approaches to L2 listening began with no obvious underlying theory of listening. Trends shifted from exposure to comprehension questions, and then on to itemized lists of sub-skills. Although new approaches to listening instruction have evolved in recent years (e.g., extensive listening), there have been reports of teachers who "either did not teach listening at all, or attempted to teach it, but did so rather poorly" (Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002, p. 207). Despite the methodological evolution illustrated in Figure 3.3, consistent, focused, and widely accepted methods for the teaching of L2 listening have yet to reach the L2 education mainstream.

Osmosis approach

Compre-hension approach

Extensive listening

Listening to readings of written texts

Sub-skills and Strategic approaches

Process-based listening strategy instruction

Mid 20th century _____*Early 21st century*
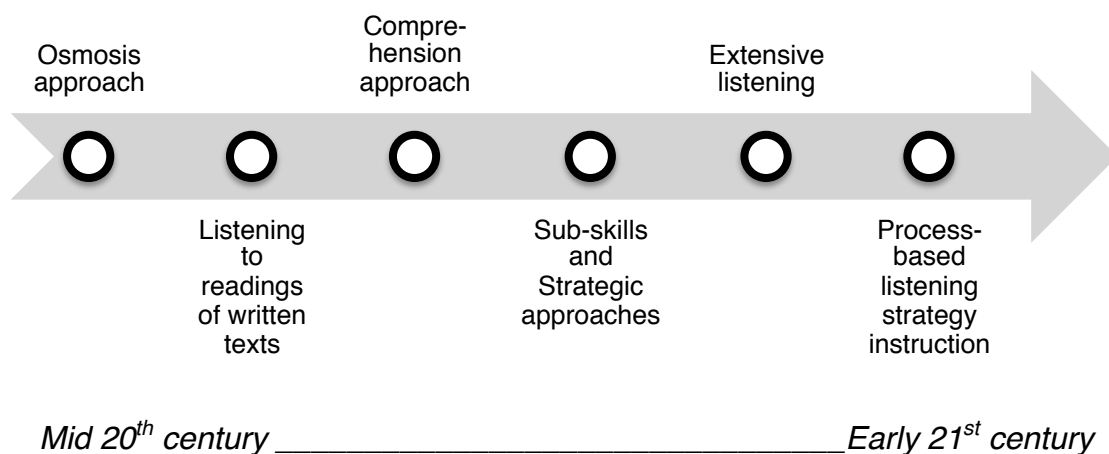
Figure 3.3. *Timeline of L2 listening pedagogy*

What is more, teachers and teacher educators have been reluctant to question previously accepted L2 listening methodologies (Field, 2008). This hesitancy may be due to precedents set by previous approaches or to a pedagogical vacuum concerning how listening should be taught. In other words, there simply is not an abundance of teaching methods for listening, nor is there conclusive evidence that any single method is more effective than

another. Even in first language educational settings, listening is not explicitly addressed and is left to develop without any direct attention (Rost, 1994). This situation has left many teachers not knowing what to do in order to help L2 learners develop their L2 aural capacity.

Language teachers may sometimes employ classroom approaches that can be classified as "doing language skills" rather than explicitly teaching them (e.g., Goh & Burns, 2012). In general, the current state of the teaching of listening in many cases should not really be labeled 'teaching' at all. Classes may rely on exposure to the L2 (e.g., the osmosis approach and extensive listening) or testing practices (the comprehension and sub-skills approaches) but not on teaching students *how to* listen. Teachers may be 'doing listening' but sometimes fail to provide explicit teaching and activities for listening skill development.

Teaching means showing a learner or explaining to them how to do something. It involves, among other practices and rituals, teacher modeling, intervention, guidance, and scaffolded support to lead learners to internalize new skills and abilities that can be utilized to accomplish previously challenging tasks by themselves. Teaching is "the process by which novices learn a skill or acquire knowledge with the help of expert input, scaffolding, and guidance" (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012, p. 189). These fundamentals of teaching are largely lacking from many of the approaches in Figure 3.3, where teachers often "ask novice listeners to engage in practice activities without a clear view of the behavior that we want them to achieve by the end of the programme" (Field, 2008, p. 120). Therefore, process-based LSI has been devised in this study as a possible advancement on this situation, as described in section 3.4.

Though exceptions surely exist, much of what occurs in listening classes could more accurately be termed 'testing,' rather than teaching. This claim is a common criticism consistently leveled at listening classes over the past 30 years (e.g., Richards, 1983; Sheerin, 1987; Field, 2008). Class time may be spent on test preparation and test-like procedures with little attention

to the development of listening abilities (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). Siegel's (2013b) study of pedagogic patterns in listening classes showed that comprehension questions were used much more frequently than other techniques during listening instruction. The difference between testing and teaching listening is a "problematic and basic issue" (Anderson & Lynch, 1988, p. 66).

A steady portion of listening methodologies "[focus] upon the outcomes of listening, rather than upon the listening process itself, upon product rather than process" (Field, 1998, p. 111), and are undesirable because they provide students with no model of listening, no guidance, no method for improvement. Traditional exercises such as multiple-choice comprehension questions and other inauthentic tasks may be convenient classroom techniques; however, they have little relevance or practicality in the real world (Ur, 1984). Furthermore, conventional listening classes offer little in relation to transferable skills and learner autonomy (Field, 2008). In light of past and current methods in teaching listening, serious attention is needed in terms of a goal-oriented model for listening informed by competent listeners and a systematic methodology for listening instruction that develops learners' processing and strategic abilities to comprehend spoken L2 input, one applicable both to the L2 classroom and the real world.

The assessment of L2 listening has also been a debatable topic and has influenced the ways in which listening instruction has evolved. Many popular multiple-choice style tests of listening have created a washback effect in the L2 classroom, a situation common in Japan, as described in Chapter 2 section 2.1. This happens when "the format of the tests influences the approach to teaching" (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005, p. 8). In addition to the negative washback effect, a number of other issues have been identified related to how listening comprehension is assessed. One such issue is the complex task of isolating aspects unique to listening from other language skills (Rost, 2002). To answer test questions, listeners may be required to listen, read, write, and/or speak, and such skill integration is insufficient to evaluate listening ability in isolation (e.g., Hansen & Jensen, 1994; Lynch, 2009). These

skills must often be used simultaneously, which only compounds the difficulty in evaluating listening (Brindley, 1998).

The mixing of language skills on 'listening' assessments calls into question the construct validity of many tests of aural comprehension (Wu, 1998; Buck, 2001). For example, test-takers may "exploit loopholes in the format of the [IELTS] test" by relying on the written question prompts and answer choices (Field, 2012a, p. 395). The TOEIC test is another example of an exam that is "not a test of the listening construct [but rather is] a test of general grammatical competence through the oral mode" (Buck, 2001, p. 216). Test-takers are often expected to use multiple language skills (e.g., listening and reading) simultaneously, an arduous task even for L1 listeners (Brindley, 1998). To alleviate these issues, some have suggested using oral rather than written prompts or making a non-linguistic response such as ordering pictures (Vandergrift, 2006), although such procedures are likely more inconvenient with large numbers of test-takers than the standardized systems currently in use.

Another issue with listening assessment is the unnatural role of 'eavesdropper' that listeners are required to occupy. Purposes for listening are also distorted; that is, test-takers may be forced to focus on minute details rather than overall outcomes. This situation potentially makes "the listening task more demanding than it was for the original listener" (Anderson & Lynch, 1988, p. 73). Furthermore, test anxiety is often high when it comes to listening, particularly when test-takers know they only have one chance to listen (Brindley, 1998; Field, 2012a).

Despite all of these issues, however, listening needs to be assessed for placement, promotion, and evaluative reasons, and quantitative tests with comprehension questions offer a convenient and affordable way to do so. An alternative qualitative stance on listening assessment is discussed in section 3.5.1 below. Meanwhile, the ways in which listening is commonly evaluated have certainly impacted how it is taught in EFL contexts like Japan. Further

consideration of listening assessment per se is beyond the scope of this study and the discussion now turns to pedagogic practices.

3.3.1 Review of classroom approaches to teaching L2 listening

Although it is often the first language skill to develop in L1 users, listening has often been the last of the four main skills to receive pedagogic attention from L2 professionals (Feyten, 1991; Nunan, 1998). Classroom time for explicit listening development tends to be squeezed in between instruction in the other skills. Language points and examples are typically presented in oral form to learners, who must use their listening abilities to access that information; however, listening has not traditionally been developed in its own right. Listening has, for instance, often been subjugated to presenting new grammar points in class (Field, 2012b). The lack of attention given to L2 listening may be related to assumptions about L1 listening. Furthermore, while other skills are developed in new ways, listening is often neglected. For example, while methodologists have emphasized interaction in the other three skills, listening has been overlooked in this regard (Field, 2008). The following paragraphs outline the approaches to listening instruction presented in Figure 3.3 and are analyzed from the perspective of whether they satisfy the criteria for teaching listening as discussed in section 3.3 above.

Osmosis Approach

This approach to listening is based on the audio-lingual view of language learning that was popular some 50-60 years ago (Morley, 1995). From this perspective, listening is a skill that unconsciously develops through repeated exposure to the L2 during periods of listening, imitating, and memorizing (e.g., Mendelsohn, 1998). Because it does not involve any explicit teaching, the osmosis approach could even be considered a 'non-approach.' Listening is not a priority for teachers and is not directly addressed in L2 classes. Rather, learners listen to input for the purposes of oral repetition. Listening skills, it is assumed, are "picked up along the way" (Mendelsohn, 1995, p. 133).

Listening to Readings of Written Texts

Learners listen to texts that were originally written for the purpose of being read, not spoken aloud. As such, these texts lack a number of the features unique to spoken language; for example, false starts, hesitations, and ellipsis are often absent (e.g., Flowerdew & Miller, 1997; Vandergrift & Goh, 2012; Burns & Hill, 2013). By listening to written texts read aloud, students may be unprepared for listening to spontaneous and authentic speech (e.g., Brown, 1994). Because these written texts involve more forethought, preparation and planning on the part of materials writers than the spontaneity of authentic speech, speaker turns in these contrived recordings are likely be longer and complete sentences more frequent than in typical speech (Flowerdew & Miller, 1997). When listening to readings of written texts, learners are deprived of opportunities to hear authentic or near-authentic L2 input and are expected to undertake the unnatural task of processing language through inappropriate means. This practice promoted the notion of "listening as reading" rather than the skill of listening being acknowledged in its own right (Brown, 2013).

In recent years, materials creators have begun to address this situation by providing audio recordings of semi-scripted dialogues in which the content and speed of the conversations are controlled for comprehensibility, but more features of spoken language (e.g., false starts and hesitations) are included in order to more closely resemble natural spoken output (Buck, 2001). However, many textbook dialogues continue to misrepresent authentic L2 communication, leaving learners to develop their listening and speaking skills from inauthentic models (Burns & Hill, 2013).

Comprehension Approach (CA)

In the CA, students listen to a text, answer related questions, after which the answers are checked by the teacher, as displayed in Figure 3.4. It is a typical 'listen, answer, check' sequence that is product-oriented in nature. Multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and matching questions are routinely used in the CA. The "gross assumption" is that answering such questions correctly equates to high listening proficiency while incorrect answers signal poor listening (Field,

2008, p. 30). A common criticism aimed at the CA is that it continuously tests existing aural ability rather than contributes to the progressive scaffolded development of learners' listening competence (e.g., Richards, 1983; Ur, 1984).

In the CA, the teacher or materials writer (i.e., not the listener) decides which information is important through the questions they create (Field, 2008). Unsurprisingly, display questions (questions in which the teacher already knows the answer and are therefore unauthentic in some ways) are frequently used (Richards & Lockhart, 1996). Another major drawback of the CA is that there is no systematic way for students to improve. Other disadvantages of the CA include an isolated and stressful classroom atmosphere (Field, 2008) and few real world applications (e.g., Ur, 1984; Siegel, 2011b). This "quiz-show format of teaching" is widespread throughout L2 education (Morley, 1995, p. 189).
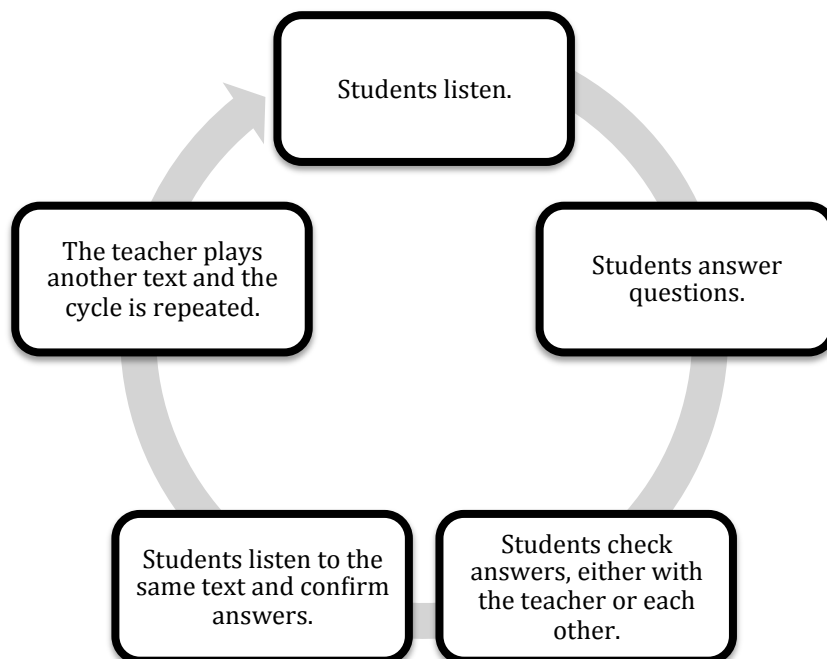
Figure 3.4. *A typical CA classroom sequence*

Sub-skills Approach

The sub-skills approach uses taxonomies of listening skills as its base. This approach attempts to divide the sizeable act of listening into more manageable components, which can be isolated and practiced in class. In theory, these components recombine to form better listening proficiency, although the possibility of recombination remains uncertain (Field, 2008). Richards (1983) provided a seminal taxonomy of 33 listening skills that is widely referenced and has led to further classifications. Rost (1990) created a practical list of classroom listening activities, which closely corresponds to listening theories; for example, activities are divided into categories such as perception, interpretation, and formulating conceptual frameworks (p. 152-153). These categories coincide with the aforementioned operations of perceptual processing, parsing, and utilization (see section 3.2.2). Such lists of sub-skills and related teaching techniques are useful for L2 listening teachers because they help to clarify the processes involved in listening and are organized in a manner that is coherent and transparent to some extent. Although the term 'listening' is difficult to define concretely (as discussed in section 3.1.1), inventories of discrete listening operations provide a substantial basis from which to plan and implement the teaching of L2 listening.

Assumptions of this approach are: listening can be divided into sub-skills; sub-skills can be isolated and practiced independently; and they can be successfully recombined (Field, 2008). The notion of a sub-skills approach was originally developed for the teaching of reading and was later applied to listening. Obvious distinctions between reading and listening exist, including differences between eyes and ears as well as visual and aural signal recognition. As Lynch (2009) explains, listening involves "the word in the ear, rather than the word on the page" (p. 37). Furthermore, while standardized spelling conventions govern reading, pronunciation varies widely (Field, 2008), which suggests that listening may be the more difficult skill. In addition, a written text has a sense of permanency while an aural text is ephemeral (Field, 2008). Though these two skills have several differences, an "essential underlying skill of language processing" applies to both (Anderson & Lynch,

1988, p. 20) and they "draw upon the same comprehension processes" (Field, 2008, p. 27). Therefore, while the internal comprehension processes required for both listening and reading may be similar, the differences in message form and delivery need to be addressed for each individual skill.

Despite their promise, taxonomies should be used with caution and not treated like process syllabi because the skills themselves are neither acquired nor utilized in a linear fashion, one after another (Rost, 1990; Field, 2008). Furthermore, the sub-skills approach involves teaching from lists, not from an expert listener's intuition or cognitive processes or a teacher's knowledge about the students in their local context. Furthermore, these lists have not been organized into a pedagogic classroom sequence that can be consistently replicated by teachers for the benefit of their students. Complications in defining specific listening skills may also undermine this approach (e.g., Ridgway, 2000), and a more serious caveat is that these taxonomies consist of hypothetical skills that are difficult to demonstrate or to prove that they actually exist (Field, 2008). Nevertheless, these taxonomies must be considered advancements on previous methods of L2 listening instruction because they attempt to define and provide a pedagogic basis for listening, two aspects lacking in older pedagogies.

Extensive Listening

Extensive listening (EL) is promoted by Renandya and Farrell (2011), who state "listening is best learnt through listening" (p. 56). In EL, students are exposed to large amounts of comprehensible input and also engage in listening for pleasure outside of the classroom. EL has been criticized for overlooking the progressive development of specific listening processes and strategies as well as for undervaluing the role expert listeners and L2 instructors (Siegel, 2011a). This approach can be facilitated by learners themselves and requires little teacher intervention to implement. In fact, the role of the teacher seems to be largely relegated to materials provider. EL also echoes the osmosis approach, as it reverts back to the days of mere exposure to the L2 as standard pedagogy. Without at least some intervention and

guidance from a skilled listener (i.e., a teacher), the approach may lack efficiency in terms of learners' time and energy commitments. EL certainly provides learners with chances to listen; however, this extensive listening practice should come in combination with in-class listening process development and LSI (Siegel, 2011a).

Process Approach

Although previous methodologies were concerned mostly with the products of listening, more recent developments have embarked on a new process-oriented course (Vandergrift, 2004). This is an important step because it supports learners in clarifying, understanding, and cultivating the listening processes they are using or need to use (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). A process approach to listening acknowledges that learners already possess some knowledge of the listening process from their L1 that they can transfer to L2 listening (e.g., Færch & Kasper, 1986; Goh, 2005), has strong ties to listening research, and is informed by psychologists, phoneticians, and neurologists (Field, 2008). This approach shares some elements of the sub-skills approach, mainly the underlying "skill-training principle of dividing a macro-skill into its component parts" (Field, 2008, p. 110). The term "process" (rather than "sub-skill") is used because it incorporates processes that native-level listeners use, rather than a hypothetical list of sub-skills (Field, 2008).

A process approach uses as its base the notion of an expert listener, who can provide a process model for L2 learners to emulate. These "expert" listeners, typically L2 language teachers, likely have L2 listening abilities superior to those of their students in the form of "tried, rapid, and efficient systems" for processing aural input (Field, 2008, p. 111). Further, the "traits of the skilled L1 listener…provide a yardstick for assessing the performance of the L2 listener at any level" (Field, 2012a, p. 397). Teachers can use a modeling technique in which they show, demonstrate, and explain to students the mental activities they go through while listening to a text (Chamot, 1995). As such, teacher modeling sets a pattern for how skilled listeners behave in terms of decoding the speech stream and also constructing appropriate

contextual meanings from input. Teacher modeling is also an emerging teaching technique for LSI. It seems logical that L2 listeners should endeavor to follow a model for listening set by expert listeners if their goal is accurate, native-like comprehension, although this goal may be questioned as the notion of English as a lingua franca continues to develop.

The view of teacher/expert listener as role model for listeners is a welcome addition to earlier pedagogies, which lack heuristic and functional goals for listeners. By raising L2 students' meta-knowledge of their L1 listening processes as well as facilitating the transfer of that knowledge to L2 listening, teachers may be able to positively influence L2 listening for those students. In this way, teachers help to guide their students in listening processes that mirror those of more skilled listeners. The process approach places expert listener competency as the goal, and the teacher's job (in the role of expert listener) is to introduce and demonstrate their expert behavior. Beyond advocating for teacher modeling of listening processes, the literature is largely devoid of any tips or models for making teacher modeling a practical undertaking for teachers, although Siegel (2013a) has offered some preliminary experiential advice on the topic, including prompts for teacher modeling.

Another complication of teacher modeling may be variations in the listening abilities of language teachers around the world. A majority of English teachers worldwide are non-native English users, and their influence and effectiveness is increasingly evident as arguments for English as a lingua franca gain attention (Llurda, 2004; Braine, 2005). So long as these non-native user teachers have listening abilities superior to those of their students, they likely can provide at least minimal scaffolding for their learners. In fact, for non-native teachers who share the L1 with the learners, they may be able to help learners overcome listening difficulties specific to the L1 group.

However, the same problem of sequencing that troubles the sub-skills approach also applies to the process approach. Uncertainty exists as to which processes should take priority in the classroom, and the potential risk persists

for teachers to run through a cataloged list of processes one-by-one (Field, 2008). Without a plan for incorporating the processes in classes in a systematic way, language educators may be at a loss for how to organize the process approach in their everyday lessons. A thorough review of the literature has not uncovered any description or report of a synchronized process approach to listening instruction set in a classroom context. Likewise, research into the effectiveness of such an approach is also lacking in the literature.

3.3.2 Listening strategies approach

The focus of this research was on instruction related to internal cognitive processes and listening strategies. The listening strategies approach originated with the idea of the "good language learner" (Rubin, 1975) and the notion that skilled language learners (listeners, in this case) can positively influence language learning behaviors in others. From a broad view, LSI is an approach that aims to "develop an awareness of skills related to listening; to use a variety of listening skills effectively in achieving an objective" (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005, p. 16). Mendelsohn (1998) provides a more precise definition of a strategy-based approach:

> A strategy-based approach is a methodology that is rooted in strategy instruction. It sees the objective as being to teach students how to listen. This is done, first, by making learners aware of how the language functions and second, by making them aware of the strategies that they use—i.e., developing 'metastrategic awareness.' Then, the task of the teacher becomes to instruct the learners in the use of additional strategies that will assist them in tackling the listening task (p. 87).

Cohen and Dörnyei (2002) recognize both mental and physical aspects of a strategy: "[strategies are] conscious and semi-conscious thoughts and behaviours used by learners with the explicit goal of improving their knowledge and understanding of a target language" (p. 178). Definitions of "strategy" vary, and terminology debates are prevalent in the literature (e.g., Macaro, 2006; Field, 2008; Heath, 2013); however, individual authors and researchers will adopt an interpretation based on their main sphere of interest

and personal viewpoints (Macaro, 2001). The lack of a coherent and widely accepted definition can be blamed for difficulties of comparing and replicating strategy studies (Oxford, 1992).

For the purposes of this study, "listening strategies" are viewed as "conscious plans to manage incoming speech" (Rost, 2002, p. 236). This definition specifies that strategies are conscious, which means that they can be identified, explicitly introduced, and developed. Furthermore, incoming speech can be 'managed' in many different ways, a view that subsumes both cognitive and metacognitive listening strategies.

Potential benefits of strategy instruction include equipping learners to succeed in a multitude of contexts (Macaro, 2001) and encouraging students to learn in new ways (Oxford, 1992). Furthermore, the capacity of LSI to foster learner autonomy is gradually being recognized, and several commentators support pedagogy which is based on developing a set of listening skills and strategies that can be transferred to new and future situations beyond the classroom context (e.g., Lynch, 2009; Siegel, 2011b).

As suggested previously, LSI is a possible solution to the purely product-oriented listening classes and questionable methodologies of the past (e.g., Nunan, 1998; Helgesen & Brown, 2007). Lynch and Mendelsohn (2002) state: "Strategy instruction is at the root of teaching learners how to tackle a listening text" (p. 206). To date, LSI has been under-researched, and the scant fieldwork available makes it an auspicious area for investigation. This shortage of research may stem from the unobservable nature of listening and/or the methodological obstacles impeding research on listening (Lynch, 2009). Despite a lack of overwhelming evidence, some early indications tentatively indicate advantages of LSI (Vandergrift, 1999; Macaro, Graham & Vanderplank, 2007; Siegel, 2012).

Strategy instruction, and process-based LSI in particular, demands, at least at times, that teachers occupy non-traditional roles. This stipulation is in line with the process approach to listening, in which an expert listener provides a model for learners. A shift in roles is necessary because teachers,

through LSI, attempt to empower learners to take control of their own L2 aural development. Given the relative newness of strategy training, Rubin (1994) notes that teachers need ample opportunities to observe, plan, trial, and implement methods for strategy instruction. According to Chamot, Barnhardt and El-Dinary (1999), "patience and perseverance" are required to teach strategies (p. 37). In addition, "teachers should get in the habit of praising good thinking more than good outcomes" (Chamot, et al., 1999, p. 104). Attention to good thinking also aligns with the shift to process-orientation as opposed to product-orientation. Furthermore, teachers need to both encourage those students hesitant to use strategies while at the same time restraining overzealous strategy users (Field, 1998). The need for scaffolding and recycling of strategies is also a responsibility of teachers, course planners, and materials designers.

Types of strategies: Cognitive and metacognitive

While O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) seminal strategy categories consist of cognitive, metacognitive, and affective strategies, other types of strategies such as social and communicative strategies also receive attention in the literature (e.g., Lynch, 2009; Oxford, 2011). This study, however, focuses on the internal processes of listening rather than social interaction. Therefore, for the purposes of this research, the teaching of cognitive and metacognitive listening strategies, two of the "most widely-agreed upon classes of language use strategies" (Rost, 2002, p. 154), was examined.

Cognitive strategies are "mental activities for manipulating the language to accomplish a task" (Vandergrift, 2003, p. 473). They involve "finding ways of dealing with the content of listening texts" (Richards & Burns, 2012, p. 36). Goh (2005) labels cognitive strategies as direct strategies, which include inference, elaboration, and visualization. Cognitive strategies are used to perceive and interpret language as well as to activate relevant knowledge. These mental activities have strong connections to the theories of listening discussed earlier (i.e., Clark & Clark, 1977; Anderson, 2005), as such theories assume that cognitive abilities exist and undertake mental operations such as

perceiving phonemes, parsing the speech stream, and activating background knowledge.

The second category of strategies in this study is metacognitive strategies, which Vandergrift (2004) describes as key to "[overseeing] the processes [and] directing deployment of appropriate cognitive strategies" (p. 485). Metacognitive strategies manage and supervise language learning, are used for selection and support of cognitive strategies, and evaluate comprehension and strategy choice (Macaro, 2001; Cohen & Dörnyei, 2002; Reed, 2013). As Flowerdew and Miller (2005) state, strategies in this category are useful for listening as they organize information while monitoring and evaluating comprehension. Metacognitive listening strategies can aid listeners in improving their listening abilities long after a course of study has been completed (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).

Metacognitive strategies may be limited to the classroom (Goh, 2008) and, while they may be useful for tests of listening, they may not be applicable to real world listening (Field, personal communication, 25 Oct 2010). Nevertheless, metacognitive strategies utilized in the classroom can potentially boost listener confidence outside the classroom. One important reason to include metacognitive strategies in this study was because all students were required to obtain specified TOEFL scores, which accounted for part of their grades. Furthermore, since some commentators (e.g., Oxford, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990) theorize that metacognitive strategies manage cognitive ones, metacognition may have some effect on listening regardless of context and thus deserve attention in L2 listening courses.

Like the uncertainties connected to the definition of 'strategy', definitions of cognitive and metacognitive strategies have received criticism. One flaw of the various definitions is a shiftiness in labels, which are vulnerable to change during the learning process (Cohen & Dörnyei, 2002); for instance, a strategy might be cognitive when it is unconscious, but when it becomes conscious, it could be considered metacognitive. A second drawback of these terms is their obscurity to many teachers and learners

(Field, 2008). Despite these terminological drawbacks, cognitive and metacognitive operations are necessary for language learning and processing.

Proponents of listening strategy training

Several commentators promote the advantages of listening strategies (e.g., O'Malley, Chamot & Küpper, 1989; Oxford, 1990; Griffiths, 2003; Helgesen & Brown, 2007). One reason for this support is that in an increasing globalized and changing world, it is impossible to predict the language situations in which L2 learners will find themselves; therefore, the teaching of generalizable strategies can equip learners to succeed in a multitude of contexts (Macaro, 2001). Strategy instruction also helps learners to reach "beyond their normal stylistic boundaries" (Oxford, 1992, p. 18). By acquiring more strategies, learners are better equipped to utilize appropriate strategies from a growing cache.

Furthermore, the capacity of LSI to foster learner autonomy is gradually being recognized, and a number of commentators support methodology which is based on developing a set of listening skills and strategies that can be transferred to new and future situations beyond the classroom context (i.e., Field, 2008; Lynch, 2009). In his seminal article on listening methodology, Richards (1983) implies that listening instruction should have the potential to transfer to real-world situations. One connection between LSI and learner autonomy is the teacher's desire to prepare students for future listening experiences which are independent of the classroom context and in which a teacher is redundant (Helgesen & Brown, 2007). While classroom listening tasks may struggle to replicate real life listening (Field, 2008), activities should align with listening in the real world whenever possible. Although it would seem enthusiasm for LSI is increasing (see, for example, Ozeki, 2000; Chen, 2007), persuasive evidence remains inadequate for commentators to universally recognize LSI as beneficial (Macaro, Graham & Vanderplank, 2007; Lynch, 2009) and thus additional studies are needed that aim to better understand the effects of LSI and to describe LSI in practice.

Opponents of strategy instruction

The notion that strategy instruction is advantageous remains unsettled, and both theoretical and practical criticisms have been expressed. One criticism aimed at strategy instruction in general is the ambiguity of the meaning of 'strategy' (e.g., Dörnyei, 2005). Another theoretical concern is the potentially tremendous cognitive demands on L2 listeners, which may mean they lack extra attention for strategy use (Ridgway, 2000); in fact, listeners may not have time to consciously employ strategies within the real-world time constraints of listening (Ridgway, 2000). In addition, Lynch (2009) points out that L2 listening strategy effectiveness can depend on individual listeners, the strategies themselves, or on the application of strategies. To extend Lynch's (2009) observation, it is possible that a combination of these factors may also affect degrees of success. The environment in which the L2 learning occurs may also influence strategy use (Goh, 2012). Furthermore, Field (2008) observes that L2 learners are likely already proficient L1 listeners, and therefore, any LSI may be redundant. There is also concern that strategies contain culturally biased Western expectations of autonomy (Jones, 1995), which learners may resist in more traditional educational contexts like Japan (see Chapter 2).

Practical concerns about LSI include a potentially large class time commitment (e.g., Cohen & Dörnyei, 2002; Dörnyei, 2005). In other words, a substantial amount of time and practice is probably required for any LSI component to be effective, but that time may not be available. In addition to the time commitment issue, questions of how much strategy training and when to include it remain unanswered (Macaro, 2001). Moreover, LSI is not a substitute for practice or for contact with the target language (Renandya & Farrell, 2011). However, Field (2008) points out that careful planning can negate some of these practical concerns.

3.3.3 Reflections on previous and present listening pedagogies

Within the pedagogic frameworks discussed thus far, students are expected to perform without being shown or receiving any direction in how to go about

accomplishing the desired task. For instance, emphasis may be placed on selecting correct answers to multiple-choice questions. Yet little or no instruction is given beforehand as to how listeners should approach a text, what they should do while listening, and how correct answers can be extracted, if necessary. An underlying assumption seems to be that learners automatically gain listening abilities through exposure and are eventually able to understand the L2 and complete assigned tasks. However, several of these methods overlook developmental and scaffolded progression. The processes that lead to successful comprehension are either neglected or assumed, but they are seldom taught.

The popularity of international standardized tests of listening, such as the TOEFL and TOEIC, may cause teachers to equate the teaching of listening with listening test preparation. In addition, multiple-choice tests of listening may contribute significantly to student grades, which may result in listening instruction mirroring assessment methods, and therefore a washback effect is evident in many pedagogic practices that aim to develop L2 listening (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). These approaches neglect real-world listening and show indifference to preparation for those listening experiences students may have beyond the classroom. With this focus on testing, the core reason for listening instruction (i.e., helping learners develop abilities to cope with aural L2 input) is muddled by an overemphasis on products resembling those needed on exams.

Problematic issues abound in connection with many of the existing practices for L2 listening instruction. Some, such as bludgeoning students with heavy doses of comprehension questions, have already been pointed out. Another issue includes distortion of listening expectations. In other words, learners are sometimes expected to recall parts of a text verbatim, which is something even L1 listeners rarely do, and such expectations exaggerate the importance of details beyond what is typical listening practice (Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Richards & Burns, 2012). What is more, the methodologies described above do little to foster *teaching* of listening in the sense that

teaching entails providing models and support, demonstrations of desired behaviors, and a *how to* element.

Yet despite these issues, L2 listening teachers continue to rely on these and similar approaches, persisting with faulty, theoretically unfounded practices that are antithetical to the core values of teaching. They may be preoccupied with "doing" listening rather than teaching it (e.g., Goh & Burns, 2013). As Mendelsohn (1995) puts it, "[second and foreign language] teachers generally have not felt very confident about *how to go about teaching* listening" (p. 133, emphasis in original). Even L1 listening instructors lack established pedagogy about how to develop their learners' aural abilities, as Janusik (2010) points to a "lack of consensus on what should be taught and how it should be taught" (p. 199). Moreover, L2 teachers can seldom find guidance in teacher manuals, which "tend to cover listening in a rather cursory way and rarely examine it as a complex set of processes" (Field, 2008, p. 120) or simply have a lack of general information about listening (Field, 2012b). To raise the standard of quality, L2 teacher education courses may need to include more emphasis on approaches and techniques for listening instruction (Mendelsohn, 2001; Siegel, 2013b).

A consensus among listening methodologists suggests that simple exposure to language is neither a pedagogically nor a practically sound approach to the teaching of listening (Field, 2008). Moreover, L2 professionals have largely neglected and underdeveloped planned and scaffolded guidance for learners' aural development. Much of listening instruction seems to "assume a set of skills is already acquired and simply [provides] opportunities for the [listener] to practice them" (Richards, 1983, p. 233). In contrast, intuitive teaching procedures would have the teacher guiding students in skill development before providing opportunities for learners to practice on their own. As such, "traditional listening pedagogies seem to have placed the proverbial cart before the horse" (Siegel, 2013a, p. 177).

A major problem facing teachers is how to apply the theories discussed in section 3.2 in listening classes. Teachers and methodologists have not yet

incorporated the components that contribute to listening competency into a pedagogic sequence that teaches students how to listen by addressing both processes and strategies. Although various methodologies have been promoted, there is very little research on how those pedagogies actually materialize in the classroom. The teaching of listening remains as complex and mysterious a task as defining or explaining it. Teachers need a teaching cycle that can be replicated and repeated during a course, a sequence that brings some order and purpose to operationalize the ideas about teaching listening from the pages of literature into the reality of the L2 classroom. This type of pedagogic sequence needs to acknowledge the L1 listening abilities learners have, develop L2 listening abilities specific to the new language, incorporate expert listener experiences, and acknowledge the multiple mental strategic elements (e.g., metacognitive and cognitive) that contribute to listening competency.

3.4 Process-based listening strategy instruction

The discussion up to this point has suggested that more appropriate methods for teaching L2 listening are in need of development. A pedagogic shift in focus from the outcomes of listening (i.e., answers to comprehension questions) to the operation of listening (i.e., development of sub-skills and procedures) may be one way to improve listening classes (Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002; Field, 2008). This project proposed process-based LSI as a possible enhancement to the problematic state of L2 listening pedagogy. Process-based LSI partially draws on the process and the LSI approaches (discussed in section 3.3). The 'process-based' element of this new approach comes from the theories of TDP and BUP as well as listening teachers' intuition and teacher modeling (e.g., Goh, 2005; Field, 2008; Siegel, 2011a), which draw on the teacher's own listening ability to set up a structure of processes and strategies for their students to emulate and develop. In addition, a central tenet is that a process can be separated into constituent parts (Field, 2008), which can subsequently be practiced and repeated in an effort to achieve automaticity.

The LSI element incorporates the cognitive and metacognitive strategic mental activities teachers use to understand a text and those that students may need to know to achieve listening competency. As Richards and Burns (2012) observe, complex terms such as cognitive and metacognitive may be impractical and overly-technical for classroom practice. Thus, while these concepts were instrumental in the planning of this project, the terms themselves were not used in any classroom instruction. Among the goals of process-based LSI are for learners to increase their listening confidence, to develop listening processes and strategies, and to evolve their abilities to transfer processes and strategies practiced in class to novel listening events, both in and beyond the L2 classroom. This approach endeavors to help learners to be "the most efficient and active listeners possible" (Mendelsohn, 2001, p. 34).

Sub-skill and strategy taxonomies for listening are useful in that they help educators better understand, describe, and reflect on discrete mental operations that enable listening to occur. However, these catalogs of skills and strategies should be used to inform teaching practice, not as simple syllabi of teaching points to be addressed in some hypothetical order. Since each listening text is different, teachers should make pragmatic choices *informed by* taxonomies, as well as their knowledge of their learners and their listening intuition, to incorporate different skills and strategies into their lessons. Selections from the taxonomies should be post hoc rather than ad hoc; that is, choices of which processes and strategies to include in class should come after a teacher reviews a listening text, not before. The teachers and the texts, rather than the taxonomies, should propel the course. After the teacher has previewed a text, they should identify skills and strategies *presented by the text* and develop those in class. With these notions in mind, the strategy selection and sequencing for this LSI was based on the theoretical model of listening proposed in Figure 3.2 and is discussed in more detail in section 4.3.

While the LSI used in this project is not without drawbacks (see *Opponents of strategy instruction* in section 3.3.2), it does address many of the flaws of existing pedagogies. First, LSI acknowledges key theoretical

concepts in listening, such as TDP, BUP, and listening strategies. These core elements are described and discussed extensively in the literature, but have not been incorporated into a pedagogic sequence that teachers can use. This combination of key listening components is often overlooked in previous pedagogies. In addition, this LSI places the teacher in a position to teach listening, which is also a characteristic uncommon in other approaches. Finally, LSI develops transferable abilities for use beyond the classroom, rather than being limited to a single text, as comprehension questions in the CA often are.

3.4.1 Teacher's role in process-based LSI

Rather than being merely materials-providers or answer-givers, teachers using process-based LSI are expected to take an active teaching role in listening pedagogy. In this role, a teacher's strong listening intuition can be used as a resource to facilitate LSI. As Sheerin (1987) points out, "even the best and most appropriate listening tasks…will not in themselves *teach* listening" (p. 129) (emphasis in original). Therefore, teachers need to be active participants in listening courses. Several commentators have acknowledged the need for teachers to play larger, more involved roles when teaching listening and have supported the idea of teacher modeling of listening strategies (e.g., Vandergrift, 2004; Goh, 2005, 2008). Furthermore, as Field (2008) points out, teachers may have specialized knowledge of and experience with a target group of listeners, which can be beneficial in addressing listening errors of a particular group.

While language educators may be encouraged to take on more responsibility for designing and implementing an LSI component, they may face some challenges in attempting to do so. Teachers may face difficulties in identifying and selecting strategies to teach; in other words, appropriate selection of a 'best' strategy is often difficult because learner styles and preferences vary (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005, p. 65). Teachers may also lack knowledge of the specific operations of listening, and teacher education courses currently do little to enhance teacher knowledge of listening or

listening pedagogy (e.g., Field, 2012b). These challenges can lead to heavy demands for teachers when initially attempting to teach listening strategies (Renandya & Farrell, 2011). These are obstacles that need to be addressed if L2 listening pedagogy is to progress.

The LSI planning stages outlined in Chapter 4, section 4.4 represent one way to mitigate this situation. Another measure to increase the viability of process-based LSI comes in the form of findings from student and teacher perceptions of this methodology (see Chapter 5), which include preferences and pedagogic advice on listening instruction. Additionally, the model for implementation of LSI at the language program level (depicted in Chapter 8, Figure 8.1) was informed by this research and helps to guide future LSI initiatives. All of these contributions were made with the intention of better informing language educators and improving the state of L2 listening instruction.

Process-based LSI starts with a listening text rather than a list of skills or strategies. From that text, the teacher extracts processes and strategies to teach. In this methodology, the teacher is viewed as an 'expert listener' who can set a model and framework for learners to emulate (see section 3.6 for additional description of teacher modeling in this LSI). Accepted approaches for teaching the other main language skills have consistently used the teacher as 'expert.' For example, the teaching of speaking incorporates model conversations and talking points for students to complete, writing pedagogy includes copying sentences and imitating sample paragraphs written by the teacher, and reading methodology covers sub-skills and strategies such as reading for gist and purpose. All of these teaching techniques put the teacher in the role of skilled language user. With regard to listening, this typically only happens in the sense that teachers recommend suitable texts (as in the osmosis or EL approaches) or that they provide the correct answers for learners (as in the CA). Process-based LSI treats the teacher as an expert in their position as competent listener and gives novice L2 listeners step-by-step guided instruction in how to approach and handle aural texts.

3.5 Present research situation

Although much research has examined other types of strategies, such as communication and reading strategies, interest in and support for LSI in particular is only beginning to develop. Various complexities and challenges, however, have hindered listening and listening strategy research (e.g., Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Flowerdew & Miller, 2005; Vandergrift, 2010). These difficulties exist despite the fact that researchers do have access to some products of listening (i.e., multiple-choice answers or word gap fills). Still, the processes of listening remain concealed, and researchers must strive to overcome two barriers of listening research: the inaccessible nature of mental processes and the multitude of factors that can influence success or failure when listening (e.g., Lynch, 2011). A further challenge is the intangibility of listening, particularly when compared to speaking or writing (Field, 2008).

Due to these challenges, listening and listening strategies have received inadequate attention from teachers and researchers in recent years (Vandergrift, 2004). Empirical data to support this observation comes from Lynch (2011), who found that of 147 articles in the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, only one focused on listening exclusively and eight discussed a combination of listening and speaking skills. This unconcern for listening in the literature is evident despite listening being recognized as the crucial language skill (Mendelsohn, 1998).

The state of learning strategy research in general is contentious since many studies have been plagued by issues of small sample size, suspect research instruments, and the large number of variables (e.g., personality, affective filter) that can affect individuals' strategy use (Plonsky, 2011). The small number of listening strategy studies in particular that are available have tended to focus on descriptions of strategy use by more or less skilled listeners (Goh, 2005) as well as frequencies and patterns of strategy use (Mendelsohn, 1998). Generally speaking, these studies attempt to describe and compare strategies used by listeners of varying abilities; in other words, they are descriptive in nature and refrain from explaining how a transformation

from lower ability to higher ability listening may be possible. This increased understanding of strong listeners' mental processes can be useful, but only if it can be used to help teachers develop appropriate listening methodologies for the classroom (Field, 2008). Otherwise, mere description may not facilitate the change to L2 listening methodology that has been argued for thus far in this thesis.

Figure 3.5 depicts the progression of listening strategy research and illustrates the course by which the present study builds upon work done by its predecessors. Research into listening strategies essentially began with work that focused on cataloguing various strategies (e.g., Oxford, 1990; Vandergrift, 1997; Goh, 2002). Subsequent studies investigated the frequency with which skilled and unskilled listeners use strategies (e.g., Vandergrift, 2003), while others have explored the different ways learners utilize strategies (e.g, Goh & Taib, 2006; Cross, 2010). The field then progressed from descriptive studies to the L2 classroom to explore ways in which listening strategies could be taught during single, detached periods of instruction (e.g., Ozeki, 2000; Chen, 2007; Cross, 2011). These studies paved the way for the project described in this thesis, in which LSI was introduced in multiple classes over the course of three semesters.
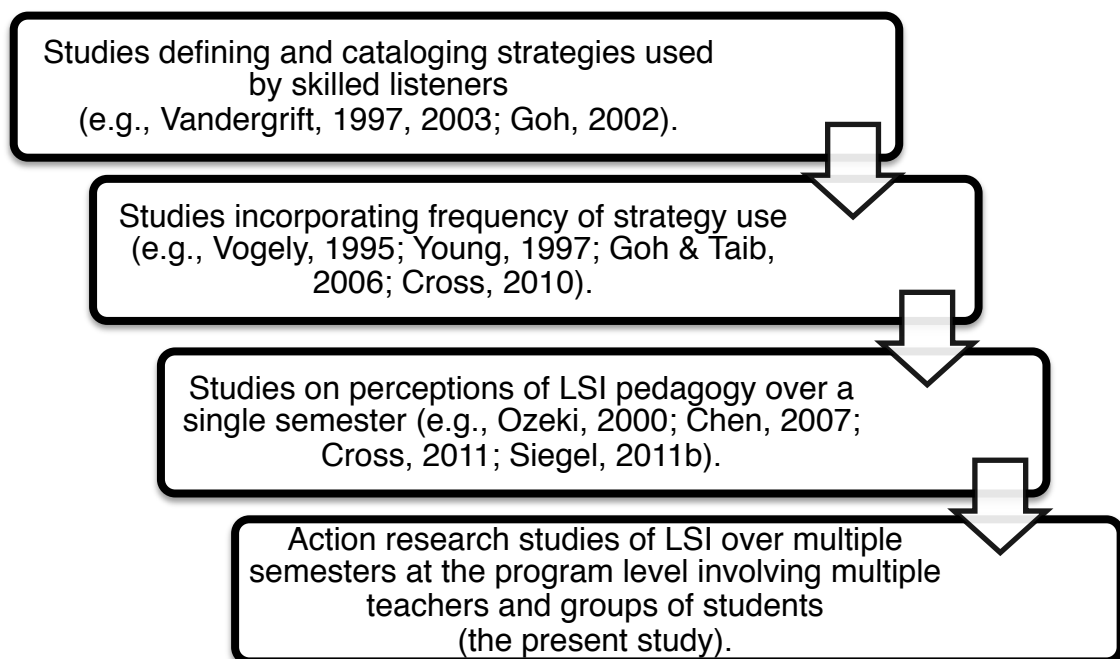
Figure 3.5: Course of listening strategy research

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Yet additional research is needed in order to develop our understanding of listening processes and, importantly, how best to teach them (Berne, 1998; Goh 2005; Field 2008). Accounts and descriptions of strategy use are necessary initial steps, but these may do little good for the L2 teacher tasked with delivering regular listening instruction. A legitimate need to transfer the body of accumulating research knowledge to pedagogic improvements in the listening classroom exists, and evaluations of strategy instruction represent the potential of listening strategies as taught in the listening classroom.

A selection of studies on listening strategies is summarized in Figure 3.6, which lists the purpose, context, and number of participants, along with strengths and weaknesses, of each study. In addition, Figure 3.7 focuses on the data collection instruments employed in these projects. These figures compare previous studies and demonstrate how the present differs from them in terms of its pedagogic purpose, its inclusion of both student and teacher perspectives, and its triangulated use of both self-report and empirical data collection instruments.

Study	Purpose	Context	Participants	Strengths	Weaknesses
Goh (1997)	To examine student beliefs and metacognitive knowledge about L2 listening	Singapore	40 Chinese ESL university students	Early investigation of learners' metacognitive knowledge about listening	Focuses on metacognition only; Lacks a pedagogic focus; Single data collection method
Vandergrift (1997)	To describe comprehension strategies	Canada	36 high school learners of French	Descriptive nature of the study created a useful inventory of various listening strategies	Lacks a pedagogical focus; Single data collection method
Young (1997)	To explore possible sequences of listening strategies	Hong Kong	18 Chinese university students	Established that a majority of strategy choices can be explained by learners	Lacks a pedagogic focus; Single data collection method; Small sample size
Goh (2002)	To inventory listening strategies used by Chinese students	Singapore	40 Chinese ESL university students	Described what listening strategies these students use; Identified ways in which strategies were operationalized through cognitive and metacognitive tactics; Measured frequency of strategy use	Lacks a pedagogic focus; Single data collection method; Provides a list of strategies, but not how to teach them
Vandergrift (2003)	To examine types of strategies used by and differences between more- and less-skilled listeners	Canada	36 junior high school learners of French	Compared strategy use between more- and less-skilled listeners; Descriptive nature of the study created a useful inventory of various listening strategies that learners reported using	Lacks a pedagogic focus; Single data collection method

Chen (2005)	To identify obstacles to listening strategy use	Taiwan	64 junior college students	First study to identify obstacles to strategy use; Incorporates student beliefs	Lacks a pedagogic focus; Does not address how to overcome each obstacle; Does not incorporate teacher beliefs
Goh & Taib (2006)	Metacognitive listening instruction for young learners	Singapore	10 primary English students	Investigated primary school students' metacognitive knowledge about listening; Showed weaker students benefited more from metacognitive listening instruction	Small sample size; Lacks a pedagogic focus; Does not incorporate teacher beliefs
Graham (2006)	To understand L2 listener confidence and strategies used by successful/unsuccessful listeners	UK	595 high school French learners completed the questionnaire; 28 learner interviews	Focused on learner beliefs about listening and listening strategy use; Demonstrated that less successful listeners are often inefficient listening strategy users	Not focused on listening pedagogy; Does not incorporate teacher beliefs
Chen (2007)	To investigate qualitative impact of LSI	Taiwan	64 junior college students	Tracked changes in participants' learning processes as a result of the LSI program; Incorporated learner beliefs	Relies only on self-report data; Does not incorporate teacher beliefs; Lacks a pedagogic focus
Graham & Macaro (2008)	To compare high- and low-scaffolded LSI interventions using a quasi-experimental design	UK	68 high school learners of French	Demonstrated affects of LSI on self-efficacy	Teacher interviews and observation are mentioned but not incorporated in analysis

Cross (2009)	To determine effects of LSI on videotext comprehension	Japan	15 adult English learners	Focused on preference for bottom up or top down strategies	Focused on a single text genre; Only 12 hours of LSI; Too many strategies attempted (by the author's admission); Emphasized pre/post test scores and undervalued student input; No participant triangulation
Graham, Santos & Vanderplank (2010)	To describe strategy clusters used by learners and the relationship between strategy use and linguistic knowledge	UK	14 high school learners of French	Unique study examining strategies and knowledge sources	Small sample size; Not focused on pedagogy; Does not incorporate student or teacher beliefs about pedagogy
Siegel (2011b)	To understand impact of LSI on university EFL learners	Japan	28 Japanese university EFL learners	Recorded students' reported strategy use over one semester; Found students using listening strategies unprompted after instruction	Teacher-researcher's novice experience in LSI; Small sample size; Does not incorporate teacher beliefs
Vandergrift & Tafaghodtori (2010)	To measure effects of metacognitive strategy instruction cycle using an experimental design	Canada	106 university French learners	Verified that metacognitive instruction helped less-skilled listeners	Does not incorporate cognitive strategies or bottom-up processing in practice; Does not incorporate teacher beliefs
Cross (2011)	Studying the effect of metacognitive listening instruction cycle	Japan	20 adult English learners	Measures the effect of metacognitive strategy instruction	Short duration; Small sample size

				Found that students believe LSI will help them in the future; Argues for incorporation of learner perspectives on pedagogy	
Siegel (2012)	To understand student perceptions of LSI	Japan	54 Japanese EFL learners	Found that students believe LSI will help them in the future; Argues for incorporation of learner perspectives on pedagogy	Relies on student self-report data; Does not incorporate teacher beliefs
Ueda (2012)	To examine top-down and bottom-up listening strategy preferences	Japan	65 Japanese university EFL learners	Compared top-down and bottom-up approaches	Does not account for internal cognitive development or student beliefs about listening pedagogy; Does not incorporate student or teacher beliefs about pedagogy; Single data collection method
Siegel (2014): The present study	To understand student and teacher perceptions of LSI; to determine methodological factors that affect LSI	Japan	121 Japanese university EFL learners	Triangulated data collection; Conducted over three semesters; Incorporates multiple perspectives; Peer debriefing; Focused on listening pedagogy	Lack of generalizability; Role of teacher-researcher; Small teacher sample size

Figure 3.6: *Summary of listening strategy studies*

Study	Question-naires	Student Interviews	Teacher interviews	Diaries	Think alouds	Retrospective verbal protocols	Systematic classroom observation	Casual classroom observation	Pre/post tests	Strategy checklists
Goh (1997)				✓						
Vandergrift (1997)					✓					
Young (1997)					✓					
Goh (2002)						✓				
Vandergrift (2003)					✓					
Chen (2005)		✓		✓						
Goh & Taib (2006)		✓							✓	

Study	Question-naires	Student Interviews	Teacher interviews	Diaries	Think alouds	Retrospective verbal protocols	Systematic classroom observation	Casual classroom observation	Pre/post tests	Strategy checklists
Graham (2006)	✓	✓								
Chen (2007)		✓		✓						
Graham & Macaro (2008)	✓		✓					✓	✓	
Cross (2009)	✓	✓						✓	✓	
Graham, Santos & Vanderplank (2010)						✓				
Siegel (2011b)	✓	✓								✓
Vandergrift & Tafaghodtori (2010)	✓							✓	✓	

Study	Question-naires	Student Interviews	Teacher interviews	Diaries	Think alouds	Retrospective verbal protocols	Systematic classroom observation	Casual classroom observation	Pre/post tests	Strategy checklists
Cross (2011)		✓							✓	
Siegel (2012)	✓	✓								
Ueda (2012)									✓	
Siegel (2014): The present study	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	
Totals	**7**	**10**	**2**	**3**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**3**	**7**	**1**

Figure 3.7: *Data collection methods*

3.5.1 Distinguishing the study in the Japanese context

Another previous study (Ozeki, 2000), conducted in Japan, investigated LSI with Japanese university learners. That study focused on LSI with one experimental group of learners compared to a control group over the course of one semester in a class taught by a single teacher. In contrast, the study described in this paper incorporated LSI on a broader scale, including six different classes taught by two teachers over the course of three semesters (see Chapter 4, section 4.6). Other differences between these studies are highlighted in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Differences between Ozeki's (2000) LSI study and this project

Aspect	Ozeki (2000)	Present LSI investigation
Number of classes	2	6
Number of semesters	1	3
Students involved	45	121
Research design	Experimental	Iterative Action Research
Data collection methods	Questionnaires, student interviews, pre/post tests, student journals.	Questionnaires, student interviews, teacher interviews, pre/post tests, classroom observations, researcher journal.
Perspectives included	Students, Single teacher	Students, Multiple teachers, Peer debriefer, Administrators

The present study also addressed factors that can help facilitate LSI pedagogy at a program-wide level across several classes, an area not explored by Ozeki (2000). It offers principles of practice and a model framework for implementing LSI in the spirit of AR to change and influence situations beyond the local level. Further, this project captures the evolution

and after-effects of the LSI intervention in subsequent semesters rather than focusing only on the differences between experimental and control groups.

To advance the growing field of L2 listening pedagogy, student perceptions of LSI are needed to help teachers and methodologists better understand how to best guide learners in developing their L2 listening skills. Studies on strategy use may establish patterns of usage, and pre and post test scores measure gains in listening ability. However, learner perspectives on LSI also have merit, as they can provide insights on any resulting internal cognitive and metacognitive changes stimulated by LSI, as well as perceptions of the effectiveness of process-based LSI. Listening test scores cannot access beliefs or impressions, which need to be better understood for listening pedagogy to continue its evolution. Learner beliefs regarding LSI can offer some indication as to whether it is viewed as a practical or an ineffective use of class time.

In addition, results of strategy instruction may not manifest themselves in the short term, which could explain the lack of consensus noted by Graham and Macaro (2008) concerning the value of such methods and the mixed results of previous LSI studies. Therefore, student viewpoints on the value of LSI can help L2 professionals to understand the perceived effects of LSI, both present and potential. Incorporation of learner perspectives is crucial to the present research, as student voices provided insights as to the effectiveness and viability of the LSI component of UIE (see Chapter 5, section 5.2).

As Rubin (2005) notes, student beliefs have important effects on learning processes, and student support for LSI is evident in the literature. Field (2008) highlights student voices from interviews and diaries that indicate increased confidence and comprehension from LSI. In addition, I conducted a previous study at another university in Japan (Siegel, 2011b) that used questionnaires, strategy checklists, and interviews, which reported students' increased strategy use and endorsement of LSI. Another preliminary study (Siegel, 2012) was conducted earlier at APU using questionnaires and interviews and reported similar positive qualitative findings from an LSI

intervention. However, those studies were limited to single semesters and included only student perspectives. As such, they were possibly too localized and limited in scope to make an impact on the wider field of L2 listening pedagogy. These studies also do not address the possible gap between the views on listening and listening pedagogy of language professionals (e.g., teachers, researchers, materials creators) on the one hand and those of learners on the other (Berne, 1998). Perspectives from teachers, along with classroom observation, and student test scores could serve to better apprise language teachers on the viability of process-based LSI. Therefore, the present research emphasized the importance of acknowledging teacher viewpoints on LSI, which were used to examine the topic through another 'lens' and to gain insight into aspects that may hinder or facilitate LSI programs.

3.5.2 Promoting qualitative methods in LSI research

The rationale for incorporating student views in the present study was based in part on the combination of two other previous studies, one on listening strategy course evaluation, the other on learners' beliefs about listening comprehension. In the former, Chen (2007) discusses alternative methods for evaluating strategy instruction and argues that qualitative information may be a more appropriate measure of the impact of LSI. She advocates for qualitative methods of assessment in order to provide more comprehensive understanding of strategy instruction results. The conceptual model she proposes includes the following dimensions relevant to the present research: learner attitudes, strategy transfer, and language proficiency (Chen, 2007). This report, involving Taiwanese junior college students, demonstrates both positive feedback and difficulties of strategy methodologies.

Qualitative methods for listening strategy evaluation are also linked to Graham's (2006) study of French learners, which investigated learner perceptions of obstacles to their listening. As Graham (2006) notes, investigations of beliefs about listening are rare, while the number of studies on general language learning beliefs is growing. Studies on beliefs about

listening often focus on the strategies learners believe they use, or in the case of Graham's (2006) study, on learner perceptions of success and struggle when listening. Fewer studies focus on learner perceptions about listening pedagogy. Therefore, the study described in this thesis merges alternate methods of strategy instruction evaluation with learners' points of view in an effort to determine whether process-based LSI is a viable option for L2 listening pedagogy as expressed by students who received the instruction and the teachers who delivered it.

Increased understanding of competent listeners' mental processes can be useful, but only if it can be used to help teachers develop appropriate listening methodologies for the classroom (Field, 2008). At present, it seems that classroom teachers must use their intuition and experience to convey research findings to their classrooms, with little explicit direction from researchers, methodologists, or teacher educators. Some link needs to be made between the descriptive research on listening strategies and classroom practices that might facilitate the development or enhancement of such strategies. Mere description may not prompt the changes to L2 listening methodology that have been argued for thus far in this thesis. Currently, research on how to implement LSI in various L2 teaching contexts is in short supply (Vandergrift, 2004; Goh, 2005). Although previous researchers have described the cognitive processes of successful listeners, the next step should be to activate this knowledge base to develop methodologies that can be applied by teachers in L2 classrooms, advancements the current study promotes.

3.6 Theoretical foundations for process-based LSI in UIE

In Chapter 2, section 2.3.2, the questionable listening pedagogy for UIE was identified as an area in need of modification, and process-based LSI was suggested as a possible improvement to the situation. This section provides the theoretical and conceptual foundations upon which the LSI program was developed by highlighting the pedagogic cycle and the underlying principles that steered the planning and implementation. Practical elements and

realizations of the process-based LSI, including scheduling, specific strategies, and the guiding strategy instruction framework, are described in Chapter 4, section 4.3.

An overview of the weekly LSI plan is displayed in Figure 3.8, which capitalizes on the listening processes that can transfer from L1 to L2, aspects of TDP and BUP, listening strategies, and teacher modeling, all of which are identified as key elements in listening instruction and are discussed above in sections 3.2.1 and 3.3. The pedagogic plan was organized drawing on Graves' (2000) notion of a "cycle", which means that "some elements occur in a predictable sequence, and once the sequence is completed, it starts all over again" (p. 141). In Monday classes, teachers set general listening tasks for students as a way of diagnosing listening ability, raising awareness of possible strategies, and generally orientating learners to an LSI approach. Teacher modeling was explicitly incorporated in Tuesday and Thursday classes, those that focused on TDP and BUP, respectively. The weekly sequence concluded on Friday, when opportunities to apply the target strategy to other texts and to recycle previously covered strategies were presented. A new cycle would subsequently begin the next week.

This cycle draws on the theory of listening proposed in Figure 3.2, as it begins with TDP elements earlier in the week (Tuesday) before targeting more specific BUP abilities later (Thursday). It also moves from guided activities and semi-authentic materials to unguided listening situations using authentic materials, where students can apply what they have previously practiced (Mendelsohn, 1995). Moreover, this cycle facilitates the transfer of listening strategies to novel listening events and other genres, which establishes a link between listening strategies and learner autonomy (e.g., Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002).
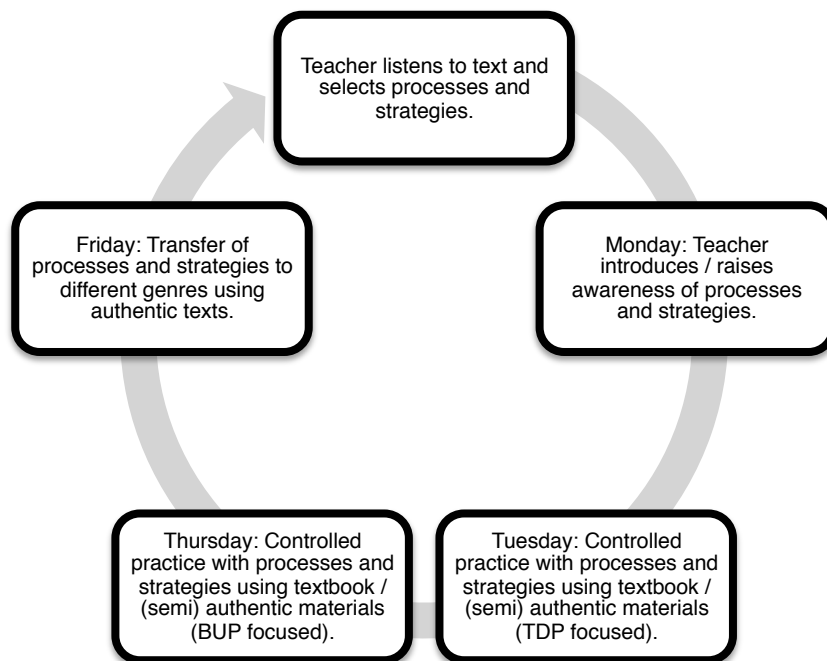
Figure 3.8: Process-based LSI cycle

In addition to the weekly schedule, recycling of previously covered strategies was incorporated throughout the course. This recycling allowed for additional transfer of strategies to new listening events (Chen, 2007), encouraged strategy retention for future use, and promoted strategies to be used in effective combinations (e.g., Vandergrift, 2003). From a practical scheduling standpoint, the specific strategies selected for the LSI could be easily positioned within this sequence (specific strategies are presented in Chapter 4, section 4.3, which details practical elements of the intervention). Each strategy was introduced, demonstrated, practiced, and transferred to other listening events, and thus was compatible with the adopted pedagogic sequence.

The cycle shown in Figure 3.8 integrated the listening teacher's role with materials use and strategy instruction. Listening tasks and activities alone are not adequate for listening instruction (Sheerin, 1987); therefore, teachers need to be active participants in listening courses. Several commentators have acknowledged the need for teachers to play larger, more involved roles when teaching listening and have supported the idea of teacher modeling of listening strategies (e.g., Goh, 2005, 2008; Vandergrift, 2004; Siegel, 2013a).

LSI provided a platform upon which the teachers could take a more active and direct role in listening instruction.

The purpose of the teacher modeling portion of the Tuesday and Thursday classes was to make explicit cognitive process that listeners normally undergo, typically without conscious thought. Initially, students listened to a text and attempted a task so that teachers could gauge ability and identify any potential areas of difficulty. The teacher would then perform a 'think aloud' procedure in which they would explain their thought processes while listening, including those related to text structure (e.g., narrative, compare and contrast, et cetera), content, selective attention, and expectations). To do so, the teacher would play a text in short bursts, pausing to explain to students their thought processes related to these areas. After this explicit modeling, students listened to the full, uninterrupted text and were encouraged to apply the same cognitive processes their teacher had just described. In this way, the teacher had an opportunity to use their 'expert' listening skills to set a model, which, in theory, students could replicate. Through repeated practice with such modeling, it was hoped learners would be able to approximate the listening patterns utilized by native listeners.

This project utilized explicit, integrated strategy instruction, as recommended by both listening methodologists (e.g., Mendelsohn, 1994) and strategy instruction specialists (e.g., Chamot, 1995). In explicit strategy instruction, teachers may name strategies, explain reasons for their usefulness, and provide straightforward practice (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1992). When strategies are explained in this manner, students are more likely to adopt and apply them (Cohen & Dörnyei, 2002). Integrating strategy instruction with existing materials is similar to "retrofitting strategies into an existing course…[which strengthens] the 'how to' component …through the teaching of strategies" (Mendelsohn, 2006, p. 81). Drawbacks of explicit instruction can include complicated discussions of cognitive processes and redundant teaching (Field, 2008). Despite these potential drawbacks this project featured explicit, informed strategy instruction for the following reasons:

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- Consistent classroom explanations and activities among the six classes over three semesters;
- Time-efficiency;
- Explanations and examples of possible strategy transfer to other listening events and other language skills;
- Recycling of strategies.

During integrated strategy instruction, strategies are taught through existing curriculum and materials. The course content is decided first, after which a strategic approach is applied. Integrated strategy instruction was utilized because when strategies are "woven into the ongoing fabric of the lesson…learners can see the applications of the strategies to the development of effective learning" (Nunan, 1998 p. 7). The integrated element is achieved by "weaving awareness-raising and strategy-training tasks into listening lessons [and] listening practice" (Goh, 2010, p. 188).

In this research, development of the LSI component was based on principles taken from relevant literature and those specific to the research context of the project. This two-tiered structure of principles is in line with Tomlinson's (2012) recommendation that materials include both universal principles as well as localized criteria specific to the "target learning context for a particular set of materials" (p. 271). The principles, which were used when planning the LSI intervention (described in Chapter 4, section 4.3), are divided into two categories and listed below.

General principles:

- Materials and activities should help students develop specific skills and strategies (Graves, 2000; Hill & Tomlinson, 2003). These skills and strategies are derived from taxonomies of listening (e.g., Richards, 1983; Brown, 1994) as well as teacher intuition and teacher knowledge of local contextual factors (Field, 2008; Siegel, 2011a).
- Materials are subject to change depending on situations and input from various stakeholders (i.e., administrators, teachers, materials designers, and students) (Brown, 1994; Edge & Wharton, 1998;

Tomlinson, 2003). Ideas for improvements to materials are welcomed from these various stakeholders.

- Materials are designed with the following base-line description of students who enroll in UIE (based on characteristics mentioned by Brown, 1994): men and women aged 18-20; Japanese; completed six years of compulsory English education in the Japanese public school system; TOEFL score of 450-499.

- Activities should include a focus on needs of students outside the language learning classroom (Edge & Wharton, 1998; Graves, 2000). Transfer of skills and strategies from the classroom to the real world beyond the classroom should be encouraged and facilitated by materials (Vandergrift, 2004; Graham & Macaro, 2008; Lynch, 2009).

- A process-oriented approach to materials design, including students' "[acquisition of] a fluid set of language skills" (Rost, 1990, p. 17), is prominent. The course focuses on "'how' rather than 'what'" (McDonough & Shaw, 1993, p. 60). A product-oriented approach to listening is present, but with a major focus on processes. Teaching listening (rather than testing listening) is a central focus (e.g., Field, 1998; Flowerdew & Miller, 2005).

LSI principles:

- Listening strategies used in L1 can be transferred to L2 (Mendelsohn, 1994; Goh, 2008).

- Listening strategies can be isolated, taught, and practiced (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990; Macaro, 2001).

- When planning materials, teachers should first listen to texts and then select strategies and skills suggested by those texts (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005; Lynch, 2009; Siegel, 2011a). Strategies and skills may also be selected spontaneously to address the needs of students in certain contexts (Field, 2008). Strategies are taught explicitly (Chamot, et al., 1999; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Chen, 2005). In addition, strategies are integrated with textbook and supplementary materials (e.g., Wenden, 1991; Nunan, 1998; Chamot, et al., 1999).

- Both top-down processes (such as schema activation and prediction) and bottom-up processes (such as phoneme discrimination and word segmentation) need attention (e.g., Brown, 1994; Vandergrift, 2010).
- Various types of knowledge, including procedural and linguistic, are addressed (Buck, 2001; Field, 2008).
- Materials need to address cognitive and metacognitive strategies (Wenden, 1991; Oxford, 1992; Goh, 2008).
- Modeling of teachers' listening processes should be used in conjunction with listening materials (e.g., Goh & Taib, 2006).
- Sequencing of strategies includes consideration of test question styles as well as top-down and bottom-up strategies. Strategies for answering common listening test questions (i.e., listening for theme) alternate with more integrated and hard-to-evaluate strategies (i.e., genre recognition).
- Recycling of strategies is important and included in the schedule (Graves, 2000).
- Texts include one-way and two-way listening as well as various types and genres of oral language (e.g., Brown, 1994; Buck, 2001; Lynch, 2009).

While some commentators (e.g., Field, 2007) argue against isolated development of individual listening strategies, others (e.g., Brown, 2011) promote individual strategy development, followed by strategy cluster development. Each of the strategies in the LSI was the focus of one week's instruction, and the strategies were introduced and practiced singly at first and then recycled and combined with other strategies, depending on listening texts and tasks. The emphasis of LSI in UIE was on the individual introduction and practice of the specified strategies. Although strategy clusters and combinations were discussed with students at certain times throughout the UIE course, the instruction under investigation in this study was the presentation and practice of individual listening strategies.

3.7 Connecting theory with pedagogy

This review makes clear that scholarship related to L2 listening in general and L2 listening pedagogy in particular is in need of greater attention than it has received in the past. Although various theories have been expressed, there remains much uncertainty about the ways in which biological, psychological, social, and individual factors combine to yield listening competency. Yet most people develop listening capacity in their L1s regardless of our inability to (accurately) describe it. Moreover, the business of L2 language learning and teaching continues despite this lack of palpable knowledge about listening and listening pedagogy. The need for listening in the L2 classroom is clear; far more uncertain is how best to address it.

Teaching has been defined as "the process by which novices learn a skill or acquire knowledge with the help of expert input, scaffolding, and guidance" (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012, p. 189). While this definition may presently apply to the teaching of the other language skills, it may not accurately describe what happens when L2 educators 'teach' listening. Likewise, there is often little explicit instruction of L2 speaking, meaning classrooms foster "doing" skills rather than teaching and/or learning them (Goh & Burns, 2012). Teachers are left waiting for a pedagogic sequence for listening instruction that they can adopt. Suggestions from taxonomies of skills and good listener descriptions have not yet materialized in L2 classrooms in the form of cohesive methodologies.

Moreover, questions arising from the literature remain unanswered: How can what is theorized about listening translate into classroom practice that teachers and students believe in? How can L2 professionals create an approach that gives a way for teachers to *teach* (rather than test) listening? How can educators develop a methodology that prepares students for life beyond the L2 classroom? How can teachers build on their students' existing L1 aural abilities and introduce those needed specifically in the L2? How can instructors set a scaffolded model of listening that learners can emulate?

3.8 Chapter summary

This chapter has reviewed literature on listening and related pedagogy in order to show the conceptual paradigm that underlies this project as well as to provide a theoretical foundation from which to proceed. It has described listening from an L2 perspective and examined the relationship between top-down and bottom-up aspects of listening. Additionally, it has traced the evolution of listening pedagogy and identified the need for better teaching practices. Previous studies on listening strategies were also reviewed, and through that process, the need for this study was established.

Process-based LSI has been promoted as a possible contribution to the current underdeveloped state of L2 listening pedagogy. It represents a pedagogic cycle based on crucial pedagogic principles derived from listening and strategy instruction literature: the transfer of L1 listening abilities to the L2; the notion of models set by expert listeners; a combination of TDP and BUP; and listening strategies. These are critical elements that have been overlooked or taken for granted within previous methodologies.

The next chapter moves on to describe how this LSI component was implemented and analyzed in UIE classes. The underlying qualitative theoretical research position for this project will also be explained, which is followed by a description of the iterative action research framework that structured the project. Chapter 4 also details the data collection and analysis methods used to investigate three research questions (see Chapter 1) that focus on the LSI intervention and its viability in the UIE course within the APU context. Several data collection tools, which drew on viewpoints and findings from multiple groups of participants (see Chapter 2), were used to address the research questions. The chapter also discusses ethical issues and limitations of the study.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The previous chapter described the underdeveloped condition of L2 listening pedagogy and demonstrated the need for educational improvements in that area of L2 instruction. Listening strategy instruction (LSI) has been identified as one potential development in L2 listening pedagogy, and the current research aims to address the viability of LSI within the context of intermediate EFL courses in a Japanese university through the following research questions (RQ):

1. What are learner perceptions of LSI?
2. What are teacher perceptions of LSI?
3. What factors contribute to success in a listening strategy instruction program for intermediate EFL university learners in the local APU context?

These questions were investigated from a qualitative, naturalistic line of inquiry operationalized through an Action Research (AR) project, which consisted of three phases (Figure 4.1).

Action Research Phase 1: Fall 2010 semester (n=54) → **Action Research Phase 2**: Spring 2011 semester (n=23) → **Action Research Phase 3**: Fall 2011 semester (n=44)
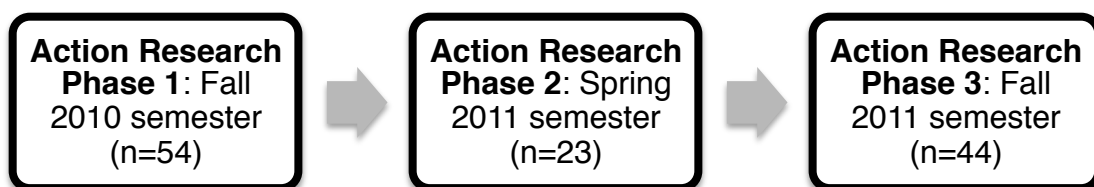
Figure 4.1: *Overview time line of data collection*

This AR project involved a total of 121 university students, a majority of whom were Japanese, enrolled in required upper intermediate level EFL courses at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) in Japan. The study also involved two teachers: Sean, the other teacher on the same course, and myself in the roles of teacher-researcher, teacher educator, and curriculum designer (see section 4.2.3). The following sections outline the overarching research methodology along with the specific data collection and analytical methods employed to address the stated research questions.

4.1 Methodological research position

The following sub-sections outline the underlying methodological research position of this project.

4.1.1 Ontological perspective

Ontology refers to one's view of reality and being and is a key consideration for a researcher when making methodological choices (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). This project is based on an interpretivist / constructivist perspective of ontology, which contends that people create, interpret, and make their own meaning of events. That is, events can be interpreted in different ways by different individuals ("interpretivist") and reality is constructed by the individuals who experience these events ("constructivist") (Waring, 2012). Because this stance views reality as being indirectly constructed based on individual interpretation, it is therefore subjectively oriented. An interpretivist / constructivist stance also views events as distinctive rather than generalizable.

The present study involved an AR project that incorporated several perspectives and viewpoints in the forms of multiple data collection methods used over a three-semester period elicited from a number of different participants. As such, this project aligned with the interpretivist / constructivist perspective as it allowed for various individuals and groups to interpret and co-construct their shared experiences of the LSI intervention. Moreover, as AR projects are not meant to be broadly generalizable to other teaching contexts, this study positioned the LSI intervention at APU as a distinctive event that may help to inform other contexts but which is not generalizable in its findings.

Other ontological perspectives not adopted for this project include positivism and post-positivism. Several characteristics of positivism (e.g., a search for complete observable truth and generalizability; and attempts to prove/disprove a theory) do not match the research goals of this project. Likewise, post-positivism's aim of describing approximate truth is incompatible with this AR project, which sought to understand LSI in a single university

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context. Moreover, positivist-oriented paradigms are often incongruent with the research needs and resources of classroom teachers (Freeman, 1998).

4.1.2 Epistemological viewpoint

Epistemology refers to views of knowledge, how that knowledge can be acquired, and how something that is presumed to exist can be explicitly known (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Waring, 2012), all of which are crucial in the conception of a research project. This project takes an interpretivist / constructivist viewpoint of epistemology. From this epistemological stance, knowledge is gained through induction, a process by which meaning evolves from data (Oxford, 2011). In addition, from this perspective, rules are inferred from particular examples and events.

A number of characteristics of the interpretivist / constructivist view of knowledge are consistent with key elements of AR (see section 4.2 for a more complete description of AR). First, knowledge is viewed as developing from specific situations (Coe, 2012), which corresponds to the nature of this AR, set in a particular context at APU. Secondly, this view of knowledge also asserts that it is gained through personal experience, a point associated with my practitioner-researcher role in AR. Finally, this epistemological position contends that knowledge cannot be objectively observed from the outside (Coe, 2012). Instead, knowledge must be observed, studied, and understood from an emic perspective (Croker, 2009); that is, from the inside through the experiences of people. The LSI intervention has been conducted by an 'inside' participant-researcher and has also incorporated the experiences of various groups of people within the community of the research site (i.e., a teacher, who in this study is known as Sean, who was the collaborating teacher, and three cohorts of students).

Although an interpretivist / constructivist standpoint has been taken in this project, limitations of this position include:

- a lack of generalizability; however, 'transferability' rather than generalizability was one focus of this project (see section 4.1.4).

- the notion that such research may measure temporary states (i.e., opinions, emotions, and attitudes) that can change over time; however, this project includes views from different participant groups over the course of three semesters and acknowledges the complex and dynamic nature of the language classroom (Burns & Knox, 2011) in an effort to address this potential drawback (see section 4.3).
- the potential for researcher bias; however, this project included multi-method data collection triangulated through methods, time, and participants to address this potential drawback (see section 4.3).

4.1.3 Qualitative stance

In conjunction with the interpretivist / constructivist ontological and epistemological positions described above, and given the exploratory nature of this research, the project adopts a qualitative stance on research methods, data collection, and analysis of findings. Qualitative research is inductive rather than deductive, which means that theory emerges from the research findings rather than the testing of hypotheses (Rasinger, 2008; Richards, Ross & Seedhouse, 2012). This concept of theory emerging from data is in line with a grounded approach to qualitative data analysis (Cohen, et al., 2011), which is described in section 4.9.1. As the data-driven exploratory and explanatory findings from a study are analyzed, patterns, structures, and reoccurring themes are assembled to generate theories of practice (Rasinger, 2008). For this study, Clarke's (1994) notion of theory is adopted: "[it is] the conscious effort to build and disseminate language teaching methods and models for general use in the profession" (p. 11).

A qualitative orientation also accounts for the multiple perspectives (i.e., students and teachers) that were pivotal in addressing the research questions, which aimed at understanding beliefs, opinions, and behaviors of a particular group (i.e., UIE students and teachers) in a specific context (i.e., APU) (Richards, et al., 2012). A qualitative approach acknowledges the "multiple interpretations of, and perspectives on" specific situations (Cohen, et al.,

2011, p. 17). As multiple perspectives were necessary in order to answer the research questions stated above, a qualitative view of research was adopted.

Some listening researchers (e.g., Chen, 2007) have advocated for more qualitative research on LSI, which can provide insights into learners' internal thought processes, behaviors, attitudes, and strategy development related to listening. Along with student input, this study also incorporated teacher perceptions of LSI in a data-driven examination of the LSI intervention. As such, it provided situational understanding on the topic by addressing "how" and "why" questions (Mason, 2007; Dörnyei, 2007) related to the LSI intervention.

4.1.4 Evaluative terminology from the qualitative position

Terms from a positivist paradigm, such as generalizablility, reliability, and validity may be inappropriate for evaluating qualitative AR conducted within an interpretivist / constructivist paradigm. Table 4.1 displays possible alternatives that will be used to discuss the findings of this project.

Table 4.1: Comparison of research terminology (partially adapted from Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Edge & Richards, 1998; Freeman, 1998; Herr & Anderson, 2005)

More traditional terms	AR-appropriate terms	Rationale
Pure	Applied	Research in education is linked to action rather than pure, isolated knowledge.
Ideal	Real-life	Due to the authentic contexts in which AR occurs, variables are difficult to control.
Objectivity	Confirmability	Due to the action researcher's participation, results cannot be completely objective. Rather, they can be confirmed and strengthened from a number of viewpoints.
Reliability	Dependability	Conclusions must be justifiable and dependable in their own contexts.
Internal validity	Credibility	The research design is planned so that outcomes are the results of explicit interventions, not outside influences.
External validity	Transferability	Findings cannot be generalized to other contexts; however, certain aspects may help to inform other situations.

The alternate terms in Table 4.1 also help to demonstrate that "truth value" in AR is key (Burns, 2010a). The confirmability, dependability, and credibility contributed to the "truth value" of this study. In addition to these concepts, the notion of "ecological validity" was important to this research. Ecological validity is concerned with whether findings and conclusions are relevant to people in their everyday lives and usual contexts (Richards, et al., 2012). This study has high ecological validity because it was set in an authentic educational setting, involved real students and teachers in their

everyday roles, and generated findings that are applicable to everyday classroom lives.

4.1.5 Summary of theoretical research position

This AR study was located within an interpretivist / constructivist view of ontology and epistemology. It also adopted a corresponding qualitative stance for data collection and analysis. In addition, this section has outlined appropriate evaluative research terminology. Having set out its methodological foundation, more practical components of the project are next discussed, beginning with the AR employed for the study.

4.2 Action research

As mentioned previously, this project was fundamentally driven by a qualitative AR orientation, the aim of which was to explore possibilities for improving situations rather than to prove theories (Hopkins, 2009). Several commentators (e.g., Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988; Wallace, 1998; Burns, 1999, 2010a) have promoted AR as a valuable undertaking to better understand and improve educational situations. Burns (2013) specifies two distinct but related activities performed by AR practitioners. One is the action, which involves enacting plans embedded in one's daily reality, while the other is research, which involves "systematic [investigation of] the impact and meanings of these plans" (p. 90). Other commentators (e.g., Goh 2005, 2008) have advocated AR specifically for studying L2 listening pedagogy. Rainey (2000) highlights two forms of AR: one at the level of individual teacher improvement, the other at the level of wider reform. This project started with the former and progressed to the latter.

4.2.1 The typical AR sequence

As Burns (1999, 2009) observes, the model put forward by Kemmis and McTaggart is likely the most widespread and frequently referenced in educational AR. Typical stages of an AR approach in their model include: plan, act, observe, and reflect (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). This set of four stages represents one AR sequence, or phase. For the purposes of this

thesis, the terms AR sequence, phase, and cycle all refer to one single circuit of the four core AR stages. The following are brief descriptions of the AR stages based on descriptions by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) and Richards and Lockhart (1996):

- Plan: Identify an area that is in need of examination and plan an intervention aiming to improve that area.
- Act: Implement an intervention (e.g., a new teaching technique, new materials).
- Observe: Collect data related to the intervention (e.g., through questionnaires, samples of student work, class observation).
- Reflect: Review and reflect on data, draw conclusions, and plan subsequent revisions to the intervention. Reflection in AR is distinct from typical reflection because it is based on systematic, rather than spontaneous, research design and data collection.

A prerequisite for the AR sequence is a situation that is in need of investigation, deeper understanding, and possibly change. Although Allwright (2003) criticizes AR for what he perceives as a superficial emphasis on change, its goals go beyond simplistic aims of only making improvements on the surface. At the core, AR seeks deep and authentic situational understanding that can lead to improvement for individuals and groups who operate within circumstantial parameters, for these are the people who will likely be affected by the changes stimulated by AR (Burns, 2010b). Theories for practice (Burns, 1996) can then emerge from the combination of situational understanding and change, and these theories for practice potentially become situational norms.

When educators identify an area that requires deeper understanding, they may be compelled to undergo a process of "inquiry" (Freeman, 1998, p. 34) and may need to "problematise" (Burns, 2010a, p. 2) certain aspects of language teaching that they feel require attention. Problematising, as stated in Chapter 1, entails identifying an area of teaching that one feels should be better understood and could be refined or improved. This area is then

examined systematically, "based on a rigorous evidential trail of data and research" (Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 344). Possible avenues for situational betterment are then developed and assessed. Once a situation has been problematised, the subsequent step is an intervention study, which Brumfit (2001) defines as a study in which "some aspect of teaching or learning is deliberately changed, so that the effects can be monitored" (p. 149). Intervention studies have the potential to lead to refinement of the situation and deeper understanding of it.

In this project, L2 listening pedagogy in the UIE course was problematised as an area in need of further investigation and improvement at the local level. The area of language teaching I initially questioned was L2 listening pedagogy, a domain that is underdeveloped yet of great consequence to L2 learners. Literature on listening, reports from other language educators, as well as my own experience and intuition as a teacher caused me to question the ways in which listening was and is addressed in many L2 courses, including UIE. The language education field has struggled for decades to improve L2 listening pedagogy and to move beyond ineffective methods, such as the comprehension approach (Field, 2008) and the osmosis approach (Mendelsohn, 1994). In response to this situation, I sought to investigate LSI as an alternative L2 listening pedagogy and adopted a "systematic and critical approach to enquiry" (Burns, 2010b, p. 81) to better understand the viability of LSI through an intervention study in UIE classes (see section 4.3 for a description of the LSI intervention).

The AR cycle described above, however, faces a number of criticisms. One charge is that the conceptual objectives and parameters of AR are limited and shortsighted in scope, as AR is sometimes thought to be an approach that targets isolated problems (Allwright, 2005). Some AR critics (e.g., Allwright, 2003) also believe a model that includes more global relevance may be preferable. That is, a research approach that potentially informs a wider audience through generalizable findings in addition to providing localized improvements may be ideal. Similarly, AR projects may be difficult to replicate due to multiple context-dependent variables (Wallace, 1998). Therefore, other

researchers may struggle to apply an AR project to their particular educational environment, a fact that may limit the usefulness of AR beyond the original project setting.

Furthermore, when illustrated in the literature, many AR sequences appear to be perfectly linear; stages seem to follow each other in smooth patterns in prescribed sequences. However, these smooth patterns may be difficult to replicate in practice, as AR stages when applied to real-life situations do not always proceed in such flawless linear fashion and may go askew during the course of a project (McNiff & Whitehead, 2000). Therefore, some descriptions of AR may be misleading to an extent, as practical application of AR models may be more complicated than some frameworks appear in the literature. Kemmis and McTaggart (2005) acknowledge that "the process might not be as neat as [a] spiral of self-contained cycles" (p. 563) and suggest that the intricate interplay of AR stages can indeed lead to further understanding, learning, and reflection. McNiff and Whitehead (2000) also point out that there may be "a good deal of creative zig-zagging" (p. 202) in AR, and Burns (2010a) writes of "many interwoven aspects" (p. 8), insights that suggest some flexibility may be necessary. This somewhat unpredictable and variable approach to research parallels the dynamic nature of teaching in general and of language course design in particular (Graves, 2000).

Despite these criticisms, I selected AR as a foundation on which to base this study for several reasons. First, this research sought to investigate and better understand a particular aspect of language teaching (i.e., LSI) in a specific localized setting (i.e., the UIE course at APU). The LSI was a deliberate intervention (Burns, 2010b) as a reaction to the previous methods of listening pedagogy used in UIE, which were identified as elements in need of examination and change (see Chapter 2, section 2.3.1). The interventionist nature of the LSI, along with my desire to stimulate practical change in L2 listening pedagogy, made the AR model described above a suitable choice. Moreover, I had confidence in the participatory and reflective nature of the approach that could help me develop at a professional level while also

contributing to the field of L2 teaching in a practical way that can potentially benefit other language educators and their students.

Finally, regarding the perceived inflexibilities of the AR sequence, I recognized that fluidity and adaptation are necessary in AR and made accommodations to proceed with the project within the institutional parameters of my teaching context (e.g., student numbers, influences from administrators, class time). A project like this LSI intervention, that spanned three semesters, incorporated perspectives from multiple groups, and was set in a real-life classroom, would have been largely unfeasible within some other research frameworks but was achievable through AR.

4.2.2 Advantages and disadvantages of AR

AR has been a contentious topic among language education researchers and commentators, with both supporters (e.g., Nunan & Bailey, 2009; Burns, 2010a) and detractors (e.g., Allwright, 2003, 2005; Dörnyei, 2007). These two groups have defended their respective stances in the educational research methodology literature.

Among the advantages of AR, proponents cite its capacity to:

- Identify and solve problems (Bell, 1999; McNiff & Whitehead, 2000)
- Improve situations for students and teachers (Burns, 2010a)
- Encourage teachers to inform their own practice as well as that of other educators (Burns, 2009)
- Allow teachers to establish themselves professionally and influence educational decision-making (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Burns, 2010a)
- Increase teachers' contextual understanding of their own teaching environment (Freeman, 1998).

In spite of these advantages, AR has been criticized for a number of reasons, which fall into two categories: practical / pragmatic drawbacks and more theoretical / abstract concerns. The former category consists of drawbacks that affect the feasibility of AR in practice, while the issues in the latter group relate to the robustness and rigor of AR findings.

Practical and pragmatic drawbacks of AR include potentially heavy time demands placed on teacher-researchers, who are required to simultaneously occupy two roles (Freeman, 1998; Dörnyei, 2007). In addition, would-be AR practitioners may lack necessary resources and incentives to conduct research (Dörnyei, 2007). However, issues such as the availability of time, resources, and incentives are related to individual situations and institutions, and such claims could be leveled at any additional work-related duty. Moreover, while some teachers may be in positions to conduct AR, they may lack sufficient research skills, at least initially. Dörnyei (2007) contends that it is "often unrealistic to expect teachers to have the expertise to conduct rigorous research" (p. 191). This line of thinking would delegate research to those classified as 'researchers,' and leave teaching to teachers, which is potentially an exclusionary position that dictates who is deemed capable of doing research.

A second practical disadvantage is that AR may not be widely-recognized as a viable research approach in many parts of the world. Although AR projects have been included at international language and linguistic conferences (e.g., AsiaTEFL, JALT, TESOL) and regularly appear in peer reviewed journals (e.g., Educational Action Research, Language Teaching Research, Korea TESOL Journal, Profile), many teachers may not be aware of it. For example, Dörnyei (2007) states that he has yet "to meet a teacher who has been voluntarily involved in an [AR] project…[and that there is] far too little of it" (p. 191). On a broader scale, Rainey (2000) found that nearly three quarters of the 228 teachers surveyed in 10 countries were unfamiliar with AR. Therefore, in addition to a lack of awareness of AR, this practical drawback also means that any teacher seeking an AR study to replicate or to use as a framework may struggle to find one. Perhaps the skeptical views expressed by some commentators originate from a lack of exposure to AR in language education. However, with increased numbers of post-graduate, research, and professional development courses for practicing teachers, exposure to AR is likely to increase, and as Burns (2010b) notes,

AR is becoming more prominent in the fields of applied linguistics and language teaching research (e.g., Borg, 2010, 2013).

Beyond the practical issues described in the previous paragraphs, a second group of criticisms confronts AR at a much deeper, more complex level. In general, AR has a lesser reputation than other research paradigms in the field of language teaching research (Nunan, 1992; Burns, 2009, 2010a). This lesser status likely stems from expectations originating in more established paradigms, positivism in particular. According to Nunan (1992) and Burns (2009), some critics cite the lack of generalizability and validity (as the terms apply to positivist research) inherent in AR's context-specific findings; however, what is lost in generalizability can often be compensated for in the depth of information and findings from an AR project. Furthermore, due to the researcher's vested interest and personal stake in an AR project, the chance for researcher bias exists (Wallace, 1998; Burns, 2010a). However, findings from AR reports can be used to inform other similar teaching contexts, a point that corresponds to the 'transferability' of AR (see Table 4.1). Additionally, researchers who want to replicate studies in other contexts have some responsibility to establish "contextual similarity" before applying a previous research design in a new situation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 298).

Furthermore, while concerns relating to reliability and validity have been raised, it must be remembered that these factors grew primarily from other research paradigms, particularly scientific research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Several commentators observe that some flexibility and leeway regarding reliability and validity of AR seem prudent (Nunan, 1992; Wallace, 1998; Burns, 1999). Burns (2010b) points out that attacks on the validity and reliability of AR are based on misconceptions about the "nature and purpose of AR…[and that] validity in AR is highly dynamic and subject to variation, determined by the ongoing and changing aims of the research" (p. 85). As such, standards of validity and reliability, like other positivist paradigm linchpins, may not be applicable or suitable to AR. Instead, factors including dependability, credibility, and transferability (see Table 4.1) may be more

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appropriate matters to address in an AR project. These factors are discussed in relation to this study later in Chapter 7, section 7.2.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) introduced terms such as dependability, credibility, and transferability in the naturalist qualitative position to defend naturalistic qualitative inquiry against positivist criticisms. As this project involved AR from a qualitative perspective, these terms corresponded more closely with its goals of situational understanding and improvement at a local level than did standardized concepts of reliability and validity. Concepts such as these may be better suited to controlled experiments than to educational applied linguistic research set in authentic contexts, which are constantly influenced by myriad factors.

To strengthen the dependability of this study, multiple perspectives were collected over three semesters. Since findings from various groups (including six classes of students, Sean as another educator, and myself as teacher-researcher) corroborated each other throughout the three-semester project, there is a degree of confidence that the findings were dependable within the context of this study (data are presented in Chapters 5 and 6).

Regarding the credibility of the project, specific items on the questionnaires and interviews asked students to comment on the LSI intervention in their UIE classes. In addition, in his teacher interviews, Sean expanded on the positive effects of the LSI intervention. These findings suggested that regardless of outside influences, which could not be controlled due to the large participant population and longitudinal data collection, the LSI intervention contributed to the outcomes of the project. As Nunan and Bailey (2009) observe, AR practitioners cannot "unequivocally say that the planned interventions *caused* the observed results…[but instead] teachers seek out options that seem to them to be convincing solutions to problems or classroom puzzles" (p. 249).

In addition, the transferability of the project was evident in the intervention plan (section 4.3), AR stage descriptions (section 4.4), findings related to methodological factors contributing to LSI implementation (Chapter

7, section 7.3.3), and the pedagogic model presented in Chapter 8, Figure 8.1, all of which may help to inform educators in other contexts and provide a foundation from which LSI interventions appropriate to their own educational environments can be initiated.

The issue of power relations may also be evident in AR studies due to the teacher-researcher's close personal involvement in research design, data collection, and project outcomes. Student-participants in AR projects may be influenced by the unequal power relations between them and the teacher-researcher. As a result, students may provide self-report data that does not actually reflect their true attitudes and opinions (Burns, 2010b). This possible impact of power relations is linked to the Halo Effect (when participants respond in ways they think will please the researcher) and Hawthorne Effect (when participants respond positively merely because they are part of a research project) (Brown, 1998). In addition, unequal power status may empower the teacher to make choices that may prioritize research over student rights and education. To mitigate any effects of power relations, this study involved informed participation that had no effects on student grades. In addition, students were given the option of withdrawing their voluntary participation in questionnaires and interviews at any time (see section 4.10 for more discussion of ethical considerations for this project).

4.2.3 Educator positions within this AR

When this project began, I had been working at APU for three years as a full time lecturer in the CLE. This experience allowed me some insight into and experience with the administrative workings of the CLE, along with procedures for curriculum development and innovation. I was therefore comfortable approaching administrators and other teachers with my plan of an LSI intervention. My interest in this topic began during previous experiences teaching at other institutions that offered little support for listening pedagogy and carried over to my post at APU.

Among the central tenets of AR is that the intervention is initiated from within the research context. This type of insider research is often contrasted

with studies conducted by outsiders. As Mercer (2007) explains, a researcher's position is likely to shift along a continuum with 'insider' and 'outsider' at respective ends, and these shifts often relate to the myriad relationships researchers have within an institution. For the present study, my position was more 'insider', particularly because I had worked at APU for three years, was familiar with the realities of the context, and had an amiable relationship with Sean prior to the start of the project. With the students in the classes I taught, I was more an 'insider', since I met them in class four times a week over the course of one semester. With students in Sean's classes, I was likely viewed more towards the 'outsider' end of the continuum because I met them only briefly (i.e., for interviews).

Mercer (2007) also highlights the advantages (e.g., easier access, good rapport, and shared histories) and disadvantages (e.g., remaining neutral and overcoming preconceptions) of insiders compared to outside researchers. For this study, I aimed to benefit from the positive aspects of being an insider while counterbalancing the potential disadvantages through various types of triangulation (see section 4.5 and Table 4.7), peer debriefing (see below, this section), and member checking (see section 7.1.4).

As an insider teacher-researcher, I occupied several roles over the course of this project. My main roles were as a curriculum designer, a classroom teacher, and a researcher investigating the effects and perceptions of LSI. To a lesser degree, I also operated as a teacher educator and an advocate for LSI in administrative meetings. In all of these roles, my underlying teacher beliefs affected my actions and my choices. For example, I believed that the university should be a place that provides learners with a process-based education that can be used both for and beyond academic work. As such, my teacher beliefs affected how I designed the LSI program, which Graves (2000) points out is typical during course design. I also questioned whether focusing on single texts and comprehension questions aids students' L2 aural development. As such, one goal for this project was to investigate a more process-based alternative to what I viewed as typical

listening instruction, much of which learners could accomplish on their own outside of the classroom.

I was interested in whether and to what extent listening teachers could contribute to their students' development in class time and believed this could be accomplished through LSI. I brought these beliefs with me as I located myself in various roles throughout the project, and I recognized that my personal background influenced all aspects of the project, from planning the LSI to research design to data collection and interpretation.

In addition to my personal position in this AR, a co-teacher, Sean, was also involved in the project. More background information on Sean and Peggy, the peer debriefer, was given in Chapter 2, section 2.4. At the time of the project, Sean had taught at APU for five years and was a full time lecturer in the CLE. He was in charge of the entire UIE course; however, since his teaching background in L2 listening was, on his own admission, underdeveloped, he asked me to review the UIE listening component and suggest any revisions. When I approached him with the LSI intervention idea, he was extremely supportive.

Sean participated in the project in a number of ways. First, he taught the LSI course in Phases 2 and 3. He also assisted with data collection and participated in planning and reflection sessions on how to improve the LSI. Sean's collaboration on the project brought with it many benefits, including a sounding board for ideas, a source of sympathetic support, and a chance to interact with a colleague with similar interests (e.g., Burns, 2010a; Cohen, et al., 2011). Since he was a member of the community in which this AR was set, the LSI intervention and any resulting positive repercussions would also potentially benefit Sean's teaching context, in addition to my teaching experience, our students' learning experiences, and the EFL program at APU in general.

A third educator, Peggy, was involved in the AR project in the role of "peer debriefer" (Barber & Walczak, 2009; Booth, 2012) or "critical friend" (Burns, 1999; Herr & Anderson, 2005). Peer debriefing is defined as "the

process of exposing [data and analysis] to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytic session and for the purpose of exploring aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit within the inquirer's mind" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 308). It is an approach that challenges the interpretations and mediates the subjectivities of the main researcher and ultimately produces research findings and conclusions that are more credible than the researcher could offer when working alone (Barber & Walczak, 2009).

In her capacity as peer debriefer, Peggy reviewed samples of the data and cross-checked the coding and categories I had assigned for open questionnaire, student interview, and qualitative classroom observation comments, as described in Chapter 6. The peer debriefing process occurred over the course of six months (October 2012-March 2013). We communicated frequently by email during the peer debriefing and had two meetings in person to discuss our respective codings of and reflections on the data. This outside review was an additional layer of investigator triangulation meant to strengthen the credibility of the findings and conclusions by opening the data to an outside observer. Examples of the peer debriefer's contributions to the data analysis are available in Chapter 6, which describes the LSI intervention through various participant 'lenses'.

4.3 The LSI intervention at APU

This section describes the process-based LSI used in the UIE course in practice. The specific strategies selected for the course are first presented, after which the pedagogic teaching schedule is discussed. Next, the strategy instruction framework that guided the LSI is displayed. Finally, listening materials are discussed and changes to the materials are exemplified, demonstrating how the specific strategies were integrated with the existing UIE materials.

The LSI in UIE consisted of 13 weeks of instruction, and each week was dedicated to a specific strategy. Two weeks of the semester were reserved for review and assessment. Like the catalog of strategies supplied by

Field (2008, p. 293-302), this list of 13 strategies for UIE (see Table 4.2) draws on a native listener's (i.e., my) intuition, my own experience teaching listening, and existing literature as well as collaboration with CLE colleagues. These strategies were also chosen because they were viewed as listening strategies that were transferable to many listening situations and also could be connected to other main language skills. The strategies are presented here in order to provide a full description of the LSI intervention. Several of the underlying theoretical elements (e.g., views on comprehension processing, types of strategies, strategy selection, and LSI principles) were discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, section 3.6.

The sequencing of the strategies selected for this LSI was influenced by the underlying theory of listening adopted for this project (see section 3.2.3 and Figure 3.2). In line with that theory, more general TDP strategies were covered earlier in the LSI. This was intentional because it was felt these general TDP strategies could be applied to all texts during the semester; thus, they were addressed first and then consistently recycled as the course progressed. Later, more specific BUP strategies, which focus on actual acoustic input and are therefore potentially more text-dependent than TDP strategies, were incorporated. At the level of the individual strategy sequencing, the theory of listening that starts with TDP and progresses to BUP is represented.

Teachers may have specialized knowledge of and experience with target groups of listeners, which can be beneficial in addressing listening errors of particular groups (Field, 2008). After living and teaching in Japan at various universities for approximately eight years, I was able to employ my experiences with Japanese learners and the Japanese education system, along with my L1 listening intuition (e.g., Mendelsohn, 1994), to select strategies I believed useful for these learners to comprehend the texts in class (as Ozeki did in her 2000 study) as well as beyond the classroom. The strategy selection process was also influenced by these taxonomies of listening skills and strategies: Richards (1983), Vandergrift (1997), and Field

(2008). I attempted to employ a wide and flexible range of strategies during the planning stage, as recommended by Flowerdew and Miller (2005).

Table 4.2: Listening strategies in UIE

Strategy	Literature references	Type(s) of processing	Type(s) of strategy
Genre recognition	Rost (1990); Lynch (2009)	TDP	Metacognitive, cognitive
Schema and background knowledge activation	Anderson & Lynch (1988); Buck (2001)	TDP	Metacognitive, cognitive
Main idea identification	Field (2008); Vandergrift & Goh (2012)	TDP, BUP	Metacognitive, cognitive
Detail identification	Hansen & Jensen (1994); Vandergrift & Goh (2012)	BUP	Cognitive
Discourse marker identification	Goh (2005); Brown (2011)	BUP	Metacognitive, cognitive
Prediction	Rost (1994); Buck (2001)	TDP, BUP	Metacognitive, cognitive
Inference	Vandergrift (1997); Field (2008)	TDP, BUP	Metacognitive, cognitive
Recognition of shifts in tone and topic	Hansen (1994); Brown (2011)	BUP	Cognitive
Identifying connectors (i.e., in other words, however)	Mendelsohn (1994); Field (2008)	BUP	Cognitive
Chunking/ grouping of words and information	Vandergrift (1997); Field (2008)	BUP	Cognitive
Use of linguistic aspects (i.e., parts of speech, intonation)	Mendelsohn (1994); Cross (2010)	BUP	Metacognitive, cognitive
Pattern recognition	Mendelsohn (1994); Lynch (2009)	TDP, BUP	Metacognitive, cognitive
Guessing new words from context	Field (2008); Lynch (2009)	TDP, BUP	Cognitive

Each strategy was addressed in the classroom through the following schedule:

- Monday: Introduction, awareness raising, brief practice;
- Tuesday: Practice with textbook and semi-authentic audio and authentic video materials, with a focus on teacher modeling of TDP;
- Thursday: Practice with textbook and semi-authentic audio and authentic video materials, with a focus on teaching modeling of BUP;
- Friday: Review and expansion to other listening situations (i.e., real world and academic affairs); reflection on strategy use and choices.

This schedule allowed for more teacher support early in the week, which was gradually retracted in order to help prepare students for listening on their own (Richards & Burns, 2012).

The pedagogic schedule outlined above was not only practical for the course, which met four times per week, but was also informed by the strategy instruction framework displayed in Table 4.3. The blending of this framework with the weekly UIE schedule helped establish the LSI as focused and predictable from a teaching standpoint. This framework draws on work from commentators on learning strategy instruction in general and on listening strategies in particular.

Table 4.3: Strategy instruction framework
(adapted from Macaro, 2001; Goh, 2008; Graham & Macaro, 2008)

Stage	Strategy instruction sequence	Realization in LSI teaching cycle
1.	Raise learner awareness of and model strategies.	Mondays
2.	Encourage strategy use and provide reminders.	Daily
3.	Offer a wide menu of strategies.	Throughout the semester
4.	Offer controlled, guided, and structured strategy practice.	Tuesdays and Thursdays
5.	Conduct post-task analysis that allows for student reflection on and evaluation of strategy use.	Fridays
*6.	Ensure consistent recycling of strategies.	Throughout the semester

Note: A particular point of emphasis added for this project.

Several other strategy methodologists suggest similar frameworks as well (e.g., O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Chamot & Rubin, 1994; Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). The basic pattern of consciousness raising, teacher modeling, controlled practice, and evaluation of strategy selection is relatively consistent among these commentators.

Materials for the UIE course consisted of the assigned textbook Interactions 2 (Tanaka & Baker, 2007), which included audio CDs, as well as supplementary authentic and semi-authentic audio and video materials. The listening texts included a variety of monologues and dialogues ranging from casual to formal. These materials consisted of both one-way and two-way listening texts (Richards & Burns, 2012). Corresponding worksheets and tasks to accompany the listening materials were also prepared. Examples of strategy-related activities were identifying repeated words in order to understand main ideas, and making predictions prior to listening, then

checking them after listening. Other activities included reacting to texts through pair discussion, note-taking, worksheets, and information gaps.

Because this project involved use of the prescribed textbook for UIE, integrated strategy training was used. The textbook included listening activities, transcripts, and CDs, which were used to teach the selected processes and strategies. Since many textbooks lack a strategic focus (Mendelsohn, 1994; Goh, 2012), this aspect was incorporated into the texts supplied by the course book. Supplementary materials were also used in order to provide additional practice and demonstrate strategy transfer to different text genres and situations. An explicit, integrated approach to strategy instruction, like the one adopted in this research, is the most common plan for the teaching of strategies (Oxford, 1992).

For the study, the required UIE listening materials (e.g., activities used with textbook audio and supplementary video texts) were reworked to better accommodate and acknowledge the listening strategy component. Differences in pre- and post-intervention listening tasks are exemplified in Table 4.4, which demonstrates how a strategic focus was integrated into the existing materials. These were strategies that presented themselves to me as I analyzed the texts and were based on my native listener intuition and my experience with the target group of learners. Additional samples of pre- and post-intervention teaching and learning materials are available in Appendix 10.

Table 4.4: Comparison of UIE sample materials (pre- and post-intervention)

Material sample	Pre-intervention description	Strategy focus	Post-intervention description
Multiculturalism video & worksheet: segment 1	Just watch	Identifying main idea	1. Which words are repeated? Stressed? 2. What is the main theme of the video?
Business leadership video & worksheet: segment 3	True / False items	Using markers	Speaker says, "Now, diversity has multiple facets". What are the 3 kinds of diversity he mentions?
Textbook page 5: On-campus conversation	Comprehension questions	Genre & Prediction	1. Identify number of speakers and setting. 2. Brainstorm possible topics. 3. Listen and check predictions against input.
Textbook page 30: Renting an apartment	Complete gap-fill activity	Chunking	Listen and put a slash (/) to show sets of words that carry meaning.
Textbook page 53: Father/son phone conversation about money	Comprehension questions	Prediction & Inference	1. Teacher plays audio and stops periodically, asking students to predict upcoming content. 2. Students listen to check their predictions. 3. Questions focus on inferences and include key words (e.g., probably).

This section has provided an overview of the adjustments made to the UIE course materials, and authentic samples of pre- and post-intervention materials are available in Appendix 10. Although descriptions and samples of

the materials may appear straightforward, their use may likely pose a variety of difficulties for some teachers and learners. Teachers may struggle with this methodology and related materials for a number of reasons. For instance, they may disagree with a process-based strategic approach to listening at a philosophical level or may be satisfied with current pedagogic approaches. They may also lack the time to prepare such materials before class or to employ them in class. In addition, the ability to explain listening processes and strategies may not be developed in some teachers, especially those with little experience. Furthermore, the necessary technology (e.g., computers and audio/visual equipment) may not be available.

Learners, meanwhile, may face conceptual and linguistic obstacles when using the LSI materials. Those with short attention spans may find it troublesome to focus on a single strategy long enough to understand and be able to apply it. Also, because strategy use may be idiosyncratic, the strategies accentuated in these materials may not be suitable for all learners. Finally, the strategies used in this LSI program were introduced and discussed in the L2 (i.e., English), which may have affected student uptake. These potential obstacles, however, seemed to have little, if any, impact on the teachers and students in this study, as indicated by the findings in Chapters 5 and 6.

This process-based LSI intervention was implemented in UIE beginning in the Fall 2010 semester. Minor revisions to the program were subsequently made, such as changes to the materials and how they were used in class based on the emerging insights. Modified versions of the LSI were then used in the Spring 2011 and Fall 2011 semesters. Although slight alterations were made to the LSI component, the core strategies, schedule, and philosophy outlined in this section remained unchanged.

4.4 The AR stages of the LSI intervention

In this study, L2 listening pedagogy in UIE courses at APU was the aspect of classroom pedagogy that had been problematised and identified as an area in need of better understanding, if not change (see Chapter 2, section 2.3.1).

Table 4.5 provides a description of the AR stages in this project. Although this table shows the phases in a neat sequential progression, in practice the phases did not occur in such an organized fashion. Rather, some stages overlapped with others, while various steps occurred in a different order than is represented in Table 4.5. However, this AR progression is the most widely recognized and cited in the literature (e.g., Burns, 2009), and is therefore used to display the cycle in this project.

Table 4.5: Realizations of AR stages

AR stage	Description
1. Plan	After identifying and problematising the area of listening methodology, an intervention involving LSI was planned. During the planning stage, the LSI methodology, based on principles for listening instruction derived from the literature was integrated with existing materials.
2. Act	Listening strategies were integrated into UIE course materials, and supplementary listening materials were prepared. The resulting LSI was used in UIE classes.
3. Observe	Data were collected via questionnaires, group interviews, classroom observations, pre/post tests, and a journal I kept throughout the project.
4. Reflect	Data were analyzed and compared in order to ascertain student and teacher perceptions of the LSI methodology. Detrimental and beneficial factors affecting LSI were also identified. Reflection on these points fed into subsequent AR cycles.
5. Next AR Phase initiated	Based on the previous AR phase, revisions to materials and classroom methodology were made, which incorporated student and teacher reflections and practical considerations.

The iterative nature of AR means that one AR sequence stimulates subsequent cycles, or phases. This project consisted of three AR phases, and each phase was influenced by the preceding phases as well as helped shape

subsequent phases, as shown in Figure 4.2. The reflection stage that occurred near the end of one phase provided new ideas and revisions for the next cycle.

In order for AR to fulfill its goals, multiple phases are necessary (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). The arrow for Action Research Phase 3 in Figure 4.2 points to the future, as effects of the LSI intervention may continue to impact and feed into L2 listening pedagogy, both at APU and within the wider L2 education context, as is discussed in Chapters 7 and 8 respectively. This cyclical and iterative AR process also reflected the recurrent pattern of course design and refinement suggested by Graves (2000), which includes "teaching the course, modifying/replanning the course, [and] reteaching the course" (p. 10).

| Action Research Phase 1 | • Plan 1 • Act 1 • Observe 1 • Reflect 1 | Action Research Phase 2 | • Plan 2 • Act 2 • Observe 2 • Reflect 2 | Action Research Phase 3 | • Plan 3 • Act 3 • Observe 3 • Reflect 3 |
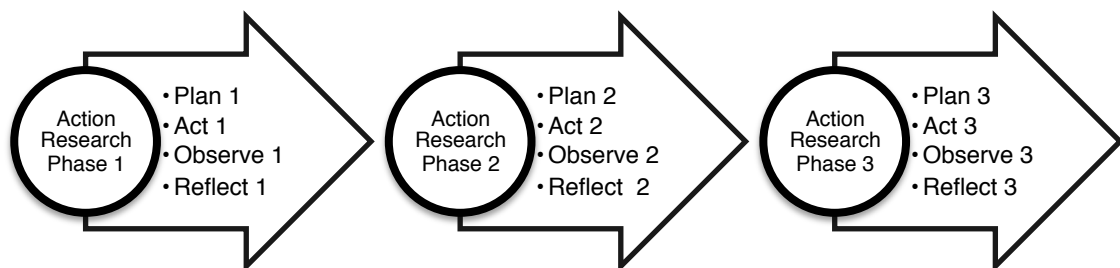
Figure 4.2: *Directionality of AR phases*

Phase 1 saw the initial introduction of the LSI intervention, and as with any new methodological practice, there were shortcomings that needed to be addressed. This first phase allowed me to gradually become more familiar and comfortable with the LSI methodology and materials. In my research journal, I noted complications from Phase 1, which included materials that were unclear to students, the timing of planned activities, and ineffective introductions to some listening strategies. During Phase 1, Reflect 1, I worked with Sean to adjust existing materials, create new materials and activities, and to recalibrate the timings for activities. We also endeavored to make clear links between the listening strategies and other language skills; for example, the organizational markers identified in our listening texts could be produced by students to good effect in their speaking and writing tasks.

These improvements fed into Phase 2, where Sean used the revamped LSI methodology and materials with a new class. While some issues were resolved from Phase 1 to Phase 2, such as the timings and clarity of some activities, others remained. For example, when teaching the strategy of *chunking*, Sean reported that he was still unsure of what to do in the classroom and that his students were also somewhat confused as to his (and indirectly, my) expectations of them. Following Phase 2, we also realized that more systematic recycling of strategies and examples of how strategies could be transferred to other listening events would improve the intervention.

These realizations made during Phase 2, Reflect 2 served as the basis for Phase 3, Plan 3. Therefore, after Phase 2, we created additional supplemental materials for *chunking* and also did some practice role-play teaching with each other to develop our respective abilities and techniques for teaching *chunking*. In response to the issue of strategy recycling, we discussed how strategies could build on and support each other. Therefore, we reorganized the LSI and materials so that when one strategy was introduced, we also incorporated strategies we had previously covered in class. This created more of a scaffolded approach that also encouraged students to grow their active strategy repertoires. Such recycling was evident in video recordings of Sean's classes (see Chapter 5, section 5.2.3). Finally, regarding strategy transference, we gathered additional texts from various genres with which we could demonstrate and encourage strategy transfer. For more details on the links between the reflection and planning stages, see Chapter 5, Tables 5.3 and 5.6.

These modifications were implemented during Phase 3, Act 3, and in Phase 3, Reflect 3, we finally felt more confident that we had adapted the LSI intervention so that it matched the principles for LSI (see Chapter 3, section, 3.6) in terms of its practicality, usefulness to students, and transference to other listening events. At this point, we focused our attention on teacher education related to LSI and how we would present LSI to other teachers in a compelling way in hopes that they too would adopt the approach. In Phase 3, Reflect 3, we decided to develop workshops and teacher training sessions to

help other teachers adopt LSI for their classrooms. These teacher education sessions were held at APU with teachers new to the UIE course. This teacher education element was currently ongoing at the time this thesis was being written and feeds into Phase 4, Plan 1, which is beyond the three-phase scope of this research.

Now that the planning and action stages of the AR sequence have been detailed, and the cyclical nature of the intervention has been highlighted, the discussion turns to the data collection and analysis procedures, which expanded gradually from Phase 1 to Phase 3, as shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Overview of three AR phases

	Semester	*Students*	*Classes*	*Data collection*
AR Phase 1	Fall 2010	54	2*	Questionnaire
				Student interviews
				Journal entries
AR Phase 2	Spring 2011	23	1**	Class observation
				Questionnaire
				Student interviews
				Teacher interview
				Journal entries
AR Phase 3	Fall 2011	44	3***	Pre/post-semester tests
				Class observation
				Questionnaire
				Student interviews
				Teacher interview
				Journal entries

Note: * = two classes I taught; ** = one class taught by Sean; *** = two classes I taught and one class taught by Sean.

The staggered progression of data collection methods, or "evolving research methodology" (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p. 76), allowed me as researcher to make revisions to the instruments as necessary and also to develop confidence in using them to effectively obtain the desired information.

Throughout all three phrases, I made entries in a research journal, cataloging the planning, development, implementation, and revisions of the LSI project. This type of systematic recording of my thoughts and reflections on the LSI intervention allowed me to monitor changes in the project, the context, and my own personal understanding of the intervention and the AR process itself (Herr & Anderson, 2005).

4.5 Multiple methods and perspectives

Incorporation of multiple data collection methods and viewpoints from various types of participants strengthens research (Burke Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007). Moreover, comparisons of data collected in several phases over a period of time can be useful to establish the credibility and trustworthiness of a study. As Richards, et al. (2012) observe, the value of integrating multiple methods and viewpoints "lies in [the] potential to develop a dialogue between different ways of seeing, interpreting, and knowing" (p. 310). In the spirit of multi-method research in a qualitative stance, this study incorporated multiple data collection instruments (e.g., questionnaires, interviews, and class observation), viewpoints of three distinct participant groups (i.e., students, teachers, and myself as researcher, as described in Chapter 2, section 2.4), and findings from different phases of data collection (i.e., over three semesters). By combining research methods and different viewpoints within AR, practitioners can come to more trustworthy and well-balanced conclusions in terms of the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A thorough and multi-layered research program aims to produce a comprehensive and accurate understanding of the research situation and research outcomes.

Regarding the mixing of methods in particular Giddings (2007) states that the "notion of using two or more methods to study a phenomenon…[is] a way to ensure confidence in the conclusions made" (p. 393). It can be argued that any single research method has advantages as well as inherent weaknesses. When individual methods are carefully selected and combined, each method can offer its strengths while simultaneously compensating for the

vulnerabilities of other selected methods. Ideally, in mixed research, data collection tools that possess "complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses" should be combined (Burke Johnson, et al., 2007, p. 127). In other words, triangulation in research methods (e.g., Denzin, 1978; Webb, Campell, Schwartz & Sechrest, 2000; Cohen, et al., 2011) can increase the "trustworthiness" and "credibility" of a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), matters of importance given the qualitative perspective of this study.

By utilizing a triangulated mixed research approach, which Vandergrift (2010) notes is especially important for investigations related to listening, this project capitalized on the strengths of multiple data collection instruments. Several additional forms of triangulation were incorporated to strengthen the research in a number of ways, thereby increasing the credibility and trustworthiness of findings and conclusions. Table 4.7 describes the various types of triangulation inherent in this study.

Table 4.7: Types of triangulation used in this study
(based on Denzin, 1978; Burns, 1999; Webb et al., 2000; Cohen, et al., 2011)

Type of triangulation	Application in this study	Purpose
Methodological	Use of questionnaires, interviews, class observation, pre/post test scores, and researcher journal	To provide both descriptive and explanatory data from non-overlapping methods
Time	Three AR phases over the course of one and a half years	To evaluate LSI over an extended period of time
Participant	Students, teachers, peer debriefer	To give a voice to various participants
Space	Six different sub-groups of students (i.e., six different classes)	To compare findings from various groups
Investigator	Myself as teacher-researcher, one co-teacher, and one peer debriefer	To invite scrutiny from other L2 professionals

4.6 Data collection tools and procedures

This section describes the five data collection tools and procedures for data analysis used in this study. As stated earlier, the questionnaire and interview items were used in Phase 1. Phase 2 saw the introduction of the classroom observation component. In Phase 3, pre/post test scores were also collected. In addition, I kept a journal of developments throughout the project.

The research questions stated at the beginning of this chapter focused on student and teacher perceptions of LSI pedagogy as well as on the implementation of LSI in this context. In order to address these questions, the combination of data collection tools described in Table 4.8 was used.

Table 4.8: Overview of data collection instruments

Instrument	Purpose	Corresponding Research Question (RQ)
Questionnaires	To measure beliefs, attitudes, preferences, and past behaviors (Dörnyei, 2007; Burns, 2010a)	RQ 1, 2, & 3
Interviews	To supply qualitative information and identify emerging themes in self-report data (Nunan, 1992)	RQ 1, 2, & 3
Classroom Observation	To detect patterns in teacher and student behaviors during EFL listening instruction (Cowie, 2009)	RQ 1 & 3
Pre/Post Tests	To show any effects of EFL listening pedagogy on listening ability as measured by standardized tests (Brown, 1998)	RQ 1
Journal	To record self-reflections and developments throughout the project (Herr & Anderson, 2005; Burns, 2010a)	RQ 2 & 3

Questionnaires and interviews yield only self-report data; therefore, in order to provide some evidence of LSI pedagogy in practice, classroom observations were also conducted. In addition, listening pre- and post-tests

helped to display any effects of LSI in quantifiable terms. Furthermore, in order to track the development of the project through the AR stages, I kept a research journal, which outlined general reflections and specific happenings during the 1.5-year study. Through this blending of research methods, aspects of introspection, retrospection, and observation (Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002) converged in a consolidated approach to determine the effects of the LSI intervention.

Chapters 5 and 6 illustrate how the data collected from these instruments address RQs 1 and 2. By first addressing these two RQs, which relate to participant perceptions, a clearer, more comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting the LSI arose. This understanding included factors that were advantageous and disadvantageous to the LSI at APU. These factors are subsequently discussed in Chapter 7, which responds to RQ 3.

4.6.1 Questionnaires: Primary data source

Questionnaires were selected for several reasons, including the practicality of administering the surveys and organizing the data. In addition, questionnaires allow all informants to be presented with a "standardized stimulus" (Babbie, 2005, p. 286), and this identical format helps to minimize unreliability on the part of the researcher. Importantly, questionnaires are effective tools for measuring beliefs, attitudes, preferences, and past behaviors (e.g., Richards & Lockhart, 1996; Freeman, 1998; Dörnyei, 2003, 2007; Burns, 2010a). As the research questions focused on student and teacher impressions and behaviors, surveys were a strong choice to gather such information.

Despite their benefits, questionnaires also have disadvantages. For example, they can be viewed as superficial and artificial rather than providing in-depth understanding (Dörnyei, 2003, 2007). In addition, while they may be convenient and efficient, questionnaires often only provide subjects with brief contact with the topic (Singleton & Straits, 1990; Dörnyei, 2007). A further drawback relates to the types of data that can be collected. Questionnaires cannot supply actual beliefs, opinions, or observations; rather, they can only

yield *reports* of beliefs, opinions, and actions (Mackey & Gass, 2005). To overcome these drawbacks, this project employed a multi-methods approach to data collection.

The questionnaire consisted of 25 statements pertaining to listening background, the LSI component of UIE, the roles of various aspects of the classroom context, and projected listening strategy usage (see Appendix 1). Scaled options were: *strongly disagree*, *somewhat disagree*, *somewhat agree*, *strongly agree*, and *I don't know*. The options were ordered from left to right, starting with *strongly disagree* in order to offset any bias. The *I don't know* option was provided so as not to force students to make a selection inconsistent with their beliefs. Three open questions allowed respondents to give their opinions and provide examples.

Language choice is an important issue in questionnaire design, and the researcher must take steps to ensure that each questionnaire item means the same thing to each individual respondent (Babbie, 2005). Questionnaires written solely in the students' L2 may affect results, as some students may lack sufficient L2 reading skills to provide answers that reflect their views (Burns, 1999). Since this questionnaire was administered on line, the respondents had no opportunities to ask for clarification if necessary. Likewise, the researcher was not able to exemplify or rephrase items if respondents were uncertain. Thus, the questionnaire was written in both English and Japanese in order to increase respondent comprehension, and therefore, the trustworthiness of responses.

4.6.2 Interviews: Primary data source

Interviews were selected as a primary data source because of their capacity to generate explanatory data that answer "how" and "why" questions (Dörnyei, 2007; Mason, 2007). The topic under investigation focused on student and teacher reactions to modifications in listening pedagogy. To date, it seems little research into the effects of certain listening methodologies has been conducted. Therefore, data collected from these interviews were valuable as they provided detailed thought processes, explanations for stated attitudes,

and reactions to the methodological changes. Dörnyei (2007) highlights the "exploratory nature [of interviews] as an effective way of exploring new, uncharted areas" (p. 39). The internal effects of LSI occurred beyond what was available to direct observation; as such, interviews were one way of gaining access to subjects' beliefs and opinions. Respondents also had opportunities to articulate in their own words any impacts these pedagogical adjustments had on their present and future English learning and teaching experiences.

Due to the personalized nature of interviews, crucial drawbacks need to be addressed. Some limitations of interviews, such as the wording of questions (Bell, 1999), item sequencing (Babbie, 2005), and demanding data analysis (Bell, 1999) need to be considered in any research interview situation. Because this LSI study was positioned in an AR framework with me as the teacher-researcher, and because it drew significantly on student and teacher perceptions, other more complex issues required attention. These include the following:

- the possibility of researcher bias (e.g., Nunan, 1992; Burns, 1999); however, in this study, a single researcher conducted all interviews, which Bell (1999) asserts is an appropriate step to limit researcher bias in interviews.
- power relations that may influence responses (e.g., Burns, 2010a); however, steps outlined by McKay (2006, as cited in Burns, 2010a) to mitigate this factor were taken, including complete explanations, interviewer sensitivity, and encouragement.
- the notion that interview data are "*representations* or *accounts* of truths, facts, attitudes, beliefs [and] mental states" (Talmy, 2011, p. 27, emphasis in original) rather than the actual truths and beliefs themselves; however, this study included multi-faceted data collection and did not rely solely on interviews.

While interviews present several challenges in terms of practicality and complex personal relations, a number of steps were taken to reduce their

influences on this project and to ensure as much as possible that the data generated were trustworthy and provided accurate representations of participant attitudes and opinions.

Student interviews

Group interviews, with up to five students, were used for practical reasons of time and availability. There were a total of 11 group interviews; in addition, three students completed individual interviews due to scheduling conflicts. In Phases 1 and 2, a total of 14 students was interviewed, while in Phase 3, 24 students participated in interviews. Data from these interviews proved valuable as they provided more detailed thought processes, explanations for stated attitudes, and reactions to the methodological changes introduced in UIE.

The interview format was semi-structured and consisted of 15 main items (see Appendix 2), which built on questionnaire items. Questions were thematically organized (Burns, 2010a) for clarity of responses and recording of data. During the interviews, the order of items shifted in response to participant replies. To help minimize memory effects, the interviews were held soon after the end of the semester, and reminders about and examples of class activities, strategies, and materials were given during the sessions. I wrote field notes and digitally recorded the interviews, which lasted approximately one hour each. Responses were first quantified and then scrutinized in order to determine their explanatory value in relation to the research questions.

Mann (2011) points out that the language(s) in which an interview is conducted contributes to the interview outcomes and therefore the language choice must be justified. In contrast to the bilingual questionnaires, the interviews were conducted in English, the students' L2. One reason for English use was because my own Japanese ability was not high enough for such discussions. Because the interviews were conducted in person, I was in a position to assess learner comprehension of the questions and rephrase or exemplify items if needed. As interviewees were at the upper intermediate

level, it was felt that they would be able to understand and respond to the items with available support from the researcher. Use of English during the interviews was also viewed as an incentive for students (e.g., Cross 2010), who often seek opportunities for English conversation, especially in an EFL context like Japan. However, interviewees were allowed to use Japanese or their bilingual dictionaries when they felt it would help them communicate their ideas.

Teacher interviews

By comparing the perceptions of two or more teachers in the same situation, authenticity of findings increases (Hopkins, 2009). Therefore, to incorporate another educator's perspective on the LSI intervention, post-semester interviews were held with Sean, the other teacher using LSI in his UIE courses. These interviews were conducted in English, the L1 Sean and I share. Two interviews took place, following Phases 2 and 3, respectively. These interviews were semi-structured (see Appendix 3) and covered topics such as the teacher's views on listening pedagogy in general, the LSI intervention, student development from the LSI, and any issues relating to LSI that needed attention or improvement.

4.6.3 Classroom Observations: Secondary data source

Classroom observation was incorporated in this study for two reasons. First, it allowed me to monitor the extent to which the LSI methodology and materials were being used by Sean in his classes. The second purpose for observations was to monitor student reactions and responses to the LSI. Classroom observation provides opportunities for systematic investigation of classroom events (Allwright, 1988) and allows L2 professionals to better understand common observable behavioral patterns that occur in classrooms (Cowie, 2009; Burns, 2010a). Furthermore, observation is often used in conjunction with other research methods that allow participants to express their feelings and beliefs (Cowie, 2009). As such, observations complemented the questionnaires and interviews described previously.

Several observation schemes have been produced for the L2 field; for example, FLINT (Moskowitz, 1967) and COLT (Allen, Fröhlich & Spada, 1984). However, many of these schemes focus on teacher-student or student-student verbal interaction and were therefore incompatible with the needs of this research. No observation schemes that focused on the delivery of LSI specifically, or even strategy instruction more generally, were located in a review of the literature. Two recent studies of LSI did involve a classroom observation component (Graham & Macaro, 2008; Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010); however, the observations in these cases did not follow any systematic procedures and no formal data were collected (Graham, personal communication, 21 Sept. 2011; Vandergrift, personal communication, 22 Sept. 2011). It seems these observations were pragmatic and intuitive, as they did not adhere to any *a priori* scheme. However, the researchers deemed them sufficient to monitor the use of prescribed methodology and materials by instructors participating in their research projects.

After describing my project to Vandergrift, he advised that I "develop an instrument of your own, listing the specific behaviours you are looking for" (personal communication, 22 Sept. 2011). Chaudron (1988) also points out that many researchers choose to develop their own systems for observation rather than adopting previous schemes because studies often have different theoretical positions and distinct research goals. Due to the absence of an observation scheme designed specifically for LSI, the incompatibility of existing schemes with this research, and the advice of other L2 listening pedagogy researchers, I developed a scheme that suited the nature of observation in this project, one that monitored LSI use and student reactions and responses to LSI classroom practices.

During AR Phase 2, the UIE level consisted of only one class, due to low student enrollment and university administration policies for streaming students. In Phase 2, Sean was assigned to teach this single class, including the LSI component. My teaching duties did not allow me to observe Sean's classes in person. Therefore, Sean completed observation note sheets that I created (Appendix 4), which focused on learners' verbal and non-verbal

reactions and responses (Galloway, 1970; Cohen & Scott, 1996) to the LSI. These note sheets consisted of five areas entitled: *verbal behaviors*, *non-verbal behaviors*, *positive behaviors*, *negative behaviors*, and *other observations*. In these spaces, Sean wrote notes about his interpretations of observed student behaviors.

These note sheets served as the basis for a quantitative behavior checklist (Appendix 5) that was developed and subsequently used in AR Phase 3. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) promote the use of similar checklists for observation of interactive listening events, and Hopkins (2009) points out that tickbox checklists generate records that are "factual rather than judgmental" (p. 89).

During AR Phase 3, both Sean and I completed the tick box side of the observation sheet by placing check marks in the appropriate boxes. Due to scheduling and time constraints, which again prohibited me from attending Sean's classes, each of us completed observation checklists for our respective classes. This system allowed me to collect observation data despite the obstacle of teaching schedules. Still, potential drawbacks to classroom observation conducted in this manner include teacher bias and aforementioned power relation issues. Additionally, since we met our respective classes four times per week, it was possible that both our and our students' routinized behaviors went unnoticed at times because we were accustomed to them. There was also the possibility that Sean and I misinterpreted our students' behaviors and reactions (Nunan & Bailey, 2009), which could lead to erroneous findings.

On the other hand, the 'insider' element of the observation meant that we, as teachers, knew the class dynamics and atmosphere, routines, and students in ways that outside observers would not be privy to. What is more, Sean and I were able to take into consideration external factors such as bad weather and classroom conditions that may have affected learners, factors that are not always accounted for in classroom-based research (Burns & Knox, 2011). Furthermore, since we met our students several times per week,

it is likely that we could provide a richer, more comprehensive description of class over the 15-week semester than a small number of class visits by an outside observer could have produced.

During these 'insider' classroom observations, individual instances of behaviors on the checklist were recorded (i.e., if one student volunteered or nodded, it was recorded. Not all students had to engage in the reaction). This observation sheet also had sections for qualitative comments on *negative behaviors, positive behaviors,* and *other* remarks. During discussions of the observations, both Sean and I acknowledged that we were unable to record all of the behaviors of all students for the entire period of LSI; therefore, this was only an illustrative sample of classroom occurrences. In the midst of delivering material, monitoring class progress, and reacting to students, complete description of behaviors by a teacher would be unrealistic and unreasonably intrusive. Therefore, given the many demands on the teachers, this system seemed to be an adequate and realistic way to meet the goals of the observation component (i.e., monitoring the extent to which LSI materials and methodology were used and ascertaining student responses and reactions).

To supplement the observation sheets, Sean also provided daily copies of the materials he used in class, including his notes. These documents provided additional evidence that Sean was aware of the LSI materials and methodology and was likely using them in class. In addition, six individual lessons (two of Sean's lessons in each Phase 2 and Phase 3, and 2 of my lessons in Phase 3) were video recorded so I could see first-hand the extent to which LSI was being used and could also monitor student verbal and non-verbal reactions. For these recordings, the classroom teacher set up a video camera on a tri-pod in a front corner of the classroom at an angle so that both the teacher and students were visible for most of the lesson. Ethical considerations for videotaping these classes are listed below in Table 4.10.

As with any observation scheme, those being observed may have behaved differently than they normally would have if no focused observation were taking place (i.e., an observer's paradox). The Hawthorne Effect and the

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Halo Effect (Brown, 1998) may also have affected the observation data. However, the number of observation sheets and video recordings collected over two semesters demonstrated consistent findings, indicating that these potential weaknesses of classroom observation had little impact on the study.

Although the LSI intervention was systematically monitored using observation sheets, video recordings, and presentation of daily class materials, it is impossible to claim categorically that the LSI component was delivered in an identical fashion in all classes. Nevertheless, every effort was made to ensure that the LSI was being used regularly.

4.6.4 Pre/post tests: Secondary data source

In order to determine any gains in listening proficiency as measured by standardized multiple-choice tests, pre- and post-semester test scores were collected for students in AR Phase 3. As Vandergrift (2010) states, listening test scores help researchers "measure growth in listening ability over time and/or consequent to a pedagogical intervention" (p. 162). Another purpose of these test scores was to corroborate any claims of listening improvement made by students on questionnaires and in interviews. The time between the pre- and post-semester tests was approximately 4 months.

TOEFL

The TOEFL test is often a priority for Japanese university students, as high scores lead to English level advancement and study abroad opportunities, along with positive self-image. During AR Phase 3, students took the paper-based TOEFL international standardized test as part of their English language curriculum. The TOEFL test consists of listening, grammar, and reading components, and scores on the listening section were isolated for comparison in this project. Different versions of the test were given for the pre- and post-semester assessments.

In-house listening tests

A second set of pre- and post-semester test scores was obtained using an in-house listening test. The test consisted of two listening texts from extra

material in Interactions 2 (Tanaka & Baker, 2007), the required student textbook (see Chapter 2, section 2.3). Both texts were at approximately the same language level, at Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level 8.8. This calculation incorporates the total numbers of sentences, words, and syllables in a text and is commonly used in the U.S. education system to help educators establish the readability of texts. The level of the texts used on this in-house test was 8.8, which indicates that students in eighth, nearly ninth grade (about the age of 13 in the U.S.) should be able to comprehend the text. Ten multiple-choice questions based on the texts with four options each were made. The same test was used for the pre- and post-semester assessment (see Appendix 7). The following steps were taken to reduce any memory or test-exposure effects: a four month gap occurred between the pre- and post-tests, students were not informed that they would take the same test a second time, and answers were not released after the pre-test.

4.6.5 Research journal: Secondary data source

In my role as teacher-researcher, I kept a research journal to track the evolution of LSI and my personal reflections on the intervention. This journal, along with the teacher interviews, provided my insider viewpoints as a teacher, teacher educator, curriculum designer, and researcher in my local context, which is a fundamental concept in AR. The perspectives of the two teachers (i.e., Sean and I) were analyzed in conjunction with the other forms of data. They were also used to compare and (re)validate data and perspectives from other LSI teachers in the future, a point which relates to the iterative nature of this AR project and its potential impact on LSI pedagogy in a broader context, as suggested in Chapter 8. I recorded a total of 40 entries in the research journal (see Appendix 8 for sample journal entries), tracing the origins of LSI in the UIE course as well as documenting other related events and my personal interpretations of and reflections on the planning and implementation stages of this project.

4.7 Longitudinal data collection

Table 4.9 displays the total number of data sources collected over the course of the three AR Phases. The progressive development of the data collection instruments was evident in Table 4.6, as methods used in Phase 1 were steadily expanded to include several different types of data. This longitudinal data collection allowed for comparison across the three phases as well as views of the findings from a number of different perspectives. The result was a multi-faceted project whose findings were triangulated via methods, time, space, perspectives, and investigators (e.g., Denzin, 1978; Webb, et al., 2000; Cohen, et al., 2011), and are likely more reliable than they would be had any single data collection technique, period, or viewpoint been used. While the number of participants and samples varied over the course of the three data collection periods, this study accurately reflected the varying parameters of a real world educational setting like the one in which this research was set.

Table 4.9: Total number of data sources for the entire project

	AR Phase 1 Fall 2010	AR Phase 2 Spring 2011	AR Phase 3 Fall 2011	Project Totals
Questionnaire	54	23	44	121
Student Interview participants	7	7	24	38
Research journal entries	10	15	15	40
Class observation forms		26	50	76
Class observation videos		2	4	6
In-house pre/post listening test			34*	34
TOEFL pre/post test			41**	41

*Note: This number reflects only students who took both the pre- and post-in-house listening test.

**Note: This number reflects only students who had both pre- and post-semester TOEFL scores available.

4.8 Weighting in data collection

Due to the inclusion of five separate types of data, the level of importance and priority designated to each type was considered, an aspect of research design called "weighting" (Ivankova & Creswell, 2009, p. 138). In this study, questionnaires and interviews received more attention than other forms of

data because they offered the most useful information for addressing the research questions. Questionnaires applied to the UIE course as a whole, and the data they generated may have implications for wider audiences of listening teachers and students. Meanwhile, interview data were needed for greater interpretation of perceptions and for explanatory purposes. Other listening studies have also combined questionnaire and interview data (e.g., Goh, 2000; Graham, 2006). These primary research methods provided a larger amount of and more robust data about student and teacher attitudes than observations, pre/post tests, and the research journal, which were designated as secondary research methods for the purposes of this study.

4.9 Analytical procedures

Data generated from the five data collection instruments were first analyzed individually and then synthesized to gain accurate, multi-faceted insight into the LSI component.

4.9.1 Questionnaire data: Descriptive statistics

Questionnaire data provided a general overview of the entire population and allowed for comparisons across the three AR phases. The questionnaires were designed using Survey Monkey, an online questionnaire generator. This website also collects and displays numerical and qualitative data.

The total numbers of respondents per item were used to create charts which allowed for comparison between different responses to each item, between different groups of students, and between the different AR phases (see Chapters 5 and 6). Each scaled option was assigned a numerical value: *strongly disagree* (1), *somewhat disagree* (2), *somewhat agree* (3), *strongly agree* (4), and *I don't know* (0). These numbers were used to generate average scores for each statement on the questionnaire.

Responses to the open questions were coded and categorized using a data-driven grounded approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2006) to qualitative data analysis, which aims to discover, rather than validate information embedded in the data (Dey, 2007). This

grounded approach aligns with the qualitative stance taken by this project, discussed in section 4.1.3. Rather than applying *a priori* categories to the data, categories emerged from the data themselves. The total number of items in each category was totaled and statements from student answers were selected as examples. While this approach was not grounded theory in its strictest sense, this analysis procedure involved two of the core procedures involved in grounded theory: segmenting and categorizing data. As Charmaz (2005) observes, it is not uncommon for researchers to employ only some features of grounded theory.

Use of a grounded approach also helps to guard against the researcher's preconceived notions about the topic in question, as the data must be examined line by line (Charmaz, 2006). This feature was another safeguard against researcher bias, discussed previously in sections 4.1.2 and 4.2.2. Dick (2007) points out that grounded theory and AR have much in common, specifically their common goal of "building theory from practice" (p. 398), which made a grounded approach suitable for qualitative data analysis in this project (also applied to qualitative interview, classroom observation, and journal data analysis described in sections 4.9.2, 4.9.3, and 4.9.4, respectively).

4.9.2 Interview data: Grounded theory

Student interviews generated more in-depth explanatory data related to the questionnaire items. Responses from the teacher interviews provided additional views on the LSI intervention from another language educator. The data from both types of interview were analyzed in the same way. First, selected parts of the interviews were transcribed. Due to the large number of interviewees (38), only responses that were specifically relevant to the stated research questions were transcribed (see Appendix 2 for sample transcriptions). The selection of responses for transcription included those that were critical of the LSI and those that differed from group norms (see Table 6.6 that highlights outlier student voices).

In an effort to distance myself as the teacher-researcher from the data and establish objective interpretations, the data were set aside for a four-month period before being analyzed for emerging themes using a grounded approach to qualitative data analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2006). This process involved reading through the data several times, first to gain a general overview of the data, then for assigning initial codes, and later to assign more focused and refined coding. Charmaz (2006, p. 46) describes the phases of a grounded approach thus:

1. an initial phase involving naming each segment of data
2. a focused, selective phase that uses the most significant or frequent initial codes to sort, synthesize, integrate, and organize large amounts of data.

Categories were expanded and revised during the analysis, which is common practice in grounded theory work (Oxford, 2011). As Richards, et al. (2012) state: "it is a constantly developing and shifting process that involves organization, re-organization, [and] redefinition" (p. 80). After responses were categorized, they were also tabulated for frequency analysis in addition to the content analysis. During the analysis of the transcripts, my field notes were used to provide any additional contextual information about the responses as they were given in real time.

4.9.3 Classroom observation: Observation scheme

Classroom observations allowed me to monitor the extent to which the LSI materials were being used in class. Additionally, they allowed me to track student reactions and responses to the LSI methodology and materials. Visual student reactions and verbal responses to LSI were recorded on the observation note sheets. The note sheets consisted of two sections for data recording: one included *a priori* categories in which teachers (i.e., Sean and I) made tick marks, while in the other, we wrote open report entries (see section 4.6.3). The purpose of these observation note sheets was to augment student self-report data from other instruments. Observations for this project were specifically focused on use of the LSI materials and student reactions and

responses to LSI. They were "confined to a particular…well-defined classroom activity" (Hopkins, 2009).

Sean and I used the observation checklists in three separate classes during AR Phase 3. In total, 50 observation sheets were completed (class CA = 14, CB = 18, CC = 18), which covered an estimated 1515 minutes of listening instruction time, as noted on these documents. A tally of each column on the observation sheet was made. In addition, comments by the teachers related to *negative behaviors*, *positive behaviors*, and *other* were categorized using grounded theory and organized into clustered themes. The class video recordings were analyzed in the same way as the in-class observations. I watched the videos and completed the same observation checklist used for the in-class observations.

4.9.4 Pre/post tests: Descriptive statistics

Pre- and post-semester test scores were used to verify any student reports of improvement in listening ability as a result of LSI. Descriptive statistics were calculated for both the pre- and post-semester TOEFL and in-house listening test scores, respectively. These calculations included the mean, mode, medium, standard deviation, and a student t-test (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.7).

4.9.5 Researcher journal: Identification of recurring themes

Like other forms of qualitative data collected for this project, entries in the research journal were analyzed using a grounded approach. Several themes were evident from analysis of my 40 journal entries. Among them were: administrative decisions that affected UIE (e.g., prerequisite TOEFL scores); materials selection and development; listening assessments; teacher education; listening strategy selection; data collection development; and attitudes and opinions toward listening instruction assembled from conversations at a number of international language teaching conferences in Asia (e.g., Asia TEFL 2010, 2011; JACET International Conference, 2011).

These various topics were then grouped into macro-factors and micro-factors. Macro-factors refer to large-scale influences on L2 contexts that act at the institutional level and often beyond the control of individual teachers, such as teaching context and institutional philosophy (Burns, 1996; VanPatten, 1997). Micro-factors are those that are at the classroom and instructional levels, those which individual teachers are in control of; for example, classroom decisions such as materials selection and timing of activities, and personal teaching philosophy (Burns, 1996; VanPatten, 1997).

4.9.6 Synthesis of data

All forms of data were first analyzed individually. A subsequent stage of analysis occurred following AR Phase 3 and involved triangulating and synthesizing the various forms of data to provide a multi-faceted description of findings related to the LSI intervention over time. This synthesis corresponded to the positioning of this project within an interpretivist / constructivist paradigm in which various perspectives were incorporated in a constructed reality. This data synthesis is discussed in detail in Chapter 7, which provides interpretation of and reflections on the findings within the localized context at APU.

The integration of research methods positioned data collection tools in combinations that capitalized on the strengths of each method in order to increase the robustness and enhance the richness of the findings, while at the same time neutralizing the weaknesses of other methods (Burke Johnson, et al., 2007). In the spirit of constructivist studies, this synthesis also gave a voice to different participant groups through different mediums (e.g., questionnaires, interviews). Finally, LSI as classroom practice is a phenomenon that has been minimally researched in the past; therefore, it necessitated examination from a variety of perspectives in order to aid teachers and researchers in better understanding this type of listening pedagogy, about which few effects and viewpoints are known.

4.10 Ethics

Ethical issues were considered at the planning stages and several steps were taken to ensure good ethical research practice (see Table 4.10). These ethical considerations were made for the purposes of respectful, appropriate, non-threatening interactions and portrayals of all participants. As such, measures were taken to minimize any feelings of pressure or anxiety for the participants. Among these steps were flexible scheduling, accessibility to the researcher (in person, by email, and by telephone), anonymity of questionnaire data, confidentiality of interview responses, and the right to withdraw from the project at any time. As an AR study, this project presented additional ethical dilemmas due to my position in the research context and the relationships I had at APU. These are described in turn below together with comments outlining how these issues were addressed.

Table 4.10: Ethical considerations

Ethical issue	Addressing the issue
1. Confidentiality and anonymity of questionnaires	No information with which students could be identified was elicited. Names, student numbers, et cetera, were not required.
2. Confidentiality and anonymity of interviews	All participants signed a consent form. In addition, pseudonyms have been used to protect anonymity. Due to the large number of interviewees (n=38), a combination of Japanese and English pseudonyms have been used indiscriminately.
3. Voluntary participation	English and Japanese translations informed students that their participation on questionnaires and in interviews was completely voluntary and that they could discontinue participation at any time for any reason.
4. Student grades	There was no impact on student grades due to participation or non-participation.
5. Classroom observation video taping	Video recordings were made with teacher and verbal student consent. Students also were notified by email of the observation schedule and were allowed to decline being video recorded. It was not uncommon for students in the CLE to be video recorded for other reasons; therefore, the videotaping element was likely relatively unnoticed by students. The videos were only used to monitor the LSI intervention. They were not used to present data for this thesis and will not be used for any further research purposes.
6. Teacher-researcher role	This dual role was inevitable in AR and measures such as observation and video recording of my own classes, incorporation of another educator's views, and a time period between data collection and analysis aimed to mitigate researcher bias.

Ethical issue 4 in Table 4.9 refers to student grades, and several steps ensured that students knew participation in the study would neither help nor hurt their class grade. First, questionnaires were anonymous, so it was impossible for the researcher to make connections between questionnaire responses and individual students. Secondly, interviewees were informed four times (verbally and in writing during recruitment, in writing on the consent form, and verbally at the beginning of the interview) that their participation would not affect their grade.

The interviewees were all volunteers who responded to verbal announcements made in class or to emails about the interview opportunity. Since these participants self-selected to join the interviews, there is the possibility that the interviewees did not accurately represent the full range of students in the UIE classes. It is likely that those students who participated were among the more motivated and enthusiastic about their English study. Therefore, different types of triangulation (see Table 4.7) were necessary to provide a well-rounded and fair portrayal of the LSI.

A Student Research Ethics Approval Form (REC1) outlining these ethical issues and the steps that were implemented to address them was submitted to the Student Ethics Review Committee at Aston University. This ethics plan received subsequent approval from Aston University representatives (see Appendix 9).

4.11 Non-selection of data collection techniques

The previous sections have described the research instruments and analysis procedures for this study. This section briefly explains reasons why some other data collection options were not selected.

4.11.1 Case studies

Case studies often focus on a single learner or a small group of learners (e.g., Goh & Taib, 2006). The present research sought a broad view of beliefs and attitudes toward LSI at a class and program level. It also sought to describe

the practicality of LSI for language educators and curriculum planners. As such, the scope of the study needed to go beyond typical case study size.

4.11.2 Think aloud procedures

Although think aloud procedures have been used to describe and catalog individuals' listening strategy use (e.g., O'Malley, Chamot & Küpper, 1989; Vandergrift, 2003), they were not applicable to this project about LSI pedagogy. Think aloud protocols involve listeners describing their internal thought processes. However, this method can be problematic due to listeners' inability to simultaneously listen and report their listening processes (Santos, Graham & Vanderplank, 2008; Cross, 2010). From these reports, researchers identify different strategies. However, the present research did not investigate individuals' listening strategy use; therefore, think aloud procedures were not employed.

4.11.3 Strategy checklists

Researchers sometimes ask participants to complete checklists of listening strategies they used while listening to a text (e.g., Griffiths, 2003; Siegel, 2011b). Such checklists generate data on the frequency of strategy use, which was not a focus of the present investigation.

4.11.4 Listener diaries

Listener diaries (e.g., Goh, 2000; Chen, 2007) can track a person's internal thoughts, reflections, and development regarding listening. However, writing such journals can be an inconvenient imposition on participants, and analysis of such data can be extremely time-consuming. As the present study was managed by a single teacher-researcher, listener journals were not used due to practical constraints related to data collection and analysis.

4.12 Limitations

As noted by several commentators, research on listening is often challenging due to the complex, intangible, and inaccessible nature of the skill (e.g., Lynch, 2009; Vandergrift, 2010). Therefore, it was not surprising that

limitations, such as those listed in Table 4.11, can be identified in the research methodology for this project.

Table 4.11: Issues related to research methodology

Issue	*Overcoming the issue*
The researcher's position as active participant in the project could lead to researcher bias.	Various perspectives were incorporated, including students' and another teacher's, over the course of multiple semesters. Various forms of triangulation (e.g., methodological, participant, time, and investigator) were used.
Findings from this study may not be compatible with research expectations from a positivist point of view (e.g., validity, objectivity).	Meeting research expectations from a qualitative interpretivist / constructivist paradigm were the aims of this project (see section 4.1.4).
No needs analysis of listening strategies was conducted for this project.	The researcher based the selected strategies on his 10+ years of teaching experience in Japan and his knowledge of learner levels in this context. The LSI was based on the required UIE listening materials, the researcher's intuition (e.g., Ozeki, 2000), and listening strategy literature. Moreover, time constraints made needs analysis and subsequent materials modification impractical.
Some data in this investigation is self-report data, which provides clues to mental representations rather than the representations themselves (Rost, 1999) and is removed from the actual behaviors themselves (Lynch, 2009).	Classroom observation, test scores, and teacher perspectives were also included to help balance this type of data.
Portions of the project that involved student data could be subject to the Halo Effect or the Hawthorne Effect (Brown, 1998) in which students respond in certain ways to please the researcher or because they know they are part of a research project.	Students were informed that their participation or non-participation would have no effect on their course grades. All participation in the project was voluntary.
Outside influences (e.g., other classes, friendships, varying amounts of study) likely affected the participants' listening ability, so any gains cannot be solely attributed to LSI.	It was not possible to control for the large number of outside influences on Japanese university students. Student self-report data specifically related to LSI in class mitigated this limitation.

Steps were taken to address and overcome each of the issues listed in Table 4.10 so that the project could progress. The only exception was outside influences, which extended beyond the language teaching context into participants' private lives, and were therefore extremely difficult to control, especially for over a prolonged period of time (i.e., a 15-week semester). In addition, this project confronted the underexplored area of L2 listening pedagogy at the classroom level, and thus involved an intricate combination of research methods. As far as I am aware, there have been no research models or standards that address the research questions stated at the beginning of this section. What is more, the complicated nature of listening itself added to the challenges of the project (Lynch, 2009; Vandergrift, 2010). As Vandergrift (2004) observes, the complexity of listening likely explains "the limited number of studies, particularly in listening instruction" (p. 18). However, this project not only gave participants a voice to express their views on the LSI intervention through primary data collection tools, but also tempered those views through secondary research methods, leading to a reasonable and justifiable understanding of the viability of LSI in this context.

4.13 Summary of methodology

To summarize, this LSI intervention was positioned within an interpretivist / constructivist paradigm and took a qualitative position on data collection and analysis. Primary data collection methods were questionnaires and student and teacher interviews. Supplementary data collection methods included classroom observation, pre/post-semester test scores, and a research journal. These data were first analyzed individually and then synthesized in order to comprehensively address the research questions. In addition, a peer debriefer from outside the project reviewed samples of the data in order to neutralize researcher bias. The discussion now turns from the research methodology to a presentation of the findings generated from the data collection.

Chapter 5: Iterative findings from the AR intervention

This chapter presents the findings generated by the research design methodology outlined in Chapter 4 from an iterative AR narrative point of view, which highlights data from each of the distinct cycles of observation and also links each data collection period to reflection and subsequent planning stages. The purpose of this chapter is to convey the way in which data from each phase of the project were collected from distinct groups of learners at specific times. In demonstrating the evolutionary nature of this AR, numerical data and narrative examples are presented chronologically so that repeating themes and views can be established, and any inconsistencies can be identified. The chapter emphasizes the methodological and cyclical triangulation of the research design. In contrast, Chapter 6 will examine the data from a different perspective, that of 'participant lenses', an approach which accentuates participant and investigator triangulation (see Chapter 4, section 4.4).

As iterative AR, this project was planned to occur over the course of three academic semesters, each of which signified one AR phase that included the core stages of plan, act, observe, and reflect. The focus of this chapter is to present data from the three AR observation stages. These data were viewed and are presented as dynamic in nature, both the products of previous AR stages and stimuli for later actions (see Figure 5.1). As such, data from observation stages are displayed and discussed in relation to planning and reflection as well. At the same time, the stages did not proceed in a lockstep manner, and flexibility and pragmatism were necessary at times to complete the project.
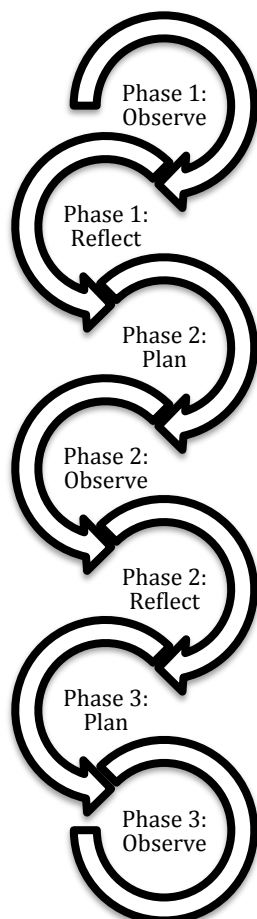
These findings were gathered from 121 students who were in six different classes. I chose to collect data from different sub-groups of learners

Figure 5.1: *Iterative AR stages chronicled in Chapter*

at distinct times in order to evaluate the LSI intervention in a longitudinal fashion and therefore increase the number and variety of learner perspectives included. This broad base aimed to provide an accurate and insightful portrayal of how the LSI intervention was perceived by students. Language educator perspectives on LSI were also important in this study and are discussed in Chapter 6. The findings reported in both Chapters 5 and 6 were the products of an evolving research methodology (Herr & Anderson, 2005), which included incremental additions to the data collection procedures.

As will be recalled from Chapter 4 (see Table 4.6), data were collected from three separate groups of students over the course of three semesters. These learners reported their perceptions of LSI via questionnaires and interviews. In order to provide authenticity and preserve the original nature of the participants' voices, written and spoken comments have been reproduced as presented with no changes to grammar or spelling. In addition, class observation provided snapshots of LSI in practice as well as documented student behavior. The observation sheets also allowed teachers (i.e., allowed Sean and allowed me) to immediately record thoughts and views about the LSI. Teacher interviews and the research journal incorporated teachers' perceptions of LSI for purposes of triangulation with findings from the student and observation data. Finally, pre/post-semester listening proficiency test scores were collected to determine any effects of LSI as measured by those instruments and also to cross-reference with learners' perceptions of their listening development.

In reporting these findings, my position as an insider teacher-researcher is relevant. At different points throughout this study, I occupied several distinct roles (as described in Chapter 4, section 4.2.3): a classroom teacher, a curriculum developer, a teacher educator, and a researcher. I played the principal role in planning the LSI intervention, in developing the research design for this project, and in gathering the data displayed in this chapter. Therefore, the findings as they are presented here have been influenced by my personal views and experiences as well as my constant interaction in the research context. In order to account for the possibility of

bias (e.g., Burns, 2010a), I included several forms of triangulation (e.g., methodological, participant, time) and involved others in the data collection and analysis procedures (i.e., a co-teacher and a peer debriefer). Both Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 should be read in light of these underlying factors unique to me as a language education professional and to my insider position as a teacher-researcher who began the project with certain convictions about LSI and the need for improvements in listening pedagogy (see Chapter 4, section 4.2.3).

5.1 Initial discoveries: Findings from Phase 1

This first section focuses on Phase 1 of the project, which occurred during the Fall 2010 semester (see Figure 5.2). This phase involved two classes I taught, totaling 54 students. Data were generated from questionnaires (n=54) and interviews (n=7), which were completed in January 2011. Topics included general listening background, perceived listening improvement, listening strategy recall, and future projected strategy use. The final paragraphs of this section deal with student comments on the LSI component and the teacher's delivery thereof, which fed into the reflection period at the end of Phase 1, and subsequently into the planning phase at the beginning of Phase 2.

AR Phase 1 (Fall 2010)	
Two classes I taught: 54 students	*Questionnaires, interviews*

AR Phase 2 (Spring 2011)	
One class Sean taught: 23 students	Questionnaires, interviews, class observations

AR Phase 3 (Fall 2011)	
Two classes I taught, one class Sean taught: 44 students	Questionnaires, interviews, class observations, pre/post tests
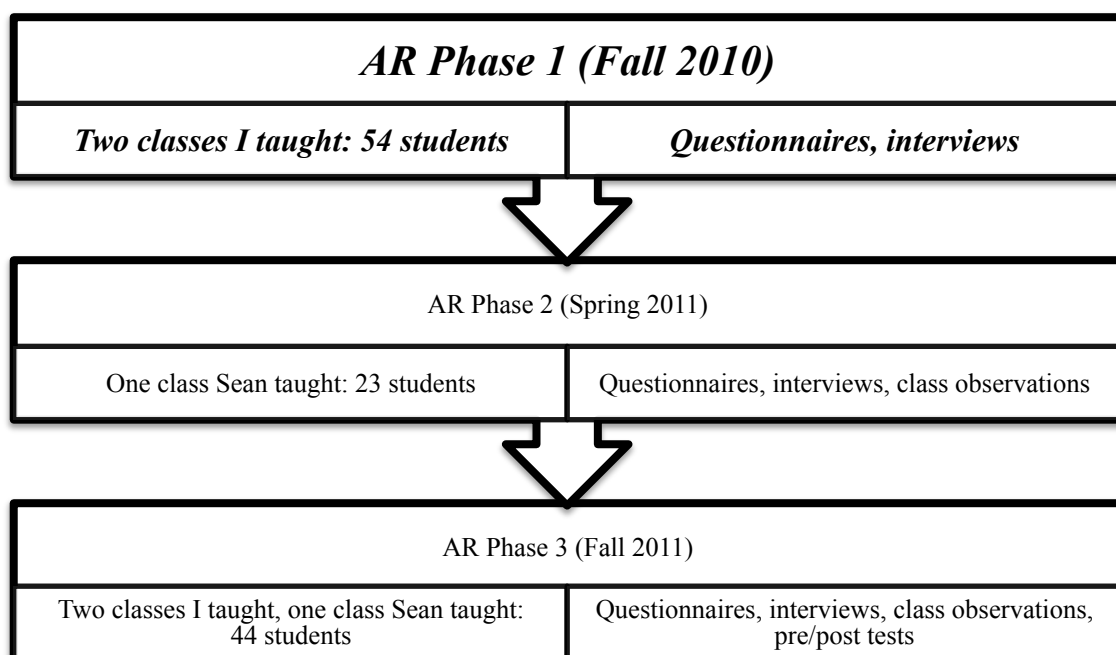
Figure 5.2: *A focus on AR Phase 1*

At the outset of the data collection stage following Phase 1, I was optimistic about student perceptions of the LSI. The students' personalities, effort, and development had all contributed to a smooth, meaningful semester, and many students displayed a passion for language learning. This was how I felt when reflecting back on the semester prior to the data collection. The LSI had progressed as planned, with few issues, and students seemed, at least anecdotally, to have enjoyed the course and benefited from it. It was time to systematically investigate how students actually perceived the intervention.

5.1.1 General listening background: What these learners think about listening

In order to recognize the general listening backgrounds of the Phase 1 students, I first administered a questionnaire to gain the students' views (see Chapter 4, section 4.5.1 and Appendix 1). These questions were asked to better understand how the students felt about EFL listening (e.g., enjoyment), how they felt when listening (e.g., confidence), and any action they took outside of class to improve their ability. These data supplied insights into whether listening pedagogy in general may be viewed as valuable to these learners. That is, if they did not view listening as enjoyable or important, then any listening instruction may be superfluous.

Figure 5.3 shows that a majority of students either *strongly agreed* (58%) or *somewhat agreed* (40%) that they enjoyed listening to English. Despite this enjoyment, most students lacked confidence when listening: 18% *strongly disagreed* that they were confident when listening to English, while 45% *somewhat disagreed*. In response to the statement "I practice listening outside of class", more than half of the students (45% *somewhat agreed*; 26% *strongly agreed*) indicated that they engaged in some form of independent listening practice. In addition, almost all students (a combined 92%) believed that LSI was an important classroom element that could positively affect their listening abilities.

Phase 1 General listening background
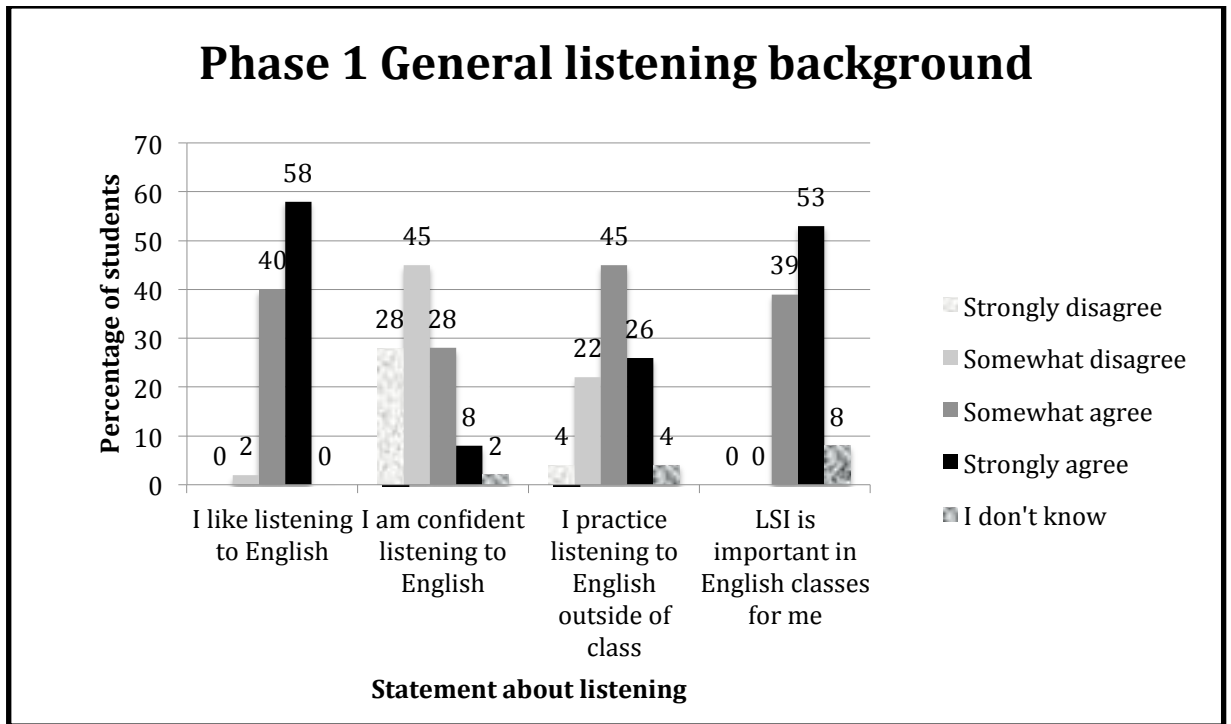
Figure 5.3: *Phase 1 general listening background*

From a more qualitative point of view, when asked in interviews, "Which of the four main language skills is most important to you?", three students responded that listening was the most crucial listening skill, including Mike who stated:

> *Listening…absolutely listening, because if no skill of listening we can no skill of conversation and don't understand each other, so we absolutely need listening.*

Two others replied that both listening and speaking were equally important. One of them, Yancy, cited the close chronological relationship between listening and speaking:

> *If we can't listening English, we can't speak English. I think listening skill is connected to speaking skill, so listening is most important.*

Meanwhile, Samantha took a more pragmatic stance to this question:

> *It depends. Like if for communication, then speaking or listening is important. But reading and writing is more important for school.*

Thus, while some interviewees expressed different opinions about the importance of listening, six of the seven learners recognized its importance at some level.

5.1.2 Perceived listening improvement

In this beginning phase of the research, I also wanted to learn more about the students' perspectives on the LSI component in UIE and its relation to listening development, specifically the course in general, teacher explanations, listening materials, listening activities, and LSI. As a classroom teacher and a listening researcher, I was curious about the extent to which learners viewed these elements as practical uses of class time.

Students reported on the impact that various classroom experiences had on their listening ability during Phase 1, as shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Experiences that led to listening development in Phase 1

Student experiences with:	*Agreed*	*I don't know*	*Disagreed*
Teacher explanations	81%	17%	2%
Listening materials	75%	18%	7%
Listening activities	88%	10%	2%
LSI in this class	80%	20%	0%

As evident in the data, all four classroom elements received support, with between 75-88% of respondents agreeing that each component contributed to their development. Importantly, I noted that eight of every ten students expressed the belief that teacher explanations and LSI positively affected their listening performance. There was still uncertainty on the part of some respondents, as 10-20% chose *I don't know.*

Through a series of interview questions I explored further the impact made by these various pedagogic aspects. When I asked if their listening skills stayed the same, decreased, or increased as a result of the LSI in UIE, six of the seven participants responded that their skills increased. Students also expressed their perceived improvements by citing gains on listening sections of standardized tests (e.g., TOEFL) and increased confidence when listening to English in academic and social situations.

Yancy: *My test scores go up, so I have more confidence.*

Yardley: *My TOEFL score, only listening skill go up, but grammar the same or go down…listening made biggest improvement.*

Edgar: *My listening skill go up. Now I can speak English when I meet exchange students, so I think my listening skill go up.*

The focus on standardized tests was likewise evident when students were asked about the teacher's listening explanations and modeling of listening processes. All commentary included some acknowledgement that teacher input contributed to listening test-taking ability and test-taking strategy usage. Only Samantha responded that her listening ability decreased due to a decline in English exposure compared to high school.

5.1.3 Listening strategy recall

The seven interview participants were also asked about listening strategies they recalled from class. This question was asked with no priming from me; that is, up to this point in the interviews, no specific listening strategies had been mentioned. I asked this question 'cold' to determine if students could report unprompted the strategies we had covered in class. My interest in this topic was from my teacher point of view, as I wondered if students were uptaking and retaining information and skills we had covered in class. As a curriculum designer and a researcher, I was curious to understand how salient the strategy labels, practices, and teacher modeling were.

Two students did not answer this question, possibly because they could not recall any specific strategies. Students reported listening for details / key words and prediction as strategies practiced in class, along with listening for main ideas and tenses, which was one of the BUP foci. Inference was also mentioned, as was recognition of phrase and sentence relationship. Sample interview excerpts included:

Samantha: *Prediction and, um, comparing two sentences. Like is it now or past?*

Yancy: *Listening for the thesis statement.*

> Yardley: *Findings words like "however" or "on the other hand"…the, ah, ones that connects each sentence.*

Some of the students also responded with specific activities they recalled from class, such as "counting words". That is, they mentioned activities associated with the strategy practice in class, but did not mention the strategy labels themselves. This showed they recalled some listening activities done in class but may have not recognized the strategy labels or how those particular activities could help develop listening ability.

In the interviews, after reviewing a list of strategies (see Chapter 4, section 4.3), corresponding activities, and texts that had been covered in class, I also asked: "Which of these strategies do you think is the most useful?" Six students replied that predicting upcoming content was the most useful strategy. While Edgar discussed the relationship of prediction to success on the TOEFL test, Yarina described a more interactional application of prediction:

> *I think prediction because when I talk with foreign students, sometimes foreign students like forgot the vocabulary so I can help them because I can guess the vocabulary.*

The only student who gave a different answer was Mike, who believed that no single strategy is superior to the others:

> *All this is…all things is good. Each is different to grow up English skill so nothing is better, nothing is worse.*

From the interview data, the students viewed prediction as the most useful strategy, with no other specific strategy being mentioned. This finding was also reflected in an open questionnaire item about the most useful strategy, where sample comments specifying prediction included: "To guessing the answer" and "Guess what the speaker says".

Then I asked interviewees to comment on what they felt the least useful strategy was. This question aimed to gain insight as to whether the teaching of any strategies was viewed as redundant and also to feed into the next planning stage. Of the seven interviewees, three cited BUP linguistic aspects such as word boundary and connected speech activities as the least useful,

two stated that all strategies were beneficial, and one declined to comment on the topic.

5.1.4 Projected listening strategy use

In an effort to determine whether students believed the listening strategies introduced and practiced in class would be utilized beyond the classroom, I asked interview participants to speculate about future perceived strategy use. This topic interested me as a teacher, a teacher educator, and a curriculum designer because I strive to teach and foster the learning of skills that university students can transfer to their real world futures. Findings related to this topic are at the core of a process-based LSI principle, namely that listening instruction should be transferable and have the capacity to extend beyond a single text covered within the walls of the classroom (see Chapter 3, section 3.6).

Although these were students' hypothetical responses about future use, they demonstrated that students considered LSI useful not only for immediate academic purposes but for broader objectives as well. Responses suggested that students believed listening strategies would benefit them in a number of contexts, including academic, business, and travel:

- 63% of students believed LSI will help them in English content classes
- 74% replied that LSI will help them when listening in conversation
- 78% said LSI will be advantageous when listening to English entertainment such as movies or music
- 67% thought LSI will be useful in future employment
- 82% responded that LSI will help them when traveling.

While a majority of students answered positively regarding perceived future strategy use, notable percentages of students replied *I don't know* to the same items, which may be a reflection of the speculative nature of this data.

The interviewees responded in line with the questionnaire data, citing academic, study abroad, travel, business, and interpersonal situations as circumstances in which they believed listening strategies would be beneficial. Several students mentioned that LSI would help them understand lectures in

their English content courses. Mike observed that the LSI had already helped him in other classes during the Fall 2010 semester:

> [UIE] helped me understand other classes in English because if I didn't take this class and go to English-based class, this maybe understand on 1%, I think, because native speaker speaking is very hard to understand, really, really difficult…so now I took this class, a little bit understand, maybe 5% or 10%.

This comment suggests that while the LSI can help learners improve their listening beyond the classroom, it is not a miracle cure that will solve all listening difficulties. Rather, it is a tool that these students generally viewed as having the potential to make an impact on their L2 listening both in and out of the classroom.

5.1.5 Teacher modeling and listening explanations

Participants were also invited, through open questionnaire items and in interviews, to comment on their teacher's (i.e., me, in Phase 1) modeling and explanations during LSI. From my teacher point of view, I wanted to know if I was able to use my 'expert' status to good effect. As a listening researcher, I was curious how students perceived teacher modeling and explanations. In other words, can the teacher provide any support and instruction to actually teach students *how to* listen?

Nearly half of the responses to the questionnaire items (28/64) indicated that students were pleased with the teacher modeling and explanations related to listening:

> "My teacher's way to study for listening is very good for me…"

> "This listening practice is important in english class. I satissfied very much".

There were also several calls for changes to the LSI component, in particular the amount of time allotted for listening. Ten responses mentioned that increased amounts of listening practice would be beneficial, for instance:

> "Teacher needs to increase listening practice time".

> "Get more opportunity to listen in English".

Other comments included modifications to the listening materials to make them more interesting or entertaining and the desire for feedback on individual student listening abilities. These comments suggested that I needed to consider minor yet important changes at the reflection stage, prior to the LSI in Phase 2.

The positive comments about teacher modeling and explanations from the questionnaire were echoed in the interviews. Interviewees spoke of tangible gains in listening exam scores resulting from the teacher modeling.

> Yancy*: It was useful [to hear the teacher explain] because the teacher showed us how to listening for details, like how or when, and how to listening for, um, markers. This is good skills for TOEFL and TOEIC.*

> Edgar: *We could find out how to read and listen better on TOEFL.*

Mike also commented that the teacher modeling was accessible and clear:

> *Not speedy, it's like…how do I say…every time, it's easy to understand and explain to us very well so I think it's very useful.*

These insights are noteworthy because teacher modeling remains an underdeveloped area of listening pedagogical research, and arguments have been made that students do not benefit from such explanations, which may be viewed as inefficient use of class time (e.g., Renandya & Farrell, 2011).

5.1.6 A time for reflection and change

After the Fall 2010 semester finished, I was able to reflect on both the systematic data that were collected as well as my personal feelings and reactions to how the first semester of the LSI intervention had transpired. The period after the semester allowed me to distance myself from both the learners themselves and also the day-to-day responsibilities of UIE. I was able to consider the situation and data more as a researcher and less as an everyday teacher in the classroom. However, such reflections about the intervention were not made solely at the end of the semester. New insights regularly occurred in or immediately after classes, as spontaneous thoughts or

realizations were quickly noted on lesson plans or note paper to be addressed in the future.

Key reflection points are listed in Table 5.3. Various sources, including student comments and research journal entries, triggered these reflections and are cited in the table. Furthermore, reflections needed to be acted upon in order for them to impact and advance the process of AR; therefore, steps taken to address the reflection points in the subsequent Phase 2 planning stage are also listed.

These reflection points arose from the systematic examination of student perceptions of the LSI and from written journal entries. In addition to this information, my personal observation of the LSI was that it had begun to accomplish, albeit in a rudimentary, fledgling way, the goals it set out to achieve. Students reported that they were benefiting from the process-based approach, and I felt I was contributing to their listening development and competency, not merely checking their answers. Though there were clearly issues that needed to be addressed, including my own practical ability to orchestrate and deliver coordinated LSI, Phase 1 moved the project in a positive direction and allowed me to consider adaptations for the next phase, as Table 5.2 shows.

Table 5.2: Addressing issues from Phase 1

Reflection point	Impetus for reflection	Steps taken for Phase 2
Timing/scheduling concerns	Not sure at this time if an entire set of 4 lessons can be done in a week. We will need time to trial with other skill components, and time modifications may be necessary (*Journal, 20 Jan 2011).*	Timing adjusted to approximately 20-30 minutes for listening per class period. Flexibility of LSI also emphasized.
Administrative pressure for standardized testing	Administrative and university pressure to assess listening in ways that reflect standardized tests like TOEFL *(Journal, 4 Nov 2010).*	More direct links from strategies to listening on tests, including some specific TOEFL and TOEIC style questions.
Concerns about the number of strategies	Is it better to get lots of exposure to a few skills/strategies or shallow exposure to many? Makes me think a large repertoire is better because of individual learner preferences/ differences (*Journal, 15 Dec 2010).*	Discussed with Sean and other teachers. All agreed that one strategy per week seemed reasonable. This coverage offers a wide range of strategies (e.g., Macaro, 2001).
Some materials deemed inappropriate	Comments that some video materials were too difficult, even with the strategy training (based on questionnaire and interview responses).	Transcripts and subtitles were added to some videos. Textbook audio use was increased since it had a slower rate of speech and clearer accents. More time was spent on the controlled practice stages of LSI.
Use of explicit, possibly over-technical, strategy labels	I'm also not sure if we should use L2 terms for strategies during instruction. Is it useful for students to know jargon like "genre" or "background knowledge"? (*Journal, 16 June 2010).*	Discussed with Sean and other teachers. We agreed that we would continue using terms like "genre" and "context" because a) students can find direct translations in dictionaries and b) the terms can be used when teaching other language skills, thereby encouraging strategy transfer.

5.2 Adapt and advance: Moving through Phase 2

After a planning stage that incorporated the issues and resolutions displayed in Table 5.2, I revised the LSI for the Spring 2011 semester. This time, due to low student enrollment and administrative decisions about entry levels, only one UIE class was held (see Figure 5.4). It was taught by Sean and consisted of 23 students. Like Phase 1, this round of data collection included questionnaires (n=23) and interviews (n=7), which I conducted. An additional element of data collection, classroom observation, was added to the research design in order to learn more about the LSI delivery in the classroom. These observations complemented the self-report data obtained through the questionnaires and interviews. Sean completed observation sheets I designed (Appendix 4), which offered insights into the teacher's immediate reactions to LSI as well as documented student verbal and non-verbal reactions and responses to the listening pedagogy (refer to Chapter 4, section 4.6.3 for further description of the classroom observation). Findings from Phase 2, as described and exemplified in this section, led to a second reflection and ensuing planning phase.

AR Phase 1 (Fall 2010)	
Two classes I taught: 54 students	Questionnaires, interviews

AR Phase 2 (Spring 2011)	
One class Sean taught: 23 students	*Questionnaires, interviews, class observations*

AR Phase 3 (Fall 2011)	
Two classes I taught, one class Sean taught: 44 students	Questionnaires, interviews, class observations, pre/post tests
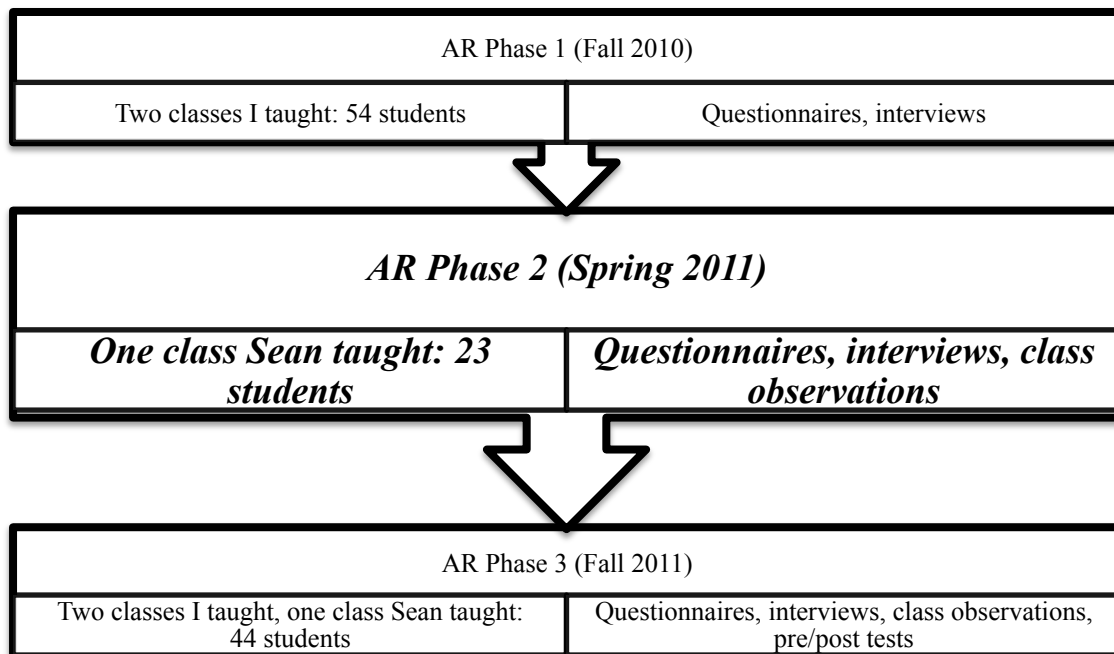
Figure 5.4: *A focus on AR Phase 2*

5.2.1 General listening background: Listener beliefs in Phase 2

At the end of Phase 2, I administered a questionnaire to learn more about student views on EFL listening (see Figure 5.5). Like Phase 1 students, this group of learners expressed a general enjoyment of listening to English (78% *strongly agreed*; 17% *somewhat agreed*) and also a propensity for listening to English outside the classroom (30% *strongly agreed*; 35% *somewhat agreed*). However, in terms of confidence levels, Phase 2 students were less confident than those in Phase 1. A total of 56% disagreed that they were confident when listening, and another 9% were unsure. This finding was interesting, for it seemed counterintuitive that 78% of students agreed they enjoy listening and yet more than half lacked confidence when listening. Meanwhile, 100% of these learners believed that LSI is important in English classes. These elements of the participants' backgrounds will be discussed through the findings presented in more detail below, specifically the relationships between enjoyment, confidence, and LSI.
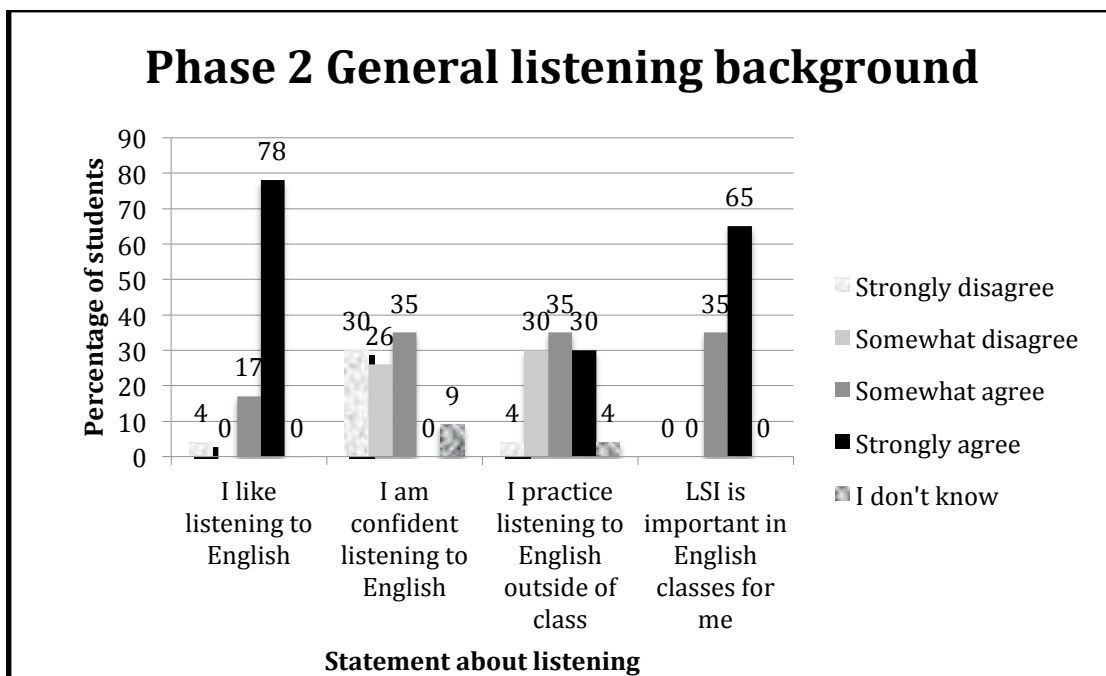
Figure 5.5: *Phase 2 general listening background*

During the interviews, four of the seven participants explained that speaking was the most important language skill, while three others cited

listening. This was noteworthy because other skills emphasized during language education at APU (reading and writing in particular) were not mentioned. Thus, it was clear that these students prioritized oral and aural skills more than literacy, as exemplified in the following statements:

> Charlene: *Listening…Many information is only sounds. If listening skill is very good, I can get information from radio and TV, and also get along with people.*

> Steven: *Listening. If I go to abroad to study, if I can't understand what they say, I can't do anything. If I understand what others say, I can say my opinion.*

> Neil: *Listening is the most important skill. It's the skill we most frequently use. If we can't speaking, reading or writing, I can still listen and understand.*

From these comments, it is clear that students expressed a desire for interpersonal communication and recognized the important role of listening in successful interaction, as evidenced by Charlene's explanation about "[getting] along with people" and Steven's desire to "say [his] opinion". Neil, moreover, echoed listening researchers (e.g., Feyten, 1991; Burley-Allen, 1995) by highlighting the fundamental nature and frequent use of aural abilities.

5.2.2 Perceived listening improvement

In order to learn about how their aural abilities developed in the classroom, I asked students to respond to questionnaire items about which classroom experiences of the LSI in Phase 2 contributed to their listening improvement. In Phase 1, approximately 80% of learners agreed that each element helped them. I was interested to find out if these positive reviews would be consistent in Phase 2 as well. Findings are displayed in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Experiences that led to listening development in Phase 2

Student experiences with:	Agreed	I don't know	Disagreed
Teacher explanations	79%	17%	4%
Listening materials	83%	4%	13%
Listening activities	87%	0%	13%
LSI in this class	83%	8%	8%

A majority of learners (between 79-87%) agreed that each of these elements contributed to their aural development, with the highest percentage for listening activities, followed by listening materials and LSI. Nearly 80% agreed that teacher explanations were beneficial, but 17% were uncertain. There is more disagreement evident in Phase 2 than in Phase 1, which may be due to the smaller number of students in Phase 2. That is, if only two or three learners disagreed, this would represent a larger percentage of the whole group.

For more qualitative information, I discussed with interviewees whether their listening ability remained the same, decreased, or increased as a result of the LSI in UIE, and all seven responded that their skills increased. All seven interviewees also reported that teacher instruction and modeling contributed to their perceived improvements. Although teacher instruction was described as useful, some students also reported difficulty or uncertainty about applying teacher advice in other contexts:

> Tom: *It was very useful for me to improve listening skill but in TOEFL test, cannot do note taking so it's not useful for TOEFL.*

> Neil: *...some instruction I can't understand when and how to use in daily life.*

However, later, Neil contradicted himself somewhat:

> *The materials and way of teaching…is very connected to daily life.*

Neil's conflicting comments seem to indicate that while some of the teacher's instructions were useful, others may not have been as clear as the

teacher intended. The connection to daily life and listening beyond the classroom Neil referred to was a priority for UIE (see Chapter 3, section 3.6) and is mentioned in the literature (e.g., Field, 2008; Lynch, 2009).

These students also acknowledged the usefulness of teacher input, specific listening strategies, and the potential transfer of these strategies. For example, Tom talked about how he changed his focus when listening as a result of Sean's advice:

> *[My listening skill] go up. Hm, before taking English class, I misunderstood. I should listen to all of the words, but in English class, the teacher say we don't have to listen to all the words. We should only collect the key words. So I got the skills to listen. So I got the listening skills.*

In addition, Steven remarked that he noticed his ability to listen to news programs increased during the Spring 2011 semester:

> *I think [my listening ability] go up…In my room, I try to always listen to English and CNN news, so to do that I could improve listening from this class.*

This statement indicates a confluence of learning techniques: taking what is learned in the classroom and applying it independently in novel situations.

Some students also commented that the materials often ranged dramatically in terms of difficulty, with the textbook listening characterized as easier and some authentic materials as more challenging, as in the following statements:

> Tom: *Sometimes [the teacher] used videos, sometimes I felt it's too difficult.*
>
> Andrea: *As for me, that level of that kind of video should be more easily.*
>
> Charlene: *On the other hand, I think that the textbook listening is too easy. It's very, um, easy contents, conversation. Daily conversation, so I can guess the answer.*
>
> Tom: *Textbook is too easy. My Korean friend said, in my room, "the textbook is, uh, used in junior high school in Korea." He said, "what did you do in junior high school? Why do you use this textbook in university?"*

These observations were taken into account during and after the semester, as the LSI component was subsequently revised (per Table 5.6 below).

5.2.3 Listening strategy recall

Later in the interviews and again with no hints or priming, I asked interviewees which strategies they could recall from the LSI. Based solely on their recollections, students mentioned the following strategies: listening for main idea (3 times), genre (1), listening for details (1), markers (1), and TOEFL listening strategies (1). Two participants could not recall any strategy terms.

After reviewing a list of strategies covered in class to refresh their memories, I asked which the students felt was the most useful strategy. Some students responded by mentioning more than one strategy. As in Phase 1, students found prediction, with three votes, the most useful. Listening for main idea, details, and markers were each mentioned twice, while inference and bottom-up linguistic aspects were cited once. In the following comments, learners explained why they felt a particular strategy was useful:

> Tom: *If we collect markers, it's easier to understand. I can watch a video and understand more than half.*
>
> Stacey: *Markers, um, they lead me to where the speaker speaks.*
>
> Charlene: *Key words and prediction are most important in daily life. I can guess in many cases.*

From these explanations, it seems that learners appreciated the transferable nature of the strategies, noticed how they could be used beyond the classroom, and attempted to apply them to novel listening situations.

An open item on the questionnaire asked a similar question about which strategy was the most useful. Survey respondents did not have the benefit of hearing a list of strategies before answering this question in the same way interviewees did. Still, prediction was cited three times, the same frequency as for listening for details. Inference and categories were each listed twice, while genre and listening for main idea were mentioned once apiece.

The interview and questionnaire findings for prediction and listening for details were relatively consistent. However, markers, specifically mentioned in the interviews, did not appear on the questionnaire responses to this item. Perhaps this inconsistency was related to the fact that interviewees heard the list of strategies before answering, while questionnaire respondents did not have access to such information and therefore had to rely solely on their own unprompted recall.

The next question in the interview was about the least useful strategy, and again, some students choose to discuss multiple points. Six responded that all strategies were useful, which supports the questionnaire and interview items about perceived listening improvement discussed above. Interestingly, two students commented that genre was the least useful, including Neil, who stated:

> Genre is not useful. [My teacher] explained difference
> between different genres, but I thought "Then what?" I'm not
> sure how to use this knowledge.

Teaching of organization markers was also viewed as unnecessary. According to Rhianna:

> All are useful, but markers, like that kind of thing, we already
> know words like "first, second." We can improve with more
> advanced words, not such simple ones.

These two comments represented the first indications that some of the strategies included may have been contributing to redundant teaching, a notion that suggests learners may already have the same strategies from their L1 and therefore any direct teaching of the same strategies in the L2 is unnecessary (Ridgway, 2000). Although my personal view is that strategy instruction for the L2 is valuable, I was acutely aware of the potential of spending class time on unnecessary instruction. If that had happened, then one of the key reasons to implement the LSI (i.e., to make more efficient use of listening class time) would be nullified. Since genre and markers were both mentioned by other students (both in Phase 2 interviews and questionnaires as well as in other phases) as being useful, they continued to receive attention in the LSI. The notion of redundant teaching became a point for further

exploration to determine whether or to what extent the LSI was addressing listening processes that the learners already possessed.

5.2.4 Projected listening strategy use

Students were also asked about the transferability of the listening processes covered in class to situations beyond the classroom. As in Phase 1, students believed LSI would benefit them in a number of contexts, including academic, business, and travel. When responses from the categories *somewhat agree* and *strongly agree* were combined:

- 61% of students believed LSI will help them in English content classes
- 83% replied that LSI will help them when listening in conversations
- 83% said LSI will be advantageous when listening to English entertainment such as movies or music
- 83% thought LSI will be useful in future employment
- 91% responded that LSI will help them when traveling.

While a majority of students answered positively regarding perceived future strategy use, notable percentages of students (the highest being 30% for use in English content classes) selected *I don't know* for this set of items. Most of these percentages were similar to those from Phase 1. Important differences included higher percentages for future employment and traveling, 16% and 9% increases respectively.

Responses from six of seven interviewees aligned with the questionnaire data. They referred to academic, business, and interpersonal situations as circumstances in which they believed listening strategies would be beneficial. However, Neil was less convinced that LSI would benefit him in the future:

> *To be frank with you, I'm not sure I can use this listening strategy. I think reading strategy the high school teacher and cram school teacher taught me is more useful than listening strategy that [my UIE teacher] taught me. Because reading strategy, um, kind of grammar, is really helps helps a lot and decrease the words or words or the words I can I have to remember.*

Despite this opinion, the other six participants indicated that LSI would help them during study abroad, interaction with English speakers, and in overseas employment, exhibited by the following student voices:

> Tom: *I will be able to collect information in English from CNN, BBC. So, it changed my…not my life (laughs), maybe changed my values. It gives me choices and options that I should get information… I will take English-based class next semester. The skills I learned in this class must be useful.*

> Andrea*: It is actually useful for me now. I don't know any other useful listening skills. If I don't use these skills in the future, then I don't have any [take away skills from this class].*

Both the questionnaire and interview findings suggest that students believed the LSI would be advantageous for them in their futures and that this methodology equipped them with functional strategies that they could utilize in a multitude of circumstances.

5.2.5 Teacher modeling and listening explanations

In response to open items on the questionnaire, participants expressed their thoughts on the teacher's (i.e., Sean's) LSI explanations and how the LSI component might be improved. Roughly one third (10/36) of comments indicated that no changes were necessary for the LSI:

> "I think [my teacher's] listening instruction is very good and I'm satisfied with it."

> "このままで大丈夫だと思います。(This style is good, I think)."

> "I think quality and quantity of listening in this class is really appropriate and teachers focus on the listening much."

The majority of comments suggested various ways to improve the LSI component, specifically the amount of time spent on listening, changes or modifications to listening texts, individual feedback for listeners, and more of a focus on TOEFL. These issues are exemplified in the following extracts:

> "I think more listenig time is needed in the every single class."

> "I want to practice more often."

> "[The teacher] should use more difficult materials."

> "Make student get used to fast speakers, like in news or documentary."
>
> "Understand the students ability."
>
> "We cannot take note on TOEFL, so I want to forcus on listening fo TOEFL more. Other listening for daily life can practice while the classes."

Although three of these issues were raised as areas for improvement from Phase 1 to Phase 2 (i.e., time, level of materials, and links to standardized testing, as displayed in Table 5.3), responses from Phase 2 participants indicated that additional consideration and possible revisions were desirable.

When I asked students to explain whether and how the teacher's explanations helped their listening development, all seven indicated that they were helpful, although Neil's reservations were noted earlier in section 5.2.3. Other students commented on how specific strategies helped change the way they approached listening texts.

> Steven: *Yes, very useful. Before I learned the strategies, I only listened, only listened, but after that, I focus on what is main topic.*
>
> Andrea: *Yes, it was useful because [Sean] taught us how to catch key words.*

These findings were encouraging to me as a curriculum designer and teacher educator because they indicated that another teacher (i.e., Sean), through process-based LSI, could affect and impact the ways in which their students listen, which suggests that teachers can in fact play active parts in listening instruction through their 'expert' listener role, as discussed previously in Chapter 3, section 3.3.1. Students recognized that teachers can (and should) do more to aid L2 listeners than merely "listen, answer, check" (Siegel, 2012) or engage in the comprehension approach (CA) (Field, 2008).

5.2.6 Monitoring the LSI through classroom observation

For Phase 2, I added classroom observation, a secondary data source, to the data collection procedures in order to monitor the extent to which the LSI materials and methodology were being used and also to investigate students'

verbal and non-verbal responses to the intervention. Sean made 96 entries on the observation sheets (Appendix 4) over the course of 26 classes (see Table 5.4). A majority of entries (36) were in the *non-verbal behaviors* category; for example, watching the teacher-controlled computer monitors and digital projector screens that showed LSI materials (see Chapter 2, section 2.3 for more details of the physical classroom layout), laughing, nodding, taking notes, and indicating confusion with facial expression or gesture. In the *verbal behaviors* section (26 entries), volunteering, participating in pair work, and shouting answers were recorded. Sean noted the following as *positive behaviors*: volunteering, using example models, and being focused on the task. *Negative behaviors* included: using the L1, sleeping (which occasionally happens in Japanese classrooms), and having confused looks. He recorded individual instances of such behaviors (i.e., if one student volunteered or nodded, it was recorded. Not all students had to engage in the reaction for it to be recorded).

Table 5.4: Classroom observation findings for Phase 2

Category	Number of comments (total 96)	Example comments
Non-verbal behaviors	36	Watching monitor, laughing, confused look/gesture, nodding
Verbal behaviors	26	Volunteering, pair work, shouting answers
Positive behaviors	21	Volunteering, focused on task, using example models
Negative behaviors	13	Confused looks, using L1

Sean acknowledged that he was unable to record all of the behaviors of all students for the entire period of LSI, nor was he expected to, per one of our pre-semester discussions. In the midst of delivering material, monitoring class

progress, and reacting to students, complete descriptions of behaviors by the teacher would be unrealistic. Therefore, this account was only an illustrative sample of classroom occurrences, and I believed this system an adequate method to address the goals of the observation component for this project (i.e., monitoring the extent to which LSI materials and methodology were used and ascertaining student responses and reactions).

In addition to the in-class observation sheets, Sean videotaped two of his classes as part of the data collection during Phase 2, on 10 May 2011 and 23 June 2011. Each video contained a segment of approximately 30-45 minutes dedicated to LSI. My observation of these videos confirmed that the LSI materials were used during class and that the teacher engaged in presentation and development of listening strategies as we had discussed. Students in the videos seemed accustomed to the manner of LSI and classroom routines, thereby strengthening my confidence that LSI was being delivered consistently in these classes.

When analyzing the videos, I used the class observation sheet as a guide. Among the verbal behaviors I noted were students responding to questions and working cooperatively and actively in pair work during listening activities. Non-verbal behaviors, such as heads down when listening, eyes focused on screens during videos, pencils moving when key words were heard, and general positive posture suggested that the majority of students were attentive and focused on the tasks at hand. There were, however, students who were seen yawning and fidgeting periodically as well as some long silences following teacher elicits. At times, the energy and atmosphere in the classroom seemed low, and some clarification of tasks and content was needed. In general, however, most behaviors were viewed as positive, and the classes progressed without incident.

Regarding the content of the LSI, prediction was the key strategy practiced in the first video recorded class, while the second focused on context. When describing how to use context to enhance listening, Sean explained: "What you see, what you hear…put them together." The prescribed

materials (i.e., Power point slides, audio, and video texts) were used in both video recordings, and students were able to accomplish the set tasks. Sean also facilitated recycling of previously covered listening strategies (see Chapter 3, section 3.6). For example, in the first video, he was heard referring to the strategy of listening for markers, which he linked to understanding of textual organization and genre. In the second video, reference was made to inference and the ability to draw on contextual clues to facilitate inferencing.

The notion of recycling and linking strategies was emphasized by Sean's statement: "As I've said before, inference is important." In addition, the strategy of listening for main theme was reinforced in the second video:

> *Very good. These words are the ones that he is stressing.*
> *These are the ones that he wants to make clear in his message.*
> *The other key words in this message, the other nouns in this um*
> *video, are all the things that you've already said. He mentioned*
> *"homelessness," "homeless people." There's "homeless" again.*

This excerpt showed Sean incorporating a previously covered strategy with a new listening text, thereby operationalizing the LSI principle of applying strategies to different texts.

Overall, the two videos from Phase 2 indicated that the LSI intervention was being conducted as expected. Sean was able to utilize LSI methodology and materials in his classes and his students were responding positively, as evidenced through task accomplishment and student engagement. From the combination of observation note sheets, the teacher's materials and notes, as well as the video recordings, there was substantial evidence that Sean conducted a majority of the LSI as I designed it to be taught. Although it is not possible to confirm this inferred conclusion completely, this combination of data showed that students were generally engaged in the LSI and that the tasks were achievable for most students.

5.2.7 A time for further reflection and change

Following Phase 2 and the Spring 2011 semester, I again had a chance to reflect on the LSI intervention. As in Phase 1, I was pleased that the majority of students found value in this listening methodology and recognized the

present and potential positive effects on their aural comprehension. The addition of classroom observation to the evolving research design (Herr & Anderson, 2005) added another layer of corroboration that the intervention was being conducted as expected and that learners exhibited favorable reactions to it.

Adjustments and decisions made between Phase 1 and Phase 2 seemed to adequately address concerns about the number of strategies to be included and the use of explicit, possibly over-technical terminology, as these issues were not raised in Phase 2. However, questions about timing, materials selection, and emphasis on standardized testing were again conspicuous in the Phase 2 findings, suggesting that more attention needed to be given to these topics between Phases 2 and 3. Table 5.5 lists these and other issues that were considered during the Phase 2 reflection stage, which fed into the planning segment of the next AR cycle.

Table 5.5: Addressing issues from Phase 2

Reflection point	Impetus for reflection	Steps taken for Phase 3
Timing	Open questionnaire responses	Because listening was already scheduled four times per week, we decided to increase exposure in each lesson through text replays.
Emphasis on standardized tests	Student questionnaires and interviews	More attention was given to the TOEIC/TOEFL listening textbook sections and more explicit listening test advice was added to materials.
Level of materials	Student questionnaires and interviews	Some tasks were adjusted to match materials (e.g., simpler tasks for more challenging texts). Textbook listening was often assigned as homework.
Possibility of redundant strategy teaching (e.g., genre, markers)	Student interviews and literature (e.g., Ridgway, 2000)	Consultation with the literature (Mendelsohn, 1994) and other teachers led us to keep these strategies in the LSI program. We emphasized connections from listening strategies to other language skills (e.g., reading and writing).
Difficulty teaching and learning strategy of chunking	Sean reported some uncertainty/hesitation about how to deliver the chunking LSI…the students were close but not confident in first understanding and then applying the ideas (*Journal 17 June 2011*).	We immediately discussed alternative classroom techniques and extra materials for chunking, which Sean used in subsequent classes. These were also added to Phase 3 materials.
Need for flexibility in LSI delivery	Sometimes Sean combined LSI Power points due to scheduling or strategy connections or the needs of his students (*Journal 20 Sept 2011).*	We decided that such flexibility would be crucial, as the number of classes that uses LSI would increase in future semesters. Teachers are also free to add additional strategy practice opportunities as they see fit.

5.3 Readjust and continue: Exploring Phase 3

Phase 3 of the LSI intervention marked the third cycle of LSI, which I revised in minor ways according to the issues raised during the reflection and planning stages (see Table 5.5). This period marked the final AR cycle included in this project and was completed during the Fall 2011 semester. It was the most extensive use of LSI in terms of classes (three) and teachers (two). Data collection involved questionnaires (n=44), a significant increase in the number of interviewees (n=24), and classroom observation, along with pre/post semester test scores from both an in-house listening test and the TOEFL (see Figure 5.6). Data from this final iterative AR cycle are presented next, and they share many similarities with the two preceding phases, lending support to the credibility and consistency of the findings.

AR Phase 1 (Fall 2010)	
Two classes I taught: 54 students	Questionnaires, interviews

AR Phase 2 (Spring 2011)	
One class Sean taught: 23 students	Questionnaires, interviews, class observations

AR Phase 3 (Fall 2011)	
Two classes I taught, one class Sean taught: 44 students	*Questionnaires, interviews, class observations, pre/post tests*
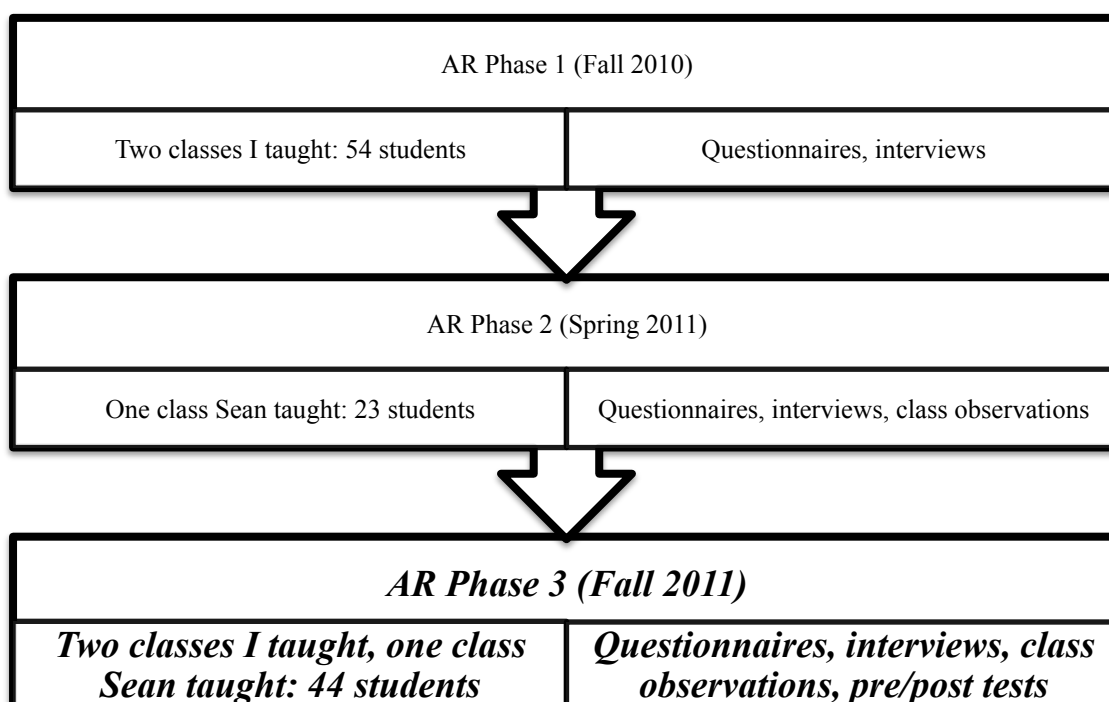
Figure 5.6: *A focus on AR Phase 3*

5.3.1 General listening background: Listener beliefs in Phase 3

For a third time, I administered a questionnaire to understand Phase 3 student views on listening in English (see Figure 5.7), which were similar to those of learners in Phases 1 and 2. In particular, most enjoyed listening to English and engaged in some independent listening practice, yet a sizeable group

(more than one third in Phase 3) lacked confidence when it came to listening (see Chapter 7, section 7.3.1 for further discussion of listener confidence). In addition, nearly 90% of these learners believed that LSI was an important component for classroom pedagogy.

Phase 3 General Listening Background
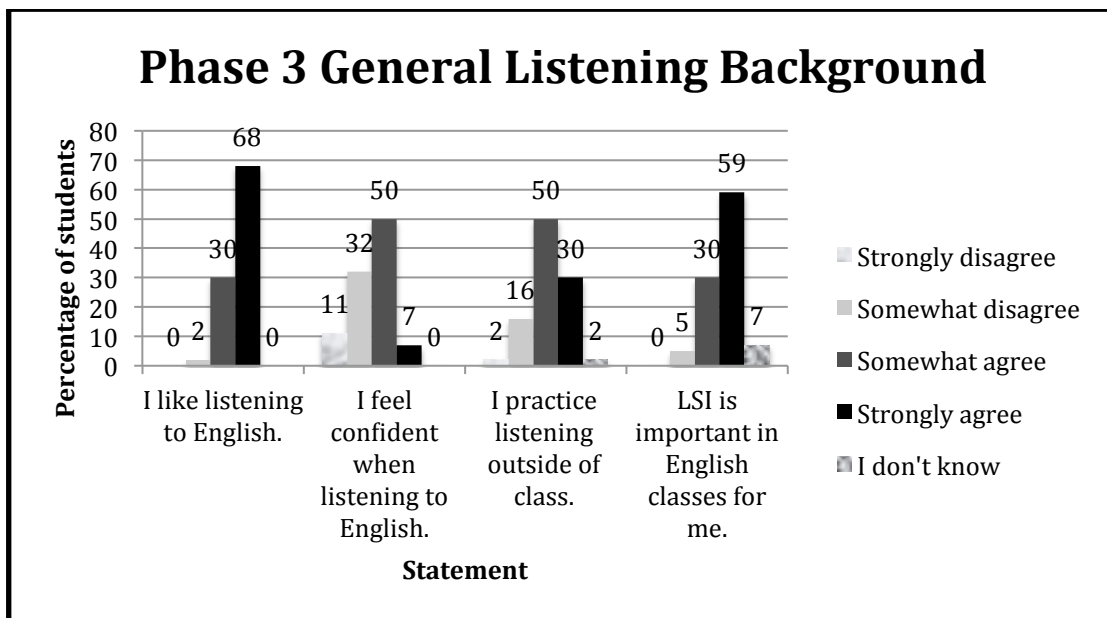
Figure 5.7: *Phase 3 general listening background*

From a more qualitative perspective, when I asked in interviews which language skill was most important to students, speaking was mentioned 16 times, listening five times, reading and writing twice apiece, and grammar once. This finding was consistent with the previous phases in that learners perceived interpersonal communicative skills as important. However, speaking was mentioned noticeably more than its symbiotic partner, listening. By citing speaking most often, these learners seemed to place importance on productive skills rather than the perceived passivity of listening, which commentators (e.g., Nunan, 1998; Field, 2008) point out is a somewhat traditional view of listening expressed in the literature

Interviewees who believed listening was the most important language skill cited the reciprocal nature of listening and speaking:

Diane: *When other say something, I need to understand, ah, to reply.*

Hiroko: *To communicate, people say something first, and I have to understand before and then reply.*

Another student, Risa, stated that:

I need to hear and understand before I can speak.

This last comment reflects the natural way that an L1 is typically learned: through listening to others speaking the L1 first and only later being able to produce the language in spoken form (e.g., Nunan, 1998).

5.3.2 Perceived listening improvement

I was again curious how learners felt about four different aspects of LSI, and so questionnaire and interview items sought to investigate this area. Questionnaire results are displayed in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6: Experiences that led to listening development in Phase 3

Student experiences with:	Agreed	I don't know	Disagreed
Teacher explanations	80%	11%	9%
Listening materials	82%	7%	11%
Listening activities	82%	7%	11%
LSI in this class	78%	21%	2%

Percentages shown in Table 5.6 are consistent with those from Phases 1 and 2, evidence that learners' reactions to these classroom elements of the LSI intervention were relatively stable. Although degrees of uncertainty and disagreement were evident, the majority of learners acknowledged that these elements had a positive impact on their listening development.

When I asked in interviews whether their listening ability changed during the course of the term, most of participants (20 out of a total 24) claimed their listening ability had increased. Below are interview extracts in which learners provided reasons as to why they believed their listening improved as a result of LSI:

Zelda: *I have a chance to speak more with other English not native speakers, like Thai students and Indonesian students. I think I understand their English better now.*

Hiroko: *My TOEFL score is up. I hear more than before.*

> Wendy: *My skill go up. I took the TOEFL test, maybe 10 times. This time I could understand almost everything. I could infer sometimes.*

> Lisa: *I play video sometimes in my room. This video have no subtitles, but I can understand about 20%, but before I couldn't do it.*

Two students said they were unsure about any listening improvement, and two others stated that their ability remained the same, although Tia did acknowledge that her TOEFL score improved:

> *Um, I think stayed the same. Yeah, my TOEFL score went up, but my feeling is the same.*

Interview discussions on this topic included references to standardized tests, conversations with English speakers on the APU campus, and ability to comprehend texts (e.g., internet news, videos) outside of class. These interview comments added support and explanatory insights to the questionnaire data about why learners made claims of improvement and how those improvements manifested themselves.

5.3.3 Listening strategy recall

Since learners viewed the LSI in general as beneficial, I was interested to learn which, if any, specific strategies learners could recall. The open questionnaire item about the most useful listening strategy included in the LSI showed that predication and listening for details were among the top-cited most useful strategies:

- Prediction (11 times)
- Listening for details (9)
- Listening for main idea (2)
- Organizational markers (1)
- Genre (1)
- Categorizing (1)
- All are useful (1)

The following are examples of responses to this item:

> "If we master listening strategies, we can predict what he or she is going to say, and it can help us understand what he or she want to say well."

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"問題を予測しながら考えることができるようになったので、TOEFL などのテストのときに役に立っている [Prediction practice in class helped me perform well on the TOEFL test]."

"Think over the listening with thinking how the speaking are organized using numbers or separate them into some groups by each topics or somthingn like that. I've never done it, and just took memo what I heared, but tha last time I took TOEFL, I think it was really useful and helped me with listening."

In Phase 3 interviews, a wider variety of strategies was recalled without prompting. This array of strategies may have been the result of the larger number of interviewees, as seven different strategies were referred to:

- Listening for main idea (9 times)
- Genre (5)
- Bottom-up linguistic aspects (4)
- Organizational markers (3)
- Prediction (3)
- Listening for details (3)
- Categorizing (2)

The larger variety of strategies recalled without prompting may be suggestive of the saliency of the LSI in Phase 3; in other words, learners remembered more of the teaching points. While several students recalled multiple strategies, three could not remember any.

Discussion of listening strategies continued with a review of the strategies that had been covered during the semester, and participants were asked to identify the one they thought was the most useful to them. Once more, a diverse selection of strategies was mentioned, and just as on the questionnaire, prediction was most often mentioned:

- Prediction (13 times)
- Organizational markers (7)
- Listening for details (6)
- Listening for main idea (6)
- Genre (6)
- Inference (2)
- TOEFL related strategies (2)
- Categorizing (1)
- Context (1)

In the following excerpts, students explained their choices:

> Misa: *We always need to predict to understand English in quiz or test or when I talk English with somebody.*
>
> Akiko: *Markers…Sometimes listening time is long, and with markers I can divide listening in my brain and understand the detail.*
>
> Chihiro: *Markers suggest about the next information, so I can, um, concentrate on the the next information.*
>
> Junichiro: *Finding main idea is definitely important. If you can't get the main point, it's very hard to figure out what's important.*

These findings showed noteworthy consistency, as prediction was chosen as the most useful strategy in the previous two phases as well. In addition, recognizing markers, details, and main ideas, along with genre, were also viewed as important. Since additional connections were made between LSI and standardized testing, it was encouraging to observe that at least a small number of students pointed out that the TOEFL strategies were of use.

Regarding the least useful strategy, seven participants stated that no strategies were unimportant. The other 17 interviewees identified the following as the least useful strategy:

- Bottom up linguistic aspects (6 times)
- Prediction (4)
- Recognizing shifts in topic (3)
- Chunking (3)
- Listening for details (1)

Some strategies mentioned in response to this question had not occurred before, specifically bottom-up linguistic aspects such as pronunciation and intonation, recognizing shifts in topic, and chunking. However, prediction and listening for details were both also discussed as beneficial strategies, evidence of some contradictory viewpoints.

5.3.4 Projected listening strategy use

As I was curious about if and how students might use the LSI beyond the classroom, a series of items asked them to speculate about the future. The learners in Phase 3 responded in the following ways to questionnaire items about future listening strategy usage:

- 67% of students believed LSI will help them in English content classes
- 86% replied that LSI will help them when listening in conversations
- 86% said LSI will be advantageous when listening to English entertainment such as movies or music
- 82% thought LSI will be useful in future employment
- 91% responded that LSI will help them when traveling.

With the exception of usefulness in future employment, all of the percentages for Phase 3 exceeded those of Phases 1 and 2, suggesting that Phase 3 participants in particular viewed the LSI as advantageous for their futures and displayed ambitious projected use of the strategies.

In interviews, students explained situations in which they would be able to use what they learned during the LSI:

> Misa: *It's my experience, uh. The previous semester I went to downtown with Danish guy, Australian guy, and American guy and they use English. And I always understood their English when I when I speak to one people one person. But I couldn't understand their all English at all. Then and so next time I will when I ah join them uh I wanna use predicting skills and I wanna expect what they're talking about and what's the topic gonna go and yeah I wanna join their conversation.*

> Violet: *Yes, I can use it in the future. From next year, we take English-based classes, so lecture style classes. Teacher will use will use transitions and markers and I can listen for those. I can also predict what is coming next. And listening is, um, how to say, connected to other skills, so it is helpful.*

> Fran: *When I take study abroad, I can't catch all information in lecture, so maybe skills this semester really useful.*

As in the previous phases, these learners were able to take what they learned in class about listening and project it to future experiences.

5.3.5 Teacher modeling and listening explanations

On the questionnaire, I asked learners to comment on the teacher's (either Sean's or my) role in LSI and to make any suggestions for improvement. On open questionnaire items, 20 of the 59 comments expressed the opinion that no changes were necessary and that students were satisfied with the LSI:

"Keep doing same way because my listening skill maybe uped."

"It is easy to understand and I could improve my listening ability."

Those comments that suggested further improvements cited themes that were mentioned in previous phases as well: the level of materials, including rate of speech and accent, and the time devoted to listening, including the desire for text replays:

"I think when students practice listening, faster speed can help."

"Give more homework using video which are used in class. I think you don't limit to textbook."

"The speed to speak between actual listening test and the teacher's speaking is quite different the test speak much faster so teachers should speak faster to get used to the speed."

"I want to listen the same conversation and lecture that have alreade listened to check my answer is correct or not."

These comments continued the trends set by previous phases, despite the steps taken between phases to adjust the level of materials and time dedicated to listening in class. These two dimensions may, however, always be contentious when viewed within the reality of the classroom and the interaction of various related constraints, such as administrative influences and attempts to cater to large numbers of individual learners in a practical, uniform manner.

Students explained during the interviews how the LSI had modified their reported approaches to listening tasks:

Evan: *Ahhh, that was so useful for me. Absolutely yes, actually I used this skill when TOEFL and listening quizzes. It it's improved my score because before I knew this I was trying to understand all of words in the listening test.*

Oscar: *Actually your information is most of it, I don't know things. I don't know what I should say. That information is unknown for me, so it is so useful.*

Fran: *The things we learn from Joe is kind of new things for us, and um I can get idea which ah if if I can't listen completely, I can guess from the situation or those kind of things. This is a new idea for me and it helps a lot.*

Some students also commented on how and why the teacher's input assisted their development:

> Isaac: *OK. Like, uh, in listening, sometimes we are not very clear the what we are listening. Yeah, and we sometimes get confused because we're not sure what they say, so yeah, that instruction help us understand what they are saying.*

> Tia: *Yes, because I didn't think anything before I listened. But you said like before listen, you can think something.*

> Nihiro: *And then I can't understand what they are wanting to talk about so but so thanks to the information like focus on noun, place, and verb, and then, after I know that kind of thing and then it helps like easy to understand the main information.*

As in the other phases, learners expressed their opinions that their teacher's (either Sean's or my) input, modeling, and explanations about listening strategies were understandable and could be put into practice, comments which suggest student uptake of the LSI.

5.3.6 Monitoring the LSI in Phase 3

New classroom observation sheets were used during Phase 3 to monitor the extent to which the LSI materials and methodology were being used and to gauge student reactions to them. Using the qualitative classroom observation comments collected during Phase 2, a new quantitative observation tick sheet was created for Phase 3 (see Appendix 5). The sheet also included open comment sections for positive and negative behaviors and other observations.

In total, Sean and I completed observations sheets for 50 classes during Phase 3. Over the course of the 13 weeks of LSI, we each completed between 1-3 sheets per class per week, a routine that fostered regular, systematic reports of LSI in the classroom. Comments suggested that the LSI was being conducted as expected and that it proceeded more smoothly than in previous semesters, likely due to familiarity with the methodology and materials, idea sharing and discussion between Sean and me, and the adjustments we had made between the phases. Table 5.7 displays the most commonly checked items from the tick sheets relating to student behavior, and complete observation data are available in Appendix 6. Qualitative entries

on the observation sheets are discussed in Chapter 6, section 6.2.2, which deals with teacher perceptions of LSI.

Table 5.7: Most frequently checked items on classroom observation tick box sheets

Verbal behaviors (% of 709 total ticks)	Non-verbal behaviors (% of 916 total ticks)
Participating in pair work (28%)	Following teacher instructions (20%)
Laughing (17%)	Watching monitor in classroom (14%)
Volunteering answers to teacher (16%)	Taking notes (11%)
Checking with classmates after listening (12%)	Smiling (11%)
Making verbal predications (9%)	Reading slides in classroom (10%)

Sean also videotaped two of his classes as part of the data collection during the Fall 2011 semester, on 1 November 2011 and 12 December 2011. Each video contained a segment of approximately 30-45 minutes dedicated to LSI. This timing was similar to that dedicated to LSI in the classes I was teaching as well. Like the video recordings from Phase 2, these videos confirmed that the LSI component was being taught in class in ways consistent with the expectations of this project.

When monitoring the LSI component shown in the videos, I made notes of verbal, non-verbal, positive, and negative behaviors displayed by students. Again, these were similar to the student behaviors witnessed in the Phase 2 videos. Students answered questions, engaged in pair work, nodded during teacher explanations, focused on screens when watching videos, shouted out answers at times, laughed, smiled, and generally followed the teacher's instructions. There were, however, two students who arrived late for class, a few students who faced away from the teacher at times, and some students who seemed nervous when asked to complete a task related to the listening.

Prescribed materials (i.e., Power point slides, audio, and video texts) were used in both classes; however, Sean and I used the materials in slightly different sequences and ways in our respective classes. Still, the same main listening strategies were explicitly taught using the same materials. This

observation about variations in the use of materials highlights the need for flexibility in LSI curriculum development to accommodate class and teacher needs and preferences, as discussed in Chapter 7, section 7.3.2.

During instruction, Sean engaged in explicit LSI. For instance, when modeling the way he used context to facilitate successful comprehension, he summarized by saying to the students: "If you're not 100% clear, you have to use context, everything around you…the language you hear, the language you read, or the images that you see. All of those things." He made connections between strategy use and other listening experiences, such as those in daily life and on academic tests of listening; for example:

> *So, either by watching the video or by listening, you can get the answers to these points. You can work out what these words mean. The easiest way to know what these words mean is to know them. But if you don't know them, if you don't have the opportunity to use your dictionary, for example, in a test, then the only thing you can use, your only resource to help you is what you see and what you hear. And very often there are hints and clues in the text around in both listening and reading that can help you. So that's context, that's why it's so important.*

In addition, previously covered strategies such as listening for details and prediction were also recycled. These were all points I had emphasized during the planning of the LSI and, as a curriculum developer and teacher educator, it was satisfying to see them being actualized in the classroom by another teacher.

To sum up the findings from these classroom videotapes, the LSI was being delivered in a manner consistent with, though not identical to, the expectations of this project. The prescribed LSI methodology and materials were used in the classes, and the fact that the lessons progressed smoothly suggested that students were accustomed to this style of teaching and that it was the class norm.

5.3.7 Viewing impact of LSI through pre/post test scores

As the project progressed, I began to wonder to what extent student scores on tests of listening might be influenced by the LSI. This was not a major concern

of mine, as a teacher, because I placed more importance on learners' internal cognitive listening development. Moreover, I agreed with views expressed in the literature that listening tests have several drawbacks, including overemphasis on discrete items (Field, 2008) and a mixing of language skills (Wu, 1998). However, since Phases 1 and 2 showed that students placed a high priority on test scores, analysis of pre/post test scores was added to the evolving research design for Phase 3.

Learners took pre/post in-house listening tests (see Appendix 7) and paper-based TOEFL tests in order to investigate the effects of LSI as shown via these test scores. Scores from the listening section of the TOEFL test were extracted from the total scores for these calculations. The top score on the listening section of TOEFL is 68. Descriptive statistics for these tests are displayed in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8: Descriptive statistics for pre/post-semester tests

	Pre-semester TOEFL listening	Post-semester TOEFL listening	Pre-semester In-house test	Post-semester In-house test
Mean	49.52	52.25	84.5%	89.2%
Range	46-55	45-60	60-100	70-100
SD	3.43	3.65	9.6	9.6
Paired student t-test	t = 2.46* df = 40 p<.05		t = 1.87 df = 33 p<.05	

*Statistically significant at p<.05.
Note: Test results were only included if the student had completed both the pre/post test version.

The TOEFL listening section test results show a statistically significant increase between the pre and post-tests. As these scores were separated from the grammar and reading sections of the TOEFL, these findings demonstrate improvement on the listening section specifically. Marks on the in-house listening test also increased, although to a lesser degree, possibly due to a ceiling effect. In addition, the relatively high standard deviation on the in-house listening tests (9.6) suggested that learner ability within this class

ranged widely, that learners in general are individuals, that they likely have unique problems with listening, and that they do not respond uniformly to any given methodology.

Since I have adopted a position in this thesis that centers on learner perspectives of their own listening development, these test scores were viewed as secondary data only as a way of supporting the qualitative findings. In particular, they were viewed in relation to student interview comments in order to strengthen or counter student claims of listening development. Such comparisons are made for individual learners in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9: Interview comments compared to post-semester TOEFL scores

Name	Interview comments	Post-semester TOEFL listening score change
Becky	Listening ability increased	+8
Kathy	Listening ability increased	+7
Wendy	Listening ability increased	+7
Tia	Listening ability stayed the same	+5
Violet	Unsure if listening ability changed	+4
Diane	Listening ability increased	+4
Lisa	Listening ability increased	-2
Misa	Listening ability increased	-8

As Table 5.9 shows, the largest post-semester TOEFL gain was Becky's 8-point increase. This finding supported her claim in the interview that her listening ability increased. Several of Becky's interview comments describe how her listening ability progressed. She identified the *how to* element of LSI as helping her development: "...now you teach me how to, which points we have to listen when listening something, ah, so that's why my listening skills improved". The confidence and abilities Becky developed in class prompted her to do more English listening outside of class: "In spring

semester, I always only watched Japanese TV. But now I always watch like Glee and Gossip Girl in English. I choose English, and of course, subtitles is English or no. I always listen to English in TV". This independent listening practice was likely stimulated by and also helped to reinforce the LSI from class. Furthermore, Becky specifically mentioned how the strategy of focusing on details contributed to her TOEFL score increase: "In TOEFL, they don't write question on paper, but you teach me ah focus on what, when, where and so on. Then on TOEFL test, I can focus on those, so I could answer a lot of questions". Other students (e.g., Kathy and Wendy) were in the same category, in which their TOEFL scores verified in a quantitative way that their listening abilities improved.

Even for learners who stated that their aural ability stayed the same (e.g., Tia) or that they were unsure about any change (e.g., Violet), TOEFL scores suggested at least some improvement. For other students like Lisa and Misa, despite reporting that their abilities improved, their TOEFL scores did not reflect this. However, even Misa, who despite the decline in her TOEFL listening score, made positive comments about the LSI and recognized that her listening confidence and ability had improved. She stated that her listening ability increased both inside and outside of class: "Listening improved this semester...for both in and out of class. In class, I can listen better for practice like quizzes and TOEFL. After class, I talk to international students, understand them easier".

She also acknowledged that her listening confidence varied depending on the number of speakers: "With one-on-one talking, I feel confident, but when there more people, listening getting more difficult and I can easily confuse". Regarding specific strategies, Misa pointed to genre as the most useful: "Listening about genre and style was so useful, to expect what others will say, what the speaker will talk. If I can imagine genre, I can get ready to listen...This helps on quiz or test or when I talk to international student". Based on these remarks, despite her lower TOEFL listening score, Misa found some benefits in the LSI, and her comments reinforce the notion that a single test or score may not be able to accurately evaluate overall listening ability.

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As exemplified in Table 5.9, not all learners were able to increase their TOEFL listening test scores, and there may be several reasons for this. Firstly, the TOEFL listening section consists of multiple choice questions, which require the integrated skills of listening, reading, and recording an answer under time pressure. Skill integration and time pressure may have negatively affected the scores for some students. Test anxiety and listening fatigue are other possible factors. In addition, the TOEFL is a single test taken on a specific day; thus, caution should be taken when interpreting results based on a single measurement of listening ability.

Overall, these test scores represented an additional layer of triangulation to support learner perspectives that the LSI component did have a positive effect in increasing their listening abilities as average scores for both tests increased on the post-semester versions.

5.3.8 The continuing AR spiral

In the spirit of continuing the processes of AR, the findings from Phase 3 would potentially feed into a further reflection phase, which in turn would motivate additional revisions to the LSI. For the purposes of this research, however, the examination of student perceptions of LSI ends with the Phase 3 observation stage. These findings and the materials used for the LSI described up to this point in the project have been passed on to other teachers, curriculum developers, and administrators at APU, who, through this research, may now be better informed about student perceptions regarding LSI. Those stakeholders who wish to build on insights from this study will likely add their own personal adjustments to their instructional practices and form their own opinions about the program, its present effectiveness, and its potential for the future.

5.4 Summary of the AR narrative

In this chapter, findings were presented from a sequential and iterative perspective by chronicling data from each of the three AR phases. In doing so, the AR story was told by drawing on multiple research methods and

incorporating methodological, time, and space triangulation (see Chapter 4, section 4.5) in the process, and the cyclical nature of the project was emphasized. Data were explained for each separate group of learners, who were exposed to LSI at distinct periods of time. Moreover, I gradually integrated secondary research methods (i.e., classroom observation and pre/post-semester test scores) to explore the LSI in new and different ways. Direct links were made from the findings and outcomes of one phase to the next, in line with AR principles that planning leads to action, which in turn stimulates reflection and subsequent action.

From this chronological perspective, it was shown that the findings were relatively stable and consistent. A majority of learners in all three phases expressed the benefits of LSI, citing teacher explanations, along with listening strategy practice, as contributing to their listening development. Most learners also recognized that LSI could be useful to them beyond the classroom in their English futures. Moreover, learners were also consistent in their identification of obstacles to this LSI; specifically, the level of materials and time devoted to listening were mentioned in all three data collections. Despite being distinct sub-groups of learners, consisting of unique individuals, exposed to the LSI at discrete time periods months apart, the findings from these three phases were not markedly different from each other and were in fact quite repetitive and contained several reoccurring themes.

While the purpose of this chapter has been to present and describe findings from multiple data collection instruments used over three semesters, the discussion up to this point has only described the intervention from a student perspective. The next chapter also focuses on findings but from a different point of view than the chronological process depicted here. Instead, Chapter 6 moves on to describe the LSI intervention as viewed through different 'participant lenses', namely those of students and language educators. It augments the study by delving further into student views and by incorporating teacher and outside reviewer perspectives on the LSI. Whereas Chapter 5 presented data from a cyclical AR point of view, Chapter 6 compares the perspectives of the groups of participants.

Chapter 6: Participant lenses: The findings viewed from different standpoints

The previous chapter presented the findings from a chronological point of view, and in doing so, emphasized the evolutionary and cyclical nature of this AR. Chapter 6 presents additional exploratory and comparative insights from the perspectives of the two participant sets (i.e., students and language educators) in order to provide a multi-faceted account of the LSI intervention. Student findings for each phase are combined and displayed so that side-by-side comparisons between each phase are possible. Comparisons of the various types of data aimed to achieve methodological triangulation, which can strengthen the credibility of the findings (see Chapter 4, section 4.4). Teacher interviews, classroom observations, the research journal, and peer debriefing served to augment the student findings through participant and investigator triangulation (e.g., Denzin, 1978).

Presentation and description of the findings in this chapter are based on a holistic view of the entire project, rather than the stage-by-stage progression evident in Chapter 5. Through various 'participant lenses' discussed in Chapter 6, the LSI intervention was evaluated and commented on by the members of the research context, who operated at a number of different levels. These included learners who studied on the LSI program, teachers who used the pedagogy, and a colleague from outside the project who peer reviewed the findings. Rather than relying solely on viewpoints from one group, this chapter allows the intervention to be examined in multiple ways, thereby aiming to express a rich and balanced description of the LSI itself, while at the same time acknowledging the general and institutional contexts in which the study took place.

6.1 The process from the students' perspective

This section displays findings from the students' perspectives and includes closed and open questionnaire responses along with interview findings. These data are presented so that inter-phase comparisons that encompass all student participants (Phase 1: n=54, 2 classes; Phase 2: n=23, 1 class; Phase 3: n=44, 3 classes) are possible. Whereas Chapter 5 displayed student

findings in a sequential phase-by-phase fashion, data in this section are shown in a comparative manner in order to emphasize the consistencies and recurrent messages derived from the three AR phases. Student questionnaire findings, which provided a general overview of learner perceptions of the LSI intervention, are presented first, followed by interview data that offered more explanatory and exploratory insights.

6.1.1 Student questionnaire data: A comparative analysis

The questionnaire used for this study consisted of 25 questions and included a combination of closed and open items (see Appendix 1). Students responded to the closed items according to a 4-point Likert scale (*strongly disagree*, *somewhat disagree*, *somewhat agree*, and *strongly agree*). The option *I don't know* was also given. The questionnaire was bilingual (Japanese and English) to assist learner comprehension. This section first displays comparative findings from the closed items, after which responses from the open questions are presented.

Regarding learners' perceptions of what impacted their listening development, Figure 6.1 shows close consistency of responses relating to various aspects of the listening component across the phases. Percentages of student responses through all three phases remained steady, varying only 7% at most. From Figure 6.1, a reasonably reliable conclusion can be drawn that teacher explanations, listening activities, and the LSI in general received favorable ratings for three consecutive semesters.

Perceived listening improvement: Comparison of phases
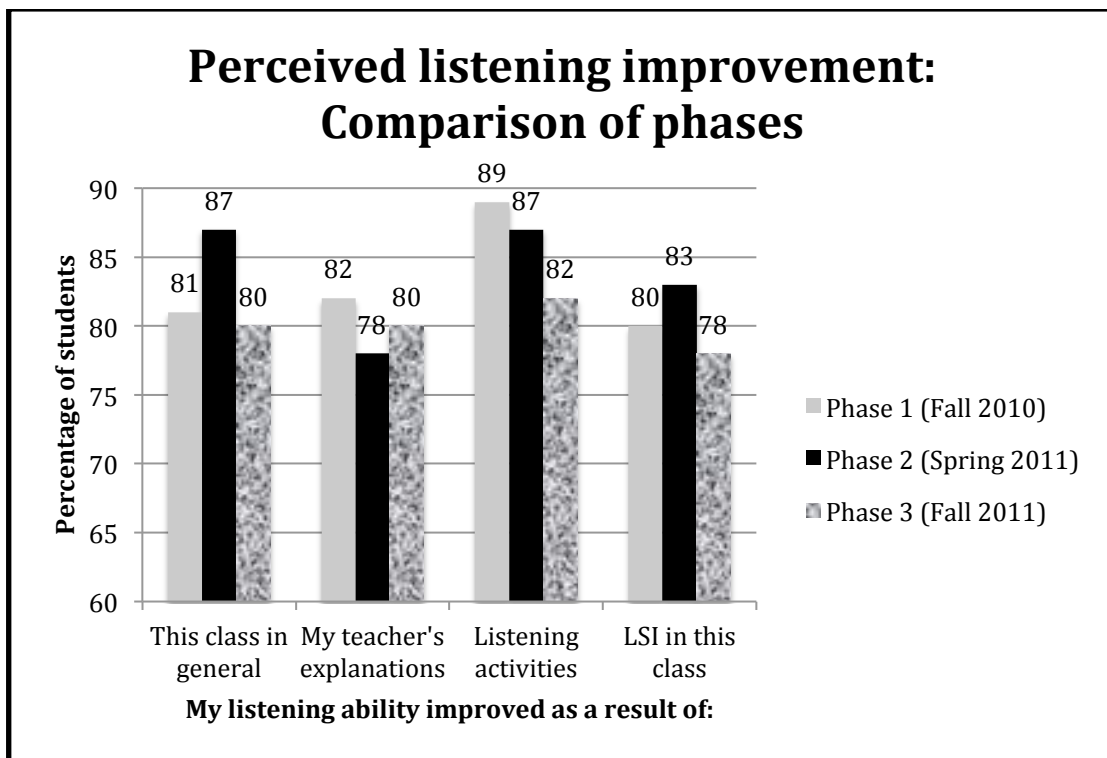
Figure 6.1: *Perceived listening improvement*

Of the aspects shown in Figure 6.1, I was particularly interested in teacher explanations, and therefore some questionnaire items inquired about that aspect in more depth. Student views on the teacher's explanations of listening strategies are displayed in Figure 6.2. Positive descriptions (i.e., useful and interesting) each received large percentages of agreement, up to 100% in some cases. The more critical view that the teacher explanations were difficult to understand was selected, although to a much lesser degree. The consistent ratings on these items indicated that learners appreciated the teacher explanations and that they were able to acquire some new, functional knowledge and listening techniques from 'expert' listeners' guidance and experiences.

The ratings also suggested that different teachers (i.e., Sean and myself) were able to deliver LSI in a somewhat uniform fashion to a standard that learners acknowledged was useful. This was an important finding within the scope of this study considering that teacher explanations, though mentioned in some literature on listening pedagogy (e.g., Chamot, 1995; Goh, 2005, 2008; Lynch, 2009; Siegel, 2013a), are largely unexplored in classroom

research. The data in Figure 6.2 suggested that multiple teachers could be successful in communicating their listening processes and strategies to the benefit of learners, a tentative conclusion that could have broader implications for L2 education (see Chapter 8).

Perceptions of teacher explanations: Comparison of phases
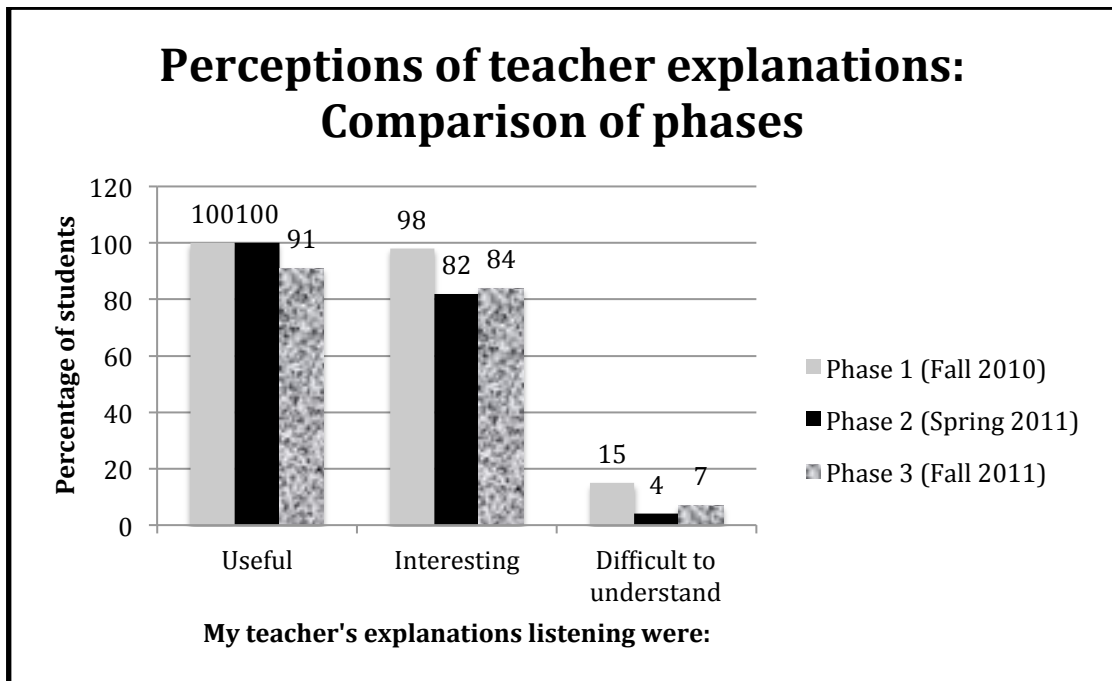
Figure 6.2: *Perceptions of teacher LSI explanations*

The forward-looking element of LSI was meant to benefit learners not only in the classroom but in the real world as well. Findings on learners' projected listening strategy use are presented in Figure 6.3. These data showed relative consistency across the three phases in terms of situations in which students believed the LSI would benefit them. I noticed in particular the comparatively low 61-66% of respondents who agreed that LSI would help them in university English-based classes. At APU, students were required to take some of their major classes in English after completing their EFL requirements; thus, it was hoped that more of these learners would be able to transfer their listening abilities from UIE to those English-based classes. This goal helped guide both the materials selected for UIE (e.g., documentary and lecture-style videos) and the strategies targeted in the LSI (e.g., organizational markers and listening for main ideas). However, learners appeared to have less confidence that the LSI would aid them in future English classes and gave

the impression of being more optimistic about the benefits of LSI beyond classroom walls in casual, employment, and travel situations.

Data from Figure 6.3 should also be examined with this fact in mind: that many students come to APU expecting to interact in English on its multicultural campus and intend to spend time outside of Japan, whether for study abroad, travel, or employment after graduation. Thus, typically they were ambitious about future opportunities to use English.
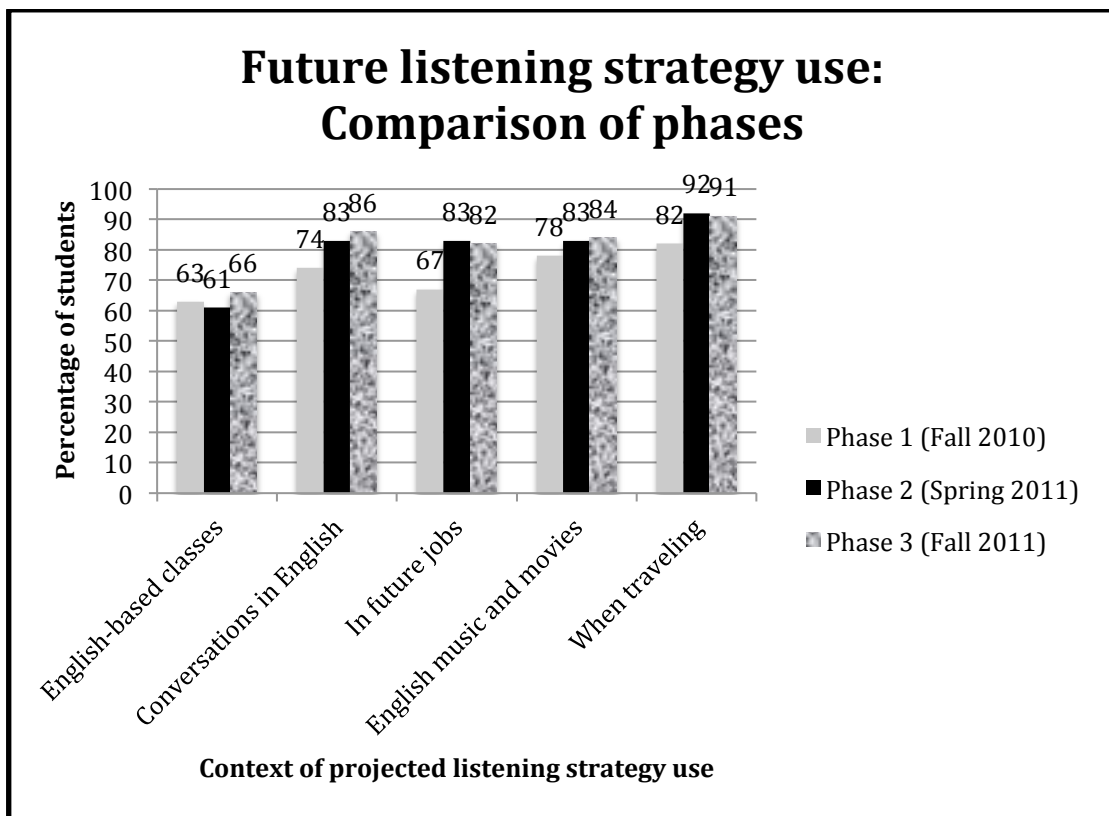
Figure 6.3: *Projected future listening strategy use*

Whereas Figures 6.1-6.3 depict responses to closed questionnaire items on which student choice was limited, Figures 6.4 and 6.5 below deal with coded answers to open questions. In asking these open questions, I wanted to give students the freedom to comment on areas for improvement and also on specific strategies in the LSI. Figure 6.4 shows the accumulated coded totals from the three AR phases on the topic of suggested improvements. A sizeable proportion (34/85 coded comments) declared that the LSI was, at minimum, satisfactory and that no obvious changes were necessary. This observation, however, was viewed with extra scrutiny, since

respondents may have responded in the simplest way they knew how or in ways that they thought may have pleased the researcher, who was the teacher for some of the respondents. This situation, along with the possibility of researcher bias, prompted me to incorporate various types of checks and balances, such as investigator triangulation in research design (see Chapter 4, section 4.5).

Other comments, such as those about class time devoted to listening, listening materials, and specific attention to TOEFL listening have been exemplified in the AR narrative above (see Chapter 5, Tables 5.2 and 5.5). Figure 6.4, however, shows how the total numbers of such comments compared to others in the topic area. Irrelevant or ambiguous responses were not included in the data set (e.g., "I don't have idea", "i don't know", "We study hard by this class's style"). Two answers fit multiple categories and were therefore counted once for each appropriate category.

Another area for improvement called for by students was the teacher's attention to individual students' listening performance; for instance:

> "[The teacher] should be talk to like one by one and face to face." (Phase 1)

> "Please give advice, in each person." (Phase 1)

While giving feedback on listening performance to each student would help address individual listening difficulties and could tailor listening plans to each unique ability level, the time and resource constraints of such an approach made it impractical in the UIE course. Therefore, this suggestion for improvement was not addressed during the project. However, several of the other suggestions mentioned (e.g., the level of materials and timing issues) were attended to throughout the AR cycles, as described in Chapter 5, Tables 5.2 and 5.5.

Student suggestions for LSI improvement: Totals from three phases
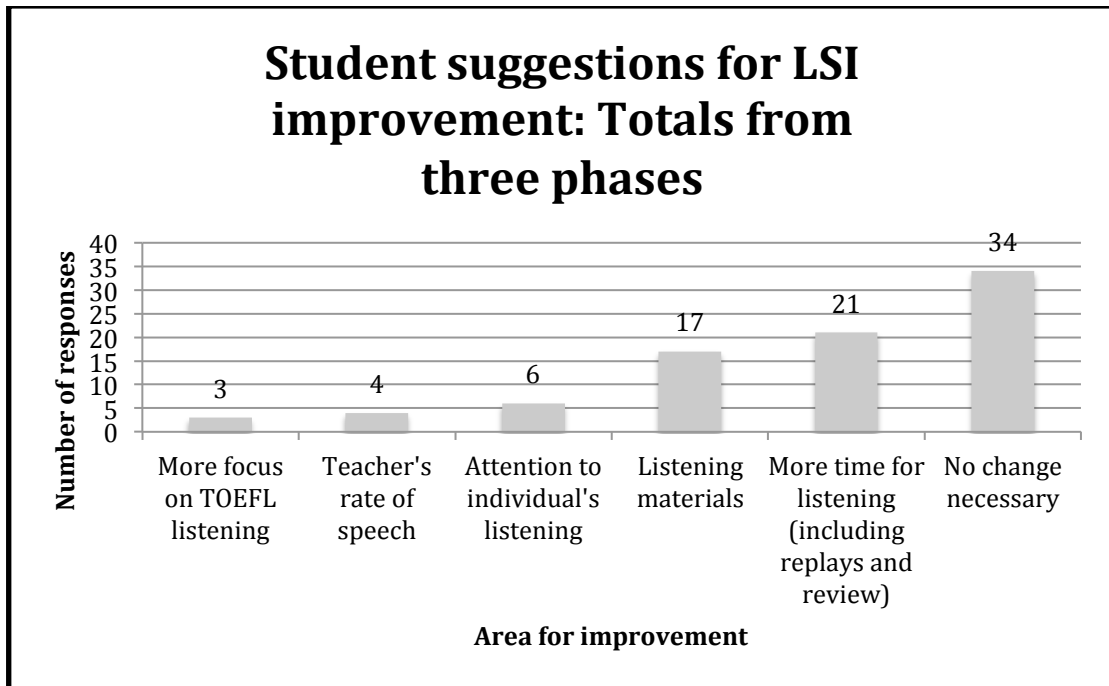
Figure 6.4: *Coded open questionnaire item responses related to improving LSI*

Cumulative totals for the open questionnaire item asking about the most useful listening strategy are shown in Figure 6.5. Over the course of the three phases, prediction was mentioned the most often, followed by listening for details and key words. Curiously, genre was mentioned both as the most useful and as one of the least useful strategies. I also observed that organizational markers was only mentioned once as the most useful strategy on the questionnaire but was discussed and exemplified several times in interviews. The findings shown in Figure 6.5 are important to the understanding of the LSI in this context because they showed that students were able to think critically about the LSI pedagogy to which they were exposed. By analyzing and determining which strategies had a positive impact on them, learners were able to supply information that not only provided feedback on this form of LSI but that can also inform the future design of such listening pedagogy both in this context and beyond.

**Most useful listening
strategies from UIE (all phases)**
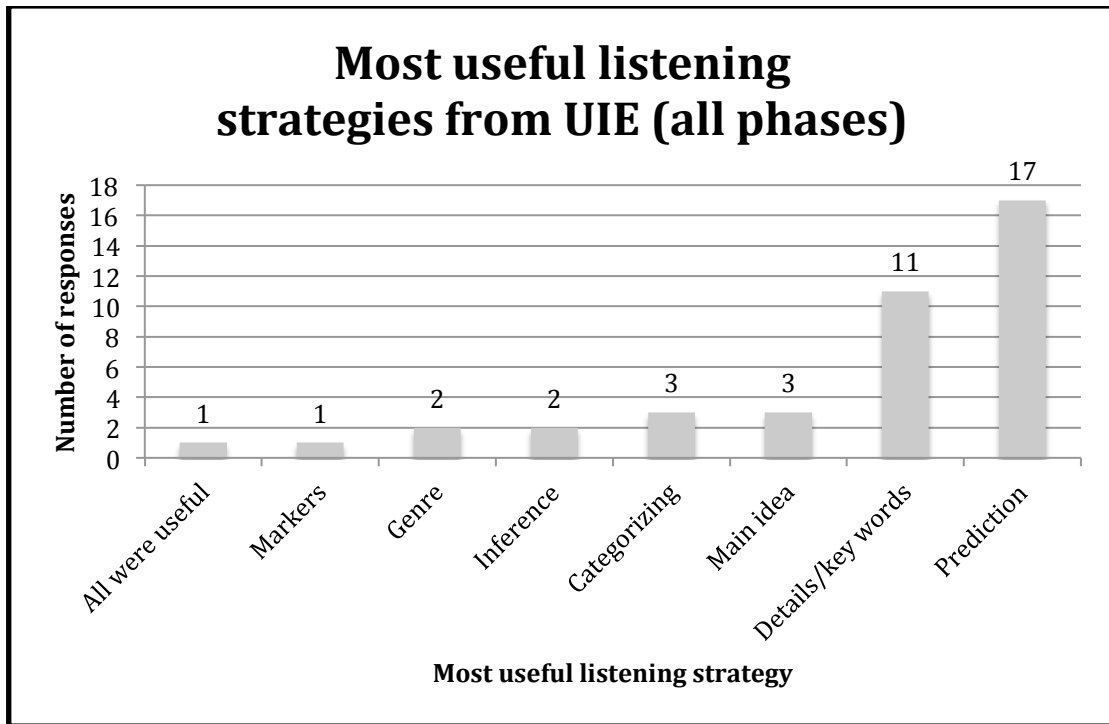
Figure 6.5: *Coded open questionnaire responses on the most useful listening strategy from UIE*

A further observation regarding the most beneficial strategy was that several of the strategies included in the LSI component (listed in Chapter 4, section 4.3) were mentioned neither on the questionnaire nor in interviews as being useful; for example, identifying connectors, using bottom-up linguistic features, and pattern recognition were not mentioned or alluded to by the participants. This may have been because the strategies were not salient enough to be remembered or that these processes were already acquired and therefore any explicit teaching was perceived as unnecessary.

By viewing these questionnaire data in a comparative fashion, the recurring nature of the findings over the course of the three AR phases was evident. There was little obvious variation in the questionnaire results, which, from a broad perspective, showed positive perceptions toward the LSI. A similar comparison of interview findings helped to identify and examine similarities and differences at a deeper and more explanatory level.

6.1.2 Peer debriefing of open questionnaire items

In order to provide an external independent view of open questionnaire responses, a peer review technique was employed (Barber & Walczak, 2009;

Booth, 2012) that aimed at strengthening the credibility of qualitative research (see Chapter 4, section 4.2.3). Peggy, a colleague who also worked at APU (as described in Chapter 2, section 2.4 and Chapter 4, section 4.2.3), agreed with my initial coding on 19 of 20 items, representing a high consistency rating of 95%. She challenged my coding on the following response:

I think when students practice listening, faster speed can help.

I initially coded this statement as "Teacher's rate of speech"; however, Peggy pointed out that the comment could also be in reference to the speed of "Listening materials". Since it was not clear whether the response was referencing teacher input or recorded listening texts, this comment was counted once in each respective category.

In addition, for five of the responses, Peggy confirmed my initial coding but also suggested additional categories. In Peggy's opinion, there was some overlap between the categories "More time for listening" and "Listening materials", as demonstrated by the following questionnaire response:

> *I think if [the teacher] gives us sklipts [scripts] for listening materials (except text book), that can be a lot of help to improve our listening skill.*

I initially coded this statement as "Listening materials" because the student specifically mentioned "listening materials" as well as one type of listening material (i.e., scripts). Peggy agreed with this categorization but also asked: "Could this maybe slide in to 'more time' as well?" In this case, there was an implication that the addition of work with scripts would necessarily increase the time spent on listening. In other words, if more materials, scripts in this case, were used in class, more time would be needed. As such, I accepted Peggy's suggestion and placed this comment in both categories.

The four other challenges also referred to this potential overlap between the categories "More time for listening" and "Listening materials"; for example,

> *I want to listen many times until I can understand meaning.*

> *I want to listen to same conversation and lecture that alreade listened to check my answer is correct or not.*

I originally coded these samples as "More time for listening" because time was explicitly stated as the main issue. Peggy questioned whether these comments should also fall under "Listening materials". However, no specific reference to materials was made in these statements, as there was in the extract discussed in the previous paragraph. They mentioned time but not materials. I chose to analyze the comments at face value and did not want to make too many inferences about them, as such practice would potentially allow me to insert my own views into student findings. Therefore, I adhered to my original coding of these four comments as "More time for listening".

The possibility that a single response or quotation could fit in multiple categories prompted additional consideration. After discussion with this critical friend, I considered whether assigning the same interview extract to two different categories was appropriate. The exploratory and descriptive nature of the study led to my decision to allow a single response to be placed in more than one category if there was sufficient evidence to do so. The sometimes-lengthy participant responses (e.g., to open questionnaire items and interview questions) often included multiple noteworthy points that shed light on their perceptions of the LSI. In addition, some categories overlapped (e.g., for student interview analysis, "Testing anxiety" may have overlapped with "Only one chance to listen"), and it was extremely difficult to finely divide student responses into only a single category, especially because this was classroom-based research that included several influencing factors.

Therefore, I decided that the informative benefits of including responses in two categories outweighed the negatives of excluding these comments. Moreover, this situation proved valuable as it forced me to revisit other categorizations I had made. (For comprehensive explanations of the peer debriefer's comments and queries regarding open questionnaire items, see Appendix 11.) Opening of these interview data to peer examination aimed to enhance the credibility of these findings. Similar peer review procedures were also used with qualitative findings from the student interviews (section 6.1.4) and classroom observation (section 6.2.3).

6.1.3 Student interview data: General consistency of learner voices

The interview discussions in Chapter 5 were examined in a sequential format. This section displays additional interview findings in a comparative manner so that any similarities in student perceptions can be identified. Before examining interview comments across the phases, Figure 6.6 gives an overview of responses to core interview questions.

Student Interview Response Overview (n=38 students)

■ Yes   ▨ I'm not sure   ☰ No

- Listening ability improved this semester: 32, 3, 3
- Listening instruction was different than my previous experience: 32, 1, 5
- My teacher's instruction was useful: 38, 0, 0
- The listening activities in this class helped improve my listening ability: 35, 3, 0
- Will be able to use listening strategies from this class in the future: 36, 2, 0

Figure 6.6: *Overview of student interview responses*

The propensity for interviewees to respond positively to the LSI in UIE is evident in Figure 6.6. A vast majority of respondents I spoke with indicated that LSI was beneficial to them in a number of ways: their listening improved, teacher input positively affected their aural development, and they believed the LSI would benefit them beyond the course itself.

I also observed that 32 of the 38 learners reported that the listening component of this class was different from that in their previous L2 study. Other learning experiences may have included LSI in different forms (for example, implicit strategy training); however, I believed it was more likely that students' previous listening experiences in the classroom were similar to the osmosis approach and/or the CA, as described in Chapter 3, section 3.3.1.

Comments made during the teacher interviews also substantiated this conclusion (see section 6.2.1 below). Since UIE appeared to be the first time many of these learners had experienced LSI, it was important to examine their interview responses as a complete data set, in addition to the chronological description of sub-groups presented in Chapter 5.

Since most students reported that their listening improved, I was eager to learn more about the reasons for their perceived improvements. Figure 6.7 displays the various reasons cited by interviewees to explain why they felt their listening abilities had improved during the LSI. While some students mentioned they noticed their abilities had improved in situations outside of the classroom (e.g., when watching videos, listening to the news, or in conversations with English users), others looked to test scores to verify their progress. The largest group of responses centered on their accomplishments on in-class listening tasks and their comprehension of prescribed listening materials, findings that overlapped with classroom observation (section 6.2.1) and teacher interview data (section 6.2.2).

Coded student interview comments: Support for listening improvement

Category	Value
Confidence increased	2
Listening opportunities outside of class	8
Test score increased	10
Conversation listening ability improved	12
Completion of in-class listening tasks	16
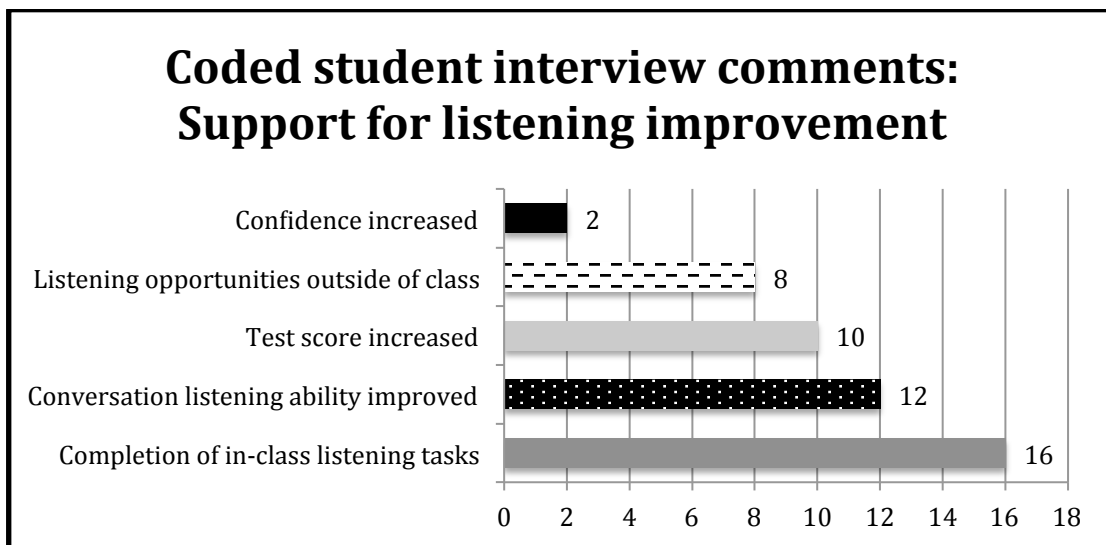
Figure 6.7: *Reasons why students reported listening improvement*

According to questionnaire and interview data, the teacher's role in LSI factored in to the effects the pedagogy had on learners. Figure 6.8 highlights coded comments regarding the teacher's explanations, information that provided understanding of precisely which aspects of the teacher's input about listening were useful. The remarks were not all positive, however, and three

learners mentioned that some elements of the LSI were confusing or lacked a direct link to daily life. Other more positive responses mentioned that listening instruction was 'visible', which made it easy to understand what was happening inside the 'expert' listener's head during speech. This 'visibility' was expressed in the following interview exchange:

> Junichiro: *Um, yeah, it's very easy to see what's going on. Yeah.*
>
> Interviewer: *And what do you mean by "easy to see what's going on"? Could you explain that a bit more?*
>
> Junichiro: *OK. Like, uh, in listening, sometimes we are not very clear the what we are listening. Yeah, and we sometimes get confused because we're not sure what they say, so yeah, that instruction help us understand what they are saying.*

The newness of the approach was also cited, a newness that may have kept learners' attention. For instance, Fran reported that:

> *The things we learn from [the teacher] is kind of new things for us, and um I can get idea which ah if if I can't listen completely, I can guess from the situation or those kind of things. This is a new idea for me and it helps a lot.*

Fifteen other comments referred to the teacher's ability to give 'how to' advice on listening, a notion called for in the literature (e.g., Mendelsohn, 1998) but seldom actualized in listening classrooms (Siegel, 2013b). Students also affirmed that they were able to acquire new listening strategies from their teacher's instruction and named several specific strategies.

**Coded student interview comments:
Reasons why teacher explanations
were useful**

Category	Value
Confusing instruction	3
Making listening 'visible'	5
Newness of instruction	6
Testing-related	8
Good materials	9
Teaching 'how to' listen	15
Specific strategies	17
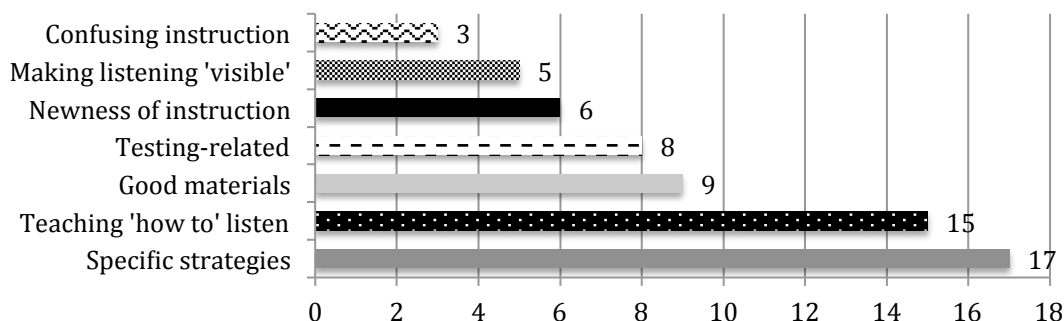
Figure 6.8: *Coded student interview comments regarding the usefulness of teacher explanations*

In spite of the listening development alluded to in Figures 6.6-6.8, many learners reported on the questionnaire that they lacked confidence when listening, even after the LSI. This finding was surprising to an extent because the learners claimed they improved, test scores added support to those claims, students enjoyed listening, and they also practiced outside the classroom. All of these findings would intuitively point to resulting increases in confidence; yet confidence in their listening abilities remained lower than hoped. It was puzzling why they still lacked confidence; therefore, I asked students in interviews to expand on the obstacles to higher listening confidence, which are illustrated in Figure 6.9. Native-like features of natural spoken English (such as rate of speech and rhythm) were the most frequently cited reasons for shortages of confidence. Accent varieties and pressure due to the ephemeral nature of listening, as well as test anxiety, were also flagged as causes of low listening confidence.

Coded student interview comments: Why Japanese learners often lack confidence when listening

Category	Value
Previous instruction neglected listening	2
Testing pressure	3
Only one chance to listen	3
Expectations of 100% comprehension	4
Lack of exposure to spoken English	4
Accents	6
Native-like features of spoken English	11
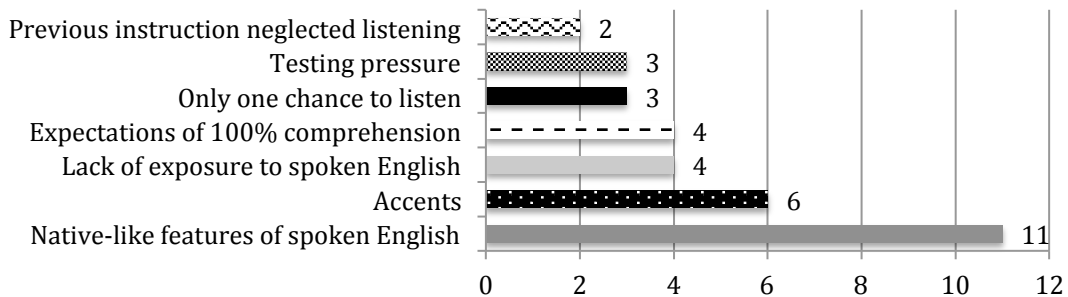
Figure 6.9: *Coded comments on why Japanese learners lack listening confidence*

To find out which strategies were viewed as useful and which were not, I asked learners about the most and least useful strategies. This question was asked so that questionnaire and interview findings on the topic could be compared. A number of specific strategies are listed in Figure 6.10, which displays the strategies that students reported as being the most useful to them. Unsurprisingly, prediction received the most nominations, followed by markers, listening for main idea, and listening for details. These findings gave some indications about which strategies (and related instruction) were more salient and were meeting course objectives compared to other strategies. These data are also important for strategy selection in future versions of LSI.

Coded student interview comments: Most useful strategies after list

Category	Value
Testing-focused	2
Inference	4
Genre	6
Details	8
Main idea	8
Markers	9
Prediction	22

Figure 6.10: *Coded comments on the most useful strategy*

At the other end of the spectrum were strategies identified as being the least useful, as displayed in Figure 6.11. A large number of interviewees (14) reported that all of the strategies included in UIE were useful. However, other strategies, such as focusing on bottom-up aspects of langu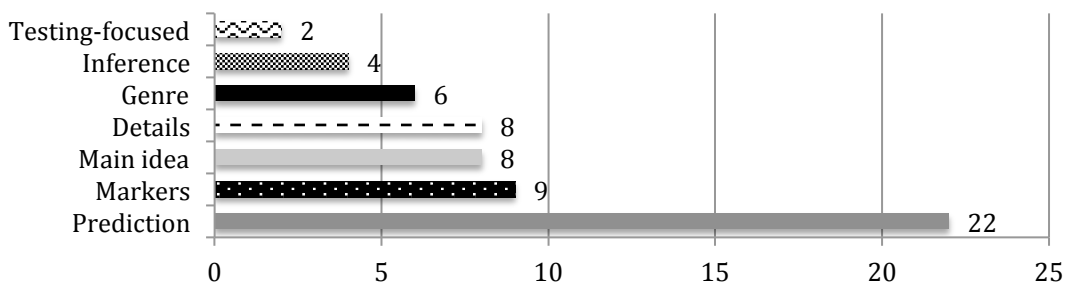age (e.g., connected speech, pronunciation, and intonation), recognizing topical shifts, and using genre, all received some selections as well. One peculiarity involves prediction, cited in Figure 6.11 four times as the least useful strategy. As evidenced on the questionnaire and in Figure 6.10 above, prediction typically ranked among the most useful strategies.

Coded student interview comments: Least useful strategies

Strategy	Count
No idea	1
Chunking	2
Topical shifts	3
Prediction	4
Genre	4
Bottom-up features	9
All are useful	14
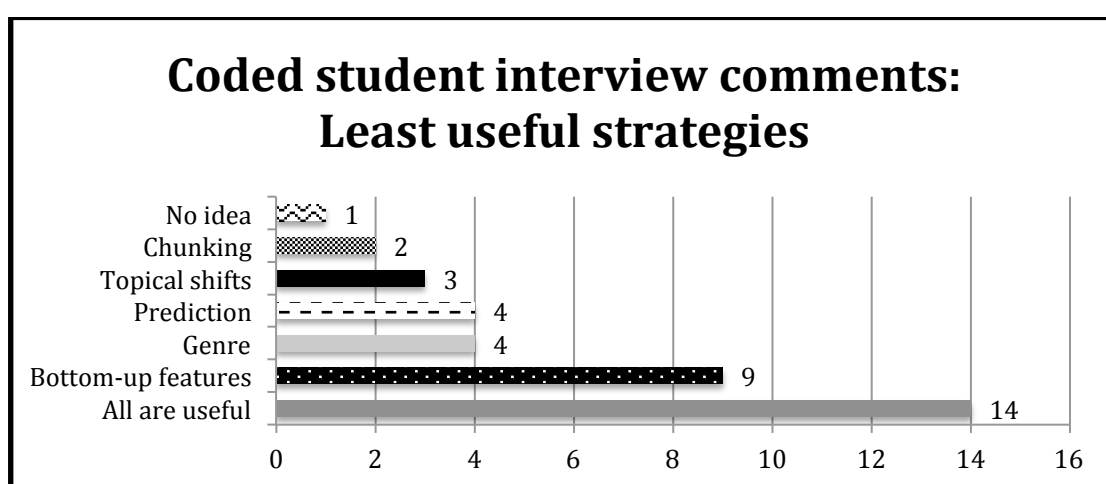
Figure 6.11: *Coded comments on the least useful strategy*

6.1.4 Peer review of student interview findings

Peggy reviewed 40 randomly selected interview extracts and compared them to the coding classifications that I had made. On 97% of the extracts (39/40), she agreed with the categorizations I had made. Thus, samples of the data displayed in the tables above were checked and corroborated independently by another teacher-researcher who had no other involvement in the project.

The one point of disagreement related to the following comment from Akiko:

> *[My listening ability] go up. I can hear more words in listening. [My teacher] taught us way which US people speak, like gonna, wanna. [He] taught us like those things, so listening become easier and I can hear more words.*

This statement was in response to an interview question about why students felt their listening abilities had improved. I initially coded this excerpt as "Teacher input"; however, Peggy suggested two alternative categorizations:

"Learned new listening approaches" and "Better materials than previous instruction". I accepted the former because the introduction of connected speech Akiko mentioned (i.e., *gonna, wanna*) could be interpreted as a 'new' approach to listening. Therefore, this quotation was coded twice: once under "Teacher input" and once under "Learned new listening approaches". I declined to include this quotation under "Better materials" because it was not clear whether listening materials were being specifically referenced, but the teacher was specifically mentioned twice. Additional explanations of the peer debriefer's comments and queries regarding student interview data are available in Appendix 11.

6.1.5 Student interview extracts

A broad quantitative view of interview findings over the course of the entire project was depicted in Figures 6.6-6.11 above. These figures identified learner tendencies as well as common and outlying answers. Additionally, charts showed how certain responses ranked in comparison to others on the same topic. The next set of interview findings look at specific interview extracts from the three phases and reveal a great deal of regularity, though there were responses that deviated from the general tendencies (i.e., outliers).

Table 6.1 shows comments made by these learners about the importance of listening in general. Tables 6.2-6.5 offer illustrative interview examples from each phase on topics specific to the listening component of UIE: listening improvement, aspects of the LSI, specific strategies, and future strategy use. The sample quotations in these tables represent a portion of the total interview data set that was the source material for Figures 6.6-6.11 above. These samples were selected because they demonstrate noticeable thematic and attitudinal consistency across the three AR phases. Finally, Table 6.6 displays outlier student voices, those responses that noticeably differed in some way from the general tendencies of the group. It is important to highlight these outlier voices to show that the LSI was not viewed positively by all participants. In addition, these atypical responses could suggest areas for future inquiry about LSI. Each table includes extracts from student

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interviews that appear in their original form without any modifications; summary paragraphs follow each table.

Table 6.1: Student perspectives on the importance of listening

Fall 2010 Student Voices	Spring 2011 Student Voices	Fall 2011 Student Voices
Yancy: If we can't listen English, we can't speak English. I think listening skill is connected to speaking skill, so listening is most important. **Mike:** Listening [is the most important language skill]…absolutely listening, because if no skill of listening, we can no skill of conversation and don't understand each other, so we absolutely need listening.	**Neil**: I think listening skill is um most important because it's the skill that we often use…most frequently use, so everywhere in the world, we hear English and maybe if we can't read or write or speak, if I can listen to English, maybe we can gets lots of information. **Charlene**: I think listening skill is the best, most important because um if I if my listening skill is very good, I can get information from the radio or TV. In emergency case, so many information is only the sounds, so if I can speak English well, even if I can speak English well, I cannot get information well, so I think listening is the most important. **Sean**: Listening. If I go abroad to study, I can't understand what they say, I can't do anything. If I understand what others say, I can say my opinion.	**Diane**: I think listening is most important for me because when the other friend say something, if I don't understand their opinion, I can speak and um…that is not to connect, not to communicate. **Risa**: To me, um, I think listening is the most important because as she said before, I think speaking is important too, but if I couldn't hear what people say and I can't understand, I can't speak in English, so I think listening is most important.

Student comments in Table 6.1 showed learners recognizing the basic and fundamental nature of listening, and that listening is the language skill most frequently used, both notions prevalent in the literature (e.g., Feyten, 1991; Nunan, 1998). Other learners pointed out that listening is indispensible for social interaction. Based on their comments, all of these interviewees believed that listening was an important ability, which indirectly suggested their desire for L2 listening improvement, the topic explored in Table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2: Student perspectives on improvements in listening ability

Fall 2010 Student Voices	Spring 2011 Student Voices	Fall 2011 Student Voices
Yancy: My test scores go up, so I have more confidence. **Yardley**: My TOEFL score, only listening skill go up, but grammar the same or go down…listening made biggest improvement. **Edgar**: My listening skill go up. Now I can speak English when I meet exchange students, so I think my listening skill go up.	**Tom**: [My listening skill] go up. Hm, before taking English class, I misunderstood. I should listen to all of the words, but in English class, the teacher say we don't have to listen to all the words. We should only collect the key words. So I got the skills to listen. So I got the listening skills. **Sean**: I think [my listening ability] go up…In my room, I try to always listen to English and CNN news so to do that I could improve listening. [Outside of class listening practice is better than inside class] because I can listen what I want to listen, while in class I should listen to what I'm not interested in.	**Wendy**: My listening skill is go up because of TOEFL test…ah…I have take TOEFL test maybe more than 10 times. Except the current one, I couldn't understand what they say. But for the current one, I could understand almost everything. It was difficult but I could understand. **Lisa**: I think like my listening skill also improved because like you and [the other teacher] also played the video in the class. And the video is no words on the screen. I can understand about 70% of the video, but before this semester, I know I cannot understand so much so I think my listening skill improved.

Table 6.2 details student perspectives on their improvements made during the LSI. These students cited

improvements on listening tests, feelings of increased ability and confidence when interacting with English users, and

enhanced ability to access aural content from a range of sources (e.g., videos, TV programs, and in classes). The rationale

for their perceived improvement came from both empirical evidence (i.e., test results) and internal factors (i.e., confidence

levels), an observation that showed different ways in which learners perceive the notion of 'improvement'. In order to explore

further which aspects of the LSI may have led to such improvements, Table 6.3 displays comments about the LSI

methodology and materials.

Table 6.3: Student perspectives on the LSI in UIE

Fall 2010 Student Voices	Spring 2011 Student Voices	Fall 2011 Student Voices
Mike: Ah, very useful. [The teacher's instruction was] not speedy, it's like…how do I say? Every time it's easy to understand and explain to us very well, so I think it's very useful.	**Sean**: Yes, [the teacher's instruction was] very useful. Before I learned these skills, I only listen, only listened, but after [this class] I focused on what is main topic.	**Kathy**: Videos and materials, internet sites, was quite quite interesting. Academic, good course. Almost all of us have interest in on the videos. I enjoyed it. **Evan**: Absolutely yes, [the teacher's listening instruction was useful]. Ah, actually, I used this skill when TOEFL and um listening quizzes. It it's improve my score because I before I knew this, I was trying to understand all of words in the listening test.
Edgar: We can find out how to listen or how to read for TOEFL.	**Neil**: Yes, [the teacher's instruction was] useful, but some instruction I can't understand when and how to use in daily life.	
Yanira: Before I listen, if I like listen to instruction by [the teacher], I can prepare for listening.	**Andrea**: Yes, it was useful because ah he taught us how to catch key words.	**Risa**: Using Power Point [to teach listening] I think is good because everyone can understand what you said. But sometimes you didn't use Power Point, I think that improved our listening skills. It help challenge us.

The remarks listed in Table 6.3 suggest that students found the LSI accessible and beneficial. Several of these interviewees specifically mentioned how the LSI connected to success on tests of listening, although Neil in particular noted that sometimes the link between a strategy and listening in everyday life was unclear. Students also commented that their general approach to listening had changed as a result of LSI (e.g., from trying to understand every word to more focused, purposeful listening). Students also viewed the range of materials positively. Since the purpose of the varied texts and materials was based on the principle of transferring strategies to different listening experiences (see Chapter 3, section 3.6), it was gratifying to hear learners appreciated the variety. Several learners also noted specific strategies from the LSI that they found useful, as shown in the next table.

Table 6.4: Student perspectives on useful listening strategies

Fall 2010 Student Voices	Spring 2011 Student Voices	Fall 2011 Student Voices
Yanira: I think prediction [is the most useful] because when I talk with foreign students, sometimes foreign students like forgot the vocabulary, so I can help them because I can guess the vocabulary. **Samantha**: If I focus on listen to "after that" or "first, second, third", if I focus on listen to that, easy to understand. **Yardley**: We can get many skills [like] key words, summarizing, and so on.	**Sean**: How'bout'chu, *toka* [things like that]. Those groups of words…uh, I didn't know "want to" become "wanna", I learned so I can image the sound of those words together. [Also] main topic, if I understand the main topic, I can predict detail. In TOEFL test, I used inference. I can switch my brain when I hear markers, so. **Charlene**: Um, key words, collecting key words…and prediction is very useful in daily life. If I can't understand all, I can guess the topic. **Sherry**: Markers, it lead me to where the speaker is speaking…useful with note taking.	**Becky**: Context is very important. Sometimes I miss the word and but I I can predict around because context (laughs). **Chihiro**: I think marker is too because markers suggest next information is the opposition or if next information is the addition or so I can concentrate I can concentrate on the next information while listening to markers and I can also predict the next things. **Violet**: I think in presentation, the like, the transitions, first, second. And also in academic study, for examination, predication is useful.

Table 6.4 displays student comments relating to individual strategies covered during the LSI. The strategies of detail identification, using context, listening for key words, and discourse marker identification were all explicitly mentioned during interviews. Learners also made reference to the connections these strategies had to situations outside the confines of the UIE classroom, such as daily life, on tests, and in other academic classes. These learners showed that they intended to take those listening abilities they developed in UIE and continue to use them after the course finished, which is a goal common to many language educators (e.g., Helgesen & Brown, 2007; Field, 2008). Table 6.5 below expands on this notion of perceived future strategy use.

Table 6.5: Student perspectives on future listening strategy usage

Fall 2010 Student Voices	Spring 2011 Student Voices	Fall 2011 Student Voices
Mike: This class helped me understand other English classes because if I didn't take this class, and go to English-based class, this maybe understand only 1%, I think, because native speaker speaking is very hard to understand. Is every time is really really difficult, so how do I say? If I didn't take this classes, I couldn't understand. But I took this class and I can understand 5 or 10% [of major classes in English]. **Yanira**: When I travel to other country, I have to listen to like announcement or airplane or everything or like ordering some food, so every time listening skill is need.	**Andrea**: In the future, yes [the listening strategies will be useful], but it is actually use for me now. I don't know any other useful listening style, so I only have the listening skill from this class to use, to um help me in the future. **Tom**: I will be able to collect information in English from CNN, BBC. So, it changed my…not my life (laughs), maybe changed my values. It gives me choices and options that I should get information.	**Fran**: I think…um…Actually, I'm going to study abroad from next Autumn semester. Then maybe I can't catch up with all the lectures or those kind of things. Then maybe the skills we learned in this semester is really useful for me. **Junichiro**: Yes, I think [I'll be able to use listening strategies from this class in the future]. Um, well, though we need more practice, but we got the points, so all we can do is review and keep practicing [the strategies] we did in class.

The students quoted in Table 6.5 cited several settings in which the LSI would potentially help them achieve their L2 listening goals. Other academic classes, travel, study abroad, and watching TV were all mentioned, and these comments served to reinforce similar responses from the student questionnaire. One student, Junichiro, mentioned that he believed he and his classmates ("we") would continue to practice and develop listening strategies after the conclusion of the course. Although tracking this type of post-course development would be a valuable avenue for research, it was beyond the scope of the present study.

Despite the generally optimistic viewpoints highlighted in tables 6.1-6.5, not all students responded in common. Though the LSI was viewed positively in the mainstream, several students' responses were divergent from the group norms. These outlier comments are displayed in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6: Outlier student voices

Topic	Project Phase	Student	Student Voice
Whether listening skill stayed the same, went down or went up this semester (Interview question 7)	Fall 2010	Samantha (1)*	My listening is getting down. When I was high school student, I was watching English movie almost everyday and talking to American friends. But now I don't and during class students use not only English.
	Spring 2011	Neil (2)	To be frank, I'm not sure. I think reading strategy that high school and cram school teacher taught is more useful than listening strategy from this class because reading strategy, grammar, helps a lot and decrease the words I need to know, I have to remember. If I'm good at grammar, I can be good at reading and listening both.
	Fall 2011	Paul (3)	I hope it improved, but I'm not sure. I can't notice the improvement. I think improvement but not enough.
Whether teacher instruction was useful (Interview question 10)	Spring 2011	Neil (4)	Useful, yes, but some interaction, some instruction, I can't understand when and how to use in daily life.
Whether listening activities in this class helped improve listening ability (Interview question 11)	Fall 2010	Mike (4)	Most helped but it is depend on the activity, so I think it is case by case. Some helped a lot but some not so much help.
Whether listening instruction in UIE was the same or different than previous experiences (Interview question 13)	Fall 2011	Evan (5)	Very similar to this university. In high school, we had New Zealand native teacher. He tried to teach English like classes in this university. So some activities and the English native teacher was, ah, quite same.
	Fall 2010	Yanira (5)	This class was mostly same as high school because I had a chance to learn from native speaker, like at APU. But in high school we didn't discussion, so that is one different thing in this class.

*Note: Numbers in parentheses correspond to bullet pointed explanations below.

Outlying responses were present in interviews in each of the AR phases. With a total of 38 individual interviewees, atypical answers were not unexpected, as each learner brought a unique background and perspective to UIE. Some explanations for the remarks in Table 6.6 can be offered, based on the context of the LSI intervention and other comments made by these students in their interviews:

- Samantha (1) mentioned that her listening ability was declining throughout UIE. In her interview, she described going to high school in Japan near a U.S. airbase and her frequent contact with L1 English speakers there (including students her own age). This frequent contact with native English speakers gave her more input and motivation than she had in UIE; thus, she felt her listening ability had declined.

- Neil (2) was unsure about his listening improvement. From his remarks, it seemed his previous English learning experiences had impacted his views of language learning. The typical approach adopted at the elementary and secondary levels in Japan is the grammar-translation method (see Chapter 2, section 2.1). Neil's feeling that grammar rules are crucial to language learning was suggestive of this approach. As Nemtchinova (2013) observes, many students feel frustrated that there are no rules for listening that can be memorized and applied as there are for grammar.

- Paul (3) found it difficult to notice listening improvement. His view could be based on a lack of tangible evidence of listening progress. Since Paul did not complete both the pre/post-semester listening tests, there was not enough evidence to further investigate this point. Perhaps activities like dictation could be added to the LSI to provide learners like Paul with more tangible evidence of listening development.

- Neil (4) and Mike (4) both alluded to some uncertainty about the strategies or the presentation thereof, and how strategies might be activated in everyday life. Because the LSI intervention was an evolutionary program, the specific techniques, activities, and materials used in the classes were still being developed and were not finished

products. Additionally, Sean and I were confident in teaching some of the strategies, but less sure about others, as discussed in sections 6.2.1 (teacher interviews) and 6.2.4 (the research journal). Given the evolutionary nature of this AR project, it might be worthwhile to compare approaches, materials, and their modifications from phase to phase. In other words, Phase 1 activities and texts could be presented to learners along with Phase 2 activities and texts for the same strategy. Learners could then be asked which they prefer and why, although such a comparative element was beyond the scope of this study. Still, incorporating this type of feedback from students was valuable to the development of the LSI by, for example, making connections to listening in daily life explicit whenever possible.

- Yarnia (5) and Evan (5) both pointed out that listening instruction in LSI was similar to their previous experiences studying English. Both learners mentioned that they had experienced frequent English classes with native speaker teachers in high school, which is a rarity in Japan. This may explain why they had been exposed to teaching methods and materials similar to those used in UIE.

While some explanations for these outlying remarks were found through closer examination of their interviews and an understanding of the Japanese context, it would have been beneficial to contact these students and explore their comments in more detail. However, these comments could not be followed up or explained fully in all cases. They remain possible issues for investigation in the future. Examination of these outlying cases has generated new research possibilities, such as investigating the use of dictation tasks or exploring strategy instruction comparisons, which may provide additional insights. These viewpoints, however, were exceptions, and the majority of interviewees answered in general agreement.

6.1.6 Summary of student perspectives

This section has illustrated student perceptions of LSI through questionnaire and interview data. With the exception of a few outliers, these findings showed general consistency among the different sub-groups of students who were

reporting their viewpoints at distinct times during the project. The positive perceptions of LSI held by most learners remained steady across the three AR phases. Insights on more specific aspects of the intervention, such as teacher involvement in listening instruction and specific strategies included in the program were also discussed, as were suggestions for how the LSI might be improved. This section also reflected the cyclical nature of AR and the dynamic process of adapting and improving an intervention in response to participant views.

Student perceptions, however, represent only one group of participants in the project. At various levels, language educators were also involved with the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the LSI. These teacher perspectives are discussed through several 'lenses' and viewpoints, including Sean's, my own, and a peer debriefer's. The next section examines the views of these participants in more detail.

6.2 The process from teachers' perspectives

One way in which this study sought to set itself apart from others on LSI (e.g., Ozeki, 2000; Goh & Taib, 2006; Cross, 2009) was the incorporation of teachers' perspectives on the planning and implementation of LSI. Teacher perceptions of LSI were incorporated in order to add additional perspectives about the effects of LSI during this project and also to consider the feasibility of such pedagogy in the broader L2 teaching and learning environment. These perspectives were gathered from post-semester interviews with co-teacher Sean, my own research journal, and discussions with Peggy, who, operating in a peer debriefer capacity and with no other involvement in the project, examined samples of questionnaire, interview, and classroom observation data. This section reports findings from these teacher viewpoints and makes connections with the student perceptions shared earlier. It is through these separate 'lenses', along with the student viewpoints previously discussed, that the experiences of LSI were recounted by and examined from the perspectives of those who participated in the intervention.

6.2.1 Teacher interview data

Sean participated in two post-semester interviews with me (following Phases 2 and 3) to formally discuss his views on the LSI component and how it was realized in practice. These interviews comprised part of the AR reflection stage in that they gave us opportunities to consider various aspects of the intervention, identify any issues that arose, and establish any points where the LSI had achieved its goals. The emerging themes from these interviews were organized according to the following topics: Sean's self-reported account, the students' experience (from the teacher's perspective), classroom operations, and dealing with teaching issues that arose. The teacher's position at the center of this data set is depicted in Figure 6.12, and it must be noted that the attitudes described in this section were viewed through the lens of one particular teacher's experience.
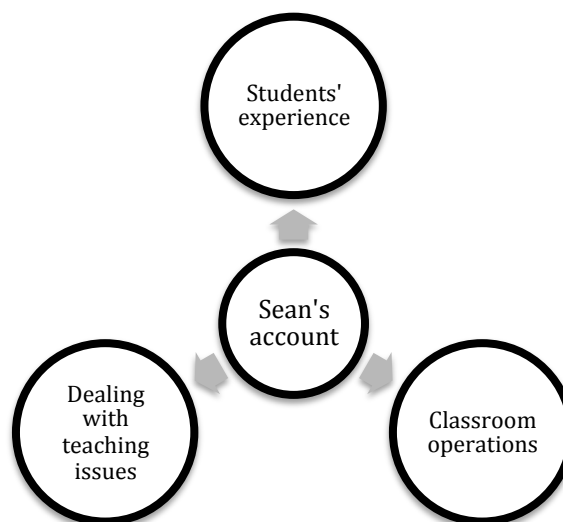
Figure 6.12: *Emerging topics from the teacher interviews*

In both interviews, Sean's insights were largely in favor of both the underlying methodology and the content of the LSI; for example, he stated "…it was an interesting experience and one that I felt was very rewarding" (*Phase 2 interview*). He also discussed how he felt the pedagogy would benefit learners both inside, and importantly, outside the classroom. According to Sean, his main goal for the course was:

> *…to make the students more confident in their use of*
> *language, and um, try to present a range of materials so*
> *this confidence wasn't just in the classroom but also in any*
> *circumstance that they might be required to use English,*
> *whether it might be on a test, in a classroom, on campus,*
> *with friends, overseas…*(Phase 2 interview).

In a related comment, he emphasized the importance of a process-based approach to listening:

> *The benefit of strategy training, of process-based training, is*
> *that you're not working towards a final exam, that you're*
> *actually working towards an improvement in the skill, which*
> *doesn't matter if it's in an exam or anywhere else. You apply*
> *these strategies, so on campus, I think [students] will have*
> *ample opportunity to get reinforcement um that these type*
> *of skills are useful (Phase 3 interview).*

The notion of preparing students for listening in new situations beyond the classroom by developing specific listening processes was a core part of the LSI principles that drove the course (see Chapter 3, section 3.6).

Sean confirmed his approval of the LSI plan and particularly the number of strategies selected for inclusion in the program, saying "I think we got the number [of specific strategies] right that we included in the course" (*Phase 2 interview*). This topic was referred to earlier in Chapter 5 as a potential area of concern. However, it seemed Sean was satisfied with the 13 strategies that we introduced and recycled throughout the course.

In spite of his enthusiasm for the LSI, Sean acknowledged that, prior to teaching this course, he was a novice in the area of listening pedagogy. His accounts of previous experiences teaching listening closely resembled those questionable practices such as the osmosis approach and CA (see Chapter 3, section 3.3.1): "Listening was just a way to present information and then it was practiced by Q and A [comprehension questions]" *(Phase 2 interview).* He added that when using a listening text in class, he would "[try] to pick out some either grammar function that was in it or some of the vocabulary that the people were using…I would say that prior to [the LSI], listening was very much a way to present information that was then some aspect of it was practiced" *(Phase 3 interview).* These statements indicated that Sean

probably approached listening instruction with few clear *listening* related goals, and that listening texts were in reality used to teach other parts of the language; any listening development was of a lower priority and perhaps incidental.

As Sean learned more about and acquired experience with LSI, he became a strong advocate for the methodology. He cited several positive aspects of how this particular LSI was planned and operationalized in class. For instance, he specified several advantages of explicit instruction: it encouraged L1 to L2 transfer of listening abilities; it made students "agents of their own abilities" *(Phase 2 interview)*; and the explicit labeling of strategies made recycling and student "noticing" easier. Many of these points were based on principles laid out at the initial LSI planning stage. To expand on the benefits of explicit strategy instruction, Sean stated:

> *I think we still need to be as focused as we have been up to this point on being explicit about what we're teaching. Um, naming [strategies] early and often, giving students skills that relate and recycling those terms and types of activities and make the process as clear to the students as possible… (Phase 3 interview).*

> *The explicit way of doing it, it has value beyond the listening skill. Um, it operationalizes it so that you as a teacher can come back to it very easily…I think giving specific titles to language functions helps you raise notice of like when you see them in other circumstances (Phase 3 interview).*

These comments showed Sean's preference for an explicit manner of strategy instruction (described in Chapter 3, section 3.6) for reasons of clarity, the raising of learner awareness, and the links not only to various listening situations but to other language skills as well.

The explicit labels given to each strategy allowed for direct connections from the LSI to UIE course instruction on reading, writing, and speaking. Since students were familiar with the terminology from the LSI, Sean and I capitalized on this by using the same terms when teaching similar concepts in relation to other skills. The ability to make connections between the strategy

instruction and other course components fostered a sense of connectivity and fluidity during the entire course:

> *…when we looked at theme, it made it really easy to talk about that in the reading course…details…supporting details in paragraph writing…markers, definitely markers…identifying a skill, identifying a name of a process and then keeping that name consistent…the students were like bang, bang, bang [they understood quickly]. And…it made organizing the class easier, it make talking about reading and writing skills easier (Phase 2 interview).*

Sean's favorable opinions about the practicality and efficiency of the explicit LSI labels was also expressed in the Phase 3 interview:

> *This strategy is this and this's going to help you with your listening. But also it's going to help with your speaking and…it makes you more efficient as a teacher because…you don't need to reteach things.*

The prospect of continuing to develop a spiraling and reinforced style of teaching based on the strategies from the listening component was also suggested as a way to further improve the course as a whole. Sean spoke of his intention to encourage other teachers to use the LSI as a way to bring course components closer together in an effort to provide less disjointed and more seamless instruction. He planned to tell other language educators:

> *Okay, this is what's coming, this is what the students should know [from the LSI]. Here's the Power point we used. You might be able to adapt it or [apply the same ideas to it]…so I'd like the integrated approach to happen that way. We can be as efficient as possible (Phase 3 interview).*

However, the possibility of overly complex terminology, mentioned in the literature (e.g., Richards & Burns, 2012), was cited as a concern in the interviews:

> *There's a certain barrier to explaining these [strategies] because they are sometimes technical vocabulary and you have to try and do it through either ah, example or slightly more difficult, analogy (Phase 3 interview).*

This statement suggested that while the labels themselves may be practical, explaining the concepts behind the labels was more challenging. It also hints at the potential difficulties of teacher modeling (i.e., when the teacher explains

their thought processes to students using a "think aloud" procedure) (e.g., Goh, 2008; Lynch, 2009; Siegel, 2013a).

Another aspect of LSI that Sean cited as making the program successful in his classes was the flexibility of the scheduling and the latitude allowed so that additional practice could be incorporated as needed. The original schedule included LSI four times a week (see Chapter 4, Figure 4.3). However, so long as all of the prescribed materials were covered during the week specified, there was flexibility in how those materials were delivered. Sean explained how he took advantage of this flexibility in Phase 3:

> *I tended to move the large um tasks, like the video and the ah audio tasks earlier on and tried to find other examples to work with during the week…I added some videos. I spent about the same amount of time on listening [in Phase 3] as [in Phase 2] (Phase 3 interview).*

Such flexibility was necessary because the course had to be planned prior to the first class, according to administrative requirements. Since no two groups of learners are ever the same, teachers need some degree of freedom to adapt lessons as necessary. If LSI is to be implemented in other language education programs, flexibility in the schedule, the delivery of the LSI, and the inclusion of supplementary materials will be key factors.

Sean's positive perceptions of the practical and efficient classroom operations of the LSI were straightforward, based on the interview extracts up to this point. He also spoke about his views on the students' exposure to this type of pedagogy, stating that: "the comments I got from the students coming out [of the program] were that they enjoyed the [LSI], that they got a lot out of it" (Phase 2 interview). Sean also acknowledged that this type of process-based instruction was likely new for these learners, the majority of whom completed compulsory EFL education in Japan (as described in Chapter 2, section 2.1). He pointed out that:

> *[These students] are used to, this is a text, these are the questions. Sit, listen, answer kind of thing. And then we'll check them. So it took a while to kind of like break the [pattern they had previously been exposed to] (Phase 2 interview).*

*Few listening activities [in UIE] were comprehension
questions. Students weren't prepared for this [process-
based strategic approach]. One obstacle was "new
experiences" because it wasn't just answering questions
(Phase 2 interview).*

These comments connected with student voices (see Figure 6.6 above) in
which learners also stated that this type of instruction was new to them and
was different than their previous exposure to listening pedagogy. The
newness of process-based LSI perceived by students corresponded to the
passive roles often occupied by Japanese learners in language education; for
instance, some Japanese learners lack experience using cognitively
demanding strategies and are therefore generally comfortable in receptive
learning capacities (Ozeki, 2000). In other words, learners may not have been
accustomed to being asked to play active roles in an EFL class, especially
during listening practice.

From Sean's point of view, once learners became accustomed to their
roles and the goals of LSI, they invested themselves in the methodology.
They generally thrived in the LSI despite it being a change from their previous
experiences. Sean shared the following thoughts about how he judged the
effectiveness of the program:

*…the proof of the effectiveness of the [LSI], I believe, was
not in the test scores but in the atmosphere of the class.
Every time there was a new strategy, they were turned on
and ready to go…[The LSI] was effective in that they were
enthused for the next one (Phase 2 interview).*

*[Student] performance in class suggested that they [learned
to use the listening strategies]…their performance
specifically in TOEFL, which has been brought up at
[departmental administration] meetings, about how good
UIE students were at that…if there's any validity in the
TOEFL score, and if there's any validity in what we've been
doing, that to me was an indicator that it's been doing very
well. So whether the students reported it in the survey or
not, I don't know, but in their performance, it suggested that
they had picked up the idea of [LSI] and are being assisted
by it (Phase 3 interview).*

Two important points were alluded to in these comments. One related to the
students' enthusiasm for and attraction to the LSI, a methodology notably

different from the students' previous educational experiences. The second was the measurable gains on the TOEFL made by the students, particularly during Phase 3. Though such gains were not a primary focus of this study, they served to demonstrate quantitative achievement facilitated by LSI, although other factors (e.g., amount of outside practice or contact with English speakers) also likely influenced test scores. Sean's comments regarding TOEFL gains in Phase 3 could also be cross-referenced with student voices and the pre/post-semester test scores (see Chapter 7, section 7.1.2).

Sean acknowledged that TOEFL scores and course grades were probably a priority for the learners, and these primary concerns may have been at odds with the LSI and its principles:

> *The orientation of the students is still going to be around scores. And we as teachers…have to try to find a way to balance that expectation, and someone going, "how does this improve my chances of getting a better grade in this course?" Against, if you focus on [LSI], not only will you get a good score in this course, but also, you are improving your fluency and proficiency and confidence as a user of the language (Phase 3 interview).*

These remarks manifested the possible tension between students' immediate and tangible priorities (i.e., high scores and grades) and teachers' dual goals of helping learners succeed both in and after classes. That these learners placed emphasis on test scores was particularly evident through the questionnaire and interview findings. Such contrasting priorities may have been an obstacle to uptake of the LSI, which only focused on test achievement to a limited extent.

The claim that learners were "ready to go" during the LSI corresponded with learners' verbal and non-verbal responses and their physical behaviors, which were observed during the LSI. Sean reported that:

> *Thinking of the [class observation] checkbox, there wasn't a lot of drifting off, looking out the window, student falls asleep, yawning…looking confused, yeah, um, the confusion comes at the start, like why are you expecting me to do this? But by the end of the task, there isn't that kind of look. It's looking at the screen, taking notes, following*

teacher directions, were getting checked more (Phase 3
interview).

The specific student behaviors that Sean commented on are addressed in
greater detail below in section 6.2.2 on classroom observation data.

One reason why students may have been tuned in to the LSI was that
clear-cut connections were made between the listening practice in class and
situations in which students would likely find themselves outside of the
classroom:

> *I would talk about things that they're likely to experience on*
> *campus, both this campus and um if they were to ever study*
> *abroad, um in their English medium courses, specifically the*
> *lectures…also general interactions, either in [APU*
> *dormitories] or if they ever choose to study abroad (Phase 3*
> *interview).*

Based on the Japanese EFL context (see Chapter 2, section 2.1), learners'
previous language instruction probably emphasized test preparation and
limited the listening activity to single discrete texts used in the classroom.
Thus, it seems unlikely that direct connections between class work and the
outside world were part of these pre-tertiary classroom experiences.

Issues that Sean mentioned to me during the interviews were related to
materials and LSI delivery. Regarding materials selection and use, Sean
conveyed some anxiety about control, or lack of it, when it came to listening
texts. He explained his feelings on both the materials created specifically for
LSI and the required commercial textbook:

> *I'm always much happier [with the LSI Power points, videos,*
> *and worksheets] because I know what's going to come, and*
> *I can gear things to what the next slide is…coming from the*
> *textbook, I'm less in control of the delivery of that…the*
> *textbook activities, I mean the comprehension questions*
> *and the pre-listening activities, I very rarely used them [as*
> *prescribed by the textbook itself] (Phase 2 interview).*

In this reflection, Sean highlighted the difficulty of integrating LSI with
materials (i.e., the textbook and corresponding CDs) that were not designed
with listening strategies in mind, which is a factor also described in the
literature (e.g., Rubin, 1990; Chamot, et al., 1999; Mendelsohn, 2006; Siegel,

2011b). Perhaps situations like these promoted strategy methodologists (e.g., Oxford, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990) to recommend creating self-made materials for strategy instruction, as in such cases the teachers have more control over how to deliver the instruction in class.

A second concern was mentioned in both the Phase 2 and 3 interviews. In both discussions, Sean described the trouble he had when explaining the strategy of chunking and the difficulty the students had in applying it:

> *…I came to you towards the end of the semester and said "Just explain to me again what [chunking] is." Like "just give me another run down on that." And like on the Tuesday, I kind of introduced the idea like just…dancing around it slightly. And Thursday, I tried an idea that I didn't think it worked. On the Friday, came back with something else and just nailed it. And that conversation with you helped me get it and so helped them get it. But if I'm only getting it on the last day…I think they understood what it was but being able to go outside the classroom and notice it and use it again, I'm not so sure (Phase 2 interview).*

Sean's concerns in Phase 2 prompted additional practice opportunities and simpler texts for Phase 3. However, the dilemma with chunking continued:

> *[Chunking is] still concerning…it's still a thing that I need to work on, because it doesn't come as naturally as, this is a theme, this is a detail, these are the context words, et cetera…but I do believe [chunking] makes you a more fluent listener…in a lecture where it's one person in front of 200, you don't get a chance to do that. You have to try to catch what they're doing at the clause level (Phase 3 interview).*

In his remarks, Sean stated that he needed to continue developing his ability to teach the strategy chunking. This type of tentativeness was not unexpected, as LSI was a new pedagogy for Sean in particular (I had previous experience teaching listening strategies in other contexts, described elsewhere in Siegel, 2011b and Siegel, 2012). LSI is also characterized in the literature as an approach to which many teachers may be unaccustomed (e.g., Mendelsohn, 1994; Chamot, et. al., 1999). Sean noted, however, that chunking warranted inclusion and that the ability to comprehend at the phrase or clause level was an important ability for listeners. Therefore, rather than abandoning the

troublesome strategy, he would continue to teach it in his classes and likely improve his ability to do so.

In the case of chunking, as well as in materials development, LSI planning, and the other issues that were addressed during the post-phase reflections (see Tables 5.2 and 5.5), collaboration between Sean and I was key in addressing the issues we faced. We also elicited input from other colleagues and the literature. These issues emerged from both student and teacher perceptions and functioned as stimuli for the successive phases of the LSI.

By way of summarizing the teacher interviews, several key points that emerged need to be noted, as demonstrated by the interview extracts displayed in this section. Based on the two discussions with Sean, his general perceptions of the LSI seemed optimistic, albeit with a few caveats. He alluded to his belief in a variety of the principles upon which this LSI was based, and he described how he viewed the practicality of the pedagogical planning. In addition, he discussed how he viewed the effectiveness of the program and the links he made between LSI and students' lives beyond the classroom. Despite the challenges posed by the program, Sean indicated his intention to continue in his own future development in LSI as well as his support for it compared to other methodologies for listening.

The teacher interviews served as 'book ends' to Phases 2 and 3 and were based on retrospective accounts of teaching the LSI component. Moreover, they hinged on self-reported information. In order to better understand the day-to-day running of the LSI component, classroom observation data are described next.

6.2.2 Through the lens of classroom observation

Findings from the classroom observations offered insights on the day-to-day running of LSI, as they provided a series of real-time snapshots of LSI in operation. These data gauged student behavior and reactions through the lens of the teachers who delivered the LSI (i.e., Sean and I). Findings described in

this chapter thus far have largely come from the students and teachers themselves. Such retrospective self-report data were therefore augmented by the observable findings described in this section, which came from observation sheets (see Appendix 5) completed during 50 Phase 3 classes. While quantitative totals from the tickbox part of the observation sheet were displayed earlier in Chapter 5, this section features qualitative comments that were grouped according to 'negative', 'positive', and 'other' behaviors. When reviewing this qualitative data, one must keep in mind that the terms 'negative' and 'positive' reflect the teachers' interpretations of classroom behavior and actions.

The most common remarks in the negative behavior category (see Figure 6.13) noted general confusion, as expressed through confused facial expressions or verbalized indications of uncertainty. The inexperience of these learners with a process-based methodology, as described in their questionnaire responses and interviews as well as in the teacher interviews, may explain this finding. The newness of the contents of the LSI, difficulties in following the teacher modeling, and perhaps being unconvinced of the benefits of LSI may have inhibited learners, thus causing some confusion in class. The second and third most frequent comments related to boredom / distraction and fatigue, which have an impact on many classes at one time or another, particularly with university-aged students who often have irregular schedules and priorities divergent from those their teachers ideally have in mind for them. I noted that in Figure 6.13, some comments described the inability of students to accomplish listening tasks, for this demonstrated that the LSI tasks were not always achievable, although specific problematic tasks were not identified.
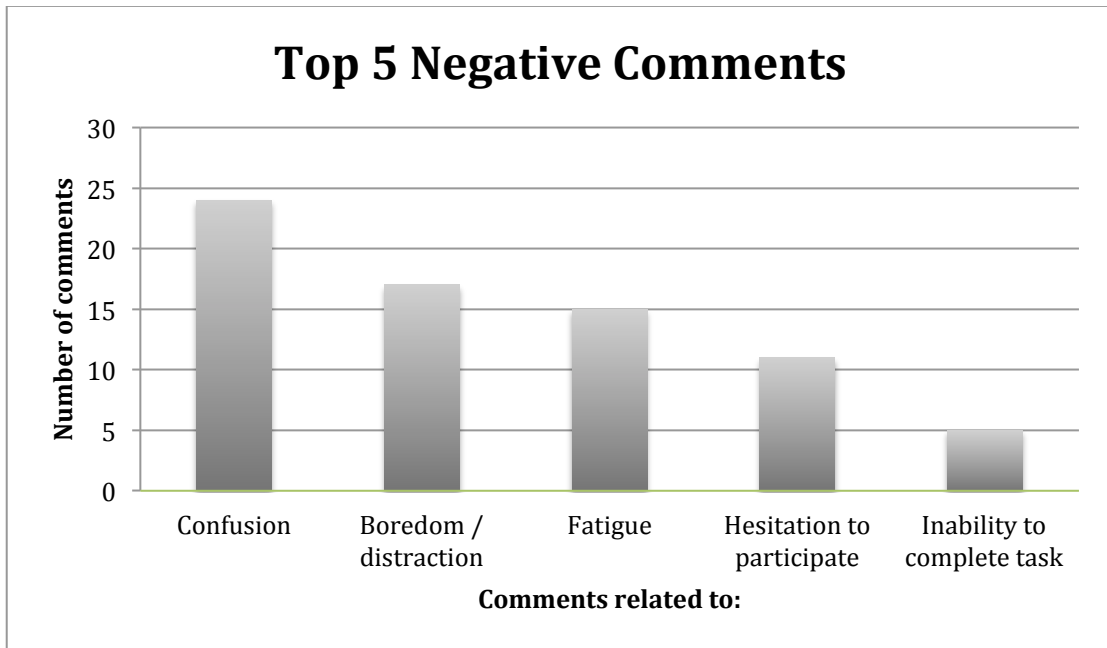
Figure 6.13: *Top 5 negative comments entered on classroom observation sheets*

Table 6.7 below shows examples of qualitative comments from the observation sheet and how they were categorized into the codes in Figure 6.13.

Table 6.7: Examples of negative comments

Category	Sample comments
Confusion	• *Had the feeling they couldn't see the point/differentiate from genre* (11 Oct 2011). • *Exasperated gasps after video* (27 Oct 2011). • *Nervous laughter at the fast rate of speech of fast food video* (22 Dec 2011). • *Student asked "What should I do?" after teacher instruction* (8 Dec 2011).
Boredom / Distraction	• *One student flipping through book during listening texts* (11 Oct 2011). • *One student fidgeting and ignoring instructions* (25 Oct 2011). • *Two students looking down during video* (8 Nov 2011).
Fatigue	• *Some sleepy students (Friday, after a test on a rainy/cloudy day)* (21 Oct 2011). • *One student yawning* (10 Nov 2011). • *One student eyes closed, head down, sleeping* (22 Dec 2011).
Hesitation to participate	• *A bit reluctant to call out key words* (17 Oct 2011). • *Some groups not so interactive* (29 Nov 2011). • *Reluctant to raise hands* (13 Dec 2011).
Inability to complete task	• *Couldn't respond when called on* (11 Oct 2011). • *Some not able to order all phrases* (15 Dec 2011). • *One pair discussing wrong topic* (22 Dec 2011).

Although comments were recorded in the negative section throughout Phase 3, the number of positive comments exceeded the number of negative remarks. A break-down of the most cited positive behaviors is displayed in Figure 6.14. Comments on the capability for learners to accomplish the set listening tasks were most frequent and were more numerous than those negative comments regarding inability to complete tasks (see Figure 6.13). The high number of notes about task accomplishment, along with the energetic atmosphere described in the comments added an additional layer of credibility to Sean's interview claims about students being able to accomplish

tasks, being focused, and being enthusiastic during the LSI (see section 6.2.1 above). Although the category *using strategies without prompting* received the fewest number of comments in Figure 6.14, this category regarding autonomous listening strategy use suggested that students would be able to use them beyond the classroom, which triangulated with questionnaires and interview findings.

Top 5 Positive Behaviors

A bar chart titled "Top 5 Positive Behaviors". The vertical axis is labelled "Number of comments" and ranges from 0 to 30. The horizontal axis is labelled "Comments related to:". The bars show: Accomplishing listening task ≈ 27; Being energetic ≈ 23; Active physical engagement ≈ 20; Focusing on task ≈ 20; Using strategies without prompting ≈ 7.
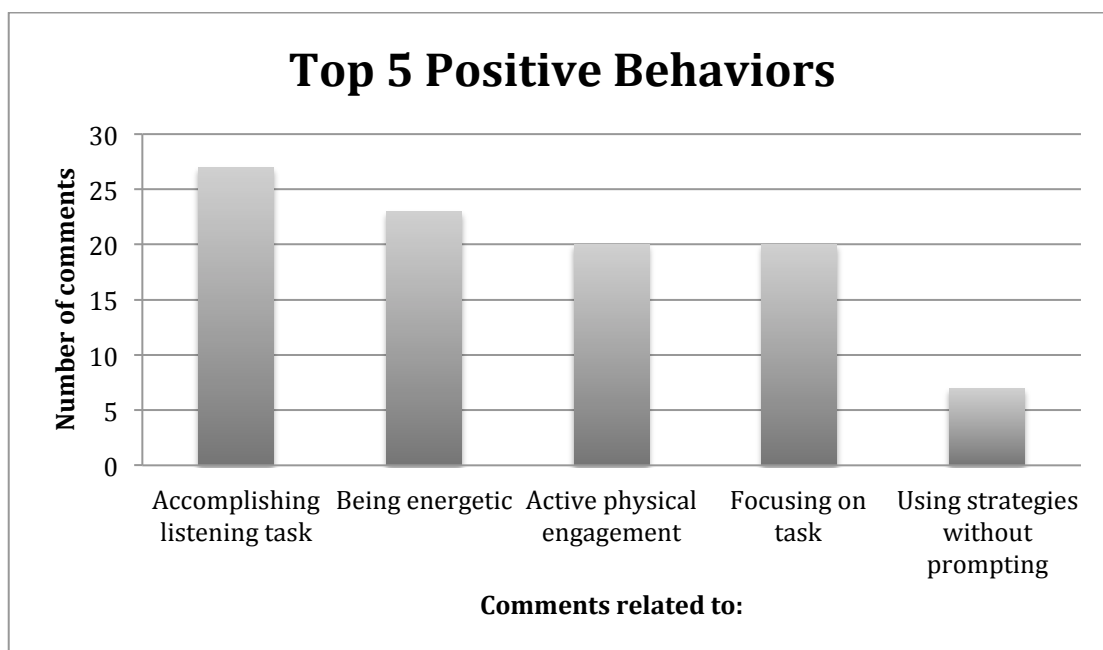
Figure 6.14: *Top 5 positive comments entered on classroom observation sheets*

Table 6.8 below lists examples of positive comments from the categories in Figure 6.14.

Table 6.8: Examples of positive comments

Category	Sample comments
Accomplishing task	• *Able to identify break in introduction pattern* (5 Dec 2011). • *Able to fill in missing connectors* (19 Dec 2011). • *Picked up category idea quickly* (10 Jan 2012).
Being energetic	• *Lots of energy and participation in pair work* (21 Oct 2011). • *Music really enthused class* (29 Nov 2011). • *Enthusiastic with video retelling and contextual questions* (15 Dec 2011).
Active physical engagement	• *One student leaning in and cupping ear* (1 Nov 2011). • *Mouthing words to song* (29 Nov 2011). • *Posture leaning over book with heads down and pencils ready* (22 Dec 2011).
Focusing on task	• *Very focused on monitors during food video* (17 Oct 2011). • *Remained on point throughout the review/pronoun intro* (28 Nov 2011). • *Students continue writing after text stops* (22 Dec 2011).
Using strategies without prompting	• *Good inferencing without prompting (theme of video)* (15 Dec 2011). • *Students predict questions without prompting* (22 Dec 2011). • *Students discussing tone unprompted* (22 Dec 2011).

When observations could be categorized as neither positive nor negative, Sean and I wrote them under the heading 'other'. The top six categories of 'other' comments are displayed in Figure 6.15. A number of these categories are connected to points already discussed in this and other chapters. Remarks on the recycling of listening strategies, for example, highlighted a point of emphasis from the LSI scheduling plan. Adding multiple replays of texts was a revision to the intervention based on student feedback, which called for additional time spent on listening and more chances to hear texts. The level of materials, sometimes too challenging or too simple, was also mentioned in student data. Finally, spontaneous everyday classroom

situations, such as sudden revisions to the listening lesson plan (e.g., providing additional unplanned practice or postponing a segment due to time constraints) and technical problems (e.g., frozen computers or stubborn projectors) were also evident in the 'other' comments.
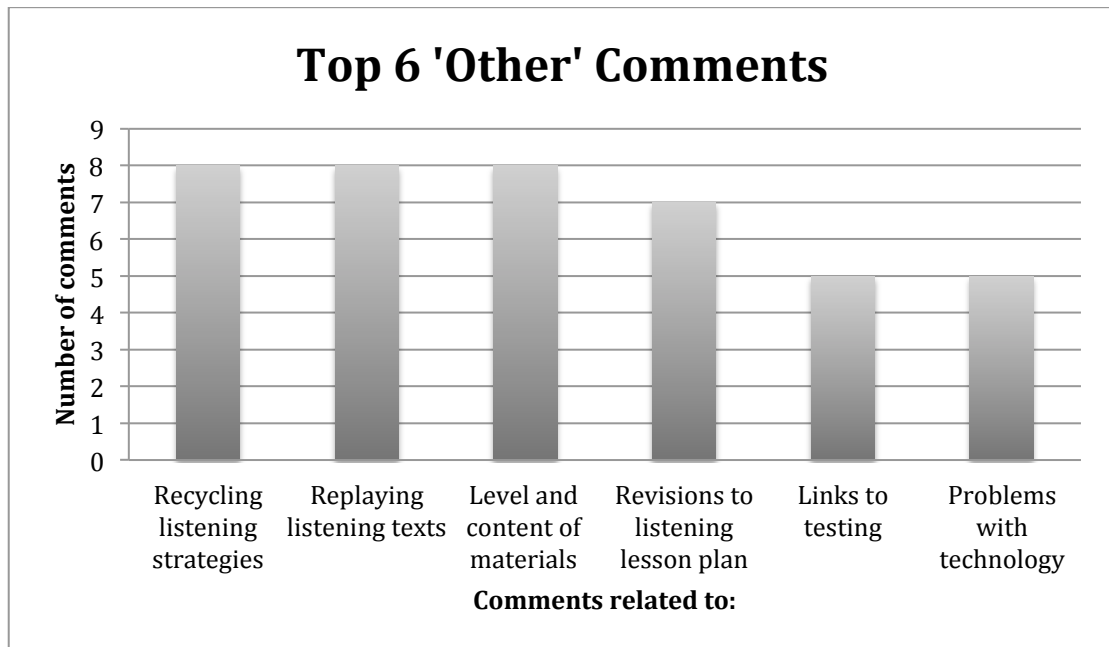

Figure 6.15: *Top 6 'other' comments entered on classroom observation sheets*

What follow in Table 6.9 are examples of 'other' comments that were categorized according to the codes in Figure 6.15. More comprehensive classroom observation sheet example comments and codes, covering 'negative', 'positive', and 'other' comments, are available in Appendix 6.

Table 6.9: Examples of 'other' comments

Category	Sample comments
Recycling listening strategies	• *Emphasized prediction and gathering as much info before listening to aid comprehension* (29 Nov 2011). • *Recycling of markers, patterns (N+V)* (8 Dec 2011). • *Incorporated rhythm and markers as well* (8 Dec 2011).
Replaying listening texts	• *Listened a total of 4 times (one time after answers for consolidation)* (27 Oct 2011). • *The second run through with prompts gave (near) perfect recognition. Still working on it!* (12 Dec 2011).
Level of materials	• *Student comments about Indian intonation* (8 Nov 2011). • *The video activity is still tough in (near) real time* (12 Dec 2011). • *Material topics are sometimes quite different topics (e.g., textbook topic on babies, video topic on homelessness)* (15 Dec 2011).
Revisions to listening lesson plan	• *Skipped 1st listening; combined the questions and transcript, which was a reaction/revision based on the first lesson of the day* (25 Oct 2011). • *Added a pause between each sentence in listening 1, based on 1st class of the day* (1 Dec 2011). • *Still having a little trouble with chunking and patterns of speech. This is definitely one of the points I want to focus on to explain better (post-semester meeting)* (6 Dec 2011).
Links to testing	• *Made explicit reference to TOEFL/TOEIC context questions* (13 Dec 2011). • *Made connection to predicting test questions* (22 Dec 2011).
Technology problems	• *Computer froze one time* (29 Nov 2011). • *One student problem connecting to internet* (8 Dec 2011). • *I used wrong text at the beginning of listening; I made a mistake with which text to play (played the wrong one, leading to some confusion)* (15 Dec 2011).

These sample comments and coded categories portrayed the LSI through the eyes of the teachers who taught it. By monitoring and recording

student reactions to the pedagogy, we generated snapshots of the LSI in practice, and our remarks recorded and captured observable learner behaviors during instruction as well as other influences on the classes. Such data were used to triangulate the self-reports from questionnaires and interviews, thereby aiming to strengthen the credibility of the research.

6.2.3 Peer debriefing of classroom observation findings

The peer reviewer, Peggy, also examined qualitative comments Sean and I made on the observation sheets in the 'negative', 'positive', and 'other' sections. This time, 46 comments were reviewed. For 35/46 (76%) of the comments, Peggy agreed with my initial coding. In 11 instances, she agreed with the codes I had assigned but also added a question, comment, or alternative suggestion for coding. This situation reflected circumstances discussed in section 6.1.4 above in which some categories overlapped and a degree of latitude was used in category assignment.

Of these 11 instances, I accepted three of the alternative codings. For example, I originally placed the comment "Picked up category idea quickly" in the "Accomplishing task" group; however, Peggy suggested that, in addition, the category "Focusing on task" might be appropriate. After further consideration, I accepted this challenge and recorded this quotation in both categories, as it was plausible that in order to accomplish the task, students first needed to focus on it. Peggy identified two other similar instances, which I accepted and recorded in two categories.

The eight instances in which I adhered to my original coding and declined to accept the reviewer's suggestions were based on a lack of context or detail surrounding the comments under review. In one case, Sean noted "Able to identify break in introduction pattern" and I labeled this "Accomplishing task" because I knew the lesson content and specific strategy (pattern recognition) for this class, background information that Peggy did not have. The reviewer asked: "Was this accomplished with prompting?" Based on the observation sheet, it was not clear whether the students needed prompting or whether the teacher gave it. On other sheets, Sean specifically

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noted that strategies were used "without prompting". Since such a detail was omitted from this particularly extract, it remained categorized as "Accomplishing task" rather than "Using strategies without prompting".

As demonstrated by the 76% agreed-upon categorizations, the peer debriefer and I viewed the findings in much the same way. On many of the other extracts, we agreed in principle and she challenged whether a different category or a combination of categories might be appropriate. Many of Peggy's queries regarding this data set involved causality; in other words, there was some uncertainty about which elements caused or influenced others. She asked, for instance, what caused students' boredom, distraction, or hesitation to participate. Cause and effect relationships such as this could not be answered by the observation data, as they only recorded visibly observable happenings (i.e., as witnessed by Sean and me). We did not speculate on the observation sheets what may have caused students to behave or react in certain ways; we simply recorded the ways they behaved or reacted. More explanatory and introspective reasons can be found in the student (section 6.1.4) and teacher interviews (section 6.2.1) and the research journal (section 6.2.5).

6.2.4 Peer debriefer overall perspective

The classroom observation findings marked the final data set that Peggy reviewed. After she had finished her detailed examination of different types of data (i.e., open questionnaire items, student interviews, and classroom observations), Peggy answered five questions about her overall impressions of the project (see Appendix 12 for the questions and Peggy's full responses). In her replies, she offered additional confirmation from outside the project that student perspectives on the LSI were positive:

> Overall, the general impression I had from the data was that students were favourable to the listening strategy instruction…it struck me that they were aware of what was happening in the class [regarding listening], the materials, and how they reacted to it. Such kind of self-reflexivity and reflection to listening tasks is not something I have experienced much of in daily practice with Japanese students.

In the above comment, Peggy also emphasized the thought, consideration, and awareness of the UIE students, who were able to express their preferences, viewpoints, and concerns about LSI through the data collection instruments.

In addition, Peggy noted the consistency and commonalities in the data she reviewed:

> *Not only as an outsider, but as an educator the data revealed what APU students consider helpful, unhelpful in an almost collective attitude to English listening tasks, texts, instructions…I feel that there was an overlap between all the data as recurrent themes, success and difficulty were expressed in all portions [of the data].*

Her observation strengthened the notion that student responses generally remained consistent despite being drawn from different groups of students at different times.

Peggy also discussed how her knowledge of the Japanese context in general and the APU environment in particular aided her examination of the data:

> *As I have had the direct experience of not only working in the Japanese socio-cultural context but also in the APU context, I could apply this knowledge to relating my own experience and background to the reported students' experiences. If I had not worked at APU, and most definitely not in the Japanese tertiary context, I feel that my interpretation of the data's implied meanings would have been quite different.*

This comment relates to the local nature of this AR, as the motivation of the project was to better understand the viability of LSI in the APU context. As Peggy noted, educators in other contexts who do not have an intimate understanding of Japanese learners may view the findings and interpretations of this study differently. From Peggy's perspective, as an outsider to this AR but with insider knowledge of APU, students' perceptions of LSI were generally positive and consistent across the different groups and types of data.

6.2.5 Research journal data

Findings from the classroom observations discussed above supplied regularly recorded accounts of what happened in the classroom during LSI. While they provided regular snapshots of the LSI in practice, they lacked both retrospective and introspective awareness. To compensate for this gap, the research journal provided an opportunity to record such perspectives. The 40 journal entries I made during the course of the research comprised a number of different themes, which were grouped according to macro-factors and micro-factors. The former are related to educational systems, policies, and frameworks at broad levels, often beyond the control of teachers (Burns, 1996; VanPatten, 1997), while the latter refer to more localized factors at the classroom level, those that teachers are often able to influence. Importantly, the research journal was written from my perspective as a teacher-researcher. In the journal, various viewpoints (e.g., other teachers, administrators) were expressed through my own 'lens', my personal interpretation of events.

Macro- and micro-factors that emerged from the research journal data are displayed in Table 6.10. Excerpts from the research journal are available in Appendix 8, and the emerging themes are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Table 6.10: Macro- and micro-factors from the research journal

Macro-factors	Micro-factors
Motivation for LSI intervention	Teachers' use of technology (DI)*
Administrator support for project	Teacher input on LSI (DI)
Materials decisions	Teacher implementation of LSI (DI)
Scheduling	Trouble spots of LSI (e.g., chunking) (I)
Strategy selection	Integrating LSI with textbook (I)
Assessments (e.g., TOEFL)	Problems with technology (I)
Student enrollment; test score entry levels	Explanation of LSI (F)
Available technology (e.g., PCs, projectors)	Trialing materials gradually (F)
	The time teachers need to become familiar with LSI principles (F)
	Recycling of LSI terms (F)
	Connecting LSI to other language skills (F)

*Note: DI = Development and implementation of LSI; I = Issues; F=Future of LSI

Many of the macro-factors mentioned in the journal were CLE policies that set the basic framework for all EFL classes at APU. Elements such as the weekly schedule, the availability of classrooms and technology, and decisions about student placement and entry standards were made at institutional levels beyond the influence of this research. In addition, the textbook choice for the UIE course was heavily influenced by CLE administrators, who received some input from other teachers in the department. Thus, comments in the research journal described how the LSI intervention was planned to operate within such university-wide guidelines. Example comments of macro-factors from the research journal are displayed in Table 6.11.

Table 6.11: Macro-factor example comments from research journal

Macro-factor	Example comment
Motivation for LSI intervention	When I first noticed the over-emphasis on product and the constraint and lack of transferability in the older materials and approach, I felt the need to speak up and present options for the betterment of the program (in my view) and to help students beyond the classroom (18 Oct 2010).
Scheduling	Class work will be mandated by week rather than by day. That means teachers may either follow the schedule strictly or cover material in a different order…also may vary depending on teacher/class needs. For my study, this means some flexibility and variation of listening coverage is likely (6 Dec 2010).
Materials decisions	LSI will be inserted into the listening texts within that textbook when possible. This will likely limit the range of strategies available. It is possible that supplementary video and/or audio materials can be created by teachers to introduce, practice, scaffold and review the LSI. Using LSI with predetermined materials is possible, although these materials were probably developed without LSI in mind. (14 June 2010).
Assessments (e.g., TOEFL)	There was administrative and university pressure to access listening in ways that reflect standardized tests like TOEFL…Products rather than processes will be assessed, though this may be best for consistency and convenience of marking. Assessment of listening processes may never be practical in classroom (i.e., non-research) contexts. Our aim during classes is to develop the processes in order to help students achieve these products (4 November 2010).
Student enrollment; test score entry levels	There are concerns about the number of students who will be enrolled in UIE in Spring 2010. The target score is 475-500 TOEFL, and it is projected that a smaller than originally anticipated number of students will fit that criteria. University and department administrators have strong influence and decision making power. The student numbers will in turn affect teacher numbers as well. This issue reflects the real-world, unable to control variables that often need to be taken into account in AR (9 Feb 2010).

The micro-factors on the right-hand side of Table 6.10 were further separated into three categories: development and implementation of the LSI program (DI), issues to overcome (I), and views for the future of LSI (F). Regarding the creation and execution of the LSI, comments covered aspects including selection of strategies, integration of those strategies with the assigned textbook and video materials, teacher explanations of listening processes, the recycling of strategies, and making connections from LSI to other language skills.

Meanwhile, the few issues that were identified in the journal involved problems with technology, the sometimes problematic balance of the LSI principles compared to the prominence placed on test scores (also repeatedly mentioned in the student interview findings), and the confusion that Sean and his students experienced when covering the strategy of chunking (also discussed in the teacher interviews). Journal comments also alluded to future semesters of LSI and how the program could be further improved. These suggestions included giving teachers new to LSI ample time to familiarize themselves with the teaching philosophy and materials, eliciting teacher investment and input for the program, and setting up workshops to practice and share ideas about how to explain and demonstrate listening processes and strategies. Table 6.12 exhibits example comments of micro-factors identified in the research journal.

Table 6.12: Micro-factor example comments from research journal

Micro-factor	Example comment
Teacher implementation of LSI (DI)	I'm also not sure if we should use L2 terms for strategies during instruction. Is it useful for students to know jargon like "genre" or "background knowledge"? Should we use L1 equivalents? In my experience, I've always used L2 terms in class but not sure of student uptake (18 Oct 2010).
Integrating LSI with textbook (I)	Creativity is a must because the textbook does not specifically, explicitly develop various listening strategies/processes; instead, each chapter contains the same listening skills, such as listening for theme, detail, inference…Since the textbook only covers a few core "skills", is it better to cover these in a rotating/recycling pattern? Or to introduce further skills? To get lots of exposure to a few skills/strategies or shallow exposure to many? Makes me think a large repertoire is better because of individual learner preferences/differences (15 Dec 2010).
Teacher input on LSI (DI)	I have created 5 weeks worth of materials and lesson plans, which will be reviewed by another teacher (Sean). Sean will then create a review set of materials based on the materials I've made so far. Getting another viewpoint will be useful, and it is a good idea to see what listening/teaching points Sean extracts and includes in the review (20 June 2010).
Trouble spots of LSI (e.g., chunking) (I)	At present, the teacher is on the strategy of "chunking." For the first time, the teacher reported some uncertainty/hesitation about how to deliver the chunking LSI. Although he covered the materials in class, he said the students were close but not confident in first understanding and then applying the ideas. The teacher will conduct some follow up instruction tomorrow based on his own reflection and some classroom techniques we discussed (e.g., relating chunking to idioms and to reading) (16 June 2011).
Connecting LSI to other language skills (F)	I am quite happy with the way the listening strategies can be reinforced by the other skills in UIE. The strategy terminology is recycled often in the listening component, but also in relation to writing, speaking, and grammar…students are assessed on their ability to use transitional phrases and markers during a speaking assessment. When writing paragraphs, inclusion of markers and transitions is one of the requirements. With this kind of integrated strategy approach, I hope students will see the benefits, see the connections between strategies and a variety of language skills, and also be able to use the strategies after class (4 Nov 2011).

Throughout the journal, the AR process was foregrounded, as various developments were trialed and subsequently improved during the project. Obstacles and barriers, both administrative and classroom-based, were identified, and plans changed in order to respond to and reflect those issues. The journal expressed, from my perspective, the development of this LSI from teachers' planning meetings to its delivery in classes. It included entries on areas that worked and on aspects that needed further attention. Furthermore, the journal emphasized the resounding effects from LSI (e.g., connections to other language skills and courses) and also provided a vision for how LSI can be implemented on a broader scale (see Chapter 8, Figure 8.1 for a model of program-wide LSI).

6.3 Examining the findings from multiple perspectives

All of the findings discussed in this chapter (i.e., questionnaires, student interviews, teacher interviews, classroom observations, and the research journal) were first examined individually and in isolation from each other. Once the discrete findings were analyzed, procedures moved to a phase of triangulation (e.g., methodological, participant, investigator), to further strengthen the trustworthiness of the aggregate data. Methodological triangulation allowed for cross-tabulation of various findings generated from different methods, while participant triangulation confirmed that the different participant groups viewed LSI in similar ways. Additionally, a co-teacher (Sean), an outside reviewer (Peggy), and I, in the role of participant-researcher contributed to the investigator triangulation.

A number of overlapping themes were evident when one type of data was viewed with respect to another. Table 6.13 provides examples of methodological and participant triangulation as well as some of the intersecting themes that manifested themselves. Additional examination of how these various data intersected and overlapped is exhibited in Chapter 7.

Table 6.13: Examples of triangulation of findings

Source of findings	Intersecting themes
Questionnaire / Student interviews	Perceived listening improvement; importance of listening strategies useful strategies; issues with materials; importance of testing
Student interviews / Post-test scores	Listening improvement
Teacher interviews / Student interviews	Listening improvement; Newness of LSI; Abilities to acquire new knowledge about listening
Teacher interviews / Class observation	Students' abilities to use strategies; students on task; students able to complete listening activities; schedule flexibility; issues with chunking strategy

6.4 Seeing through various 'lenses'

While Chapter 5 related the findings through an AR narrative, Chapter 6 has provided a different perspective on the data that drew out various points of view. The purpose of this chapter has been to present and describe the findings from the multiple participant perspectives, or 'lenses'. Each lens described the LSI intervention from an independent angle, allowing a rich variety of viewpoints through which to examine the project. The lenses of students, a co-teacher (Sean), a participant teacher-researcher (me), and an outside reviewer (Peggy) are intended to provide an extensive portrayal of the LSI intervention. The participant lenses augmented the methodological, time, and space triangulation presented in Chapter 5 through participant and investigator monitoring with a view to strengthening the credibility of the findings. When the findings are examined from a 'participant lens', the consistency and stability of views regarding the LSI can become more evident. That is, students and teachers alike found the LSI to be beneficial for myriad reasons: it promoted general listening processes; it focused on 'how to' listen; and it made connections with other language skills.

This chapter has demonstrated the outcomes of the observation stages of AR phases 1, 2, and 3 as well as how those findings created resonances throughout the three-semester project. Various types of data and several viewpoints were embraced in order to provide a multi-faceted account of learner and teacher perceptions of LSI and to shed light on the methodological factors that contributed to the development and implementation of LSI in this Japanese university context. While this chapter has focused on analysis and description of the data from participant perspectives, it has not offered in-depth interpretation of and reflections on the data. Therefore, the next chapter considers the key messages from the study and examines the triangulated findings in greater detail. In addition, it addresses the stated research questions (see Chapter 1, section 1.2) and explores what meaning can be drawn out of these findings that relates to the viability of LSI in the specific context of APU.

Chapter 7: Reflections and key findings for the local context

The previous two chapters presented findings from this study in distinct ways. Chapter 5 explored the evolution of the LSI from an iterative AR perspective, while Chapter 6 examined the intervention through various participant lenses. The purpose of Chapter 7 is to situate, interpret, and reflect on the findings within the local context of APU and to consider the ways in which various participant groups perceived the LSI intervention. In doing so, Chapter 7 considers whether LSI is a viable and sustainable pedagogic option for APU. This chapter aims to draw on the richness and variety of the findings and weave them together to provide a multi-faceted, triangulated interpretation of the LSI at APU. It aims to generate key findings and outline essential methodological elements that can facilitate successful incorporation of similar LSI components at APU.

The findings from the multiple AR iterations of the LSI intervention needed to be reflected upon in order to determine their meaning and impact within the local APU context. The previous listening pedagogy for the UIE course was identified as a limited approach that focused on comprehension questions and was confined to the classroom context. Therefore, LSI, a new approach that had not been used previously at APU, was implemented with six classes taught by two different teachers over the course of three semesters. The scope and duration of the study represented a more substantial exploration of LSI as it could be operationalized in the classroom than in previous studies; for example, Ozeki's (2000) study involved fewer students and took place over a single semester.

In Chapter 7, the findings are reflected upon in three ways, as shown in Figure 7.1: through discussing the concept of triangulation, considering the standards of qualitative action research (AR), and evaluating them relative to the research questions (RQs) set out in Chapter 1. These reflections lead to key messages from this study as they apply to the local context.
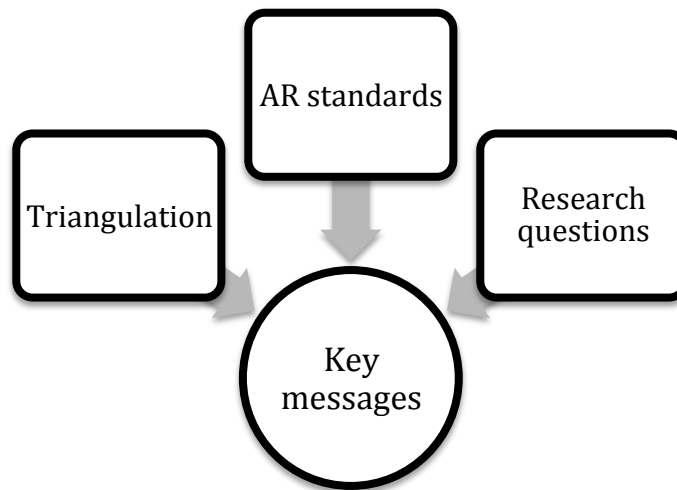
Figure 7.1: *Types of reflection leading to key messages*

The chapter begins by interpreting the findings through triangulation and cross-referencing of the various types of data collected. These layers of cross-examination were built into the research design in order to challenge and/or reinforce interpretations, assumptions, and conclusions stemming from the study. Next, the research is considered in relation to standards of qualitative AR, including notions of confirmability, dependability, and transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which were described in Chapter 4, Table 4.1. The chapter then examines the findings within the framework of the RQs stated at the outset of this thesis in Chapter 1. These RQs focused on learner and teacher perceptions of LSI as well as factors contributing to or inhibiting the viability of LSI at the program level at APU (i.e., beyond a single classroom). These three methods of reflection lead to the fourth section of the chapter that highlights key messages from the data and what they mean within the English curriculum at APU.

7.1 Reflecting on the findings through triangulation

The underlying ontological and epistemological foundations of this project were based on the following principles: that people create and interpret their own meaning of events (Waring, 2012); that reality is constructed by individuals (Waring, 2012); and that knowledge must be understood from an emic perspective (Croker, 2009). The accompanying qualitative nature of the

project accounted for the inclusion of multiple perspectives to better understand the topic under investigation (Cohen, et al., 2011).

This section compares and contrasts data yielded from the various research instruments and participant voices. For the purpose of triangulation, data were gathered "from a number of different sources so that the research findings or insights can be tested out against each other" (Burns, 1999, p. 25). The premise for this approach is that any research may be open to challenge when judged by any single source of data, or based solely on the views of a single group. When findings are challenged, questioned, and/or corroborated through triangulation, the resulting interpretations and conclusions are strengthened by multi-layered examination.

This section synthesizes different types of data that were individually displayed and discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. Rather than repeating particular details or specific participant voices that have already been reported, this chapter both summarizes the findings and examines the common and divergent themes therein. All of the data sources discussed thus far (questionnaires, student and teacher interviews, classroom observations, pre/post test scores, and the research journal) are included in the data synthesis.

7.1.1 Triangulating student perceptions of LSI

In order to better understand student perceptions of LSI, I wanted to cross-reference the questionnaire, student interview, and classroom observation findings (see Figure 7.2). On the whole, questionnaire results showed that students perceived the LSI positively. As a broad measurement of their perceptions, the questionnaire showed that students recognized the value of the LSI in UIE in general as well as its component parts: teacher modeling, listening materials, and corresponding activities.
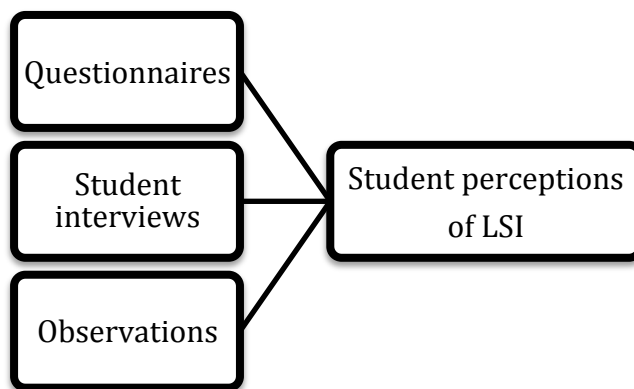
Figure 7.2: *Synthesis for understanding student perceptions of LSI*

When these questionnaire responses were compared to student interview comments, the findings were markedly similar: the interviews largely supported the questionnaire responses. I noted this co-occurrence because, while the questionnaires included several closed items, the interviews allowed students more freedom to express themselves as individuals and to provide contrary opinions to those on the questionnaires if they were so inclined. However, very few interviewees contradicted the questionnaire responses. The majority of interviewees offered confirmatory and explanatory statements about how LSI was advantageous to them. The cross-referencing of questionnaire data with interview findings was a check on student perspectives that showed the consistency of responses, through two types of research instrument: one that provided a broad overview and another that furnished more explanatory and personal viewpoints.

Since both the questionnaires and interviews involved self-report data from the students' perspective, I wanted to include a research instrument that would allow me to examine student reports from a third independent angle focusing on behaviors. This evidence was supplied by the classroom observation checklists. Those daily snapshots of LSI in practice reported that, in general, students were on task, paid attention, and accomplished many of the tasks set during LSI. There were instances when individuals were not on task, and a rare case in which a number of learners struggled to understand the strategy of chunking. However, over the course of the 50 classes observed during Phase 3, few negative behaviors or reactions were recorded. The

observations demonstrated that students had participated in the LSI much as expected and were able to uptake and apply the selected strategies. As such, observer reports were consistent with the student self-report data.

7.1.2 Triangulating perceived listening improvements

To examine perceived listening improvements, four different sources of data were cross-referenced: questionnaires, student interviews, test scores, and teacher interviews, as depicted in Figure 7.3.
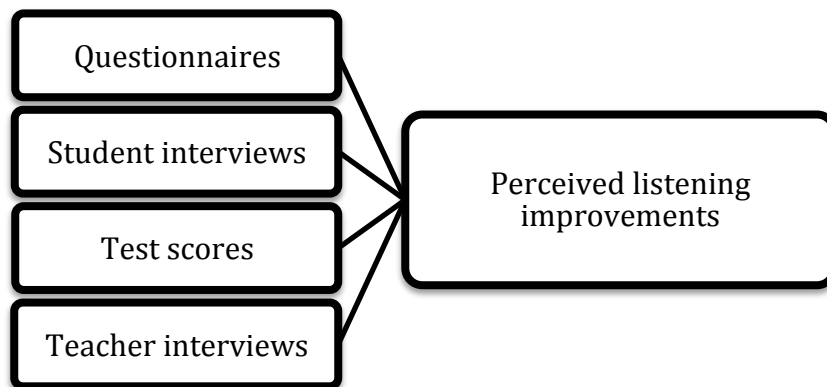

Figure 7.3: *Synthesis for understanding perceived listening improvements*

In their questionnaire responses over the three phases, more than 75% of the students claimed that their listening developed as a result of the LSI in UIE. On their own, these results may be unconvincing due to limitations of this research method (e.g., the Halo Effect; random responses) and given that the questionnaire was anonymous. Viewed in light of the student interviews, however, many learners explained that their listening had indeed improved. They cited examples such as raised confidence levels when interacting with English speakers, increased ability to understand English TV programs, and higher scores on listening proficiency tests.

Although interview comments served to support the claims made on the questionnaires, thereby increasing the integrity of the questionnaire responses and vice versa, the data were still limited to only self-reports of listening improvement. When these claims of listening improvement were examined in light of the pre/post semester listening test scores, many of which had increased, their credibility strengthened further. For example, several of the

interviewees responded that their listening ability had gone up and their test scores supported their anecdotal, impressionistic assertions (see Table 5.9). In other words, claims of improvement were backed up by test results in most, but not all, cases.

Teacher interviews offered another perspective on listener development. During interviews, Sean stated that he believed learners had acquired many of the strategies included in the LSI program. He also acknowledged that UIE students' TOEFL test scores had increased, even to the point of gaining the special attention of CLE administrators, indicated by comments made in departmental meetings. Thus, the notion of listener development was analyzed from different viewpoints (i.e., students and teachers) using multiple research methods that incorporated both self-report (i.e., questionnaire and interview) and empirical (i.e., test scores) evidence. The richness of the data generated combined with the triangulation of findings from various research methods provided enhanced confirmability for this aspect of the study.

7.1.3 Triangulating teacher perceptions of LSI

Three different instruments aimed to assess teacher perceptions of LSI: the teacher interviews, the research journal, and the class observations (see Figure 7.4).
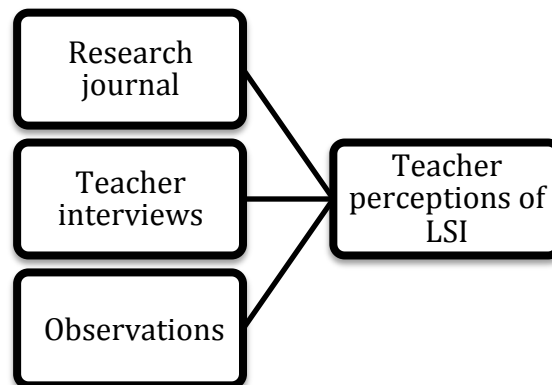

Figure 7.4: *Synthesis for understanding teacher perceptions of LSI*

From the interviews with Sean, it was evident that he began the project with the same views on listening instruction as many other EFL teachers

might. That is, he expressed a belief that listening was not a skill that needed to be developed in its own right. It was used to deliver other language points rather than receiving attention for its own development. Over the course of teaching two semesters of LSI, he became a supporter of the process-based approach and realized that listening deserved its place within a holistic L2 curriculum. Although he cited various obstacles, such as the use of strategy terminology and difficulty teaching the strategy of chunking, he was enthusiastic about the LSI program and its potential.

When Sean's views were cross-examined with the research journal, several of the same themes emerged, which were divided into 'positive' and 'negative' categories. In terms of positive perceptions of the LSI, principled viewpoints and practical topics were mentioned in the teacher interviews and also in my own writing in the research journal. Sean and I separately voiced support for the underlying principles that guided the planning and implementation of the LSI, specifically that a process-based approach was more appropriate for university EFL learners than was one that repeatedly centered on discrete comprehension questions. Both of us also discussed our impressions of and experience within the Japanese educational system, which continues to rely heavily on comprehension questions to 'teach' listening (a point which also aligns with student interview findings). In addition, the efforts made to prepare learners for their listening futures were highlighted in both forms of teacher data, as was the desire to develop transferable listening abilities that learners can apply when and where they need to.

Teacher interviews and the research journal data also overlapped by including several references to how well the strategies integrated within the course organization. We felt we had selected the appropriate number of strategies for a 15-week semester, avoiding some problems that other researchers have had (e.g., Cross, 2009) in which too many strategies had been incorporated for the allotted class time. Moreover, based on our combined 15 years of EFL education at the university level in Japan, Sean and I had corresponding views on the specific strategies that were selected for inclusion in a course targeting Japanese university students at the

intermediate level. We both commented that the strategies in UIE were ones that our students would benefit from when interacting with spoken English inside and outside of class. Finally, our reports indicated at several points that students were able to uptake the strategy instruction and were able to accomplish most of the set tasks.

Common areas of concern were also raised in the teacher interviews and the research journal. One example was the issue of strategy terminology and the possibility that some terms might have been too technical for learners. If terms were overly complicated, learners may have used some of their attention to try to understand the term rather than focusing on the cognitive concept (i.e., strategy) underlying the term. Since both Sean and I were aware of this possibility and wanted to avoid confusion, I used relatively simple labels for complex concepts (e.g., listening for main idea, listening for key words), and we agreed to limit the use of jargon in class.

We also expressed uncertainty about how explicit we could be in explaining the mental processes of listening. This was a challenge for us, but also one faced by all listening teachers: how to make the invisible processes of listening tangible for learners. We attempted to do this through Power points, text scripts, and teacher modeling; however, this issue remains in need of more attention through future AR studies on listening pedagogy and teaching techniques. Finally, Sean and I mentioned the potential friction between our priorities (e.g., developing learners' transferable listening strategies in English and preparing them for their English futures) and the priorities of some other teachers, administrators, students, and parents who often emphasize proficiency test scores.

When cross-referenced, the two sets of findings discussed above (i.e., teacher interviews and the research journal) were consistent; however, both were based only on self-report data. Therefore, classroom observation findings were also triangulated with these two data sets in order to ascertain any refutations or confirmations stemming from LSI in the classroom. Phase 2 and Phase 3 observation findings reported positive behaviors and suggested

that the LSI component was structured in a scaffolded, supportive manner that learners found useful (see Chapter 2, section 2.3.1 for additional comments on the term 'scaffolding'). They also suggested that students themselves appreciated a different type of listening pedagogy to that which they had previously been exposed.

Data on teacher perceptions were collected independently of each other, yet overlapped on a number of points. Sean's views as expressed in the teacher interviews, and my own articulated in the research journal, showed two teachers with very similar views on the LSI intervention. Sean and I agreed that a fundamental change to the listening component in UIE was needed, that our Japanese learners' needed exposure to more challenging and appropriate pedagogy, and that LSI provided the means for us as teachers to address these educational priorities. We were also both pleased with how the LSI was scheduled, how it was carried out in class, and how our students reacted to it. Classroom observation findings further augmented these interpretations.

7.1.4 Triangulating participant views through member checking

Member checking is a procedure that strengthens the credibility of findings by presenting previously collected data to participants and asking them to confirm, refute, or otherwise comment on the data under consideration. This procedure can be used when there are multiple data collection instruments, as it provides elements of openness, transparency, and confidence in the findings and is particularly useful to triangulate self-report data with findings from class observations (e.g., Oxford, 2011). In this study, results and conclusions from the classroom observations were presented to both students and Sean during their interviews, and they were asked to comment on the accuracy of those conclusions.

Conclusions from the observations were favorable but I needed to present them to other project participants for confirmation; relying on my own interpretation was insufficient. During Phase 3 student interviews, I asked students about three points (see Table 7.1). A limited number of students

(n=10) was asked due to time constraints; however, this number represented more than 40% of the 24 Phase 3 interviewees.

Table 7.1: Member checking in student interviews

Topic	Agreed	Uncertain	Disagreed
Students paid attention	9	0	1
Students understood the LSI	5	5	0
Students generally achieved listening tasks	10	0	0

Ninety percent of interviewees agreed with the conclusion that students paid attention during the LSI. They explained their agreement by citing actions in class such as students raising their hands and orally participating, which they believed demonstrated on-task behavior. Some also mentioned that the teachers did not need to use disciplinary measures or raise their voices in order to get students' attention. The lone student who disagreed used herself as the exception, saying that "sometimes I looked down when [the teacher] was talking or sometimes I did not listening carefully."

More discrepancy was evident regarding whether learners understood the LSI. This conclusion was based not only on classroom observation data, but also on the questionnaires, previous student interviews, and teacher interviews. In this member checking, half the students agreed that they and their classmates understood the LSI, while the other five students were unsure. The five who agreed cited the following reasons: students rarely asked the teachers for clarification or repetition during instruction; most were able to participate in class; and many students' test scores improved. Students who said they were unsure commented that sometimes they or other students needed to ask their partners for clarification and that learners may have feigned understanding to save themselves or their teachers embarrassment. This issue was a difficult one to investigate because it involved learners speculating about their classmates. While the member checking left this issue unresolved, student perceptions of LSI as reported on

other instruments were positive. However, the dimension of LSI uptake is another area for further research.

As for the check about listening task achievement, 100% of students agreed that learners were generally able to accomplish the tasks. When prompted to support their claims, students pointed to behaviors such as raising hands, orally participating, and working with partners toward a common listening goal. These were some of the behaviors recorded by teachers on the class observation sheets; thus, the students' interpretations of standard classroom activities matched the teachers' viewpoints as expressed on the observation sheets.

The same three topics in Table 7.1 were presented to Sean during the Phase 3 interview. Sean agreed with all three of the conclusions drawn from the classroom observations. Indeed, he concurred that learners were paying attention, understood the LSI, and were generally able to accomplish listening tasks. Sean was presented with findings from my own classroom observation sheets and acknowledged that the typical behaviors and atmosphere in his classes during LSI were similar to those in mine.

By triangulating the findings through member checking, additional layers of confirmability and dependability were added to this study. This procedure allowed me to corroborate and contemplate interpretations of the data between participants and methods to uncover any discrepancies. Upon reflection, it became clear that the biggest discrepancy revealed was the split student views on whether learners understood the LSI. Besides that, no other discrepancies arose during the member checking, and general agreement was established between student and teacher views and the records of class observation.

7.1.5 Triangulating the positive and negative aspects of LSI

In order to better understand the factors that positively and negatively affected the LSI, this sub-section cross-examines findings from questionnaires, student and teacher interviews, class observations, and the research journal (see

Figure 7.5). These 'positive' and 'negative' factors were further separated into those that contributed to a broad guiding framework of the LSI situated within the UIE course and those that directly related to classroom practice.
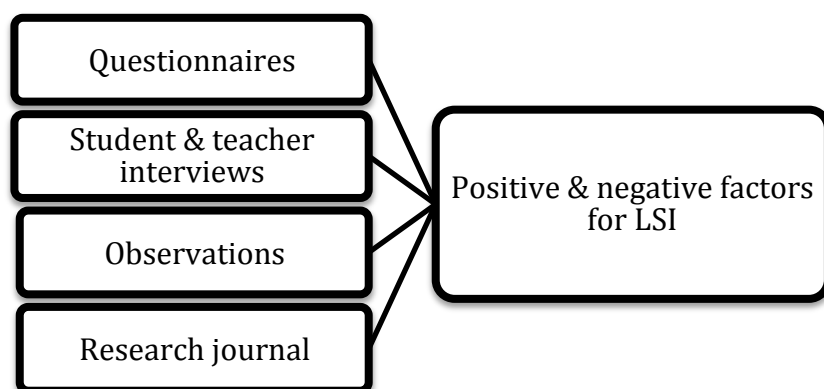

Figure 7.5: *Synthesis for determining positive and negative factors for LSI*

A number of factors positively influenced the LSI at the conceptual and planning stages. Importantly, there was strong administrative support for the LSI, without which the project would not have been possible. Through a presentation I made about listening pedagogy prior to this intervention, open-minded supervisors recognized the flaws of the previous listening methodology in UIE and the potential of process-based LSI. This support was highlighted in the research journal and in teacher interviews. In the interviews, Sean specifically exemplified how the LSI was a departure from typical listening pedagogy. Additionally, the schedule of four class meetings a week was conducive to the pedagogic pattern of LSI: introduction, practice, extend, and review (see Chapter 3, Figure 3.8). Sean and I agreed that adequate class time had been allocated to strategy instruction and that an appropriate number of strategies were included each semester. Collaboration among teachers, including Sean, administrators, other CLE teachers, and me, was also instrumental in generating enthusiasm for and new insights on the intervention. These favorable contextual elements were present in the early stages of development and remained positive aspects that, in the background, helped the project progress over the three AR phases.

At the classroom level, the pedagogic sequence worked as expected. Teachers and students were able to use and progress through the designated material, as demonstrated by questionnaires, interviews, and class observations. The four-day pedagogic sequence allocated for each strategy gave learners enough time for exposure to the strategies as well as to work with and internalize them. Schedule flexibility, mentioned by both Sean and myself, was also a key factor because it allowed us to make adjustments if learners needed more time with a particular strategy or activity.

Moreover, the newness, novelty, and challenge of the LSI for UIE students likely helped them to stay focused in class, as described on the class observation sheets, in Sean's interviews, and in the research journal. Furthermore, the LSI prompted smooth connections and conceptual links to instruction in other language skills, an unintended benefit mentioned in teacher interviews and the research journal. Another crucial advantage at the practical level was the adaptations made to the LSI from phase to phase, which were informed by feedback from the classroom. All of these elements aided the day-to-day running of the LSI, and some of them (e.g., linking to other language skills) also positively impacted the course as a whole.

There were also negative elements that affected the LSI which were recorded through the research instruments. At the conceptual level, Sean and I voiced concerns about the difficulty of teaching an invisible skill and how to make it tangible for our students, an issue echoed in the literature (e.g., Vandergrift, 2004; Field, 2008). Concerns were also raised about mismatched priorities. In other words, whereas Sean and I agreed that we wanted to teach a process-oriented strategy-based approach to listening, other stakeholders (e.g., some parents, university administrators, and students) may have been more focused on test scores. This potential mismatch, though not explicitly problematic during this intervention, could prove a major obstacle in other contexts or iterations of LSI.

Another concern was how other teachers might react to a process-based approach. Although Sean and I, along with our immediate supervisors,

were in agreement on the direction of the LSI, other teachers might be resistant to the basic tenets of the approach or to trialing new teaching techniques in their classrooms. Again, this concern was a non-issue within the parameters of this research but was raised as a potential obstacle to more widespread implementation of LSI. These concerns were all expressed from the teachers' perspective, and it was interesting that both Sean and I had many of the same concerns, especially those about how to involve more teachers in LSI.

In terms of practical operations, some students expressed their uncertainty about how much of the LSI they and their classmates were able to understand, as evidenced by some interview comments and on the class observations. The importance of appropriate materials selection was also an issue, mentioned several times in student and teacher interviews. The assigned textbook was not developed with LSI explicitly in mind and thus there were times when we inserted strategy instruction into less than ideal materials. In addition, both Sean and I made explicit our uncertainty about the labels we used to name strategies and wondered if they were too difficult or overly complex. It was also possible that we were spending class time on strategies that students may have already acquired, either from their L1 or from previous English study, which would constitute redundant teaching. Lastly, our reliance on technology and its inevitable flaws (e.g., frozen computer screens and slow audio/video file downloads) were made clear on observation sheets and in the research journal.

Each of these positive and negative points was raised on multiple data collection instruments, as exemplified in Chapters 5 and 6. This consistency suggested that these aspects were important to the LSI in UIE specifically and to the potential viability of LSI in the future. Several of these aspects were reported or elaborated upon in interviews and during class observations. Others were recorded in separate instances by both of us who were the teachers involved in the project. As such, these factors need to be recognized for their capacity to improve the LSI in UIE and also to inform the wider EFL community about ways to implement LSI and how to avoid potential pitfalls. A

number of these factors were integrated into the proposed model for LSI implementation presented in Chapter 8, section 8.4.

7.2 Reflecting on the study through AR standards

Whereas the previous section discussed the findings through methodological triangulation, this section considers the findings from a broader perspective of AR-appropriate research standards. A common criticism leveled at AR is that it does not meet positivist requirements such as validity and reliability. However, AR has other challenges and standards that it needs to address in order to be meaningful. The standards and terms listed below are based on previous work on qualitative research (e.g., Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Edge & Richards, 1998; Freeman, 1998; Herr & Anderson, 2005) and were described in greater detail in Chapter 4, Table 4.1:

- Applied research
- Real-life environment
- Confirmability
- Dependability
- Credibility
- Transferability.

The LSI intervention is described in relation to these AR standards in order to consider the extent to which they were met by this project. This type of interpretation and analysis was crucial to determining the overall value of this research to the UIE course and the local context. Additionally, examination of the research in relation to research standards helped to validate the key messages from the study, which will be discussed near the end of this chapter in section 7.4.

7.2.1 Applied research within a real-life environment

This project met the standards of applied research set in an authentic EFL teaching and learning context. It was categorized as applied research because it operated within the framework of an ongoing course at APU that involved regular students enrolled in UIE. This research was not planned to be

experimental or set in a strictly controlled setting, which are more characteristics of positivist research. It involved the LSI intervention that was integrated within the UIE course framework and existing UIE listening materials. Students were assigned to the UIE course and were required to complete the course as per graduation requirements. Only at the interview stage did learners self-select to participate in that particular part of the study.

This study also took place within a real-life tertiary environment and was affected by myriad outside influences, such as administrative decisions, scheduling, facilities, and baseline requirements for entry to UIE. Within this real-world context, it was not possible to control all of the individual influences that may have affected the 121 students and two teachers who participated in the three-semester study. It would have been unrealistic to expect to control for variations in, for example, students' sleep patterns, outside-of-class listening practice, and relationships with English speakers, all of which potentially affected the findings of the study. The project was set in the real world and acknowledged that outside influences could not be controlled, given the number of participants and the length of time involved. Variable control was not a priority for the study, as such control is seldom possible in the everyday classroom.

7.2.2 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the potential for biased findings based on the action researcher's position as a participant-researcher. Thus, sensitive confirmability necessitates multiple viewpoints on the data. As has been previously described, this research involved multiple data collection instruments, which allowed participants to express their views in different ways. Findings were then cross-examined through detailed triangulation, the results of which were confirmatory, as findings from one type of data (e.g., questionnaires) were generally upheld on other types (e.g., interviews). Furthermore, findings were examined through different participant lenses (see Chapter 6), which included students, teachers, and a peer debriefer from outside the project. Member checking provided yet another layer of

confirmability, as some conclusions were presented to participants for their endorsement or rejection. Thus, the findings and conclusions from this study have aimed for strong confirmability due to the triangulation and multiple perspectives incorporated at the data analysis stages.

7.2.3 Dependability

For AR to have sound dependability, the conclusions drawn from it must be justifiable and dependable in their own contexts. As this project was set in the local APU context, eliciting insider viewpoints was crucial. The notable number of local viewpoints incorporated in this study strengthened its dependability, and the member checking presented participants with opportunities to counter some of the conclusions made from the class observation data. In addition, the peer debriefer was a colleague familiar with the APU context, student body, and university expectations. The fact that her review of the findings and her general comments about the LSI corresponded to student and teacher perspectives helped to strengthen the dependability of the project.

7.2.4 Credibility

The credibility of an AR project refers to the degree to which the outcomes are due to the explicit intervention and not to outside influences. This LSI intervention was explicitly planned and implemented for this context. From its inception, Sean, myself, and departmental administrators were aware of the overt nature of the intervention. The LSI intervention was also made explicit to UIE students. As such, the entire group of participants and those in supervisory roles had full knowledge that an intervention related to listening pedagogy was taking place. Due to the applied, real-world nature of this project, as described in section 7.2.1, it was neither practical nor appropriate to control for outside influences. Therefore, such factors may have affected outcomes, although likely to a minimal degree.

Findings from the multiple research methods (the student interviews in particular) suggested that LSI impacted learners, improved their listening abilities, and would likely benefit them in the future. These findings coincided

with the principles of LSI; for example, that listening strategies should be incorporated into everyday life beyond the classroom, and that LSI should develop within students transferable listening strategies that they can use when and where they need to. As such, learners likely incorporated them into their everyday lives and sought additional listening opportunities outside of class, through TV programs or conversations with English speakers. These interactions, perceived as outside influences from a positivist point of view, actually indicated that some learners took personal action and applied classroom content on their own without a teacher. The outside influences therefore provided some indications that learners were able to utilize the strategies beyond the classroom.

7.2.5 Transferability

As AR tends to focus on local issues, the findings may help to inform other contexts but are not directly generalizable. This project was conducted in a local context within the single UIE level at APU. However, since the administrative framework was the same for all other CLE levels (e.g., Elementary and Pre-intermediate English), the LSI intervention from UIE could be adapted for these other levels. The weekly schedule and facilities, for example, were consistent between all levels, which suggested that since LSI was viable in UIE, similar versions could operate at the other levels.

For other educational contexts that have similar calendars, class time, and facilities, many aspects of LSI could also be easily adopted. The course schedule of strategies and the pedagogic cycle of introduction, practice, review, and extend could be transferred to other contexts that have similar overarching curriculum frameworks. However, appropriate strategy selection may vary depending on the context and the target group of learners.

The transferability of the study may also have some limitations. Other institutions in Japan, as well as in other contexts, may have less class time than the four-days-per-week schedule at APU. For instance, many Japanese university EFL courses meet only once a week for 90 minutes. Another scheduling issue is that some courses may need to cover all four main

language skills and thus not have sufficient time allocated specifically for listening development. Indeed, listening is often neglected in the classroom in favor of the other skills (e.g., Feyten, 1991; Nunan, 1998). Furthermore, other contexts may lack access to the technology (e.g., computers, projectors, audio/video equipment) that were used for LSI in this project. Despite these obstacles, this study can inform other EFL contexts about steps to incorporate LSI, a topic expanded on in Chapter 8. Specific suggestions for overcoming the obstacles mentioned in this section are listed in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2: Overcoming practical obstacles of LSI

Issue	*Possible solutions*
Meeting once a week	• Shorten the pedagogic cycle to: introduction, practice, review • Spread the cycle over two class periods • For beginners, focus on strategy introduction and practice • For advanced levels, reduce time spent on strategy introduction and increase practice and extension
Lack of class time	• Integrate listening practice with other skills • Skip pedagogic stages based on student ability
Limited access to technology	• Learners can access texts outside of class • Teachers, volunteers, or students can read texts aloud • Texts can be read aloud in groups

As demonstrated in Table 7.2, adjustments can be made to increase the viability of LSI within contexts that may differ from that in which this research took place.

7.3 Interpreting the study through the research questions

This project began with three research questions (RQs), related to student and teacher perceptions of process-based LSI and to factors that influenced the viability of such a program in this research context. Although RQs in action

research may need to be changed or modified during a course of research, I found no cause to adjust the original questions I set out to investigate. Using those RQs as a guiding framework, this section reflects on the findings as they relate to each of the areas under investigation.

7.3.1 RQ 1: What are learner perceptions of LSI?

Before considering learner perceptions of LSI, it is important to understand their general listening backgrounds and the affective factors that may have influenced their views. By understanding their previous views on listening and listening pedagogy, learners' perceptions of LSI can be viewed more clearly. In general, the EFL listening experiences of the students, prior to the LSI, were based on a comprehension approach (CA) that emphasized correct answers to discrete questions based on listening text content (e.g., Sheerin, 1987; Flowerdew & Miller, 2005; Field, 2008; Siegel, 2013b).

A few students in their interviews stated that their high school listening lessons were similar to those in LSI; however, the vast majority claimed that the LSI was markedly different than their previous L2 listening instruction. In addition, listening tended to receive the least amount of attention in class, whereas more time was spent on grammar, writing, and reading, a situation typical of other EFL contexts (e.g., Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). Several of the interviewees also expressed their opinions that listening was the most important of the four main language skills, a notion echoed in the literature (e.g., Oxford, 1993; Rost, 1994; Vandergrift, 1997). These conclusions were based on data from questionnaires as well as student and teacher interviews, and they aligned with previous literature on listening pedagogy.

Coming from this typical 'listen, answer, check' background in which they likely felt much anxiety and pressure about listening in English (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012), it was not surprising that many of these learners lacked confidence when listening. That is, the main reason they listened to English during their pre-tertiary education was to identify correct answers, which presumably would lead to high test scores, and thus better educational opportunities. These questions were often high stakes, the answers to which

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were either correct or incorrect. The constant test-like pressure, along with impossibly high standards for listening (i.e., understanding 100% of what they hear in the L2) likely contributed to the low confidence levels described on questionnaires and in interviews. In fact, it seemed many of these learners had unrealistic expectations for listening such as understanding every word verbatim. In interviews, students reported that they wanted to and expected to understand all the words in a message rather than just gleaning the main topic or important details. These unrealistic expectations were probably the result of the "test, not teach" culture of typical listening lessons (e.g., Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Mendelsohn, 2006).

The low levels of listening confidence found in this study are reflected in the literature. For example, Field (2008) states that listening is the language skill that learners believe is the most difficult. Regarding Japanese learners specifically, O'Donnell (2003) found that student confidence was low in all four main language skills, and that of 135 participants, 46.7% reported having no ability in listening and 43% only reported a little ability. Therefore, the findings of low confidence mentioned above are not unusual for the Japanese EFL context. Furthermore, after a listening strategy training session, some of Chen's (2005) learners expressed frustration that they were unable to notice any progress in their listening skills. When compared with the literature, the low confidence of the learners in this study was not uncommon.

However, in the interviews following LSI, many learners reported that their listening confidence had increased. They cited interactions with English speakers on the APU campus, increased ability to understand their English content courses, and better comprehension of TV and internet programs in English. Therefore, while their self-assessed confidence still remained lower than teachers might hope (as it was based on unrealistic expectations), learners appeared to be more confident and prepared for listening beyond the classroom following the LSI intervention.

As for the LSI in the classroom, students expressed their views that it played a role in their improved listening abilities, test scores, and confidence

levels. These perceived improvements were noted on questionnaires and in interviews, suggesting that students perceived LSI in a positive light because it contributed to improvements in their listening abilities by expanding their listening strategy repertoires and usage. Learners also reported that various elements of the LSI, including specific listening strategies, materials, and activities contributed to their development. Teacher explanations of listening processes were also viewed as beneficial, which suggested that learners recognized the potential that an 'expert' listener can contribute to listening instruction (e.g., Goh, 2008). In other words, these learners appreciated that the LSI was attempting to teach them 'how to' listen rather than constantly testing their present abilities. This 'how to' component was mentioned several times during student and teacher interviews and is also promoted theoretically in the literature (e.g., Mendelsohn, 1998; Vandergrift, 2004); however, the literature has yet to describe a 'how to' component in practice in sufficient detail.

Students also showed their awareness of how the LSI could potentially be advantageous to their English futures. Both the questionnaire and student interview findings demonstrated that learners could project their listening strategy use beyond the immediate confines of the classroom and their one semester of UIE. This forward-looking element of LSI allowed students to recognize the potential advantages of such pedagogy. In other words, they developed strategies that they would be able to 'take away' from the course to use in the future. Indeed, learner autonomy in relation to listening is a notion expressed by several listening commentators (e.g., Helgesen & Brown, 2007; Lynch, 2009). The fact that learners believed LSI would benefit them in their futures reflects their positive perceptions of the methodology.

There were also a number of aspects of LSI that learners perceived as in need of additional attention and possibly change. One such area involved the materials that were selected and used during LSI. Some materials were cited in interviews and on questionnaires as being too easy (e.g., some textbook audio texts) while others were overly-challenging (e.g., authentic video lectures). The problems with text difficulty often related to unfamiliarity

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with accents, failure to understand blended speech, and inability to recognize the spoken forms of words the learners knew in printed form. Such concerns about listening text levels have already been cited in the literature (e.g., Goh, 2000; Brown, 2011). Both Sean and I also voiced our concerns about the listening materials assigned to the program. However, problems with such texts may actually present opportunities to select different and potentially more appropriate strategies to help learners deal with the challenging material. Thus, some issues may not necessarily be linked to the texts themselves; rather, the problems might be alleviated with more attuned strategy choice.

Another change learners called for was more time spent on listening and the use of text replays during class, which is a topic highlighted in the literature (e.g., Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). This concern raises further questions about how many replays are necessary, if they are needed for all texts, and how to decide when to replay (e.g., if only one student wants a replay, should the whole class listen to the text again?). There were also some specific strategies that were cited as less useful than others, which indicated that the inclusion of certain strategies may need to be reconsidered. Perhaps other strategies would be more beneficial for these learners. By highlighting these specific improvements that could be made to the LSI, the students showed that they were attuned to and able to criticize the methodology; thus, while their perceptions of LSI were generally positive, they voiced their critical opinions as well.

A number of points raised during the student interviews coincided with the literature, demonstrating that the views and concerns about listening discussed by these learners are common to the EFL field as a whole. Other points from the literature were not brought up during the interviews, showing that learners may not have been aware of or placed less importance on them. For instance, the relationship between memory and listening ability was not mentioned during interviews; however, according to the literature, memory plays a crucial role in listening and in the retention of acoustic information (e.g., Goh, 2002; Field, 2008).

Interviewees also made no references to their L1 listening abilities or to certain aspects of L1 listening that may affect L2 listening, nor did they compare their L1 and L2 listening abilities. While some recent literature (e.g., Buck, 2001) has suggested that processes for L1 and L2 listening are essentially the same, other commentators have pointed out the sometimes drastic differences in phonotactic and segmentation conventions (e.g., Al-jasser, 2008; Field, 2008). These topics (i.e., memory and L1/L2 connections) influence all listeners who are learning an L2; thus, I was somewhat surprised that interviewees did not mention these aspects during our discussions.

Other topics mentioned in the literature but not brought up during the student interviews were related to theories of listening and listening pedagogy, respectively. Although there is no shortage of literature describing the bottom-up and top-down processes that constitute listening from a theoretical point of view (e.g., Buck, 2001; Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002; Field, 2003), interviewees made no explicit mention of these terms. They did, however, mention chunking, intonation, and rate of speech, all of which are connected to the bottom-up view. Prediction and background knowledge, which are examples of the top-down view, were also mentioned. It was likely that learners were unaware of the theoretical bottom-up and top-down views of listening but instead recognized some practical realizations thereof.

Meanwhile, literature on listening pedagogy has typically emphasized a teaching sequence involving pre-, during, and post-listening stages (e.g., Goh, 2005; Field, 2008). Interviewees did not cite any of these specific listening lesson stages, perhaps because the LSI used a more flexible and subtle pedagogic cycle, one that focused on processes. In general, learners are typically not concerned with underlying second language acquisition theories or with pedagogic plans, so it was understandable that interviewees did not discuss these abstract notions.

To sum up learners' perceptions of LSI, the findings from the various research methods indicated that students involved in the UIE course during the three AR phases generally had positive views of this approach to listening

pedagogy. These learners noted that LSI was a different form of listening pedagogy than that which had been included in their previous EFL classes. While they identified practical areas in need of further refinement, they also recognized the value of process-based listening instruction and activities, as well as the contributions that listening teachers can make toward learners' listening development. Most students attributed their progress in listening during UIE to the LSI component, and the majority perceived the value of listening strategies to their futures. For these reasons, learners' perceptions on LSI were favorable, as they believed it was useful, practical, new, and beneficial.

7.3.2 RQ 2: What are teacher perceptions of LSI?

This research question pertained to the teachers directly involved in the action research intervention and was addressed through the teacher interviews with Sean, the research journal I wrote, and the classroom observations. This research was motivated by my desire to investigate the viability of LSI; therefore, my personal viewpoints on LSI were favorable from the study's inception. Over the course of the three AR phases, my perceptions became better informed and more in-depth. Meanwhile, Sean was a novice in the area of listening pedagogy and LSI, and therefore he began the project with a more impartial stance. His perceptions of the program, expressed in interviews, were cross-referenced with my own to determine how two different teachers viewed the same LSI intervention. I also examined the qualitative data from class observation sheets, which cataloged frequent teacher reflections on the LSI. The emic views of Sean and I were balanced by Peggy, the peer debriefer from outside the project, who provided general comments on her impressions of the intervention based on her reviews of data samples.

Findings showed that the educators involved in this study (i.e., Sean, Peggy, and I) generally viewed the LSI as a positive step in L2 listening pedagogy. It was felt that the principled planning of the intervention and the practical execution thereof provided teachers with manageable lesson contents and teaching points that were beneficial to intermediate level

Japanese university learners. In particular, Sean and I agreed that a process-based LSI approach to the teaching of listening was preferable to previous methodologies, discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.3, such as the osmosis approach (Mendelsohn, 1995) or the comprehension approach (CA) (Field, 2008). Our perceptions of LSI were that it was an achievable, practical, and theoretically sound program. However, in order to understand the teacher perceptions in greater detail, emerging themes from the teacher data have been organized into those related to the general concept of LSI and those linked to LSI in action in the classroom and are now discussed.

Regarding the general underlying concept and principles of this LSI, Sean and I felt the program met our desire as teachers to prepare our university learners for life beyond the L2 classroom. During our discussions, we both expressed the views that university language education should involve broadening perspectives, developing transferable skills, and preparing students to apply those skills in future situations. It should not confine language skill usage to only classroom or academic contexts, especially given the international atmosphere of the APU campus and the English speaking goals of the Japanese students who matriculated there. We also wanted to minimize the influence of comprehension questions and product-oriented teaching methods. For us, the LSI allowed the teaching of listening to coincide with our deeply held teacher beliefs in ways that other listening pedagogies did not. Thus, despite any issues that had arisen, at an abstract level, it felt to us like the right pedagogical approach to take.

We also recognized that a process-based orientation was new for these students, a point reinforced by questionnaire and student interview findings. For Sean, LSI was a new concept as well. Since this approach was a novel and creative way to teach listening at APU, and it aligned with our beliefs about developing processes rather than overemphasizing products, we both invested large amounts of time and energy in the planning of the course, in collaborating about materials, and in refining our classroom techniques.

For us, the LSI generated a degree of stimulation because we knew most of our students had not experienced this type of pedagogy and that we needed to be attentive to our daily practices regarding listening. We were not simply playing texts and checking answers. Instead, our roles in class were much more extensive, as we explained our thought processes, demonstrated strategy use, and monitored practice activities. The regular collaborations Sean and I had about the progress of the LSI and how to adjust it according to classroom operations, as well as listening-related discussions with other CLE colleagues, also added to our enthusiasm. We had a teamwork mentality and motivation about the LSI and how it could be continuously improved.

While we felt that LSI was an appropriate pedagogy for our context and one that matched our teacher beliefs, there were some theoretical questions that we realized could not be answered through the limited scope of this study. One such issue related to a teacher's modeling of listening processes and whether such modeling is indeed comprehensible to learners. In other words, do verbal and/or visual explanations of internal cognitive processes actually help learners' listening abilities? According to students in this study and judging by advocacy in the literature (e.g., Goh, 2008; Lynch, 2009), teacher modeling is possible, but more work needs to be done to answer questions about its effects and how to execute it effectively.

A second concern expressed in the teacher data was the extent to which L1 listening skills and strategies may transfer to L2 listening, a topic not clarified by any research to date. Thus, we acknowledged the possibility that we may have been introducing strategies that the learners already had acquired and were using competently. A final theoretical concern related to the types of listening tests our learners took and would need to take in the future. These assessments typically prioritize the end products of listening, rather than the processes that contribute to identifying those products or selecting correct answers. Therefore, our 'teach, not test' approach may have differed from the prime concerns of our learners. We accepted these dilemmas and persevered with the LSI despite some uncertainties, again because our

guiding teacher beliefs and intuition as university educators prompted us toward process development and transferable listening strategies.

Among the teacher perceptions on LSI in the classroom were positive views of consistent listening strategy labels. While some uncertainty about the terminology was evident, Sean and I highlighted the pedagogical benefits of the strategy labels: they made recycling and reviewing strategies straightforward and allowed for swift connections between other language skills. Another positive element of LSI was the flexibility of the content and materials, as we were able to adjust our listening instruction based on the time available, students' individual and group needs, and our personal teacher preferences. Though the LSI materials and weekly schedule were prescribed, the daily delivery of the materials was more flexible, which allowed us to comfortably cover all content in class. In other words, the strategy and materials were used in one week, albeit sometimes in different orders.

One practical element of the LSI that received attention in all three phases was the strategy of chunking and how to teach it. Sean mentioned in both of his interviews that chunking was the strategy that he had the least confidence in teaching. As the LSI evolved from the first AR phase, we gradually adjusted the materials and activities for chunking in order to provide a clearer introduction and additional practice opportunities. By Phase 3, Sean and I were more comfortable with chunking, and in his Phase 3 interview, he voiced his support for retaining chunking in the LSI despite the challenges he had experienced when teaching it. The issue of how to teach chunking was a challenge, but one that we, collaboratively, were able to overcome by refining the LSI. This situation raised the issue of how to address a strategy that has been identified as difficult to teach. If LSI is to be a more widely used pedagogy, teachers must be attuned to any strategies or related classroom practices that may need attention. This notion coincides with that of teachers playing more active roles and being more aware of their potential contributions as teachers of listening.

Through her role as peer debriefer, Peggy added yet another educator perspective on the LSI. Her point of view was based on a brief explanation of the study and the LSI, her exposure to samples of the data, as well as the dialogues we had via email and in person. Despite her moderate involvement with the study, she expressed a positive opinion of the LSI: "Giving the students the chance to approach listening equipped with the strategies not only improved their listening but engagement with their own learning processes." Peggy also reported being impressed with the learners' aptitude for "self-reflexivity and reflection" about the listening instruction they received. More specific information regarding Peggy's perspective on the LSI is available in Chapter 6, section 6.2.4 and Appendix 12. While her encouraging views on the LSI were likely due to the favorable impressions and recurrent themes she found during her reviews of the data, as an outsider with limited knowledge of the project, she acknowledged the positive aspects of the intervention.

Overall, the three teachers involved in this study had positive perceptions of LSI and believed it was an improvement on the typical listening methodologies often adopted in Japanese EFL classes. As participant-researcher, I brought to this project positive beliefs and opinions about LSI and its potential to improve the way listening had been taught in UIE. Sean was introduced to LSI during Phase 1 of the project and increasingly developed favorable impressions of both the underlying principles and the classroom delivery of the methodology during and after the three-semester study. His viewpoints were valued because he not only undertook the LSI on a daily basis in class but also because he helped to identify areas of concern and suggested practical refinements.

Peggy had less of an investment in the LSI than Sean or me; yet through her examinations of the data, she was able to glean some impressions of the pedagogy and student reactions to it. She reported that it tentatively seemed a constructive and practical program, although her outsider status meant she did not know about the program in great depth. These teachers, myself included, had confidence that LSI was a viable methodology

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for UIE and other CLE courses and that it embodied several positive attributes, both theoretical and practical.

7.3.3 RQ 3: What factors contribute to success in a listening strategy instruction program for intermediate EFL university learners in the local APU context?

This RQ aimed to elicit from the data a list of factors that could facilitate and sustain an LSI framework in the CLE with the intention of informing other EFL contexts as well. This section focuses on the local APU context in particular, while implications for the broader EFL community are discussed in Chapter 8, section 8.3. The specific scope of this research was limited to the listening component of upper intermediate level EFL classes at one private university in Japan. More details about the APU context were given in Chapter 2, sections 2.2-2.4. The factors are organized into three sets: conceptual, structural, and practical.

7.3.3.1: Conceptual factors

Several conceptual factors emerged from this study that provided a stable foundation for the planning and implementation of the LSI program in UIE. To implement an LSI innovation in this context, a conceptual framework was necessary before it could progress from the planning stages and be realized in the classroom. Based on the findings from this research (e.g., teacher interviews and the research journal), there are several conceptual factors that fostered effective LSI: motivation and opportunity, theoretical knowledge, and a collaborative, supportive community.

The first conceptual factor that deserves attention is a genuine interest in and motivation to develop listening pedagogy, which would stimulate an LSI intervention. In the case of the present research, my dissatisfaction with previous teaching methods for listening in UIE (outlined in Chapter 2, section 2.3.1) generated the necessary personal motivation. There was also a general sense of uncertainty on the part of CLE administrators and teachers about how to develop listening pedagogy further within this context, which provided the opportunity for this LSI intervention to take place. Motivation and

opportunity are necessary because LSI is an approach to listening that is in its infancy, and the introduction of it, especially in more traditional EFL contexts, represents a break from more established listening instruction (e.g., the comprehension approach or the osmosis approach).

As described in section 2.4, Sean was a doctoral candidate in applied linguistics with an open-minded approach to a new pedagogy (i.e., LSI). His interest in improving the status quo of listening instruction at APU and his willingness to trial an innovation within this context were admirable. His academic background and interests, along with his confidence as a language educator, made him an ideal partner for this LSI. Other teachers with less motivation or ability may have struggled to implement the LSI to the same degree as described in this thesis.

Although APU is a university situated within the traditional Japanese context, it is a relatively new institution, having opened in 2000. Because the institution itself is not steeped in tradition and is less conservative than other universities in Japan, teachers and administrators at APU, and particularly in the CLE, tended to be open-minded, flexible, and accepting of innovative approaches to language teaching; thus, L2 professionals in the CLE were receptive to the notion that listening instruction was underdeveloped and in need of innovation.

Administrative factors also influenced the incorporation of the LSI program. From my viewpoint as participant-researcher and LSI designer, administrator support was crucial for the incorporation of a process-based LSI program. A process-oriented approach to listening instruction is one that many L2 professionals and administrators are likely unaware of or unfamiliar with. As such, program managers and coordinators may need to be presented with background information about the benefits and drawbacks of a program like LSI. In the case of the present study, CLE administrators were receptive to and supportive of the new methodology that I introduced to them. This organizational support helped facilitate the integration of LSI into the previous UIE curriculum. While I could make suggestions and requests, administrators

ultimately controlled practical factors like assigning classrooms, creating the semester schedule, and balancing time spent on listening with the other skills in UIE; thus, their flexibility and consideration helped this LSI to proceed.

The CLE curriculum structure was also conducive to the LSI intervention. First, explicit goals of the EFL program included preparing students for: on-campus conversations with English users, English-content lecture courses, study abroad, travel, and employment. These explicit goals indirectly determined a need for a methodology such as LSI that could offer students the chance to develop transferable listening strategies rather than those merely limited to the classroom context. Course goals were actualized through structured curriculum plans, which needed administrative approval prior to the semester. Approval for overall course plans and individual daily lesson plans meant that content, materials, and activities were thought through and reviewed in a systematic way. Moreover, the course schedule of four UIE classes per week made integration of the LSI teaching cycle straightforward, as each day had a particular purpose (e.g., strategy introduction Mondays, strategy extension on Fridays).

Beyond the administrative and structural factors, background knowledge about language learning strategies in general and listening strategies in particular is another important conceptual element. Such knowledge aids the requisite planning and decision-making stages about an LSI program. Familiarity with strategy instruction from close contact with the literature and experience in trying, adapting, and refining strategy instruction for Japanese university learners can help teachers and course designers to make appropriate and informed choices regarding elements such as strategy selection and classroom delivery. For this research, I shared my own knowledge of listening pedagogy and the literature as well as my previous experiences designing and implementing LSI programs (e.g., Siegel 2011a; Siegel, 2012) with open-minded colleagues in the CLE, who in turn built on those ideas in reciprocal fashion. This theoretical awareness about listening and strategy instruction promoted the creation of the list of principles and the pedagogic cycle (Chapter 3, section 3.6) for LSI used in this study.

By sharing experiences and thereby helping develop other language educators who expressed similar frustrations and questions about commonly accepted practices for the teaching of L2 listening, a dynamic collaborative community of teachers materialized in the CLE. Sean and I formed the core of this listening-focused community, which also included other CLE teachers and administrators. This community generated interest in and new ideas for the content and delivery of LSI that were appropriate for the student body in UIE. The community also helped to implement the LSI successfully within the structure of CLE courses specifically and within university-wide curriculum. Without such a collaborative and supportive community, pedagogic change in the classroom would be difficult to sustain. Yet this intervention did so for three consecutive semesters. In fact, the effects of the intervention may still be impacting courses in the CLE, although evidence for any such influences is beyond the scope of this research.

A strong understanding of and belief in process-oriented strategy-based instruction is crucial for LSI, in addition to motivation and opportunity, theoretical knowledge about language learning and listening strategies, and a community focused on learning more about and potentially improving listening pedagogy. Encountering an LSI approach would probably be the first time many Japanese learners would have exposure to a process-oriented methodology in relation to listening, and findings from this study substantiated this assertion. Time and patience with learners were therefore crucial for this intervention. Likewise, the approach was unfamiliar to some teachers and administrators in the CLE, who needed some introduction to the fundamentals and purposes of LSI. This guidance was furnished through demonstration lessons and activities, use of the consistent pedagogic cycle for LSI (see Chapter 3, Figure 3.8), workshops, and discussion.

As described above, a number of conceptual factors facilitated the adoption of LSI in UIE classes. First, the notion that listening pedagogy is an area in need of improvement and innovation stimulated this LSI. While the initial stimulus came from me, other teachers and administrators were receptive to the intervention as well. Their interest and support provided an

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opportunity for the research. Second, theoretical knowledge and practical experiences concerning the content and pedagogic options for LSI formed a coherent and feasible plan that could be implemented within the CLE curriculum structure (e.g., through the list of LSI principles and the pedagogic cycle). Thirdly, recognition that both learners and language teachers in Japan may be new to a process-based approach to listening assisted this LSI intervention by allowing for adequate class time and flexible course design.

After initial meetings and discussions about LSI prior to the intervention, CLE faculty came to share fundamental beliefs in the LSI principles: that the teacher is a skilled listener who can contribute actively in that role, that LSI can help learners develop transferable listening skills and strategies, and that strategy instruction potentially benefits learners beyond the classroom. If these factors continue to be nurtured, the LSI that was established within the UIE course has a high likelihood of favorable outcomes for the future and could potentially shift to other CLE courses as well.

7.3.3.2: Practical factors

Whereas the factors discussed in the previous section were necessary for the intervention at the contextual level, a number of practical factors facilitated LSI in the classroom. Though CLE faculty supported LSI at an underlying conceptual level, the intervention only succeeded in the classroom because certain practical factors were addressed. One practical factor that facilitated the LSI was collaboration among teachers, which was key because some teachers and administrators were encountering strategy instruction for the first time. This LSI marked the first time Sean in particular had been introduced to such an approach to listening instruction. Since Sean participated extensively in the LSI as a teacher in UIE, his cooperation and investment in the program were pivotal. He was willing to try an approach that was new to him. Despite some challenges, he persisted with the LSI and in his belief that it was valuable for our students. In addition, our collaborations before, during, and after each AR phase had direct applications to the LSI, such as refined classroom materials and teaching methods.

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Materials selection was a second element that impacted classroom operations on a daily basis. Identifying and selecting materials that have been designed with the purpose of developing listening strategies was preferable, but as demonstrated by this research, not obligatory. For instance, in this study the assigned textbook was not explicitly designed for LSI. However, the theoretical foundation and principles on which the LSI was based helped to compensate for the lack of explicit listening strategies in the textbook. By relying on that theoretical background, incorporating my own experience in teaching listening strategies, integrating Sean's input, and developing supplementary materials, the LSI program was able to overcome deficiencies in the textbook. When selecting commercial materials for future iterations of LSI in UIE and other CLE courses, it may be important to choose those with which appropriate strategies can easily be integrated. An alternative direction is for teachers to develop their own texts and activities for strategy instruction, as was done at times during the present study; however, this course of action involves substantial commitments in terms of time, effort, and resources.

A third practical factor that aided LSI in UIE was the pedagogic cycle adopted for this study (introduction, practice, review, and extension). Due to the newness of LSI for UIE students, the routine of an organized and replicable pedagogic sequence likely made learners feel comfortable and helped them realize the purposes for activities they completed in class. Routine also assisted the teachers in becoming accustomed to a pattern of LSI. Adequate amounts of class time were designated for LSI so that teachers had enough time to introduce and explain strategies and so that students did not feel rushed in trying to apply them. In this study, class observations showed that between 20-60 minutes were normally allocated for LSI. Designation of sufficient class time in future iterations of LSI in UIE would also allow for text replays which, according to findings in this study, would likely increase learner confidence.

Strategy labels, as discussed previously, were another important factor that aided the day-to-day implementation of LSI. These benefits applied to the LSI specifically and also transferred to other language skills taught in UIE.

Recycling of strategies ensured that students were familiar with the terminology and the concepts it represented, and that learners were able to practice applying the strategies to various audio and video texts. The labels were easily recalled by students and teachers during review sessions and had organizational value when linked to other skills. As Sean pointed out, labels like those used in this study help teachers be as efficient as possible. The connections to other language skills also reinforced the cognitive processes introduced through LSI. In other words, when a strategy like chunking was presented during LSI, the similar processing of groups of words was also highlighted during the reading segment of a class. According to the teacher perspectives expressed in Chapter 6, section 6.2, this connection from LSI to other skills was of great value to the course as a whole.

The final classroom factor to emerge from this study was the importance of a mechanism for addressing problems with LSI and for incorporating solutions and refinements to the approach. As it was based on the processes of AR, this study had a built-in system for eliciting issues about the LSI at the end of each AR phase and refining them prior to the subsequent phase. Since LSI was a new approach in UIE, this type of system identified and addressed areas of concern. As a result, the program was adjusted to increasingly meet the needs of the learners, teachers, and local context. The LSI described in this study benefitted from a monitoring and reflection system designed to continuously improve it. Continuing to elicit viewpoints from CLE students and teachers alike, as done in this study, will inform and improve ensuing versions of LSI in UIE on a continuous basis and also inform planning for other courses in the CLE.

7.3.3.3 Summary of factors contributing to the success of LSI in UIE

In summary, a number of factors contributed to the success of LSI in this research. Fundamental conceptual factors such as teacher motivation and opportunities for using process-based listening and strategy instruction stimulated the intervention. The APU curriculum structure and administrative support set a strong foundation from which to launch an LSI program. In

addition, theoretical knowledge about listening, listening strategies, and strategy instruction helped to shape and organize the intervention in ways that invited investment from teachers and administrators, who formed a collaborative group that supported the LSI. Practical factors included cooperation between Sean and me in developing and refining the methodology. Materials selection and adaption was also an important factor, as was the freedom and flexibility to add supplementary texts and activities when necessary. Classroom delivery of LSI was facilitated by the pedagogic cycle and the consistent use of strategy labels. A final component that aided this intervention was the integration of a mechanism for reflection and refinement. As with any pedagogic innovation, time, patience, and troubleshooting were also essential. These conceptual and practical factors are discussed in relation to broader Japanese EFL university and L2 contexts in Chapter 8.

7.4 Key messages from the study

Thus far, this chapter has discussed the triangulation of the various research methods and types of data that were integrated during the study. The scope and richness of the findings helped to demonstrate the consistency of responses across different data collection tools and AR phases. This chapter has also considered the study in terms of standards for evaluating AR and addressed expectations for confirmability, credibility, dependability, and transferability. Furthermore, the three research questions that drove the project were addressed in relation to the specific context in which this study was set. In the process of reflecting on the findings in these three ways (i.e., triangulation, AR standards, and research questions), several key messages from the study have emerged and are discussed in this section. These key messages have been derived from the context of the UIE course at APU. While they are specifically situated within a single university context in Japan, they can be useful in informing potential LSI in other L2 programs as well, as will be explained in Chapter 8.

7.4.1 Key messages from UIE student and teacher perceptions

As consistently demonstrated by student voices over the course of three AR phases, the majority of learners in the UIE course believed that LSI was a beneficial and practical way to teach EFL listening. Their positive perceptions of the process-oriented approach were based on the teacher's role in listening instruction, the materials utilized in class, and the listening activities they engaged in. Many of the learners also pointed out that an LSI approach was new to them and that it diverged from their previous experiences with EFL listening, which often included a product-oriented approach. Furthermore, students in this research recognized that the LSI component offered a chance to learn 'how to' listen, a stance seldom adopted in their prior EFL courses. A key message from the study, then, was that LSI has the potential to meet the expectations of university learners that they will be taught 'how to' listen through progressive descriptions and 'expert' listener input. Another important message from students was that they were dissatisfied with a product-oriented comprehension-based approach to listening and that they desired some kind of pedagogic change in this area.

Teachers' perceptions of the LSI were likewise positive, as it promoted a process-oriented approach that allowed teachers to use their listening abilities and pedagogic knowledge to better effect than other listening pedagogies might permit. The two main teachers involved in the study (i.e., Sean and I) both expressed a preference for a process-oriented approach and were pleased with the everyday running of the LSI. The third teacher, Peggy, had less in-depth knowledge about the LSI program; however, in her responses to general questions, she reported that the program seemed well-organized and was appreciated by learners. Thus, from an outsider-educator's perspective, the intervention was planned and executed effectively. Among the positive aspects of LSI from the teachers' points of view were the principled nature of the intervention, the consistent weekly pedagogic cycle, the specific strategies and strategy labels, and the convenience of using strategy terminology in other parts of the course. A key message from the

teachers' point of view was that LSI helped broaden learners' range of strategies and also made course planning and execution more fluid.

The principled underpinnings of this LSI intervention set a solid, informed foundation for the project. During data collection and analysis, it became clear that a number of the principles discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.6 were acknowledged in the findings. Table 7.3 displays a selection of these principles and shows where they were displayed in different types of data.

Table 7.3: Connections between LSI principles and findings

Principle	Positive findings in relation to principle
Teacher modeling of listening strategies has value.	Questionnaires, student interviews, teacher interviews
Listening strategies should be transferred to real world situations.	Questionnaires, student interviews, teacher interviews
Focusing on 'how to' listen is crucial.	Student interviews, teacher interviews, research journal
Strategies should be recycled consistently.	Teacher interviews, research journal
Strategies should be integrated with existing textbooks and materials; additional supplementary materials may also be necessary.	Teacher interviews, research journal

The principles listed in Table 7.3 were selected at the planning stage of the intervention because they were promoted in the literature and also met my personal views about listening instruction (see Chapter 2, section 2.5 and Chapter 4, section 4.2.3). They also aimed to address problems with previous listening instruction as described by other L2 professionals working in different contexts within Asia (see Chapter 2, section 2.5.3). The positive findings related to these principles within the UIE course strongly suggest that these ideals can supply a theoretical foundation for LSI interventions that may be used in other contexts. Thus, a major recommendation from this study is that principles should be the foundation of an LSI intervention. Whether they are the same principles as those used in this study may depend on context, learner ability, and individual teacher beliefs. However, the need for informed

and appropriate theoretical underpinnings is a key message that was reinforced by the findings in this project.

Both students and teachers recognized that the LSI was not perfect and that some elements need to be amended for future iterations. For example, findings suggested that some strategy explanations may need refinement and that more links to students' daily lives would make the LSI more salient. This marks another key message from the study: that although LSI was perceived positively by most participants, an LSI approach needs to be dynamic in nature. That is, course planners must be prepared to alter strategies, materials, and classroom delivery to suit specific groups of learners at particular levels of development. When teachers are open to student feedback and professional reflection on LSI, improvements can be made from one course to the next.

The key messages from student and teacher perspectives were that the LSI in UIE was a positive experience for both. It provided students with new knowledge about listening and a 'how to' element that had been lacking in their previous EFL education. It also recognized the enhanced role that teachers can play in listening instruction. Moreover, the principles of LSI met the teachers' personal desires to prepare UIE learners for listening both in and beyond the class. Findings from the data collection reinforced that these principles were important to the success of the project. While the perceptions of these participants provided important insights into LSI, other key messages from the study relate to the planning of LSI within the UIE curriculum and the organizational framework of the EFL program at APU.

7.4.2 Key messages for the curriculum planning of LSI

This section describes the key messages related to the structure and organization of the LSI program within the UIE course and the curriculum framework established by the CLE at APU. Most other EFL contexts will differ at least slightly from the CLE; however, by understanding those aspects that worked well and those that were challenging for the LSI in this study,

educators in other contexts will be better prepared to incorporate and develop LSI in their own teaching and learning environments.

A number of macro-factors facilitated this LSI intervention. First, support from administrators and other teachers provided a motivating and stimulating environment in which to trial and refine a new approach to listening instruction, one that had not been used at APU prior to this project. In addition, a shared belief in process-oriented language teaching enabled the cycle of planning and refining LSI to proceed smoothly and helped the intervention to continuously improve, better meeting the needs and desires of students and teachers alike. It is possible that this type of support will not be immediately available in some situations, perhaps because teachers or supervisors may lack sufficient understanding of what listening is. In addition, they may be unaware of the drawbacks of previous pedagogies. As such, those interested in process-based LSI should be prepared to explain and demonstrate the approach to other stakeholders in order to gain their support.

Another key message from this study was that LSI could be successfully integrated with commercial materials, even if those materials were not specifically designed with listening strategies in mind. This assertion suggests that LSI has the potential to be implemented in any L2 teaching and learning situation. The process-based approach can be applied to any set of existing materials, so long as teachers are prepared and trained to select appropriate strategies, explain their 'expert' listening processes, and set out listening models for their learners. Supplementary materials can be created for strategy introductions, additional practice, and extension to other listening situations; however, the existing listening materials in any course likely provide a solid starting point from which to develop an LSI program. In addition, the weekly pedagogic pattern of strategy introduction, practice, review, and extension was found to be an effective, scaffolded method of raising strategy awareness and facilitating strategy use.

7.5 Final thoughts on key messages

As this was an AR project, the key messages in this study should be interpreted within the local context of the UIE level at APU. Reflection on the findings through triangulation, AR standards, and the research questions, has produced insight into key messages and themes from this study within this local context. These reflections apply directly to the UIE course, although these findings and interpretations may be useful in informing other contexts as well (i.e., transferability). The possible extension of this project to other contexts is discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

The key messages of the research from learners and teachers in this context, as well as those for curriculum planning, are summarized below:

- LSI was perceived positively by the students and teachers of UIE;
- Participants acknowledged that the LSI intervention was an improvement on previous listening pedagogy;
- The theoretical principles of LSI helped to guide the program;
- Support from administrators and other teachers greatly enhanced the transition from a product-oriented to process-based listening pedagogy;
- Listening strategies were integrated with existing and/or supplementary listening materials;
- A consistent pedagogic cycle appears to be beneficial for both learners and teachers due to the newness of LSI;
- As a new approach to listening pedagogy, constant refinements will be necessary to match other contexts and groups of learners.

Taking a slightly broader perspective, an LSI intervention like the one described in this thesis could be planned and implemented at other levels within the EFL curriculum at APU. This would be possible because all EFL courses at APU operate on the same schedule (i.e., four classes per week), utilize the same facilities (i.e., classrooms with audio/visual equipment and computers), and would likely have similar operational support. With modifications to the level of materials, the listening activities, and the selected

strategies, it would be possible for LSI to begin with less proficient learners using the same basic framework detailed in this thesis.

The LSI used in this project met the goal of helping learners to develop generalizable listening strategies that they could use beyond the L2 classroom. Some learners recognized that they had benefited from the strategies during the time they were in the UIE course, pointing out that their listening had improved in English content classes or when interacting with English-speaking friends. Many other learners stated that the LSI would also help them in future listening situations. As such, learners appreciated the forward-looking and autonomous aspects of the LSI compared to their previous EFL listening experiences. The LSI also met teacher expectations, as the process-oriented approach acknowledged and utilized the teachers' superior listening abilities in ways not possible within other listening methodologies.

For three semesters, over the course of three AR phases, LSI in UIE at this university in Japan seemed to work well and was positively received by those who participated in the study. A substantial question remains about whether LSI can function in the same way in other contexts, an issue that will be explored further in Chapter 8.

Chapter 8: Implications and conclusion

The final chapter places this study within a broader context and considers its implications in the field of L2 teaching and learning. In doing so, the scope and purpose of the project, first described in Chapter 1, section 1.2 will be revisited. The limitations of the study, both theoretical and practical, will also be identified and addressed. Key messages and pedagogic implications for a wider audience, beyond those for the local APU context described in Chapter 7, will also be discussed. These main points will then be incorporated to form a model for LSI program design and implementation, which builds on the LSI principles upon which this project was based. Finally, future research directions will be suggested, including those for my own research agenda as well as those for other teacher-researchers and teacher educators.

8.1 Defining the scope of the project

The purpose of the AR intervention for this study was to introduce to the APU context a process-based form of LSI, which had not previously been utilized there. The project sought to investigate student and teacher perceptions of process-based LSI and to ascertain the viability of such a program being taught to multiple groups of learners by multiple teachers. This purpose stemmed from my personal discontent with the state of listening instruction in UIE, which also reflected several issues related to listening pedagogy expressed by other colleagues both in Japan specifically and Asia in general. In addition, the literature raises numerous issues that question current widespread listening pedagogies and calls for alternative approaches. Thus, a general state of uncertainty, both in the literature and among L2 teaching professionals, about how to improve L2 listening led to the inception of this project.

While questions about how to improve listening instruction are common in the L2 teaching profession, this project focused on the issue at a local level. The LSI intervention was designed specifically for UIE level classes at a single university in Japan. As such, the LSI was planned within the APU and CLE administrative frameworks and was integrated within the existing program and

listening materials. However, although the findings, reflections, and conclusions from this study apply specifically to UIE, the research provides an illustrative case that can potentially contribute to a broader field of inquiry and could have implications in Japanese and other similar EFL contexts.

This research implemented LSI in UIE courses and investigated the pedagogy from a qualitative AR perspective, which provided a relevant empirical framework upon which to base the study. As an AR process, this study was concerned with problematising L2 listening instruction within a specific social setting and determining the extent to which LSI was a viable option for UIE classes. Due to the unobservable nature of the skill of listening, the study relied on student and teacher perceptions collected through the primary research methods of questionnaires and interviews. These were augmented by secondary data collection procedures, which included classroom observations, pre/post-semester test scores, and a research journal. The combination of these different research methods was possible within a qualitative AR framework that sought to explore the viability of LSI from several participant lenses and at various points in time.

A number of questions related to listening instruction were beyond the scope of this qualitative AR. First, the study was designed to involve the viewpoints of those who were affected by the intervention; specifically, the learners and teachers in UIE. Its ambition was not to plan or promote universally-accepted principles for listening pedagogy. Though findings and conclusions from the study may inform other contexts, its main purpose was to improve the L2 learning and teaching lives of those directly involved in the UIE course. Secondly, the project did not set out to meet expectations usually required in quantitative studies; for example, qualitative concepts of credibility and transferability were favored over quantitative notions of interval validity and generalizability. Moreover, this study did not attempt to catalog the listening strategies L2 learners use, as others have already done (e.g., Vandergrift, 1997, 2003; Goh, 2002); nor did it investigate the frequency with which listening strategies were used (e.g., Vogely, 1995; Goh & Taib, 2006; Cross, 2010).

The study aimed to build on such descriptions of strategy use and incorporate previous listening strategy research into a pedagogic system that could be introduced and implemented by other L2 educators. Through AR, it bridged the gap between academic literature and the everyday listening classroom. While some literature discusses theoretical views on listening (e.g., Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002; Vandergrift, 2004), other researchers have described the listening strategies used by skilled and less skilled listeners (e.g., Vandergrift, 2003; Graham, 2006). In addition, previous research has described small scale listening strategy interventions involving smaller numbers of students, classes, and teachers (e.g., Ozeki, 2000; Chen, 2007; Cross, 2009, 2011; Siegel, 2011b, 2012). Other commentators (e.g., Goh, 2005) have advocated specifically for AR interventions to help L2 professionals better understand and increase the range of the L2 listening pedagogic options that are available.

This project, therefore, was a response to commentators such as Goh (2005) who have explicitly called for AR on listening pedagogy and listening strategies. It not only investigated the viability of LSI as classroom practice, but it provided a framework that teachers and teacher educators can adapt to their own contexts and utilize in order to help learners develop listening strategies. Findings from this study showed that both students and teachers recognized the LSI was useful, practical, and beneficial. This study contributed to the field of L2 listening pedagogy at the local level by bettering listening instruction in UIE and also on a broader scale, as findings, interpretations, and conclusions may inform and benefit other teachers and their students as well, specifically those working in similar contexts.

Few works on L2 listening pedagogy have described in depth how an LSI program was designed and implemented. Fewer still have investigated participant perceptions of LSI from a qualitative stance. Thus, this research filled a gap in the academic work on listening strategies by conducting a multi-faceted investigation into the perceptions and viability of LSI over three semesters within a local context. Although this study was conducted on a local

scale, findings and conclusions can be disseminated to and shared with L2 professionals in other contexts for adaptation to their particular circumstances.

The findings from the study showed that there were many positive outcomes that arose from the processes of exploration through AR. However, as with any study it is important to acknowledge the limitations in the design and scope of the research. The following section discusses both the limitations and delimitations of the study.

8.2 Limitations and delimitations

The LSI in this study was a multi-dimensional concept that was operationalized in a specific social setting. The complexities of and uncertainties related to listening, listening pedagogy, and second language development found in the literature contributed to the intricate nature of the project. As such, limitations of this study include theoretical issues about what listening is and the extent to which it can be researched; issues in the research design; and possible obstacles to the practical application of the LSI. This section highlights the limitations of the study as well as the steps taken to compensate for these shortcomings.

8.2.1 Theoretical limitations and delimitations

The ability to listen in an L1 involves an extremely complex interplay of biological, cognitive, affective, and social elements, and the processes of L1 listening have yet to be fully understood. When listening is done in an L2, the variables inevitably increase, as the L2 listener must deal with unfamiliar features, such as phonemes, intonation patterns, lexicon, and syntax. Furthermore, access to the listening process is restricted since it occurs only within the listener's mind and is not directly accessible (Buck, 2001; Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). This situation makes listening the most difficult language skill to investigate, and therefore the least understood (Vandergrift, 2010). Moreover, the variety of outside influences (e.g., fatigue, affective factors, background noise) that can affect a listener's level of comprehension adds additional barriers to the understanding and researching of aural abilities. By focusing on participant perceptions and responses to one type of

listening pedagogy (i.e., LSI), the present study targeted how listening can be taught rather than describing and detailing the listening process itself.

8.2.2 Limitations and delimitations of the research design

To gain a comprehensive understanding about LSI, this study relied on multiple research methods, triangulation, various participant viewpoints, and three data collection cycles. One reason for this research design was to compensate for the inaccessibility of listening. Despite the robustness of the research design and the richness of the findings, the research plan had limitations, which were pointed out previously in Chapter 4. The following paragraphs summarize those limitations.

One limitation was the fact that much of the data was based on self-reports (e.g., questionnaires and interviews). Self-report data provide clues to mental representations and participant beliefs but not the actual beliefs themselves (Rost, 1990). Further weaknesses of self-report data include the Halo Effect and the Hawthorne Effect (Brown, 1998), as explained in Chapter 4, section 4.2.2. To offset these potential weaknesses, data were collected from different groups at three separate times. These data were triangulated and found to be consistent regardless of when or from whom they were collected. Moreover, the self-report data were supplemented with secondary empirical measures (e.g., class observations and pre/post test scores).

Another limitation of the research design was an inability to control outside influences on the learners who participated in the study. All participants were first-year university students and thus had numerous matters that affected their lives, both in and out of class. These influences probably ranged from homesickness to part-time jobs to dealing with relationships, and all potentially impacted learners' lives in general. Influences specific to L2 listening development, such as watching English TV programs outside of UIE, interactions with L1 English students on campus, or other English courses could also have affected the findings. Thus, this study was not strictly controlled as in experimental research set in laboratory conditions. As such, it was not intended to fit positivist expectations for research (e.g., validity,

reliability, generalizability). Yet another drawback of the research design was that it measured learner opinions and progress at the end of each respective semester; however, listening improvement may be slow to develop and evidence of progress may have come after the data collection procedures finished.

Furthermore, my position as an active participant within this project left open the possibility of researcher bias, a vulnerability acknowledged by commentators such as Wallace (1998) and Dörnyei (2007). In order to defend against such bias, data in this study were collected from various groups at different times using several research methods. In addition, a number of types of triangulation were incorporated to cross-reference findings and an outside reviewer cross-checked the data analysis. All of these steps endeavored to increase the study's trustworthiness, credibility, and dependability.

Finally, it is difficult to isolate listening from other language skills. Therefore, the effects of listening instruction can be difficult to determine. For example, on discrete item proficiency tests, learners may understand a spoken text very well but fail to understand written questions or be unable to communicate their responses in writing. During the everyday teaching of the LSI, listening pedagogy involved reading, writing, and speaking. This situation meant that listening was not completely isolated and practiced. The results of comprehension or non-comprehension must be expressed in some way, which means that students must possess some ability in those other skills in order to demonstrate their ability to listen and comprehend. Therefore, all research on L2 listening pedagogy is indirect in a sense because information and opinions about it must be expressed through other language skills.

8.2.3 Practical limitations and delimitations

Practical limitations centered on the conduct of LSI at the classroom level. One such shortcoming was the lack of a needs analysis at the beginning of the project. Ideally, a diagnosis and needs analysis of listening strategies for each group of learners would have been conducted in order to determine baseline levels of listening strategy usage, as done in some previous studies

(e.g., Ozeki, 2000; Graham & Macaro, 2008). Diagnosis could be accomplished through student think aloud protocols, interviews, or questionnaires. Information from such diagnostic procedures would have aided listening strategy selection during program development.

However, this study did not include a listening strategy needs analysis for a number of reasons. First, Sean and I had extensive experience of teaching Japanese university students at a number of institutions. We also knew about the typical pre-tertiary EFL experiences of Japanese students. Therefore, we relied on our intuition and experience, as well as literature on L2 listening, to plan the LSI for what we considered a 'typical' first-year Japanese EFL student at the intermediate level. Descriptions of skilled listeners from the literature (e.g., Vandergrift, 2003; Graham, 2006; Helgesen & Brown, 2007) and listening strategy inventories (e.g., Vandergrift, 1997; Goh, 2002) helped inform the design of the LSI in this project.

Another reason for omitting needs analysis was because the UIE curriculum needed to be set *prior* to the first class meetings, which meant that listening materials, activities, and strategies needed to be decided upon ad hoc and in advance. Due to administrative policies, it was not possible to meet students first for diagnostic purposes and then plan the course. Rather, the UIE curriculum needed to be planned and approved prior to the start of the semester. Therefore, I was compelled to rely on my teaching experience, Sean's informed input, and the literature when developing the LSI. However, the LSI was refined from phase to phase, a process in which learner needs and feedback were incorporated, which provided a degree of needs analysis.

Since this project investigated the viability of LSI taught by multiple teachers to several different classes, the consistency of the LSI was important. Such consistency could be better established if the LSI program was designed and understood by teachers prior to the semester rather than developing it in a hurried fashion while the semester was ongoing. As everyday teachers in the classroom, Sean and I would have found it strenuous and complicated to adjust the LSI to each individual student or each separate

group of learners we had in our classes. Given more time and administrative flexibility, needs analysis procedures could have helped make this study more precisely aimed at developing strategies that these students were not using effectively or efficiently. However, since those elements were not readily available, pre-planned LSI was used.

Regarding the actual use of LSI in the classroom, the number and types of listening strategies included are debatable. I relied on my experience, collaboration with other teachers, definitions of listening, and strategy taxonomies in the literature to inform the strategy selections I made (see Chapter 4, Table 4.2 for the list of strategies and references to the literature). The choices I made are open to challenge. In addition, no socio-affective strategies were included in this study, which focused rather on the cognitive and metacognitive aspects of listening. Uncertainties about the amount of time spent on explicit LSI as compared to individual student listening practice (e.g., extensive listening) is a further limitation of this study.

8.2.4 Making progress by mitigating limitations

This section has identified theoretical, research design, and practical limitations in this research. In order to mitigate these weaknesses, steps were taken to limit their impact on the capacity of the project to address the research questions and to provide insights on the viability of LSI in the Japanese university EFL context. These measures included research triangulation, multiple-participant viewpoints, and teacher collaboration. Despite its various limitations, the project sought to address the research questions and understand insights on LSI within a local context. Whereas several previous studies provided theoretical and descriptive information about listening strategies themselves (e.g., Vandergrift, 1997; Goh, 2002; Chen, 2007), this research examined LSI in practice. Findings, reflections, and conclusions extracted from this study can help inform L2 professionals in other contexts about the advantages and disadvantages of LSI and provide guidelines for those interested in adopting similar methodology. As such, the broader implications from this study are discussed in the following section.

8.3 Implications

In Chapter 7, the findings from this study were reflected upon within the local context of the UIE level at APU. This section now discusses the findings, interpretations, and conclusions as they apply to the wider L2 educational community. In a sense, research question 3 (What factors contribute to success in listening strategy instruction programs in the local CLE context?) can be expanded to embrace the Japanese university EFL and broader language teaching contexts as well. Several of the factors specifically related to this study within the UIE course can transfer to and help inform other locales. The transferability of this project includes key messages that can inform classroom teachers, teacher educators, curriculum developers, and language program administrators who are interested in improving the status quo of L2 listening pedagogy by adopting LSI.

8.3.1 Implications for the Japanese university context

As this study took place at a university in Japan, the LSI intervention has direct implications for Japanese learners and their teachers at other Japanese tertiary institutions. First, the findings from this study suggested that Japanese university EFL learners desire a change from the standard comprehension-based 'listen, answer, check' methodology that is prevalent in Japan. Participants in this study preferred the possibility of developing transferable and generalizable listening strategies to the limited scope of the product-oriented comprehension approach (CA). These learners did not view CA-type lessons as helpful for their futures in a globalized world in which they will need to understand and interact in novel listening situations. All of these points suggest that LSI is a viable option for the Japanese university context.

Due to Japan's position as an EFL (rather than ESL) context, teachers may want to bring their university EFL learners in contact with different genres and types of listening texts. Designation and use of class time to develop listening abilities is important because the classroom is one of the few places that Japanese students have for meaningful aural contact with the L2 (even though online materials are accessible for independent and motivated

learners). Various accents and rates of speech will also help learners become accustomed to hearing a variety of speakers on a range of topics. Strategies selected by teachers or curriculum designers for inclusion in LSI can help students learn to deal with the variety of texts available for use in class. Moreover, because many classrooms at universities in Japan are equipped with audio/visual equipment and the Internet, delivery of the LSI program described in this dissertation is likely to be feasible.

Another important factor to consider in the Japanese context is the evaluation of students' listening proficiency. As evidenced by the frequent references to standardized test scores in the data, this study showed that many Japanese learners place a high priority on achievement scores. Indeed, it seems much of their previous listening instructional practice focused on comprehension questions. It is no coincidence that most proficiency tests (e.g., TOEIC and TOEFL) include heavy doses of multiple-choice questions (e.g., Wu, 1998). The relationship between standardized tests and commonly-used listening pedagogy should be viewed as a washback effect. That is, these tests dictate the decisions teachers and program coordinators make about classroom content, materials, and pedagogic approaches. There is little concern for the actual teaching of listening, and instead a non-developmental product-oriented approach is repeatedly used (as has been described in Chapter 3, section 3.3).

For LSI to be viable in Japanese tertiary EFL courses, the capacity to avoid or resist negative washback is important, at least to some degree, so that listening processes and strategies can be developed. Process development and strategy use are not easily assessed, and this is one drawback to LSI in its current form. There are currently no practical empirical methods for assessing strategy use during everyday classroom teaching and learning; the major evidence of strategy development in this study is qualitative and came from self-report findings. The issue of listening assessment scores is also relevant beyond the Japanese context, where many teachers and learners also tend to place emphasis on test scores.

8.3.2 Implications for the wider L2 teaching and learning community

One of the main messages from the study is that the status quo related to L2 listening methodology can be altered through pedagogic interventions that introduce new, innovative teaching approaches and techniques in listening lessons. Informed by previous research and commentary on listening instruction, experimental approaches can be integrated within the existing frameworks of listening components. When teachers and curriculum designers have adequate knowledge about listening and the various pedagogic approaches used to develop listening abilities, interventions such as the LSI in this study are possible. Being content with the status quo of questionable pedagogy like the CA will not push the boundaries of what can be accomplished through listening instruction; instead, classroom trials and AR-style interventions are needed to advance the field of L2 listening pedagogy and determine the impacts of various approaches.

The guiding framework introduced in this study, which includes principles for LSI, a pedagogic cycle, and a sample list of specific listening strategies, can be applied by individual teachers for their individual classes. Language courses or programs with multiple classes or proficiency levels can also adopt all or part of the LSI program described in this thesis. The LSI program was based on an underlying theoretical perspective on listening (see section 3.2.3) that guided the pedagogic cycle as well as the strategy selection. This innovative theoretical perspective and the application thereof to L2 listening instruction mark original contributions to the field of language teaching. For any L2 professionals who want to circumvent purely product-oriented approaches to listening, this LSI intervention provides a theoretically-grounded framework for a process-oriented, strategy-based approach methodology for listening.

Given the positive perceptions of the LSI and the systematic implementation measures of this intervention, the viability of LSI, either similar to or based on the version described in this study, represents a key message for the broader L2 professional community. Both learners and teachers

involved in this LSI intervention reported that the program was beneficial, effective, and included an approach to and concepts about listening that were new for these learners. Students recognized the benefits of the transferable listening strategies that they were practicing in classes. This application of LSI showed that pedagogic concepts for listening strategies and skills could be extracted from the literature, organized into a coordinated approach, and transferred to the classroom. The study also demonstrated how the same LSI could be utilized in several classes taught by multiple teachers, a valuable finding for the possible proliferation of LSI or similar pedagogy.

Some aspects of LSI may challenge the boundaries of teachers' 'comfort zones' by trialing new techniques such as teacher modeling of listening strategies and processes. Within LSI, the role and expectations of the listening teacher increase from those called for by a 'listen, answer, check' approach to listening instruction (e.g., Goh, 2005, 2008; Siegel, 2011a). In some cases, teachers may be hesitant to trial LSI due to unfamiliarity with its theoretical groundings and practical applications. In those cases, experienced teachers and teacher educators may wish to explain the purpose of the approach, demonstrate classroom techniques, be open-minded to concerns, and be ready to troubleshoot. For teachers already working in the field, a change to LSI may be welcome depending on current teaching situations. For teachers-in-training who are learning the basics of language education, exposure to LSI may provide a practical and systematic approach to L2 listening that they can take from their teacher education courses to the classroom.

8.3.3 Implications for teacher education

Another key message from the study relates to expanded teacher education about how to teach listening, which can also benefit from the conclusions prompted by this study. For years, teacher education programs have neglected or underrepresented L2 listening (e.g., Mendelsohn, 2001; Field, 2008; Graham, et al., 2011), a trend that persists, given the relative lack of pedagogical writing and scholarly research on L2 listening instruction (Lynch,

2011). In addition, teacher manuals seldom provide the type of theoretical and practical support that helps teachers adequately develop listening in the classroom (Field, 2012b).

This lack of attention may be the result of insufficient pedagogic knowledge about listening beyond the CA. In the past, teacher educators may not have emphasized the importance of listening simply because they themselves did not prioritize listening or because they lacked adequate background knowledge in the various approaches to listening instruction. For many teachers, the traditional notion that checking comprehension questions equates to listening instruction may have come from and/or been reinforced by such teacher education courses. The LSI described in this study provides teacher educators with a practical, flexible framework grounded in listening theory and practical research that they can present to teachers-in-training.

The APU context offered favorable conditions for the implementation of LSI, and Sean's open-mindedness, teaching experience, and willingness to trial a new approach to listening instruction contributed to the project. When the product-oriented approach to listening previously used in UIE was presented to Sean along with a plan for a process-based strategic approach, he agreed that a process-approach was preferable. The following teacher education techniques were effective in guiding Sean on the LSI program: awareness raising of present and possible approaches to the listening material; creating a specific schedule of strategies to be incorporated; selecting a manageable number of strategies to include; adhering to a weekly pedagogic schedule with explicit goals for each day (see section 3.6 and Figure 3.8); and providing opportunities for feedback, reflection, and refinement. As this study represents only one teacher (i.e., Sean) who was able to learn about LSI from me and apply it in his courses in a single context, these techniques may need to be adjusted in other environments and with other individuals.

For teachers with ample experience and established teacher beliefs about listening instruction, an awareness-raising task may be a beneficial way

to introduce LSI. Teachers could record and analyze their own or others' listening instruction in order to recognize the extent to which they are teaching *how to* listen. Alternatively, sample lesson plans (e.g., with a CA-approach, an LSI approach, and/or an osmosis approach) could be presented, from which teachers could select the one that most closely represents their classroom practices. Teachers could also be encouraged to discuss the benefits and drawbacks of each approach. Through such self-examination and reflection, practicing teachers could have the opportunity to realize that they can potentially contribute more to their listening lessons. For teachers just beginning their careers, and whose teacher beliefs are only at their formative stages, increased attention to listening in initial training courses could help them start their careers with nuanced insights into how listening can be taught through LSI.

Potential courses for teacher education could consist not only of theoretical reading about listening but also a practicum element that allows student-teachers to observe and trial instructional techniques. These developing teachers would need the freedom to question previously accepted views on listening instruction, criticism that has been infrequent; indeed, many teachers fail to challenge the status quo on L2 listening instruction, as pointed out by Field (2008). Additionally, teachers-in-training would benefit from the autonomy to try a range of listening approaches in their classrooms and determine which one(s) they would choose to adopt in the future. These approaches to listening pedagogy could be systematically investigated individually or collectively by groups of teachers through AR, as was done for this study. In fact, it was this type of autonomy and initiative that prompted the LSI investigation discussed in this thesis. Teacher preferences about listening pedagogy may change based on context, class composition, or class goals, but their increased knowledge about listening instruction would help them make informed decisions from an array of options, including LSI.

Teacher education is the most significant factor that can contribute to LSI. As many teachers lack knowledge and experience of *teaching* listening, they will likely need support identifying and selecting strategies for an LSI

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program, planning and delivering LSI materials, and engaging in teacher modeling and think aloud explanations. The present study has provided some initial guidance on these topics, and more information is available in the pedagogic literature (e.g., Mendelsohn, 1994, 2006; Vandergrift & Goh, 2012; Siegel, 2013a) as well as in research studies (e.g., Chen, 2007; Cross, 2009; Siegel, 2012). Exposure to theories of listening, discussion of the benefits and pitfalls of previous methodologies, and more modern classroom practices for listening instruction would help prepare teachers with a wider and more in-depth understanding of what listening is and what options they have to teach it.

8.4 Theoretical advancements

In order to promote the transferability of this study to L2 teaching contexts beyond Japan, this section outlines theoretical advancements that teachers, program coordinators, and administrators can draw on to plan and implement similar LSI in their respective environments. The principles discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.6 were instrumental in guiding the LSI intervention for this study. Future renditions of LSI might also include these principles so that a purposeful and theoretically-grounded intervention can be planned and executed. Based on the experiences of designing and implementing this LSI, however, I would also recommend further principles, outlined below, at the design, delivery, and reflection stages. This section also introduces a theoretical model constructed from the implementation of LSI in this study. Both the principles and the model were informed by the findings and experiences from the present study and can be built on for future versions of LSI.

My experiences in the initial planning and design stages of the LSI highlighted certain issues not addressed by the original set of principles described in Chapter 3, section 3.6. During those stages, I became aware of the relative unfamiliarity that other language teachers and course administrators experienced with listening, listening pedagogy, and LSI. Their general comments and attitudes toward listening were similar to those of typical EFL teachers (described in Chapter 2, section 2.5) in that their

pedagogic knowledge and direction about listening appeared underdeveloped. In addition, I noted the value of student and teacher feedback on LSI which was acquired from the AR observation and reflection stages, especially considering the exploratory nature of this study and the newness of LSI. Moreover, an LSI plan needs time to evolve and improve; thus, design and contents may need to be reconsidered and refined after each LSI course. With these points in mind, the following principles are suggested:

- Conduct LSI orientation sessions to familiarize teachers and administrators with the approach;
- Respond to student and teacher feedback by adapting the LSI contents, texts, and/or activities;
- Allow the LSI program to evolve over time.

Other principles apply to the in-class implementation of the LSI. Based on student and teacher feedback, classroom observations, and my own personal experiences with LSI, these recommended principles may support LSI in the classroom:

- Allocate sufficient class time to avoid haste and confusion with the new approach;
- Be consistent in the use and regularity of LSI, which should be based on a pre-planned yet flexible schedule;
- After introducing several strategies individually, progress to strategy combinations and/or clusters, which are promoted by some commentators (e.g., Rost, 1990; Graham & Macaro, 2008);
- Make explicit connections between LSI and other language skills (e.g., reading).

Both the original principles listed in Chapter 3, section 3.6 and the additional concepts described above, along with practical experiential elements from this study are combined in the proposed model for LSI implementation displayed in Figure 8.1.
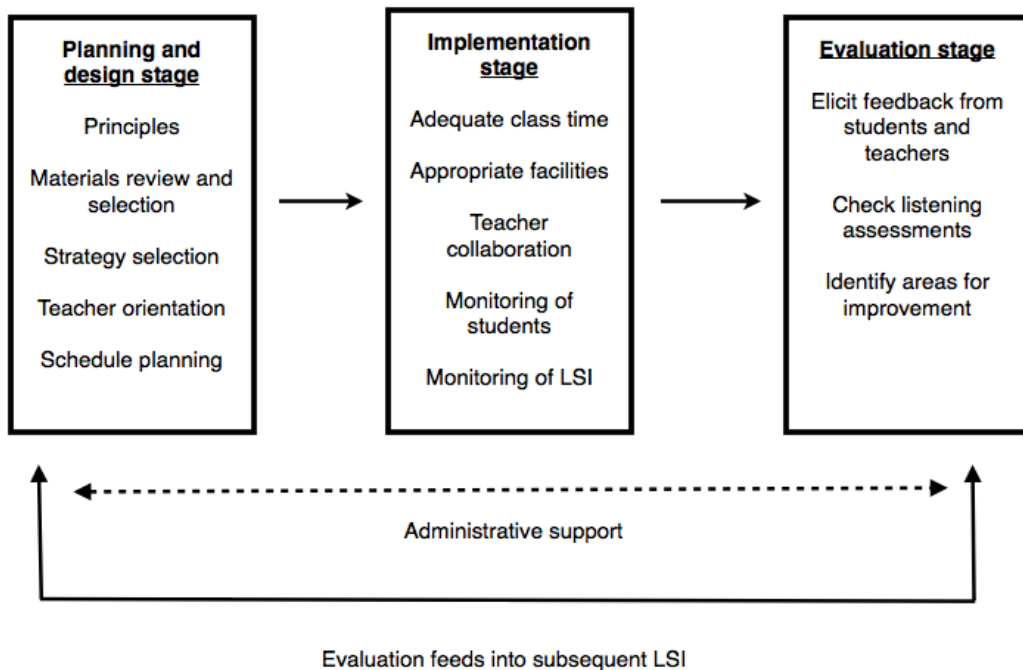
Figure 8.1: *Model for LSI implementation*

Based on my experiences in this project, I would argue that the most important part of an LSI program is the planning and design stage. Without a set of theoretically-based fundamental propositions from which to launch a program, the purposes and content of the course risk being unclear. In this stage, it is crucial for teachers and/or curriculum developers to identify principles and ways of putting them in to practice. Materials and strategy selections for the target group of learners are also key to effect future implementation. Teacher education in the form of readings, workshops, orientation sessions, and/or action research can help those teachers unfamiliar with LSI to understand its underpinnings and observe teaching samples.

The implementation stage moves the LSI from the planning phase to the classroom. During implementation, sufficient class time must be allocated for LSI delivery. This is especially important with groups of learners who may be not be accustomed to process-oriented approaches to language learning (such as the Japanese learners in this study). Utilizing facilities with audio/visual equipment and the Internet will help make listening texts easy to use. Additionally, teacher collaboration about LSI can build a sense of

motivation, as groups of teachers can discuss teaching tips and ways to overcome any issues unforeseen at the planning stage. By "problematising" certain aspects of LSI, teachers can investigate components of LSI through action research studies, which will help to refine the approach and inform those involved. During this implementation stage, teachers may wish to monitor student reactions and uptake of the LSI, as was done in this project through class observations and videotaping. Teachers may also conduct peer-observations to learn more about how LSI is conducted, and supervising teachers or researchers may wish to observe classes to learn the extent to which LSI is being delivered as planned (as in studies by Graham & Macaro, 2008 and Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010).

The final stage in the model involves evaluation of LSI. As a new and innovative approach to listening instruction, revisions and modifications to any LSI plan are likely to be necessary. Therefore, it is important to listen to and be aware of student and teacher feedback on the LSI. At this stage, areas for improvement can be identified through the experiences and suggestions of the people who are in contact with LSI on a regular basis. This type of evaluation can come from research methods like those described in this thesis as well as from empirical listening assessments or proficiency tests. Understanding both the qualitative and quantitative outcomes from a course of LSI can positively influence subsequent versions, just as the reflection stages of AR served to improve the LSI in this study.

8.5 Directions for future research

Three dimensions of future research on LSI have emerged from this study: my own personal research agenda, recommendations for other teacher-researchers in the Asia region, and broader questions about listening pedagogy to be addressed by the L2 field. This three-tiered research agenda reflects the contextual layers that impacted on the research described in this thesis, which were discussed in Chapter 2, section 2.5. Those conceptual influences included listening pedagogy within my own teaching environment (i.e., APU), the current state of listening instruction within the Asian context, and the somewhat unfavorable descriptions of listening pedagogy described in

the academic literature. Figure 8.2 depicts the interconnectedness of potential research directions stemming from this study in order to connect this research on LSI with these three contextual layers.
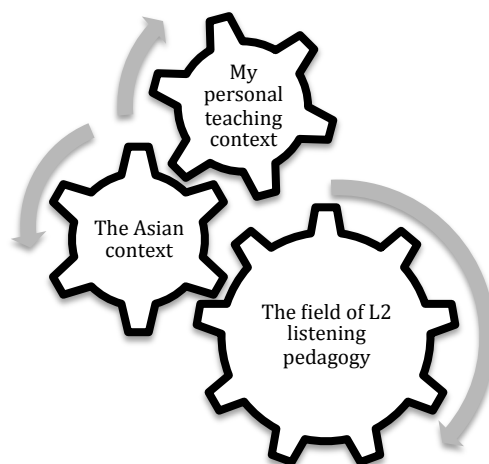
Figure 8.2: *Three levels of future LSI research*

The activity and motion illustrated in Figure 8.2 aim to represent the stimulating influence of AR at a local level. As I continue to investigate LSI in my own context, findings and pedagogic implications will feed into the Asian context through publications, presentations, and workshops, some of which may reach the broader level of the whole field of listening pedagogy. (For a list of publications and presentations inspired by this thesis, see Appendix 13). Research on listening pedagogy from the international L2 teaching and learning community may also trigger changes in listening pedagogy and LSI that affect the Asian region in general and my own university context in Japan specifically.

At the local level, my own research interests include investigating the effectiveness and usefulness of individual listening strategies. This study presented a group of strategies and LSI as a pedagogic bundle, and individual strategies were not explored in great detail. Therefore, it would be valuable to develop a variety of methods for teaching individual strategies (e.g., listening for discourse markers or chunking). These techniques could be presented to groups of learners, who could provide insights on the extent to which they view the techniques as effective. Such investigations could involve

questionnaires, interviews, think alouds, and/or stimulated recall protocols. They could build on the notion that learner perspectives on pedagogical practices are valuable for the field. This line of research would add to pedagogic knowledge by exploring different methods for teaching each strategy.

A second direction for my own research is to further investigate the notion of teacher modeling. I would like to present a set of listening texts to several teachers in Japan and explore through conventions of discourse analysis (e.g., Seedhouse, 2004; Walsh, 2011) the ways that they explain their listening processes and strategies. By examining teacher modeling through a discourse analysis approach, important findings could be made about the organization and specific steps teachers use when explaining their listening processes. This type of research could also explore the extent to which teacher modeling is possible and practical for Japanese students, and it could provide guidelines for teacher modeling that would benefit L2 educators on a large scale.

With regard to extending LSI research beyond my own personal context, I am keen to investigate the viability of LSI with other teachers in Japanese tertiary situations similar to that of this study. Specifically, my aim is to investigate how other teachers might implement LSI and what in-class activities, techniques, and explanations they might use. I plan to actively seek opportunities to work with such teachers in a researcher capacity to introduce them to the LSI concept and then research their implementations thereof, utilizing similar research questions and data collection tools to those employed for this study.

Another possible research direction includes broadening the scope of potential research to include other Asian countries. For teachers seeking alternatives to the comprehension approach and other commonly-used methods for L2 listening (outlined in Chapter 3, section 3.3), trialing LSI may be an attractive option. Indeed, some teachers in Asia (discussed in Chapter 2, section 2.5.3) have expressed frustration about how to address L2 listening

in their classrooms and thus may be interested in adopting an action research stance and an LSI intervention. If teachers in the Asian region developed their own context-specific renditions of LSI, which catered for their target groups of learners, those versions could be investigated through the same research questions and compared to the findings from this study. Such comparisons would shed additional light on ways to improve and refine LSI in general and make it context- and/or group-specific. Findings from other LSI studies in Asia would help determine the extent to which LSI is viable in similar contexts. In addition, because other Asian cultures (e.g., Chinese and Korean) often emphasize product-based achievements and high test scores, it would be constructive to evaluate the use of process-oriented pedagogy such as LSI in these contexts.

This research on LSI also raises questions that need to be explored and addressed by the wider field of L2 listening pedagogy. Given the current underdeveloped and underexplored state of L2 listening pedagogy described in the literature (see Chapter 3, section 3.3), researchers could investigate teachers' general awareness and knowledge of listening and related pedagogy. Questions that could be posed include: Are teachers aware of their capacity as skilled listeners? If so, to what extent do they utilize that capacity? Another issue underscored in the literature is the importance of teaching learners 'how to' listen in the L2. Yet questions remain as to how this type of process-oriented instruction can be realized in L2 listening classes. As such, different approaches to L2 listening pedagogy need to be explored to determine their effectiveness, both from qualitative and quantitative standpoints.

Teacher-researchers in other contexts could implement the LSI described in this paper, or parts of it, and collect data from questionnaires, interviews, and pre/post-test scores. Findings from LSI studies with different groups of students, ages, and proficiency levels could help determine the extent to which LSI is appropriate for various learner classifications as well as the effectiveness of LSI beyond the Asian context. These findings could then be compared with those of this study, as well as any conducted within Asia, to

determine whether the LSI proposed is readily transferable to other contexts or if modifications are needed. In other words, opportunities for cross-contextual and cross-cultural research could generate LSI appropriate for learner groups with backgrounds and preferences different than those in this study. Furthermore, such studies could result in lists of culturally appropriate principles for LSI. In the case that modifications to the LSI are necessary in these contexts, additional data related to those refinements could add to the knowledge base on LSI established by this study.

Another avenue for LSI research within the broader field of L2 listening pedagogy depends on researchers interested in teacher education. According to the literature (e.g., Mendelsohn, 2001; Field, 2008; Graham, et al., 2011), teacher education on listening has long been neglected. Therefore, pedagogical research on L2 listening instruction is a productive area, one that could have an immediate positive impact on the field. Teacher educators wishing to do research could introduce their trainees to several approaches to listening instruction, including LSI, during their sessions. Teacher preferences and opinions on these methods could be collected and used to inform the wider L2 teaching field. Further, if teacher educators tracked their trainees from the time they are beginning teachers, they could determine what the teachers actually go on to do in the classroom to address listening abilities. Do they continue to rely on traditional product-based approaches or do they push the boundaries by using process-oriented methods? The field of teacher cognition (e.g., Borg, 2006) could contribute to the understanding of L2 listening instruction by examining teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward, along with their conceptualizations about, listening in the L2 classroom.

Many of the avenues for future research presented in this section involve learner perceptions of listening pedagogy, which relates to the qualitative foundation for this study. As pointed out previously, listening is an extremely complicated skill that occurs beyond direct observation. Thus, much previous research has relied on listening proficiency test scores. However, such tests have substantial inherent limitations because of their tendency to mix skills (e.g., answers to questions may involve reading or writing as well).

In other words, they do not generate data that is specific to listening. In the short term, educators, both in Japan and elsewhere, are likely to need to continue to rely on proficiency tests for placement and grading purposes, although LSI may be exhibited indirectly through those test scores. In the future, evaluation of strategy use could come in the forms of think aloud procedures, listening journals, or problem-solving activities. Moreover, in future approaches to research on listening pedagogy, it is important that learners at the university level be given a voice to describe how they view listening pedagogy and which approaches they find effective and meaningful for them.

To summarize, the fields of L2 listening and listening instruction are currently underdeveloped yet auspicious areas for research at several levels. From my point of view, a number of key points deserve attention. Future directions for research on LSI include exploring: the strategies that are most effective; practical methods for teaching those strategies; the potential and value of teacher modeling; and the capacity for LSI to extend beyond the local APU context to other universities in Japan and in the Asian region. More broad-ranging initiatives could investigate: views and knowledge about L2 listening pedagogy; the viability of LSI in other contexts outside of Asia; and the extent to which teacher education about listening pedagogy can be improved.

8.6 Closing remarks

It is argued that listening is the main language skill, the first to develop, and the one that supports all other language skills (e.g., Rost, 1994; Nunan, 1998). In addition, it is the skill that adults use the most frequently, as it comprises approximately 40% of their communication time (Burley-Allen, 1995). Despite its importance socially, academically, and financially, listening is typically taken for granted in many language programs (Nation & Newton, 2009). Many people give little thought to how they learned to listen, and although listening seems undeniably easy in one's L1, it is indeed a complex and multi-faceted ability for those learning another language (Cutler, 2012).

The fact is that most L1 listeners developed their abilities without any deliberate effort; however, listening in the L2 requires much more deliberate application and motivation. L2 listening difficulties have their origins in one or more of several areas, including: adjusting to a new sound system (e.g., Goh, 2000), the rapid speed of L2 speech (e.g., Lynch, 2009), ineffective listening strategy use (e.g., Hasan, 2000), and social-affective factors (e.g., Wolvin, 2010). These obstacles lead many L2 learners to cite listening as the most difficult of the four main skills (Renandya & Farrell, 2011), and it is "arguably the least understood and most overlooked of the four skills in the language classroom" (Nation & Newton, 2009, p. 37). This lack of understanding and attention likely applies to learners and teachers alike. Listening is so basic, so seemingly simple in the L1 that such oversight may be understandable; however, L2 listening cannot be taken for granted in the same way that L1 listening often is.

While listening may be a troublesome area for many L2 learners, their teachers may also struggle with how to address L2 listening in the language classroom. The student message highlighted in Chapter 1 ("Please tell me how to listen ^ English words better") served to emphasize the difficulties of both learning and teaching L2 listening. While L2 educators believe that strong listening skills are important for L2 development (e.g., Berne, 1998), the general L2 teaching community seems conflicted about how to design and teach effective lessons based on the skill of listening (e.g., Richards & Burns, 2012). As a result, many teachers continue to rely on comprehension- and product-based approaches to listening (e.g., Field, 2008). I was myself exposed to such approaches in my own L2 teaching and teacher education experiences, through my interactions with other language teachers in Asia, and in research and pedagogical literature on listening. In response to my experiences of the limitations of previous L2 listening pedagogy in the Japanese context and at APU specifically, the purpose of this research was to focus on LSI and investigate its viability as a pedagogic option for L2 listening instruction.

If there is one main theme to emerge from this research, it is that the status quo of L2 listening pedagogy can be challenged. Standard practices of 'listen, answer, check' do not have to replicated. They can be supplanted by other methods, including process-based LSI. Comprehension-based approaches may well be appropriate for some situations (e.g., for classroom management purposes with large groups or for courses strictly aimed at test preparation), but progressive methods such as LSI offer new avenues and possibilities for university-aged learners. These are learners who urgently need to develop generalizable L2 skills that they can apply beyond their classroom experiences. Since university instruction is likely to be their last formal form of education, rather than confining their L2 listening experience to restricting methodologies, teachers can exploit classroom opportunities to positively influence learners' listening abilities into the future.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire items

(1) Please respond to these statements about *your listening ability*:

Responses: strongly disagree / somewhat disagree / somewhat agree / strongly agree/ I don't know

I like listening to English.

I feel confident when listening to English.

My listening ability improved as a result of this class.

My listening ability improved as a result of my teacher's explanations.

My listening ability improved as a result of listening materials (videos, worksheets, Power points, textbooks, etc.) used in this class.

Choosing or writing answers in textbooks helps my listening ability.

My listening ability improved as a result of listening practices and activities in class.

I practice listening outside of class.

(2) Please respond to these statements about *the listening component* of this class:

Responses: strongly disagree / somewhat disagree / somewhat agree / strongly agree/ I don't know

My teacher's explanations about listening were useful.

My teacher's explanations about listening were interesting.

My teacher's explanations about listening were difficult to understand.

My teacher's explanations about listening were different than I have heard before.

Listening materials (videos, worksheets, Power points, textbooks, etc.) used in this class were useful.

Listening materials (videos, worksheets, Power points, textbooks, etc.) used in this class were different than I have seen before.

Listening practices and activities in this class were useful.

Listening practices and activities in this class were different than I have participated in before.

The listening component of this class is similar to that of my previous English classes (elementary, junior high, high schools and other APU English classes).

(3) Please respond to these statements about *listening strategy training* in this class:

Responses: strongly disagree / somewhat disagree / somewhat agree / strongly agree/ I don't know

Listening strategy training is important in English classes.

The listening strategy training in this class helped to improve my English listening ability.

I will be able to use listening strategies in future classes conducted in English.

I will be able to use listening strategies in conversations with English speakers.

I will be able to use listening strategies when listening to entertainment, such as movies and music, in English.

I will be able to use listening strategies in future jobs.

I will be able to use listening strategies when traveling.

Appendix 2: Student interview protocols

Procedures

All interviews were conducted in the same small counseling room on the APU campus. There were three chairs, a sofa, and a table in the room. During the interviews, tea was available for participants, and a small digital recorder was placed on the table in the middle of the room.

After a few minutes of small talk about the weather, hometowns, and other classes, the interview began with the interviewer asking the first question. Students were then given time to think about their responses. The interviewer first asked for volunteers to answer. After volunteers answered, the interviewer asked other participants to respond. Students were given the option of declining to answer, to use a Japanese/English dictionary, or to respond in Japanese, if they desired. However, the vast majority of students chose to respond and to respond in English.

Questions

(1) Is studying English important for you? Why or why not?

(2) There are four main language skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening. In general, which one do you think is the most important for you?

(3) Do you feel your English skills improved during this semester? If yes, in which skills?

(4) One of the skills this class focused on was listening. Did your listening skills stay the same / go down / go up because of this class? Why?

(5) Which is better, listening practice in class or outside of class? Why?

(6) Was the teacher's listening instruction in this class useful? Why or why not?

(7) Did the listening activities help your listening skills? How?

(8) How was listening taught in your previous English classes?

(9) Was the teaching of listening in this class the same or different than in other English classes you've taken (junior high, high school, APU)?

(10) Listening strategies were introduced and practiced in this class. What listening strategies can you remember?

(11) In your class, you learned these strategies. (I then recounted a full list of strategies). Which strategies do you think are the most useful? Why?

(12) Which strategies do you think are the least useful? Why?

(13) Will you be able to use these listening skills in the future? Why or why not? If yes, please give an example.

Sample transcriptions

From Phase 2, Interview 1 9:55 Interviewer (I): As you know in class, one of the skills that you and your teacher focused on was listening, and you mentioned that your listening skill improved this semester. I just want to double-check. Would you say your listening skill stayed the same as before, did it go down or go up? What do you think?

Neil (N): Um, I think, um, go up.

I: And why do you say that, Neil?

N: Um, my listening. Because I spend a time at to listen to English and went to self-access center sometimes. And, um, it's the TOEIC, no TOEFL listening is still difficult for me.

I: It's difficult for me, too.

N: But TOEIC is much easier. Mm.

I: It sounds like, then, that you spent lots of time listening by yourself. Is that different studying by yourself or practicing listening in class?

N: Ah! Different.

I: Did you do both things? Did both help your listening? Listening on your own and in class? Or was one better than the other? Or did both help?

N: Ah, I think both is good, but studying by myself is a little bit better because I can choose topic and control of the English, so that's more comfortable for me.

I: It'd be great if every student was as motivated as you are to practice out of class. Ah, okay, Rhianna, what do you think? Did your listening skill stay the same, go up or go down?

Rhianna (R): Go up.

I: Okay, why do you think so?

R: Because when, um, I was high school student, I can't hear English, but now I can hear English everywhere at APU.

I: And with Neil, he mentioned listening outside of class. Did you do some practice listening outside of class?

R: Yes, I use my dictionary and I studied TOEFL listening but it is not so difficult.

N: TOEFL? Really? Not difficult?

I: Really? That easy? Wow, that's great because I think the TOEFL listening is quite difficult.

From Phase 3, Interview 1: 12:18 Interviewer (I): As you know, one of the skills we spent a lot of time on in class was listening, almost everyday, and we've had listening tests and those kind of things. Becky, you mentioned that, um, you are more confident now than listening before. I'm wondering what everybody thinks. Do you think your listening skill this semester stayed the same as before, did it go down, or did it go up?

Becky (B): So, in my life, I always watch Japanese TV before. In spring semester, I always only watch Japanese TV. But now I always watch like Glee and Gossip Girl in English. I choose English, and of course, subtitles is

English or no. I always listen to English in TV. And yeah. And in workshop class, we have lots of opportunity to speak with English speakers in class, international students, so that's why.

I: Thanks, Becky. Akiko or Chihiro?

Akiko (A): Um, in this semester, I tried to understand English by English. In spring semester, teacher taught English by Japanese and I could understand. But our, my listening skill maybe didn't go up, so in this semester, I want to listen in English. And in my life, I watched a TED website, so maybe this is also give me chance to skill up my listening skill.

I: Okay, great. That's a great website, isn't it? Very interesting things on there.

A: Yes.

I: Okay, Chihiro?

Chihiro (C): Yes, um, I can learn learn the way of, the way which American people speak English, ah, like 'I'm gonna', 'wanna', so I can hear that word in listening. Yeah.

I: Okay, thanks, everybody for those answers. Becky and Akiko, you both said you like watching things like Glee and Gossip Girl. I've never seen those shows, but I know Glee is really popular in the US. And Akiko you said you like watching TED videos. Those things helped your listening skill go up, that's great. And those are things that you did outside of class. Is there anything that we did inside class that you think helped your listening skill?

20:30

I: Moving on then to our next question, think about the kind of listening practice that we did in our class. Is there anything that you didn't like about how we practiced listening?

A: Didn't like? Didn't like?

I: Yes, like things where you thought, 'Joe, maybe you shouldn't do this' or 'I thought this was a waste of time' or 'I didn't understand this.' That'll help me do my job better next time.

B: No. Nothing to change.

A: Same, nothing special.

C: Nothing, but if you give me movie, please movie to put translation. Ah, English, English.

B: Oh, yeah.

I: Oh, the subtitles?

C: Yeah, that one.

I: I think some of the videos that we used had subtitles but some of them don't. Okay. So I see what you mean. Can help match the word to the written word. Okay, thanks for that.

Interview consent form

Dear UIEA student,

Listening is a very important skill for communication, but it is a difficult skill to teach and learn. There is currently a research project about English listening in the CLE, and I would like to ask you to participate in this research. I would like to discuss with you how you learn to listen in English and about your listening strategies.

I would like you to:

1. Join a group interview discussion about the listening strategy instruction.

For your participation in the interview, you will receive 1000 yen.

Joining this project is voluntary. Participation in this research is not graded and will not affect your grades for any classes. That is, joining the interview will not help or hurt your grade.

If you are willing to participate, please read the form below carefully and sign it in the space at the bottom.

Thank you for your help.

Joe Siegel (siegeljo@apu.ac.jp)
Center for Language Education
Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

Subject consent form

I have read the description of the research project to be carried out by Joe Siegel. I have had the opportunity to discuss it with him and ask any questions I have.

I understand that I have been asked to take part in an interview about my views on listening teaching methods and that these interviews will be digitally recorded. I promise not to repeat others' opinions I may hear during these interviews. I understand that I can decline to take part in such an interview at any time.

I understand that my name will be kept in confidence and that my identity will not be revealed.

I agree to take part in the study. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time, for whatever reason, and if I do, I will inform the researchers.

_____   _____

Signature   Date

_____

Print name

Sample of email sent to potential participants

Upper Intermediate English

Research Interviews

What: Research interviews about your class

When: July (please contact Joe Siegel by email for the schedule)

Time: about 1 hour

Where: BII Building, 1 Floor

Who: Small groups of students from your class

Language: English preferred, Japanese if necessary

Contact: Joe Siegel

Email: siegeljo@apu.ac.jp

Please send me an email if you are interested in this opportunity or if you have any questions.

Appendix 3: Teacher interview questions

(1) What were your language learning goals for the students in this class?

(2) Did this course help you reach these goals? Why or why not?

(3) What are your impressions of this course?

(4) What percentage of time did you devote to: listening, speaking, reading, writing, in this class?

(5) This course introduced listening strategies. Have you taught listening strategies in the past?

(6) This course featured explicit, integrated listening strategy training. Given the choice, how would you prefer to teach listening strategies: implicitly or explicitly? Integrated or separately?

(7) Do you feel students learned to use these strategies? Why or why not?

(8) Do you think your students will be able to use these listening strategies in the future? If yes, please give one example.

(9) What issues arose for you when explaining the listening process to students?

(10) What issues arose for you when explaining the listening strategies in class?

(11) How effective were the listening explanations?

(12) How effective were the listening activities?

(13) How effective were the listening materials?

(14) Would you like to change anything about the listening component in this course?

(15) Other possible questions linked to the class video tapes and observation note sheets.

Appendix 4: Phase 2 observation comment sheet

Teacher's name: _____
Date: _____
Day of the week: _____
Time spent on listening: _____
(approximate, in minutes)
*Please record observed verbal and non-verbal behavior you witness from students in your classroom. It is acknowledged that during the course of classroom circumstances and interactions, that not all behaviors will be observed. If you have questions at any time, please contact me (Joe Siegel; siegeljo@apu.ac.jp). Your help and support are appreciated.

Verbal behaviors	Non-verbal behaviors
Such as: asking for repetition from teacher; asking classmates in L1; completing pair work; volunteering to speak; raising hands; replying with spoken comprehension confirmation, i.e., "Yes", "I understand", etc.	Such as: nodding; laughing; smiling; having "tuned in" posture; taking notes; watching monitor; making eye contact with teacher; having a confused look; shaking head in confusion; sleeping

Positive behaviors	Negative behaviors

Other observations / notes:

Teacher's name: _____Class code: _____ Date: _____Time on listening (in minutes):_____

#	Verbal behaviors										Nonverbal behaviors											
	Pair work	Volunteering answers to T	Sharing comments	Laughing	Checking with classmates	Making verbal predictions	Adding details	Shouting out of turn	Using target phrases/vocab	Speaking L1	Raising hands	Shaking head	Making eye contact	Taking notes	Leaning in	Smiling	Sleeping	Watching monitor	Reading slides	Nodding	Frowning/ Confused	Following T directions
1																						
2																						
3																						
4																						
5																						
6																						
7																						
8																						
9																						
10																						
11																						

Negative behaviors	
Positive behaviors	
Other notes	

Appendix 6: Additional examples of classroom observation comments

6a1: Additional examples of negative comments

Category	Sample comments
Confusion	• *Students asked for a video replay* (17 Oct 2011). • *One student staring blankly after instructions* (15 Dec 2011). • *Students said "wakaranai" (I don't understand) and "muri" (impossible) after listening* (22 Dec 2011).
Boredom / Distraction	• *One student arrived late to class during the listening segment* (10 Nov 2011). • *One student fidgeting with hair* (5 Dec 2011). • *One student writing in schedule book during listening* (8 Dec 2011).
Fatigue	• *Quite difficult to get [students] going* (11 Oct 2011). • *One student rubbing eyes and temples* (15 Dec 2011). • *Eye lids fluttering* (22 Dec 2011).
Hesitation to participate	• *Not so interactive* (7 Oct 2011). • *Limited calling out of answers* (17 Oct 2011). • *Not much volunteering* (29 Nov 2011).
Inability to complete task	• *One student unable to answer pre-listening question* (29 Nov 2011). • *Many guessed wrong on context question 1* (15 Dec 2011).
Not following instructions	• *One student didn't write answers* (5 Oct 2011). • *One pair talking during instructions* (1 Nov 2011). • *One student not taking notes* (10 Nov 2011).
L1 use	• *A lot of pair work preparing details for conversation and lectures meant lots of opportunities for L1 use. Unfortunately.* (20 Oct 2011). • *Some L1 chatter with students' backs to the teacher* (5 Dec 2011).

6a2: Additional examples of positive comments

Category	Sample comments
Accomplishing task	• *Able to predict and respond to patterns on slides* (5 Dec 2011). • *Made predictions of chunking* (8 Dec 2011). • *Listen and repeat activity went well with focal point in mid-sentence* (19 Dec 2011).
Being energetic	• *Good energy for opening pre-listening question* (21 Oct 2011). • *More energy with textbook listening and repeat activity* (1 Dec 2011). • *Good participation in pre-listening; lots of excited gesturing* (8 Dec 2011).
Active physical engagement	• *Leaning in to read monitor* (8 Nov 2011). • *Heads going back and forth between video and notes* (13 Dec 2011). • *Some students mouthing word on slides* (19 Dec 2011).
Focusing on task	• *Followed directions very well* (7 Oct 2011). • *Focused on transcript task* (25 Oct 2011). • *Focused on ordering the text* (15 Dec 2011).
Using strategies without prompting	• *Used target phrases and patterns without prompting* (27 Oct 2011). • *Starting listening discussion without prompting* (29 Nov 2011).
Asking for help	• *Clarified vocabulary from listening text* (14 Oct 2011). • *One student asked about the meaning of "close-minded" from a video* (1 Nov 2011).
Comprehension feedback	• *Nodding at the idea of "brush my teeth" as a set rather than each individual word* (8 Dec 2011). • *"Ah's" of understanding after the teacher demonstrated the importance of key words using Power Point slides* (19 Dec 2011).
Enjoyment	• *Surprised and interested gasps at key making video* (27 Oct 2011). • *Laughing/smiling* (8 Dec 2011).

6a3: Additional examples of 'other' comments

Category	Sample comments
Recycling listening strategies	• *Having introduced markers for grammar the week before, this went very smoothly* (18 Oct 2011). • *Made clear connection to chunking* (15 Dec 2011). • *Connected this activity to predicting test questions* (22 Dec 2011).
Replaying listening texts	• *Watch the key making video three times* (27 Oct 2011). • *First video play with no audio; second play with audio* (13 Dec 2011).
Level of materials	• *"So easy" said one student [referring to textbook listening material]* (5 Oct 2011). • *APU video seemed fast for some, led to confused looks* (17 Oct 2011). • *Impressive in listening to natural pace video* (22 Dec 2011).
Revisions to listening lesson plan	• *I added an anecdote for listening and pair work to liven atmosphere, which increased energy, smiling* (10 Nov 2011).
Links to testing	• *Emphasized TOEIC link* (15 Dec 2011). • *Part 1 was test focused on TOEFL* (22 Dec 2011).
Technology problems	• *I was talking for a bit, but corresponding slides weren't up* (25 Oct 2011). • *My mistake in slide order* (13 Dec 2011).
Connections to other language skills	• *Very quick and accurate in pronoun identification; I would suggest that this is a positive crossover from our work in the B course on pronouns* (28 Nov 2011). • *Lots of reading to support listening points today* (15 Dec 2011). • *Emphasized connection to writing UIEA essay and change in tone* (19 Dec 2011).
Personalization	• *I tried to add personalized post-listening discussion questions* (10 Nov 2011). • *Added personalized post-listening questions about parents, fast food* (22 Dec 2011).
Teacher questions	• *Should I use sub-titles in videos or not?* (13 Dec 2011). • *Should I always do pre-listening activities to build schema? Students don't get schema support on tests.* (15 Dec 2011).

Appendix 7: In-house pre/post listening test questions

1. What is the main topic of this lecture?
a. mistakes in English
b. grammar and vocabulary
c. spoken and written English
d. intonation and slang

2. Which three categories are mentioned in the lecture?
a. pronunciation, spelling, and grammar
b. intonation, vocabulary, and mistakes
c. medium of communication, grammar, and vocabulary
d. reading, mood, and expressions

3. What can you use to convey mood in written English?
a. punctuation
b. stress
c. intonation
d. grammar

4. Which is NOT used in formal written English?
a. slang
b. verb agreement
c. pronouns
d. punctuation

5. Which sentence is true?
a. People often make mistakes in spoken English.
b. People often notice mistakes in spoken English.
c. People don't often notice mistakes in written English.
d. People often use pronouns in formal written English.

6. What is the main topic of this interview?
a. fashion
b. food
c. music
d. environment

7. What is an example of a natural material?
a. wool
b. nylon
c. polyester
d. pesticides

8. What does "spread the message" mean in the conversation?
a. make more money
b. make the issue popular
c. save the environment
d. wear old clothes

9. What is "vintage" clothing?
a. last year's fashion
b. environmental fashion
c. fashion from the 50's and 60's
d. modern clothing

10. What does Marietta hope to do by combining old and new?
a. make people keep their clothing for longer
b. make people buy more clothing
c. make people throw their clothing away
d. make people sew their own clothing

Appendix 8: Research journal extracts

Journal entry 2 (16 June 2010): Some concerns on my mind include whether to teach strategies implicitly or explicitly. Most of my experience has been with the explicit teaching of cognitive and metacognitive listening strategies. Not sure how this fits with what other teachers have experience in or want to do. I'm also not sure if we should use L2 terms for strategies during instruction. Is it useful for students to know jargon like "genre" or "background knowledge"? Should we use L1 equivalents? In my experience, I've always used L2 terms in class but not sure of student uptake.

Journal entry 3 (19 June 2010): It seems that textbooks have been selected for our new curriculum, although the titles have not been announced to all CLE teachers yet. This means that the listening texts contained in these textbooks will need to be used (at least at times) during classes. It's important to remember that our Listening Team selected and organized skills and strategies before a textbook was chosen. We will need to continue development by:

1. Fitting/ "shoe-horning" our selected skills and strategies into the pre-determined textbook listening passages.
2. Design supplementary materials to introduce/practice/support skills and strategies.
3. Help train teachers in how to use textbook and supplementary listening texts.

Journal entry 12 (24 Oct 2010): There's been an update about UIEA, which will have 3 components: listening, writing, speaking. The listening component will likely feature a mix of conversation and academic texts. Periodic quizzes on note taking (for the academic texts) and on LSI (e.g., theme, detail, pronoun reference, discourse markers, prediction) will likely be used.

As for the specific LSI, we will need to decide if a workshop style approach will work. We will also need to work out a pattern for introduction, practice, review, and recycling of the strategies.

Journal entry 13 (4 Nov 2010): There was administrative and university pressure to access listening in ways that reflect standardized tests like TOEFL: main ideas, details, inference, and textual organization are among assessed skills. Students will also be able to take notes in order to transfer information to an assessed task. Although I believe there are useful cognitive skills used in listening, this assessment plan does not recognize some. Products rather than processes will be assessed, though this may be best for consistency and convenience of marking. Assessment of listening processes may never be practical in classroom (i.e., non-research) contexts. Our aim during classes will be to develop the processes in order to help students achieve these products. This will include explicit strategy instruction involving BUP and TDP approaches.

I still need to determine what, if any, strategy training is included inherently in the textbook. Was this textbook designed with LSI in mind? It is an integrated

textbook, so this is doubtful. In the past, I have needed to totally integrate process and LSI supplementary materials and activities into textbooks lacking in these areas. Such additions may be necessary with: video, audio, worksheets, Power point, pair work, and teacher modeling, L1-L2 awareness raising. Consideration and creation of these materials are likely in the future.

Journal entry 19 (15 Dec 2010): While I create plans and materials for listening, I need to use the textbook. Creativity is a must because the textbook does not specifically, explicitly develop various listening strategies/processes; instead, each chapter contains the same listening skills, such as listening for theme, detail, inference. I'm trying to insert additional skills and strategies. Since the textbook only covers a few core "skills", is it better to cover these in a rotating/recycling pattern? Or to introduce further skills? To get lots of exposure to a few skills/strategies or shallow exposure to many? Makes me think a large repertoire is better because of individual learner preferences/differences.

Journal entry 23 (26 April 2011): Another improvement to listening materials was suggested by the current UIE teacher. Transcript lines and CD times can be added to Power points and teacher lesson plans, which can make delivery of materials more straight-forward. These information additions can help save time and make playing of audio/video easier. In addition, this modification should save class time, as teachers will know exactly when to stop or pause a listening text.

Journal entry 25 (16 June 2011): In a meeting with the current UIE teacher, we discussed the semester's listening materials so far and identified potential areas for development. The teacher reported that he was able to use the materials confidently in class and is pleased with both the coherence of the materials and the ability to recycle/build on previously covered strategies and content. The real-life applications of the strategies to various situations and genres were also specified as benefits of the LSI. Overall, the teacher's outlook and enthusiasm reflect positively on the LSI (presumably better than previous listening methodologies he has been exposed to).

At present, the teacher is on the strategy of "chunking." For the first time, the teacher reported some uncertainty/hesitation about how to deliver the chunking LSI. Although he covered the materials in class, he said the students were close but not confident in first understanding and then applying the ideas. The teacher will conduct some follow up instruction tomorrow based on his own reflection and some classroom techniques we discussed (e.g., relating chunking to idioms and to reading). We agreed that we should be alert to potentially troublesome/confusing materials/strategies, which can be modified before the next semester. Indeed, based on teacher comfort, intuition and capacity as well as learner desires, performance, and reaction, we must be prepared to modify LSI accordingly.

Journal entry 26 (17 June 2011): Today, the teacher told me that the chunking work in class went very well. Students and the teacher dissected a listening transcript (as per the listening lesson plan) and discussed patterns

for chunking. Students also did a pair reading/listening activity in which they swapped roles in order to mark chunks. The teacher was very enthusiastic about this progress! He also mentioned how previous work on pattern recognition aided both his explanations and student uptake in class.

Journal entry 29 (29 Sept 2011): The assigned classrooms for UIE have digital monitor displays rather than large digital projector screens. These smaller monitors may make it difficult for students to see video and text that is displayed. It is clear that appropriate technology and facilities are necessities for LSI to be widespread and effective. At our resource-rich university, we have many facilities and may even be able to change classrooms in this case. Likely, others will lack either the facilities or the flexibility to be able to deliver LSI in a consistent and ideal fashion.

Journal entry 30 (21 Oct 2011): Regarding recycling of terms, I learned that UIE's counterpart reading course features very similar strategy training. Teachers are being encouraged to use consistent terminology for strategies (e.g., markers, inferencing) and to make references to the A (listening) and B (reading) classes. This overlap and recycling opportunity has great potential and benefit, I think, so long as all teachers are on board. If so, students will get extra exposure to strategies as well as chances to apply them to different language skills.

Journal entry 33 (11 Nov. 2011): From watching Sean's class video, it seems as if students are accustomed to the strategy training and materials. I saw Sean using the materials in the way I intended and very similar to how I used them in my own classes. The time spent in his class on listening was about 40 minutes, which is similar to the time I used for the same activity. We do some things differently, though; for example, I ask students to work in pairs more often after a listening segment to promote collaborative listening, while his style focuses more on individual listening. Whereas he specifies individual students to respond, I ask for voluneers.

It is also important to note how dependent on technology this LSI is. If there were a computer/audio problem, some of the listening materials would be difficult to deliver. Fortunately, all of the technology has worked fine thus far. Both Sean and I have a lot of experience with the audio/video systems, but newer/less technology-savvy teachers may struggle with all of the buttons to push and folders to click.

Journal entry 37 (8 Jan. 2012): I am starting to wonder about the order in which we use materials in class. Which order would benefit students most? Listening text, reading the text, subtitles or none, Power points, etc.). The order of these as they are presented in class will certainly have some effect, and I am sure some people have done research on the effects of written/spoken language and which order leads to increased comprehension and language acquisition.

Appendix 9: Ethical approval

Student Research Ethics

Approval Form (REC1)

PLEASE NOTE: You MUST gain approval for any research BEFORE any research takes place. Failure to do so could result in a ZERO mark	
Name	**Joseph Paul Siegel**
Student Number	**109019684**
Module Name	**Research Methods**
Module Number Applied	**NA School of Languages and Social Sciences PhD Linguistics by distance**

Please type your answers to the following questions:

1. **What are the aim(s) of your research?**

The aims of this research are to bring about a shift in the pedagogy of L2 listening skills from product-orientation to process-based listening through direct, explicit strategy training (LST). This project seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are learner and teacher perceptions of LST methodology?
2. Which methodological factors contribute to success in LST programs?

The research assumption under consideration is that revision of prevalent, generally accepted listening pedagogy is not only attainable but is necessary in order to help L2 listeners develop. Furthermore, it is expected that both students and teachers will perceive these changes as logical, beneficial and constructive compared to product-oriented approaches.

The intended outcomes of this research include development and facilitation of LST in methodology and materials development at one level of university English courses at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) in Japan. The level at which the LST intervention is made cannot be determined with certainty at this time but will likely be the Intermediate level. If the researcher is assigned to teach at a different level, subsequent adjustments will be made and research will be conducted within that level.

To bring about the proposed change in listening methodology, an Action Research plan will be implemented. This Action Research will take place

within the context of the 2011 Curriculum Reform in the Center for Language Education at APU and will include the following stages: planning, intervention, observation, and reflection. The role of the researcher in the intervention will include significant contributions to a Listening Curriculum Team, input on methodological and materials selection, and design and leadership of faculty development workshops on process-based teaching of listening.

2. **What research methods to you intend to use?**

- Quantitative questionnaires administered via an online teaching platform (Blackboard) will be completed by Intermediate level APU English students on a regular basis. These will be part of in-class tasks. Approximately 300 students will complete these questionnaires.

- Quantitative questionnaires will also be completed by Intermediate level APU English teachers. Approximately 3-5 teachers will complete these questionnaires.

- Qualitative group interviews will be conducted with groups of Intermediate level APU English students. Groups will consist of no more than five students.

- Qualitative interviews will also be conducted with Intermediate level APU English teachers.

- A journal will be written by the researcher in order to log reflections, reactions, and thought processes during the planning and intervention stages.

- Observations of relevant Intermediate level classes will be made. These will likely include observations of 3-5 classes and ideally will be made once per semester.

3. **Please give details of the type of informant, the method of access and sampling, and the location(s) of your fieldwork. (see guidance notes).**

Type of informant:

1. Students studying at the Intermediate taking English courses at APU, consisting of both the Spring and Fall semesters.

2. Teachers working in the Intermediate English section of the Center for Language Education at APU.

Access:

1. With the cooperation of teachers at the Intermediate level of the English program, students will complete questionnaires during class time as both a reflective teaching tool and a data collection mechanism. These questionnaires will be prepared with the program SurveryMonkey and linked via the Blackboard teaching platform. Questionnaires will be completed twice each semester, once at the end of the first quarter and once at the end of the second quarter.
2. Intermediate level teachers will be contacted via campus email for requests to participate in the project. Most potential teacher participants have offices in the same faculty building, which allows for direct contact as well.

Location:

All fieldwork will take place at APU located in Beppu City, Oita Prefecture, Japan. APU is a private university with approximately 5,000 Japanese and international students. Questionnaires will be completed in APU classrooms. Group interviews may be conducted in APU classrooms or in faculty consultation rooms and will depend on room availability.

4. **Please give full details of all ethical issues which arise from this research**

   1. Confidentiality and anonymity of questionnaire responses.
   2. Confidentiality and anonymity of group interview participation.
   3. I will be operating in a dual role of researcher and teacher in this project.
   4. Students may feel required to respond to questionnaires and take part in interviews because teachers ask them to participate.

5. **What steps are you taking to address these ethical issues?**

   1. Confidentiality and anonymity of questionnaire responses:
      No information with which students can be identified will be elicited. Names, student numbers, etc. will not be required.

2. Confidentiality and anonymity of group interview participation: A statement indicating that group interview discussions should not be recounted by participants will be included in the consent form. In addition, pseudonyms will be used to protect anonymity in any written work stemming from the project.

3. This dual role is inevitable given the Action Research involved in the project. The fact that several other teachers will be teaching using the new listening pedagogy should help to balance the individual effects of my teaching. I will also invite outside observers to my classes in an effort to confirm that I am not overtly influencing student views of the modified listening methodology. Regarding data analysis, I will ask other EFL professionals conduct inter-rater checks in order to corroborate findings. In addition, I will bring findings from questionnaire data to the interview sessions, and present these findings to participants for them to either refute or accept.

4. It will be made clear to students in both Japanese and English through translated information that their participation on questionnaires and in interviews is completely voluntary. They will be told explicitly that grades will not be affected by participation or non-participation and that they can discontinue participation at any time for any reason.

5. There will be no impact on student grades due to participation. Completing the questionnaires will be an in-class reflective task, but this activity will not be assessed in relation to class grades.

6. The on line questionnaire might have an item asking about interest in group interviews. Respondents could then provide names and email addresses for future arrangements concerning the group interviews.

6. What issues for the personal safety of the researcher(s) arise from this research?

This research will involve only APU-enrolled students and APU faculty. All data collection will be conducted at APU's private campus. As such, safety risks are minimal.

7. **What steps will be taken to minimise the risks of personal safety to the researchers?**

   Interviews will be held with groups of teachers and students in rooms with accessible doors and windows. Therefore, these situations pose minimal safety risks. Common sense will be an effective measure to ensure safety.

Statement by student investigator(s):

I/We consider that the details given constitute a true summary of the project proposed

I/We have read, understood and will act in line with the LSS Student Research Ethics and Fieldwork Safety Guidance lines .

Name	Signature	Date

Statement by module convener, placement or project supervisor.

I have read the above project proposal and believe that this project only involves minimum risk. I also believe that the student(s) understand the ethical and safety issues which arise from this project.

Name	Signature	Date

This form must be signed and both staff and students need to keep copies.

Approval email

Dear Joe,

I'm pleased to inform you that your application for ethical approval has been approved by the LSS Ethics Committee, and that you should proceed with your research as per your supervisor's guidance. Best of luck, and please do let me know if you have any further questions at any point in your project.

Best wishes,
Sarah

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Appendix 10: Samples of pre- and post-LSI intervention materials

This appendix illustrates examples of how assigned materials (e.g., Power point slides, videos, worksheets, and textbooks) were used both before and after the LSI intervention. Prior to the intervention, the approach was essentially a comprehension-based, product-oriented approach that focused on correct answers but did little to develop learners' abilities to reach those answers. The post-intervention materials display a process-based approach that included stages of strategy introduction, practice, and review. Recycling of strategies is also evident in some of the materials.

Samples in this appendix include Power point slides, worksheets, references to videos, lesson plans, and pages from my UIE textbook. Each section shows the pre-intervention approach, either in the form of worksheets or textbook pages, followed by the post-intervention materials. The specific strategic focus of each set of materials is also listed. On some textbook pages, my written responses and lesson planning notes are visible. Comments in textboxes draw attention to fundamental changes in the materials.

When using these materials, the teacher set up a task according to the Power point slides, worksheet, or textbook page. This set up typically included discussion and/or review of a specific strategy. After students attempted the task, the teacher would check the degree of task achievement. Next, the teacher would review how the particular strategy could be useful in completing the specified task. This was often done through teacher modeling. Students were then given time to reflect on how effective the strategy was for them and on when and how the might employ the strategy in the future.

10.1a Pre-intervention textbook page with comprehension questions (later used for strategy of *genre recognition*)

fashion designer.

Genre prediction

2 people meet on college campus.

Listen

1/3

3 Comprehension Questions Listen to the conversation. You don't need to understand all the words. Just listen for the answers to these questions. After you listen, discuss your answers with a partner.

main idea

genre - first meeting
- *usual topics*
- *open/closing*
con.
- *their relationship?*
- *list. for answers.*
- *comp. ?'s*

1. Where are the women going? Why? *Campbell Hall, placement test*

2. Who is Nancy? What does she do? *English teacher*

3. Who is Mari? Where is she from? *Japan*

4. How did Mari learn to speak English? *family came to the country*

5. Why does Mari need to take an English course? *improve writing*

6. What does Mari want to major in? *international business*

*Product-oriented comprehension questions from the textbook

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10a.2 Post-intervention slides for strategy of *genre recognition* (based on textbook audio)

Using Genre

Imagine these situations:

At a hotel
At a coffee shop
Meeting a person for the first time

- How many speakers are there?
- Who are the speakers?
- What will they probably talk about?

Turn to page 5, activity 3 in your textbook. We will hear a conversation between two women meeting for the first time on a university campus.

Trip to a university office

- How many speakers are there?
- Who are the speakers?
- What will they probably talk about?

Turn to page 8, activity 6 in your textbook. We will hear a conversation between a former student and an office staff member.

10b.1 Pre-intervention worksheet for video, Muslims in America (2 pages)

Intermediate English II – Multiculturalism – Muslims in America

Vocabulary

[ ] anxiety   [ ] pilgrimage   [ ] condemn   [ ] prophet
[ ] dominate   [ ] defend   [ ] impressive   [ ] hospitality

a) say that someone/something is bad   e) wonderful, amazing
b) hold complete power   f) journey to a holy place
c) feeling of worry   g) warm and generous treatment
d) protect, support   h) religious leader

Videos

Video 1 – Introduction   (just watch)

Video 2 – The Start of the Journey
What are the rules of his stay in the Muslim community?
1) He must live with a Muslim family, and follow their _____ and
_____
2) He must study the Qur'an _____
3) He must grow a _____

*Worksheet consists of only product-based comprehension questions

Video 3 – Meet the Haques
Shamael or *Sadia*
[   ] is a doctor
[   ] is an American Muslim
[   ] wears a hijab
[   ] is a legal student
[   ] is descended from Pakistani immigrants

Video 4 – The 5 Pillars
What are the 5 most important things for a Muslim?
Faith in one _____
C_____
F_____
_____ to Mecca
Prayer _____ times a day
What time do the Haques wake up to pray?
_____ am

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Video 5 – "…Satan is the third"
From the next video, which of these statements is true?:

[T / F] Sadia would not feel comfortable alone with Dave
[T / F] There are 3 men and 3 women in the house
[T / F] Dave will stay in the house alone
[T / F] Dave feels a little angry at Shamael
[T / F] Dave will accept Shamael's opinion

*More product-based comprehension questions

Video 6 – Speaking with the Imam
Christianity, Judaism, Islam
Different _____
Different _____,
The _____ and _____ are the same

core
language
culture
principles

Video 7 – Day 5   *(just watch)*

Video 8 – Dave learns a lesson
What does the Imam tell Dave about alcohol?

Video 9 – Halal
What are the rules for food and drink that Muslims must follow?
No _____
No _____
Only eat _____ that is blessed at the time of slaughter

Video 10 – Jihad - *What does Jihad mean?*
True = [✓]   [   ]   Winning an argument
              [   ]   War
              [   ]   Self-control
              [   ]   Blowing things up
              [   ]   Surrender
              [   ]   Focus on God

Video 11 – Lessons learned
What does Dave's teacher ask him to do ?
If somebody says something wrong about Muslims…

10b.2 Post-intervention worksheet for video Muslims in America, focusing on strategy *listening for main idea/theme* (2 pages)

Intermediate English II – Multiculturalism – Muslims in America

Vocabulary	

to dominate
 	
innocent
	Video 1 – Introduction (Theme)
	What is the main theme of this video?
	    a) it is important to be scared of Muslims
	    b) it is difficult to learn about Muslims
	    c) it is important to learn about different cultures
	    d) America is not a Muslim country

	Video 2 (Prediction)
	What do you think are the rules of his 30 days?
	  1) He must follow Islamic _____ and _____
	  2) He must study _____
	  3) He must grow a _____
	Answers:
	  1) He must follow Islamic _____ and _____
	  2) He must study _____
	  3) He must grow a _____

	Video 3 - Shamael or Sadia (Detail – Who?)
	    [ ] a doctor
	    [ ] an American Muslim
	    [ ] wearing a hijab
	    [ ] a legal student
	    [ ] descended from Pakistani immigrants

	Video 4 – The 5 Pillars (Detail – What?)
	  Faith in one _____
	  C_____
	  F_____
	  _____ to Mecca
	  Prayer _____ times a day

	Video 5 - What is the main theme of their conversation? (Theme)
	    a) Shamael doesn't like Dave in his life
	    b) Shamael doesn't want Dave in his home with Sadia
	    c) Dave is angry that Shamael woke him up early
	    d) Shamael's wife wants Dave to go home

*Worksheet question on theme. Corresponds with slides (see below) with strategies for identifying themes

*More theme practice

principle	**Video 6** (Restatement) "The <u>principles</u> of these three religions are the same". _____
prophet	**"Abraham and Jesus are considered <u>prophets</u> in the Islamic faith".** _____

Video 7 (Theme / Main point)
What is Dave's teacher's main point?
     a) drinking alcohol will kill Dave
     b) Dave cannot promise he can control himself
     c) the teacher loves alcohol
     d) drinking alcohol is part of religion

More theme practice

Video 8 – How is Dave feeling? (Main point)

    great ---- good ----- fair ---- bad ---- terrible

More theme practice

Video 9 – What are the rules for halal foods? (Detail – What?)
    No _____
    No _____
    Only eat _____ that is blessed.

Video 10 - 'Jihad' could best be replaced with (Detail – vocabulary)
    a) attack   c) practice
    b) struggle   d) teaching

Video 11 – What / Who does he have to (Main point)
'defend'?
    a) Christianity   c) stereotypes
    b) Americans   d) Islam

Choose 5 words from the vocabulary list.
Write a short sentence using them summarizing the video. (one example is given)
  0) Negative images of Muslims <u>dominate</u> the American view of the religion.
    1)
    2)
    3)
    4)
    5)

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10b.3 Sample post-intervention materials for *listening for main idea/theme* (2 pages; used in conjuction with 10b.2 worksheet)

4/3/13

Sample LSI slides for Main Ideas (Muslims in America video)

Multiculturalism
Muslims in America

Video One
Introduction

Strategy instruction for identifying themes and main ideas (corresponds to worksheet questions above)

Theme

Listening for the **theme**.
1) Read the options of the question.
2) Listen for the key words of the listening.
 - Which words are repeated?
 - Which words are stressed?
 - What information is focused on?

Theme - 3 questions

Which words are repeated?
 Muslim / Islam – 10 times
 USA / America – 6 times

Which words are stressed?
 <u>Who</u> are they?
 <u>What</u> does this religion teach?

What information is focused on?
 People are more interested in Islam after 9/11
 Islam is not well-known in the United States
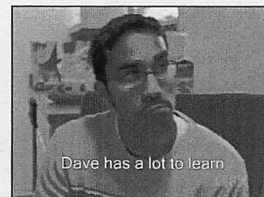
Dave has a lot to learn

Strategy instruction for identifying themes and main ideas (corresponds to worksheet questions above)

Theme

What is the main theme of this video?
a) it is important to be scared of Muslims
b) it is difficult to learn about Muslims
c) it is important to learn about different cultures
d) America is not a Muslim country

Point-by-point breakdown

a) it is important to be scared of Muslims
 The video is about Muslims
 ✗ It does not recommend being scared
b) it is difficult to learn about Muslims
 The video is about Muslims
 ✗ It does not mention it being difficult
c) it is important to learn about different cultures
 People do not know about Islam
 It is part of the American culture
d) America is not a Muslim country
 ✗ There are 6 million Muslims in America

Video Five
"...Satan is the third"

1

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*Strategy instruction for identifying themes and main ideas (corresponds to worksheet questions above)

Main Idea

What is the main theme of this conversation?
a) Shamael doesn't like Dave in his life
b) Shamael doesn't trust Dave in his home
c) Dave is angry that Shamael woke him up early
d) Shamael's wife wants Dave to go home

Point-by-point breakdown

a) Shamael doesn't like Dave in his life
   ✗ Shamael doesn't say he doesn't like Dave
b) Shamael doesn't want Dave in his house with Sadia
   ✎ He explains his wife would not be comfortable with Dave in the house.
   ✎ He gives a religious reason.
c) Dave is angry that Shamael woke him up early
   ✎ Dave is 'kind of offended'
   ✗ They do not talk about the call to prayer
d) Shamael's wife wants Dave to go home
   ✎ Shamael talks about his wife
   ✗ They do not talk about Dave going home

Video Seven

Prayer

*Strategy instruction for identifying themes and main ideas (corresponds to worksheet questions above)

He's proving a quick study in Arabic.
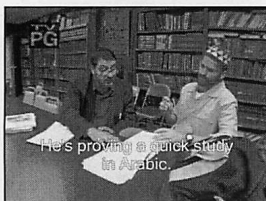
Main Idea

How is Dave feeling?

great --- good ---- fair --- bad --- terrible

Main Idea

How is Dave feeling?

great --- good ---- fair --- bad --- terrible

"Not knowing what was being said in Arabic, I really had a huge panic attack"
"For me to pray to another God, it makes me feel like I'm going to be turning my back on my own God"

2

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10c.1 Pre-intervention textbook page with comprehension questions (later used for strategy of *detail identification* and for recycling previously covered strategies)

*Product-oriented comprehension questions from the textbook

10c.2 Post-intervention slides for strategy of *detail identification* (also includes recycling of some strategies) (based on textbook audio)

*Recycling of strategies for genre recognition and identification of main ideas / theme

DETAILS

Conversation page 19, activity 3

Genre

This conversation takes place on the phone.

How many speakers will there probably be?

What will they most likely say at the beginning of the conversation?

Theme

Who are the speakers?

A)A student and an apartment owner
B)A mother and a daughter
C)A boyfriend and a girlfriend
D)A boss and an employee

* Questions for practicing identification of details, aided by genre and theme.

What is the student calling about?

A)Noisy neighbors
B)Starting college
C)Renting a room
D)Studying English

Details

Where does the student live now?

A)At home with her parents
B)In a hotel with her friend
C)In a dormitory with her classmates
D)In a house with other students

What's the problem at this house?

A)It is too small and too expensive.
B)It is too loud and too messy.
C)It is too noisy and too cold.
D)It is too far from school and too old.

*Process-based approach for identifying important details and answering detail questions

Who lives in the house that the speaker is talking about?

A) The speaker, her husband, and her cousin.
B) The speaker, her boss, and her cat.
C) The speaker and her two friends.
D) The speaker, her sister, and her daughter.

How is the neighborhood describe?

A)Boring
B)Artistic
C)Modern
D)Safe

First: Know what DETAILS you need (read the questions)

Then: Think about GENRE and THEME (they will help in understanding)

Next: Listen carefully for the details and take notes

10d.1 Pre-intervention worksheet for Leadership video about Carlos Ghosn (2 pages)

Fall 2008 · Leadership

Intermediate English II – Leadership – Carlos Ghosn

Vocabulary

[ ] identical   [ ] field   [ ] diversity   [ ] theorem

[ ] competence   [ ] facet   [ ] challenge   [ ] implement

a) area of study   e) put something into use

b) stimulating test   f) exactly the same or equal

c) (ethnic, gender) variety   g) one part of something

d) idea accepted as true   h) ability to do something well

Videos

Video 1 – Introduction

Topics: Nissan, new research, his experiences, international management, management around the world, his new book

Won't talk about:	Will talk about:

Video 2 – The Good News

What is the "good news"?: "***You are in the _____ field***

Synonym check:

powerful   dislike   controversial

certain   unknown   false

Video 3 – The Bad News

True or False?

[T/F]   They will need to put in a lot of effort

[T/F]   95% of their job is complete

[T/F]   Experience is the majority of their concern

Video 4 – An good example

What is his message?:

[ ] Good mathematicians work at universities.

[ ] You should forget your studies.

[ ] Using rules correctly is the true test.

[ ] Only Carlos Ghosn knows the truth.

*Worksheet consists of only product-based comprehension questions

Video 5 – International Management

    "What you're going to learn is _____ *"*

    "What's going to come after is _____ *"*

Video 6 – Diversity
Which of <u>these</u> does Carlos talk about?

    [   ]   **Making money**

    [   ]   **Designing new things**

    [   ]   **Inspiring business partnerships**

    [   ]   **Building company funds**

More product-based comprehension questions

Video 7 – Types of diversity
    Which two types of diversity does Carlos mention?

    1) C_____   2) E_____

Video 8 – Other types of diversity

| Designer |
| Lawyer |
| Marketer |
| Controller |
| Someone in communications |
| Manufacturer |

_____ vs. _____

_____ vs. _____

_____ vs. _____

Video 9 – Working together
What are the good points?   1) You _____ _____ together.

    2) You _____ _____.

What is the major bad point?   *You cannot _____ from someone who*

    is _____ to you.

10d.2 Post-intervention worksheet for Leadership video featuring Carlos Ghosn, focusing on strategy of *discourse marker identification* (2 pages)

Intermediate English II – Leadership – Carlos Ghosn

Pre-listening—Carlos Ghosn (Inference)

This week's topic is Leadership and the video is about a man named Carlos Ghosn.

What are **3 things** you can infer (guess) about Carlos?

1)

2)

3)

Whole video—Markers (Markers)

Carlos uses several key words to signal when he is changing topics. Check the boxes when you hear the marker:

Now ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐   Well ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐   OK ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Right ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐   However ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐   Still ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

*Strategy practice for identifying organizational markers (linked to slides below in 10d.3)

Video 1—First point

What is Ghosn's first main point?   (Markers)
   a) International business is a great career.
   b) He is a good businessman with bad workers.
   c) Studying international management takes time.
   d) Business has some wonderful and some difficult points.

What is the "good news"? _____ is going to _____ this _____.

What is the "bad news"? You're going to have to _____ _____, you're going to _____ a lot, but when you are _____, you are not _____.

Video 2—Idea + Example

Carlos gives an **idea** and then an **example** to explain the idea.

What is the **idea**?
   a) You study more than you work.   (Patterns)
   b) Your experience is more important than study.
   c) Experience happens before you study.

What is the **example**?
   a) Someone good at math can use math in real life.
   b) Learning math rules is more important than doing math.
   c) Carlos enjoys solving math exercises.

*Strategy of listening for patterns

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*More practice with the strategy of listening for organizational markers

Video 3—Diversity

"Now, diversity has multiple facets." What are the 3 (Markers) different kinds of diversity he mentions?

1) _____ 2)_____ 3)_____

Video 4—More diversity

In this section, the speaker repeats **3 key words.** What are they?

1)_____ 2)_____ 3)_____

What can you infer from these **3 key words?**   (Repetition)
   a) Ghosn wants everyone to be similar.
   b) The speaker believes diversity is beneficial.
   c) He always looks for chances to find new ideas.

*Recycling strategy of listening for theme and repeated words

*More practice with the strategy of listening for organizational markers

Video 5—Next main point

What is his **2nd** main point?   (Markers)

"The _____ _____ I wanted to make is _____ responsibility, and particularly _____ management responsibility is to make sure you are _____ these _____. This is a _____."

Video 6—Idea + Example

Idea: "You know, _____." (Patterns)

Example: "_____ men of the same _____, same _____, coming from the same _____, coming from the same _____, _____ the same field are going to work very easily together."

BUT Carlos believes:
   a) We learn more from people different than us.
   b) He prefers working with people the same as him.
   c) A boss and her workers should be identical.

Choose 5 words from the vocabulary list.
Write a short sentence using them summarizing the video. (one example is given)
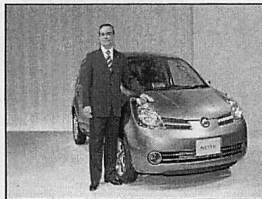   0) Negative images of Muslims **dominate** the American view of the religion.
   1)
   2)
   3)
   4)
   5)

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10d.3 Sample post-LSI intervention Power point slides for strategy of *discourse marker identification* (3 pages; used in conjunction with 10d.2)

4/3/13

Sample LSI slides for Markers (Carlos Ghosn Leadership video)

That's right, it's **Carlos Ghosn, CEO of Nissan**

We know he is a business leader.

What are 3 things you can infer / guess about Carlos Ghosn?

*Strategy introduction for identifying organizational markers

Infer or **Guess**

Carlos Ghosn is a business leader, so he is probably…

Carlos Ghosn works for a Japanese company, so he most likely…

Carlos Ghosn has been very successful, so I guess that he…

Discourse Markers
- Now…
- Right …
- Well…
- First…
- And another thing…
- Besides that…
- So…
- Finally…

Markers

These words help us understand the organization of a text.

Listeners can use these signals to follow a speaker's ideas from one point to another.

Video One

First point
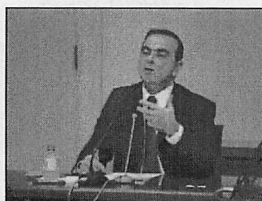
Carlos's first main point?

a) International business is a boring career
b) He is a good businessman with bad workers
c) Studying international management takes time
d) Business has some wonderful and some difficult points

1

*Recycling of strategies identification of main ideas / theme

Carlos's first main point?

Business has some wonderful and some difficult points.

"I have for you the good news and the bad news."

The Good and Bad News

What is the "good news"?:
Globalization is going to _shape_ this _century_ .

What is the "bad news"?
You're going to have to go through _hard_ work, you're going to _study_ a lot, but when you are _finished_ , you are not _finished_ .

Video Three

Diversity

---

*More practice with the strategy of listening for organizational markers

"Now, diversity has multiple facets."

What are the 3 different kinds of diversity he mentions?

1._____

2._____

3._____

What are the 3 different kinds of diversity he mentions?

1. Cultural _____

2. Experiences _____

3. Competences

Video Five

Next main point

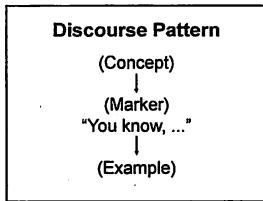
What is his 2nd main point?

"The _____ point, or the _____ point, I wanted to make is _____ responsibility, and particularly _____ manager responsibility, is to make sure you are _____ these differences. This is a _____."

2

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Video Six **Idea +** **Example**	Discourse Pattern (Concept) ↓ (Marker) "You know, ..." ↓ (Example)	**Example** "___ men of the same _____, same _____, coming from the same ____, coming from the same _____, _____ the same field are going to work very easily together."

Idea: "You know, it's very easy to work when we're the same."	Discourse Pattern (Concept) ↓ (Marker) "You know, ..." ↓ (Example)	**Markers** Listen for markers and signals that help you understand the organization of a passage.
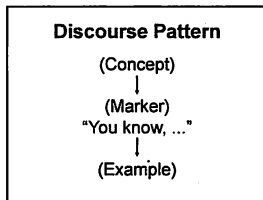
Markers On your worksheet, check the boxes when Carlos uses one of these markers.	Discourse Marker Count Now ☑ ☑ ☑ Well ☑ ☑ ☑ Okay ⊗ But ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ However ⊗ So ☑ ☑ ☑

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10e.1 Pre-intervention textbook page with comprehension questions (later used for strategy of *inferencing*)

Handwritten margin notes: pred. / speakers / talk about / what? / stop text and / predict like / movie

Listen

3 Comprehension Questions Listen to the conversation. You don't need to understand all the words. Just listen for the answers to these questions. After you listen, discuss your answers with a partner.

1. What is Jeff's problem?

2. What solutions does his father suggest?

3. Why can't Jeff work more hours?

4. How does Jeff feel at the end of the conversation?

*Product-oriented comprehension questions from the textbook

10e.2 Post-intervention slides for strategy of *inferencing* (based on textbook audio)

*Strategy introduction for inferencing; Recycling of genre recognition

*Recycling and practice for strategy of prediction

Inferences
(using information and guessing)
Common sense + some info = inference

Listen to a telephone conversation between a young man and his father.

"Common sense + some info = inferencing"

Your teacher will stop the conversation a few times and ask you to predict (guess) what will happen next. Tell your partner your ideas.

First play...
Now listen again.
After listening, answer the following questions.

*Practice with strategy of inferencing

What's the theme of the passage?

A)Canceling a budget
B)Borrowing some money
C)Working at a computer store
D)Playing the guitar

What kind of event would Jeff most likely attend?

A)A concert
B)An art show
C)A baseball game
D)A computer exhibition

This is probably the first time Jeff has borrowed money from his Dad.
True or False?

*Practice with strategy of inferencing

*Practice with strategy of inferencing

How does Dad most likely feel after this conversation?
A)Happy
B)Distracted
C)Generous
D)Frustrated

It can be inferred that Jeff will:

A)Quit his job at the computer store
B)Think of a new way to buy a guitar
C)Drop out of school next year
D)Ask his mother for money instead

Key words for inferences:

Probably,
Most likely,
Infer,
Imply

10f.1 Pre-intervention textbook page with sequencing activity (later used for recycling strategy of *discourse marker recognition* and practicing strategy of *listening for patterns*)

Listen

4 Sequencing Events Listen to the man describe his day. Write numbers under the pictures to show the order in which each activity occurred. If two things happened at the same time, give them the same number. Pay attention to time words (*before, after, during,* etc.) and verb tenses. (Note: Only *some* of the activities are shown in the pictures.) Then compare answers with a partner.

*Product-oriented comprehension questions from the textbook

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10f.2 Post-intervention lesson plan for strategy of *listening for patterns* (for use in conjunction with textbook audio)

UIE Listening Patterns L2

Part 1: The topic is daily schedules. In pairs, students discuss daily schedules and find 5 things they have in common with their partner. Example: "I take the bus to APU everyday. How about you? Yeah, me too. OK, both of us take the bus everyday."

Part 2: Use p. 95, activity 4, sequencing events. Use the text twice. On first playing the CD, ask students to fill in the appropriate number for the pictures. *Recycling the strategy of listening for organizational markers

Part 3: Second listening, ask students to make a note of the **Verb + Noun** pattern for each picture. Write **Verb + Noun** pattern on the board and give/elicit some basic examples. *Recycling the strategy of listening for patterns

Part 4: Point out to students that native listeners and readers usually process/understand/look/listen for words in common groups. We don't generally focus on each single word but rather on groups. *Recycling the strategy of chunking

Part 5 (optional): In pairs, students describe what they think the teacher's daily schedule is like. They write an outline of ideas. Then the teacher can tell their schedule. Students listen and note what was correct or incorrect.

Appendix 11: Peer debriefer comments

11a: Peer debriefer comments on open questionnaire items (Peggy's comments are displayed in italics)

Issue	Peer debriefer comment	Addressing the issue
Uncertainty about teacher input or listening materials	*Not sure if "faster speed" is in reference to instructions from the teacher or the listening practice itself.*	My initial coding was "Teacher's rate of speech." Based on Peggy's challenge, this comment was also categorized as "Listening materials".
Conflicted coding on student comment suggested more use of scripts in class.	*Could this maybe slide in to 'more time' as well?*	I originally coded this comment as "Listening materials". Peggy inquired if it should fall under "More time for listening". The comment inferred that additional time should be spent on listening with scripts. Therefore, this response was counted in both categories.
Overlapping categories: "Listening materials" and "More time for listening"	Peggy made several comments about four responses that specifically mentioned "more time." She questioned whether "more time" included "listening materials".	The category "Listening materials" was delineated by comments about the quality, amount, or type of materials. These four comments did not mention anything about materials. They only referred to time. Therefore, the original categorization of "More time for listening" was used.

11b: Peer debriefer comments on student interview data

Issue	Peer debriefer comment	Addressing the issue
Placing a single quotation into more than one category	*Also [category]3?; Also infers [category] 3 by 'this skill'?; Could be interpreted as 4 as well…*	Through reflection and discussion with Peggy, I decided that it was appropriate to put a single quotation into more than one category. As long as there was justification, quotations were placed in the appropriate categories.
Definition of "English skills"	*What is your definition of "English skills" constructed from?*	In interviews, students were asked which of the four main language skills (i.e., speaking, listening, reading, writing) was most important for them. This definition is based on the simple and commonly reference skills and was used to make the question accessible to learners.
Disagreement on coding: "Go up. I can hear more words in listening. [Teacher] taught us way which US people speak, like *gonna, wanna*. [Teacher] taught us like those things, so listening become easier and I can hear more words."	*Would this not fall under Category 1 or even 2?*	I categorized this as "Teacher input" rather than "Learned new listening approaches" (Cat. 1) or "Better materials than previous instruction" (Cat 2). Since the student directly refers to what the teacher did and what the student learned, I decided to also include this quotation in Cat. 1. However, since no listening materials were referred to, it was not added to Cat. 2.
Category label: "Outside of class listening"	*It seems difficult to discern some of the responses categorized in '4 Outside of class Listening' as whether they were the cause or the result from in class practice and/or instruction and/or learned approaches…*	I looked for times when students explicitly mentioned outside of class listening situations (e.g., conversations on campus or listening to the news in their dorm rooms). These explicit remarks were counted as "Outside of class listening". It was not possible to know whether these instances were causes or effects of listening improvement.
Category label: "Better materials than previous instruction"	*Is this in reference to the teacher's selection AND utilization of listening materials?*	This category was only intended for "selection" rather than "utilization" of materials and was clarified as such. I accept that learners may not make clear distinctions between the two.

11c: Peer debriefer comments on classroom observation data

Issue	Peer debriefer comment	Addressing the issue
Cause-effect relationship of classroom occurrences	*What was "Hesitation to participate" caused by?*	Insufficient detail on the observation sheet compelled me to keep my original coding. There was no information about causality listed.
Cause-effect relationship of classroom occurrences	*Was boredom/distraction caused by affective factors such as fatigue/task/text difficulty?*	Insufficient detail on the observation sheet compelled me to keep my original coding. There was no information about causality listed.
The initial category "Level of materials" was too narrow.	Student comments about Indian intonation*: Agree, Recognition of non-standard Englishes?;* Material topics are sometimes quite different topics (e.g., textbook topic on babies, video topic on homelessness): *Agree, text content?*	The original category "Level of materials" was expanded to "Level and content of materials" so that comments about speaker accents and topics could be included.
Overlapping categories	*How is "Being energetic" differentiated from cognitive "Focus on task" and "Physical engagement"?*	I reconsidered my initial coding in light of additional examples and my knowledge of the content and context of lessons.

Appendix 12: Post-peer review questions for Peggy

1. After your review of the different types of data, could you give an overall general viewpoint about student views of the listening strategy instruction?

> Overall the general impression I had from the data was that students were favourable to the listening strategy instruction. They seemed to lack a common metalanguage to discuss it apart from the phrases that they were familiar with from the previous listening instruction. In saying that, it struck me that they *were* aware of what was happening in the class, the materials and how they reacted to it. Such kind of self-reflexivity and reflection to listening tasks is not something I have experienced much of in daily practice with Japanese students. Of note is also the importance that students place on standardized proficiency tests' listening texts and strategies rather than more 'real world' imagined future experiences.

2. Do you feel you had enough situational information and experience to understand the student comments within the context of APU?

> As I have had the direct experience of not only working in the Japanese socio-cultural context but also in the APU context I could apply this knowledge to relating my own experience to background the reported students' experiences. If I had not worked at APU, and most definitely not in the Japanese tertiary context, I feel that my interpretation of the data's implied meanings would have been quite different.

3. From viewing this intervention as an outsider, did you learn anything about listening strategy instruction (LSI) through the student voices as expressed in the data?

> Not only as an outsider, but as an educator the data revealed what APU students consider helpful, unhelpful in an almost collective attitude to English listening tasks, texts, instructions. Giving the students the chance to approach listening equipped with the strategies not only improved their listening but engagement with their own learning processes.

4. Would you characterize student responses as generally negative, generally neutral, or generally positive on the topic of the LSI?

Generally positive, often relating success/improvement to the LSI.

5. You examined portions of data from student questionnaires, student interviews, and classroom observation. Do you feel you that the findings from these different data samples were divergent? Or was there overlap between them? Could you please explain your answer?

> I feel that there was an overlap between all the data as recurrent themes, success and difficulty were expressed in all portions.

Appendix 13: Scholarly work inspired by this thesis

Publications:

Siegel, J. (In Press). On the capacity of action research in language classrooms. *OnCUE Journal, 6*(3), 24-35.

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Siegel, J. (2011). Learner development through listening strategy training. In K. Irie & A. Stewart (Eds.), *Realizing autonomy: Practice and reflection in language education contexts* (pp. 78-93). Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Presentations:

Siegel, J. (2014-accepted). Listen outta here! Preparing learners to listen beyond the classroom. Paper to be presented at the TESOL 2014 Conference. 29 March 2014. Portland, USA.

Siegel, J. (2013). Exploring L2 listening instruction in practice. Paper presented at the BAAL 2013 Conference. 6 September 2013. Edinburgh, UK.

Siegel, J. (2013). L2 listening pedagogy: A descriptive study. Paper presented at the TESOL 2013 Conference. 23 March 2013. Dallas, USA.

Siegel, J. & Siegel, A. (2013). Empirical and attitudinal effects of bottom-up listening activities. Paper presented at the AAAL 2013 Conference. 16 March 2013. Dallas, USA.

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Siegel, J. & Haswell, C. (2010). Developing a process-based framework for EFL listening pedagogy. Paper presented at the Asian EFL Journal 2010 Conference. 13 August 2010. Cebu, Philippines.