

## Moving Beyond Content Comprehension to Language Acquisition: A Case for Metacognition in Second Language Listening Instruction

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### **Abstract**

Metacognition has been defined in simple terms as ‘thinking about the processes of thinking’. While thinking itself is a complex process, thinking about thinking becomes more elusive. But if a teacher painstakingly investigates the role of metacognition, and trains the learners too in that direction, such an effort may be worth rewarding because of the added advantages it may contribute to learning a second language in particular and studying subjects in general. This article proposes the needs and modes of incorporating metacognition in the context of teaching listening. Conventional training in listening stops with helping learners arrive at the content of what they have listened to. The input is processed exclusively for filtering fragments of contents for reproduction later and mastery of the target language is minimal in this approach. When metacognition is employed, the learner moves beyond comprehending the content, and reflects on the roots and routes of the learning processes.

**Keywords:** metacognition, cognition, comprehension, signposting, cohesive and coherence devices

### **Introduction**

Teachers generally orient their teaching towards the cognitive development of their learners, and language teachers may insist on the learners’ linguistic development, too. In spite of the bulk of theory and research in education, teaching mostly takes care of transmitting