Journey
Journal of English Language and Pedagogy
(2025), 8 (1): 81–87

Enhancing Listening Comprehension In Grade XI-D at MAN 2 Jember through Note-Taking Techniques

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SUBMISSION TRACK
Submitted : 17 March 2025
Accepted : 11 June 2025
Published : 26 June 2025

KEYWORDS
Listening Comprehension, Note-taking techniques, Senior High School

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A B S T R A C T
Listening comprehension is a crucial skill in language learning,. But many students continue to struggle with understanding spoken information due to cognitive overload, difficulty identifying key points, and ineffective note-taking strategies. A preliminary observation in Class XI D at MAN 2 Jember revealed that students faced significant challenges in listening tasks, as shown by their low average pre-test score of 52.5. These difficulties highlighted the urgent need for targeted instructional strategies like Classroom Action Reserach to support their listening development. This classroom action research (CAR) was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of sentence and abbreviation note-taking techniques in improving students' listening comprehension. Implemented over two cycles involving planning, acting, observing, and reflecting stages, the study demonstrated a significant improvement in students' performance, with the average score rising to 75.9 in Cycle 2, surpassing the success criterion of 70. The findings suggest that structured note-taking techniques enhance students' ability to extract key information and reduce cognitive overload. By addressing challenges such as classroom arrangement, phonological interference, and divided attention, the study provides practical insights for teachers seeking to improve students' listening skills through effective note-taking strategies.

Introduction

Listening comprehension is widely recognized as a cornerstone of language learning, serving as the gateway for effective communication. It allows students to decode spoken language, interpret its meaning, and respond appropriately (Namaziandost et al., 2019). Mastering listening comprehension is not only about hearing the words but also about understanding their meaning in context, which requires a range of skills. According to (Bridgeman & Morgan, 1996) effective listening comprehension involves the ability to decode sounds, recognize words, identify the meaning of phrases within context, and integrate this new information with existing knowledge. This skill is foundational not only for academic achievement but also for effective communication in both formal and informal settings. However, students often face significant challenges when attempting to master listening comprehension, including issues with vocabulary limitations, difficulty identifying key points, cognitive overload, and ineffective note-taking strategies (Jaya et al., 2021). These barriers can impede their ability to process spoken language efficiently, thereby hindering their overall learning progress.

Among the strategies suggested to support listening comprehension, note-taking stands out as a particularly effective method. Note-taking is an active cognitive process in which listeners record key points or information while listening. This practice serves multiple functions: it helps students capture vital information, aids in organizing thoughts, and encourages deeper engagement with the material. By writing down key points, students are not merely transcribing but actively processing and consolidating the

information, thus improving both retention and understanding. However, research reveals that students often face challenges in note-taking, especially when trying to balance between listening attentively and capturing relevant information (Zhou & Dong, 2024). The challenge of divided attention where students need to focus on both listening and note-taking simultaneously often leads to gaps in comprehension as crucial details are overlooked (Jaya et al., 2021). This difficulty is compounded by the fact that many students struggle to recognize which information is essential and which is secondary. As a result, ineffective note-taking strategies can worsen students' listening comprehension, making it even more difficult for them to retain and process the spoken information.

In the context of Indonesian high schools, where listening comprehension remains one of the most difficult skills to develop in English language learning, the need for effective note-taking strategies is particularly urgent. A preliminary study conducted at MAN 2 Jember revealed that students in Class XI D were struggling significantly with listening comprehension. Interviews with teachers indicated that students felt overwhelmed by the dual task of listening and note-taking, leading to considerable stress and poor retention of information. This was further reflected in the pre-test scores, which averaged just 52.5, indicating a clear need for instructional interventions to improve students' listening abilities. Based on the problems commonly found in listening activities, previous studies have suggested that note-taking techniques can be an effective strategy to improve students' listening comprehension According to (Salame & Thompson, 2020), strategic note-taking has been shown to significantly improve students' ability to recall and understand spoken information. However, despite the proven benefits of note-taking, many students remain unaware of the most effective techniques for doing so. This lack of knowledge often hinders their ability to process information during listening tasks, which can negatively impact academic performance (Abualzain, 2024).

. Furthermore, the difference between this research and two previous studies is the type of note-taking used and the purpose of this method, which can be seen from the researcher's methodology. this study focuses on the effectiveness of two specific note-taking techniques sentence note-taking and abbreviation note-taking designed to improve students' listening comprehension rather than Cornell note-taking techniques which requires a more structured and time-intensive process of organizing and reviewing notes (Abualzain, 2024), sentence and abbreviation note-taking are more practical for the immediate demands of listening comprehension (Thomas, 2021). This research aims to investigate how the implementation of these note-taking techniques can enhance students' ability to extract and retain key information from spoken texts, with the ultimate goal of improving overall listening comprehension. In different methods, the previous studies used quantitative experiments while this study uses Classroom Action research to systematically address and overcome those challenges and improve students' listening comprehension through note-taking techniques, especially using two specific kinds of techniques, such as sentence and abbreviation note-taking techniques suitable for selective listening. The study also seeks to provide teachers with practical tools for supporting students' listening comprehension development. Understanding how these techniques affect students' engagement, retention, and comprehension will offer valuable insights into how teachers can better support learners in mastering listening skills.

Research Method

This study employed a classroom action research (CAR) design to improve students' listening comprehension through the implementation of sentence and

abbreviation note-taking techniques. The research was conducted in Grade XI D at *MAN 2 Jember*, consisting of 25 students. The selection of participants was based on initial observations and a pre-test that revealed significant difficulties in listening comprehension among the students. This study followed a two-cycle model, with each cycle consisting of three 45-minute sessions (3 learning hour), totaling six sessions throughout the study.

Each cycle was structured around four stages, as outlined below:

1. **Planning**: In the planning stage, the researcher designed a detailed plan to be implemented in the subsequent stages. This included selecting appropriate techniques to address the students' listening comprehension challenges, specifically sentence and abbreviation note-taking methods, and learning tools like lesson plans, teaching materials, and student worksheets.
2. **Acting**: During the acting stage, the planned note-taking techniques were implemented in the classroom according to the schedule. Teachers and researchers worked together to apply the sentence and abbreviation techniques in a way that was aligned with the lesson objectives.
3. **Observing**: In the observation stage, data were collected to assess the effectiveness of the implemented techniques. The researcher observed the students' responses and interactions during the lessons and administered tests to measure improvements in listening comprehension.
4. **Reflecting**: The final stage involved reflecting on the implementation process. The researcher evaluated the results based on student performance and feedback to assess the success of the intervention. Data from the observations and test results were analyzed and compared with the research problem to determine whether the action achieved the desired improvements. If the action did not meet the expected outcomes in the first cycle, adjustments would be made for the next cycle.

This research utilized a success criterion to determine whether the action was effective. The cycle was considered successful if the average student grade exceeded a score of 70. If this target was not achieved in Cycle 1, the researcher would proceed to Cycle 2, making necessary adjustments based on reflections from the first cycle.

Result and Discussion

This study demonstrates a progressive improvement in students' ability to take structured notes and extract key points from listening materials, leading to a significant enhancement in their ability to process and retain auditory information. A detailed presentation of the result and disscusion is provided in the following sub-sections.

A. Cycle 1

In the first cycle, students were introduced to sentence and abbreviation note-taking techniques as strategies designed to enhance their listening comprehension skills. These techniques were selected based on the premise that they could help students better organize and retain critical information while reducing cognitive overload during listening tasks. The results of the listening comprehension test at the end of Cycle 1 showed a a clearer understanding of the students' general listening comprehension, that can be seen on these comparasion between the pretest.

Pre-test	Cycle 1
52,5	66,7

Table 1. The average of listening comprehension test

the average listening comprehension test score in cycle 1 showed a 26.9% improvement from the pre-test scores. While this improvement suggests that the introduction of note-taking techniques had a positive impact on students' listening skills, it fell short of the success criterion, which required a score above 70. This outcome provides valuable insights into the challenges and effectiveness of the note-taking strategies implemented during this phase.

The goal of the note-taking techniques was to assist students in organizing key points from the listening material and to support their memory retention by providing a structured framework for writing down essential information. Despite this, the students encountered several challenges that hindered the effectiveness of these techniques. One of the primary difficulties noted in the study was the issue of divided attention between listening and writing. As (Zhou & Dong, 2024) and (Siegel, 2024) have pointed out, students often struggle to manage the dual tasks of listening to the material while simultaneously taking notes. This difficulty was evident in this study, where students frequently missed critical pieces of information as they attempted to capture all the details. Recent studies by (Liu et al., 2023) also reinforce these findings, emphasizing that cognitive overload and divided attention are significant barriers to effective listening and note-taking.

Several contextual factors further exacerbated these challenges. The classroom arrangement, for instance, was not conducive to effective learning. Students were seated in groups of three, which led to distractions, as students often turned to speak with their neighbors or engaged in other non-academic activities. The lack of individual personal space meant that students were unable to concentrate fully on the listening task, which in turn affected the quality of their notes, classroom arrangement plays a crucial role in student engagement, and ineffective seating arrangements can lead to distractions, diminishing the effectiveness of instructional strategies.

Furthermore, the class was often disrupted by irregular schedules and students' prior lessons or tests. These disruptions had an impact on students' readiness and focus, which is a critical factor for the successful implementation of learning strategies, as students were less prepared to engage in the lesson when they had just finished another activity. Studies such as (Kang & Chen, 2009) highlight how irregular schedules can negatively influence student concentration and impede the cognitive processing required for active learning. Additional factors, such as the discomfort students experienced from wearing sports uniforms, further impacted their ability to concentrate on the task at hand. The students' discomfort with their attire, combined with physical fatigue from other school activities, made it difficult for them to engage effectively with the lesson. (Kennedy & Stafford, 2023) discuss how environmental factors, including physical discomfort, can undermine learning outcomes, especially in tasks that require sustained attention and focus.

To complicate matters, some students were absent due to school activities, and others had to leave for extracurricular commitments. These absences disrupted the flow of the lesson and reduced the overall number of students involved in the learning process, affecting the consistency of participation. Furthermore, there were challenges related to

the speed of the audio and phonological interference, as students often struggled to understand unfamiliar pronunciation or words obscured by background noise. These issues resulted in a lack of accuracy in note-taking, with students frequently missing key points or misinterpreting what they heard. (Smith, 2023) suggest that phonological interference, such as unfamiliar accents or background noise, can negatively affect students' ability to accurately transcribe information during listening activities, thus impacting comprehension.

Despite these challenges, a significant number of students remained highly engaged throughout the lesson. Most students actively participated, asking questions and seeking clarification when needed, demonstrating a strong level of attentiveness. Although these difficulties were substantial, the results of the first cycle showed that the students were making progress in their listening comprehension and note-taking skills, as evidenced by the improvement in their test scores.

B. Cycle 2

In Cycle 2, the researcher continued to use the sentence and abbreviation note-taking techniques, but this time with several adjustments aimed at addressing the challenges encountered in the first cycle. The goal was to refine the approach and overcome the obstacles that had hindered the students' progress. The results of the listening comprehension test in Cycle 2 showed a dramatic improvement, that 2 can be seen on these comparasion between the pretest and cycle 1.

Pre-test	Cycle 1	Cycle 2
52.5	66.7	75.9

Table 2. The average of listening comprehension test

With the average score rising to 75.9, reflecting a 44.3% improvement over the pre-test scores. This significant improvement in scores suggests that the adjustments made to the note-taking strategies were successful in addressing the challenges faced in the previous cycle.

The improvements in Cycle 2 were influenced by a series of targeted adjustments and refinements to both the learning environment and the teaching methods used. One of the first steps taken to address the issues from Cycle 1 was the restructuring of the classroom seating arrangement. In response to the problem of distractions caused by students sitting in groups of three, the researcher ensured that no more than two students were seated at each table. This change provided students with more personal space and created a quieter, more focused environment in which they could concentrate better on the task of taking structured notes. Another challenge identified in Cycle 1 was student readiness and the difficulty students had in transitioning between classes. In Cycle 2, the researcher allocated a 7-minute period at the beginning of the lesson to allow students time to settle in after their previous class, which had been held in the library. Attendance in Cycle 2 also improved compared to Cycle 1. While some students were still absent due to extracurricular activities, the overall attendance rate was more consistent, which contributed to the stability and continuity of the lessons. This reduced absenteeism was beneficial as it ensured that more students were present to participate in the lessons and contribute to the learning process.

The most significant improvements in Cycle 2 was the cognitive demand of simultaneously listening and writing it is allign with (Siegel, 2024), who states that the act of note-taking during auditory processing demands divided attention, often

overwhelming learners and resulting in missed information. To mitigate this issue, the researcher applied several strategic modifications based on expert suggestions. These included: breaking audio into smaller segments, increasing the number of repetitions, and using phonological awareness activities. These practices align with the recommendations of (Zhou & Dong, 2024), who emphasized the importance of phonological training and manageable audio chunks to improve auditory processing in listening-based tasks. The improving acivitiy such as keyword prediction and symbol training, it was also contributed to reducing distractions and improving focus. As (Gökmen et al., 2024)suggested, structured training in note-taking strategies, including the use of abbreviations and listening scaffolds, is crucial for helping students overcome processing overload. These expert-backed techniques gave students the tools to manage the fast-paced nature of listening tasks and focus on extracting meaningful content.

Moreover, the use of sentence note-taking helped students better understand and organize spoken information, supporting the theory proposed by (Edan, 2022), who found that simple sentence-based notes facilitate structured thought and recall. Meanwhile, abbreviation note-taking enabled quicker writing and more content capture, especially in time-constrained conditions is an approach supported by (Siegel et al., 2020), who advocated for consistent, time-saving shorthand strategies in EFL contexts. Although some students continued to experience challenges with audio speed and phonological nuances, their ability to capture key points and engage with listening materials showed notable improvement. These outcomes underscore the importance of continuous guided practice and targeted scaffolding in overcoming the inherent cognitive load of note-taking during listening tasks, as reinforced by the work of (Abualzain, 2024).While some difficulties persisted, particularly with the fast-paced nature of the audio, students demonstrated significant progress in their ability to focus on the material, extract key points, and take more structured and accurate notes. The improvements in test scores, active student participation, and the accuracy of note-taking all point to the success of the strategies implemented in Cycle 2.

Conclusion

In summary, this research demonstrates that the implementation of sentence and abbreviation note-taking techniques significantly improves Grade XI D students' listening comprehension at *MAN 2 Jember*. The study highlights the positive impact of structured note-taking on students' ability to extract key points, manage cognitive load, and retain auditory information. The findings indicate that through the two cycles of intervention, students showed notable improvement, with their average listening comprehension scores increasing from 52.5 to 75.9, surpassing the success criteria of 70. Despite some challenges such as divided attention and phonological interference, students demonstrated greater engagement and improved note-taking skills in Cycle 2. The adjustments made to classroom arrangements and lesson preparation also contributed to a more conducive learning environment. Overall, this research provides valuable insights for educators seeking to enhance listening comprehension through effective note-taking strategies, especially in high school settings where listening comprehension remains a critical yet challenging skill for students to master. Further studies may explore expanding note-taking techniques to address global listening comprehension issues, refining strategies for real-time listening contexts, and examining their long-term impact on language acquisition.

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