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## A REVIEW OF THE PLACE OF LISTENING IN THE L2 LEARNER CURRICULUM

Aminah Suriaman

Universitas Tadulako, Palu, Indonesia

[amisuriaman@gmail.com](mailto:amisuriaman@gmail.com)

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### Abstract

Listening chances are frequently described in second language studies as the linguistic environment - the stage for SLA. The speakers of the target language and their speech to the L2 learners give linguistic input in the form of listening and interaction opportunities embedded in social and pedagogical circumstances. It has been observed that three major conditions are required for a person to learn a second language: (1) a learner who recognizes the need to learn the second language and is motivated to do so; (2) a speaker of the target language who knows it well enough to provide the learner with access to the spoken language and the support (such as simplification, repetition, and feedback) they require for learning it; and (3) a social setting that brings the learner in frequently enough and sustainably. Listening is necessary under two of these conditions and is thus an important way of language development, which is frequently disregarded in language instruction and research. To acquire the language, the learner must come to grasp the input and pay attention to the forms in the input. The more input pupils receive from listening, the richer their knowledge becomes, and the more fluent they become. It is up to educators to plan and arrange listening in such a way that it brings the learner into frequent and sustained contact with target language speakers to make language learning possible.

**Keywords:** Listening, SLA, Second Language Curriculum

## INTRODUCTION

This essay advocates for a reconsideration of the role of the listening lesson in the curriculum. Before we do anything further, we should try to make as clear as possible what we will be addressing under the definition of listening and summary of listening comprehension studies. What is it that is listening? According to Rost (2002, 1), with increasing knowledge of the human brain in the 1920s and 1930s, hearing was defined as a mostly unconscious process governed by concealed cultural schemata. Listening was characterized in terms of successful transmission and reproduction of messages in the 1940s when breakthroughs in telecommunications were booming and information processing was considered the new scientific horizon. When computer science became dominant in the 1950s, listening was described as processing and labeling data so that it could be stored and retrieved quickly. With the rise of transpersonal psychology in the 1960s, listening incorporated heuristics for understanding the speaker's intent.

The definition changes depending on the trend. Other interests are likely to impact the meaning of listening. Definitions of listening as assessing the cultural relevance of speech behavior' gained acceptance with the renewed interest in anthropology in the 1970s. With developments in computer software for dealing with massive amounts and varieties of data in the 1980s and 1990s, listening came to be characterized as parallel processing of input. What about you? What is it that is listening?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### An Overview of Listening Comprehension Research

Although hearing is widely recognized as an important aspect of language learning, it still causes confusion in understanding the processes. Listening receives less emphasis than the other three skills (reading, writing, and speaking), which receive greater attention. Teachers frequently expect pupils to learn to listen by osmosis and without assistance (Mendelsohn, 1984; Oxford, 1993 in Osada, 2004). According to the osmosis strategy, also known as the Audiolingual method, students will develop their listening comprehension skills via experience if they listen to the target language all day.

The origins of audiolingual may be traced back to the early twentieth century when it had a considerable impact on notions of language instruction. Pavlov's training experiments - stimulus and response - inspired behaviorists. This old approach to listening, which considered it as a necessary ability for production-oriented activities, "has trapped students in a frenzied 'Hear it, repeat it!', 'Hear it, answer it!', or 'Hear it, translate it!' nightmare" (Meyer, 1984, p. 343 in Osada, 2004, p. 54).

Arguments keep flowing and modifying the listener's comprehension. It was first expressed in the mid-1960s by Rivers, who foresaw that "speaking does not of itself constitute communication unless what is being said is comprehended by another person" (p. 196), and that "teaching the comprehension of spoken speeches is thus of primary importance if the communication aim is to be achieved" (p. 204) in Osada (2004). According to Field (1998, p. 110), listening comprehension classes followed a very constant format in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

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In the 1980s and 1990s, there was a greater emphasis on listening. Explorations of the nuances of this complicated talent, further research, and curriculum building on listening comprehension were done during the 1980s, and they continued drastically in the 1990s. Throughout the 1990s, the importance of hearing in language teaching and aural understanding in second language or foreign language learning grew (Osada, 2004, p.55).

## RESEARCH METHOD

A literature review is a procedure for discovering, analyzing, and summarizing works of research results and ideas created by academics and practitioners that is systematic, explicit, and reproducible.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Listening may have been neglected or poorly taught due to the misconception that it is a passive talent (Call, 1985) in Osada, 2004, p.54 and Nunan (2003). It has been observed that three major conditions are required for a person to learn a second language (Rost, 2002, p.90-91): (1) a learner who recognizes the need to learn the second language and is motivated to do so; (2) a speaker of the target language who knows it well enough to provide the learner with access to the spoken language and the support (such as simplification, repetition, and feedback) they require for learning it; and (3) a social setting that brings the learner in. In two of these settings, hearing is required, and listening opportunities are frequently regarded as the linguistics environment - the stage for

SLA. The speakers of the target language and their speech to the L2 learners give linguistic input in the form of listening and interaction opportunities embedded in social and pedagogical circumstances.

According to Krashen (1982) and Dunkel (1991), understandable input is a necessary requirement for language learners. One study published in Nation (2009) by Dupuy (1999) found that "narrow listening" - a strategy based on Krashen's theory - improved students' listening comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary, as well as their confidence in French. The enhancements resulted from listening to a variety of 1 - 2-minute aural texts on a variety of familiar and interesting themes as many times as they wanted. Rickerson (1984) in Dunkel (1991, p. 437) emphasizes the need to provide opportunities for foreign/second language students to produce the language in order to increase motivation throughout language learning. Thus, in order to demonstrate meaningful meaning, students must receive relevant and understandable input, either through listening or reading, in order to acquire not only a full understanding of the messages being spoken but also the model to communicate them in the appropriate speaking context. Rivers (1966) in Osada foresaw that "speaking does not constitute communication unless what is being said is comprehended by another person" (p.196), and that "teaching the comprehension of spoken speeches is therefore of primary importance if the communication aim is to be achieved" (p.204). The more input pupils receive from listening, the richer their knowledge becomes, and the more fluent they become.

As teachers and academics get a better understanding of the distinctive properties of listening and the critical role it plays in language learning and communication, they recognize the growing relevance of teaching listening

comprehension (Rubin 1994, p.199). Listeners may need to integrate information from a variety of sources to interpret spoken messages, including phonetic, phonological, prosodic, lexical, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic information (Osada, 2004, p.55-56). Because we accomplish all of this in real-time as the message unfolds, hearing becomes "complex, dynamic, and fragile" (Celce-Murcia, 1985, p.366). Because speaking is basically an interactive endeavor that occurs under real-time processing constraints (Hughes, 2004, p.135) and (Buck, 2001), the learner must come to understand the input and pay attention to the forms in the input in order to interpret and respond to the spoken messages. Word recognition in fluent speech is the foundation of spoken-language comprehension.

The listener's two fundamental tasks in word recognition are word identification and activating knowledge of word meanings. Word recognition is frequently the most difficult aspect of hearing. Furthermore, if a listener knows a word but does not understand its underlying meaning, the entire process of word recognition is undermined, and the listener must rely on compensating mechanisms for understanding (Rost, 2002, p.20). According to Berne in Osada (2004), training in the use of listening strategies improves L2 listening comprehension, and L2 learners may and should be taught how to utilize listening strategies. Furthermore, the Pre-listening activities that provide short synopses of listening passages or allow listeners to preview comprehension questions help L2 listening comprehension. According to Field (1998, p.110 and 2009, p.17), pre-listening activities, during listening, and post-listening activities are all recommended, and Buck 1995 in Nunan (2003, p. 29) states that pre-listening activities do two things: provide a context for interpretation and activate background knowledge that will aid interpretation.

Spoken language differs greatly from written language. According to Buck (2001), three characteristics of speech are particularly important in the listening comprehension construct: (a) speech is encoded in the form of sound; (b) it is linear and occurs in real-time, with no opportunity for review; and (c) it is linguistically distinct from written language. When we examine the complexity of real-time speech engagement, it is probably unsurprising that even the most accomplished students struggle to participate in spontaneous, casual conversation in a new language (Hughes, 2002, p.134). According to Burns, McCarthy, and O'Keeffe's (2004, p. 33) proposal focuses on the microstructures of conversation and can provide teachers with the opportunity to highlight for students the appropriateness of utterances, how speakers negotiate certain situations (e.g., accepting/rejecting invitations), and providing a framework for the performance of speech acts, for example, through role plays and simulations. Meanwhile, because listening and speaking are interconnected, it is also important to set different types of speech modifications or visual aids that vary depending on the degree of L2 listening proficiency (Berne in Osada, 2004, p. 55-56) and Field (2009, p.18) presents it is important to compensate for the limitations of using an audio cassette by giving students a general idea of what they will hear.

Visual aids have been shown in studies to improve auditory comprehension. Rubin (1994, p.204) discovered that high-beginning Spanish students who saw video plays improved substantially more than students who did not receive video reinforcement for their listening training. "Video can serve as a haven to enhance listening comprehension if it is selected in such a way that it provides sufficient clues for information processing," she claims. Herron et al. observed that listening comprehension improved more for first-year university French students after one year of exposure to a video-based curriculum than after the same period of

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exposure to a text and audio-based curriculum.

Mueller's study of English-speaking German students provides additional clarification on when and how video can aid. Mueller shows that when the text includes an interview with a single graphic line drawing, the usefulness of visual cues is inversely related to proficiency levels--that is, the greater the learner's proficiency, the less important visual cues are for comprehension. Wolff discovered that the more difficult the text, the more the subject used the picture in his research of German ESL learners aged twelve to eighteen.

It is important to remember that each procedure may result in incomplete or incorrect recognition of the words in an utterance. Fortunately, even if not all words are recognized, spoken language comprehension can usually proceed successfully because the listener can infer the meaning of statements by illustration in the task (Rost, 2002, p. 20-21). Lund has investigated how task type influences learners' ability to retain more key ideas or details and to provide more inferences and elaborations in Rubin (1994, p.205-206). According to Lund, "the study's findings do not necessarily imply that one task is superior to another." It all depends on your listening goals" p.14. The study found that learners' behavior changes depending on the job at hand. Activities centered on speaking must also be handled and fostered by the instructor through careful planning and guidance, as well as the selection of appropriate assignments to stimulate communication (Hughes, 2002, p.134).

## CONCLUSION

It is evident from the linked relationship between speaking and listening, as well as culture. This research study also includes listening methods, awareness of



spoken language, media visuals, task features, amount of understandable information, and opportunities for listening and speaking. Thus, it is the educator's responsibility to plan and arrange listening in such a way that it brings the learner into regular and sustained contact with target language speakers to enable language learning.

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