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LISTENING AND SPEAKING: MAKING THE CONNECTION

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1. Some characteristics of spoken language which can affect listening

It is usually instantaneous. No chance to listen again.

Speech rates vary considerably.

- Radio monologs: 160 wpm
- Conversation: 210 wpm

Accents vary from native to non-native.

1. Some characteristics of spoken language which can affect listening

Spoken discourse usually unplanned. Often reflects processes of construction, e.g. hesitations, fillers, repeats.

Spoken discourse has a linear structure, compared to a hierarchical structure for written discourse.

Spoken texts are often context dependent and personal.

1. Some characteristics of spoken language which can affect listening

Spoken discourse may contain many colloquialisms.

Spoken discourse characterized by reduced forms, blendings.

Spoken English has a stress-timed rather than syllable timed rhythm.

1. Some characteristics of spoken language which can affect listening

Large cars waste gas

The weather in Tokyo is very humid in the summer.

2. The role of listening in second and foreign language learning

Two different goals for teaching listening –

listening for comprehension

and

listening for language learning

3. Listening for comprehension

Assumes that the purpose for listening is to understand what was said, and not how it was said.

Goals for listening from this perspective include:

Recognizing and acting on the speaker's intentions

Identifying information from a spoken text

3. Listening skills that are important when listening for comprehension

Listening for details

Listening for gist

Listening and making inferences

Listening selectively

Making predictions before listening

4. Understanding the processes involved in listening for comprehension:

bottom-up processing
and
top-down processing

5. Bottom-up processing

Explains how the literal meaning of messages is identified

Data driven

Sounds – words – sentences – meaning

Meaning is extracted from the message

Goal is to identify topics and propositions

5. Bottom-up processing

The woman/who sat next to me on the plane/
on my flight from Hong Kong/told me/her
whole life story.

5. Assumptions underlying bottom-up processing

Sentences are composed of “chunks” or
“constituents”

Sentences are the packaging surrounding the
propositions

Chunks are the building blocks of meaning

5. Assumptions underlying bottom-up processing

Listener must recognize the correct chunks or constituents to arrive at appropriate meaning

Lexical and grammatical knowledge as well as phonological clues guide the listener to appropriate constituents

Once meaning has been identified, the “packaging” is discarded

6. Implications for teaching

Recognizing key words is essential

Accurate recognition is important

Knowledge of vocabulary and syntax is important

7. Top-down processing

Explains how real world knowledge is used in listening comprehension

Concept or meaning-driven

From meaning to language

Makes use of contextual knowledge, schemas and scripts

8. Contextual knowledge

The setting

The participants

The goals of the participants

The roles of the participants

Procedures typically employed

Expected outcomes

9. Implications for teaching

Word by word listening not needed

Prediction and guessing key processes

Message is sampled to confirm expectations

The basis for normal comprehension

Employs schemas, scripts and discourse plans

10. Recommended lesson structure when teaching *listening for comprehension*

Pre-listening

Set context: Create motivation

11. Recommended lesson structure when teaching *listening for comprehension*

Listening:

Extensive listening (followed by questions on context, attitude)

Pre-set task/Pre-set questions

Intensive listening

Checking answers

11. Recommended lesson structure when teaching *listening for comprehension*

Post-listening

Examining functional language

Inferring vocabulary meaning

12. Listening for language learning

Based on the role of noticing in language learning

13. Assumptions about the noticing hypothesis

Key concepts: input, intake, restructuring

New language will be acquired if it is first noticed in the input

A bottom-up approach to listening

Noticing facilitated by input at the appropriate level of difficulty

14. Noticing activities involve returning to the listening texts that served as the basis for comprehension activities and using them as the basis for language awareness

Examples of noticing activities:

Identify differences between what they hear and a printed version of the text

Complete a cloze version of the text

Complete sentences stems taken from the text

14. Noticing activities involve returning to the listening texts that served as the basis for comprehension activities and using them as the basis for language awareness

Examples of noticing activities:

Check off from a list expressions that occurred in the text

Sorting a text from a jumbled version of it

Pair dictation (students have different parts of a text and dictate the missing parts to partner)

15 Noticing activities in Tune-In

- ◆ Highlight features of spoken interaction.
- ◆ Features are embedded in the dialogues.
- ◆ Tune-In activities focus on recognition.
- ◆ Follow-up activities provide oral practice.

16. Restructuring activities are oral or written tasks that involve productive use of selected items from the listening text

Examples of restructuring activities:

in the case of conversational texts, pair reading of the tape scripts

Written sentence- completion tasks requiring use of expressions and other linguistic items that occurred in the texts

17. Restructuring activities are oral or written tasks that involve productive use of selected items from the listening text

Examples of restructuring activities:

Dialog practice based on dialogs that incorporate items from the text

Role plays in which students are required to use key language from the texts

18. Two- part strategy recommended for teaching listening when there is a connection between listening and speaking skills in a language course, involving both listening for comprehension and listening for language learning

Phase 1: listening as comprehension

Phase 2: listening as language learning

Thank you

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