

Chapter 18

Factors Affecting Listening

Vehbi Turel

The University of Bingol, Turkey

ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the author looks at the difficulties that stem from listening materials in terms of affecting listening. To be able to select or create effective listening materials, some of the vital points that need to be known are the difficulties that stem from listening materials. Providing that we know what and how they affect listening, adequate listening materials can then be selected or created. To this purpose, first, the author looks at them in detail to see clearly from what components listening materials might consist. Afterwards, they focus on and diagnose the problematic features, find out what difficulties these elements cause in listening, and show how such problems can be overcome.

INTRODUCTION

It is a well-known fact that language learners face difficulties when listening to listening texts (Goh, 2000, pp. 55-75), whether they are in the form of conventional materials (i.e. tape cassettes, video cassettes; Turel, 2014a) or hypermedia environments (i.e. interactive multimedia applications; *ibid.*: 2014a). The major factors that affect listening comprehension are categorised into different groups by different researchers (Rubin 1994, p. 199; Mangiafico, 1996, pp. 10-25; Turel, 1996, pp. 28-42). Rubin (1994, p. 199) groups them as “(1) text characteristics (variation in a listening passage... or associated visual support); (2) interlocutor characteristics (variation in the speakers’ personal characteristics); (3) task characteristics (variation in the purpose for listening and as-

sociated responses); (4) listener characteristics (variation in the listener’s personal characteristics); and (5) process characteristics (variation in the listener’s cognitive activities and in the nature of the interaction between speaker and listener)”.

Mangiafico (1996, pp. 10-25) divides the factors that affect listening comprehension into two major groups: (1) those exterior to the listener, which are further divided into three groups: (a) characteristics of the speaker, (b) characteristics of the message and (c) situational factors. (2) Those interior to listener, which are categorised into different groups such as listener’s age, level of intelligence, strategies, world knowledge and so on. As well as this, the factors affecting listening comprehension are also divided into four groups: (1) language-based factors, (2) background factors, (3) learner-based factors, and (4) teacher-based factors (Turel, 1996, pp. 28-42).

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-6248-3.ch018

Factors Affecting Listening

However, here we only look at the factors that stem from listening materials. To be able to select or create effective listening materials, one of the vital points that need to be known is the difficulties that stem from listening materials. Providing that we know what and how they affect listening, adequate listening materials can then be selected or created. To this purpose, it is better first to have a look at them in detail to see clearly from what components listening materials might consist of. Afterwards, we can focus on and diagnose the problematic features, find out what difficulties these elements cause on listening, and how such problems can be overcome.

Figure 1 clearly shows that listening materials might consist of a diverse range of different elements such as visuals, input/text, speech/sound, tasks and tests, which also have their own sub-components. In this chapter, we only look at two of these elements: (a) input and (b) speech. While looking at the input element, we look at the length and amount of the input, cultural differences aspect

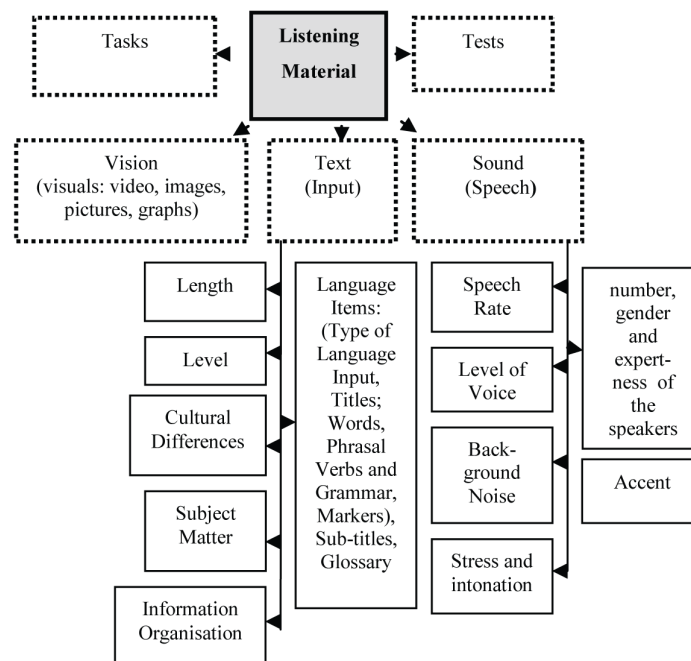
of the input, subject matter, coherence, types of the input, unfamiliar items, discourse markers and glossary. While looking at speech, we look at speech rate, voice and background noise, pause and hesitation phenomena, stress, intonation and rhythm patterns, the number of speakers, expertise and gender of speakers, and accents. The pertinent issues will be looked at one by one, the potential problems will be diagnosed, and possible solutions will be put forward. Moreover, implications for selecting and/or creating listening materials as a part of the FLL process will be drawn.

INPUT (TEXT)

Length and Amount of Input

The length of any listening text and the amount of information that it features might considerably affect listening comprehension. The assumption is that when the length increases, “the time for

Figure 1. The framework of the elements that listening materials might feature (Turel, 2004, p. 56)



20 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/factors-affecting-listening/112182

Related Content

The Ethical Dilemmas of Social Networking Sites in Classroom Contexts

Glenn Auldand Michael Henderson (2015). *Human Rights and Ethics: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 741-756).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-ethical-dilemmas-of-social-networking-sites-in-classroom-contexts/117059

Social Media Analytics for Intelligence and Countering Violent Extremism

Jennifer Yang Hui (2016). *Combating Violent Extremism and Radicalization in the Digital Era* (pp. 328-348).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/social-media-analytics-for-intelligence-and-countering-violent-extremism/150583

Mandatory Uncitral Model Laws: An Anlysis

(2023). *Policies, Practices, and Protocols for International Commercial Arbitration* (pp. 91-100).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/mandatory-uncitral-model-laws/333077

Community Engagement Beyond Volunteerism: A Paradigm Shift in University Social Responsibility (USR)

Krishna Khanaland Neha Arora (2024). *Ethical Quandaries in Business Practices: Exploring Morality and Social Responsibility* (pp. 439-458).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/community-engagement-beyond-volunteerism/356331

Summary and Conclusion

(2017). *Globalization and the Ethical Responsibilities of Multinational Corporations: Emerging Research and Opportunities* (pp. 52-57).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/summary-and-conclusion/180175