Strategies for Second Language Listening

Also by Suzanne Graham

EFFECTIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING
Positive Strategies for Advanced Level Language Learning

IMPROVING FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING
Towards a Research-based Curriculum and Pedagogy (*co-authored*)

OBJECTIF BAC 2 (*co-authored*)

Strategies for Second Language Listening

Current Scenarios and Improved Pedagogy

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To our parents

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Glossary

Note: We include here terms with which the reader may be unfamiliar and those which are not discussed at length in the book. As the definition of the term 'strategy' is the subject of discussion in Chapter 2, we have not given an additional definition of it here.

A level: Advanced Level, an examination taken (and corresponding qualification awarded) in different subjects at 18 years of age, generally, in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and in some other countries.

academic listening: listening that occurs in school, university or other educational settings, involving for example lectures, seminars, group discussions, *inter alia*.

advance organiser: instructional device used prior to learning with a view to helping learners organise, interpret and retain new information.

aural: related to the ear or to the sense of hearing.

bi-directional listening: a type of aural comprehension in which the listener is expected to respond to what is heard, as in face-to-face conversations or on the phone.

bottom-up processes: processes that involve attention to parts and not to the whole. In aural comprehension, bottom-up processes occur when the listener focuses on sounds, phonemes and parts of the words heard.

bottom-up strategies: strategies that draw predominantly on linguistic knowledge and involve conscious attention to linguistic features, such as to verb endings, individual lexical items, phonemes and parts of words.

co-text: the adjacent or accompanying parts of the text.

cognitive processes: subconscious mental activity, such as retention, grouping, identification, rehearsal or retrieval of information.

collaborative listening: a listening practice in which two or more people interact in order to achieve a common goal.

communicative language teaching: pedagogical practices whose means and aim are the development of learners' ability to communicate successfully.

comparison group: the group in a research study that is not exposed to the condition or treatment under investigation but which in other respects matches the the experimental group (which is exposed to the condition under investigation). Its members are not randomly selected from the same population as members of the experimental group.

comprehension tasks: tasks whose main goal is the identification of some type of information in the text.

comprehensive school: a state-funded school that does not select pupils on the basis of their achievement or aptitude.

content word: a word with lexical meaning (as opposed to a function word, whose primary function is to establish syntactic relations).

contextual features: elements that relate to the context of a situation, that is, who the participants are; what is their relationship; purpose of the situation; its setting; its level of formality; its topic; *inter alia*.

control group: the group in a research study that is not exposed to the condition or treatment under investitagtion but which in other respects matches the experimental group (which is exposed to the condition under investigation). Its members are randomly selected from the same population as members of the experimental group.

correlation: in statistics, it refers to the extent to which there is a relationship between two sets of data. A positive correlation occurs when high or low scores in one set of data tend to be associated with, respectively, high or low scores in the other set. A negative correlation involves high scores in one set and low in the other.

discourse: language in action, including linguistic and sociopolitical issues associated with language use.

discourse markers: words or phrases used to connect and signal different parts of discourse, for example to indicate hesitation, turn-taking, relationships (time, addition, cause, consequence, etc.).

ELT: English language teaching.

empirical study: a study based on observable evidence.

exam board: an official body in the UK that sets examinations and awards academic qualifications.

experimental group: the group in a research study that receives the treatment or condition that is the focus of investigation.

extensive listening: listening to large amounts of text for general understanding or pleasure.

focusing strategies: strategies related to helping the listener focus on what is to be heard, for example, prediction or selective attention.

GCSE: General Certificate of Secondary Education, an examination taken (and corresponding qualification awarded) in different subjects at the end of compulsory education (Years 10–11, ages 15–16) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and in some other countries.

genre: oral or written realisations produced and recognised by members of a group, for example: commercials, lectures, informal conversation.

global understanding: general understanding with no focus on details.

grammar school: a state-funded school that selects its pupils on the basis of their achievement or aptitude, often assessed in an entrance examination.

grapheme: the smallest unit in a writing sytem, for example the letters "b" or "β", and the symbols @ and &.

IB: International Baccalaureate, a curriculum (and corresponding qualification) offered by a non-profit organisation with the same name, generally followed by learners aged 16–18.
implicit knowledge: also called tacit knowledge, it involves knowledge that cannot be explicitly verbalised.
intensive listening: a type of listening that involves the identification of details about what is heard.
inter-rater reliability: the degree to which two or more raters (or scorers) agree.
intervention study: a study whose aim is to modify one or more conditions in the individuals or groups being studied.
Key Stage 3: also KS3, it covers Years 7, 8 and 9 (pupils aged 11 to 14) in schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
Key Stage 4: also KS4, it covers Years 10 and 11 (pupils aged 14 to 16) in schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
key word: a word whose understanding is necessary in a particular situation of language use.
L1: a person's first language (also called mother tongue).
L2: a person's second or additional language.
language varieties: the various forms in which the same language is used depending on differences due to geographical location, education level, socioeconomic level, age, among other factors.
lexis: all of the words in a language.
liaison: when two consecutive words are linked together in their articulation.
Likert scale: a research tool for measuring a respondent's degree of agreement (or disagreement) with a series of statements.
local understanding: comprehension of details and/or parts of a text (as opposed to the understanding of the whole, or a general idea).
long-term memory: the mental storage system that retains information permanently.
mean: the arithmetic average of a set of numbers.
mediation: a concept with theoretical roots in sociocultural theory, according to which learning occurs through assisted or scaffolded guidance.
metacognitive awareness: knowledge about cognition and control over it.
metacognitive processes: processes involving 'cognition about cognition', that is, planning, monitoring and evaluation of cognitive processes.
metalanguage: language used to talk or write about language.
MFL: modern foreign languages.
minimal pairs: pairs of words whose pronunciation differs by one single phoneme, for example, *ship/sheep* in English; *rit/rue* in French.
narrow listening: repeated exposure by learners to different sources of oral input about a topic of their choice.
National Curriculum: the official document outlining the teaching and learning agenda in England in primary and early secondary education.

non-linguistic knowledge: knowledge associated with meaning-making resources that do not involve language, for example, music, gesture, images, architecture, clothing, mathematical symbolism, and so on; world knowledge, that is, knowledge of what normally happens; knowledge drawn from everyday experience.

non-participant observer: a researcher who collects data by means of observation and field notes without participating in the situation under investigation.

non-word: a word that looks like and sounds like an existing word in a given language, but that is not recognised or accepted as a legitimate word.

one-way (or unidirectional listening): a type of aural comprehension that involves listening events in which the listener is not expected to respond to what is heard (such as radio or TV programmes, lectures, films, public announcements, voice mail, political speeches, *inter alia*).

opportunistic sample: in research, a sampling technique that involves investigating subjects who are most easily available (for example family members, colleagues, students).

orchestration of strategies: when a strategy is applied not in an isolated manner, but in a combination of strategies: in sequence (strategy chains) or in simultaneous use (strategy clusters).

paralanguage: what accompanies language, adding meaning to what is said or written, for example: in spoken discourse, gestures, intonation, tone of voice or facial expresssions; in written discourse: punctuation marks, font, colour, use of bold, italics, underlining, and so on.

parsing: in a cognitive approach to aural comprehension, it involves a listener's mental retrieval of a grammatical structure that puts together the sounds and syllables heard, trying to identify words that might fit those grammatical slots.

perception: in a cognitive approach to aural comprehension, it involves a listener's attempt to match what is heard to recognisable sounds and syllables.

phoneme: minimal units of sound that distinguish meaning in a language. For example, the sounds in p**e**t and p**a**t in English; v**ous** and v**ue** in French; ba**rr**o and ba**j**o in Spanish.

prosody: the patterns of rhythm, stress and intonation in a language.

range: the difference between the highest and the lowest score in a set of scores.

raw numbers: the actual figures retrieved from a calculation (and not, for example, their percentages).

regulation: control and monitoring of behaviours, thoughts and emotions.

scaffolding: a central concept in a sociocultural approach to pedagogy, it refers to the notion that learners need some guidance from a more-competent peer or a teacher before being able to perform autonomously. The metaphor of a scaffold illustrates this idea of support that is fully provided

initially but which is gradually removed, ultimately leading to learners' independence.

schema: a unit of world knowledge and prior experience that helps us to make meaning.

self-efficacy: a person's belief in their capability to perform a given task successfully.

semantic cues: textual hints that support meaning-making processes based on one's prior knowledge of, for example words, phrases, text organisation, images and symbols.

skills-based approach: a language teaching and learning syllabus in which content is organised around the development of the four language skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing).

speech rate: the ratio between the number of words and the duration of a listening passage.

speech segmentation: process of recognising the boundaries between phonemes, syllables and words in a stream of speech.

standardised test: a test containing the same type of tasks, given under the same conditions and scored in a consistent manner.

statistically significant: the conclusion that the results achieved in a statistical test are unlikely to have occurred by chance.

syntactic cues: textual hints that support meaning-making processes based on one's prior knowledge of the structure of a language, for example, word order and use of auxiliary for question formation.

taxonomy: coding system.

thinkaloud: practice that involves 'thinking out loud' while simultaneously carrying out a task.

TL: target language, or the language being taught.

top-down processes: meaning-making processes based on prior knowledge and experience.

top-down strategies: strategies that draw predominantly on prior knowledge and experience. Some examples are: identifying the topic, constructing meaning from tone of voice.

utilisation: in a cognitive approach to aural comprehension, it involves a listener's attempt to impose meaning on what is heard by linking the parsed speech to his/her previous knowledge.

validity: the degree to which conclusions can be drawn in a study considering the results from an instrument; the extent to which a research instrument is able to measure what it sets out to measure.

working memory: the temporary mental storage system for non-permanent information.